

The Presidency of Ronald Reagan and the End of the Cold War
Notes for the CCC Class, April, 2010
Carruth McGehee

Selected References

1. Anderson, Martin and Anderson, Annelise, **Reagan's Secret War: The Untold Story of his Fight to Save the World from Nuclear Disaster**, Crown Publishers, 2009. **
2. Arquilla, John, **The Reagan Imprint: Ideas in American Foreign Policy from the Collapse of Communism to the War on Terror**, Ivan R. Dee, 2006. **
3. Bunch, Will, **Tear Down This Myth: How the Reagan Legacy has Distorted our Politics and Haunts our Future**, Free Press, 2009. ***
4. Coll, Steve, **Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001**, Penguin Books, 2004. *****
5. Colodny, Len; and Shachtman, Tom, **The Forty Years War: The Rise and Fall of the Neocons, from Nixon to Obama**, Harper, 2009 *****
6. Diggins, John Patrick, **Ronald Reagan: Fate, Freedom, and the Making of History**, W. W. Norton & Co., 2007. *****
7. Hoffman, David E., **The Dead Hand: The Untold Story of the Cold War Arms Race and Its Dangerous Legacy**, Doubleday, 2009. *****
8. Mann, James, **The Rebellion of Ronald Reagan: A History of the End of the Cold War**, Viking, 2009. *****
9. Reeves, Richard, **President Reagan: The Triumph of Imagination**, Simon & Schuster, 2005. ****
10. Skinner, Kiron K., Anderson, Annelise, and Anderson, Martin, editors; Foreword by George P. Shultz; **Reagan: A Life in Letters**, Free Press, 2003. ***
11. Weiner, Tim, **Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA**, Doubleday, 2007. *****
12. Wilentz, Sean, **The Age of Reagan: A History, 1974-2008**, Harper, 2008. ****

Other Books of Interest

1. Sheehan, Neil, **A Fiery Peace in a Cold War: Bernard Schriever and the Ultimate Weapon**, Random House, 2009. Reviewed by Steve Coll in the February 25, 2010 issue of New York Review of Books.
2. Zubok, Vladimir M., **A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev**, University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

Chronology of Selected Events

- February 6, 1911: Ronald Wilson Reagan was born in Tampico, Illinois.
- March 2, 1931: Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev was born in the small village of Privolnoye, in the Stavropol region of southern Russia.
- 1966: Reagan was elected Governor of California.
- 1968: Nixon was nominated for President at the Republican National Convention in Miami Beach. There was almost a Rockefeller-Reagan ticket.
- April 10, 1972: The Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention was signed by 70 nations. It had no provision for verification. Nixon had renounced the U.S. biological weapons program except for defense three years before. The Soviet Union proceeded to cheat on a massive scale, and thought the U.S. was doing the same. BW centers were established at Obolensk near Moscow, at Koltsovo near Novosibirsk, and elsewhere.
- May 26, 1972: SALT I, including the ABM Treaty, signed in Moscow.
- 1976: Ford was nominated for President by the Republicans. The vote was 1187 for Ford, 1070 for Reagan.
- October 15, 1979: The CIA reports 40-60 deaths, perhaps from anthrax, near Sverdlovsk. They seek but don't find proof of a BW plant.
- Christmas Day, 1979: The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Carter pulled back the SALT II Treaty from the Senate.
- March 30, 1981: Reagan was shot. In his hospital bed, he wrote a letter to Brezhnev.
- June, 1981: Israel bombed the Iraqi nuclear reactor.
- July 19, 1981: In Ottawa, Mitterand told Reagan about "Farewell," a Soviet who was giving information to the French.
- Early 1982: William P. Clark became National Security Adviser.
- June 7, 1982: Reagan discussed Poland with John Paul II.
- June 25, 1982: George Shultz became Secretary of State, Alexander Haig having been fired.
- September 14, 1982: Reagan meets Edward Teller, who said that an antimissile system could be made to work.
- November 11, 1982: Leonid Brezhnev died. Yuri Andropov, who succeeded him, spent half of his 15 months in office in the hospital.
- February 12, 1983: Reagan held a long meeting with Anatoly Dobrynin, the Soviet ambassador to the U.S., in the White House.
- March 23, 1983: Reagan made a speech announcing his support for missile defense. He did so to the surprise of his government; there was no concrete proposal even on paper. The Soviets understood Reagan's missile defense idea as a threat, not a peaceful move. Yuri Andropov sent an angry reply.
- 1983: Tensions mounted. The Soviets became genuinely afraid of an American attack. Andropov ordered an intelligence operation, RYAN, to watch for signs of

such an attack. Reagan became convinced that Soviets were genuinely frightened.

- August 31, 1983: Korean Airlines 007 was shot down by the Soviets. The matter poisons U.S.-Soviet relations for a time.
- September 2, 1983: At Serpukhov-15, south of Moscow, a top-secret missile attack early-warning station that received signals from satellites, the screen lit up with red letters, MISSILE ATTACK. Lt. Col. Stanislav Petrov had minutes to make a decision. When he got a call from higher military authorities, he said: "This is a false alarm."
- Columbus Day, 1983: Reagan watches an early screening of *The Day After*, which was to be shown on U.S. TV in November. Reagan said "It's very effective and left me greatly depressed." Observers said he stayed depressed for four days and became anxious and worried. He began to shape a new approach toward the Soviet Union. One said: There has been a change in the man.
- October 23, 1983: 241 U.S. personnel were killed in Beirut bombing.
- October 25, 1983: The U.S. invaded Grenada.
- November 2-11, 1983: Able Archer, a NATO exercise, raised Soviet fearfulness to a new height; they thought there was a real alert on U.S. bases.
- February 9, 1984: Yuri Andropov died. Konstantin Chernenko, suffering from advanced emphysema, succeeded him.
- December 10, 1984: Gorbachev gave his *perestroika* speech.
- March 10, 1985: Chernenko died. Mikhail Gorbachev succeeded him.
- November, 1985: Reagan and Gorbachev met in Geneva.
- April 26, 1986: Chernobyl.
- October 11, 1986: Reagan and Gorbachev met in Reykjavik.
- December 12, 1986; Gorbachev frees Sakharov, who returns to Moscow.
- December, 1986: Reagan and Gorbachev met in Washington and signed the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force) Treaty.
- February 26, 1987: The Soviet Union carried out its first nuclear test since 1985.
- April 1, 1987: Margaret Thatcher visited Gorbachev.
- April 14, 1987: Shultz visited Gorbachev.
- May, 1987: Gorbachev attends a meeting of Warsaw Pact ministers in East Berlin. He announces that the Pact is to be purely defensive. Behind closed doors, he tells the ministers, If you have trouble with your people, don't call me and don't count on the Red Army for help.
- May 28, 1987: Mathias Rust, a teenager from Hamburg, lands a Cessna near Red Square. Subsequently, Gorbachev removes 150 senior military officers.
- June 12, 1987: Reagan: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall."
- December, 1987: Reagan and Gorbachev signed the INF Treaty.
- May 27, 1988: The Senate ratified the INF Treaty by a vote of 93-5.
- May 31, 1988: At the end of their 4th summit, Reagan and Gorbachev took a walk around the Kremlin and Red Square. Asked if he still considered the Soviet Union an "evil empire," Reagan said "No. I was talking about another time, another era."
- December, 1988: Reagan, Gorbachev, and George H.W. Bush met in New York. In his speech at the UN, Gorbachev announced a reduction of the Soviet military by a half million troops, and the withdrawal of six divisions from Eastern Europe.

- 1989: “The lost year” in US-USSR relations.
- January, 1989: Erich Honecker said the Berlin Wall would exist “for 100 years.” Brent Scowcroft said “The Cold War is not over.”
- November 1989: The Berlin Wall fell, after oddly confused announcements and rumors of relaxed restrictions. Egon Krenz, Honecker’s successor, explained what happened to Gorbachev, who said, Congratulations.
- December 2, 1989: Bush and Gorbachev met in Moscow.
- September, 1990: The Reagans, with Suzanne Massie, visited the Soviet Union. Reagan laid flowers at the graves of Dostoyevski and Tchaikovsky.
- July 31, 1991: Bush and Gorbachev signed a Strategic Arms Treaty, achieving 30% reductions in strategic nuclear missiles; 18,000 missiles kept by each side.
- August 18, 1991: Senator Sam Nunn visited Moscow, invited by Andrei Kokoshin, to observe “big things happening”.
- Christmas Day, 1991: Gorbachev called Bush at Camp David to tell him he was about to resign, transferring the control of nuclear weapons to President Boris Yeltsin of Russia. “You can have a very quiet Christmas evening.” The Soviet Union came to an end, splitting into 15 separate nations.
- February 14, 1992: Secretary of State James A. Baker III arrived by car at Chelyabinsk-70 in western Siberia, a secret nuclear weapon design facility since 1955. Hundreds of Soviet technicians and scientists shout and wave jubilantly.
- July, 1993: Andy Weber takes a job with the U.S. embassy in Kazakhstan. The Kazakhs show him over 1300 pounds of weapons-grade uranium. Subsequently, the U.S. bought it and took it away in five C-5 Galaxy airlifters. Vice-President Al Gore informed the Russians, who did not object.
- November, 1994: Reagan, in a letter to the people of the U.S., announced that he had Alzheimer’s.
- June 5, 2004: Reagan died.

A Ronald Reagan Quiz

1. Which of the following Presidents had, according to the Gallup Poll, better average approval ratings than Ronald Reagan?
 - a. Franklin D. Roosevelt
 - b. Dwight Eisenhower
 - c. John F. Kennedy
 - d. Lyndon Johnson
 - e. George H. W. Bush
 - f. Bill Clinton
2. The following description applies to what post-WWII president? He reduced the government payroll from about 3 million when he took office to about 2.6 million. Federal spending fell as a share of the gross domestic product from 21.4% in his first year in office to 18.5% in the first year after he took office.
3. In June of 1982, Reagan fired Alexander Haig as Secretary of State. Haig’s successor had been a Marine, had a Ph.D. in economics from MIT, served as dean

- of the University of Chicago Business School, was Secretary of Labor and the Treasury under Nixon, and was chair of the Bechtel Corporation. His name was
- a. George P. Shultz
 - b. George P. Schultze
 - c. George P. Schultz
4. During Reagan's presidency, who was the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union?
 - a. Andrei Gromyko
 - b. Edward Shevardnadze
 5. Which of the following served as director of the National Security Council under Reagan?
 - a. Richard V. Allen
 - b. William Clark
 - c. Bud McFarlane
 - d. John Poindexter
 - e. Frank Carlucci
 - f. Colin Powell
 6. Who was Secretary of Defense under President Reagan?
 - a. Caspar Weinberger
 - b. Frank Carlucci
 7. Who was Ronald Reagan's White House Chief of Staff?
 - a. James A. Baker III
 - b. Don Regan
 - c. Howard Baker
 8. Who was Secretary of the Treasury while Ronald Reagan was President?
 - a. Don Regan
 - b. James A. Baker III
 - c. Howard Baker
 9. Which presidents of the US were divorcees?
 10. Who was Director of the CIA while Ronald Reagan was President?
 - a. William Casey
 - b. Robert Gates
 - c. William Webster
 11. Who was General Secretary of the Soviet Union while Ronald Reagan was President of the U.S.?
 - a. Leonid Brezhnev
 - b. Yuri Andropov
 - c. Konstantin Chernenko
 - d. Mikhail Gorbachev
 12. In which of these places did Reagan and Gorbachev meet?
 - a. Geneva
 - b. Reykjavik
 - c. Washington
 - d. Moscow
 - e. New York
 13. Who was Suzanne Massie?

14. Of the following, who supported President Reagan's policy of negotiations with the Soviet Union? The negotiations led to, among other things, (1) an agreement on the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and (2) the INF treaty signed in 1987 and ratified in 1988.
- a. Richard Nixon
 - b. Henry Kissinger
 - c. Alexander Haig
 - d. William Casey
 - e. Brent Scowcroft
 - f. Robert Gates
 - g. Jack Kemp
 - h. Dan Quayle
 - i. Pete DuPont
 - j. Jesse Helms
 - k. Pat Robertson
 - l. Charles Krauthammer
 - m. George Will
 - n. Jim Hoagland
 - o. The Wall Street Journal
15. Where is the world's largest statue of Ronald Reagan?

Answers: 1: All of them. 2: Bill Clinton 3: a 4: Both of them. Gromyko had been Foreign Secretary for nearly 30 years when Gorbachev replaced him with Shevardnadze. 5: All of them, in that order. 6: Both of them. 7: All of them. 8: a and b. Don Regan was first; he and James Baker proposed to Reagan that they swap jobs, and he agreed. 9: Reagan; no others. 10. All of them. Actually, Robert Gates was only acting director; he was nominated to be Director but dropped out because of Iran-Contra. 11. All of them. 12. All of them. The New York meeting was not a summit, but just a luncheon meeting of Reagan, Gorbachev, and G.H.W. Bush, held after Bush's election as President. Gorbachev was in New York for an address to the U.N. 13: See Mann's book. 14: None of them. Not a darned one of them. Not a darned one. 15. In Covington, Louisiana, unveiled in the summer of 2008, 15 feet high and made from bronze. It was a gift from a foundation founded by the late oil magnate Patrick F. Taylor.