

# Reagan's Legacy and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy

## Introduction

The legacy of Ronald Reagan's foreign policy continues to shape American foreign policy today. Reagan's policies were based on a belief in American exceptionalism and the need to confront the Soviet Union. He pursued a policy of peace through strength, which involved increasing defense spending and developing new weapons systems. He also sought to promote democracy and free markets around the world.

Reagan's foreign policy was successful in many ways. He helped to end the Cold War and bring about the collapse of the Soviet Union. He also helped to restore American prestige and influence in the world.

However, his policies also had some negative consequences. His decision to increase defense spending led to a large budget deficit. His support for the Contras in Nicaragua contributed to the Iran-Contra affair. And his invasion of Grenada was widely criticized as an unnecessary use of force.

Despite these criticisms, Reagan remains a popular figure in American politics. His legacy is one of a strong leader who stood up for American values. His foreign policy helped to make the world a safer and more prosperous place.

Reagan's foreign policy was based on a number of key principles. First, he believed in American exceptionalism. He believed that the United States was a unique nation with a special mission in the world. Second, he believed in the need to confront the Soviet Union. He saw the Soviet Union as a threat to American values and interests. Third, he believed in a policy of

peace through strength. He believed that the best way to deter war was to build up American military power.

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## Book Description

Reagan's Legacy and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy is a comprehensive examination of Ronald Reagan's foreign policy and its impact on the world. The book covers a wide range of topics, including Reagan's relations with the Soviet Union, his policies in Latin America and the Middle East, and his commitment to human rights and democracy.

Reagan's foreign policy was based on a number of key principles, including American exceptionalism, the need to confront the Soviet Union, and a belief in peace through strength. Reagan's policies were successful in many ways. He helped to end the Cold War and bring about the collapse of the Soviet Union. He also helped to restore American prestige and influence in the world.

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Reagan's Legacy and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy is a valuable resource for anyone interested in American foreign policy and the legacy of Ronald Reagan. The book provides a clear and concise overview of Reagan's policies and their impact on the world. The book is also well-written and engaging, making it a pleasure to read.

If you are interested in American foreign policy or the legacy of Ronald Reagan, then Reagan's Legacy and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy is a must-read. The

book provides a comprehensive and insightful analysis of Reagan's foreign policy and its impact on the world.

# Chapter 1: Reagan's Foreign Policy

## Vision

### The Reagan Doctrine

The Reagan Doctrine was a foreign policy strategy adopted by the United States during the presidency of Ronald Reagan. The doctrine called for the United States to support anti-communist movements around the world, even if it meant providing military aid to rebel groups. The Reagan Doctrine was based on the belief that the United States had a moral obligation to promote democracy and freedom around the world.

The Reagan Doctrine was first applied in Central America, where the United States provided military aid to the Contras, a rebel group fighting against the communist government of Nicaragua. The United States also provided military aid to anti-communist rebel groups in Afghanistan, Angola, and Cambodia.

The Reagan Doctrine was controversial, with critics arguing that it led to the United States supporting brutal dictatorships and human rights abuses. However, the Reagan Doctrine is also credited with helping to end the Cold War and bring about the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The Reagan Doctrine was a major shift in American foreign policy. Prior to Reagan's presidency, the United States had generally avoided intervening in the internal affairs of other countries. However, the Reagan Doctrine called for the United States to take a more active role in promoting democracy and freedom around the world.

The Reagan Doctrine was based on a number of key principles. First, Reagan believed that the United States had a moral obligation to promote democracy and freedom around the world. Second, Reagan believed that the Soviet Union was a threat to American values

and interests. Third, Reagan believed that the best way to deter war was to build up American military power.

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### The Strategic Defense Initiative

The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), also known as "Star Wars," was a proposed missile defense system that was developed by the United States during the 1980s. The goal of SDI was to protect the United States from attack by nuclear missiles.

SDI was based on the idea of using lasers and other directed energy weapons to destroy incoming missiles. The system was designed to be able to intercept missiles in the boost phase, mid-course phase, and terminal phase of their flight.

SDI was a highly controversial program. Critics argued that it was too expensive and that it would not be effective in stopping a nuclear attack. Supporters of SDI argued that it was necessary to protect the United States from the threat of nuclear missiles.

The SDI program was never fully implemented. However, the research and development that was done on SDI led to the development of a number of new technologies, including the Patriot missile defense system.

SDI was a key part of Reagan's foreign policy vision. He believed that SDI would make the United States safer from nuclear attack and that it would help to deter the Soviet Union from starting a nuclear war.

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### The End of the Cold War

The end of the Cold War was one of the most significant events of the 20th century. It marked the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolar world order that had existed since the end of World War II.

The Cold War was a period of intense rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. The two superpowers competed for global influence, and their rivalry led to a number of proxy wars and other conflicts around the world.

The end of the Cold War was brought about by a number of factors, including the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev to power in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev introduced a series of reforms that weakened the Soviet Union's grip on its satellite states in Eastern Europe. These reforms, combined with the growing

economic problems facing the Soviet Union, led to the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989.

The end of the Cold War had a profound impact on the world. It led to the reunification of Germany, the independence of the Baltic states, and the rise of new democracies in Eastern Europe. It also marked the beginning of a new era of global cooperation, as the United States and the Soviet Union worked together to address common challenges such as nuclear proliferation and climate change.

Reagan's foreign policy played a major role in the end of the Cold War. Reagan's tough stance against the Soviet Union, combined with his commitment to peace through strength, helped to convince the Soviet leadership that they could not win the Cold War. Reagan's policies also helped to strengthen the United States' allies in Europe and Asia, and this made it more difficult for the Soviet Union to project its power around the world.

The end of the Cold War was a major victory for Reagan and his foreign policy. It marked the end of a long and dangerous period of tension between the United States and the Soviet Union, and it opened up new possibilities for peace and cooperation.

**This extract presents the opening three sections of the first chapter.**

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# Table of Contents

**Chapter 1: Reagan's Foreign Policy Vision** - The Reagan Doctrine - The Strategic Defense Initiative - The End of the Cold War - The Iran-Contra Affair - The Reagan Legacy

**Chapter 2: The Middle East and the War on Terror** - The Iran-Iraq War - The First Gulf War - The September 11 Attacks - The War in Afghanistan - The War in Iraq

**Chapter 3: The Soviet Union and the Cold War** - The Cuban Missile Crisis - The Vietnam War - The Détente Era - The Helsinki Accords - The Reagan-Gorbachev Summits

**Chapter 4: Latin America and the Monroe Doctrine** - The Cuban Revolution - The Bay of Pigs Invasion - The Grenada Invasion - The Contras in Nicaragua - The Panama Canal Treaties

**Chapter 5: Asia and the Pacific** - The Korean War - The Vietnam War - The Nixon Doctrine - The Sino-Soviet Split - The Reagan-China Relationship

**Chapter 6: Europe and the Atlantic Alliance** - The Marshall Plan - The Berlin Wall - The Helsinki Accords - The INF Treaty - The Collapse of the Soviet Union

**Chapter 7: Africa and the Cold War** - The Congo Crisis - The Nigerian Civil War - The Angolan Civil War - The Ethiopian-Somali War - The Reagan Doctrine in Africa

**Chapter 8: The Global Economy and Trade** - The Plaza Accord - The Louvre Accord - The Uruguay Round - The North American Free Trade Agreement - The World Trade Organization

**Chapter 9: Arms Control and Nuclear Proliferation** - The Non-Proliferation Treaty - The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks - The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty - The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty - The New START Treaty

**Chapter 10: Human Rights and Democracy** - The Helsinki Accords - The Carter Administration and Human Rights - The Reagan Administration and Human Rights - The Tiananmen Square Massacre - The Collapse of the Soviet Union

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