# The 1980s

Election of 1980, Reagan vs Carter, Reagan wins big. Reagan wants to be firmer in the Cold War than Carter, wants to cut taxes, vote as a conservative.

## Rawhide Down - 1981

Reagan was the victim of an assassination attempt in 1981. John Hinkley tried to shoot him. Was wounded, went through surgery, and he quickly recovered.

## Reaganomics

Laffer Curve got popular here, Reagan was big on tax cuts. He took money out of the economy, which temporarily hurt but lessened inflation. Economy was very strong in the late 80s.

## Reagan in the Cold War

Reagan was a hard-core anti-Communist. He wants to win the Cold War. Mocked the USSR and emboldened people behind the Iron Curtain. Military expansionism was a big part of his strategy.

Reagan had many allies across the world, including Margaret Thatcher (Britain), Lech Walesa (Poland revolutionist), Pope John Paul II (fundamentally anti-Communist)

**Military Intervention**

Reagan would send a very targeted campaign to push back against communism. Grenada had a pro-soviet government, liberated by the US. Libya was a hotspot for terrorism. Reagan was hard on the Libyans and they flipped.

## Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)

System of satellites and lasers in space that could destroy missiles. Reagan really didn’t like MAD.

## Election of 1984

Reagan v Walter Mondale, another landslide for Reagan.

## Reagan and Gorbachev

Gorbachev came into power in the USSR. He’s still a communist but wants to work with Reagan for reform. Reagan proposed a disarmament program for the USSR, but the US would have to abandon SDI. Reagan didn’t take the deal.

A year later, US and the USSR sign the INF treaty, agreeing to scrap a whole class of nuclear weapons.

## Iran-Contra Scandal

There was a complicated system of trades and support between the US and anti-communist regimes. Congress barred Reagan from giving aid to the anti-Communist Contras, but Reagan found a way around that.

## The Berlin Wall

Reagan hates the Berlin wall and condemns it. Reagan challenges Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin wall.