



Welcome to US History Talks

Preview : Module 7: Master of the World

Talk	Title	Time Period	Date of Talk
44	The Reagan Revolution	1981-1988	October 20th
45	Reagan and the world	1981-1998	November 3rd
46	Master of the World	1998-1992	November 17th
47	US culture and society 1980's	1980-1992	December 1st
48	The Clintons Presidency	1992-1998	December 15th
49	Pax Americana: US and the 1990's World	1993-2001	January 19th
50	US culture and society 1990's	1981-2001	February 2nd

Reagan and the World

- Reagan and the crusade against communism
- Confronting the USSR 1980-1984
- Interventions
- Reagan and Gorbachev 1985-1988
- Iran Contra Affair
- Reagan epilogue



Reagan and Crusade vs Communism

Brief History US & Communism

- 1865-1930 Industrialisation and triumph of Capitalism
 - Labour Unions accommodation with business/ socialism rejected
- 1930-1945: Collectivist America
 - New Deal and planned economy / USSR Alliance
- 1946-1971: Cold War: USSR global and domestic threat
- 1971-1980 : Détente: Balance of Power/ zones of control/ SALT 1

Goldwater and the rejection of Detente

Campaigning for President 1964



Libertarian “Hard Right”

...Government force of evil

...1964 Republican candidate

“.....communism and the governments it now controls are enemies of every man on earth who is or wants to be free ... I would remind you that extremism in the defence of liberty is no vice, and let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.”

Reagan: standard bearer of hard right

Reagan 1964 "Time of Choosing" Speech



New Deal (FDR) supporter

Resents army bureaucracy

...making propaganda films 1940's

Leads efforts to crush pro

Communist Union Hollywood 1940's

Informant to House Un

American Committee..

Communist influence Hollywood

GE spokesman...pro capitalism

California politics...Goldwater

Supporter...1964

Becomes leader of "hard right"

after Goldwater defeat



Reagan: US Exceptionalism

“I've always believed that this blessed land was set apart in a special way, that some divine plan placed this great continent here between the oceans to be found by people from every corner of the Earth who had a special love for freedom and the courage to uproot themselves, leave homeland and friends, to come to a strange land.

And coming here they created something new in all the history of mankind—a land where man is not beholden to government, government is beholden to man.”

Reagan Presidential candidate & USSR 1980

- Opposes Détente
 - USSR using SALT 1 to build strength and threaten US
 - USSR expansionist and threatening US global interests
 - USSR ignoring commitments to allowing dissent (Helsinki Accords)
- Future US policy to be based on “Peace through Strength”
- US to confront USSR globally and “roll back” Soviet power

USSR (and most Western Press) view Reagan as “warmonger”
.....a “cowboy”

Reagan War on Communism 1981-1985

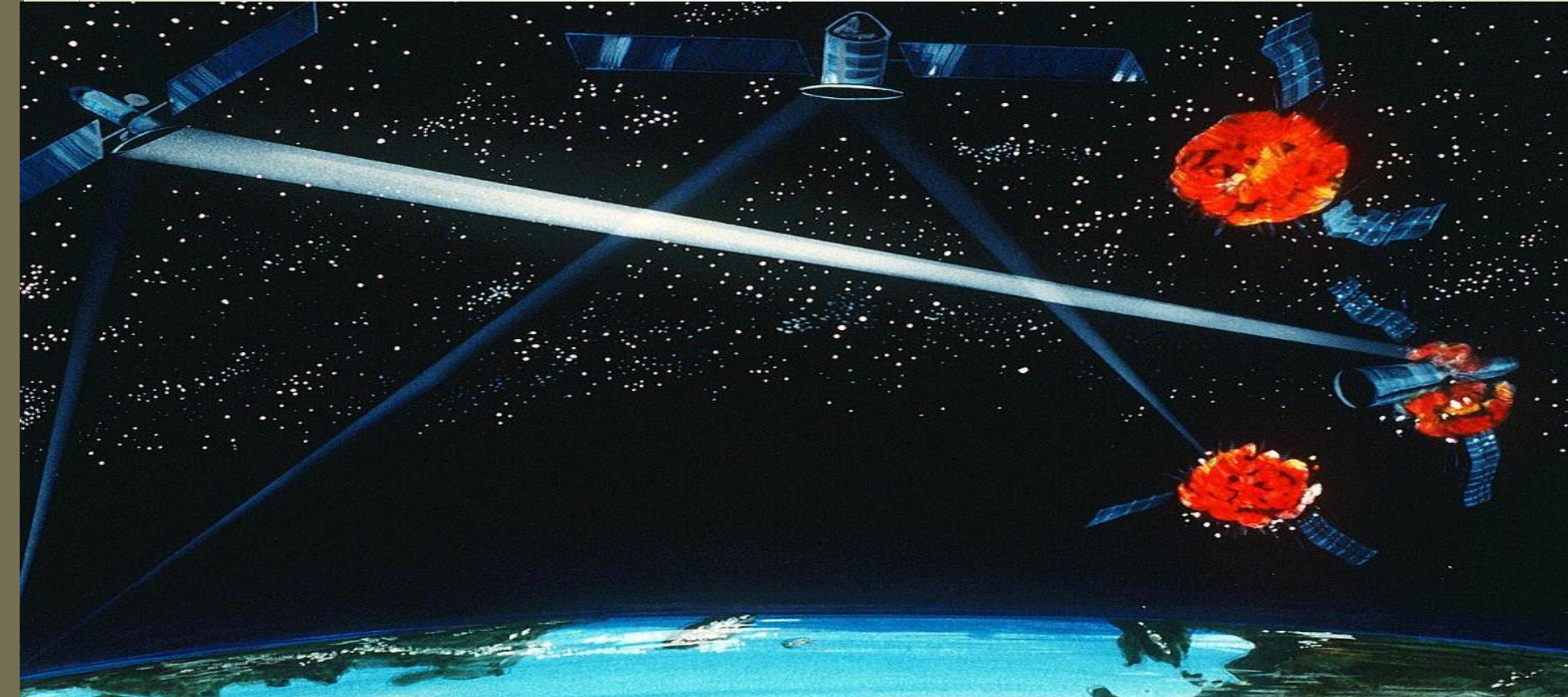
- Increase defence expenditure
 - Doubles expense from \$130BN to 250Bn by 1985 (Carter had increase 1979)
 - 600 ship navy
 - New generation missiles Pershing
- Rollback Soviet gains....challenge East Europe dominance
 - Counter Soviet forward deployment missiles in Easter Europe
 - Actively support Polish Trade Unions/ Afghanistan mujahedeen
 - Active intervention to crush potential threats
- Invest in new Technology: “Star Wars”

“Star Wars”not a joke
....\$30Bn in expenditure by 1990

Kinetic interceptors: tested 1984...intercept missile at 6km/second at 100 miles altitude



Star Wars...Laser rays to intercept
...testing fails...abandoned 1990's



USSR View: threat from space realKrocodile magazine



USSR 1976-1985 & Reagan Doctrine

USSR Brezhnev Doctrine: Retain control Eastern Europe

- Allegations true: USSR increase defence from 8% to 15% of GDP
- Yom Kippur war 1973...USSR equipment revealed as inferior
- Growing unrest Poland....Polish Pope, emergence of Solidarity
- Leadership transition from Brezhnev to Andropov
 - KGB Veteran witness USSR authority (Hungary experience)...Reagan “cowboy”
 - First Strike fear: “Reagan is unpredictable. You should expect anything from him”
- Forward deployment missiles East Europe
 - SS-20 missiles....eliminate Western Europe, USA untouched
 - Test US willingness to defend Europe

SS20 Missiles

...mobile, MIRV armed, faster (solid fuel)



US Response to SS20 Deployment

....consultation with trusted allies...particularly UK
....Maggie Thatcher....Cruise missile deployment



Forward missile deployment across Europe
...200 mobile systems, 150 medium range (UK)



Extensive opposition to Pershing missile deployment



Reagan and Thatcher “warmongers”
...no demonstrations vs SS20's



Anti Reagan/ Thatcher buttons



Russian response to missiles: Project rYan 1981-1989 (aketno-Yadernoe Napadenie: Nuclear Attack)

- USSR commit to comprehensive overall missile defence systems
- Installation computer based detection systems
 - Multiple triggers to accelerate information capture
 - Rules established to semi-automate responses to attack
 - 6 minute decision
 - “No surprise” doctrine
- Deployment across USSR accelerated....”buggy programmes”

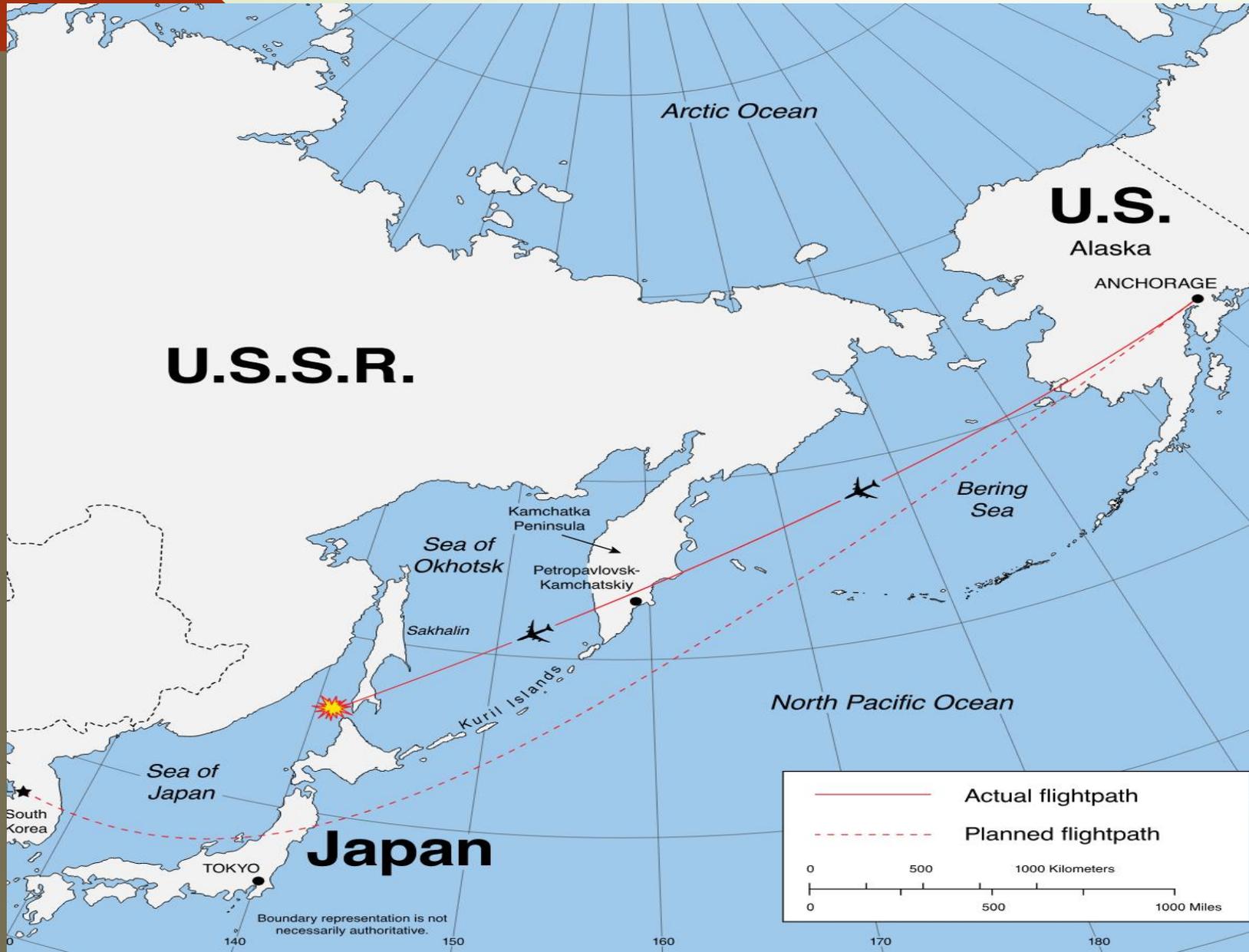
Reagan “Evil Empire Speech” March 1983

Yes, let us pray for the salvation of all of those who live in that totalitarian darkness—pray they will discover the joy of knowing God. But until they do, let us be aware that while they preach the supremacy of the State, declare its omnipotence over individual man, and predict its eventual domination of all peoples on the earth, they are the focus of evil in the modern world

So, in your discussions of the nuclear freeze proposals, I urge you to beware the temptation of pride—the temptation of blithely declaring yourselves above it all and label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an *evil empire*, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.

Russian actions support “evil empire” rhetoric

Korean flight January 1983



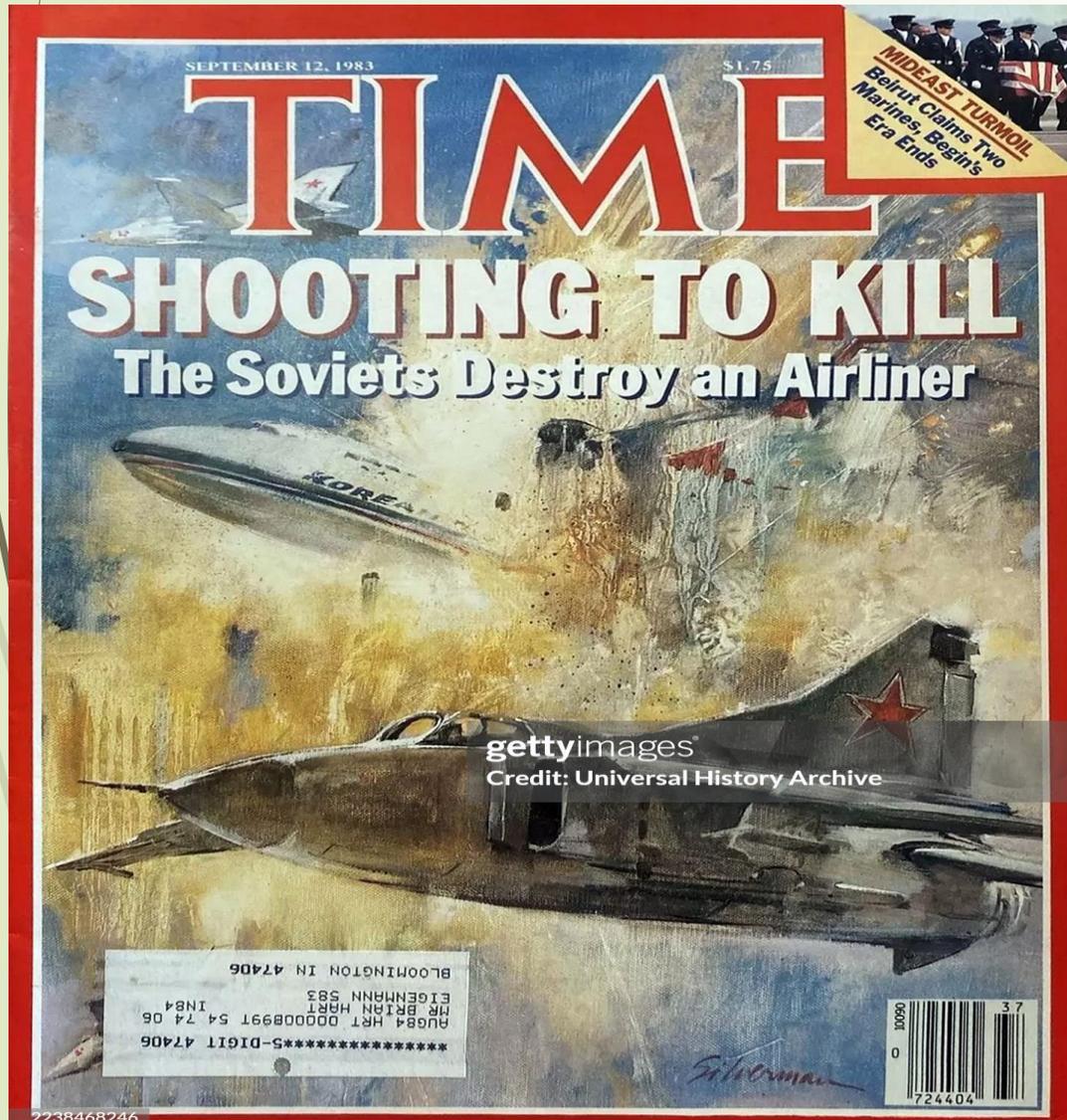
Korean flight to Japan
....wrong flight path
...faulty tracking in Japan

USSR Eastern Commander
Orders destruction

USSR claim warning
...non recorded
...not seen by captain

250 deaths, 22 children
US Congressman
Leader John Birch Society

USSR / US Response



USSR deny

Then “spy plane”

Then claim warnings

US intercept Russian pilot comms

No warnings

Comments “mission accomplished”

Play to open UN Meeting

Maximises distrust

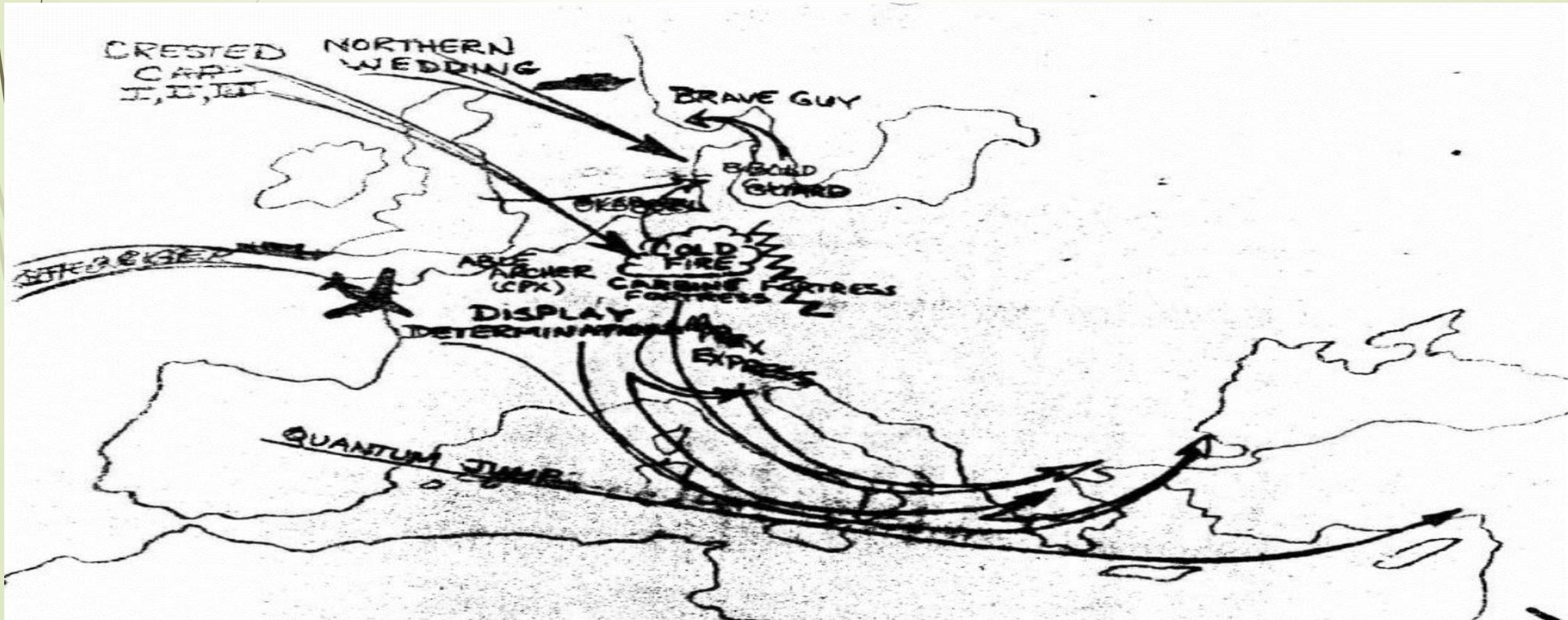
...Reagan “Russian animals”

US military decide to proceed with operation “Able Archer”

Abel Archer October 1983

...largest peacetime military exercise

...simulate nuclear war as realistically as possible



Missile defence centres

..this US NORAD Headquarters, rYan same in USSR



Abel Archer Exercise...land ...supplemented by simulated nuclear attack



British agent warns
US USSR paranoid
...Able Archer real attack

US dismiss as nonsense
...use attack call signs

USSR fear attack
...arm bombers
..alert rYAn operations to
Prepare for first strike

Stanislav Petrov (1939-2017)

...the man who saved the world



Graduate Kiev military
Aircraft academy

Joined USSR nuclear air
Defence 1972

Yan detects incoming
Missile,,Petrov waits
3 minutes late..5 incoming
Petrov decides fake

Disobeys orders.

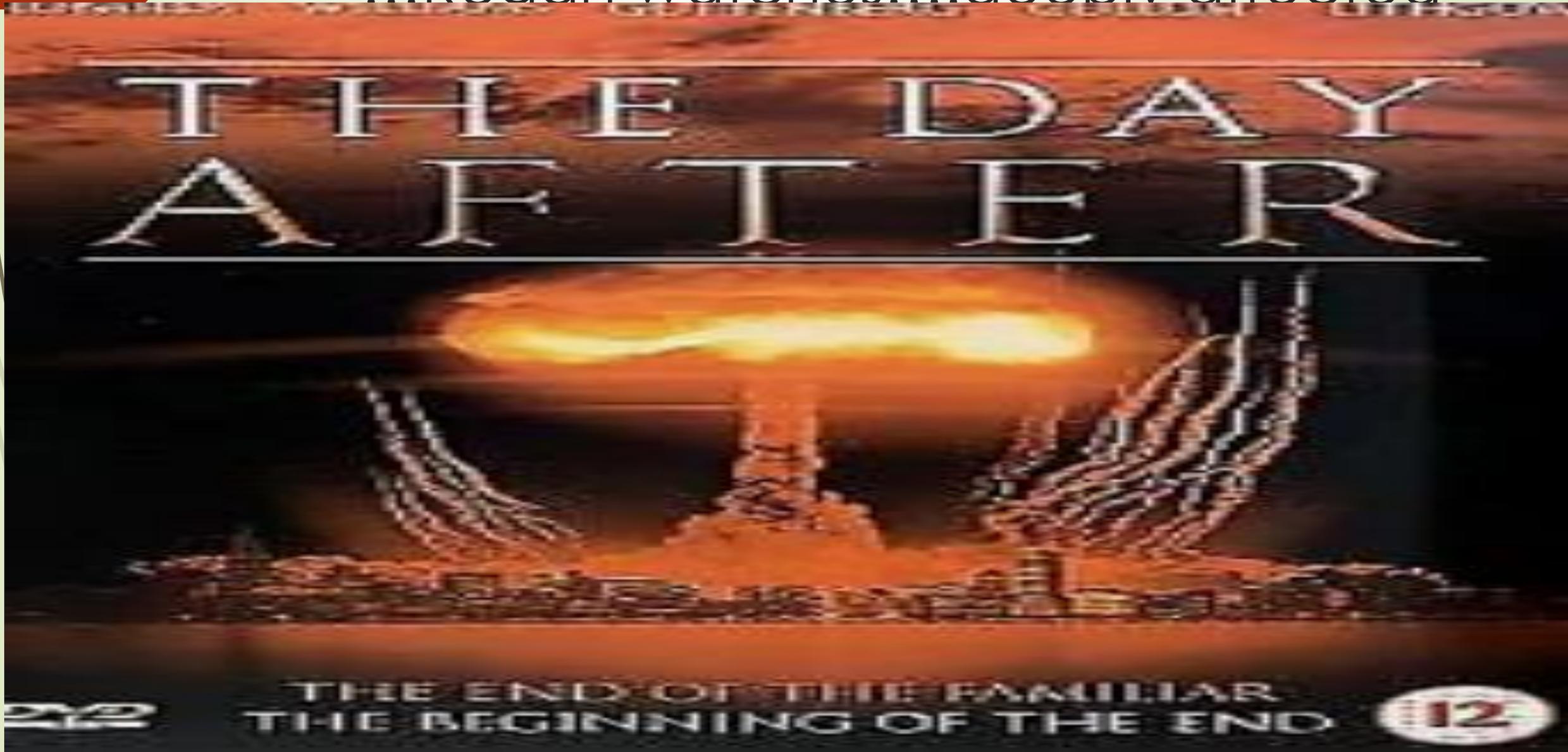
...false alarm

....vindicated

...reflections from clouds

US tv movie November 1983

...Reagan watches...deeply affected





Interventions

Global situation 1981....US perspective

- ▶ China: stable, anti USSR...placate by free trade, marginalise Taiwan
- ▶ East Asia: stable...support dictatorships ..no Communist expansion
- ▶ South/ Central America/ Caribbean: Unstable/ Cuban threat
- ▶ South Asia/ Central Asia...opportunity to hurt USSR/ recover Iran
 - ▶ Afghanistan USSR invasion: enemy of my enemy my friend”
 - ▶ Iran: support Iraq invasion/ prevent its domination of Lebanon

South / Central America 1981

- ▶ Stable democracies Venezuela & Columbia....since 1960
- ▶ New democracies emerging :Bolivia & Ecuador 1980-1982
- ▶ New “Cuba”: El Salvador/Socialist (Sandinistas)...Carter blamed
- ▶ Unsteady dictatorships in place elsewhere...economic recession
 - ▶ Active and committed Cuban/ Communist interests threaten stability
 - ▶ Reagan response: reopen Panama College, resume “Condor”

Reagan Administration support for dictatorships disrupted
.....by Falklands war

Falklands War 1982: US View

US media: shock admiration



US and Argentina

...support for dictatorship via Condor
...tolerate "dirty war" vs "Communist"

Argentina invasion of islands surprise

US expect UK to submit to international talks
...South American policy in disarray
...."Shuttle diplomacy"

Reagan: decisive

"I just don't see how we can call the British the aggressors here. They're trying to get back what was taken from them."

....offers US carriers if UK carriers damaged/sunk
....technology (sidewinder missiles
....satellite access to view Argentinian movements

Impact Falklands War

Mass demonstrations vs “disappeared” Buenos Aires
.....October 1982



In Argentina

- ...military discredited
- ...mass demonstrations
-democratic regime 1983

Catalyst of unintended effects

-US shifts policy...pro democracy
-military regimes humiliated
-economic recessions

Triumph of democracy

- ...Uruguay 1984
-Brazil 1985
- ...Paraguay 1989
- ...Chile 1990

Trouble in Grenada

About Grenada

- ...British colony since 1763
- ...Independent 1974
- ...member of Commonwealth
- ...population 100,000

Political turmoil 1983

- ...Elected leader overthrown
- ...Peoples Liberation Army in power
- ...Communist...Cuban build airport
- ...Governor under house arrest

Reagan

- ...no more Cuba's
- ...600 US students potential hostages
- ...warns Thatcher (Commonwealth)
- ...secures request to intervene from Barb



Invasion of Grenada

US marines Grenada October 1983



US invade...largest act since Vietnam.....7,000 marines
....2,000 Cubans & Grenadian
...Thatcher furious/supports in public

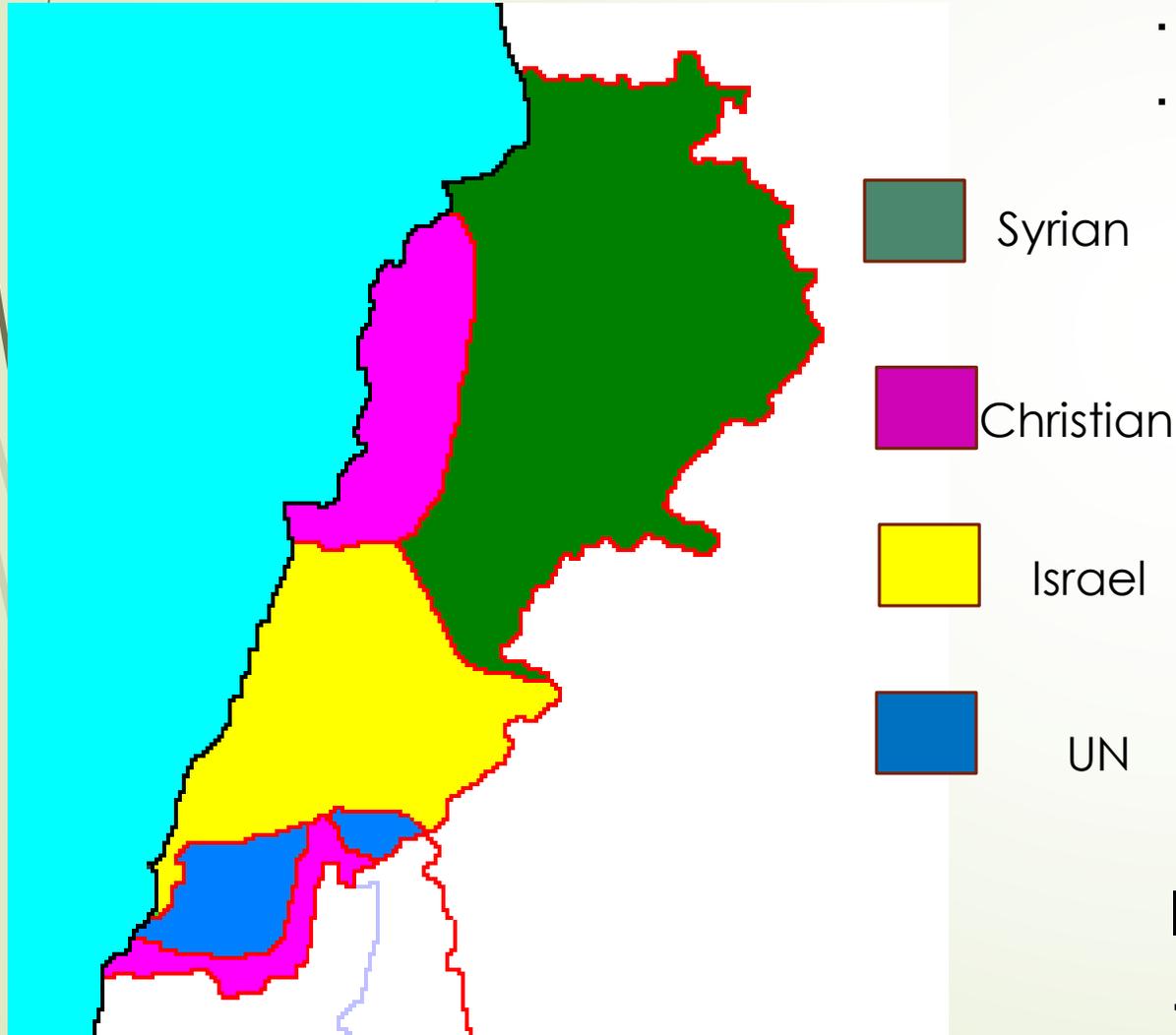
3 day battle,
... 19 US, 100 Cubans/Grenada dead
, Students/ Governor “rescued”

Successful outcome
....invasion celebrated
....civilian government
...appetite for more interventions
In Central America increased

Success offset disastrous intervention
Middle East.

Lebanon 1982-1983

The Divided land 1983



Lebanon

...Ottoman Empire 1516-1919

...French Mandate 1919-1946

...divided by Religion 55% Muslim, 40% Christian
5% Druze

Palestinian exodus 1948/1965..350,000

Civil wars....Syrian invasion countered by
Israeli counter invasion to prevent Christian
elimination

UN negotiate cease fire....Multi National Force
US/France/Italy/ UK 1983

Iran send militants to kill/ kidnap US troops
...convert "ceasefire" into war

Barracks bombing October 1983

Barracks after bombing



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Credit: Peter Jordan/Popperfoto

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Reagan sends US marines
To join "Multi National Force"
...peace keepers

Iranian attacks on US

Attack 1 May 1983
...20 marines killed

Attack 2 July 1983
Suicide bomber
248 US/ 50 French killed

MNF restricted to base

Reagan: the learning President



Meets returning caskets marines
Killed, meets each family

Withdraws US marines April 1984

“Perhaps we didn’t appreciate fully the depth of the hatred and the complexity of the Middle East. If I had to do it over again, I would not have had our troops there once the mission changed from peacekeeping to fighting a war we couldn’t win.”

Adopt less confrontational
approach...avoid direct conflict,
,Iran the real enemy
...US support for Israel increased

.....Reagan: a change of view

▶ Reviews Able Archer outcome November...after watching “Day After”

.....“It’s very effective and left me greatly depressed

▶ Reagan *“by golly, would they really think we would do that.... “they truly fear us not just as adversaries but as a threat to their very existence.”*

▶ *“If seems the Soviets are so defence minded about being attacked that without being in any way soft on them we ought to tell them no one here has any intention of doing anything like that*

Reagan's Ivan and Anya Speech January 1984

Just suppose with me for a moment that an Ivan and an Anya could find themselves, oh, say, in a waiting room or sharing a shelter from the rain or a storm with a Jim and Sally. And there was no language barrier to keep them from getting acquainted. Would they then debate the differences between their respective Governments?

Or would they find themselves comparing notes about their children and what each other did for a living? Before they parted company, they would probably have touched on ambitions and hobbies and what they wanted for the children and problems of making ends meet. And as they went their separate ways, maybe Anya would be saying to Ivan: "Wasn't she nice. She also teaches music." And Jim would be telling Sally what Ivan did or didn't like about his boss. They might even have decided they were all going to get together for dinner some evening soon.

....someone in USSR was listening...Michael Gorbachev



Intermission



Reagan and Gorbachev 1984-1988

US and USSR Reagan's Second Term

Reagan re-elected 1984

- Retains control of Senate, Democrats retain House
- Democrats pass "Boland Amendment"
- Boland Amendment: restricts President power. No arms sales anti communists
- Reagan strategy: confront USSR indirectly
 - Avoid direct use of US troops...anywhere
 - Continue Defence build up....regardless of deficit
 - Maximise support to anti Soviet forces in Afghanistan (Congress approved)

Focus...USSR...develop strategy to reverse Communist gains in Nicaragua

Afghanistan & Mujahedeen (Afghanistan)

Reagan and Mujahedeen March 1985



Arms programme started by Carter

Congressional approval
...co funded Saudi Arabia

Reagan invites Mujahedeen To White House....prefers more Zealous Islamists

The problem...effectiveness of USSR aircraft & helicopters

Solution : Stinger Missiles 1985s

.....3 Russian Migs shot down one day



Mounting Russian losses 1985 +
....air war impossible, 15,000 deathsRussian Vietnam



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... Meanwhile USSR starting to decompose

Soviet propaganda students and workers united



The official view: everything bright and sunny in the worker's paradise



USSR mid 1980's...GUM Department Store Moscow



Not exactly Waitrose. Moscow Supermarket 1985



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Credit: ANDRE DURAND

People queuing for bread



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Credit: Bernard Bisson

Waiting for food shop to open 1983



Poverty outside major cities, outside toilets



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Credit: David Turnley

Soviet cartoons....Poor quality goods

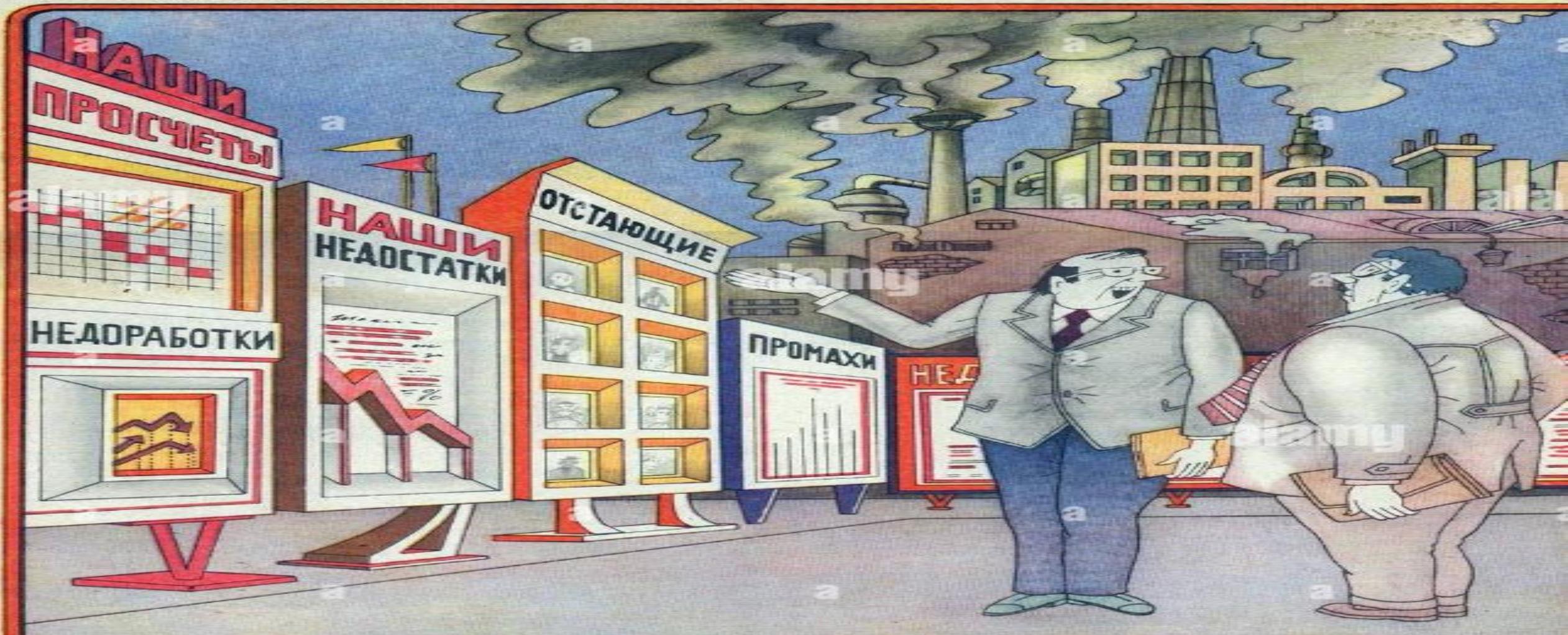


Gap promise and reality



КРОКОДИЛ

№ 9 • м а р т • 1987



USSR Stagnation 1980's

Causes

- Planned economy model not adaptable to new industry
- Aging secret police political leadership
- Public awareness of Western wealth
- 15% economy military related (vs 5% USA) draining capital

Evidence

- GDP and income growth 1% or less (vs 4-5% 1979.s)
- Collapsing oil industry ...oil glut 1983 +
- Collapsed export agricultural market....reliant on US and Canada import
- Technological backwardness....US weapons middle east war

New leadership to save “Communism”

Michael Gorbachev (1931-2022)



Peasant family, brilliant student
Committed Communist
Law School...first no KGB

Khrushchev protégée....reforming
And adaptation objective
Trusted and elected General
Secretary by Politburo 1985

Committed to reform and peace
...restructure USSR based on
..."Glasnost". Openness
...Perestroika...economic reform

Wants Military expense reduction
...meets Thatcher Vienna
..."a man with whom we can do
Business"...informs Reagan

Reykjavik Summit 1986...Civil Negotiations



Reykjavik Summit 1986



Gorbachev
...eliminate Intermediate
missiles
...50% strategic reduction

Reagan. Yes but continue
Research SDI

Talks end no agreement

Breakthrough...trust
& likeability

International Intermediate Missile Treaty 1987



Follow up from Reykjavik

Agreed elimination of
Medium range missiles
Inspection regime

Discussion on reducing
Eliminating Strategic
Missiles begin
..... In earnest

Russian inspection cruise missiles UK



US inspectors in USSR 1987



Reagan visit to Berlin 1987 ...750 year anniversary



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Credit: jean-Louis Atlan

Reagan "Mr Gorbachev tear down this wall"



War vs Communism 1988

- ▶ Direct confrontation has ended
- ▶ Disarmament talks progressing at a pace
- ▶ USSR itself falling apartreforms failing. Pressure on Gorbachev
.....Talk 46

Meanwhile.....Proxy Wars continue and “Iran Contra Affair” erupts



Iran-Contra Affair



Central America late 1980's

- US dominated area: dictatorships
- US invasions
 - Cuba Puerto Rico invaded 1898
 - Panama “created” 1903
 - ..Nicaragua occupied 1912-33
 - Honduras interventions 1907-1924
 - .Guatemala CIA coup 1954.
- Civil Wars rampant: Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua

Central America and Nicaragua 1980's



Sandinistas seize power 1979
1979...with help President Carter
Somoza regime followers to Honduras
Sandinistas pro Cuba/ USSR
....form "Contras"

US agriculture mining interest
Reagan Administration "No more
Cubas"

US Congress
....bans arm sales to Contras
...no more Vietnams

Sandinistas : The “Cuban look”



Sandinista army en route to fight



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Credit: Cindy Karp

Contras in training Florida



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Credit: ullstein bild

Contra force build up...threaten Sandinistas

Contras in transit from Cost Rica to Nicaragua



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Credit: William Gentile

USA and Iran 1981



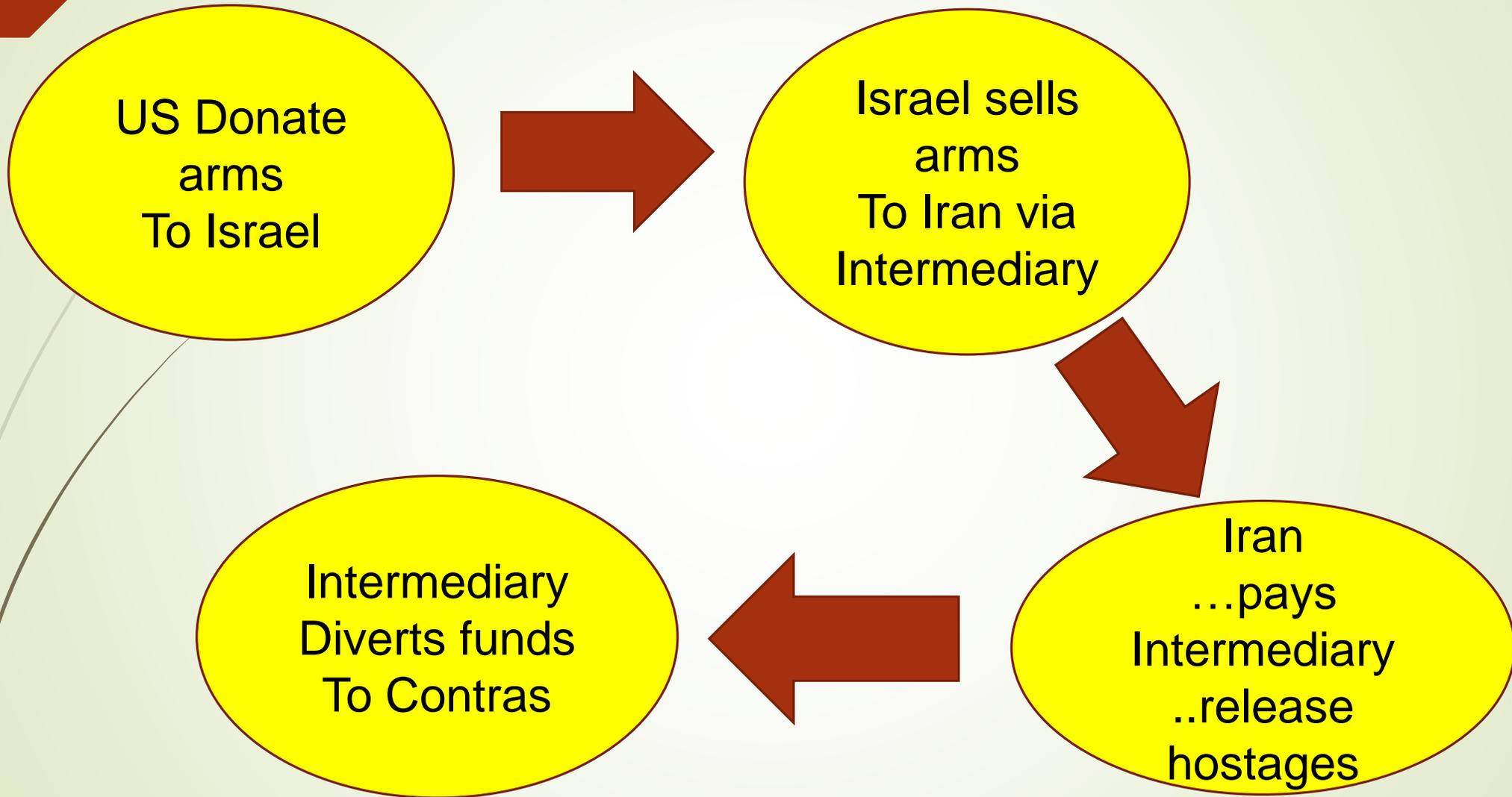
Iran

- Committed to destruction of Israel with US “Great Satan”
- War with Iraq
- Military equipment US made....need spare parts
- Seize US citizens, hold as hostages and blackmail US into selling arms

USA

- Seeking revenge for embassy hostages, Lebanon barracks bombing
- Support Iraq vs war with Iran...and Saddam Hussein (Iraq)
- Minimise USSR influence in Iran and Central America...Nicaragua
- Imposes international ban on arms sales to Iran

The Deal 1985-1989



Problem: No effective “moderates in Iran

Iran Contra outcomes

Nicaragua

- Sandinistas hold free electionsand lose to “Contras”
- Sandinistas Return to power 2006....return to Dictatorship ...becomes “Ortega family business”

➤ Iran

- War continues till 1988...1 million dead ...stalemate
- Emboldened to expand ultra Islamic groups Lebanon, Syria. Elsewhere
- Iraq indebted to Kuwait, expected rewards, seeks debt elimination & control of oil

➤ USA

- Hostages released...one by one
- Lebanese newspaper exposes “deal” 1986

Reagan administration broke US law, International Arms Ban, lied to public
.....Investigations launched...Congress “out for blood”

Demonstration USA



Iran Contra Hearings 1987

Colonel Oliver North



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Credit: CHRIS WILKINS

Senate and House Democrat controlled
...establish "Tower Commission"
...Hearings of Reagan Administration &
army

Military acting independently and contrary to
Law....unclear Reagan directed

Findings: "The common ingredients of the
Iran and Contra policies were secrecy,
deception, and disdain for the law."

The key question "What did the President
Know and when did he know it."

Reagan denial of involvement ...no proof, VP
Bush aware and approve, but not implicated

The architect
George Bush
VP, formed head CIA



Iran Contra Legacy

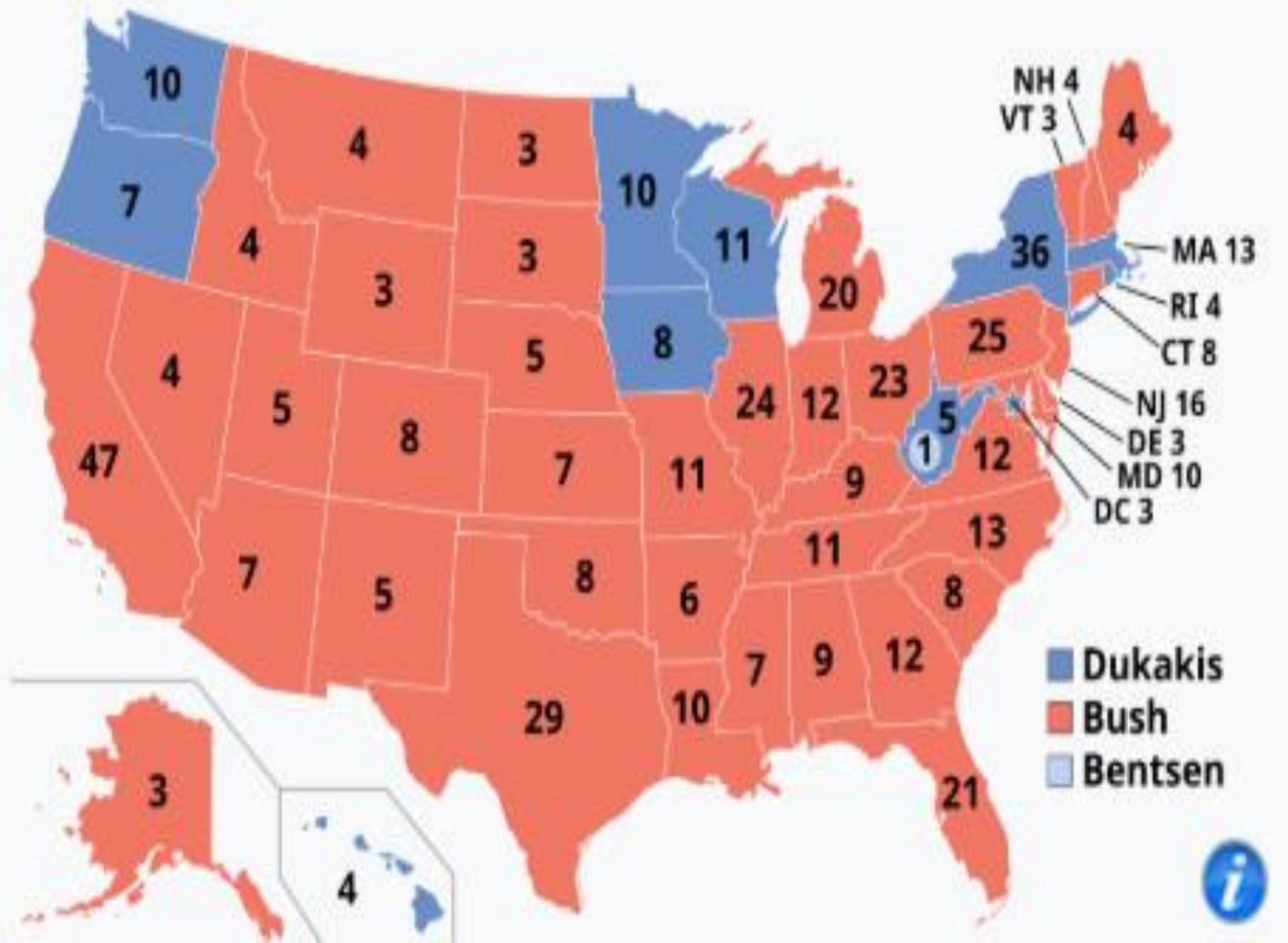
- Presidential abuse of power...Administration ignored Boland Amendment
- Collusion military- CIA- President vs Congress
- Reagan image damaged...among independents only
 - Disingenuous responses
 - Loss of control over subordinates...over delegation
 - 77 years old in 1988....nap times, remote, some memory loss,

Reagan diagnosed Alzheimer 1994
...no evidence of symptoms while President

Reagan Epilogue

- Reagan left office with 60% popularity rating (Vs 35% Trump 2024, 30% Carter)
- Economy recovered from 1981 recession
 - Rising debt...deficit NOT reduced
 - Interest rates down, unemployment down
 - Impact of S&L crisis not felt
- Cold War ending
 - Intermediate missile reductions
 - Talks underway to reduce all missiles
 - USSR falling apart

1988 Election: Republican Landslide



Reagan VP Bush
,...Republican coronation

Democrat Mike Dukakis.
....Great Society Liberal
...Spanish speaker

Landslide Republican v
53% vs 46% vote

Reagan Revolution
In place



Reagan after Presidency

- Retires to ranch in California with Nancy at age 77
- Withdraws from politics
- Supports gun reform
- Diagnosed with Alzheimer disease 1994....gradual decline

Reagan and Gorbachev 1992



5 Presidents 1991

George Bush, Reagan, Carter, Ford, Nixon



Reagan (aged 93) and Nancy 2004



The final goodbye



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Credit: Matthew Cavanaugh

Ronald and Nancy 1980 California
...how he would like to be remembered



Reagan verdict?

➤ Achievements

- Restored US confidence
- Delivered policies that reduced inflation and increased economic growth
- Accelerated ending of Cold War
- Retained “pragmatic conservatism” and civility in politics

➤ Impact. Good or bad

- Increased deficit and US debt
- Ended “Great Society” programmes , mental health, homeless
- Ineffectual response to drugs and crime and Aids epidemic
- Disabled constraints on finance, discourse, campaign financing

Changed trajectory of USA from collective regulated society to individual and market

Reagan the man



➤ Positives

- Great disciplined communicator
- Focused on big ideas
- Lead and listen and compromise
- Disciplined in personal and public life

➤ Negatives

- Callous indifference to consequences
- Simple solutions only
- Absence of empathy
- Locked into world view ...focus on short term, victory, not outcome

Lucky.....personal life right place right time sports caster> Hollywood> GE> Nancy
.....decision of Carter on interest rates, weakness of USSR, Petrov on duty



By end of Reagan Presidency
.....USA had become “Master of the World”
.....economically and militarily

Talk 46: the Use of that Power