

President Ronald Reagan's farewell address to the nation

(Extracts taken from the President's speech made on 11th January 1989)

My fellow Americans,

This is the thirty-fourth time I'll speak to you from the Oval Office and the last. We've been together for eight years now, and soon it'll be time for me to go. But before I do, I wanted to share some thoughts, some of which I've been saying for a long time. It's been quite a journey this decade, and we held together through some stormy seas. And at the end, together, we are reaching our destination.

The fact is, from Grenada to the Washington and Moscow summits, from the recession of '81 to '82, to the expansion that began in late '82 and continues to this day, we've made a difference. The way I see it, there were two great triumphs, two things that I'm proudest of. One is the economic recovery, in which the people of America created – and filled – 19 million new jobs. The other is the recovery of our morale. America is respected again in the world and looked to for leadership.



Well, back in 1980, when I was running for president, it was all so different. Some pundits said our programs would result in catastrophe. Our views on foreign affairs would cause war. Our plans for the economy would cause inflation to soar and bring about economic collapse. I even remember one highly respected economist saying, back in 1982, that 'the engines of economic growth have shut down here, and they're likely to stay that way for years to come.' Well, he and the other opinion leaders were wrong. The fact is, what they called 'radical' was really 'right'. What they called 'dangerous' was just 'desperately needed'.

When you've got to the point when you can celebrate the anniversaries of your thirty-ninth birthday, you can sit back sometimes, review your life, and see it flowing before you. For me there was a fork in the river, and it was right in the middle of my life. I never meant to go into politics. I was happy with my career in the entertainment world, but I ultimately went into politics because I wanted to protect something precious.

Ours was the first revolution in the history of mankind that truly reversed the course of government, and with three little words: 'We the people'. 'We the people' tell the government what to do, it doesn't tell us. 'We the people' are the driver, the government is the car. And we decide where it should go, and by what route, and how fast. ...Our Constitution is a document in which 'We the people' are free. This belief has been the underlying basis for everything I've tried to do these past eight years.

Pronunciation guide

Grenada /grə'neɪdə/
morale /mə'reɪl/

soar /sɔː/

Comprehension

1 Read the first text on page 28 again and choose the best title for each paragraph.

Paragraph 1

- A Time to go
- B Together for eight years
- C Thoughts from the Oval Office
- D The thirty-fourth time

Paragraph 2

- A Respected America
- B Two triumphs
- C Every summit
- D Recession

Paragraph 3

- A Presidential campaign
- B Pundits
- C Looking back
- D Radical and dangerous

Paragraph 4

- A Birthday
- B Mid-life crisis
- C A precious thing
- D Becoming a politician

Paragraph 5

- A Reagan's motivation
- B We the people
- C People and government
- D The American Revolution

The Reagan–Gorbachev summits

In the 1980s I reported on a series of meetings between Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev for my newspaper. Their aim was to ensure the security of the world by eliminating the possibility of nuclear war between the two superpowers. What started as an attempt at reducing the number of weapons on both sides, finished with the possibility of an end to nearly half a century of confrontation.

For the first of these meetings we travelled to Geneva in Switzerland. Both General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan realized how important it was to first establish good relations between themselves. The two men talked for an hour and a half, and although there were no treaties negotiated and no agreements reached about weapons, advisors on both sides were clearly amazed by the news that two further summits had been arranged. What I remember most is Gorbachev's honesty – trying to break with the past. Reagan also made an impression on the Soviet team because of his clever tactics in negotiating for peace, while still being able to create new weapons. He called it 'negotiation from strength'.

The second meeting was scheduled in Reykjavik, Iceland and here real progress was made. We saw an agreement on the reduction of nuclear weapons: both sides agreed to reduce and limit the number of warheads and missiles they held. The two presidents talked about limiting the

locations of their missile bases – the USA would only keep missiles in the USA and the USSR's bases would be confined to Asia. It seemed to us in the press that finally there was an atmosphere of trust between the two countries. The only disappointment of the meeting was that Reagan refused to give up the SDI (Star Wars) anti-missile system and this hindered further progress.

When the leaders and press gathered once more in Washington for the third meeting, Reagan and Gorbachev quickly picked up where they had left off. They signed a treaty which exceeded all expectations in reducing the number of nuclear weapons they held. I remember not really believing it at the time, but a few years later I was able to report on the destruction of these weapons. I think what made it possible was that the two men had come to understand each other – and perhaps even like each other.

The fourth and final meeting took place in Moscow. It was difficult to imagine at the time how the success of the Washington meeting could be matched. In fact, looking back, I realize that the purpose of this last meeting was less about arms-reduction than about building on relationships and preparing the ground for the end of the Cold War. It was a truly historic achievement on both sides, and to this day, no one can state that either country 'won' the Cold War.

Pronunciation guide

Geneva /dʒə'ni:və/
Switzerland /swɪtsə'lənd/

Iceland /'aɪslənd/
Reykjavik /'rekjəvɪk/

SDI /es di: 'aɪ/

2 Read the second text on page 29 again and choose the best ending for each sentence.

- 1 The two presidents first met ...
 - A to get to know each other.
 - B to end the Cold War.
 - C in order to remove the chance of nuclear war.
 - D to report on a series of meetings.
- 2 Geneva was a success because ...
 - A they agreed on everything.
 - B it was in a neutral country.
 - C no treaties were signed.
 - D the two men learned to listen to each other's views.
- 3 After the meeting in Iceland, ...
 - A there was an atmosphere of trust.
 - B there were no limits to their agreements.
 - C they began reducing the number of nuclear weapons.
 - D SDI was abandoned.
- 4 At the Washington meeting ...
 - A it was clear there was understanding between the two men.
 - B missiles were destroyed.
 - C they apologized for any previous failures.
 - D expectations were reduced.
- 5 The meeting in Moscow ...
 - A was about reducing weapons.
 - B was about the world in the future.
 - C discussed arms reduction.
 - D was difficult to imagine.

Vocabulary

Complete the summaries using these words from both texts.

decade destination eliminating established good relations
exceeded expansion limit recession recovery reducing

President Ronald Reagan's farewell address to the nation

In his farewell speech President Reagan said that in eight years the country had come from 1 in 1981 to 2 which had begun in late 1982. It had made economic and moral 3 The country had travelled a long journey that 4 and was reaching its 5

The Reagan-Gorbachev summits

At the four meetings they talked about 6 the possibility of nuclear war. The first thing was to agree on 7 the number of weapons they had. When they had 8 with each other, they were able to agree to 9 the number of weapons. What they actually agreed on 10 their expectations at the start of the talks. The talks prepared the world for a peaceful future.

Unit 7 American history

Text 1 President Ronald Reagan's farewell address to the nation

1. В своей прощальной речи 11 января 1989 года президент США Рональд Рейган, обращаясь к своим соотечественникам, сравнил минувшее десятилетие с нелёгким путешествием по бушующему морю, в конце которого страна достигла заданного места назначения.
2. Страна сделала шаг вперёд, пройдя через периоды экономического спада, преодолев конфликт в Гренаде и успешно завершив переговоры на высшем уровне по вопросам разоружения в Вашингтоне и Москве.
3. Президент отметил, что он больше всего гордится двумя достигнутыми победами. Первая из них — оздоровление экономики и создание 19-ти миллионов рабочих мест. Другая победа — это возрождение духа американской нации. Америка вернула себе уважение других стран и вновь стала играть ведущую роль в мире.
4. Когда Р. Рейган избирался в президенты, некоторые эксперты считали, что его программа приведет к катастрофе внутри страны, а его взгляды на внешнюю политику могут привести к войне.
5. Все эти опасения не оправдались: то, что называли радикальным, оказалось правильным, а то, что называли опасным, оказалось крайне необходимым.

Text 2 The Reagan-Gorbachev summits

1. В 1980-е годы были проведены четыре встречи между президентом Рейганом и М.С. Горбачёвым, целью которых было обеспечение безопасности в мире и исключение возможности начала ядерной войны.
2. Встречи начались с обсуждения проблемы сокращения ядерных вооружений и завершились окончанием почти полувекового противостояния — «холодной войны».
3. Успех первой встречи, состоявшейся в Женеве, заключался в том, что оба лидера смогли понять точки зрения друг друга, без чего вообще невозможны никакие переговоры.
4. Следующая встреча состоялась в Рейкьявике, где впервые было достигнуто соглашение о сокращении ядерных вооружений; однако президент Рейган не согласился на отказ от проекта «Звёздные войны», что затруднило дальнейший прогресс в переговорах.
5. На встрече в Вашингтоне президенты Рейган и Горбачёв подписали договор о значительном сокращении ядерных вооружений.
6. Последующие годы показали, что стороны выполнили взятые на себя обязательства.
7. Во время четвёртой встречи на высшем уровне оба лидера сконцентрировали своё внимание на укреплении доверия, достигнутого на предыдущих встречах.