

# Foreign Policy After the Cold War

## MAIN IDEA

The end of the Cold War, marked by the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, led to a redirection of many U.S. goals and policies.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

After the Cold War, the United States provided and continues to provide substantial economic support to the new capitalistic and democratic nations.

## Terms & Names

- Mikhail Gorbachev
- *glasnost*
- *perestroika*
- INF Treaty
- Tiananmen Square
- Sandinistas
- Contras
- Operation Desert Storm

## CALIFORNIA STANDARDS

**11.9.3** Trace the origins and geopolitical consequences (foreign and domestic) of the Cold War and containment policy, including the following:

- The era of McCarthyism, instances of domestic Communism (e.g., Alger Hiss) and blacklisting
- The Truman Doctrine
- The Berlin Blockade
- The Korean War
- The Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis
- Atomic testing in the American West, the “mutual assured destruction” doctrine, and disarmament policies
- The Vietnam War
- Latin American policy

**11.9.5** Analyze the role of the Reagan administration and other factors in the victory of the West in the Cold War.

**11.9.6** Describe U.S. Middle East policy and its strategic, political, and economic interests, including those related to the Gulf War.

**REP 3** Students evaluate major debates among historians concerning alternative interpretations of the past, including an analysis of authors’ use of evidence and the distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications.

**HI 1** Students show the connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.

## One American's Story

Colin Powell did not start out in life with any special privileges. He was born in Harlem and raised in the Bronx, where he enjoyed street games and tolerated school. Then, while attending the City College of New York, he joined the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). He got straight A’s in ROTC, and so he decided to make the army his career.

Powell served first in Vietnam and then in Korea and West Germany. He rose in rank to become a general; then President Reagan made him national security adviser. In this post, Powell noted that the Soviet Union was a factor in all the administration’s foreign policy decisions.



▲  
General  
Colin Powell

### A PERSONAL VOICE COLIN POWELL

“Our choosing sides in conflicts around the world was almost always decided on the basis of East-West competition. The new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, however, was turning the old Cold War formulas on their head. . . . Ronald Reagan . . . had the vision and flexibility, lacking in many knee-jerk Cold Warriors [participants in the Cold War between the U.S. and the USSR], to recognize that Gorbachev was a new man in a new age offering new opportunities for peace.”

—My American Journey

Though U.S. foreign policy in the early 1980s was marked by intense hostility toward the Soviet Union, drastic economic problems in the Soviet Union destroyed its ability to continue the Cold War standoff.

## The Cold War Ends

In March of 1985, **Mikhail Gorbachev** became the general secretary of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. His rise to power marked the beginning of a new era in the Soviet Union.

**GORBACHEV INITIATES REFORM** Gorbachev had inherited a host of problems in the Soviet Union. Many of them revolved around the Soviet economy, which was under a great amount of stress. Reagan added pressure by increasing U.S. defense spending. When the Soviets attempted to keep up, their economy was pushed to the brink of collapse.

A skilled diplomat and political leader, Gorbachev advocated a policy known as *glasnost* (Russian for “openness”). He allowed open criticism of the Soviet government and took steps toward freedom of the press. In 1985, he outlined his plans for *perestroika*, a restructuring of Soviet society. He called for less government control of the economy, the introduction of some private enterprise, and steps toward establishing a democratic government.

Gorbachev recognized that better relations with the United States would allow the Soviets to reduce their military spending and reform their economy. As a result, he initiated a series of arms-control meetings that led to the **INF Treaty (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty)** signed on December 8, 1987. The treaty eliminated two classes of weapons systems in Europe and allowed each nation to make on-site inspections of the other’s military installations. **A**

**THE SOVIET UNION DECLINES** Gorbachev’s introduction of democratic ideals led to a dramatic increase in nationalism on the part of the Soviet Union’s non-Russian republics. In December 1991, 14 non-Russian republics declared their independence from the Soviet Union. Muscled aside by Russian reformers who thought he was working too slowly toward democracy, Gorbachev resigned as Soviet president. After 74 years, the Soviet Union dissolved.

A loose federation known as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) took the place of the Soviet Union. In February 1992, President George Bush and Russian president Boris Yeltsin issued a formal statement declaring an end to the Cold War that had plagued the two nations and divided the world since 1945. In January 1993, Yeltsin and Bush signed the START II pact, designed to cut both nations’ nuclear arsenals by two-thirds.

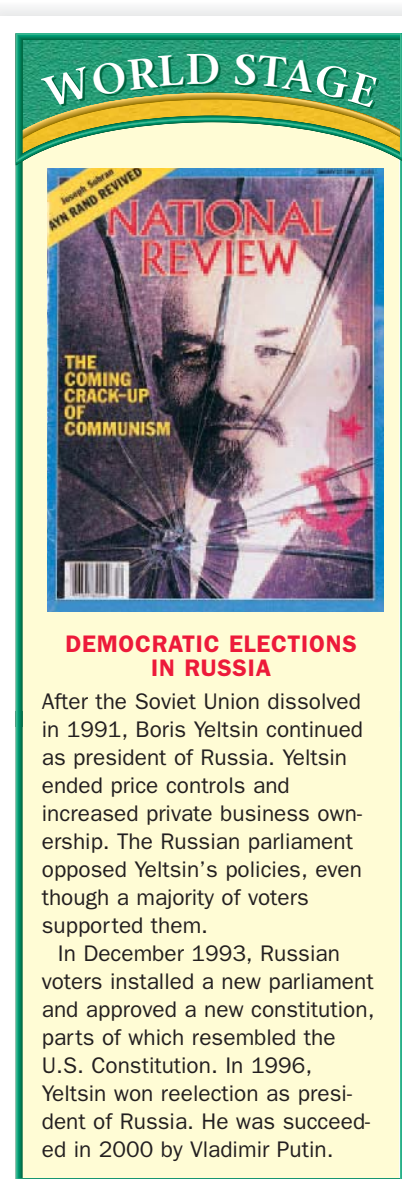
**THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNIST REGIMES** Before his resignation, Gorbachev had encouraged the people of East Germany and Eastern Europe to go their own ways. In 1988, when the Soviet Union was still intact, he reduced the number of Soviet troops in Eastern Europe and allowed non-Communist parties to organize in satellite nations, such as East Germany and Poland. He encouraged the satellite nations to move toward democracy.

During a speech given at the Berlin Wall in 1987, President Reagan challenged Gorbachev to back up his reforms with decisive action.

**A PERSONAL VOICE** RONALD REAGAN

“General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!”

—speech, June 12, 1987



**MAIN IDEA**

**Evaluating Leadership**

**A** Which evidence in the text supports the viewpoint that Gorbachev was a skilled politician and diplomat?



▲ A demonstrator pounds away on the Berlin Wall as East German border guards look on from above at the Brandenburg Gate, on November 11, 1989.

In October 1989, East Germans startled the world by repudiating their Communist government. On November 9, 1989, East Germany opened the Berlin Wall, allowing free passage between the two parts of the city for the first time in 28 years. East German border guards stood by and watched as Berliners pounded away with hammers and other tools at the despised wall. In early 1990, East Germany held its first free elections, and on October 3 of that year, the two German nations were united. **B**

Other European nations also adopted democratic reforms. Czechoslovakia withdrew from the Soviet bloc. The Baltic states of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania declared their independence from the Soviet Union. Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania made successful transitions from communism.

Yugoslavia, however, collapsed. Four of its six republics seceded. Ethnic rivalries deteriorated into a brutal war among Muslims, Orthodox Serbs, and Roman Catholic Croats, who were dividing Yugoslavia, each claiming parts of it. Serbia backed Serb minorities that were stirring up civil unrest in Croatia and Bosnia.

**COMMUNISM CONTINUES IN CHINA** Even before perestroika unfolded in the Soviet Union, economic reform had begun in China. Early in the 1980s, the Chinese Communist government loosened its grip on business and eliminated some price controls. Students in China began to demand freedom of speech and a greater voice in government.

In April 1989, university students in China held marches that quickly grew into large demonstrations in Beijing's **Tiananmen** (tyān'ān'mě'n') **Square** and on the streets of other cities. In Tiananmen Square, Chinese students constructed a version of the Statue of Liberty to symbolize their struggle for democracy.

China's premier, Li Peng, eventually ordered the military to crush the protesters. China's armed forces stormed into Tiananmen Square, slaughtering unarmed students. The world's democratic countries watched these events in horror on television. The collapse of the pro-democracy movement left the future in China uncertain. As one student leader said, "The government has won the battle here today. But they have lost the people's hearts."



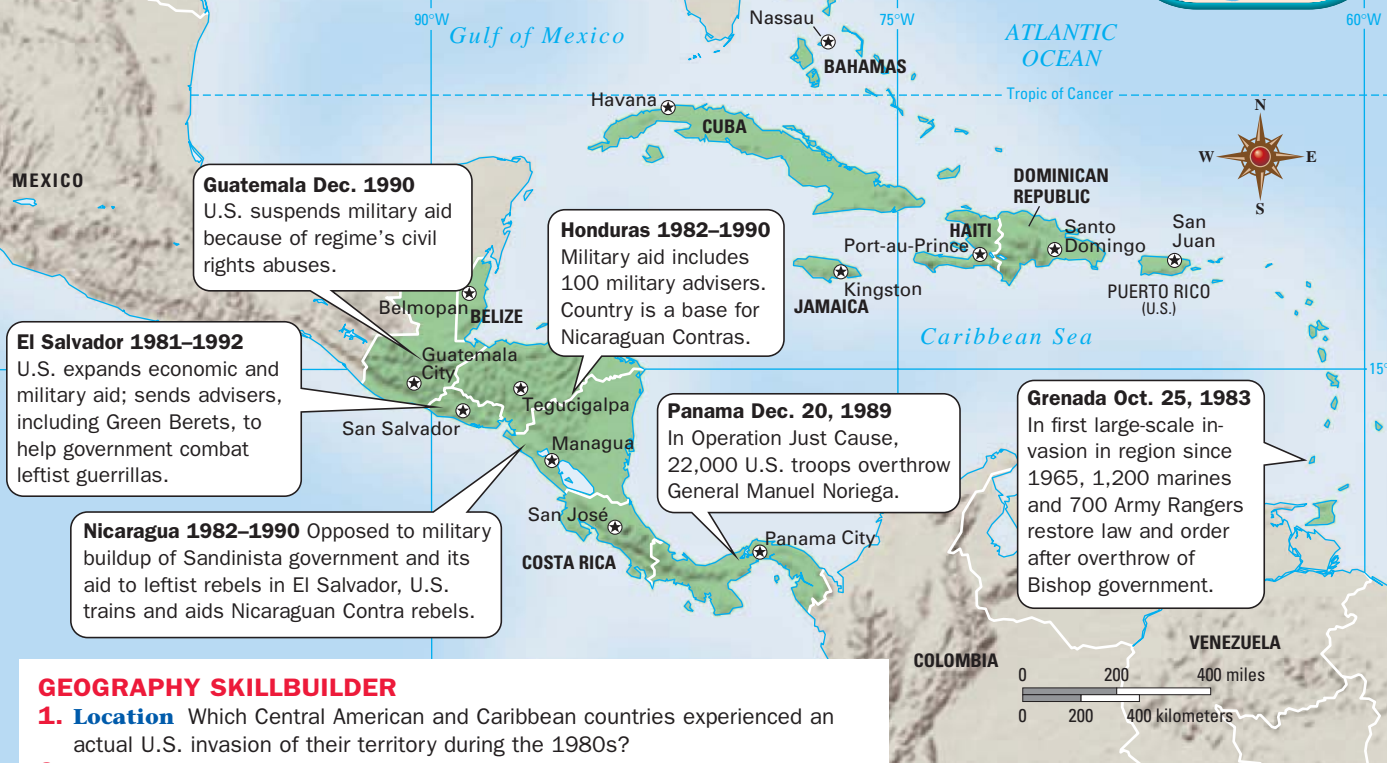
▶ A Chinese protester defies the tanks in Tiananmen Square in 1989. ▶

#### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Events

**B** What signs signaled that the Cold War had come to an end?

## Central America and the Caribbean, 1981–1992



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER

- Location** Which Central American and Caribbean countries experienced an actual U.S. invasion of their territory during the 1980s?
- Region** Besides direct attack, what other techniques did the United States employ to influence countries in the Caribbean and Central American regions?

## Central American and Caribbean Policy

Cold War considerations during the Reagan and Bush administrations continued to influence affairs in Central America and the Caribbean. In these places, the United States still opposed left-leaning and socialist governments in favor of governments friendly to the United States.

**NICARAGUA** The United States had had a presence in Nicaragua ever since 1912, when President Taft sent U.S. Marines to protect American investments there. The marines left in 1933, but only after helping the dictator Anastasio Somoza come to power.

The Somoza family ruled Nicaragua for 42 years. To keep control of its business empire, the family rigged elections and assassinated political rivals. Many people believed that only a revolution would end the Somoza dictatorship.


Between 1977 and 1979, Nicaragua was engulfed in a civil war between Somoza's national guard and the **Sandinistas**, rebels who took their name from a rebel leader named Sandino who had been killed in 1934. When Sandinista rebels toppled the dictatorship of Somoza's son in 1979, President Carter recognized the new regime and sent it \$83 million in economic aid. The Soviet Union and Cuba sent aid as well.

In 1981, however, President Reagan charged that Nicaragua was a Soviet outpost that was "exporting revolution" to other Central American countries. Reagan cut all aid to the Sandinista government and threw his support to guerrilla forces known as the **Contras** because they were "against" the Sandinistas. By 1983, the Contra army had grown to nearly 10,000 men, and American officials from the CIA had stationed themselves to direct operations—without congressional approval. In response, Congress passed the Boland Amendment, banning military

aid to the Contras for two years. However, Reagan's administration still found ways to negotiate aid to the Contras.


On February 25, 1990, Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega held free elections, and Violeta de Chamorro, a Contra supporter, was elected the nation's new president. Chamorro's coalition was united only in opposition to the Sandinistas; it was too weak and divided to solve Nicaragua's ongoing problems.

**GRENADA** On the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada, the United States used direct military force to accomplish its aims. After noting that the island was developing ties to Communist Cuba, President Reagan sent approximately 2,000 troops to the island in 1983. There they overthrew the pro-Cuban government, which was replaced by one friendlier to the United States. Eighteen American soldiers died in the attack, but Reagan declared that the invasion had been necessary to defend U.S. security.

**PANAMA** Six years later, in 1989, President Bush sent more than 20,000 soldiers and marines into Panama to overthrow and arrest General Manuel Antonio Noriega on charges of drug trafficking. Noriega had been receiving money since 1960 from the CIA, but he was also involved in the international drug trade. After he was indicted by a Miami grand jury, Noriega was taken by force by the American military and flown to Miami to stand trial. In April 1992, Noriega was convicted and sentenced to 40 years in prison. Many Latin American governments deplored the "Yankee imperialism" of the action. However, many Americans—and Panamanians—were pleased by the removal of a military dictator who supported drug smuggling. 

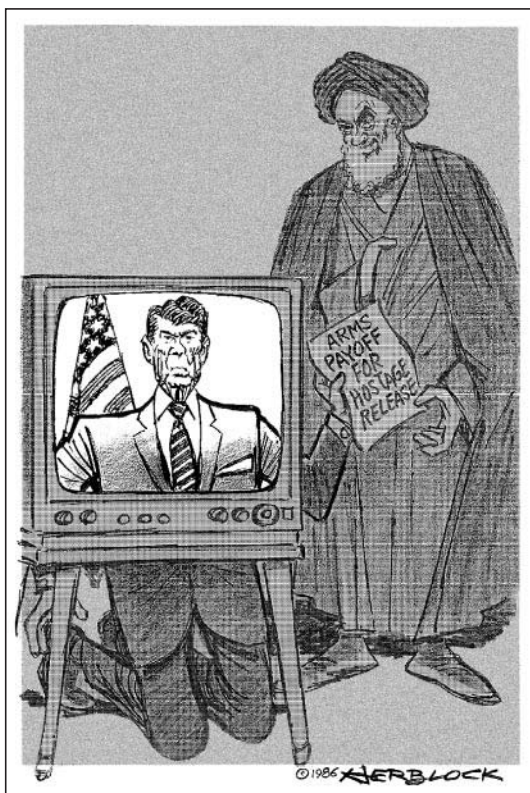
**MAIN IDEA**

**Comparing**

 Between 1980 and 1992, how did U.S. policies regarding Central America differ from those regarding Europe?


## Middle East Trouble Spots

Results favorable to U.S. interests were more difficult to obtain in the Middle East. Negotiating conflicts between ever-shifting governments drew the United States into scandal and its first major war since Vietnam.



### THE IRAN-CONTRA SCANDAL

In 1983, terrorist groups loyal to Iran took a number of Americans hostage in Lebanon. Reagan denounced Iran and urged U.S. allies not to sell arms to Iran for its war against Iraq. In 1985, he declared that "America will never make concessions to terrorists." Therefore, Americans were shocked to learn in 1986 that President Reagan had approved the sale of arms to Iran. In exchange for those sales, Iran promised to win the release of seven American hostages held in Lebanon by pro-Iranian terrorists. What's more, members of Reagan's staff sent part of the

 President Reagan's message to television audiences about selling arms to Iran differed greatly from what was going on behind the scenes.

profits from those illegal arms sales to the Contras in Nicaragua—in direct violation of the Boland Amendment. President Reagan held a press conference to explain what had happened.

### A PERSONAL VOICE RONALD REAGAN

**“I am deeply troubled that the implementation of a policy aimed at resolving a truly tragic situation in the Middle East has resulted in such controversy. As I’ve stated previously, I believe our policy goals toward Iran were well founded.”**

—presidential press conference, November 25, 1986

In the summer of 1987, special committees of both houses of Congress conducted a dramatic inquiry into the Iran-Contra affair during a month of joint televised hearings. Among those testifying was Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, a member of the National Security Council staff who played a key role in providing aid to the Contras. North appeared in military uniform adorned with medals. In defending his actions, North talked about patriotism and love of country. He asserted that he thought he was carrying out the president’s wishes and that the end of helping the Contras justified almost any means.

After a congressional investigation, Special Prosecutor Lawrence E. Walsh, early in 1988, indicted various members of the Reagan administration who were involved in the scandal. Oliver North was found guilty of taking part in the cover-up. He was sentenced to pay a stiff fine and perform community service. On Christmas Eve of 1992, President Bush pardoned a number of Reagan officials.

**THE PERSIAN GULF WAR** Regardless of the scandal surrounding the Iran-Contra affair, conflict with Iraq (Iran’s long-standing enemy) and its leader, Saddam Hussein, soon eclipsed U.S. problems with Iran. During the 1980s, Iran and Iraq had fought a prolonged war, and Hussein found himself with enormous war debts to pay. Several times, Hussein had claimed that the oil-rich nation of Kuwait was part of Iraq. On August 2, 1990, Iraqi troops invaded a disputed area claimed by Kuwait. The Iraqi invaders looted Kuwait, then headed toward Saudi Arabia and

## POINT

**“The United States must occasionally intervene militarily in regional conflicts.”**

Proponents of U.S. military intervention abroad agreed with General Norman Schwarzkopf that “as the only remaining superpower, we have an awesome responsibility . . . to the rest of the world.”

“The United States must take the lead in promoting democracy,” urged Morton H. Halperin, former director of the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union). “To say ‘Let the UN do it’ is a cop-out,” stated adviser Robert G. Neumann.

Political scientist Jane Sharp expressed a similar sentiment. She asked, “Can any nation that has taken no action [in Bosnia] to stop the Serbian practice of ethnic cleansing continue to call itself civilized?”

## COUNTERPOINT

**“The United States should not intervene militarily in regional conflicts.”**

A foreign-policy analyst at the Cato Institute, Barbara Conry, stated that “intervention in regional wars is a distraction and a drain on resources.” What’s more, she argued, “it does not work.” Recalling the presence of American troops in Lebanon, Conry argued that intervention not only jeopardized American soldiers, it often obstructed what it sought to achieve.

“The internal freedom of a political community can be achieved only by members of that community,” agreed Professor Stephen R. Shalom. He added that “using [military action] encourages quick fix solutions that ignore the underlying sources of conflict.”

### THINKING CRITICALLY

#### 1. CONNECT TO TODAY Comparing and Contrasting

What do you think are the strongest arguments for and against military intervention in regional conflicts?



SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R8.

- #### 2. CONNECT TO HISTORY Hypothesizing
- With at least one partner, research the events leading up to U.S. involvement in one of these countries: Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, or Kuwait. Then negotiate to resolve the conflict.

# The Persian Gulf War, 1990–1991



Major Iraqi missile target  
 Iraqi forces  
 UN coalition forces  
 US/UN major air strike  
 US/UN naval forces

0 100 200 miles  
 0 100 200 kilometers

**Jan. 16, 1991**  
US/UN air attacks begin against Iraq.

**Aug. 2, 1990**  
Iraq invades Kuwait.

**Feb. 23, 1991**  
UN coalition launches ground war.

Women served along with men in the military during the Gulf War (right). Massive oil fires started by the Iraqis burned in Kuwait (below).



## GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER

- 1. Region** What did UN coalition forces probably hope to achieve by moving forces into southern Iraq?
- 2. Movement** How did the movements of coalition ground forces show that the intention of the coalition in the Gulf War was ultimately defensive, not offensive?

## MAIN IDEA

its oil fields. If Iraq conquered Saudi Arabia as well as Kuwait, it would control one-half of the world's known oil reserves, which would severely threaten U.S. oil supplies. **D**

For several months, President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker organized an international coalition against Iraqi aggression. With the support of Congress and the UN, President Bush launched **Operation Desert Storm** to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi control. On January 16, 1991, the United States and its allies staged a massive air assault against Iraq. On February 23, they launched a successful ground offensive from Saudi Arabia. On February 28, 1991, President Bush announced a cease-fire. Operation Desert Storm was over. Kuwait was liberated.

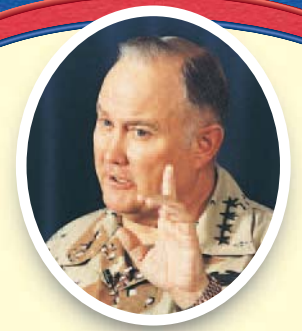
Millions of Americans turned out for the victory parades that greeted returning soldiers. After the debacle in Vietnam, they were thrilled the war was over, with fewer than 400 casualties among UN coalition forces. (However, there were subsequent reports that Gulf veterans were suffering from disabilities caused by chemicals used in the war.) By contrast, Iraq had suffered an estimated 100,000 military and civilian deaths. During the embargo that followed, many Iraqi children died from outbreaks of cholera, typhoid, enteritis, and other diseases.

**BUSH'S DOMESTIC POLICIES** Despite his great achievement in the Persian Gulf War, President Bush was not as successful on the domestic front. He was hurt by rising deficits and a recession that began in 1990 and lasted through most of 1992. Bush was forced to raise taxes despite his campaign pledge. His approval rating had dropped to 49 percent by 1992. The weak economy and the tax hike doomed Bush's reelection campaign, and 12 years of Republican leadership came to an end.

## Drawing Conclusions

**D** What issue led to the conflict in the Middle East?

## KEY PLAYER



### H. NORMAN SCHWARZKOPF 1934–

In 1988, Norman Schwarzkopf, shown above, became commander in chief of forces in Asia and Africa. During the Persian Gulf War, more than 540,000 men and women served under the command of "Stormin' Norman." Schwarzkopf said of Saddam Hussein that he was "neither a strategist, nor is he schooled in the operational art, nor is he a tactician, nor is he a general, nor is he a soldier. Other than that, he is a great military man."

## SECTION 4

## ASSESSMENT

**1. TERMS & NAMES** For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its meaning.

• Mikhail Gorbachev  
• *glasnost*

• *perestroika*  
• INF Treaty

• Tiananmen Square  
• *Sandinistas*

• *Contras*  
• Operation Desert Storm

## MAIN IDEA

**2. TAKING NOTES** (11.9.6)  
Use a chart like the one below to explain U.S. foreign policy toward world regions.

U.S. Foreign Policy
Europe
Central America and Caribbean
Middle East

Now write a paragraph in which you describe a trouble spot in one of these regions.

## CRITICAL THINKING

**3. ANALYZING CAUSES** (11.9.5)  
What factors caused the end of the Cold War? **Think About:**

- events in the Soviet Union
- events in Germany and Eastern Europe
- how U.S. leaders responded to those events

**4. FORMING GENERALIZATIONS** (HI 1)  
What factors do you think determined whether or not the United States intervened militarily in other nations?

**5. HYPOTHESIZING** (REP 3)  
Is it possible for an authoritarian government to make economic reforms without also making political reforms? Support your answer with details from the text.