

**UNIT 8**

# Recent American History

1974–Present

40-50-minute classes | 12-15 classes

**UNIT PREVIEW****Structure**

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**Why Teach Recent American History**

In more than one respect, the events of the last half-century have formed the day-to-day life of today's American students. We feel their consequences still at play in American politics, government, and culture. In order for students to gain some perspective on recent events, they must study the latest chapter of American history. In these years, the question of American identity—of what America *is*—resurfaced, even as America found herself in new territory as the world's lone superpower. Finding the answer to this question in the closing years of the Cold War, in the midst of an ongoing cultural revolution as globalization and new technologies have reshaped American society, has proved to be an enormous challenge. Students deserve to learn the contours of these competing ideas and to understand the scope of their own responsibilities as the generation in charge of the next chapter of America's story.

## Enduring Ideas from This Unit

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1. Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan presented two competing views of the role of government—views that have continued to define modern political alignments.
2. The victory of the United States over communism in the Cold War was largely due to the strength of America's principled commitment to freedom, a strong posture in foreign policy, the strong grassroots movement for liberty in eastern Europe, and the inherent flaws of the planned economies and totalitarian regimes the United States opposed.
3. The 1990s were an era of relatively strong bipartisanship on issues of fiscal responsibility and free-market principles.
4. The policy responses to the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks moved from a tightly focused pursuit of retributive justice to two decades of expansive foreign wars and a large-scale expansion of U.S. intelligence agencies.
5. A struggle in politics and business between the “establishment elite” and middle- and lower-income Americans has defined much of American politics since the 2008 economic crisis.

## What Teachers Should Consider

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As we reflect on the present, we may have great firsthand insights that will elude the attention of future historians. But we also will have many blind spots. We won't have sufficient perspective to understand the causes of recent events or foresee their ultimate consequences. Those two advantages will be held by future historians. Therefore, in studying the American history of the last five decades, our claims to knowledge must be prudent and reserved, and we must be careful not to turn history class into a current-events debate. For this reason, our curriculum does not advise history instruction on events of the current or most recent presidential administrations and concludes with the 2016 presidential election.

In the late 1970s, America was at a crossroads. The Nixon administration had mixed success in reversing progressive policies (and in some cases actually expanded government influence), and it left the presidency itself in a damaged state following the Watergate scandal. Jimmy Carter's presidency reasserted progressive ideas, even as Carter himself adhered to more traditional religious and cultural views. But a combination of economic woes and a faltering standing in world affairs hobbled Carter's presidency with the perception that it was causing a national decline.

Ronald Reagan campaigned against Carter in 1980 on this theme, seeking a restoration of the principles on which America was founded. His message and personality resonated with many Americans, helping him to decisively win the presidency in both 1980 and 1984. Reagan's policies as president largely remained true to his campaign message. Overall, he sought to reduce the size of the federal government, he brought stability to the economic landscape, and he confronted the Soviet Union with a firm policy of “peace through strength.” The result was an astounding political victory leading to a partisan realignment.

The collapse of the Soviet Union ushered in a new era in American history. The American economy continued to strengthen, while on the world stage, America embraced a post-Cold War role as the world's policeman, engaging in military campaigns in small nations on multiple continents.

The terror attacks on September 11, 2001, were a great shock, and they cast a shadow forward for the next two decades—and beyond. The American response to the attacks resulted in massive military expenditures and the end of balanced budgets. The quest to hunt terrorists wherever they could be found led to two long wars in the Middle East, even as American nation-building efforts in that region foundered. The growth in size and power of American intelligence agencies marked a new phase in the power of the federal government in the American regime.

The financial crisis of 2008 marked another turning point in recent American history. The size and power of the federal government and the national debt continued to grow. The income gaps between Americans grew ever sharper. America's principles and the virtues of statesmanship, so abundant in the past, were suddenly in short supply in the partisanship that emerged during the late 1990s and early 2000s. This class shift aligned with a cultural shift, and the 2016 election increasingly became about the struggles over these issues.

The United States is still very much in the throes of this struggle today, and it remains to be seen what the outcome will be.

## How Teachers Can Learn More

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### TEXTS

*The Cold War*, John Lewis Gaddis

*Revolution 1989*, Victor Sebestyen

*A History of the Modern Middle East*, William Cleveland and Martin Bunton

*American Heritage: A Reader*, ed. Hillsdale College History Faculty

### ONLINE COURSES | [Online.Hillsdale.edu](https://Online.Hillsdale.edu)

*The Great American Story*

*American Heritage*

## Lesson Planning Resources

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### TEACHER RESOURCES

*Restless Giant*, James Patterson

*A Teacher's Guide to Land of Hope*, Wilfred McClay and John McBride

*A Student Workbook for Land of Hope*, Wilfred McClay and John McBride

*Land of Hope*, Wilfred McClay

### STUDENT RESOURCES

*Land of Hope Young Reader's Edition*, Wilfred McClay

## PRIMARY SOURCES

First Inaugural Address, Ronald Reagan  
Remarks at the Brandenburg Gate, Ronald Reagan  
Contract with America, Republican National Committee  
Address to a Joint Session of Congress, George W. Bush  
Address at Cairo University, Barack Obama  
Remarks to the People of Poland, Donald Trump

## **LESSON PLANS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND FORMATIVE QUIZ**

## Lesson 1 — Crossroads, at Home and Abroad

1974–1989

4–5 classes

### LESSON OBJECTIVE

Students learn about the ongoing woes America faced during the 1970s and then the principles and policies of the Reagan administration, both at home and toward the Soviet Union near the end of the Cold War.

### TEACHER PREPARATION

Create a note outline based on the following:

#### Student Texts

<i>Land of Hope, Young Reader's Edition, Vol. 2</i>	Pages 204-221
Primary Sources	See below.

#### Teacher Texts

<i>Land of Hope</i>	Pages 393-407
<i>A Teacher's Guide to Land of Hope</i>	Pages 364-368
<i>A Student Workbook for Land of Hope</i>	Pages 240-242

#### Online.Hillsdale.edu

<i>The Great American Story</i>	Lectures 23-24
<i>American Heritage</i>	Lecture 10

### STUDENT PREPARATION

**Assignment:** Students read *Land of Hope (YRE)*, pages 204-221, and prepare for a reading quiz (provided below).

### CORE CONTENT IN THIS LESSON

#### Geography & Places

Saigon	Grenada
Egypt	Libya
Israel	Taiwan
Iran	Berlin
Afghanistan	

#### Persons

Gerald Ford	Sandra Day O'Connor
Jimmy Carter	Muammar Gaddafi
Anwar el-Sadat	Margaret Thatcher
Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini	Pope John Paul II
Ronald Reagan	Mikhail Gorbachev

**Terms and Topics**

pardon	“Big Government”
stagflation	Reaganomics
taxation	Economic Recovery Tax Act
Khmer Rouge	Social Security
Fall of Saigon	national debt
bicentennial	Department of Education
Carter Doctrine	Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)
Camp David Accords	Solidarity
Iranian Revolution	Euromissile crisis
Iranian Hostage Crisis	glasnost
social conservatives	perestroika
libertarians	Berlin Wall
limited government	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)

**Primary Sources**

First Inaugural Address, Ronald Reagan  
Remarks at the Brandenburg Gate, Ronald Reagan

**To Know by Heart**

“If no one among us is capable of governing himself, then who among us has the capacity to govern someone else?” —Ronald Reagan, First Inaugural Address  
“Government’s first duty is to protect the people, not run their lives.” —Ronald Reagan  
“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same.” —Ronald Reagan  
“Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” —Ronald Reagan, Remarks at the Brandenburg Gate

**Timeline**

1975-1976	Reunification of Vietnam
1978-1979	Iranian Revolution
1979-1981	Iran hostage crisis
1980	Ronald Reagan elected president
1985-1987	Iran-Contra Affair
1989	Fall of the Berlin Wall

**Images**

Historical figures and events  
Footage and images from the fall of Saigon  
Footage of hostages in Iran  
Images and footage from the Solidarity movement in Poland

**STORIES FOR THE AMERICAN HEART**

- Biography of Ronald Reagan
- Stephen Klinkhammer’s account of the fall of Saigon
- How the Camp David Accords came about
- How the Iranian Revolution and hostage crisis unfolded

- Debates between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan
- William Harwood's eyewitness account of the *Challenger* disaster

### QUESTIONS FOR THE AMERICAN MIND

- What caused stagflation during the 1970s?
- What happened in Vietnam after the American forces withdrew?
- What were Jimmy Carter's foreign policy successes and failures?
- What role did the Supreme Court play in the changing culture of the 1970s?
- Who made up the Reagan coalition that led to his 1980 election victory?
- How did Ronald Reagan change the role of the federal government?
- How did Ronald Reagan's economic policies foster a stronger economy during the 1980s?
- How did the policies and words of the Reagan administration successfully confront the Soviet Union?
- Questions from the U.S. Civics Test:
  - Question 108: Who was the United States' main rival during the Cold War?
  - Question 109: During the Cold War, what was one main concern of the United States?
  - Question 126: Name three national U.S. holidays.

### KEYS TO THE LESSON

The Watergate scandal and the resignation of Richard Nixon were the culmination of a decade of tremendous turmoil in the United States. Beginning in 1963 with President John F. Kennedy's assassination, the Vietnam War abroad and the cultural revolution at home brought America to a kind of crossroads. Jimmy Carter tried to change the tone of politics, putting forward more positive visions for the presidency at home and for America in the world. Against this backdrop, Ronald Reagan argued for a recovery of America's founding principles and the nation's vital role in opposing communism internationally. In the 1980 election, American voters chose Reagan's path, which led to a robust economic recovery and the eventual fall of the Soviet Union.

Teachers might best plan and teach Crossroads, at Home and Abroad with emphasis on the following approaches:

- Help students to appreciate the collective psychological state of the American citizenry in the wake of the Watergate scandal, Vietnam, the cultural revolution, the riots, and the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King Jr. In addition, they should be reminded of the lingering fear of a nuclear war. The ideals of America and the American way of life seemed to have been undermined or exposed as an illusion for many Americans. In many respects, it was unfamiliar territory for the country.
- Discuss the general policy of news media in the United States following the 1960s and 1970s. Vietnam and Watergate led the media and much of the public to be skeptical of official government narratives and the authority of elected figures.
- Consider the presidency of Gerald Ford and the timely role he played against this backdrop of uncertainty and upheaval. Ford deserves credit for the sense of calm and competence he exuded, helping to alleviate the high level of distrust in public figures.
- Review with students the events that followed the United States' withdrawal of military from Vietnam, including the fall of Saigon and the Cambodian genocide. Students should consider



the great responsibilities and risks involved in military operations within the domestic struggles of another country, especially for noncombatants, American soldiers, and allies.

- Examine the rise and appeal of Jimmy Carter, including his more casual approach to the presidency, his focus on environmentalism, and the Carter Doctrine. Note both his successes, such as the Camp David Accords, and his failures, such as the Iranian hostage crisis, the Arab Oil Embargo, and stagflation. Students should be able to articulate the main causes and events for each.
- Outline with students the main principles of Ronald Reagan's candidacy and campaign message. Note in particular Reagan's appeals to the principles of the American Founders, his arguments against what he termed "big government," and his steadfast determination to oppose communism and the Soviet Union as moral evils. Show how these views contrasted with the prevailing spirit of the late 1970s.
- Explain the new economic policies of the Reagan administration, the extent to which they were responsible for controlling inflation and revitalizing the American economy, and the ways in which Ronald Reagan departed from a policy of a limited federal government.
- Identify the major principles and achievements of Ronald Reagan regarding foreign policy, especially in opposition to the Soviet Union. Explain that Reagan was convinced that the Soviet Union was not only morally wrong but also an existential threat to American interests. This conviction was combined with a fierce defense of American principles and increased military and economic pressure to curb the advances of the Soviet Union in international affairs. Students should also understand how Reagan's policies toward the Soviet Union worked with Margaret Thatcher, Pope John Paul II, and the Solidarity movement in Poland to champion freedom in eastern Europe.

## STRENGTHENING UNDERSTANDING: POST-LESSON ASSIGNMENTS

**Assignment 1:** Explain the policies and outcomes of the Carter administration (1-2 paragraphs).

**Assignment 2:** Explain the policies and outcomes of the Reagan administration (1-2 paragraphs).

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Quiz

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Recent American History | Lesson 1  
*Land of Hope, Young Reader's Edition* Vol. 2, pages 204-221

**DIRECTIONS:** Answer each question.

1. What did historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. argue about President Nixon and the Watergate scandal in his 1973 book entitled *The Imperial Presidency*?
2. Provide an example of President Carter's immediate efforts to reject the "imperial presidency."
3. What was the foreign policy disaster that led to the erosion of President Carter's credibility?
4. What were the effects of President Reagan's Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981?
5. How did President Reagan handle the 1983 Euromissile crisis?

## Lesson 2 — America after the Cold War

1989–2001

4–5 classes

### LESSON OBJECTIVE

Students learn about the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States' subsequent involvement in the global economy across the George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton administrations, and the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

### TEACHER PREPARATION

Create a note outline based on the following:

#### Student Texts

<i>Land of Hope Young Reader's Edition</i>	Pages 222-233
Primary Sources	See below.

#### Teacher Texts

<i>Land of Hope</i>	Pages 408-417
<i>A Teacher's Guide to Land of Hope</i>	Pages 376-380
<i>A Student Workbook for Land of Hope</i>	Pages 250-251

#### Online.Hillsdale.edu

<i>The Great American Story</i>	Lecture 25
<i>American Heritage</i>	Lecture 10

### STUDENT PREPARATION

**Assignment:** Students read *Land of Hope* (YRE), pages 222-233, and prepare for a reading quiz (provided below).

### CORE CONTENT IN THIS LESSON

#### Geography & Places

Middle East	Panama
Iraq	Balkans
Kuwait	Ground Zero
Persian Gulf	Shanksville, Pennsylvania

#### Persons

George H. W. Bush	Bill Gates
Boris Yeltsin	George W. Bush
Saddam Hussein	Al Gore
Colin Powell	Dick Cheney
Clarence Thomas	Osama bin Laden
Bill Clinton	

**Terms and Topics**

Tiananmen Square massacre	“Sun Belt”
Berlin Wall	“Contract with America”
Operation Desert Storm	Welfare Reform Act
UN Security Council	budget surplus
Invasion of Panama	pop music
Waco massacre	1995 Oklahoma City bombing
European Union	impeachment
globalism	2000 election
Violent Crime Control Act	World Trade Center
terrorism	The Pentagon
The Internet	Flight 93
personal computer	al-Qaeda
North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)	War on Terror
illegal immigration	Taliban
outsourcing	Patriot Act
“Rust Belt”	No Child Left Behind Act

**Primary Sources**

Contract with America, Republican National Committee  
 Address to a Joint Session of Congress, George W. Bush

**To Know by Heart**

“The era of big government is over.” —Bill Clinton

**Timeline**

1990-1991	Gulf War
1991	Dissolution of the Soviet Union
2001	9/11 attacks

**Images**

Historical figures and events  
 Footage from the Tiananmen Square massacre, including “Tank Man”  
 The fall of the Berlin Wall  
 Footage from the Gulf War  
 Images and uniforms of American and Iraqi soldiers and al-Qaeda terrorists  
 Military equipment and weaponry  
 Early computers, cell phones, and websites  
 Footage from fighting in the Balkans  
 Footage and images from the 9/11 attacks  
 Footage of President Bush’s “bullhorn speech”

**STORIES FOR THE AMERICAN HEART**

- Heroic deeds of soldiers in the Gulf War
- The *Los Angeles Times*’ reporting on the Rodney King riots
- The missed opportunities against Osama bin Laden in the 1990s

- Heroic deeds of citizens, police, and firefighters on 9/11, including the passengers on Flight 93
- Fighting in the first months in Afghanistan

### QUESTIONS FOR THE AMERICAN MIND

- What were the Chinese protesting in Tiananmen Square? What happened?
- What events in Europe and within the Soviet Union led to the fall of the Berlin Wall?
- Why did the United States fight the Gulf War? What was the outcome?
- What were some of the appeals of Bill Clinton in 1992?
- How did American jobs and businesses change during the 1990s and early 2000s, especially in small towns, the “Rust Belt,” and the “Sun Belt”?
- What legislation and policies did Bill Clinton and Congress use during the 1990s to balance the federal budget and spur economic growth?
- How did American culture and demographics further change during the 1990s?
- What happened on September 11, 2001? Why did it happen?
- What policy events from the 1980s and 1990s paved the way for the September 11 attacks?
- What were America’s responses to the September 11 attacks, both militarily and at home?
- Questions from the U.S. Civics Test:
  - Question 100: Name one war fought by the United States in the 1900s.
  - Question 114: Why did the United States enter the Persian Gulf War?
  - Question 115: What major event happened on September 11, 2001, in the United States?

### KEYS TO THE LESSON

The collapse of the Soviet Union marked an American victory in the Cold War. Decades of high-stakes maneuvering—in economics, in policy, and on the battlefield—culminated in this event which had for much of the Cold War seemed impossible. But now, coming off this great victory and the prosperity of the Reagan years, America was poised to be the sole superpower in the world, one that would seek to promote self-government and free enterprise at home and abroad. The 1990s continued the economic gains of the 1980s, while America’s military and intelligence apparatus turned toward the affairs of smaller countries in the Caribbean, the Balkans, and the Middle East. The new global economy brought advantages and challenges to Americans. But the relative calm with which America approached the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century was suddenly disrupted by the terror attacks on September 11, 2001, which would dramatically shift American foreign policy and the American way of life.

Teachers might best plan and teach America after the Cold War with emphasis on the following approaches:

- Walk students through the final events leading to the collapse of the Soviet Union and what the world has since learned about life in the Soviet Union, the atrocities of communism, and its economic failures.
- Consider the status of America, both on the world stage and economically, at the start of the 1990s. The order that victory in World War II seemed to have promised but which the Cold War delayed appeared finally to have arrived.
- Study with students the impetus for fighting the Gulf War and the shifting spheres for foreign policy.

- Review the presidency of Bill Clinton, especially the extent to which he and the Republican Congress worked together during the 1990s and the effects these policies had on the budget, economic growth, trade, and domestic manufacturing.
- Examine changing attitudes and practices in America regarding marriage rates, birth rates, divorce rates, religious participation, crime, and welfare during the 1990s.
- Explain to students the technological changes that occurred during the 1990s, especially the widespread development of personal computers and the Internet and their effects on Americans' communications and lifestyle.
- Teach about the conflicts in Haiti and the Balkans during the 1990s, including America's and NATO's involvement.
- Detail the events leading up to the September 11 attacks in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Cover the history of that day in detail, including the many acts of heroism exhibited by selfless American citizens.
- Outline with students the major policy actions and events in response to the September 11 attacks, including the military campaigns in Afghanistan, changes to airport security, and the expansion of intelligence agencies and powers, especially under the Patriot Act.
- Have students think through the various advantages and disadvantages each side had in the Afghanistan War.
- Highlight the key contributions of both leaders and common soldiers in Afghanistan.

### **STRENGTHENING UNDERSTANDING: POST-LESSON ASSIGNMENTS**

**Assignment 1:** Explain how the American economy and demographics changed during the 1990s (1–2 paragraphs).

**Assignment 2:** Describe what happened on September 11, 2001, and explain the United States' response in the months and years that followed (1–2 paragraphs).

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Quiz

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Recent American History | Lesson 2  
*Land of Hope, Young Reader's Edition* Vol. 2, pages 222-233

**DIRECTIONS:** Answer each question.

1. Describe President George H. W. Bush's demeanor during the collapse of the Soviet Union.
2. What was the action taken by the Bush administration that the book describes as supporting Francis Fukuyama's claim that the end of the Cold War marked "the end of history"?
3. During his early presidency, what was President Clinton's most notable achievement?
4. What was President Clinton's strategy for remaining popular during the end of his first term?
5. Name one action that President George W. Bush took in response to the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks.

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## Unit 8 — Formative Quiz

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Recent American History | Lessons 1-2  
10-15 minutes

**DIRECTIONS:** Answer each question in at least one complete sentence.

1. What happened in Vietnam after the American forces withdrew?
2. How did Ronald Reagan's economic policies foster a stronger economy during the 1980s?
3. What events in Europe and within the Soviet Union led to the fall of the Berlin Wall?
4. What were some of the appeals of Bill Clinton in 1992?
5. What policy events from the 1980s and 1990s paved the way for the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks?



## Lesson 3 — Twenty-First Century America

2001–2016

4–5 classes

### LESSON OBJECTIVE

Students learn about the War on Terror and the Iraq War, as well as the domestic successes and struggles of the following 15 years.

### TEACHER PREPARATION

Create a note outline based on the following:

#### Student Texts

<i>Land of Hope Young Reader's Edition</i> , Vol. 2	Pages 233-245
Primary Sources	See below.

#### Teacher Texts

<i>Land of Hope</i>	Pages 417-428
<i>A Teacher's Guide to Land of Hope</i>	Pages 380-381, 385-395
<i>A Student Workbook for Land of Hope</i>	Pages 251-252, 256-257

#### Online.Hillsdale.edu

<i>The Great American Story</i>	Lecture 25
<i>American Heritage</i>	Lecture 10

### STUDENT PREPARATION

**Assignment:** Students read *Land of Hope* (YRE), pages 233-245, and prepare for a reading quiz (provided below).

### CORE CONTENT IN THIS LESSON

#### Geography & Places

Fallujah  
Benghazi  
North Korea

#### Persons

Mark Zuckerberg	Hillary Clinton
Barack Obama	Donald Trump
Edward Snowden	

#### Terms and Topics

“weapons of mass destruction” (WMD)	Google
improvised explosive device (IED)	iPhone
	social media
	Facebook

*Harry Potter*  
 Iraq War troop surge  
 national debt  
 personal debt  
 housing crisis  
     bailout  
 Great Recession  
 Affordable Care Act  
 (“Obamacare”)  
 establishment

Tea Party movement  
 school choice  
 Afghanistan troop surge  
 Benghazi attack  
 Chinese Communist Party  
 IRS targeting  
 Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)  
 Twitter  
 nationalism

### Primary Sources

Address at Cairo University, Barack Obama  
 Remarks to the People of Poland, Donald Trump

### To Know by Heart

“There is not a liberal America and a conservative America—there is the United States of America. There is not a black America and a white America and Latino America and Asian America—there’s the United States of America.” —Barack Obama

“The West became great not because of paperwork and regulations but because people were allowed to chase their dreams and pursue their destinies.” —Donald Trump, Remarks to the People of Poland

### Timeline

2001–2021	Afghanistan War
2003–2011	Iraq War
2008	Housing market collapse
2008–2009	Great Recession

### Images

Historical figures and events  
 Images and uniforms of American and Iraqi soldiers  
 Footage and photographs of scenes from Iraq  
 Maps: alliances, overall strategies, specific battles  
 Military equipment and weaponry  
 Destruction from the Iraq War  
 Antiwar protests  
 First iPhone  
 Tea Party protests  
 Images of China’s economic and military growth  
 Images of ISIS

## STORIES FOR THE AMERICAN HEART

- Heroic deeds of soldiers in the Iraq War and Afghanistan War

## QUESTIONS FOR THE AMERICAN MIND

- Why did the United States invade Iraq?
- What was fighting like in Iraq after the initial invasion?
- How did smartphones and social media change the flow of information, the economy, and communication in the United States?
- What caused the 2008 housing market collapse?
- How did Congress's response to the 2008 financial crisis help or hinder economic recovery?
- How did ISIS come into existence and overrun much of Iraq, Syria, and Libya?
- Question from the U.S. Civics Test:
  - Question 116: Name one U.S. military conflict after the September 11, 2001, attacks.

## KEYS TO THE LESSON

The September 11 attacks opened a new era in American history, one that has defined much of American foreign policy and politics until the present. The power of the presidency and of the federal government continued to grow during the War on Terror and the Iraq War begun in 2003. At home, America experienced a revived antiwar movement and then an economic crash in 2008. During the presidencies of Barack Obama and Donald Trump, American political alignments became increasingly partisan and divisive. All the while, the advent of smartphones and social media revolutionized the way Americans communicate and share ideas. As the American economy continued to globalize, China's growth in economic and political power, the growing influence of nongovernmental organizations, and the power of technology companies all presented a new chapter in American history.

Teachers might best plan and teach Twenty-First Century America with emphasis on the following approaches:

- Review with students the debates leading up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Students should understand the arguments at the time, the disposition of the American citizenry against the backdrop of the September 11 attacks, and the information that has since been revealed about the origins of the conflict.
- Have students think through and compare the various advantages and disadvantages each side had in the Iraq War and how these shifted during the war. Of special importance was the de-Ba'athification of Iraq and the dismissal of the Iraqi Army.
- Highlight the key contributions of both leaders and common soldiers in the Iraq War.
- Explain the origins of the 2008 housing bubble and the economic crash and recession that followed, including the effect of subprime mortgages and the role of federal policy, the banking industry, personal debt, the government bailouts and stimulus, and uncertain federal fiscal and monetary policy in the years that followed.
- Outline for students the main political debates involving the Affordable Care Act, the Tea Party movement, and the Occupy protests.
- Review American foreign policy during the late Bush administration and the Obama administration. Noteworthy events to cover in some detail include the 2007 troop surge in Iraq, Barack Obama's address at Cairo University and the Arab Spring, the NATO bombing campaign in Libya, the attack on the American diplomatic compound in Benghazi, and the rise of ISIS.

- Introduce the unexpected electoral victory of Donald Trump in 2016 and the political shift in the populace that led to his election.

### **STRENGTHENING UNDERSTANDING: POST-LESSON ASSIGNMENT**

**Assignment:** Explain the major foreign and domestic events in the United States since 2003 (2-3 paragraphs).

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Quiz

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Recent American History | Lesson 3  
*Land of Hope, Young Reader's Edition* Vol. 2, pages 233-245

**DIRECTIONS:** Answer each question.

1. What effect did the recession of 2008 have on the general public's opinion of government?
2. What problems did President Obama's healthcare plan attempt to address?
3. What political activist movement led to a Republican House majority in 2010, effectively stopping President Obama's legislative plans for the rest of his presidency?
4. What rising idea did President Trump emphasize during his time in office?
5. According to the book, what is the great unresolved bipartisan problem that illustrates the dysfunction of our current political system?

## **APPENDIX A**

Study Guides

Tests

Writing Assignment

## Study Guide A — Recent American History, Test #1

### Lesson 1 | Crossroads, at Home and Abroad

Unit 8

Test on \_\_\_\_\_

### TIMELINE

*When given chronological dates, match events from a list to the years or dates that they happened.*

1975-1976	Reunification of Vietnam
1978-1979	Iranian Revolution
1979-1981	Iran hostage crisis
1980	Ronald Reagan elected president
1985-1987	Iran-Contra Affair
1989	Fall of the Berlin Wall

### GEOGRAPHY AND PLACES

*Identify each on a map and/or tell where it is and explain its significance.*

Saigon	Grenada
Egypt	Libya
Israel	Taiwan
Iran	Berlin
Afghanistan	

### PERSONS

*Identify each, provide biographical details, and explain what he or she thought or did in specific periods or events.*

Gerald Ford	Ayatollah Ruhollah	Muammar Gaddafi
Jimmy Carter	Khomeini	Margaret Thatcher
Anwar el-Sadat	Ronald Reagan	Pope John Paul II
	Sandra Day O'Connor	Mikhail Gorbachev

### TERMS AND TOPICS

*Identify each and explain its significance to the period of history studied.*

stagflation	Carter Doctrine
taxation	Camp David Accords
Khmer Rouge	Iranian Revolution
Fall of Saigon	Iranian hostage crisis
bicentennial	limited government

“Big Government”  
Reaganomics  
Economic Recovery Tax Act  
Social Security  
national debt  
Department of Education  
Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)

Solidarity  
Euromissile crisis  
glasnost  
perestroika  
Berlin Wall  
Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)

## PRIMARY SOURCES

*Based on annotations and notes from seminar conversations, be able to answer questions on each primary source. While you will not necessarily be asked why each primary source was created, what it did or argued, and what its effects were, being able to answer these kinds of questions will make you well prepared.*

First Inaugural Address, Ronald Reagan  
Remarks at the Brandenburg Gate, Ronald Reagan

## TO KNOW BY HEART

*Fill in missing words and/or identify the speaker and context.*

“If no one among us is capable of governing himself, then who among us has the capacity to govern someone else?” —Ronald Reagan, First Inaugural Address

“Government’s first duty is to protect the people, not run their lives.” —Ronald Reagan

“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same.” —  
Ronald Reagan

“Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” —Ronald Reagan, Remarks at the Brandenburg Gate

## STORIES FOR THE AMERICAN HEART

*In your own words, retell each episode in narrative form. Consider your audience to be 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students.*

- Biography of Ronald Reagan
- Stephen Klinkhammer’s account of the fall of Saigon
- How the Camp David Accords came about
- How the Iranian Revolution and hostage crisis unfolded
- Debates between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan
- William Harwood’s eyewitness account of the *Challenger* disaster



## QUESTIONS FOR THE AMERICAN MIND

*Based on notes from lessons and seminar conversations, answer each of the following.*

- ☐ What caused stagflation during the 1970s?
- ☐ What happened in Vietnam after the American forces withdrew?
- ☐ What were Jimmy Carter's foreign policy successes and failures?
- ☐ What role did the Supreme Court play in the changing culture of the 1970s?
- ☐ Who made up the Reagan coalition that led to his 1980 election victory?
- ☐ How did Ronald Reagan change the role of the federal government?
- ☐ How did Ronald Reagan's economic policies foster a stronger economy during the 1980s?
- ☐ How did the policies and words of the Reagan administration successfully confront the Soviet Union?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Recent American History — Test #1**

Unit 8

**Lesson 1 | Crossroads, at Home and Abroad****TIMELINE***Write the letter of each historical event next to the date it took place.*

1975-1976	_____	A. Ronald Reagan elected president
1978-1979	_____	B. Fall of the Berlin Wall
1980	_____	C. Iranian Revolution
1985-1987	_____	D. Iranian Hostage Crisis
1979-1981	_____	D. Reunification of Vietnam
1989	_____	E. Iran-Contra Affair

**GEOGRAPHY & PLACES***Answer each question by naming the correct location(s).*

1. What was the name of the capital of South Vietnam?
2. The Brandenburg Gate is located in what city and country?

**PERSONS, TERMS, AND TOPICS**

*Fill in the blanks with the letter of the correct answer.*

- |                              |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| A. perestroika               | F. stagflation        |
| B. Euromissile crisis        | G. Fall of Saigon     |
| C. Gerald Ford               | H. Carter Doctrine    |
| D. Camp David Accords        | I. Iranian Revolution |
| E. Economic Recovery Tax Act |                       |

8. President \_\_\_\_\_ exuded a sense of calm and competence during the post-Watergate uncertainty and upheaval, helping to alleviate Americans' high level of distrust in public figures.
9. The \_\_\_\_\_ marked the end of the Vietnam War.
10. The \_\_\_\_\_ was a foreign policy designed to defend the United States' interests in the Persian Gulf region.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ was a political reform movement led by Mikhail Gorbachev aimed at restructuring the political and economic systems of the Soviet Union.
12. The \_\_\_\_\_ happened during the presidency of Jimmy Carter.
13. In 1981, President Ronald Reagan introduced the \_\_\_\_\_ in order to restore the American economy.
14. The United States oversaw a treaty between Egypt and Israel known as the \_\_\_\_\_.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ was a major economic problem throughout the 1970s.

16. President Reagan's actions in response to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the early 1980s demonstrated his resolve to aggressively confront the Soviet Union.

## KNOW BY HEART

*Fill in missing words and/or identify the speaker.*

17. "Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, tear down \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_!" —Ronald Reagan, Remarks at  
\_\_\_\_\_

18. "Government's first duty is to \_\_\_\_\_, not  
\_\_\_\_\_." —Ronald Reagan

## STORIES FOR THE AMERICAN HEART

*In your own words, retell each episode in narrative form. Consider your audience to be 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students.*

19. The fall of Saigon

20. The 1980 presidential debates between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan

### QUESTIONS FOR THE AMERICAN MIND

*Answer each of the following. Complete sentences are not necessary, but correct spelling and writing should be employed and responses must fully answer each question.*

21. What caused stagflation during the 1970s?

22. What were Jimmy Carter's foreign policy successes and failures?

23. What role did the Supreme Court play in changing American culture during the 1970s?

24. Who made up the coalition that led Ronald Reagan to his 1980 election victory?
25. How did Reagan change the role of the federal government?
26. How did the policies and words of the Reagan administration successfully confront the Soviet Union?

## Study Guide B — Recent American History, Test #2

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Lesson 2 | America after the Cold War

Lesson 3 | Twenty-First Century America

Unit 8

Test on \_\_\_\_\_

### TIMELINE

*When given chronological dates, match events from a list to the years or dates that they happened.*

1990-1991	Gulf War
1991	Dissolution of the Soviet Union
2001	9/11 attacks
2001–2021	Afghanistan War
2003–2011	Iraq War
2008	Housing market collapse
2008–2009	Great Recession

### GEOGRAPHY AND PLACES

*Identify each on a map and/or tell where it is and explain its significance.*

Middle East	Ground Zero
Iraq	Shanksville, Pennsylvania
Kuwait	Fallujah
Persian Gulf	Benghazi
Panama	North Korea
Balkans	

### PERSONS

*Identify each, provide biographical details, and explain what he or she thought or did in specific periods or events.*

George H. W. Bush	Al Gore
Boris Yeltsin	Dick Cheney
Saddam Hussein	Osama bin Laden
Colin Powell	Mark Zuckerberg
Clarence Thomas	Barack Obama
Bill Clinton	Edward Snowden
Bill Gates	Hillary Clinton
George W. Bush	Donald Trump

## TERMS AND TOPICS

*Identify each and explain its significance to the period of history studied.*

Tiananmen Square massacre	impeachment	Facebook
Operation Desert Storm	2000 election	Iraq War troop surge
UN Security Council	World Trade Center	national debt
European Union	The Pentagon	housing crisis
globalism	Flight 93	bailout
terrorism	al-Qaeda	Great Recession
The Internet	War on Terror	Affordable Care Act
personal computer	Taliban	("Obamacare")
North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)	Patriot Act	Tea Party movement
illegal immigration	No Child Left Behind Act	Afghanistan troop surge
outsourcing	"weapons of mass destruction" (WMD)	Benghazi attack
"Rust Belt"	improvised explosive device (IED)	Chinese Communist Party
"Sun Belt"	Google	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)
"Contract with America"	iPhone	Twitter
Welfare Reform Act	social media	
Oklahoma City bombing		

## PRIMARY SOURCES

*Based on annotations and notes from seminar conversations, be able to answer questions on each primary source. While you will not necessarily be asked why each primary source was created, what it did or argued, and what its effects were, being able to answer these kinds of questions will make you well prepared.*

Contract with America, Republican National Committee  
 Address to a Joint Session of Congress, George W. Bush  
 Address at Cairo University, Barack Obama  
 Remarks to the People of Poland, Donald Trump

## TO KNOW BY HEART

*Fill in missing words and/or identify the speaker and context.*

"The era of big government is over." —Bill Clinton

"There is not a liberal America and a conservative America—there is the United States of America. There is not a black America and a white America and Latino America and Asian America—there's the United States of America." —Barack Obama

"The West became great not because of paperwork and regulations but because people were allowed to chase their dreams and pursue their destinies." —Donald Trump, Remarks to the People of Poland



## STORIES FOR THE AMERICAN HEART

*In your own words, retell each episode in narrative form. Consider your audience to be 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students.*

- Heroic deeds of soldiers in the Gulf War
- The *Los Angeles Times*' reporting on the Rodney King riots
- The missed opportunities against Osama bin Laden in the 1990s
- Heroic deeds of citizens, police, and firefighters on 9/11, including the passengers on Flight 93
- Fighting in the first months in Afghanistan
- Heroic deeds of soldiers in the Iraq War and Afghanistan War

## QUESTIONS FOR THE AMERICAN MIND

*Based on notes from lessons and seminar conversations, answer each of the following.*

### Lesson 2 | America after the Cold War

- ☐ What were the Chinese protesting in Tiananmen Square? What happened?
- ☐ What events in Europe and within the Soviet Union led to the fall of the Berlin Wall?
- ☐ Why did the United States fight the Gulf War? What was the outcome?
- ☐ What were some of the appeals of Bill Clinton in 1992?
- ☐ How did American jobs and businesses change during the 1990s and early 2000s, especially in small towns, the “Rust Belt,” and the “Sun Belt”?
- ☐ What legislation and policies did Bill Clinton and Congress use during the 1990s to balance the federal budget and spur economic growth?
- ☐ How did American culture and demographics further change during the 1990s?
- ☐ What happened on September 11, 2001? Why did it happen?
- ☐ What policy events from the 1980s and 1990s paved the way for the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks?
- ☐ What were America's responses to the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, both militarily and at home?

### Lesson 3 | Twenty-First Century America

- ☐ Why did the United States invade Iraq?
- ☐ What was fighting like in Iraq after the initial invasion?
- ☐ How did smartphones and social media change the flow of information, the economy, and communication in the United States?
- ☐ What caused the 2008 housing market collapse?
- ☐ How did Congress's response to the 2008 financial crisis help or hinder economic recovery?
- ☐ How did ISIS come into existence and overrun much of Iraq, Syria, and Libya?

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

**Recent American History — Test #2**

Unit 8

Lesson 2 | America after the Cold War

Lesson 3 | Twenty-First Century America

**TIMELINE***Write the letter of each historical event(s) next to the year(s) during which it took place.*

1990-1991	_____	A. Great Recession
1991	_____	B. 9/11 attacks
2001	_____	C. Gulf War
2001-2002	_____	D. Housing market collapse
2003-2021	_____	E. Afghanistan War
2008	_____	F. Iraq War
2008-2009	_____	G. Dissolution of the Soviet Union

**GEOGRAPHY AND PLACES***Answer each question by naming the correct location(s).*

1. What body of water is the namesake of the 1991 war that followed Iraq's invasion of Kuwait?
2. What was the name of the Iraqi city the United States invaded in April 2003?

## PERSONS, TERMS, AND TOPICS

*Fill in the blanks with the letter of the correct answer.*

- |                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A. Saddam Hussein           | F. Taliban                     |
| B. George W. Bush           | G. War on Terror               |
| C. Edward Snowden           | H. Operation Desert Storm      |
| D. No Child Left Behind Act | I. Affordable Care Act         |
| E. Bill Clinton             | J. weapons of mass destruction |

3. President George W. Bush declared the \_\_\_\_\_ in response to the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks.
4. President Bush's administration left a lasting impact on public K-12 education through the passage of the \_\_\_\_\_ in 2001.
5. The potential presence of \_\_\_\_\_ in Iraq played a significant role in the United States' decision to invade the country in 2003.
6. The \_\_\_\_\_ was a major focus of President Barack Obama's first term in office.
7. President \_\_\_\_\_ famously used a PR strategy called "triangulation."
8. \_\_\_\_\_ was president of Iraq during the U.S. invasion in 2003.
9. In 1991, the United States successfully completed \_\_\_\_\_ in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ was a whistleblower responsible for leaking a large amount of highly classified information from the NSA in 2009.
11. President \_\_\_\_\_ was victorious by a narrow margin in the controversial 2000 presidential election.
12. The \_\_\_\_\_ were a major faction hostile to the United States and its allies during the Afghanistan War.

### KNOW BY HEART

*Fill in missing words and/or identify the speaker.*

13. “The era of \_\_\_\_\_ is over.” —Bill Clinton
14. “There is not a liberal America and a conservative America—there is the \_\_\_\_\_ . There is not a black America and a white America and \_\_\_\_\_ America and \_\_\_\_\_ America—there’s the United States of America.” —  
\_\_\_\_\_
15. “The West became great not because of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ but because people were allowed to \_\_\_\_\_ their dreams and pursue their \_\_\_\_\_.” —\_\_\_\_\_,  
Remarks to \_\_\_\_\_

## STORIES FOR THE AMERICAN HEART

*In your own words, retell each episode in narrative form. Consider your audience to be 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students.*

16. The heroic deeds of soldiers in the Gulf War

17. The heroic deeds of passengers on Flight 93

## QUESTIONS FOR THE AMERICAN MIND

*Answer each of the following. Complete sentences are not necessary, but correct spelling and writing should be employed and responses must fully answer each question.*

18. Who were the Chinese protesting in Tiananmen Square? What happened?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
19. Why did the United States fight the Gulf War? What was the outcome?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
20. How did American jobs and businesses change during the 1990s and early 2000s, especially in small towns, the “Rust Belt,” and the “Sun Belt”?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
21. How did American culture and demographics further change during the 1990s?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
22. What happened on September 11, 2001? Why did it happen?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
23. What were America’s responses to the above event, both militarily and at home?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
24. Why did the United States invade Iraq?

25. What was fighting like in Iraq after the initial invasion?

26. What caused the housing market collapse in 2007-2008?

27. How did Congress' response to the 2008 financial crisis help or hinder economic recovery?

## Writing Assignment — Recent American History

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Unit 8

Due on \_\_\_\_\_

### DIRECTIONS

*Citing events and primary sources in your argument, write a 2-3 paragraph essay answering the following question:*

How did American foreign policy attempt to respond to the questions raised by the War on Terror?



## **APPENDIX B**

### Primary Sources

Ronald Reagan

Republican National Committee (RNC)

George W. Bush

Barack Obama

Donald Trump

## PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

# First Inaugural Address

### SPEECH

January 20, 1981

U.S. Capitol Building | Washington, D.C.

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### BACKGROUND

In the midst of rising hostilities between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the actor-turned-politician Ronald Reagan ran a robust campaign against incumbent Jimmy Carter. Reagan won the election with the most electoral votes against any incumbent in U.S. history.

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What problems in America does Reagan address?
2. What solutions to these problems does he propose?
3. Who are the “heroes” that Reagan mentions?
4. What is the relationship between the government and the people?
5. Where is the inauguration held and why is the location important?

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Ronald Reagan. “First Inaugural Address (1981)”. January 20, 1981. From Teaching American History. <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/first-inaugural-address-6/>.

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Senator Hatfield, Mr. Chief Justice, Mr. President, Vice President Bush, Vice President Mondale, Senator Baker, Speaker O'Neill, Reverend Moomaw, and my fellow citizens: To a few of us here today, this is a solemn and most momentous occasion; and yet, in the history of our Nation, it is a commonplace occurrence. The orderly transfer of authority  
5 as called for in the Constitution routinely takes place as it has for almost two centuries and few of us stop to think how unique we really are. In the eyes of many in the world, this every-4-year ceremony we accept as normal is nothing less than a miracle.

Mr. President, I want our fellow citizens to know how much you did to carry on this tradition. By your gracious cooperation in the transition process, you have shown a  
10 watching world that we are a united people pledged to maintaining a political system which guarantees individual liberty to a greater degree than any other, and I thank you and your people for all your help in maintaining the continuity which is the bulwark of our Republic.

The business of our nation goes forward. These United States are confronted with an  
15 economic affliction of great proportions. We suffer from the longest and one of the worst sustained inflations in our national history. It distorts our economic decisions, penalizes thrift, and crushes the struggling young and the fixed-income elderly alike. It threatens to shatter the lives of millions of our people.

Idle industries have cast workers into unemployment, causing human misery and  
20 personal indignity. Those who do work are denied a fair return for their labor by a tax system which penalizes successful achievement and keeps us from maintaining full productivity.

But great as our tax burden is, it has not kept pace with public spending. For decades, we have piled deficit upon deficit, mortgaging our future and our children's future for the  
25 temporary convenience of the present. To continue this long trend is to guarantee tremendous social, cultural, political, and economic upheavals.

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You and I, as individuals, can, by borrowing, live beyond our means, but for only a limited period of time. Why, then, should we think that collectively, as a nation, we are not bound by that same limitation?

5 We must act today in order to preserve tomorrow. And let there be no misunderstanding—we are going to begin to act, beginning today.

The economic ills we suffer have come upon us over several decades. They will not go away in days, weeks, or months, but they will go away. They will go away because we, as Americans, have the capacity now, as we have had in the past, to do whatever needs to be done to preserve this last and greatest bastion of freedom.

10 In this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem.

15 From time to time, we have been tempted to believe that society has become too complex to be managed by self-rule, that government by an elite group is superior to government for, by, and of the people. But if no one among us is capable of governing himself, then who among us has the capacity to govern someone else? All of us together, in and out of government, must bear the burden. The solutions we seek must be equitable, with no one group singled out to pay a higher price.

20 We hear much of special interest groups. Our concern must be for a special interest group that has been too long neglected. It knows no sectional boundaries or ethnic and racial divisions, and it crosses political party lines. It is made up of men and women who raise our food, patrol our streets, man our mines and our factories, teach our children, keep our homes, and heal us when we are sick—professionals, industrialists, shopkeepers, clerks, cabbies, and truckdrivers. They are, in short, “We the people,” this breed called Americans.

25 Well, this administration’s objective will be a healthy, vigorous, growing economy that provides equal opportunity for all Americans, with no barriers born of bigotry or

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discrimination. Putting America back to work means putting all Americans back to work. Ending inflation means freeing all Americans from the terror of runaway living costs. All must share in the productive work of this “new beginning” and all must share in the bounty of a revived economy. With the idealism and fair play which are the core of our system and our strength, we can have a strong and prosperous America at peace with itself and the world.

So, as we begin, let us take inventory. We are a nation that has a government—not the other way around. And this makes us special among the nations of the Earth. Our Government has no power except that granted it by the people. It is time to check and reverse the growth of government which shows signs of having grown beyond the consent of the governed.

It is my intention to curb the size and influence of the Federal establishment and to demand recognition of the distinction between the powers granted to the Federal Government and those reserved to the States or to the people. All of us need to be reminded that the Federal Government did not create the States; the States created the Federal Government.

Now, so there will be no misunderstanding, it is not my intention to do away with government. It is, rather, to make it work—work with us, not over us; to stand by our side, not ride on our back. Government can and must provide opportunity, not smother it; foster productivity, not stifle it.

If we look to the answer as to why, for so many years, we achieved so much, prospered as no other people on Earth, it was because here, in this land, we unleashed the energy and individual genius of man to a greater extent than has ever been done before. Freedom and the dignity of the individual have been more available and assured here than in any other place on Earth. The price for this freedom at times has been high, but we have never been unwilling to pay that price.

It is no coincidence that our present troubles parallel and are proportionate to the intervention and intrusion in our lives that result from unnecessary and excessive growth of government. It is time for us to realize that we are too great a nation to limit ourselves to small dreams. We are not, as some would have us believe, doomed to an inevitable decline. I do not believe in a fate that will fall on us no matter what we do. I do believe in a fate that will fall on us if we do nothing. So, with all the creative energy at our command, let us begin an era of national renewal. Let us renew our determination, our courage, and our strength. And let us renew our faith and our hope.

We have every right to dream heroic dreams. Those who say that we are in a time when there are no heroes just don't know where to look. You can see heroes every day going in and out of factory gates. Others, a handful in number, produce enough food to feed all of us and then the world beyond. You meet heroes across a counter—and they are on both sides of that counter. There are entrepreneurs with faith in themselves and faith in an idea who create new jobs, new wealth and opportunity. They are individuals and families whose taxes support the Government and whose voluntary gifts support church, charity, culture, art, and education. Their patriotism is quiet but deep. Their values sustain our national life.

I have used the words “they” and “their” in speaking of these heroes. I could say “you” and “your” because I am addressing the heroes of whom I speak—you, the citizens of this blessed land. Your dreams, your hopes, your goals are going to be the dreams, the hopes, and the goals of this administration, so help me God.

We shall reflect the compassion that is so much a part of your makeup. How can we love our country and not love our countrymen, and loving them, reach out a hand when they fall, heal them when they are sick, and provide opportunities to make them self-sufficient so they will be equal in fact and not just in theory?

Can we solve the problems confronting us? Well, the answer is an unequivocal and emphatic “yes.” To paraphrase Winston Churchill, I did not take the oath I have just

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taken with the intention of presiding over the dissolution of the world's strongest economy.

5 In the days ahead I will propose removing the roadblocks that have slowed our economy and reduced productivity. Steps will be taken aimed at restoring the balance between the various levels of government. Progress may be slow—measured in inches and feet, not miles—but we will progress. Is it time to reawaken this industrial giant, to get government back within its means, and to lighten our punitive tax burden. And these will be our first priorities, and on these principles, there will be no compromise.

10 On the eve of our struggle for independence a man who might have been one of the greatest among the Founding Fathers, Dr. Joseph Warren, President of the Massachusetts Congress, said to his fellow Americans, “Our country is in danger, but not to be despaired of.... On you depend the fortunes of America. You are to decide the important questions upon which rests the happiness and the liberty of millions yet unborn. Act worthy of yourselves.”

15 Well, I believe we, the Americans of today, are ready to act worthy of ourselves, ready to do what must be done to ensure happiness and liberty for ourselves, our children and our children's children.

20 And as we renew ourselves here in our own land, we will be seen as having greater strength throughout the world. We will again be the exemplar of freedom and a beacon of hope for those who do not now have freedom.

To those neighbors and allies who share our freedom, we will strengthen our historic ties and assure them of our support and firm commitment. We will match loyalty with loyalty. We will strive for mutually beneficial relations. We will not use our friendship to impose on their sovereignty, for our own sovereignty is not for sale.

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As for the enemies of freedom, those who are potential adversaries, they will be reminded that peace is the highest aspiration of the American people. We will negotiate for it, sacrifice for it; we will not surrender for it—now or ever.

5 Our forbearance should never be misunderstood. Our reluctance for conflict should not be misjudged as a failure of will. When action is required to preserve our national security, we will act. We will maintain sufficient strength to prevail if need be, knowing that if we do so we have the best chance of never having to use that strength.

10 Above all, we must realize that no arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of the world, is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women. It is a weapon our adversaries in today's world do not have. It is a weapon that we as Americans do have. Let that be understood by those who practice terrorism and prey upon their neighbors.

15 I am told that tens of thousands of prayer meetings are being held on this day, and for that I am deeply grateful. We are a nation under God, and I believe God intended for us to be free. It would be fitting and good, I think, if on each Inauguration Day in future years it should be declared a day of prayer.

This is the first time in history that this ceremony has been held, as you have been told, on this West Front of the Capitol. Standing here, one faces a magnificent vista, opening up on this city's special beauty and history. At the end of this open mall are those shrines to the giants on whose shoulders we stand.

20 Directly in front of me, the monument to a monumental man: George Washington, Father of our country. A man of humility who came to greatness reluctantly. He led America out of revolutionary victory into infant nationhood. Off to one side, the stately memorial to Thomas Jefferson. The Declaration of Independence flames with his eloquence.



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And then beyond the Reflecting Pool the dignified columns of the Lincoln Memorial. Whoever would understand in his heart the meaning of America will find it in the life of Abraham Lincoln.

5 Beyond those monuments to heroism is the Potomac River, and on the far shore the sloping hills of Arlington National Cemetery with its row on row of simple white markers bearing crosses or Stars of David. They add up to only a tiny fraction of the price that has been paid for our freedom.

10 Each one of those markers is a monument to the kinds of hero I spoke of earlier. Their lives ended in places called Belleau Wood, The Argonne, Omaha Beach, Salerno and halfway around the world on Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Pork Chop Hill, the Chosin Reservoir, and in a hundred rice paddies and jungles of a place called Vietnam.

15 Under one such marker lies a young man—Martin Treptow—who left his job in a small town barber shop in 1917 to go to France with the famed Rainbow Division. There, on the western front, he was killed trying to carry a message between battalions under heavy artillery fire.

We are told that on his body was found a diary. On the flyleaf under the heading, “My Pledge,” he had written these words: “America must win this war. Therefore, I will work, I will save, I will sacrifice, I will endure, I will fight cheerfully and do my utmost, as if the issue of the whole struggle depended on me alone.”

20 The crisis we are facing today does not require of us the kind of sacrifice that Martin Treptow and so many thousands of others were called upon to make. It does require, however, our best effort, and our willingness to believe in ourselves and to believe in our capacity to perform great deeds; to believe that together, with God’s help, we can and will resolve the problems which now confront us.

25 And, after all, why shouldn’t we believe that? We are Americans. God bless you, and thank you.

**PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN**

# Remarks at the Brandenburg Gate

SPEECH

June 12, 1987

Brandenburg Gate | West Berlin, Germany

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**BACKGROUND**

President Reagan delivered this speech alongside the Berlin Wall. The wall was erected in 1961 in order to divide democratic and communist Europe.

**GUIDING QUESTIONS**

1. Why have American presidents chosen to speak in Berlin?
2. What differences does Reagan note about life under democracy and life under communism?
3. What does Reagan demand from General Secretary Gorbachev? Why?

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Ronald Reagan. "Remarks on East-West Relations at the Brandenburg Gate in West Berlin". Presidential Message, June 12, 1987. From Teaching American History. <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/speech-at-brandenburg-gate/>

**ANNOTATIONS**

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. . . Twenty-four years ago, President John F. Kennedy visited Berlin, speaking to the people of this city and the world at the city hall. Well, since then two other presidents have come, each in his turn, to Berlin. And today I, myself, make my second visit to your city.

We come to Berlin, we American Presidents, because it's our duty to speak, in this place, of freedom. . . .

Behind me stands a wall that encircles the free sectors of this city, part of a vast system of barriers that divides the entire continent of Europe. From the Baltic, south, those barriers cut across Germany in a gash of barbed wire, concrete, dog runs, and guard towers. Farther south, there may be no visible, no obvious wall. But there remain armed guards and checkpoints all the same – still a restriction on the right to travel, still an instrument to impose upon ordinary men and women the will of a totalitarian state. Yet it is here in Berlin where the wall emerges most clearly; here, cutting across your city, where the news photo and the television screen have imprinted this brutal division of a continent upon the mind of the world. Standing before the Brandenburg Gate, every man is a German, separated from his fellow men. Every man is a Berliner, forced to look upon a scar.

. . . Today I say: As long as this gate is closed, as long as this scar of a wall is permitted to stand, it is not the German question alone that remains open, but the question of freedom for all mankind. Yet I do not come here to lament. For I find in Berlin a message of hope, even in the shadow of this wall, a message of triumph.

In this season of spring in 1945, the people of Berlin emerged from their air-raid shelters to find devastation. Thousands of miles away, the people of the United States reached out to help. And in 1947 Secretary of State – as you've been told – George Marshall announced the creation of what would become known as the Marshall plan. Speaking precisely 40 years ago this month, he said: "Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine, but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos."

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In the Reichstag a few moments ago, I saw a display commemorating this 40th anniversary of the Marshall plan. I was struck by the sign on a burnt-out, gutted structure that was being rebuilt. I understand that Berliners of my own generation can remember seeing signs like it dotted throughout the Western sectors of the city. The sign read simply: "The Marshall plan is helping here to strengthen the free world." A strong, free world in the West, that dream became real. Japan rose from ruin to become an economic giant. Italy, France, Belgium – virtually every nation in Western Europe saw political and economic rebirth; the European Community was founded.

In West Germany and here in Berlin, there took place an economic miracle . . .

. . . From devastation, from utter ruin, you Berliners have, in freedom, rebuilt a city that once again ranks as one of the greatest on Earth. . .

In the 1950's, Khrushchev predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history. In the Communist world, we see failure, technological backwardness, declining standards of health, even want of the most basic kind – too little food. Even today, the Soviet Union still cannot feed itself. After these four decades, then, there stands before the entire world one great and inescapable conclusion: Freedom leads to prosperity. Freedom replaces the ancient hatreds among the nations with comity and peace. Freedom is the victor.

And now the Soviets themselves may, in a limited way, be coming to understand the importance of freedom. We hear much from Moscow about a new policy of reform and openness. Some political prisoners have been released. Certain foreign news broadcasts are no longer being jammed. Some economic enterprises have been permitted to operate with greater freedom from state control. Are these the beginnings of profound changes in the Soviet state? Or are they token gestures, intended to raise false hopes in the West, or to strengthen the Soviet system without changing it? We welcome change and

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openness; for we believe that freedom and security go together, that the advance of human liberty can only strengthen the cause of world peace.

There is one sign the Soviets can make that would be unmistakable, that would advance dramatically the cause of freedom and peace. 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!

I understand the fear of war and the pain of division that afflict this continent – and I pledge to you my country’s efforts to help overcome these burdens. . . .

In Europe, only one nation and those it controls refuse to join the community of freedom. Yet in this age of redoubled economic growth, of information and innovation, the Soviet Union faces a choice: It must make fundamental changes, or it will become obsolete. Today thus represents a moment of hope. We in the West stand ready to cooperate with the East to promote true openness, to break down barriers that separate people, to create a safer, freer world.

And surely there is no better place than Berlin, the meeting place of East and West, to make a start. . . .

## REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

# Contract with America

## PARTY PLATFORM

September 27, 1994

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### BACKGROUND

This document was released during the mid-term elections of 1994 to explain what the Republicans would do if they gained control of Congress. The Republican party would go on to win fifty-four seats to gain control of the House of Representatives for the first time in forty years.

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What does the Republican Party seek to do with this contract?
2. What are the eight reforms proposed that are “aimed at restoring the faith and trust of the American people in their government?”
3. What will the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress do in its first 100 days?

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Republican National Committee. “Contract with America”. Platform, September 27, 1994. From Teaching American History. <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/contract-with-america-2/>.

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As Republican members of the House of Representatives and as citizens seeking to join that body we propose not just to change its policies, but even more important, to restore the bonds of trust between the people and their elected representatives.

5 That is why, in this era of official evasion and posturing, we offer instead a detailed agenda for national renewal, a written commitment with no fine print.

10 This year's election offers the chance, after four decades of one-party control, to bring to the House a new majority that will transform the way Congress works. That historic change would be the end of government that is too big, too intrusive, and too easy with the public's money. It can be the beginning of a Congress that respects the values and shares the faith of the American family.

Like Lincoln, our first Republican president, we intend to act "with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right." To restore accountability to Congress. To end its cycle of scandal and disgrace. To make us all proud again of the way free people govern themselves.

15 On the first day of the 104th Congress, the new Republican majority will immediately pass the following major reforms, aimed at restoring the faith and trust of the American people in their government:

- ☐ FIRST, require all laws that apply to the rest of the country also apply equally to the Congress;
- ☐ SECOND, select a major, independent auditing firm to conduct a comprehensive audit of Congress for waste, fraud, or abuse;
- ☐ THIRD, cut the number of House committees, and cut committee staff by one-third;
- ☐ FOURTH, limit the terms of all committee chairs;
- ☐ FIFTH, ban the casting of proxy votes in committee;

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- ☐ SIXTH, require committee meetings to be open to the public;
- ☐ SEVENTH, require a three-fifths majority vote to pass a tax increase;
- ☐ EIGHTH, guarantee an honest accounting of our federal budget by implementing zero base-line budgeting.

Thereafter, within the first one hundred days of the 104th Congress, we shall bring to the House floor the following bills, each to be given full and open debate, each to be given a clear and fair vote and each to be immediately available this day for public inspection and scrutiny.

1. The Fiscal Responsibility Act: A balanced budget/tax limitation amendment and a legislative line-item veto to restore fiscal responsibility to an out-of-control Congress, requiring them to live under the same budget constraints as families and businesses.
2. The Taking Back Our Streets Act: An anticrime package including stronger truth-in-sentencing, “good faith” exclusionary rule exemptions, effective death penalty provisions, and cuts in social spending from this summer’s “crime” bill to fund prison construction and additional law enforcement to keep people secure in their neighborhoods and kids safe in their schools.
3. The Personal Responsibility Act: Discourage illegitimacy and teen pregnancy by prohibiting welfare to minor mothers and denying increased AFDC [Aid to Families with Dependent Children] for additional children while on welfare, cut spending for welfare programs, and enact a tough two-years-and-out provision with work requirements to promote individual responsibility.
4. The Family Reinforcement Act: Child support enforcement, tax incentives for adoption, strengthening rights of parents in their children’s education, stronger child pornography laws, and an elderly dependent care tax credit to reinforce the central role of families in American society.



5. The American Dream Restoration Act: A \$500 per child tax credit, begin repeal of the marriage tax penalty, and creation of American Dream Savings Accounts to provide middle-class tax relief.
6. The National Security Restoration Act: No U.S. troops under UN command and restoration of the essential parts of our national security funding to strengthen our national defense and maintain our credibility around the world.
7. The Senior Citizens Fairness Act: Raise the Social Security earnings limit which currently forces seniors out of the workforce, repeal the 1993 tax hikes on Social Security benefits and provide tax incentives for private long-term care insurance to let older Americans keep more of what they have earned over the years.
8. The Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act: Small business incentives, capital gains cut and indexation, neutral cost recovery, risk assessment/cost-benefit analysis, strengthening the Regulatory Flexibility Act and unfunded mandate reform to create jobs and raise worker wages.
9. The Common Sense Legal Reform Act: “Loser pays” laws, reasonable limits on punitive damages, and reform of product liability laws to stem the endless tide of litigation.
10. The Citizen Legislature Act: A first-ever vote on term limits to replace career politicians with citizen legislators.

Further, we will instruct the House Budget Committee to report to the floor and we will work to enact additional budget savings, beyond the budget cuts specifically included in the legislation described above, to ensure that the federal budget deficit will be less than it would have been without the enactment of these bills.

Respecting the judgment of our fellow citizens as we seek their mandate for reform, we hereby pledge our names to this Contract with America.

**PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH**

# Address to a Joint Session of Congress

SPEECH

September 20, 2001

U.S. Congress | Washington, D.C.

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## BACKGROUND

After the terrorist group al Qaeda launched attacks on the United States, resulting in about 3,000 deaths, President George W. Bush called a joint session of Congress to explain to them and the American people how the United States would respond.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How has the world come together in the days following 9/11?
2. What came under attack on 9/11?
3. What is al Qaeda and what does it stand for?
4. What kind of war does the U.S. seek to fight and how will it accomplish this goal?
5. What outcome does President Bush hope to see after the U.S.'s war on terror?

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George W. Bush. "Address to a Joint Session of Congress". Speech, September 20, 2001. From Teaching American History. <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/address-to-a-joint-session-of-congress/>.

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Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro Tempore, members of Congress, and fellow Americans:

In the normal course of events, Presidents come to this chamber to report on the state of the Union. Tonight, no such report is needed. It has already been delivered by the American people.

- 5 We have seen it in the courage of passengers, who rushed terrorists to save others on the ground—passengers like an exceptional man named Todd Beamer. And would you please help me to welcome his wife, Lisa Beamer, here tonight.

- 10 We have seen the state of our Union in the endurance of rescuers, working past exhaustion. We have seen the unfurling of flags, the lighting of candles, the giving of blood, the saying of prayers—in English, Hebrew, and Arabic. We have seen the decency of a loving and giving people who have made the grief of strangers their own.

My fellow citizens, for the last nine days, the entire world has seen for itself the state of our Union—and it is strong.

- 15 Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.

- 20 I thank the Congress for its leadership at such an important time. All of America was touched on the evening of the tragedy to see Republicans and Democrats joined together on the steps of this Capitol, singing “God Bless America.” And you did more than sing; you acted, by delivering \$40 billion to rebuild our communities and meet the needs of our military.

Speaker Hastert, Minority Leader Gephardt, Majority Leader Daschle and Senator Lott, I thank you for your friendship, for your leadership and for your service to our country.

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And on behalf of the American people, I thank the world for its outpouring of support. America will never forget the sounds of our National Anthem playing at Buckingham Palace, on the streets of Paris, and at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate.

5 We will not forget South Korean children gathering to pray outside our embassy in Seoul, or the prayers of sympathy offered at a mosque in Cairo. We will not forget moments of silence and days of mourning in Australia and Africa and Latin America.

10 Nor will we forget the citizens of 80 other nations who died with our own: dozens of Pakistanis; more than 130 Israelis; more than 250 citizens of India; men and women from El Salvador, Iran, Mexico and Japan; and hundreds of British citizens. America has no truer friend than Great Britain. Once again, we are joined together in a great cause—so honored the British Prime Minister has crossed an ocean to show his unity of purpose with America. Thank you for coming, friend.

15 On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars—but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war—but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks—but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day—and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack.

20 Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking: Who attacked our country? The evidence we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al Qaeda. They are the same murderers indicted for bombing American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, and responsible for bombing the USS Cole.

25 Al Qaeda is to terror what the mafia is to crime. But its goal is not making money; its goal is remaking the world—and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere.

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The terrorists practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics—a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam. The terrorists’ directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans, and make no distinction among military and  
5 civilians, including women and children.

This group and its leader—a person named Osama bin Laden—are linked to many other organizations in different countries, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries. They are recruited from their own nations and neighborhoods and brought to  
10 camps in places like Afghanistan, where they are trained in the tactics of terror. They are sent back to their homes or sent to hide in countries around the world to plot evil and destruction.

The leadership of al Qaeda has great influence in Afghanistan and supports the Taliban regime in controlling most of that country. In Afghanistan, we see al Qaeda’s vision for  
15 the world. Afghanistan’s people have been brutalized—many are starving and many have fled. Women are not allowed to attend school. You can be jailed for owning a television. Religion can be practiced only as their leaders dictate. A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not long enough.

The United States respects the people of Afghanistan—after all, we are currently its  
20 largest source of humanitarian aid—but we condemn the Taliban regime. It is not only repressing its own people, it is threatening people everywhere by sponsoring and sheltering and supplying terrorists. By aiding and abetting murder, the Taliban regime is committing murder.

And tonight, the United States of America makes the following demands on the Taliban:  
25 Deliver to United States authorities all the leaders of al Qaeda who hide in your land. Release all foreign nationals, including American citizens, you have unjustly imprisoned. Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country. Close

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immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, and hand over every terrorist, and every person in their support structure, to appropriate authorities. Give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating.

- 5 These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act, and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate.

- I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many millions of Americans, and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those  
10 who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah. The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them.

- Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until  
15 every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.

Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber—a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms—our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.

- 20 They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa.

- These terrorists kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life. With every atrocity, they hope that America grows fearful, retreating from the world and  
25 forsaking our friends. They stand against us, because we stand in their way.

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We are not deceived by their pretenses to piety. We have seen their kind before. They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions—by abandoning every value except the will to power—they follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism. And they will follow that path all the way, to where it ends: in history’s unmarked grave of discarded lies.

Americans are asking: How will we fight and win this war? We will direct every resource at our command—every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war—to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network.

10 This war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion. It will not look like the air war above Kosovo two years ago, where no ground troops were used and not a single American was lost in combat.

Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen.

15 It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success. We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, 20 any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

Our nation has been put on notice: We are not immune from attack. We will take defensive measures against terrorism to protect Americans. Today, dozens of federal departments and agencies, as well as state and local governments, have responsibilities 25 affecting homeland security. These efforts must be coordinated at the highest level. So tonight I announce the creation of a Cabinet-level position reporting directly to me—the Office of Homeland Security.

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And tonight I also announce a distinguished American to lead this effort, to strengthen American security: a military veteran, an effective governor, a true patriot, a trusted friend—Pennsylvania’s Tom Ridge. He will lead, oversee and coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to safeguard our country against terrorism, and respond to any attacks that may come.

These measures are essential. But the only way to defeat terrorism as a threat to our way of life is to stop it, eliminate it, and destroy it where it grows.

Many will be involved in this effort, from FBI agents to intelligence operatives to the reservists we have called to active duty. All deserve our thanks, and all have our prayers.

And tonight, a few miles from the damaged Pentagon, I have a message for our military: Be ready. I’ve called the Armed Forces to alert, and there is a reason. The hour is coming when America will act, and you will make us proud.

This is not, however, just America’s fight. And what is at stake is not just America’s freedom. This is the world’s fight. This is civilization’s fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom.

We ask every nation to join us. We will ask, and we will need, the help of police forces, intelligence services, and banking systems around the world. The United States is grateful that many nations and many international organizations have already responded—with sympathy and with support. Nations from Latin America, to Asia, to Africa, to Europe, to the Islamic world. Perhaps the NATO Charter reflects best the attitude of the world: An attack on one is an attack on all.

The civilized world is rallying to America’s side. They understand that if this terror goes unpunished, their own cities, their own citizens may be next. Terror, unanswered, cannot only bring down buildings, it can threaten the stability of legitimate governments. And you know what—we’re not going to allow it.



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Americans are asking: What is expected of us? I ask you to live your lives, and hug your children. I know many citizens have fears tonight, and I ask you to be calm and resolute, even in the face of a continuing threat.

I ask you to uphold the values of America, and remember why so many have come here.

- 5 We are in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them. No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith.

- 10 I ask you to continue to support the victims of this tragedy with your contributions. Those who want to give can go to a central source of information, [libertyunites.org](http://libertyunites.org), to find the names of groups providing direct help in New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

The thousands of FBI agents who are now at work in this investigation may need your cooperation, and I ask you to give it.

I ask for your patience, with the delays and inconveniences that may accompany tighter security; and for your patience in what will be a long struggle.

- 15 I ask your continued participation and confidence in the American economy. Terrorists attacked a symbol of American prosperity. They did not touch its source. America is successful because of the hard work, and creativity, and enterprise of our people. These were the true strengths of our economy before September 11th, and they are our strengths today.

- 20 And, finally, please continue praying for the victims of terror and their families, for those in uniform, and for our great country. Prayer has comforted us in sorrow, and will help strengthen us for the journey ahead.

- 25 Tonight I thank my fellow Americans for what you have already done and for what you will do. And ladies and gentlemen of the Congress, I thank you, their representatives, for what you have already done and for what we will do together.

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Tonight, we face new and sudden national challenges. We will come together to improve air safety, to dramatically expand the number of air marshals on domestic flights, and take new measures to prevent hijacking. We will come together to promote stability and keep our airlines flying, with direct assistance during this emergency.

- 5 We will come together to give law enforcement the additional tools it needs to track down terror here at home. We will come together to strengthen our intelligence capabilities to know the plans of terrorists before they act, and find them before they strike.

We will come together to take active steps that strengthen America's economy, and put our people back to work.

- 10 Tonight we welcome two leaders who embody the extraordinary spirit of all New Yorkers: Governor George Pataki, and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. As a symbol of America's resolve, my administration will work with Congress, and these two leaders, to show the world that we will rebuild New York City.

- 15 After all that has just passed—all the lives taken, and all the possibilities and hopes that died with them—it is natural to wonder if America's future is one of fear. Some speak of an age of terror. I know there are struggles ahead, and dangers to face. But this country will define our times, not be defined by them. As long as the United States of America is determined and strong, this will not be an age of terror; this will be an age of liberty, here and across the world.

- 20 Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom—the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time—now depends on us. Our nation—this generation—will lift a dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our  
25 efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail.

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It is my hope that in the months and years ahead, life will return almost to normal. We'll go back to our lives and routines, and that is good. Even grief recedes with time and grace. But our resolve must not pass. Each of us will remember what happened that day, and to whom it happened. We'll remember the moment the news came—where we were and  
5 what we were doing. Some will remember an image of a fire, or a story of rescue. Some will carry memories of a face and a voice gone forever.

And I will carry this: It is the police shield of a man named George Howard, who died at the World Trade Center trying to save others. It was given to me by his mom, Arlene, as a proud memorial to her son. This is my reminder of lives that ended, and a task that  
10 does not end.

I will not forget this wound to our country or those who inflicted it. I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people.

The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear,  
15 justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them.

Fellow citizens, we'll meet violence with patient justice—assured of the rightness of our cause, and confident of the victories to come. In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America.

20 Thank you.

**PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA**

# Address at Cairo University

**SPEECH**

June 4, 2009

Major Reception Hall, Cairo University | Cairo, Egypt

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**BACKGROUND**

When Barack Obama was campaigning for the presidency in 2008, he promised the world that he would address Muslims from a Muslim capital shortly after being elected, with the aim of resolving tensions between the United States and Islam.

**GUIDING QUESTIONS**

1. What are the principles shared by the United States and Islam?
2. What are the issues that President Obama seeks to address?
3. What is the President's "first duty?"
4. What are the human rights that ought to be upheld by every nation?
5. What religious books does Obama quote?

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Barack Obama. "Address at Cairo University". Presidential Message, June 04, 2009. From Teaching American History. <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/address-at-cairo-university-2/>.

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... I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap and share common principles – principles of justice and progress, tolerance and the dignity of all human beings. . . .

... [H]uman history has often been a record of nations and tribes and, yes, religions subjugating one another in pursuit of their own interests. Yet in this new age, such attitudes are self-defeating. Given our interdependence, any world order that elevates one nation or group of people over another will inevitably fail. . . .

... [L]et me speak as clearly and as plainly as I can about some specific issues that I believe we must finally confront together.

The first issue that we have to confront is violent extremism in all of its forms. In Ankara, I made clear that America is not, and never will be, at war with Islam. We will, however, relentlessly confront violent extremists who pose a grave threat to our security, because we reject the same thing that people of all faiths reject: the killing of innocent men, women, and children. And it is my first duty as President to protect the American people. . . .

[The President next discussed Palestine, and nuclear proliferation.]

The fourth issue that I will address is democracy. . . . No system of government can or should be imposed by one nation on any other.

That does not lessen my commitment, however, to governments that reflect the will of the people. Each nation gives life to this principle in its own way, grounded in the traditions of its own people. America does not presume to know what is best for everyone, just as we would not presume to pick the outcome of a peaceful election. But I do have an unyielding belief that all people yearn for certain things: the ability to speak your mind and have a say in how you are governed, confidence in the rule of law and the equal administration of justice, government that is transparent and doesn't steal from the people, the freedom to live as you choose. These are not just American ideas, they are human rights. And that is why we will support them everywhere.

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Now, there is no straight line to realize this promise, but this much is clear: Governments that protect these rights are ultimately more stable, successful, and secure. Suppressing ideas never succeeds in making them go away. America respects the right of all peaceful and law-abiding voices to be heard around the world, even if we disagree with them. And  
5 we will welcome all elected, peaceful governments, provided they govern with respect for all their people.

This last point is important, because there are some who advocate for democracy only when they're out of power. Once in power, they are ruthless in suppressing the rights of others. So no matter where it takes hold, government of the people and by the people sets a single  
10 standard for all who would hold power. You must maintain your power through consent, not coercion; you must respect the rights of minorities and participate with a spirit of tolerance and compromise; you must place the interests of your people and the legitimate workings of the political process above your party. Without these ingredients, elections alone do not make true democracy.

The fifth issue that we must address together is religious freedom. Islam has a proud tradition of tolerance. We see it in the history of Andalusia and Cordoba during the Inquisition. I saw it firsthand as a child in Indonesia, where devout Christians worshiped freely in an overwhelmingly Muslim country. That is the spirit we need today. People in every country should be free to choose and live their faith based upon the persuasion of the  
20 mind and the heart and the soul. This tolerance is essential for religion to thrive, but it's being challenged in many different ways. . . .

The sixth issue that I want to address is women's rights. I know – [applause] – I know, and you can tell from this audience, that there is a healthy debate about this issue. I reject the view of some in the West that a woman who chooses to cover her hair is somehow less  
25 equal, but I do believe that a woman who is denied an education is denied equality. And it is no coincidence that countries where women are well educated are far more likely to be prosperous. . . .

I am convinced that our daughters can contribute just as much to society as our sons. Our common prosperity will be advanced by allowing all humanity, men and women, to reach  
30 their full potential. I do not believe that women must make the same choices as men in

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order to be equal, and I respect those women who choose to live their lives in traditional roles. But it should be their choice. And that is why the United States will partner with any Muslim-majority country to support expanded literacy for girls and to help young women pursue employment through microfinancing that helps people live their dreams.

- 5 Finally, I want to discuss economic development and opportunity. I know that for many, the face of globalization is contradictory. The Internet and television can bring knowledge and information, but also offensive sexuality and mindless violence into the home. Trade can bring new wealth and opportunities, but also huge disruptions and change in communities. In all nations, including America, this change can bring fear. Fear that
- 10 because of modernity, we lose control over our economic choices, our politics, and, most importantly, our identities, those things we most cherish about our communities, our families, our traditions, and our faith.

- But I also know that human progress cannot be denied. There need not be contradictions between development and tradition. Countries like Japan and South Korea grew their
- 15 economies enormously while maintaining distinct cultures. The same is true for the astonishing progress within Muslim-majority countries from Kuala Lumpur to Dubai. In ancient times and in our times, Muslim communities have been at the forefront of innovation and education.

[. . .]

- 20 I know there are many, Muslim and non-Muslim, who question whether we can forge this new beginning. Some are eager to stoke the flames of division and to stand in the way of progress. Some suggest that it isn't worth the effort, that we are fated to disagree and civilizations are doomed to clash. Many more are simply skeptical that real change can occur. There's so much fear, so much mistrust that has built up over the years. But if we
- 25 choose to be bound by the past, we will never move forward. And I want to particularly say this to young people of every faith in every country: You, more than anyone, have the ability to reimagine the world, to remake this world. . . .

- . . . It's easier to start wars than to end them. It's easier to blame others than to look inward. It's easier to see what is different about someone than to find the things we share. But we
- 30 should choose the right path, not just the easy path. There's one rule that lies at the heart

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of every religion, that we do unto others as we would have them do unto us. This truth transcends nations and peoples, a belief that isn't new, that isn't black or white or brown, that isn't Christian or Muslim or Jew. It's a belief that pulsed in the cradle of civilization and that still beats in the hearts of billions around the world. It's a faith in other people, and it's what brought me here today. We have the power to make the world we seek, but only if we have the courage to make a new beginning, keeping in mind what has been written.

The Holy Koran tells us: "O mankind! We have created you male and a female, and we have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another." The Talmud tells us: "The whole of the Torah is for the purpose of promoting peace." The Holy Bible tells us: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." The people of the world can live together in peace. We know that is God's vision. Now that must be our work here on Earth.

Thank you, and may God's peace be upon you.



**PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP**

# Remarks to the People of Poland

**SPEECH**

July 6, 2017

Krasinski Square | Warsaw, Poland

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**BACKGROUND**

Early in his presidency, President Trump visited Poland and delivered a speech in front of the Warsaw Uprising Monument at Krasinski Square that set the tone internationally for his time in office.

**GUIDING QUESTIONS**

1. What threat to Western Civilization is “firmly within our control”?
2. What is the democratic foundation that Poland and the United States have in common?
3. What was the significance of the Jerusalem Avenue Passage during the Warsaw Uprising?
4. Where does “the fight for the West” begin?

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Donald Trump. “Remarks by President Trump to the People of Poland”. Presidential Message, July 06, 2017. From The White House Archives. <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-people-poland/>.

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... It is a profound honor to stand in this city, by this monument to the Warsaw Uprising, and to address the Polish nation that so many generations have dreamed of: a Poland that is safe, strong, and free.

5 President Duda and your wonderful First Lady, Agata, have welcomed us with the tremendous warmth and kindness for which Poland is known around the world. Thank you. My sincere — and I mean sincere — thanks to both of them. And to Prime Minister Syzdo, a very special thanks also...

10 This is my first visit to Central Europe as President, and I am thrilled that it could be right here at this magnificent, beautiful piece of land. It is beautiful. Poland is the geographic heart of Europe, but more importantly, in the Polish people, we see the soul of Europe. Your nation is great because your spirit is great and your spirit is strong.

15 For two centuries, Poland suffered constant and brutal attacks. But while Poland could be invaded and occupied, and its borders even erased from the map, it could never be erased from history or from your hearts. In those dark days, you have lost your land but you never lost your pride.

So it is with true admiration that I can say today, that from the farms and villages of your countryside to the cathedrals and squares of your great cities, Poland lives, Poland prospers, and Poland prevails.

20 Despite every effort to transform you, oppress you, or destroy you, you endured and overcame. You are the proud nation of Copernicus — think of that — Chopin, Saint John Paul II. Poland is a land of great heroes. And you are a people who know the true value of what you defend.

The triumph of the Polish spirit over centuries of hardship gives us all hope for a future in which good conquers evil, and peace achieves victory over war.

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For Americans, Poland has been a symbol of hope since the beginning of our nation. Polish heroes and American patriots fought side by side in our War of Independence and in many wars that followed. Our soldiers still serve together today in Afghanistan and Iraq, combatting the enemies of all civilization.

- 5 For America's part, we have never given up on freedom and independence as the right and destiny of the Polish people, and we never, ever will.

Our two countries share a special bond forged by unique histories and national characters. It's a fellowship that exists only among people who have fought and bled and died for freedom.

- 10 The signs of this friendship stand in our nation's capital. Just steps from the White House, we've raised statues of men with names like Pułaski and Kościuszko. The same is true in Warsaw, where street signs carry the name of George Washington, and a monument stands to one of the world's greatest heroes, Ronald Reagan.

- 15 And so I am here today not just to visit an old ally, but to hold it up as an example for others who seek freedom and who wish to summon the courage and the will to defend our civilization. The story of Poland is the story of a people who have never lost hope, who have never been broken, and who have never, ever forgotten who they are.

... This is a nation more than one thousand years old. Your borders were erased for more than a century and only restored just one century ago.

- 20 In 1920, in the Miracle of Vistula, Poland stopped the Soviet army bent on European conquest. Then, 19 years later in 1939, you were invaded yet again, this time by Nazi Germany from the west and the Soviet Union from the east. That's trouble. That's tough.

- 25 Under a double occupation the Polish people endured evils beyond description: the Katyn forest massacre, the occupations, the Holocaust, the Warsaw Ghetto and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the destruction of this beautiful capital city, and the deaths of nearly one

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in five Polish people. A vibrant Jewish population — the largest in Europe — was reduced to almost nothing after the Nazis systematically murdered millions of Poland’s Jewish citizens, along with countless others, during that brutal occupation.

5 In the summer of 1944, the Nazi and Soviet armies were preparing for a terrible and bloody battle right here in Warsaw. Amid that hell on earth, the citizens of Poland rose up to defend their homeland. I am deeply honored to be joined on stage today by veterans and heroes of the Warsaw Uprising.

We salute your noble sacrifice and we pledge to always remember your fight for Poland and for freedom. Thank you. Thank you.

10 This monument reminds us that more than 150,000 Poles died during that desperate struggle to overthrow oppression.

From the other side of the river, the Soviet armed forces stopped and waited. They watched as the Nazis ruthlessly destroyed the city, viciously murdering men, women, and children. They tried to destroy this nation forever by shattering its will to survive.

15 But there is a courage and a strength deep in the Polish character that no one could destroy. The Polish martyr, Bishop Michael Kozal, said it well: “More horrifying than a defeat of arms is a collapse of the human spirit.”

20 Through four decades of communist rule, Poland and the other captive nations of Europe endured a brutal campaign to demolish freedom, your faith, your laws, your history, your identity — indeed the very essence of your culture and your humanity. Yet, through it all, you never lost that spirit. Your oppressors tried to break you, but Poland could not be broken.

25 And when the day came on June 2nd, 1979, and one million Poles gathered around Victory Square for their very first mass with their Polish Pope, that day, every communist in Warsaw must have known that their oppressive system would soon come crashing down.

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They must have known it at the exact moment during Pope John Paul II's sermon when a million Polish men, women, and children suddenly raised their voices in a single prayer. A million Polish people did not ask for wealth. They did not ask for privilege. Instead, one million Poles sang three simple words: "We Want God."

- 5 In those words, the Polish people recalled the promise of a better future. They found new courage to face down their oppressors, and they found the words to declare that Poland would be Poland once again.

- 10 As I stand here today before this incredible crowd, this faithful nation, we can still hear those voices that echo through history. Their message is as true today as ever. The people of Poland, the people of America, and the people of Europe still cry out "We want God."

- 15 Together, with Pope John Paul II, the Poles reasserted their identity as a nation devoted to God. And with that powerful declaration of who you are, you came to understand what to do and how to live. You stood in solidarity against oppression, against a lawless secret police, against a cruel and wicked system that impoverished your cities and your souls. And you won. Poland prevailed. Poland will always prevail.

You were supported in that victory over communism by a strong alliance of free nations in the West that defied tyranny. Now, among the most committed members of the NATO Alliance, Poland has resumed its place as a leading nation of a Europe that is strong, whole, and free.

- 20 A strong Poland is a blessing to the nations of Europe, and they know that. A strong Europe is a blessing to the West and to the world. One hundred years after the entry of American forces into World War I, the transatlantic bond between the United States and Europe is as strong as ever and maybe, in many ways, even stronger.

- 25 This continent no longer confronts the specter of communism. But today we're in the West, and we have to say there are dire threats to our security and to our way of life.

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...[O]n both sides of the Atlantic, our citizens are confronted by yet another danger — one firmly within our control. This danger is invisible to some but familiar to the Poles: the steady creep of government bureaucracy that drains the vitality and wealth of the people. The West became great not because of paperwork and regulations but because  
5 people were allowed to chase their dreams and pursue their destinies.

Americans, Poles, and the nations of Europe value individual freedom and sovereignty. We must work together to confront forces, whether they come from inside or out, from the South or the East, that threaten over time to undermine these values and to erase the bonds of culture, faith and tradition that make us who we are. If left unchecked,  
10 these forces will undermine our courage, sap our spirit, and weaken our will to defend ourselves and our societies.

But just as our adversaries and enemies of the past learned here in Poland, we know that these forces, too, are doomed to fail if we want them to fail. And we do, indeed, want them to fail. They are doomed not only because our alliance is strong, our countries are resilient,  
15 and our power is unmatched. Through all of that, you have to say everything is true. Our adversaries, however, are doomed because we will never forget who we are. And if we don't forget who we are, we just can't be beaten. Americans will never forget. The nations of Europe will never forget. We are the fastest and the greatest community. There is nothing like our community of nations. The world has never known anything like our community  
20 of nations.

We write symphonies. We pursue innovation. We celebrate our ancient heroes, embrace our timeless traditions and customs, and always seek to explore and discover brand-new frontiers.

We reward brilliance. We strive for excellence, and cherish inspiring works of art that  
25 honor God. We treasure the rule of law and protect the right to free speech and free expression.

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We empower women as pillars of our society and of our success. We put faith and family, not government and bureaucracy, at the center of our lives. And we debate everything. We challenge everything. We seek to know everything so that we can better know ourselves.

5 And above all, we value the dignity of every human life, protect the rights of every person, and share the hope of every soul to live in freedom. That is who we are. Those are the priceless ties that bind us together as nations, as allies, and as a civilization.

10 What we have, what we inherited from our — and you know this better than anybody, and you see it today with this incredible group of people — what we've inherited from our ancestors has never existed to this extent before. And if we fail to preserve it, it will never, ever exist again. So we cannot fail.

15 This great community of nations has something else in common: In every one of them, it is the people, not the powerful, who have always formed the foundation of freedom and the cornerstone of our defense. The people have been that foundation here in Poland — as they were right here in Warsaw — and they were the foundation from the very, very beginning in America.

Our citizens did not win freedom together, did not survive horrors together, did not face down evil together, only to lose our freedom to a lack of pride and confidence in our values. We did not and we will not. We will never back down.

20 ...We have to remember that our defense is not just a commitment of money, it is a commitment of will. Because as the Polish experience reminds us, the defense of the West ultimately rests not only on means but also on the will of its people to prevail and be successful and get what you have to have. The fundamental question of our time is whether the West has the will to survive. Do we have the confidence in our values to defend them at any cost? Do we have enough respect for our citizens to protect our borders? Do we  
25 have the desire and the courage to preserve our civilization in the face of those who would subvert and destroy it?

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We can have the largest economies and the most lethal weapons anywhere on Earth, but if we do not have strong families and strong values, then we will be weak and we will not survive. If anyone forgets the critical importance of these things, let them come to one country that never has. Let them come to Poland. And let them come here, to Warsaw,  
5 and learn the story of the Warsaw Uprising.

When they do, they should learn about Jerusalem Avenue. In August of 1944, Jerusalem Avenue was one of the main roads running east and west through this city, just as it is today.

Control of that road was crucially important to both sides in the battle for Warsaw. The  
10 German military wanted it as their most direct route to move troops and to form a very strong front. And for the Polish Home Army, the ability to pass north and south across that street was critical to keep the center of the city, and the Uprising itself, from being split apart and destroyed.

Every night, the Poles put up sandbags amid machine gun fire — and it was horrendous  
15 fire — to protect a narrow passage across Jerusalem Avenue. Every day, the enemy forces knocked them down again and again and again. Then the Poles dug a trench. Finally, they built a barricade. And the brave Polish fighters began to flow across Jerusalem Avenue. That narrow passageway, just a few feet wide, was the fragile link that kept the Uprising alive.

Between its walls, a constant stream of citizens and freedom fighters made their perilous,  
20 just perilous, sprints. They ran across that street, they ran through that street, they ran under that street — all to defend this city. “The far side was several yards away,” recalled one young Polish woman named Greta. That mortality and that life was so important to her. In fact, she said, “The mortally dangerous sector of the street was soaked in the  
25 blood. It was the blood of messengers, liaison girls, and couriers.”

Nazi snipers shot at anybody who crossed. Anybody who crossed, they were being shot at. Their soldiers burned every building on the street, and they used the Poles as human



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shields for their tanks in their effort to capture Jerusalem Avenue. The enemy never ceased its relentless assault on that small outpost of civilization. And the Poles never ceased its defense.

5 The Jerusalem Avenue passage required constant protection, repair, and reinforcement, but the will of its defenders did not waver, even in the face of death. And to the last days of the Uprising, the fragile crossing never, ever failed. It was never, ever forgotten. It was kept open by the Polish people.

10 The memories of those who perished in the Warsaw Uprising cry out across the decades, and few are clearer than the memories of those who died to build and defend the Jerusalem Avenue crossing. Those heroes remind us that the West was saved with the blood of patriots; that each generation must rise up and play their part in its defense — and that every foot of ground, and every last inch of civilization, is worth defending with your life.

15 Our own fight for the West does not begin on the battlefield — it begins with our minds, our wills, and our souls. Today, the ties that unite our civilization are no less vital, and demand no less defense, than that bare shred of land on which the hope of Poland once totally rested. Our freedom, our civilization, and our survival depend on these bonds of history, culture, and memory.

20 And today as ever, Poland is in our heart, and its people are in that fight. Just as Poland could not be broken, I declare today for the world to hear that the West will never, ever be broken. Our values will prevail. Our people will thrive. And our civilization will triumph.

Thank you. So, together, let us all fight like the Poles — for family, for freedom, for country, and for God.

Thank you. God Bless You. God bless the Polish people. God bless our allies. And God bless the United States of America.

25 Thank you. God bless you. Thank you very much.

