

Peter Robinson: I am Peter Robinson. Be sure to follow us on Twitter a new departure for us at <http://twitter.com/uncknowledge>; <http://twitter.com/uncknowledge>. A fellow of both the American Enterprise Institute and the Pacific Research Institute, Steven Hayward started work a decade ago on a two volume project in which he intended to provide a comprehensive analysis of Ronald Reagan and his times. Appearing in 2001, Dr. Hayward's first volume, the age of Reagan, the fall of the old liberal order, covered the years from 1964 when Reagan emerged with his famous speech on behalf of Barry Goldwater, to 1980 the year Ronald Reagan was elected President. This book set the stage. This summer, the main event, the publication of Dr. Hayward's second volume, *The Age of Reagan, the Conservative Counter Revolution* which presents Ronald Reagan as President. Steven Hayward, after a decade of effort congratulations.

Steve Hayward: Well thank you Peter, I am tired.

Peter Robinson: Segment one – was it worth it?

Steve Hayward: Oh absolutely. It was the most fun ever.

Peter Robinson: For a decade?

Steve Hayward: Sure.

Peter Robinson: All right. You open *The Age of Reagan, 1980 to 1980* on June 12, 1987. Describe the event and then tell us why you chose to open a book of more than 700 pages with that moment.

Steve Hayward: Well I felt a little bashful since you were the primary speech writer for the Berlin Wall Speech and the famous line “tear down this wall” it is not regarded as one of Reagan's' most famous and prophetic utterances since the wall came down two years later. I wanted to begin there because one of the things that has happened in a lot of the Reagan literature, even from conservative authors is they divide Reagan into two halves, foreign policy half and a domestic policy half. The liberals continue to deride Reagan's domestic policy and they give him his due finally on the Cold War. The argument in my book is that Reagan State Craft has to be understood as a unity and so although Reagan never stood in front of the Federal Trade Commission, and gave a speech saying Mr. Regulator tear down this rule, he had that attitude and there is a common theme.

Peter Robinson: I wish I had come up with that.

Steve Hayward: There is a common theme that ran through his domestic and foreign policy and they need to be understood together. So he was a person at the ramparts against the Soviet Empire and communism and he was also in ways that are less dramatic because there is not the personal dimension. He stood in the ramparts against big government at home.

Peter Robinson: I am quoting you “the ruckus over the Berlin Wall speech highlights two important things about Reagan. The first is Reagan's insight”. That is a very important word to you in this volume. Explain what you mean by insight and how it applies to Ronald Reagan.

Steve Hayward: Well I think it is especially important in the Cold War story. Most conservatives, Nixon and Kissinger especially and even more ideological conservatives, they all thought the Soviet Union was here to stay for good. Reagan had the insight that he shared with a very few people, I

argue that Churchill was the other person who had this insight 50 years before. He had the insight that the Soviet Union was weak. Internally weak. I mean they could make weapons that threatened to annihilate both countries, but he thought the system was unstable. That finally informed the grand strategy of pressing back hard against the Soviet Union; it was a more sophisticated revival of the so called roll back strategy of the 1950's in some ways. Now Reagan said himself later and a lot of his own people said we never thought it would collapse so soon, but they thought that if we turned American policy in certain ways and put pressure against the Soviet Union, not only might we win the Cold War but we might actually make the Soviet Union change. They had in mind whenever they thought about it a longer time arising, 20 or 30 years. But that was new and it really depended on Reagan's insight to make that happen.

Peter Robinson: Whittaker Chambers famous book, *Witness* in which he talks about being a communist member of the communist underground in this country in the 1930's, he breaks with the communist party, it was a book much beloved of Ronald Reagan. He could quote passages from memory. Whittaker Chambers said when he left the communist party he did so in the conviction that he was losing the winning side to join the losing side. He was pessimistic about the prospect for victory for democracy and Reagan just never bought that did he?

Steve Hayward: It is so interesting that he could quote Chambers from memory and was obviously influenced by him and Reagan now and then could sound some sour notes. We forget this now in our image of him as a smiling, happy figure. But look, I mean that is another aspect of his character's He was an optimist fundamentally about what the United States could achieve and the endurance of our institutions. But that was also true domestically in a way that made him unique. Remember that he loved to quote the line from Thomas Payne, "we have it within our power to begin the world over again",

Peter Robinson: That drove George Will into a frenzy every time Reagan did that.

Steve Hayward: George Will said anytime, anyplace, that is nonsense. Russell Kirk, you know the famous author *Conservative Mind*, he complained about Reagan quoting Thomas Payne at all.

Peter Robinson: Because it was not conservative.

Steve Hayward: Exactly.

Peter Robinson: To be conservative is to be in the first instance concerned about what is, about reality of the givingness of things and Reagan emphasized the extent to which we need not be bound by the givingness of things.

Steve Hayward: Well there is that and I think in the case of someone like Russell Kirk, you are worried about change undermining legitimate authority and structures and traditions. Reagan embraced change. He understood that was the great story of American and again the peculiar balance of Ronald Reagan is here is a person who was a defender of tradition, a defender of family values, but could also embrace change. Things like the Silicon Valley revolution would not have, which began under his Presidency, would not have surprised him at all, and he would have embraced the internet and so forth. I do think however, if Reagan were alive today, he would outlaw PowerPoint at the White House, just a hunch.

Peter Robinson: One other quotation here “the second key aspect of Reagan’s state graph is the extent to which Reagan battled not only with the democratic opposition, but also against the conventional reflexes much of his own party and staff.”

Steve Hayward: Right, right. Well his staff represented, I mean the famous division that appeared in the press was the pragmatist and the ideologues and there is some truth to that although that was often overdrawn by journalists who were looking to stir up trouble. But, what Reagan was doing there was replicating in his own White House staff the divisions in the Republican Party. Which is probably shrewd in certain ways. But then what really struck me in reading his diaries when they were published and released a few years ago was how often he complained about Republicans in his diary. I did not actually try and count it up but I think he complained about Republicans as often as he complained about Tip O’Neill and the Democrats and the media. He would often say oh the Republicans deserted me again on another vote. The phrase he would like to use is “we had rabbits when we needed tigers’. He tells stories in his diaries and there are other documents that we now have that show him having ferocious arguments with Senate Republicans who usually wanted to raise taxes.

Peter Robinson: Bob Baker, Bob Dole.

Steve Hayward: All of those folks. Remember at the time Reagan is elected, you had a lot of what we then regarded as liberal Republicans in the Senate. Maybe as many as 15 depending on how you count them.

Peter Robinson: Right, but we better not count them, but Percy of Illinois, Mathias of Maryland.

Steve Hayward: Right, Packwood of Oregon.

Peter Robinson: Packwood or Oregon.

Steve Hayward: Hatfield

Peter Robinson: Hatfield of Oregon.

Steve Hayward: Right, Percy did you mention of Illinois. Today we complain about conservatists today.

Peter Robinson: Lowell Wycker.

Steve Hayward: Lowell of course, Lowell Wycker. Right and there are several others, the fellows from the Dakotas who are now long gone.

Peter Robinson: Right.

Steve Hayward: Yeah so he had to fight them constantly.

Peter Robinson: Segment two – the Cold War before Gorbachev. Phase one let us call it. Autumn 1983, take you through several incidents, you describe them briefly and then tell us what they mean. Autumn 1983, Reagan deploys Pershing missiles in Europe, why is that important?

Steve Hayward: Well, the new phase on the arms front of the Cold War starting in the 1970's was not only was the Soviet Union building a lot of intercontinental missiles, directed at us, many more

Peter Robinson: Capable of flying across, actually across the ice cap with the Arctic to strike in North America.

Steve Hayward: They had also deployed a large number of short range or intermediate nuclear missiles in Eastern Europe pointed at Western Europe, pointed at our NATO forces. Well this caused a serious problem. In the late 1970's the Europeans were becoming alarmed and the Europeans asked the NATO Alliance, but really the United States, we need to counter that in the theaters it was called because we cannot really rely on the United States threatening to launch their intercontinental ballistic missiles against the Soviet Union in the event of a conventional war. It all gets very complicated and seems kind of strange looking back today, we do not think about that kind of problem in the age of terrorism, so actually it was under Jimmy Carter it was decided all right, we will install up to almost 600 short range missiles of a couple of different kinds. By 1983, at the same time we will negotiate with the Soviet Union to try and get them to take their missiles out or reach some kind of agreement. This was called the Two Track Process. The Europeans never really had their heart in this. They were hoping that the bluff of the United States would be enough to get the Soviets to back down. The Soviets had just the other view. If we hang tough, the Europeans will lose their nerve and they very nearly did and the US will not install those missiles after all. So it was a very tense arrangement and the Soviet Union we know from information later, did spend millions of dollars on the anti-nuclear movement in Western Europe, and help generate crowds in the hundreds of thousands out in the streets when the Reagan and Vice President George Bush would visit the continent.

Peter Robinson: And indeed in a nuclear freeze concert in Central Park in 1983, which Bruce Springsteen performed, that held for years and may still, hold the record as the largest outdoor political gathering full stop I think in this country's history.

Steve Hayward: I think that is still true.

Peter Robinson: There was a lot of opposition in this country. But Reagan did it, right?

Steve Hayward: Reagan did it. Kind of tough on it in some very difficult circumstances.

Peter Robinson: Now, let me present you with another quotation from your book. "Reagan" you write "had waited at least a year and a half into his Presidency before he participated in a complete briefing and rehearsal of the actual operating plan for a nuclear war". So on the one hand you have Ronald Reagan insisting on deploying nuclear weapons and proving very queasy about learning how to exercise the authority to launch them.

Steve Hayward: right. This is one the more extraordinary stories about Ronald Reagan and our mutual late friend Bill Buckley wrote in his last book *The Ronald Reagan I Knew Something Extraordinary* I am just paraphrasing here, but he said that I used to praise Reagan for his willingness to risk our survival. Paradoxically to insure our survival.

Peter Robinson: Yes

Steve Hayward: And he added, I now doubt that that was true of the man that I have said that about 25 years ago. In other words Reagan was in his heart of heart a pacifist. There have been a few people who worked for him that said you know we really worry that if it really came to the crunch whether he would really push the button. Because his view was what is the point

Peter Robinson: What is your considered view?

Steve Hayward: This is very tough. The reason being is that other people like our other mutual friend Marty Anderson says oh no, Reagan knew his duty. We know what the drill was. If you are going to have mutual shared destruction, you have to be willing to go through with it.

Peter Robinson: But your point is, by the way I had not, I read a lot on Reagan and I lived through a big piece of it, I have not know this until I got to your book, your point is he did not know the drill. He carried that the command card and the nuclear football in the briefcase was always close to him, but he waited a year and a half before sitting still for a briefing on how to use the darn thing.

Steve Hayward: Let me explain that a little bit further. He knew how to use the card, you punch it into the football and all of that is very classified what he did not go through for a year and a half as best we know is what they call the full briefing on what is known as SIOP. Single integrated operational plan. If the word comes that the Soviet Union is shooting missiles here, or somewhere, you want the President to be prepared to make instantaneous decisions.

Peter Robinson: Right.

Steve Hayward: And what that briefing is about is here are all the responsible

Peter Robinson: Here are your options, right.

Steve Hayward: You want to be able to pick Option A through F or whatever they are. That he resisted doing much to the alarm ultimately of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and his own national security staff.

Peter Robinson: The conclusion that he was queasy about it, that he just did not like the idea of it is inescapable.

Steve Hayward: I think that is right. A person like, more conventional politician like Richard Nixon or Bill Clinton could probably compartmentalize this.

Peter Robinson: Right.

Steve Hayward: I think with Reagan with his capacious imagination for various reasons, I think just found it so distasteful even to contemplate the destruction that would be involved in his picking Option A through F, he just kept pushing it off his schedule.

Peter Robinson: All right. Ronald Reagan March 23, 1983 “we are launching an effort which holds the promise of changing the course of human history”. Explain.

Steve Hayward: Well that was

Peter Robinson: Briefly, but explain.

Steve Hayward: That was the famous strategic defense initiative, or what was derided as Star Wars and what is important about that is almost the entire apparatus of his administration was against that speech and against that idea. His only support came from Bill Clark his national security advisor and George Keyworth his science advisor up to an hour before the speech Secretary of State Schultz was still trying to argue him out of it. And even the Defense Department was not very enthusiastic at that moment.

Peter Robinson: But he did it.

Steve Hayward: Yeah.

Peter Robinson: During Reagan's first term he faces three old men in the Kremlin. Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenkov and he is retching up the pressure, he deploys the intermediate range missiles in Britain and in West Germany in 1983 and in 1983 he announces the Strategic Defense Initiative, he reaches up this defense spending to the tune of many tens of billions of dollars, he establishes a goal of a 600 ship Navy, very nearly doubling in size the United States Navy against these three decrepit old leaders and a declining system. I put it to you, that your hero Ronald Reagan was pursuing a reckless strategy.

Steve Hayward: Well that was argued at the time against him. What was not known at the time is that all during that time Reagan was having a correspondence with all three of those men. A correspondence that actually upset some people in the State Department because they thought he was conceding too much, he was being too sentimental. He writes to Brezhnev in 1981 saying "are we letting our ideologies get in the way of sitting down and actually solving some of these problems" It was the kind of letter you would expect Jimmy Carter to send and not Ronald Reagan. There was lots of talk of trying to have a Summit, but these guys all kept dying on him as he would like to say. Again this was two tracks in Reagan's mind. Late in 1981 he said to a reporter in an interview that I think was mostly ignored, he said "I always believed there has to be settlement with the Soviet Union. Otherwise we are going to end the world". Something Churchill always used to say also. At the same time, he was writing these letters very sentimental letters, he wrote to another friend of his in 1983 saying "I have never thought of the Soviet Union as people you could talk to as normal people. I am trying to present them with a choice of either lowering level of weapons together with us to a mutual and agreeable level or entering an arms race that they cannot win." I mean this is something; I am going to make them an offer they cannot refuse. So, there is a sentimental and tough minded Reagan existing side by side. It had to be extraordinarily difficult for the Soviets to handle that.

Peter Robinson: Final question about this Phase One of the Cold War. It actually looks like you could sum up the correlation of forces to use the old Marxist phrase on March 11, 1985, when Constantine Chernenkov dies, what is the state of the Cold War, he is dead, three hours later, Mikhail Gorbachev will be elected General Secretary of the Community Party. But the hour before Gorbachev is elected, how do matters stand?

Steve Hayward: Well, the Cold War is still in deep freeze really. The criticism Reagan was receiving was he was the first American President since, well first American President since the Soviet Union existed who would not meet a Soviet leader. He had gone almost five years without a Summit or meeting of any kind, at least a public meeting we knew about. He had a private meeting with

Peter Robinson: With Dobrenan

Steve Hayward: With Dobrenan in 1983 which was quite significant. We did not learn that until much later. So it looked pretty cold. The Soviet Union was in full cry against the strategic defense initiative and the worry always was gosh Reagan's hard line rhetoric is going to make the hard liners in the Kremlin put up a wall. Instead you got Gorbachev whose argument in my book was genuinely a person of liberal reformist instincts, but a confused one.

Peter Robinson: Fine we will come to Gorbachev next. Segment Three – what Reagan got up to here at home - domestic policy? Ronald Reagan, I quote him “I knew it was working when they stopped calling it Reaganomics”. Describe the American economy when Ronald Reagan took office and tell us what he did about it.

Steve Hayward: I think

Peter Robinson: O will give you about two sentences on each we have to

Steve Hayward: well all right.

Peter Robinson: The medium imposes its own disciplines.

Steve Hayward: No I understand it is a complicated story. But two things to mention real quick. One is that January of 1980, December – January, 1981, you had an economy at near panic conditions. Not unlike what you saw fall of 2008 during the housing and banking crisis. Reagan rejected the advice of Jack Camp and David Stockman to declare a Roosevelt style national economic emergency. Seems like that would make things worse. But you did have record inflation, record interest rates. The prime rate was approaching 20%, you had some banks were stopping issuing mortgages at all and so forth. So that was interesting that Reagan approached that calmly and said yes we have a crisis but we are going to deal with this in a calm way and then he stuck to his guns on his tax cuts. The center piece of Reaganomics was the income tax reductions which even as I say in the book, lost of Republicans were against. Memo to Obama, Reagan tax cuts passed the Senate by a vote of I think 89 to 10 at the end of the summer. Which is why a lot of people say healthcare should be a bipartisan matter these days to get off topic slightly.

Peter Robinson: All right. Reagan enacts an across the board income tax reduction to be phased in over three years in his first year in office in 1981. Within a few months, the economy is tipping into what turns out to be the deepest recession at that point since the Second World War, unemployment reaches 11%, about a percent and a half higher than it is now as you and I tape this program. It becomes clear that Federal deficits are going to explode. This is a man who believed as he took the Oath of Office that he could balance the Federal Budget. The Federal deficits begin to explode. And, he takes back some of the tax cuts with TEFRA. Steven Hayes in this book “that is the 1982 tax hike they have looked good on paper a \$98 billion tax increase following a \$750 billion tax cut,

but with Social Security taxes rising by more than a hundred billion over the next three years, the income tax cut of 1981 barely kept many workers even". A source of great confusion to this day on net was Reagan a tax cutter or was he a tax hiker?

Steve Hayward: There are several ways you can answer that question. I argue that ultimately he is a tax cutter because he kept in place the central principle which was lowering marginal income tax rates. And other taxes you could play with because they have less of a distorting effect on the economy. What is important to understand is that when the economy starts to tip into recession in 1981, immediately the Democrats and the media go on full alert, we have to repeal these income tax cuts.

Peter Robinson: Right

Steve Hayward: And you know they wanted to cancel the third year and all kinds of things.

Peter Robinson: Only the Democrats?

Steve Hayward: Some Republicans, Bob Dole was along with this idea because he did not like

Peter Robinson: Some Republicans in the White House perhaps?

Steve Hayward: Some in the White House too although Reagan knew they were having and authorizing these private negotiations that were going on. I make the argument and I have run this by a number of people who say they are not aware of any evidence for it, but think it is perhaps plausible that having gotten a larger tax package passed, then Reagan originally forecast, he knew he had some room to give back some of those. In other words, here is how the bidding went, Democrats said cancel the income tax cuts, the third year, the second year or the whole thing. And Reagan said I will agree to raise taxes by \$3 billion. That is his opening bid. I see the whole story of 1982 and Reagan is saying stay the course and he is hoping that things will turn around faster than the fact they did. I see that as very clever and patient negotiations on Reagan's part. I think he knew early on that the tax cut had been the total dollar amount had been too big because you had this bidding war and added on all kinds of tax breaks for industries. I think he was always open to taking some of those back, but preserving the income tax cut because that was the center of the whole thing and that is what the Liberals most especially want to roll back.

Peter Robinson: So what you establish in *The Age of Reagan the Conservative Counter Revolution* is that on the domestic side, even as on the foreign policy side, what you have is a man playing quite sophisticated game.

Steve Hayward: Absolutely. You know there is the famous old Saturday Night Live sketch

Peter Robinson: Yes

Steve Hayward: You know the one

Peter Robinson: It is memorized, but tell, describe

Steve Hayward: It is the Reagan we all sort of know and love, is a grandfatherly figure patting Girl Scouts on the head and then they are ushered out and suddenly the Machiavellian Reagan shows up and he spreads the map on the table and he is barking orders. It turns out that the comedians were closer to reality than we thought.

Peter Robinson: In August, 27 years ago, the stock market bottomed out and began to rise signaling the beginning of what would be an economic expansion with only a couple of very shallow, very brief reverses that lasted until just 18 months ago. More than a quarter of a century of prosperity it could be argued the most unparalleled economic expansion in all of human history. And the credit for that, if it must be given to one person, goes above all to Paul Volker.

Steve Hayward: No.

Peter Robinson: Why not?

Steve Hayward: Well he is part of the story. It was true that we needed to get a more sensible monetary policy. And Reagan supported Volker when everybody including most Republicans wanted him reigned in because it is probably right that the Federal Reserve slowed the monetary growth too fast and contributed to the death of the 1982 recession. But the thing that I think Reagan and supply sighthers were absolutely right about is that high tax rates and high regulation had really clogged up the economy in the 1970's. You have very low rates of capital formation, very low rates of start up. Completely unproductive use of capital and by changing the regulatory system and the tax system, you redeploy capital from inflation hedges of real estate and orange groves and all kinds of things like this and art into the investment lead boom that we have seen n the last two decades. You really needed those changes for that to happen. Stable monetary policy was an important element but not the sold element.

Peter Robinson: Steven Hayward again, I am quoting you "the fundamental reunity of Reagan's statesmanship asserted in this book opens up for debate the question of whether Reagan's domestic record is commensurate with his foreign achievements". Well is it?

Steve Hayward: I think so, it is harder

Peter Robinson: Why isn't he given credit for that?

Steve Hayward: Well I think, well let me back up a step and put it this way. One of the reasons I undertook this project is I was sure when Reagan left office 20 years ago, he would be treated roughly by the media, academic complex. He would be as I put it Coolidgeized. Coolidge was popular until a generation of historians made him into a post-clown.

Peter Robinson: Right.

Steve Hayward: So the big surprise in the last 10 years has been the rise in esteem for Reagan, even among a great many liberals. You know Sean Melenze of Princeton gives him is due, so did Richard Reeves had always been a critic of Reagan.

Peter Robinson: Sort of.

Steve Hayward: However, they make the distinction between Reagan the Cold Warrior and Reagan the Domestic President where he was awful.

Peter Robinson: And they furthermore distinguished if I may between Reagan the cold Warrior of Term 1

Steve Hayward: Yes

Peter Robinson: Who has actually a warrior and Reagan the softie of the second term who suddenly says oh well let us just talk and negotiate? That is the one they think they like.

Steve Hayward: That is exactly right. I think they are wrong on that count too. They do not see the unity of his state craft from the very beginning on the Cold War and Reagan understanding that he could change tactics and change emphasis along the way.

Peter Robinson: Reagan was willing to talk once he had them exactly where he wanted them.

Steve Hayward: Right, right. But look even on domestic policy Reagan inherited a number of trends that were already underway under Jimmy Carter. Deregulation of certain industries, deregulating energy, especially deregulation, now he did a lot more of that than Carter ever would have done if there had been a Carter second term. But even in those cases I think Reagan does not get the credit he deserves for being pretty bold. Now it is a more mixed record of course because he fell short in a lot of areas, did not get everything he wanted. Something's were gone back one, but it is an impressive record.

Peter Robinson: All right. So that 25 years of prosperity belongs, if you have to give the credit to one person, not to Paul Volker, not to Bill Clinton, it is to Ronald Reagan and others who have effectively stayed out of the way of his program.

Steve Hayward: What did Bill Clinton end up doing in his second term? He cut the capital gains tax rate.

Peter Robinson: Right, right. Okay, Segment four – Cold War Phase 2 Endgame. Steven Hayward, the Reagan Gorbachev Geneva Summit in November, 1985, was the first such meeting in six years. Reagan placed great stock in personal diplomacy. Tell us what happened in Geneva. Briefly.

Steve Hayward: Well a lot happened there and it is hard to summarize, but they get to like each other a little bit and get along, but what is really important about Geneva and all the Summits is that for other first time the United States and our President is arguing, having real arguments with a Soviet leader. Most of the Summits before that had been set pieces. So much set pieces that you know the Soviets would respond from a notebook to every American point to pre-arranged talking points. Gorbachev did not do any of that. The Soviets had agreed before the first Summit to a remarkable concession that Secretary Schultz worked out, everything will be on the table; human rights, regional conflicts, cultural exchanges and arms control. Reagan I think got the better of Gorbachev in a lot of those arguments. Gorbachev would try to argue about you have a human rights problem in the United States, essentially he was taking his talking points from the *New York Times* editorial page and Reagan could swat that away all day long. All the people thought Gorbachev will run circles around Reagan; well it was the other way around.

Peter Robinson: All right let me give you an anecdote. This was told and ask you what you do with this? How does this fit into your understanding of Ronald Reagan? Hugh Socitey, the late and great, I would argue Hugh Socitey was probably the great magazine journalist of the last 50 years, for *Time* magazine and Hugh Socitey told the story that flying back from Geneva on Air Force One he was given a moment to go forward and talk with Reagan and by then he had established something of a relationship with Reagan and he said Mr. President, I have to tell you many of us in the press corps were very worried flying to Geneva because we were concerned this is all very technical material, throw weights and nuclear strategy, it all gets very complicated and Ronald Reagan interrupted him and said, oh Hugh, Gorbachev does not know any of that stuff neither.

Steve Hayward: My guess is Gorbachev was probably more briefed on the fine points, but Gorbachev had somewhat more interest in having these serious arguments with Reagan about broader matters. The other thing about Geneva that I think is significant about that particular point is Reagan said later I knew nothing concrete was actually going to come out of that meeting. Reagan was amazingly patient about this process for an older guy. He knew that this first meeting was going to be whether we can get along and actually lay the ground work for real progress later. Which I think is also an interesting insight in the way he approached this.

Peter Robinson: All right. So Reagan enjoys being underestimated even as we depict the merges he is a pretty sophisticated, all right. Reykjavik Summit, 1986, Steven Hayward I am quoting you once again "There have been numerous nominees for the moment the Cold War ended. This was very nearly it". Explain.

Steve Hayward: Well actually referring I think there to a particular exchange between Reagan and Gorbachev. If you go back for just a moment to Reagan's first press conference in 1981 and that is where he says listen Soviet Union will lie, cheat and steal because that is their morality. Every leader said they believed in world domination. Reagan who obviously paid closer attention to people getting credit for said to Gorbachev you are the first Soviet leader that has not said that boiler plate. I thought that was Reagan's invitation for him to sort of ratify that publicly, but no, Gorbachev later did specifically disavow in 1988 and disavow the Brezhnev Doctrine. There is one moment where Reagan puts on the table, maybe this is all over and maybe we are turning a new page in our relations right now. Gorbachev did not quite grab it because he was there really trying to get something specific. He wanted to kill SDI so he did not grab a hold of the ring that Reagan offered to him, but they came close.

Peter Robinson: Gorbachev and Reagan in Reykjavik is supposed to be a pre Summit Summit it is just an informal discussion that is meant to tee up a later Summit. In fact, Gorbachev comes in with dramatic proposals and says look I will give you deep cuts in nuclear weapons, Reagan sees him and raises him and says let us have even deeper cuts in nuclear weapons and then Gorbachev says fine.

Steve Hayward: Right

Peter Robinson: As long as you limit the strategic defense initiative to the laboratory for a decade.

Steve Hayward: Right

Peter Robinson: Only laboratory no deployment

Steve Hayward: Right

Peter Robinson: No outside the laboratory testing for a decade. And they go back and forth and Reagan says to Gorbachev are you really going to turn down a historic opportunity agreement for the sake of one word.

Steve Hayward: Right

Peter Robinson: And Gorbachev did.

Steve Hayward: Right

Peter Robinson: Why did laboratory matter?

Steve Hayward: Well you know my favorite joke about came out of all of that made in time with Richard Pearl who apparently sat at one of the meetings, what if the laboratory is in space. Really what they were after was we have to find a way to confine it to the laboratory because as a bureaucratic matter, if you confine it to a research program that is a bureaucratic way of killing it.

Peter Robinson: It will never happen

Steve Hayward: By the way it kind of happens to some extent anyway with SDI. I think the most important insight coming out of all of that is that once Gorbachev offers those concessions and tied it together to getting rid of SDI Reagan was three quarters of the way to win the whole game. But because as Secretary Schultz pointed out once you put those concessions on the table, you really cannot take them back.

Peter Robinson: Secretary Schultz did not point that out immediately after Reykjavik.

Steve Hayward: No he was

Peter Robinson: He was very, very down.

Steve Hayward; Well I am sure for the folks that have been up all night long and the way it unfolded so unexpectedly at the moment it seemed like a real catastrophe but it was only days later people started

Peter Robinson: Why did the Soviets care about the strategic defense imitative? Had not they read the statements by the American union of concerned scientists who said this is pie in the sky, it is technically infeasible, it is ridiculous. Why did they care?

Steve Hayward: Well, they genuinely feared that we might be able to do it or do something that would complicate their force planning. In fact they had been trying to do strategic defense and had done very well at it, but were trying some things and also I mentioned in the book, other people mentioned this. We faked a couple of tests to scare them. Deliberate disinformation. So they had reason to be frightened about it.

Peter Robinson: The Washington Summit in December, 1987 Reagan and Gorbachev signed the INF Treaty calling for the elimination of an entire category of nuclear weapons. You make the point that it was only about 3% or so of nuclear stockpiles, but still it was the first time that you get an entire category, weapons come down rather than merely capping the growth

Steve Hayward: Right.

Peter Robinson: George Will “December 8th the day of the signing of that treaty” George Will “December 8th will be remembered as the day the Cold War was lost”.

Steve Hayward: Right. I have asked George about that statement and good for George he says well I was wrong, Ronald Reagan knew more than I though he did. Of course they were great friends, Will was a great admirer of Reagan, but I think there he reflected the conventional wisdom of conservatives a great many conservatives not just him who thought you can never trust the Russians to make a deal – period, let us go home.

Peter Robinson: When was the Cold War won?

Steve Hayward: I think it is in the period. I think it is between Geneva and Reykjavik and coming out of Reykjavik. I tell quite a lot more about Gorbachev than I thought I would as I went through what is available from the Soviet archives and translated documents. Realize in fact that Gorbachev and certain of his key aides really were liberal reformers and wanted to end this, they had their own political pressures from their hard-line folks. They were confused about what reform meant, did not understand they could not control it which ultimately is what happens to them. As I say Reagan was writing his diaries and letters to friends. I think this guy is different. Here we are seeing some real changes in the Soviet Union. There is lots of problem here along the way but I want to give Gorbachev his due although it has to be said that the dissolution of the Soviet Union was never part of his purpose.

Peter Robinson: No

Steve Hayward: Which is ultimately why he is confused about things.

Peter Robinson: Do you remember, I will toss this in because I cannot resist it. Meeting with the speech writers, this is after Geneva and before Reykjavik, speech writers have a meeting with Don Regan then the Chief of Staff and Regan says the President wants you to tone down the rhetoric on Gorbachev. And we said, like hell he does. You want us to tone down the rhetoric on Gorbachev; Ronald Reagan would never say any such things. To give Don Regan his due, he trooped us down the hall to the Oval office and Ronald Reagan said, well no I do think this fellow is different and I do think he wants to get out of Afghanistan and I would like to give him a little room. We walked out, it took days for us to, we were numb, we thought Ronald Reagan had gone soft on communism and in fact of course, and he was the first person I ever heard, it was Ronald Reagan himself, was the first person who said they are going to get out of Afghanistan.

Steve Hayward: Yeah

Peter Robinson: Insight. He saw, somehow or other he saw. I am really gratified your own insight into Reagan's insight. Segment five – the Reagan Legacy. Steven Hayward, quoting again from your book “William F. Buckley, Jr. national review defined itself as standing afoot history yelling stop, this kind of conservatism although intellectually rigorous is too backward looking and aristocratic for America, the land of immigrants, upward mobility and constant transformation.” If Ronald Reagan was not a national review conservative, what kind of conservative was he?

Steve Hayward: Well I think that original national review statements standing afford history that is what you might call lost cause conservatism. I sympathize with many aspects of it, but in a modern dynamic world that is obviously going to have to give way to lots of changes and the Reagan was what I like to say he was an American conservative. That is different I think than say a European conservative or a Burken conservative that elevates tradition, authority and class structure to almost a level of principle. We have never done that in America. It is interesting that we call our Founders conservatives could be our Founders, but we also call the intellectually Liberals.

Peter Robinson: Yes

Steve Hayward: So this is the interesting thing about the American tradition. Reagan in some respects is an old classical liberal who believes in expanding individual freedom, he believes in a limited government version of this which is a whole lot better and that is what I think made him so different from other conservatives. And is why I think his legacy is sort of people tend to look too much at his personality and his humor and his style and miss the intellectual core of the man which was quite important.

Peter Robinson: Now, what did he really accomplish? You quote Coolidge biographer Thomas Silver “judged by the highest goal he set for himself Reagan was not successful, it cannot be said that Reagan in any fundamental way dismantled or even scaled back, the administrative state created by FDR”.

Steve Hayward: Yeah I think that is slightly too harsh but implausible. I think government would have run a lot more if Jimmy Carter had a second term. I mean Carter's own budget projections showed a pretty rapid growth in spending and taxes which did not happen under Reagan. Here is the important story I think about Reagan today looking back on him. Both as Governor in his second term in California and his second term in Washington, he understood that even though I have been able to hold the line to some degree of success in all of these areas, there is no guarantee that people after me, presidents after me will do so. In California he proposed Prop 1 which was taxes spending limitation issue.

Peter Robinson: Would that have been enacted?

Steve Hayward: Exactly. Right. And in his second term starting in 1987, you may have written some of the speeches or certainly read them; he started abdicating repeatedly his tax payer's bill or rights.

Peter Robinson: Yes.

Steve Hayward: It was a suite of five Constitutional Amendments. Two were old stand bys, balance budget amendment and line item veto for the President. But the other three were interesting.

One was a two-thirds vote for any tax increase by Congress, but one was a spending limitation of some kind, you know the government can spend only so much of national income. The last one is the one that also I was curious to me it was a Constitutional ban on wage and price controls which no one was talking about at the time. But today we are talking about controlling the wages of bankers, in the banking sector and controlling prices in the healthcare sector. Of course there is not hope that those are going to get through in the 1980's but here is Reagan arguing in Constitutional terms. Ultimately I make the argument that if Reagan failed in a permanent alignment the way Roosevelt did with The New Deal it was because the Republican Party its successors and even Reagan himself were not a full fledged Constitutional movement and that is what we need to get back to. Next question.

Peter Robinson: Exactly. The shortcomings of the Reagan Revolution and I am quoting again from your magnificent book "The shortcoming of the Regan Revolution stem from its failure to be a full fledged Constitutional movement of its own?"

Steve Hayward: Right

Peter Robinson: What would it have looked like if it had been a full fledged Constitutional movement? How would it have differed?

Steve Hayward: Well I think Reagan should have pushed for those Amendments in his first term. I think that should have been part of his package in 1981.

Peter Robinson: Oh I see. All right.

Steve Hayward: But I mean look I have to give him his props on this, I mean, when we celebrate Reagan we should celebrate more than just as I say his style points and personality and you look at the substance of things, one of the things I think was quite important that we forgot now is the whole fight that the Attorney General Ed Meade started about original intent on the second term because that is still with us today, it is quite important. People thought that was a dead and gone subject and they have revived it and as I say it is still important today in these judicial confirmations and our legal arguments.

Peter Robinson: Right. Again, this Constitutional point, I am quoting you "one of the great shortcomings of conservative political leadership since Reagan is the near total absence of any serious broad gauge Constitutional argument". Today what would that Constitutional argument look like?

Steve Hayward: Well, that is a hard question and I go around and around trying to think about how you would explain it. I do not have a good answer for that but I do think that modern liberalism really is based on the idea that the living Constitution, the Constitution can be molded any way we want it, we simply ignore convenient passages in it. So I think the first order of business is conservatives need to say that liberalism undermines Constitutionalism and therefore undermines free government. You have to push back on what is the core of their view and then you have to make hard arguments that require learning about the subtlety of the framers design for things. We saw in Reagan and the Iran Contra catastrophe really and then also we saw it in George W. Bush these arguments about executive power and connection with foreign policy. Those are Constitutional arguments. The Constitution is ambiguous about some of these things, it is not black

and white. But that is where you need to be making serious arguments about how a government out to run and how executives ought to proceed and what their power should be. Those kinds of debates are edifying and clarify the public mind.

Peter Robinson: Right and the argument should be made before the President gets himself into a problem.

Steve Hayward: Yeah although it is hard.

Peter Robinson: All right, all right. Last questions, sort of short answer essays.

Steve Hayward: Okay. The lightning round.

Peter Robinson: What surprised you most about Ronald Reagan?

Steve Hayward: I think it was the canniness of the guy that we did not perceive. Quick story it often was said that Reagan did not talk much at meetings. Well it turns out that he talked a lot at meetings, but a lot of them he did not. Two reasons for that – one – is he liked to reserve judgment to make decisions later in most cases, but two – he knew that if he said something in a meeting he was likely to read it in the paper the next morning. He never told people that, later he would tell people that or put it in his diary. At least drove them crazy, but that is an example of the guy having a real discipline that we did not perceive because he was so good at it.

Peter Robinson: His greatest weakness?

Steve Hayward: I think it had to be a bit of sentimentality that you saw on the one hand, these letters to people like Brezhnev that really do read kind of strangely if you do not know it is from Ronald Reagan, you would think it was some mush headed liberal who had written this. You also saw it and I am very critical of him in the book, my one really strong criticism is that is what led him into the Iran Contra disaster. His sympathies for the hostages held in Lebanon was so overwhelming that it over wrote his own better judgment and the better judgment of his advisors who said we should not be trying to sell arms to the Iranians even as three card money scheming as his mind for why it might work.

Peter Robinson: How did he wear with you for this decade when you were living with him so closely? Was Ronald Reagan good company?

Steve Hayward: Absolutely are you kidding. What was the old line from Jack Warner in the 1960's, no, no, no Jimmie Stewart for Governor, Ronald Reagan for best friend.

Peter Robinson: Right, right. What would you most like readers to grasp, excuse me let me refine the question. We now have the kids who graduate from college this year will have been born after Ronald Reagan left office and oh my aching back. So what do you want the generation that understands this large figure departed the scene just before they made their own entrance? What do you want them to grasp?

Steve Hayward: Boy I could answer a lot of things there. I think the one thing if I have to pick one is to understand that a lot of the political arguments we are having now we had then. Another thing that is receded from view is oh Reagan, we all loved Reagan and when in fact

Peter Robinson: Nonsense

Steve Hayward: I tried to capture in the book that the partisan bitterness about Reagan was just as strong as it was under George W. Bush or now under Obama. In fact I quote in there a poll that was taken of the most hated people in history that somebody in London did and it was Hitler, Stalin and Ronald Reagan and you know, the Reagan/Hitler theme was around just like the Bush/Hitler theme was around. So, this points out the broader, deeper long running political divisions we have. We let nostalgia gloss those over sometimes.

Peter Robinson: Is the conservative movement, the Republican Party too hung up on Ronald Reagan? Should they just forget about him and move on?

Steve Hayward: Well yes and now. My criticism a lot of conservatives is that their affection for Ronald Reagan is too superficial, it is his style, it is his speech making. IN fact not only I think do they not study his substance seriously enough but also his style. My criticism of most politicians of either party is they talk too long, Reagan from a show business days understood always want to leave people wanting more. He practices speeches as we know and really worked hard on them. Too many politicians approach their speeches in a slap dash way, both as with substance and length and style and preparation.

Peter Robinson: Right.

Steve Hayward: So if you really want to be faithful to Ronald Reagan you will work harder.

Peter Robinson: Right. Ronald Reagan only made it look easy.

Steve Hayward: Exactly. It was hard work that made it look easy.

Peter Robinson: No it was extremely hard, I was so struck, very quickly I went to the Reagan speech writing staff from George H.W. the Vice Presidential speech writing staff and I carried with me certain prejudices assuming the President was effectively a lazy man. He was extremely disciplined about marking up the speeches and his edits were always superb, we would send over those drafts, they would come back the next morning without fail, marked up, edited, he worked at it.

Steve Hayward: Right

Peter Robinson: Last question Steve; Clare Booth Loose famously said that history would have only one sentence even for the greatest of men. Churchill defeated Hitler. Lincoln freed the slaves.

Steve Hayward: Yeah I think

Peter Robinson: Ronald Reagan

Steve Hayward: I think I will give that one to Margaret Thatcher who said Ronald Reagan won the Cold War without the firing of a single shot. Which by the way she is paraphrasing Churchill who said in the famous Iron Curtain speech in 1946 that World War II could have been prevented without the firing of a single shot. If only we had stood up o the dictators and armed ourselves. I think the Iron Lady had the Iron Curtain speech in mind when she said that about Reagan.

Peter Robinson: Doctor Steven Hayward, author of *The Age of Reagan, the Conservative Counter Revolution, 1980 to 1989* a magnificent achievement.

Steve Hayward: Thank you Peter.

Peter Robinson: Thank you for joining us. For Uncommon Knowledge, and the Hoover Institution I am Peter Robinson.