

Reagan Document Analysis

Document Questions	Notes
<p data-bbox="293 304 427 331"><u>Education</u></p> <p data-bbox="142 352 578 451">What did Reagan do for education first while governor of CA and later as president?</p>	
<p data-bbox="269 711 451 739"><u>AIDS timeline</u></p> <p data-bbox="147 760 573 858">How did Reagan and the federal govt handle the “discovery” and outbreak of AIDS in the 1980s?</p>	
<p data-bbox="261 1165 459 1192"><u>Urban situation</u></p> <p data-bbox="177 1213 544 1312">What challenges were faced in America’s cities during Reagan’s administration?</p> <p data-bbox="147 1333 576 1465">Consider in your response what was happening with spending, crime rates, drugs, homelessness and infrastructure.</p>	
<p data-bbox="250 1585 470 1612"><u>Military/Defense</u></p> <p data-bbox="152 1633 568 1698">What efforts did Reagan make while president to end the Cold War?</p> <p data-bbox="326 1719 394 1747">AND</p> <p data-bbox="147 1768 573 1833">How did America’s military spending enter into this larger defense strategy?</p>	

The Educational Legacy of Ronald Reagan

What is Mr. Reagan's educational legacy? Let's begin with a look at his record as governor of California. While running for the governorship, Mr. Reagan shrewdly made the most of disorder on University of California campuses. For instance, he demanded a legislative investigation of alleged Communism and sexual misconduct at the University of California at Berkeley. He insisted on public hearings, claiming "a small minority of hippies, radicals and filthy speech advocates" had caused disorder and that they should "be taken by the scruff of the neck and thrown off campus – permanently."

Once elected, Mr. Reagan set the educational tone for his administration by calling for an end to free tuition for state college and university students, and annually demanding 20% across-the-board cuts in higher education funding.

And he certainly did not let up on the criticisms of campus protestors that had aided his election. Mr. Reagan's denunciations of student protesters were both frequent and particularly venomous. He called protesting students "brats," "freaks," and "cowardly fascists." And when it came to "restoring order" on unruly campuses he observed, "If it takes a bloodbath, let's get it over with. No more appeasement!"

Governor Reagan not only slashed spending on higher education. Throughout his tenure as governor, Mr. Reagan consistently and effectively opposed additional funding for basic education. This led to painful increases in local taxes and the deterioration of California's public schools. Los Angeles voters got so fed up picking up the slack that on five separate occasions they refused to support any further increases in local school taxes. The consequent under-funding resulted in overcrowded classrooms, ancient worn-out textbooks, crumbling buildings and badly demoralized teachers. Ultimately half of the Los Angeles Unified School District's teachers walked off the job to protest conditions in their schools. Mr. Reagan was unmoved.

Ronald Reagan left California public education worse than he found it. A system that had been the envy of the nation when he was elected was in decline when he left. Nevertheless, Mr. Reagan's actions had political appeal, particularly to his core conservative constituency, many of whom had no time for public education.

In campaigning for the Presidency, Mr. Reagan called for the total elimination the US Department of Education, severe curtailment of bilingual education, and massive cutbacks in the Federal role in education. Upon his election he tried to do that and more.

Significantly, President Reagan also took steps to increase state power over education at the expense of local school districts. Federal funds that had flowed directly to local districts were redirected to state government. Moreover, federal monies were provided to beef up education staffing at the state level. The result was to seriously erode the power of local school districts.

As in California, Mr. Reagan also made drastic cuts in the federal education budget. Over his eight years in office he diminished it by half. When he was elected the federal share of total education spending was 12%. When he left office it stood at just 6%.

He also advocated amending the Constitution to permit public school prayer, demanded a stronger emphasis on values education and proposed federal tuition tax credits for parents who opted for private schooling. The later two initiatives stalled in Congress. There were efforts to promote greater values education but they eventually misfired because of an obvious lack of consensus on whose values were to be taught.

Reagan's avowed purpose was to make America more competitive in the world economy. It also suggested that it was far more important for schools to turn out good employees than good citizens or decent human beings.

In California, Mr. Reagan had made political hay by heaping scorn on college students and their professors. As President his administration's repeatedly issued or encouraged uncommonly bitter denunciations of public education. William Bennett, the President's Secretary of Education, took the lead in this. He toured the nation making unprecedented and unprincipled attacks on most aspects of public education including teacher certification, teacher's unions and the "multi-layered, self-perpetuating, bureaucracy of administrators that weighs down most school systems." "The Blob" was what Bennett dismissively called them.

Predictably, Mr. Bennett made no mention of Reagan's massive cuts in education spending. Though he did repeatedly assert that public education was not going to be improved "by throwing money at it." He also scoffed at any suggestion that social ills and poverty limited educational possibilities. He characteristically used name-calling to deprecate that reasoning as "sociological flimflammy." But even as Bennett spoke, 11 million children were living in poverty, 275,000 children were in foster homes and some 100,000 children under age sixteen were homeless.

Three years into his first term Mr. Reagan's criticism of public education reached a crescendo when he hand picked a "blue ribbon" commission that wrote a remarkably critical and far-reaching denunciation of public education. Called "A Nation At Risk," this document charged that the US risked losing the economic competition among nations due to a "... rising tide of (educational) mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people."

After "A Nation At Risk" the nation's public schools were fair game for every ambitious politician or self-important business boss in the country. Its publication prompted a flood of follow-up criticism of public education as "blue ribbon" and "high level" national commissions plus literally hundreds of state panels wrote a flood of reform reports. Most presupposed that the charges made by Mr. Reagan's handpicked panel were true. Oddly though, throughout this entire clamor, parental confidence in the school's their children attended remained remarkably high. Meanwhile Mr. Reagan was quietly halving federal aid to education.

That sums up Mr. Reagan's educational legacy. As governor and president he demagogically fanned discontent with public education, then made political hay of it. As governor and president he bashed educators and slashed education spending while professing to value it. And as governor and president he left the nation's educators dispirited and demoralized.

Source: <http://www.newfoundations.com/Clabaugh/CuttingEdge/Reagan.html>

Urban Situation

Urban spending:

Table One

Federal Contribution (%) to Budgets, Selected Big Cities¹⁹

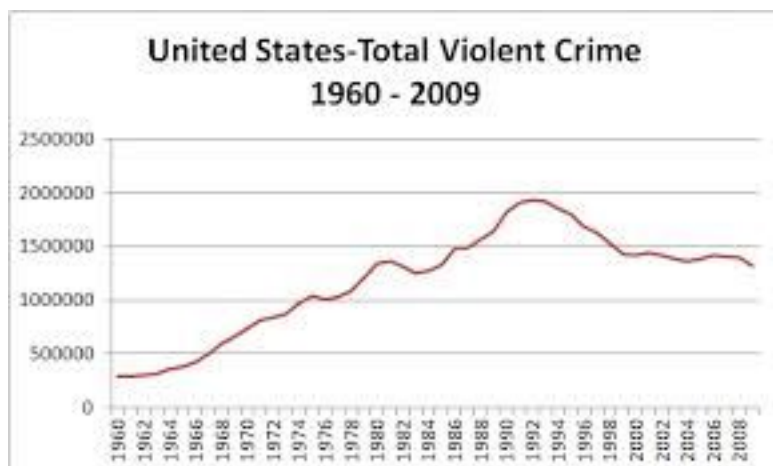
	1977	1985
1. New York	19%	9%
2. Los Angeles	18%	2%
3. Chicago	27%	15%
4. Philadelphia	20%	8%
5. Detroit	23%	12%
6. Baltimore	20%	6%
7. Pittsburgh	24%	13%
8. Boston	13%	7%
9. Cleveland	33%	19%
10. Minneapolis	21%	9%

¹⁹ US Bureau of Census, *City Government Finances, 1977-78 and 1984-85*; and Preston Niblack and Peter Stan, 'Financing Public Services in L.A.', in James Steinberg, David Lyon and Mary Vaiana, *Urban America: Policy Choices for Los Angeles and the Nation*, the Rand Corporation, Santa Monica 1992, p. 267.

Urban decay/blight:

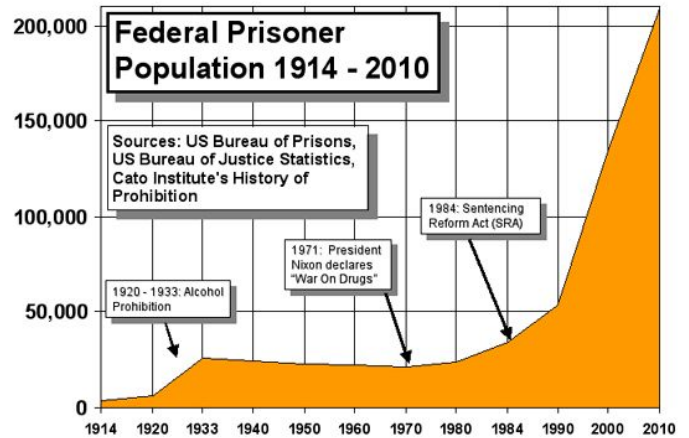


Crime:



Drugs:

The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 initiated the unequal treatment between crack and powder cocaine. At that time, crack cocaine was believed to be more problematic and dangerous than powder. Based on these mistaken beliefs, the 1986 Act authorized a 100-to-1 ratio sentencing scheme, which equated a single gram of crack with 100 grams of powder. No rationale for the ratio was discussed in the legislative history. The newly created United States Sentencing Commission simply adopted the 1986 Act's sentencing scheme without utilizing the required approach founded upon past sentencing practices. -- United States Sentencing Commission



Rachel

New Year's Eve.

She [Rachel] stalks into the room. Her eyes are reddened and her clothes in disarray. She wears a wrinkled and translucent nightgown. On her feet: red woolen stockings. At her throat: a crucifix. Over her shoulders is a dark and heavy robe. Nothing I have learned in the past week prepares me for this apparition.

She cries. She weeps. She paces left and right and back and forth. Pivoting and turning suddenly to face me. Glaring straight into my eyes. A sudden halt. She looks up toward the cracked and yellowish ceiling of the room. Her children stand around her in a circle. Two little girls. A frightened boy. They stare at her, as I do, as her arms reach out—for what? They snap like snakes and coil back. Her hair is gray—a stiff and brushlike Afro.

Angelina is twelve years old, Stephen is eleven, Erica is nine. The youngest child, eleven months, is sitting on the floor. A neighbor's child, six years old, sits in my lap and leans her head against my chest; she holds her arms around my neck. Her name or nickname (I do not know which) is Raisin. When she likes she puts her fingers on my mouth and interrupts the conversation with a tremolo of rapid words. There are two rooms. Rachel disappears into the second room, then returns and stands, uneasy, by the door.

ANGIE: "Ever since August we been livin' here. The room is either very hot or freezin' cold. When it be hot outside it's hot in here. When it be cold outside we have no heat. We used to live with my aunt but then it got too crowded there so we moved out. We went to welfare and they sent us to the shelter. Then they shipped us to Manhattan. I'm scared of the elevators. 'Fraid they be stuck. I take the stairs."

RAISIN: "Elevator might fall down and you would die."

RACHAEL: "It's unfair for them to be here in this room. They be yellin'. Lots of times I'm goin' to walk out. Walk out on the street and give it up. No, I don't do it. BCW [Bureau of Child Welfare] come to take the children. So I make them stay inside. Once they walk outside that door they are in danger."

ANGIE: ". . . I wish someone in New York could help us. Put all of the money that we have together and we buy a building. Two or three rooms for every family. Everybody have a kitchen. Way it is, you frightened all the time. I think this world is coming to the end."

STEPHEN: "This city is rich."

ANGIE: "Surely is!"

ERICA: "City and welfare, they got something goin'. Pay \$3,000 every month to stay in these here rooms . . ."

RACHEL: "I believe the City Hall got something goin' here. Gettin' a cut. They got to be. My children, they be treated like chess pieces. Send all the money off to Africa? You hear that song? They're not thinking about people starvin' here in the United States. I was thinkin': Get my kids and all the other children here to sing. 'We are the world. We live here too.' How come do you care so much for people you can't see? Ain't we the world? Ain't we a piece of it? We are so close they be afraid to see. Give us a shot at something. We are something! Ain't we something? I'm depressed. But we are something! People in America don't want to see." . . .

ANGIE: "There's one thing I ask: a home to be in with my mother. That was my only wish for Christmas. But it could not be."

RAISIN: "I saw Mr. Water Bug under my mother's bed. Mr. Rat be livin' with us too." . . .

ANGIE: "School is bad for me. I feel ashamed. They know we're not the same. My teacher do not treat us all the same. They know which children live in the hotel." . . .

ERICA: "When we hungry and don't have no food we borrow from each other. Her mother [Raisin's] give us food. Or else we go to Crisis. In the mornin' when we wake up we have a banana or a cookie. If the bus ain't late we have our breakfast in the school. What I say to President Reagan: Give someone a chance! I believe he be a selfish man. Can't imagine how long he been president."

RAISIN: "Be too long."

ANGIE: "Teacher tell us this be a democracy. I don't know. I doubt it. Rich people, couldn't they at least give us a refund?"'

AIDS Timeline

1981

- By March 1981 at least eight cases of a more aggressive form of cancer had been diagnosed amongst young gay men in New York. At about the same time there was an increase, in California, New York and Atlanta, in the number of cases of a rare lung infection.
- In June, the CDC (Center for Disease Control) published a report which is sometimes referred to as the "beginning" of AIDS, but it might be more accurate to describe it as the beginning of the general awareness of AIDS in the USA.

1982

- On April 13, U.S. Representative Henry Waxman convenes the first congressional hearings on HIV/AIDS. Henry Waxman and Phillip Burton introduce legislation to allocate \$5 million to CDC for surveillance and \$10 million to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for AIDS research.
- AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) was first properly defined in September.
 - *By the beginning of July a total of 452 cases, from 23 states, had been reported to the CDC.*
- Still very little was known about transmission and public anxiety continued to grow.
 - *"It is frightening because no one knows what's causing it, said a 28-year old law student who went to the St. Mark's Clinic in Greenwich Village last week complaining of swollen glands, thought to be one early symptom of the disease. Every week a new theory comes out about how you're going to spread it." - The New York Times*
- By the end of 1982 many more people were taking notice of this new disease, as it was clearer that a much wider group of people was going to be affected.
 - *"When it began turning up in children and transfusion recipients, that was a turning point in terms of public perception. Up until then it was entirely a gay epidemic, and it was easy for the average person to say 'So what?' Now everyone could relate." - Harold Jaffe of the CDC for Newsweek*

1983

- In March, the CDC stated that, *"persons who may be considered at increased risk of AIDS include those with symptoms and signs suggestive of AIDS; sexual partners of AIDS patients; sexually active homosexual or bisexual men with multiple partners; Haitian entrants to the United States; present or past abusers of IV drugs; patients with haemophilia; and sexual partners of individuals at increased risk for AIDS."*
- AIDS transmission became a major issue in San Francisco, where the Police Department equipped patrol officers with special masks and gloves for use when dealing with what the police called "a suspected AIDS patient".
- And in New York:
 - *"landlords have evicted individuals with AIDS" and "the Social Security Administration is interviewing patients by phone rather than face to face." - Dr David Spencer, Commissioner of Health, New York City*
 - *"In many parts of the world there is anxiety, bafflement, a sense that something has to be done - although no one knows what." - The New York Times*
- As anxiety continued, the CDC tried to provide reassurance that children with AIDS had probably acquired it from their mothers and that casual transmission did not occur:
 - *"The cause of AIDS is unknown, but it seems most likely to be caused by an agent transmitted by intimate sexual contact, through contaminated needles, or, less commonly, by percutaneous inoculation of infectious blood or blood products. No evidence suggests transmission of AIDS by airborne spread. The failure to identify cases among friends relatives, and co-workers of AIDS patients provides further evidence that casual contact offers little or no risk [...] the occurrence in young infants suggests transmission from an affected*

mother to a susceptible infant before, during, or shortly after birth."

- In May, the U.S. Congress passes the first bill that includes funding specifically targeted for AIDS research and treatment—\$12 million for agencies within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- On December 6, a congressional subcommittee releases 'The Federal Response to AIDS, a report criticizing the U.S. Government for failure to invest sufficient funding in AIDS surveillance and research.
- By the end of the year the number of AIDS cases in the USA had risen to 3,064 and of these 1,292 had died.

1984

- At the CDC researchers had been continuing to investigate the cause of AIDS to confirm that AIDS was a transmittable disease.
- Meanwhile there was still concern about the public health aspect of AIDS. This was particularly the case in San Francisco where all the gay bath houses and private sex clubs were closed. Some gay men regarded the closures as an attack on their civil rights.
- By the end of 1984, there had been 7,699 AIDS cases and 3,665 AIDS deaths in the USA.

1985

- In January 1985 the U.S Food and Drug Administration (FDA) licensed, for commercial production, the first blood test for AIDS.
- The U.S. Congress allocates \$70 million for AIDS research.
- The Pentagon announces that it will begin testing all new military recruits for HIV infection and will reject those who test positive for the virus.
- On September 17th, President Reagan publicly mentioned AIDS for the first time, when he was asked about AIDS funding at a press conference. At the same press conference he was also asked a question whether he would send his children if they were younger to school with a child who has AIDS.
 - o *"It is true that some medical sources had said that this cannot be communicated in any way other than the ones we already know and which would not involve a child being in the school. And yet medicine has not come forth unequivocally and said, 'This we know for a fact, that it is safe.' And until they do, I think we just have to do the best we can with this problem. I can understand both sides of it." - Ronald W. Reagan*
- In the USA 15,948 cases of AIDS had been reported.

1986

- In August, the USA Federal Government accused an employer of illegal discrimination against a person with AIDS for the first time.
- In the United States, the Surgeon General's Report on AIDS was published. The report was the Government's first major statement on what the nation should do to prevent the spread of AIDS. The "unusually explicit" report urged parents and schools to start "frank, open discussions" about AIDS.

1987

- On May 31, President Reagan makes his first public speech about AIDS and establishes a Presidential Commission on HIV.
- In July, the U.S. Congress adopts the Helms Amendment, which bans the use of Federal funds for AIDS education materials that "promote or encourage, directly or indirectly, homosexual activities."

Military/Defense

“Our defense policy is based on a very simple premise: the United States will not start fights. We will not be the first to use aggression. We will not seek to occupy either lands or control other peoples. Our strategy is defensive; our aim is to protect the peace by ensuring that no adversaries ever conclude they could best us in a war of their own choosing.”

- Ronald Reagan, Statement on U.S. Defense Policy, March 9, 1983

The White House
Washington

October 1, 1985

Dear Bob:

In 1983, I announced the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), a program of vigorous research in advanced defensive technologies. Our aim is to investigate options for increasing the contribution of defenses, with a focus on eliminating the threat currently posed by ballistic missiles. The long-term promise provided by this research is the possibility of moving towards an enhanced means of deterring aggression, strengthening stability, and increasing the security of the United States and our allies—and doing so through the increased contribution of defensive systems that threaten no one.

The Soviet Union's efforts in strategic defense have long been far more extensive than our own. Over the last decade, the Soviet Union has spent roughly as much on strategic defenses as it has on its massive, but more widely known, offensive force build-up. In the near term, the SDI research program responds to this ongoing and extensive Soviet activity. It provides both a hedge and a deterrent against any Soviet decision to expand its ballistic missile defense capability in the hope of gaining advantage.

I fear that there may be a lack of awareness and understanding of the scope of Soviet activities in the area of strategic defense. Given the criticality of this subject, I would like to arrange for a detailed, classified briefing on Soviet Strategic defenses to the full United States Senate in a closed session. I would greatly appreciate your personal support in scheduling of this briefing as soon as possible.

Sincerely,
[signed] Ron

The Honorable Bob Dole
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Excerpt from a letter from Ronald Reagan to Sec. General Gorbachev, Nov. 28, 1985:

Regarding strategic defense and its relation to the reduction of offensive nuclear weapons, I was struck by your conviction that the American program is somehow designed to secure a strategic advantage—even to permit a first strike capability. I also noted your concern that research & testing in this area could be a cover for developing & placing offensive weapons in space.

As I told you, neither of these concerns is warranted. But I can understand, as you explained so eloquently, that these are matters which cannot be taken on faith. Both of us must cope with what the other side is doing, & judge the implications for the security of his own country. I do not ask you to take my assurances on faith.

However the truth is that the United States has no intention of using its strategic defense program to gain any advantage, & there is no development underway to create space-based offensive weapons. Our goal is to eliminate any possibility of a first strike from either side. This being the case, we should be able to find a way, in practical terms, to relieve the concerns you have expressed.

Regarding another key issue we discussed, that of regional conflicts, I can assure you that the United States does not believe that the Soviet Union is the cause of all the world's ills. We do believe, however, that your country has exploited and worsened local tensions & conflict by militarizing them and, indeed, intervening directly & indirectly in struggles arising out of local causes. While we both will doubtless continue to support our friends, we must find a way to do so without use of armed force. This is the crux of the point I tried to make.

In Geneva I found our private sessions particularly useful. Both of us have advisors & assistants, but, you know, in the final analysis, the responsibility to preserve peace & increase cooperation is ours. Our people look to us for leadership, and nobody can provide it if we don't. But we won't be very effective leaders unless we can rise above the specific but secondary concerns that preoccupy our respective bureaucracies & give our governments a strong push in the right direction.

So, what I want to say finally is that we should make the most of the time before we meet again to find some specific & significant steps that would give meaning to our commitment to peace & arms reduction. Why not set a goal—privately, just between the two of us—to find a practical way to solve critical issues—the two I have mentioned—by the time we meet in Washington?

Please convey regards from Nancy & me to Mrs. Gorbachev. We genuinely enjoyed meeting you in Geneva & are already looking forward to showing you something of our country next year.

Sincerely yours,
Ronald Reagan