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Salem Press Announces *Defining Documents in American History: The 1980s (1980-1989)*

The United States witnessed major socioeconomic change in the 1980s. The final years of the Carter administration, plagued by the Iran hostage crisis and runaway inflation, caused many Americans to embrace a new conservatism socially, economically, and politically, characterized by the policies of President Reagan. Both working-age Americans and affluent retirees flocked to the country's southeast and southwest Sun Belt regions resulting in a change in the political climate that strengthened conservatism in America.

Defining Documents in American History: The 1980s (1980-1989) offers in-depth analysis of fifty-nine documents, including diary excerpts, speeches, court rulings, legal texts, legislative acts, essays, newspaper and magazine articles, and interviews. These selections help define the events that took place during the 1980s and how those events have helped shape history. The first volume of this set focuses on the presidency of Reagan, speeches made by him that hold historical importance; Reagan's economic policies coined "Reaganomics", national issues faced during Reagan's term, and the differing party opinions on policy. The second volume is dedicated to court decisions that impacted the country in the 1980s, international affairs involving the United States, the advancement of technology, and cultural shifts within the United States during that time.

The material is organized into nine sections, and each section begins with a brief introduction that examines the politics and policies of the United States through a variety of historical documents.

- **Reagan on Reagan—and Reaganism** includes documents that track the important speeches made by President Reagan during his presidency such as Ronald Reagan's First Inaugural Address, Ronald Reagan's "Evil Empire" Speech, and the famous "Tear Down This Wall" Speech.
- **Reaganomics** includes documents regarding Reagan's economic policy including the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, a news article from *The Wall Street Journal* titled "Stocks Plummet on 'Black Monday'", and the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989.
- **Immigrations, Guns, Drugs, and Crime** begins with the Incident Memo regarding Cuban Refugees and is followed by such important documents as the Brady Handgun Violence Protection Act, Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" Message to the Nation, and the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

- **Other Voices—Pro and Con** pulls from documents such as a news article by Elisabeth Bumiller in *The Washington Post* titled “Schlafly’s Gala Goodbye to ERA”, Geraldine Ferraro’s Acceptance Speech at the Democratic National Convention, and a report on The Cultural Literacy Debate: Excerpt from “First Lesson: A Report on Elementary Education in America”.
- **Court Decisions** provides such important documents on *Bowers v. Hardwick*, *Hazelwood School District et al. v. Kuhlmeier et al.*, and *Texas v. Johnson*.
- **Iran** includes President Jimmy Carter’s Address in the Iran Hostage Rescue Attempt, Diary Excerpts of an American Hostage in Iran, and President Reagan’s Address to the Nation on the Iran-Contra Affair.
- **World Affairs** highlights more resources, such as Memos Concerning a Meeting between Donald Rumsfeld and Saddam Hussein and Pakistan’s Nuclear Weapons Program and US Security.
- **Technology and the Environment** includes documents regarding the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, a meeting transcript of the Extraordinary Session of the Soviet Politburo concerning the Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster and the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill: A Report to the President.
- **Old Wounds and New Change** includes the proposal of The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and a newspaper article from *The New York Times* titled “When Wal-Mart Comes to Town”.

Each Historical Document is supported by a critical essay, written by historians and teachers, that includes a Summary Overview, Defining Moment, About the Author, Document Analysis, and Essential Themes. An important feature of each essay is a close reading of the primary source that develops broader themes, such as the author’s rhetorical purpose, social or class position, point of view, and other relevant issues. Each essay also includes a Bibliography and Additional Reading section that provides suggestions for further readings and research.

Appendixes in this book include:

- **Chronological List** which arranges all documents by year;
- **Web Resources**, an annotated list of websites that offer valuable supplemental resources;
- **Bibliography** lists of helpful articles and books for further study

About the Series

The *Defining Documents* series provides in-depth commentary and analysis on the most important primary source documents in the United States and the world. *The Defining Documents* series is perfect for students, those researching a particular era, or anyone interested in world history. Visit www.salempress.com for more information about additional titles in this series.

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