**Period 9 Overview: 1980-Present**



**Overview** As the United States transitioned into the 21st century, it experienced a technological revolution, renewed ideological and cultural debates, and the worst terrorist attack in history. It attempted to redefine its foreign policy, witnessed shifting immigration patterns, and adapted to economic globalization. While the election of Ronald Reagan signaled the closing of the Cold War era, the election of Barack Obama in signaled a major shift in the political landscape.

***Beginning*** ***=*** *Election* *Ronald* *Reagan* *&* *Conservative* *backlash* *to* *social* *change*

***What*** ***do*** ***I*** ***need*** ***to*** ***know?***

**1.** **Reasons** **for** **the** **rise** **of** **Reagan** **and** **Conservative** **(Republican)** **politics**

**a.** Examples: Belief in social and moral erosion (including Rose vs. Wade, Gay Liberation, etc.) gave rise to **religious** **fundamentalism** (opposed to abortion, gay marriage, etc.)

**b.** Lack of faith in the government to solve real social problems after the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations

**i.** Examples: Inflation 1970’s, Oil Shock, Malaise, Watergate Scandal, Huge deficits from New Deal/Great Society

**2.** **Conservative** **Political** **Victories** **&** **Defeats**

a. **Examples** **of** **Conservative** **Victories**: Reaganomics (trickledown economics) reduced taxes, Deregulation of industry/limiting scope of EPA

b. **Examples** **of** **Conservative** **Defeats**: Size of government grew (Medicare & Medicaid, Social Security popular and abortion remained legal), Recession hit in 1988 leading to criticism of Reaganomics

**3.** **Rhetoric** **VS** **Reality** **of** **Reagan’s** **Cold** **War** **Philosophy**

a. **Examples** **of** **Rhetoric**: Hardcore anti­‐Communist, Soviet Union = “Evil Empire”, rejected détente, big increase in $$ for military

b. **Examples** **of** **Reality**: Reagan was friends with Gorbachev, Arms Control Agreements

**4.** **How** **the** **post­‐Cold** **War** **World** **led** **to** **challenges** **for** **US** **foreign** **&** **domestic** **policy**

a. Examples: Terrorist attacks on US targets abroad and at home i. **Abroad**: USS Cole Attack, Benghazi Attack,

ii. **At** **Home**: Oklahoma City Bombing, Unabomber, World Trade Center, 9/11 Attacks

b. **Bush** **Doctrine**: War on Terror, Pre­‐emptive War against Iraq to depose Saddam Hussein (Weapons of Mass Destruction)

c. **Concerns** **about** **violations** **of** **Civil** **Liberties** **via** **the** **Patriot Act**

d. **President** **Obama** **continues** **War** **on** **Terror**

i. Limits troops on ground in favor of Drone Strikes, death of Osama bin Laden, rise of factious Islamic fundamentalism in Iraq and Syria

**5.** **Changes** **in** **American** **society** **since** **1970**

**a.** **Demographics:** **Changing** **population** **(graying** **of** **America,** **Hispanic/Latino** **immigration)**

i. Still debating immigration reform?

**b.** **Continued** **debate** **over** **the** **role** **of** **the** **federal** **government** i. Examples: Attempts and successes of health care laws

[Affordable Care Act = “Obamacare” was an effort dating back to the Great Society], Social Security and Medicare spending, Government surveillance

**c.** **Loss** **of** **manufacturing** **jobs** **to** **overseas** **(“post­‐industrialism”** **NAFTA),** **rise** **in** **income** **inequality,** **Urban** **poverty**

**d.** **Environment:** **Significant** **changes** **in** **pesticide** **use,** **concerns** **over** **global** **warming** **&** **climate** **change** **Environmental** **Protection** **Agency** **(EPA)** **successes/failure,** **oil** **consumption**

i. **Historical** **View** **of** **Conservation**: TR/Muir = National Parks/Conservation, Rachel Carson “Silent Spring” (ban pesticides), Clean Air Act 1963, EPA 1970

***End*** ***=*** *What* *history* *will* *your* *generation* *make????????* *(Cue* *dramatic* *outro* *music)*

**See** **ya,** **now** **go** **ace** **that** **APUSH** **Exam!!!**

**Period Perspectives** The decline of faith in the federal government's ability to solve social and economic problems, the championing of unregulated markets by American corporations and the growth of religious fundamentalism combined to give conservatism new life. The demographic growth of the Sunbelt and the shift of Southern white conservative voters to the Republican Party also helped create an electoral majority. Conservatives achieved some of their goals, but the enduring popularity of government programs, such as Social Security and Medicare limited the amount of actual change.

The Reagan administration pursued an aggressive anti-communist foreign policy, but the end of the Cold War took away the forty-five-year focus of U.S. foreign policy. After the terrorists' attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States quickly became involved in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq with a new focus on homeland security.

The Great Recession of 2008 and demographic and cultures changes deepened the political divide in the nation, between an older white population who dominated the Tea Party movement and a younger multicultural society who represented the new emerging majority.

**Alternate View** Analysis of the last six presidential elections suggests that the conservative resurgence on the national level was short-lived, and if the disputed election of 2000 had gone the other way, the narrative of the period would have been considerably different.

