1980s America

Kevin Philips, a Republican analyst: 1980s was "a triumph of upper America

. . . the political ascendancy of the rich, and the glorification of capitalism, free markets, and finance."

I. Concentration of Economic and Political Power

A. Mergers and Conglomerates

1. legalization of "shared monopolies"

a. specific segments of the economy become

dominated by a few corporations

2. film industry

a. federal government vacated consent decree

b. large corporations monopolize but

now vertical and horizontal

B. Globalization

1. most large corporations become MNCs

2. federal govt subsidizes moves

a. AID

b. military aid to stabilize "corporate friendly"

third world countries

C. Deregulation

1. deregulation of oil prices +2Billion

2. banking industry and stock markets

D. Taxes

1. $190 billion tax cut to wealthy, taxes to poor increased

2. Reagan 70% to 28% for top bracket

3. corporations that paid no taxes in some years despite

making billions

a. 42 Fortune 500 companies paid no tax 1981-85

E. Regulatory Agencies

1. appointed corporate friendly NLRB

2. appointed hostile business man head of OSHA

3. weakened EPA, enforcement, funding, manpower

F. Federal Judiciary

1. appointed half of judgeships federal most conservatives

2. appointed arch-conservative to Supreme Court

G. Attack on unions

II. US Empire vs "evil empire"

A. Reagan restarts the cold war

1. Russian invasion of Afghanistan and third world

insurgencies raise specter of Communist threat

2. $1 trillion to military for first term

a. Star Wars

b. Trident submarine

c. B-1 bomber

d. fall of SU 1989 only 2% cut

e. 1992 $120 billion to defend Europe

CIA espionage chief: never seen any study that shows SU would profit in any way from invading UA or WE.

3. US interventions

a. 1982 Marines to Lebanon

b. Oct 1983 Operation Urgent Fury

c. Increased military aid to El Salvador

d. Nicaragua

e. bomb Libya

f. Bush - Panama

4. However, Reagan signed nuclear disarmament treaty,

ready for total nuclear disarm

III. Consequences

A. Created two tiered work force as America transformed from

a society of industrial productivity to sales and service

1. globalization and automation

2. two tiers

3. knowledge industry

B. The rich got richer

1. wealth 1978-90 Forbes 400 3x

2. wealth 1980-1992 top 1% gained $1 trillion

3. income top 1% +87%

5. reflected in *Wall Street*

C. the poor got poorer

1. wealth declined

2. real income 77-90 down for 60% income for bottom 20% down 5%

D. Workers

1. Job loss 1980-94 43 million

2. 1982 1.2 million jobs lost in industrial sector

3. job loss include downsizing of white collar workers

4. women enter workforce 70 40% by 90 60%

5. unemployment up - 1982 11%

6. increase in sweatshops in major cities with immigrants

form globalization

F. Family

1. leisure time is down

2. two people working

3. child poverty is 25%

4. 350,000 disabled off Social Security

5. 1 million children cut from school lunches

G. Minorities

1. unemployment 21/2x

2. teenage blacks 30-40% unemployed

H. Other countries

1. El Salvador

a. Reagan aid to government that was killing own

people "death squads" est 50,000

b. Deaubisson trained at OSA certified as making

human rights progress

c. El Mozote massacre denied, killed nuns, Archbishop

Romero

d. did away with certification process

e. 49-79: $16.7 million; 1981: $82 million

2. Nicaragua

a. financed counter-revolutionary force with no

popular support

b. violated congressional law and financed illegally

through Irangate

3. Panama

a. Noriega one of Bush's men in CIA

b. 1989 26,000 troops, free fire zone

i. hundreds to thousands

c. reestablished US friendly and drug friendly

government