



# Media Reality ✓ Check

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Long Before Liberal Producers Invented Dialogue to Denigrate Ex-President, CBS Bashed Ronald Reagan

## Anti-Reagan Agenda of CBS News Exposed

CBS now says it won't broadcast its inaccurate and unfair mini-series *The Reagans*, but the entertainment division's Reagan bashing echoes various CBS News stars who disdain Ronald Reagan and his conservative policies. Here are a few quotes illustrating CBS's anti-Reagan agenda, culled from the Media Research Center's archives:

■ "In the plague years of the 1980s — that low decade of denial, indifference, hostility, opportunism, and idiocy — government fiddled, medicine diddled, and the media were silent or hysterical. A gerontocratic Ronald Reagan took this [AIDS] plague less seriously than Gerald Ford had taken swine flu. After all, he didn't need the ghettos and he didn't want the gays." — CBS *Sunday Morning* TV critic **John Leonard**, September 5, 1993.

■ "The '80s...[were] a decade dominated, in politics and in style, by the Reagans....While the wealthy got most of the attention, those who needed it most were often ignored. More homeless, less spending on housing. The gap between the top and the bottom grew in the '80s....The AIDS crisis began in the '80s. Some say the decade's compassion gap made it worse." — CBS *This Morning* co-host **Kathleen Sullivan**, November 13, 1989.

■ "Historians are going to be totally baffled by how the American people fell in love with this man [Ronald Reagan] and followed him the way we did." — **Lesley Stahl** on NBC's *Later with Bob Costas*, January 11, 1989.

■ "The working poor have borne the brunt of the cost of the Reagan Revolution. The hardest-hit programs have been welfare, housing and other anti-poverty measures. Even programs that were not cut have failed to keep up with inflation. Meanwhile, rich people got big tax breaks. And the middle class kept most of their subsidies intact. As a result, the Reagan years brought on a wider gap between rich and poor." — **Bill Moyers**, who reported CBS's 1982 anti-Reagan documentary, *CBS Reports: People Like Us*, after PBS re-aired it on June 20, 1989.

■ "He talked about being proud of what's happened with the economy, about the millions of new jobs that have been created. And as I listened to that, I also thought one out of five babies born in the United States are born into poverty. There are hundreds of thousands of people in this country now that are homeless, have no place to live." — CBS *This Morning* co-host **Harry Smith** to Maureen Reagan on January 12, 1989, the day after President Reagan's Farewell Address.

■ "Ronald Reagan presided over a meltdown of the federal government during the last eight years. Fundamental management was abandoned in favor of rhetoric and

imagery. A cynical disregard for the art of government led to wide-scale abuse. Only now are we coming to realize the cost of Mr. Reagan's laissez-faire: the crisis in the savings and loan industry, the scandal in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the deterioration of the nation's nuclear weapons facilities, the dangerous state of the air traffic control system — not to mention the staggering deficit." —

**Terence Smith**, who covered the Reagan White House for CBS News, in a November 5, 1989 *New York Times* op-ed.

■ "The legacy of the Reagan administration will be with us for years. The deficit under Reagan totaled more than a trillion dollars. Someday we're going to have to pay those bills. As officials look to cut spending and taxes at the same time, we can't afford another round of voodoo economics....I remember that campaign slogan one year 'It's morning again in America.' Well, it may have been morning for some, but for a lot of people in this country it's become a nightmare." — **Ed Bradley** in an April 28, 1996 speech to Benedictine University in Illinois, aired May 11, 1996 on C-SPAN.

— Brent Baker and Rich Noyes

### The Bottom Line: CBS Hated Reagan

**Former Reagan Chief-of-Staff Don Regan:**

"What's the bottom line of the Reagan administration? It's a great record."

**CBS's Lesley Stahl:** "Bottom line. Largest deficits in history. Largest debtor nation. Can't afford to fix the housing emergency."  
— *Face the Nation*, May 15, 1988.

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