

The Decline of America: 100 Years of Leadership Failures



A thoroughly researched book reviewing the last 100 years of American presidents, from Wilson through Obama.



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“Bill” Clinton was elected in 1992, and captured only 43% of the popular vote to incumbent George H. W. Bush’s 38%. Independent Ross Perot garnered 19%.

Clinton was reelected in 1996 with a relatively easy victory - 49.2% of the vote to former Senator Bob Dole’s 40.7%. Perot ran again, but received less media coverage and sank to 8.4% of the vote.

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Significant Events During Clinton's Time in Office:

1993

- Clinton signs the Family and Medical Leave Act
- First World Trade Center Bombing kills six people
- AG Janet Reno criticized for her decisions in the Branch Davidian Standoff in Waco, TX
- Deputy Counsel to Clinton Vince Foster found dead in public park in DC
- Ruth Bader Ginsburg appointed to US Supreme Court
- US Forces ambushed in Somalia in Battle of Mogadishu
- NAFTA – North American Free Trade Agreement signed by Clinton

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Significant Events During Clinton's Time in Office (cont):

1994

- Trade embargo with Vietnam ended by Clinton
- Clinton promotes welfare reform
- Israel and Jordan reach peace accord
- Democrat Senator George Mitchell kills Clinton healthcare plan
- Newt Gingrich leads "Contract with America" Republican sweep of Congress
- US agrees to be part of GATT – General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

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Significant Events During Clinton's Time in Office (cont):

1995

- Congressional Accountability Act signed by Clinton
- US loans Mexico \$20 billion to head off financial crisis
- Oklahoma City Federal Building bombed with 168 dead
- Partial government shut-down in budget struggle between Gingrich and Clinton
- Dayton Peace Accord – Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia

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Significant Events During Clinton's Time in Office (cont):

1996

- VP Gore attends \$60,000 fund raiser at Buddhist Temple in California
- First convictions in the Whitewater trials in Arkansas of Clinton insiders
- Clinton signs HIPAA bill – protecting medical records and insurance portability
- Welfare Reform bill signed by Clinton
- Madeline Albright appointed first female Secretary of State

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Significant Events During Clinton's Time in Office (cont):

1997

- Senate Votes 99-0 to investigate Democrat fundraising practices
- Convention banning chemical weapons is announced
- Five-year plan to eliminate federal deficit is announced
- Paula Jones allowed to pursue sexual harassment case against Clinton
- Clinton signs balanced budget legislation

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Significant Events During Clinton's Time in Office (cont):

1998

- Monica Lewinsky affair becomes public
- American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania are bombed in coordinated attacks
- Starr Report presents possible grounds for impeachment of Clinton
- Wye River Memorandum results in truce between Palestine and Israel
- House votes to impeach Clinton for perjury and obstruction

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Significant Events During Clinton's Time in Office (cont):

1999

- The Senate acquits Clinton in impeachment case
- Columbine shootings in Colorado
- Air attacks against Serbian positions brought to an end

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Significant Events During Clinton's Time in Office (cont):

2000

- Economic “expansion” declared the longest ever at 9 years
- USS Cole bombed in Yemen with 17 service persons dead
- Clinton – Putin Summit
- Independent Counsel declines to indict Clintons over Whitewater
- George W. Bush and Al Gore fight to virtual tie in popular vote

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Clinton Scandals

Paula Jones lawsuit

In her 1994 lawsuit, Jones accused President Clinton of sexually harassing and assaulting her in 1991, while she was a state employee and he was Governor of Arkansas.

Clinton tried to claim presidential immunity to avoid the suit, but in 1996 the Court found that presidential immunity did not apply to unofficial acts.

Jones settled the case in 1997 for \$850,000; in a typical no-merit employment discrimination case, the settlement amount would have been between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

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Clinton Scandals (cont)

Juanita Broaddrick, Gennifer Flowers, and Kathleen Willey allegations

- In 1999, Broaddrick alleged that Clinton raped her in 1978, while she was a volunteer for his gubernatorial campaign and he was Arkansas' Attorney General.
- She had never filed civil or criminal charges, and Clinton denies the allegations and has raised issues regarding her credibility.
- In 1992, the Jones case sparked the revelation that Clinton had an affair with Flowers. Clinton denied the affair at the time, but in 1998 admitted it during a deposition in the Jones case.
- In 1998, Willey alleged that Clinton sexually assaulted her in 1993, while she was a campaign volunteer and he was already President. In 2016, she launched the website www.ascandaladay.com with the goal of warning women of Clinton's activities and of Hilary Clinton's efforts to support her husband and "trash" the women who came forward. A great many accusers are listed on this site.

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Clinton Scandals (cont)

Monica Lewinsky and Impeachment

The affair that caught the public's attention more than any other was

Clinton's relationship with White House intern Monica Lewinsky, then 24. For weeks and months increasing amounts of evidence leaked out, including the "blue dress." Meanwhile, Clinton repeatedly denied the affair and refuted the evidence, famously declaring "I did not have sexual relations with that woman...Miss Lewinsky." These denials were made in the media, but also during the official investigation of the incident and during depositions of the Paula Jones case.

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Clinton Scandals (cont)

Monica Lewinsky and Impeachment (Cont)

The evidence eventually compelled Clinton to admit that he lied during the investigation, as well as gave false evidence during the Jones depositions. This led to only the second impeachment ever of a sitting president. He was later acquitted by the Senate.

In April 2001, Clinton's Arkansas law license was suspended for 5 years and he was fined \$25,000. He was later disbarred from practicing before the U.S. Supreme Court.

He has not applied to have his law licenses reinstated as of today

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Clinton Scandals (cont)

Death of Vince Foster (Deputy Counsel to Clinton)

Foster was found dead in a public park, and although his death was announced as a suicide, some pundits speculate that a Clinton insider killed him to keep him from exposing Whitewater (below). After his death, the White House blocked access to his office for a short period of time, increasing speculation that sensitive records were removed.

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Clinton Scandals (cont)

Whitewater

In 1978, while Clinton was Arkansas Attorney General, he and Hilary put together a real estate deal with James and Susan McDougal. They formed Whitewater Development Company and borrowed \$200,000 to build vacation homes on 220 acres of land in the Ozark Mountains. James McDougal then bought a bank, renaming it Madison Guaranty. It loaned Hilary money for a model home at Whitewater and hosted a fundraising event to help Bill pay off campaign debt; investigators later determined that some of the money was illegally drawn from the depositors accounts.

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Clinton Scandals (cont)

Whitewater (cont)

McDougal hired Rose Law Firm (where Hillary was a partner), to help the bank deal with its legal problems; Hilary led the attempts to recapitalize the bank.

McDougal was removed as bank president due to a series of questionable deals and loans, while the bank closed in 1989 due to bad loans.

McDougal was indicted on fraud charges, but later acquitted, while the Clintons were named as potential beneficiaries of the fraud.

Foster (see above) filed delinquent tax returns for Whitewater in 1993.

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Clinton Scandals (cont)

Whitewater (cont)

Treasury Department officials gave the Clintons inside information about the investigation, and a subsequent criminal prosecution of the Clintons was blocked by US Attorney Paula Casey (a former law student of Clinton). Clinton produced Whitewater documents in response to a subpoena.

Other investigations of Whitewater continued. The McDougals and Governor Jim Tucker were later convicted of bank fraud, and other people close to the Clintons were prosecuted, but no charges were ever brought against the Clintons in connection with Whitewater.

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Clinton Scandals (cont)

Other Scandals

Travelgate: In 1993, the White House fired seven travel department employees, allegedly so it could hire Clinton's associates.

Filegate: In 1996, it was disclosed that the White House used the FBI to collect background reports on a number of people, including prominent Republicans.

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Clinton Scandals (cont)

Other Scandals (cont)

In 1996, VP Al Gore attended a DNC fundraising event at a Buddhist temple in Los Angeles, in violation of U.S. campaign law. Gore would later claim he was not aware it was a fundraising event. The event's organizer, John Huang, later became infamous when several such incidents came to light, and he was ultimately prosecuted for deliberate campaign fundraising violations.

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Clinton Scandals (cont)

Other Scandals (cont)

Pardongate: Clinton pardoned approximately 450 criminals while in office. One of these was Marc Rich, whose wife made donations to the Clinton Presidential Library fund and to the campaign funds of Democratic candidates prior to the pardon. Another of these was for Roger Clinton, Jr. (Bill's half-brother), and erased a conviction and one-year prison sentence for cocaine possession.

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The Domestic Front and Race Relations

Clinton's administration is today remembered fairly positively for its economic agenda.

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 is often cited as the key to the economic expansion in the 90's, but probably did not have much to do with the growth.

Clinton is remembered for his focus on reducing growth in the annual budget deficit. Following governmental shutdowns in late 1995 and early 1996, Clinton and Gingrich agreed on a budget deal in which the US would not pay down the national debt, but would operate without a deficit. However, the national debt increased by \$ 1.2 trillion during Clinton's two terms.

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The Domestic Front and Race Relations (cont)

Toni Morrison hailed Clinton as “the first black President,” but honest analysis of his civil rights policies yields mixed results.

The “reform” of the welfare system disproportionately impacted minorities

The Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 makes members of

Congress responsible for their discriminatory actions, on the same basis as the rest of U.S. employers.

Clinton appointed the first female Attorney General and Secretary of State, a female U.S. Supreme Court Justice, and a black female Secretary of Energy and U.S. Surgeon General.

Clinton authorized “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” as the policy for gays in the military.

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International Trade Treaties and Pacts

Clinton supported NAFTA, and the U.S. joined “GATT” under his administration.

Clinton renewed China’s “most favored nation” trading status with the US despite its slaughter of protesters in Tiananmen Square in 1989, and accepted Vietnam as an official trading partner of the US despite the repression of its own population and the murder of many supporters of the South Vietnamese government after the regime’s takeover in 1975.

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The Clinton International Record

The Clinton international record is definitely not a strong point for his legacy or the US.

Clinton took action against Iraq at least four times due to continued aggressive acts and violation of the peace accord by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Clinton inherited a limited involvement of American troops in Somalia initiated by George Bush on reportedly humanitarian grounds, resulting in the death of US service members without obtaining any rational outcome for the US or even relief for the people of Somalia.

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The Clinton International Record (cont)

During the Clinton administration, there were numerous opportunities to capture or kill Osama bin Laden and inexplicably, Clinton failed to take advantage of those opportunities.

Clinton's early inaction in combating terrorism was tragically documented by bombings of two US embassies and the attack on the *USS Cole* by Al Qaeda.

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By the Numbers:

As with recent presidents, the national debt increased steadily during the Clinton administration. However, the rate of increase was fairly modest, giving the country a bit of a breather.

As the benchmark for a growing economy is about 2% inflation, the Clinton administration exceeded it in six out of eight years. However, the dips in 1998 and 1999, near the end of his second term, do indicate that it was not all an upward trajectory.

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Making the Grade:

Clinton's scandals, most of which he was personally involved with, document a person with no moral compass of any kind.

On the domestic scene, reports of a healthy US economy during this period tend to be overstated in his favor.

Internationally, Clinton's failures can be traced through his administration to the embassy bombings and then the bombing of the *USS Cole*.

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Making the Grade (cont)

Clinton generally gets modestly good ratings from various polls, but in the cold light of what actually happened during his administration, it is hard to tell why the ratings are anything other than at the bottom. The power of his own promotion machine and media support seems to be the only explanations.

Clinton's Grade: D-