

## Ronald Reagan (R) administrations (1981–1989)

[\[edit\]](#)

Further information: [Scandals of the Ronald Reagan administration](#)

### Executive branch

[\[edit\]](#)

- [Operation Ill Wind](#) was a three-year investigation launched in 1986 by the FBI into corruption by U.S. government and military officials, as well as private defense contractors.
1. [Melvyn Paisley](#), appointed [Assistant Secretary of the Navy](#) in 1981 by Republican President Ronald Reagan, <sup>[280]</sup> was found to have accepted hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes. He pleaded guilty to bribery, resigned his office and served four years in prison. <sup>[281][282]</sup>
  2. James E. Gaines Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy, took over when Paisley resigned his office. <sup>[283]</sup> He was convicted of accepting an illegal gratuity, and theft and conversion of government property. He was sentenced to six months in prison. <sup>[284]</sup>
  3. Victor D. Cohen, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, was the 50th conviction obtained under the Ill Wind probe when he pleaded guilty to accepting bribes and conspiring to defraud the government. <sup>[285]</sup>
- The Housing and Urban Development scandal concerned bribery by selected contractors for low income housing projects. <sup>[286][287]</sup>
1. [Samuel Pierce](#), [Secretary of Housing and Urban Development](#), was not charged because he made "full and public written acceptance of responsibility". <sup>[288]</sup>
  2. [James G. Watt](#), the Secretary of Interior from 1981 to 1983, was charged with 25 counts of perjury and obstruction of justice, sentenced to five years' probation, fined \$5,000 and 500 hours of community service. <sup>[289]</sup>
  3. [Deborah Gore Dean](#) (R), Executive Assistant to [Samuel Pierce](#) (Secretary of HUD from 1981 to 1987, and not charged), was convicted of 12 counts of perjury, conspiracy, bribery. Sentenced to 21 months in prison. (1987) <sup>[290]</sup>
  4. Phillip D. Winn, Assistant Secretary of HUD from 1981 to 1982, pleaded guilty to bribery in 1994. <sup>[290]</sup>
  5. Thomas Demery, Assistant Secretary of HUD, pleaded guilty to bribery and obstruction. <sup>[290]</sup>
  6. Joseph A. Strauss, Special Assistant to the Secretary of HUD, was convicted of accepting payments to favor Puerto Rican land developers in receiving HUD funding. <sup>[291][292]</sup>
  7. Silvio D. DeBartolomeis was convicted of perjury and bribery. <sup>[290]</sup>

- [Wedtech scandal](#) – Wedtech Corporation was convicted of bribery for Defense Department contracts.
1. [Edwin Meese](#) (R) [Attorney General](#) resigned, but was never convicted.<sup>[293]</sup>
  2. [Lyn Nofziger](#) (R) White House [Press Secretary](#) had a conviction of lobbying that was overturned.<sup>[294]</sup>
  3. [Mario Biaggi](#) (D-NY) was sentenced to 2+½ years in prison.<sup>[295]</sup>
- [Savings and loan scandal](#) – 747 institutions failed and had to be rescued with \$160,000,000,000 of the taxpayer's money in connection with the [Keating Five](#). see Legislative scandals.<sup>[296]</sup>
  - John M. Fedders (R) SEC Dir of Enforcement, in divorce testimony he admitted beating his wife and then resigned. (1985)<sup>[297][298]</sup>
  - Emanuel S. Savas, appointed by Ronald Reagan to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, resigned on July 8, 1983, after an internal Justice Department investigation found he had *abused his office* by having his Government staff work on his private book on Government time.<sup>[299][300]</sup>
  - [Iran-Contra Affair](#) (1985–1986) – In violation of an arms embargo, administration officials arranged to sell armaments to Iran in an attempt to improve relations with Iran and obtain their influence in the release of hostages held in Lebanon. [Oliver North](#) of the [National Security Council](#) then diverted proceeds from the arms sale to fund Contra rebels attempting to overthrow the left-wing government of Nicaragua, which was in direct violation of Congress' [Boland Amendment](#).<sup>[301]</sup> Ronald Reagan appeared on TV stating there was no "arms for hostages" deal, but was later forced to admit, also on TV, that yes, there indeed had been:
    1. [Caspar Weinberger](#) (R) Secretary of Defense, was indicted on two counts of perjury and one count of obstruction of justice on June 16, 1992.<sup>[302]</sup> Weinberger received a pardon from [George H. W. Bush](#) on December 24, 1992, before he was tried.<sup>[303]</sup>
    2. [William Casey](#) (R) Director of the CIA is thought to have conceived the plan, but was stricken ill hours before he would testify. Reporter [Bob Woodward](#) records that Casey knew of and approved the plan.<sup>[304]</sup>
    3. [Robert C. McFarlane](#) National Security Adviser was convicted of withholding evidence, but after a plea bargain was given only two years' probation. Later pardoned by President [George H. W. Bush](#)<sup>[305]</sup>
    4. [Elliott Abrams](#) (R) Assistant Secretary of State, was convicted of withholding evidence, but after a plea bargain was given only two years' probation. He was later pardoned by President [George H. W. Bush](#)<sup>[306][307]</sup>
    5. [Alan D. Fiers](#) Chief of the CIA's Central American Task Force, was convicted of withholding evidence and sentenced to one year's probation. Later pardoned by President [George H. W. Bush](#)<sup>[308]</sup>

6. [Clair George](#) Chief of Covert Ops-CIA was convicted on two charges of perjury, but was pardoned by President [George H. W. Bush](#) before sentencing.<sup>[309]</sup>
7. [Oliver North](#) (R) Deputy Director of the National Security Council, was convicted of accepting an illegal gratuity, obstruction of a congressional inquiry, and destruction of documents, but the convictions were vacated, after the appeals court found that witnesses in his trial might have been impermissibly affected by his immunized congressional testimony.<sup>[310]</sup>
8. [Fawn Hall](#), Oliver North's secretary, was given immunity from prosecution on charges of conspiracy and destroying documents in exchange for her testimony.<sup>[311]</sup>
9. [John Poindexter](#) (R) National Security Advisor, was convicted of five counts of conspiracy, obstruction of justice, perjury, defrauding the government, and the alteration and destruction of evidence. The Supreme Court overturned this ruling.<sup>[312]</sup>
10. [Duane Clarridge](#) Ex-CIA senior official, was indicted in November 1991 on seven counts of perjury and false statements relating to a November 1985 shipment to Iran. He was pardoned before trial by President [George H. W. Bush](#).<sup>[313][314]</sup>
11. [Richard V. Secord](#) an ex-major general in the Air Force, who organized the Iran arms sales and Contra aid, pleaded guilty in November 1989 to making false statements to Congress. He was sentenced to two years of probation.<sup>[315][316]</sup>
12. [Albert Hakim](#), Businessman, pleaded guilty in November 1989 to supplementing the salary of Oliver North by buying him a \$13,800 fence. Hakim was given two years of probation and a \$5,000 fine, while his company, Lake Resources Inc. was ordered to dissolve.<sup>[315][317]</sup>
13. [Thomas G. Clines](#), a former intelligence official who became an arms dealer, was convicted in September 1990 on four income tax counts, including under-reporting of income to the IRS and lying about not having foreign accounts. He was sentenced to 16 months of prison and fined \$40,000.<sup>[315][318]</sup>
14. Carl R. Channell (R) a fund-raiser for conservative causes, pleaded guilty in April 1987 to defrauding the IRS via a tax-exempt organization to fund the Contras.<sup>[319]</sup> He was sentenced to two years' probation.<sup>[315][320]</sup>
15. Richard R. Miller associate to Carl R. Channell, pleaded guilty in May 1987 to defrauding the IRS via a tax-exempt organization led by Channell. More precisely, he pleaded guilty to lying to the IRS about the deductibility of donations to the organization. Some of the donations were used to fund the Contras.<sup>[321]</sup> Sentenced to two years of probation and 120 hours of community service.<sup>[315]</sup>
16. [Joseph F. Fernandez](#) CIA Station Chief of Costa Rica, was indicted on five counts in 1988.<sup>[322]</sup> The case was dismissed when Attorney General [Dick Thornburgh](#) refused to declassify information needed for his defense in 1990.<sup>[323]</sup>

- [Michael Deaver](#) (R) Deputy Chief of Staff to Ronald Reagan from 1981 to 1985, pleaded guilty to perjury related to lobbying activities and was sentenced to three years' probation and fined \$100,000.<sup>[324]</sup>
  - [Sewergate](#) was a scandal in which funds from the EPA were selectively used for projects which would aid politicians friendly to the Reagan administration.
1. [Anne Gorsuch Burford](#), Head of the EPA, cut the EPA staff by 22% and refused to turn over documents to Congress about withholding funds, citing presidential "[executive privilege](#)",<sup>[325]</sup> whereupon she was found in Contempt and resigned with twenty of her top employees. (1980)<sup>[326][327]</sup>
  2. [Rita Lavelle](#), a [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) Administrator, misused "superfund" monies and was convicted of perjury. She served six months in prison, was fined \$10,000 and given five years' probation.<sup>[328]</sup>
- [Louis O. Giuffrida](#) (R), director of the [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#), was appointed in April 1981 by Ronald Reagan and resigned his position on September 1, 1985. His announcement came a day before a Congressional subcommittee was to approve a report detailing waste, fraud, and abuse at his agency.<sup>[329]</sup>
  - Fred J. Villella, deputy director at [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#), had more than \$70,000 in renovations made to part of a dormitory at an agency training center in Maryland for use as a residence, including an \$11,000 stove, wet bar, microwave oven, fireplace and cherrywood cabinets. Villella accepted free tickets to the same Republican fund-raisers as Giuffrida and also was accused of sexually harassing a FEMA security guard he also used for private errands. He resigned in 1984. (1984)<sup>[330][331][332]</sup>
  - [J. Lynn Helms](#) was appointed head of the [Federal Aviation Administration](#) by Ronald Reagan in April 1981. He was charged by the [Securities and Exchange Commission](#) with diverting \$1.2 million from an issue of tax-exempt municipal bonds to his own personal use. Mr. Helms signed an order that settled the case before trial, though he resigned his FAA post.<sup>[333][334]</sup>
  - Veterans administration Chief [Bob Nimmo](#) was appointed by President Ronald Reagan in 1981. He resigned one year later just before a General Accounting Office report criticized him for improper such use of government funds. (1982)<sup>[330][335]</sup>
  - John Fedders was appointed chief of enforcement for the [Securities and Exchange Commission](#) by President Ronald Reagan.<sup>[336]</sup> He was asked to resign his position after divorce proceedings, during which he admitted beating his wife.<sup>[337][338]</sup>
  - [Peter Voss](#) (R) was appointed to the US Postal Service Board of Governors in 1982 by President Ronald Reagan. He was sentenced to four years in federal prison and fined \$11,000 for theft and accepting payoffs. He resigned his office in 1986, when he pleaded guilty.<sup>[339][340]</sup>

- Carlos Campbell (R), Asst Sec of Commerce to the EDA, was accused of favoritism in awarding grants and being over zealous. Before an investigation could start he resigned. (1983)<sup>[341][342]</sup>
- [Jim Petro](#) (R), U.S. Attorney appointed by President Ronald Reagan, was dismissed and fined for tipping off an acquaintance about an ongoing Secret Service investigation. (1984)<sup>[343][344]</sup>
- William H. Kennedy, United States Attorney in San Diego, was dismissed by President Reagan after he mentioned that the CIA was involved in a smuggling case. (1982)<sup>[345][346]</sup>
- [Marjory Mecklenburg](#) (R) Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Resources used travel funds to see her son's Denver Bronco games. She resigned. (1985)<sup>[347][348]</sup>
- Guy W. Fiske (R) Deputy Secretary of Commerce, after allegations of a conflict of interest in contract negotiations with satellite communications company Comsat, resigned. (1983)<sup>[349][350][351]</sup>

## Legislative branch

[\[edit\]](#)

- [Mark Hatfield](#) (R-OR) US Senator and US Appropriations Chairman, revealed that his wife had been paid \$55,000 by Greek arms dealer Basil Tsakos, who had been lobbying for a trans-African pipeline. (1984)<sup>[352][353][354]</sup>
- [David Durenberger](#) (R-MN) Senator was denounced by the Senate for unethical financial transactions (1990) and then disbarred as an attorney.<sup>[355]</sup> In 1995, he pled guilty to 5 misdemeanor counts of misuse of public funds and was given one year's probation.<sup>[241]</sup>
- [Barney Frank](#) (D-MA) US Representative, lived with convicted felon Steve Gobie, who ran a gay prostitution operation from Frank's apartment without his knowledge. Frank was admonished by Congress for using his congressional privilege to eliminate 33 parking tickets attributed to Gobie. (1987)<sup>[356]</sup>
- [Donald E. "Buz" Lukens](#) (R-OH) was convicted of two counts of bribery and conspiracy. (1996)<sup>[357]</sup>
- [Anthony Lee Coelho](#) (D-CA) resigned rather than face inquiries from both the Justice Department and the House Ethics Committee about an allegedly unethical "junk bond" deal, which netted him \$6,000. He was never charged with any crime. (1989)<sup>[358]</sup>
- [Jim Wright](#) (D-TX) US Representative and house Speaker, resigned after an ethics investigation led by Newt Gingrich alleged improper receipt of \$145,000 in gifts (1989)<sup>[359]</sup>
- [Keating Five](#) (1980–1989) The failure of Lincoln Savings and Loan led to [Charles Keating](#) donating to the campaigns of five Senators for help. Keating served 42 months in prison.<sup>[360]</sup> The five were investigated by the Senate Ethics Committee which found that:

1. Senator [Alan Cranston](#) (D-CA) was reprimanded.<sup>[361]</sup>
  2. Senator [Dennis DeConcini](#) (D-AZ) acted improperly.<sup>[362]</sup>
  3. Senator [Don Riegle](#) (D-MI) acted improperly.<sup>[362]</sup>
  4. Senator [John Glenn](#) (D-OH) used poor judgment.<sup>[362]</sup>
  5. Senator [John McCain](#) (R-AZ) used poor judgment.<sup>[362]</sup>
- [Abscam](#) was an FBI sting involving fake "Arabs" trying to bribe 31 congressmen. (1980)  
The following six Congressmen were convicted:
    1. Senator [Harrison A. Williams](#) (D-NJ) was convicted on nine counts of bribery and conspiracy, and was sentenced to three years in prison.<sup>[241]</sup>
    2. Representative [John Jenrette](#) (D-SC) was sentenced to two years in prison for bribery and conspiracy.<sup>[241]</sup>
    3. [Richard Kelly](#) (R-FL) accepted \$25K and then claimed he was conducting his own investigation into corruption. Served 13 months.<sup>[241]</sup>
    4. [Raymond Lederer](#) (D-PA) said that "I can give you me" after accepting \$50,000. He was sentenced to three years in prison.<sup>[363]</sup>
    5. [Michael Myers](#) (D-PA) accepted \$50,000, saying "... money talks and bullshit walks." He was sentenced to three years in prison and was expelled from the House.<sup>[241]</sup>
    6. [Frank Thompson](#) (D-NJ) was sentenced to three years in prison.<sup>[241]</sup>
    7. [John M. Murphy](#) (D-NY) served 20 months of a three-year sentence.<sup>[364]</sup>
  - 8. Also arrested were NJ State Senator [Angelo Errichetti](#) (D)<sup>[365]</sup> and members of the Philadelphia City Council.
- [Mario Biaggi](#) (D-NY) was part of the [Wedtech scandal](#) and was convicted of obstruction of justice accepting illegal gratuities. He was sentenced to eight years in prison and fined \$500,000. (1988)<sup>[366][367]</sup>
  - [Ernie Konnyu](#) (R-CA) US Representative from the 12th District, was accused of sexual harassment by several female employees and retaliating against those who complained. He was ousted by fellow republicans and lost the next primary. (1987)<sup>[368][369][370]</sup>
  - [Pat Swindall](#) (R-GA) was convicted of six counts of perjury. (1989)<sup>[371][372]</sup>
  - [George V. Hansen](#) (R-ID) was censured for failing to file out disclosure forms. He spent fifteen months in prison.<sup>[373]</sup>
  - [Frederick W. Richmond](#) (D-NY) was convicted of tax evasion and possession of [marijuana](#). He served nine months in prison. (1982)<sup>[363]</sup>
  - [Joshua Eilberg](#) (D-PA) pleaded guilty to conflict-of-interest charges. In addition, he convinced President [Jimmy Carter](#) (D) to fire the U.S. Attorney investigating his case.<sup>[228]</sup>

- [Robert E. Bauman](#) (R-MD) was charged with soliciting sex from a teenage boy. Counseling was ordered, but he lost his next two elections. (1980)<sup>[262][263]</sup>

## Judicial branch

[\[edit\]](#)

- [Alcee Hastings](#) (D-FL) Federal District Court Judge was impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate of soliciting a bribe. (1989)<sup>[374]</sup>
- [Harry Claiborne](#) (D-NV) Federal District Court Judge was impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate on two counts of [tax evasion](#). He served over one year in prison.<sup>[375]</sup>
- J. William Petro (R) U.S. Attorney in Ohio, was found guilty of criminal contempt of court for leaking confidential information. He was removed from office. (1985)<sup>[343]</sup>
- [Walter Nixon](#) (D) US Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi, was accused of asking a local DA to stop prosecuting the son of a donor to [Richard Nixon](#). He was found guilty of perjury and sentenced to five years in prison. Still a US Judge while imprisoned, he was impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate of perjury and removed from office. (1983)<sup>[77][376][377][378]</sup>
- [Robert Frederick Collins](#) (D) US District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana appointed by [Jimmy Carter](#). Collins was accused of accepting bribes from a marijuana smuggler in exchange for a lighter sentence. He was found guilty of bribery, conspiracy and obstruction of justice and sentenced to five years in prison. (1991)<sup>[379][380]</sup>