PART 8

The Modern State and the Age of Liberalism

1945–1980

Between 1945 and 1980, the United States became the world's leading economic and military power. That development defines these decades as a distinct period of American history. Internationally, a prolonged period of tension and conflict known as the Cold War drew the United States into an engagement in world affairs unprecedented in the nation's history. Domestically, three decades of sustained economic growth, whose benefits were widely, though imperfectly, distributed, expanded the middle class and brought into being a mass consumer society. These international and domestic developments were intertwined with the predominance of liberalism in American politics and public policy. One might think of an "age of liberalism" in this era, encompassing the social-welfare liberalism that was a legacy of the New Deal and the rights liberalism of the 1960s, both of which fell under the larger umbrella of Cold War liberalism.

Global leadership abroad and economic prosperity at home were conditioned on further expansions in government power. How that power was used proved controversial. Immediately following World War II, a national security state emerged to investigate so-called subversives in the United States and, through the clandestine Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), to destabilize foreign governments abroad. Meanwhile, American troops went to war in Korea and Vietnam. At home, African Americans, women, the poor, and other social groups called for greater equality in American life and sought new laws and government initiatives to make that equality a reality. Here, in brief, are the three key dimensions of this convulsive, turbulent era.

Global Leadership and the Cold War

When the United States officially joined the combatants of World War II, it entered into an alliance with England and the Soviet Union. That alliance proved impossible to sustain after 1945, as the United States and the Soviet Union became competitors to shape postwar Europe, East Asia, and the developing world. The resulting Cold War lasted four decades, during which the United States extended its political and military reach onto every continent. Under the presidency of Harry S. Truman, American officials developed the policy of containment—a combination of economic, diplomatic, and military actions to limit the expansion of communism—that subsequent presidents embraced and expanded.

Diplomatic and military intervention abroad was a hallmark of the Cold War. Most American interventions took place in developing countries, in recently independent, decolonized nations, and in countries where nationalist movements pressed for independence. In the name of preventing the spread of communism, the United States intervened directly or indirectly in China, Iran, Guatemala, Cuba, Indonesia, and the Dominican Republic, among many other nations, and fought major wars in Korea and Vietnam. This new global role for the United States inspired support but also spurred detractors. The latter eventually included the antiwar movement during the war in Vietnam. Chapter 25 focuses on the Cold War, and Vietnam is addressed in Chapter 28.

The Age of Liberalism

In response to the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal expanded federal responsibility for the social welfare of ordinary citizens, sweeping away much of the *laissez-faire* individualism of earlier eras (see Chapter 23). Legislators from both parties embraced liberal ideas about the role of government and undertook such measures as the GI Bill, subsidies for suburban home ownership, and investment in infrastructure and education. Poverty, however, affected nearly one-third of Americans in the 1960s, and racial discrimination denied millions of nonwhites full citizenship. Lack of opportunity became a driving force in the civil rights movement and in the Great Society under President Lyndon Johnson.

Inspired by African American civil rights, other social movements sought equality based on gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and other identities. If "New Deal liberalism" had focused on social welfare, this "rights liberalism" focused on protecting people from discrimination and ensuring equal citizenship. These struggles resulted in new laws, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and transformative Supreme Court decisions. Conservative opponents, however, mobilized in the 1960s against what they saw as the excesses of liberal activism. The resulting conflict began to reshape politics in the 1970s and laid the groundwork for a new conservative resurgence. These developments are discussed in Chapters 27 and 28.

Mass Consumption and the Middle Class

More than ever, the postwar American economy was driven by mass consumption and the accompanying process of suburbanization. Rising wages, increasing access to higher education, and the availability of suburban home ownership raised living standards and allowed more Americans than ever to afford consumer goods. Suburbanization transformed the nation's cities, and the Sunbelt led the nation in population growth. But the new prosperity had mixed results. Cities declined and new racial and ethnic ghettos formed. Suburbanization and mass consumption raised concerns that the nation's rivers, streams, air, and open land were being damaged, and an environmental movement arose in response. And prosperity itself proved short-lived. By the 1970s, deindustrialization had eroded much of the nation's once prosperous industrial base.

A defining characteristic of the postwar decades was the growth of the American middle class. That growth was predicated on numerous demographic changes. Home ownership increased, as did college enrollments. Women worked more outside the home and spurred a new feminism. Children enjoyed more purchasing power, and a "teen culture" arose on television, in popular music, and in film. The family became politicized, too, and by the late 1970s, liberals and conservatives were divided over how best to address the nation's family life. All these developments are discussed in Chapters 25 and 29.

The Modern State and the Age of Liberalism
1945–1980

Thematic Understanding

This timeline arranges some of the important events of this period into themes. Consider the entries under "America in the World" and "Politics and Power" across all four decades. What connections were there between international developments and domestic politics in this era of the Cold War? >

	AMERICA IN THE WORLD	POLITICS AND POWER	IDENTITY	ENVIRONMENT AND GEOGRPAHY	WORK, EXCHANGE, AND TECHNOLOGY
1940	• Truman Doctrine • Israel created (1947) • Marshall Plan (1948) • Containment strategy emerges • NATO created; West Germany created (1949)	• GI Bill (1944) • Loyalty-Security Program • Taft-Hartley Act (1947) • Truman reelected (1948) • Truman's Fair Deal (1949)	• *To Secure These Rights* (1947) • Desegregation of armed services (1948) • *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948)	• Continued South-North migration of African Americans • First Levittown opens (1947) • FHA and VA subsidize suburbanization	• Bretton Woods system established: World Bank, International Monetary Fund • Baby boom establishes new consumer generation
1950	• Permanent mobilization as a result of NSC-68 • Korean War (1950–1953) • Geneva Accords regarding Vietnam (1954)	• Cold War liberalism • McCarthyism and Red Scare • Eisenhower's presidency (1953–1961)	• *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) • Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955) • Little Rock — Central High School desegregation battle • Southern Christian Leadership Conference founded (1957)	• Disneyland opens (1955) • National Highway Act (1956) • Growth of suburbia and Sunbelt • Atomic bomb testing in Nevada and Pacific Ocean	• Treaty of Detroit (1950) • Military-industrial complex begins to rise • National Defense Education Act (1958) spurs development of technology
1960	• Cuban missile crisis (1962) • Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (1964) • Johnson sends ground troops to Vietnam; war escalates (1965) • Tet offensive (1968); peace talks begin	• John F. Kennedy's New Frontier • John F. Kennedy assassinated (1963) • Lyndon B. Johnson's landslide victory (1964) • War on Poverty; Great Society • Riots at Democratic National Convention (1968)	• Greensboro sit-ins • *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) • Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts (1964–1965) • National Organization for Women founded (1966) • Alcatraz occupation (1969) • Black Power • Student and antiwar activism	• Great Society environmental initiatives • Urban riots (1964–1968) • Kerner Commission Report (1968)	• Economic boom • Government spending on Vietnam and Great Society • Medicare and Medicaid created (1965)
1970	• Nixon invades Cambodia (1971) • Paris Accords end Vietnam War (1973) • Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel (1978) • Iranian Revolution (1979) and hostage crisis (1979–1981)	• Richard Nixon's landslide victory (1972) • Watergate scandal; Nixon resigns (1974) • Jimmy Carter elected president (1976) • Moral Majority founded (1979)	• Equal Rights Amendment (1972) • *Roe v. Wade* (1973) • *Bakke v. University of California* (1978) • Harvey Milk assassinated (1978)	• First Earth Day (1970) • Environmental Protection Agency established (1970) • Endangered Species Act (1973) • Three Mile Island accident (1979)	• Energy crisis (1973) • Inflation surges, while economy stagnates (stagflation) • Deindustrialization • Tax revolt in California (1978)

CHAPTER 25

Cold War America 1945–1963

IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA

In the first two decades of the Cold War, how did competition on the international stage and a climate of fear at home affect politics, society, and culture in the United States?

In the autumn of 1950, a little-known California congressman running for the Senate named Richard M. Nixon stood before reporters in Los Angeles. His opponent, Helen Gahagan Douglas, was a Hollywood actress and a New Deal Democrat. Nixon told the gathered reporters that Douglas had cast "Communist-leaning" votes and that she was "pink right down to her underwear." Gahagan's voting record was not much different from Nixon's. But tarring her with communism made her seem un-American, and Nixon defeated the "pink lady" with nearly 60 percent of the vote.

A few months earlier, U.S. tanks, planes, and artillery supplies had arrived in French Indochina. A French colony since the nineteenth century, Indochina (present-day Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia) was home to an independence movement led by Ho Chi Minh and supported by the Soviet Union and China. In the summer of 1950, President Harry S. Truman authorized $15 million worth of military supplies to aid France, which was fighting Ho's army to keep possession of its Indochinese empire. "Neither national independence nor democratic evolution exists in any area dominated by Soviet imperialism," Secretary of State Dean Acheson warned ominously as he announced U.S. support for French imperialism.

Connecting these coincidental historical moments, one domestic and the other international, was a decades-old force in American life that gained renewed strength after World War II: anticommunism. The events in Los Angeles and Vietnam, however different on the surface, were part of the global geopolitical struggle between the democratic United States and the communist, authoritarian Soviet Union known as the Cold War. Beginning in Europe as World War II ended and extending to Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa by the mid-1950s, the Cold War reshaped international relations and dominated global politics for more than forty years.

In the United States, the Cold War fostered suspicion of "subversives" in government, education, and the media. The arms race that developed between the two superpowers prompted Congress to boost military expenditures. The resulting military-industrial complex enhanced the power of the corporations that built planes, munitions, and electronic devices. In politics, the Cold War stifled liberal initiatives as the New Deal coalition tried to advance its domestic agenda in the shadow of anticommunism. In these ways, the line between the international and the domestic blurred—and that blurred line was another enduring legacy of the Cold War.

The Perils of the Cold War Americans, like much of the world, lived under the threat of nuclear warfare during the tense years of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. This 1951 civil defense poster, with the message "It *can* happen Here," suggests that Americans should be prepared for such a dire outcome.

Containment and a Divided Global Order

The Cold War began on the heels of World War II and ended in 1991 with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. While it lasted, this conflict raised two critical questions at the center of global history: What conditions, and whose interests, would determine the balance of power in Europe and Asia? And how would the developing nations (the European colonies in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa) gain their independence and take their places on the world stage? Cold War rivalry framed the possible answers to both questions as it drew the United States into a prolonged engagement with world affairs, unprecedented in the nation's history, that continues to the present day.

Origins of the Cold War

World War II set the basic conditions for the Cold War. With Germany and Japan defeated and Britain and France weakened by years of war, only two geopolitical powers remained standing in 1945. Even had nothing divided them, the United States and the Soviet Union would have jostled each other as they moved to fill the postwar power vacuum. But, of course, the two countries were divided — by geography, history, ideology, and strategic interest. Little united them other than their commitment to defeating the Axis powers. President Franklin Roosevelt understood that maintaining the U.S.-Soviet alliance was essential for postwar global stability. But he also believed that permanent peace and long-term U.S. interests depended on the Wilsonian principles of collective security, self-determination, and free trade (Chapter 21).

Yalta At the **Yalta Conference** of February 1945, Wilsonian principles yielded to U.S.-Soviet power realities. As Allied forces neared victory in Europe and advanced toward Japan in the Pacific, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin met in Yalta, a resort in southern Ukraine on the Black Sea. Roosevelt focused on maintaining Allied unity and securing Stalin's commitment to enter the war against Japan. But the fates of the nations of Eastern Europe divided the Big Three. Stalin insisted that Russian national security required pro-Soviet governments in Eastern Europe. Roosevelt pressed for an agreement, the "Declaration on Liberated Europe," that guaranteed self-determination and democratic elections in Poland and neighboring countries, such as Romania and Hungary. However, given the

East Meets West

With an "East Meets West" placard providing inspiration, Private Frank B. Huff of Virginia (on the left) and a Russian soldier shake hands. Huff was one of the first four Americans to contact the Russians when the two armies met at the River Elbe (seen in the background of this photo) in eastern Germany, on April 25, 1945. The good will in evidence in the spring of 1945, as Americans and Russians alike celebrated the defeat of Nazi Germany, would within two short years be replaced by Cold War suspicion and hostility. © Bettmann/Corbis.

presence of Soviet troops in those nations, FDR had to accept a pledge from Stalin to hold "free and unfettered elections" at a future time. The three leaders also formalized their commitment to divide Germany into four administrative zones, each controlled by one of the four Allied powers, and to similarly partition the capital city, Berlin, which was located in the middle of the Soviet zone.

At Yalta, the Big Three also agreed to establish an international body to replace the discredited League of Nations. Based on plans drawn up at the 1944 Dumbarton Oaks conference in Washington, D.C., the new organization, to be known as the **United Nations**, would have both a General Assembly, in which all nations would be represented, and a Security Council composed of the five major Allied powers — the United States, Britain, France, China, and the Soviet Union — and seven other nations elected on a rotating basis. The Big Three determined that the five permanent members of the Security Council should have veto power over decisions of the General Assembly. They announced that the United Nations would convene for the first time in San Francisco on April 25, 1945.

Potsdam Following the Yalta Conference, developments over the ensuing year further hardened relations between the Soviets on one side and the Americans and British on the other. At the **Potsdam Conference** outside Berlin in July 1945, Harry Truman replaced the deceased Roosevelt. Inexperienced in world affairs and thrown into enormously complicated negotiations, Truman's instinct was to stand up to Stalin. "Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language," he said, "another war is in the making." But Truman was in no position to realign events in Eastern Europe, where Soviet-imposed governments in Poland, Hungary, and Romania were backed by the Red Army and could not be eliminated by Truman's bluster. In Poland and Romania, in particular, Stalin was determined to establish communist governments, punish wartime Nazi collaborators, and win boundary concessions that augmented Soviet territory (the Soviet leader sought eastern Polish lands for the Soviet Union and sought to make far northeastern Germany part of Poland).

Yalta and Potsdam thus set the stage for communist rule to descend over Eastern Europe. The elections called for at Yalta eventually took place in Finland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia, with varying degrees of democratic openness. Nevertheless, Stalin got the client regimes he desired in those countries and would soon exert near-complete control over their governments. Stalin's unwillingness to honor self-determination for nations in Eastern Europe was, from the American point of view, the precipitating event of the Cold War.

Germany represented the biggest challenge of all. American officials at Potsdam believed that a revived German economy was essential to ensuring the prosperity of democratic regimes throughout Western Europe — and to keeping ordinary Germans from turning again to Nazism. In contrast, Stalin hoped merely to extract reparations from Germany in the form of industrial machines and goods. In exchange for recognizing the new German-Polish border, Truman and Secretary of State James Byrnes convinced the Soviet leader to accept German reparations only from the Soviet zone, which lay in the far eastern, and largely rural, portion of Germany and promised little wealth or German industry to plunder. As they had done for Europe as a whole, the Yalta and Potsdam agreements paved the way for the division of Germany into East and West (Map 25.1).

Yalta and Potsdam had demonstrated that in private negotiations the United States and the Soviet Union had starkly different objectives. Subsequent public utterances only intensified those differences. In February 1946, Stalin delivered a speech in which he insisted that, according to Marxist-Leninist principles, "the unevenness of development of the capitalist countries" was likely to produce "violent disturbance" and even another war. He seemed to blame any future war on the capitalist West. Churchill responded in kind a month later. While visiting Truman in Missouri to be honored for his wartime leadership, Churchill accused Stalin of raising an "iron curtain" around Eastern Europe and allowing "police government" to rule its people. He went further, claiming that "a fraternal association of English-speaking peoples," and not Russians, ought to set the terms of the postwar world.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
How did American and Soviet viewpoints differ over the postwar fate of Europe?

The cities and fields of Europe had barely ceased to run with the blood of World War II before they were menaced again by the tense standoff between the Soviet Union and the United States. With Stalin intent on establishing client states in Eastern Europe and the United States equally intent on reviving Germany and ensuring collective security throughout Europe, the points of agreement were few and far between. Among the Allies, anxiety about a Nazi victory in World War II had been quickly replaced by fear of a potentially more cataclysmic war with the Soviet Union.

MAP 25.1

Cold War in Europe, 1955

This map vividly shows the Cold War division of Europe. The NATO countries (colored green) are allies of the United States; the Warsaw Pact countries (in purple) are allied to the USSR. At that point, West Germany had just been admitted to NATO, completing Europe's stabilization into two rival camps. But Berlin remained divided, and one can see from its location deep in East Germany why the former capital was always a flash point in Cold War controversies.

The Containment Strategy

In the late 1940s, American officials developed a clear strategy toward the Soviet Union that would become known as **containment**. Convinced that the USSR was methodically expanding its reach, the United States would counter by limiting Stalin's influence to Eastern Europe while reconstituting democratic governments in Western Europe. In 1946–1947, three specific issues worried Truman and his advisors. First, the Soviet Union was pressing Iran for access to oil and Turkey for access to the Mediterranean. Second, a civil war was roiling in Greece, between monarchists backed by England and insurgents supported by the Greek and Yugoslavian Communist parties. Third, as European nations suffered through terrible privation in 1946 and 1947, Communist parties gained strength, particularly in France and Italy. All three developments, as seen from the United States, threatened to expand the influence of the Soviet Union outside of Eastern Europe.

Toward an Uneasy Peace

In this anxious context, the strategy of containment emerged in a series of incremental steps between 1946 and 1949. In February 1946, American diplomat George F. Kennan first proposed the idea in an 8,000-word cable — a confidential message to the U.S. State Department — from his post at the U.S. embassy in Moscow. Kennan argued that the

Soviet Union was an "Oriental despotism" and that communism was merely the "fig leaf" justifying Soviet aggression. A year after writing this cable (dubbed the Long Telegram), he published an influential *Foreign Affairs* article, arguing that the West's only recourse was to meet the Soviets "with unalterable counter-force at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world." Kennan called for "long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies." *Containment*, the key word, came to define America's evolving strategic stance toward the Soviet Union.

To see a longer excerpt of the Long Telegram, along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History***.

Kennan believed that the Soviet system was inherently unstable and would eventually collapse. Containment would work, he reasoned, as long as the United States and its allies opposed Soviet expansion in all parts of the world. Kennan's attentive readers included Stalin himself, who quickly obtained a copy of the classified Long Telegram. The Soviet leader saw the United States as an imperialist aggressor determined to replace Great Britain as the world's dominant capitalist power. Just as Kennan thought that the Soviet system was despotic and unsustainable, Stalin believed that the West suffered from its own fatal weaknesses. Neither side completely understood or trusted the other, and each projected its worst fears onto the other.

In fact, Britain's influence in the world was declining. Exhausted by the war, facing enormous budget deficits and a collapsing economy at home, and confronted with a determined independence movement in India led by Mohandas Gandhi and growing nationalist movements throughout its empire, Britain was waning as a global power. "The reins of world leadership are fast slipping from Britain's competent but now very weak hands," read a U.S. State Department report. "These reins will be picked up either by the United States or by Russia." The United States was wedded to the notion — dating to the Wilson administration — that communism and capitalism were incompatible on the world stage. With Britain faltering, American officials saw little choice but to fill its shoes.

It did not take long for the reality of Britain's decline to resonate across the Atlantic. In February 1947, London informed Truman that it could no longer afford to support the anticommunists in the Greek civil war. Truman worried that a communist victory in Greece would lead to Soviet domination of the eastern Mediterranean and embolden Communist parties in France and Italy. In response, the president announced what became known as the **Truman Doctrine.** In a speech on March 12, he asserted an American responsibility "to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." To that end, Truman proposed large-scale assistance for Greece and Turkey (then involved in a dispute with the Soviet Union over the Dardanelles, a strait connecting the Aegean Sea and the Sea of Marmara). "If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world," Truman declared (Thinking Like a Historian, p. 810). Despite the open-endedness of this military commitment, Congress quickly approved Truman's request for $300 million in aid to Greece and $100 million for Turkey.

Soviet expansionism was part of a larger story. Europe was sliding into economic chaos. Already devastated by the war, in 1947 the continent suffered the worst winter in memory. People were starving, credit was nonexistent, wages were stagnant, and the consumer market had collapsed. For both humanitarian and practical reasons, Truman's advisors believed something had to be done. A global depression might ensue if the European economy, the largest foreign market for American goods, did not recover. Worse, unemployed and dispirited Western Europeans might fill the ranks of the Communist Party, threatening political stability and the legitimacy of the United States. Secretary of State George C. Marshall came up with a remarkable proposal: a massive infusion of American capital to rebuild the European economy. Speaking at the Harvard University commencement in June 1947, Marshall urged the nations of Europe to work out a comprehensive recovery program based on U.S. aid.

This pledge of financial assistance required congressional approval, but the plan ran into opposition in Washington. Republicans castigated the **Marshall Plan** as a huge "international WPA." But in the midst of the congressional stalemate, on February 25, 1948, Stalin supported a communist-led coup in Czechoslovakia. Congress rallied and voted overwhelmingly in 1948 to approve the Marshall Plan. Over the next four years, the United States contributed nearly $13 billion to a highly successful recovery effort that benefitted both Western Europe and the United States. European industrial production increased by 64 percent, and the appeal of Communist parties waned in the West. Markets for American goods grew stronger

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT

Why did the United States enact the Marshall Plan, and how did the program illustrate America's new role in the world?

The Global Cold War

Until 1950, the U.S. policy of containment was confined to economic measures, such as financial assistance to Greece and Turkey and the Marshall Plan, and focused on Europe. That changed between 1950 and 1954. In those years, containment became militarized, and its scope was expanded to include Asia and Latin America. What had begun as a limited policy to contain Soviet influence in war-torn Europe had by the mid-1950s become a global campaign against communism and social revolution.

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1. President Harry S. Truman, address before joint session of Congress, March 12, 1947. *Known as the Truman Doctrine, this speech outlined Truman's plan to give large-scale assistance to Greece and Turkey as part of a broader anticommunist policy.*

To ensure the peaceful development of nations, free from coercion, the United States has taken a leading part in establishing the United Nations. The United Nations is designed to make possible lasting freedom and independence for all its members. We shall not realize our objectives, however, unless we are willing to help free peoples to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes. . . .

At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one.

One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression.

The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio; fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms.

I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.

I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way.

I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes.

2. Syngman Rhee, president of South Korea, criticizing U.S. policy in 1950. *The Korean War, 1950–1953, represented the militarization of the Truman Doctrine.*

A few days ago one American friend said that if the U.S. gave weapons to South Korea, she feared that South Korea would invade North Korea. This is a useless worry of some Americans, who do not know South Korea. Our present war is not a Cold War, but a real shooting war. Our troops will take all possible counter-measures. . . . In South Korea the U.S. has one foot in South Korea and one foot outside so that in case of an unfavorable situation it could pull out of the country. I daresay that if the U.S. wants to aid our country, it should not be only lip-service.

3. Secretary of State Dean Acheson's testimony before the Senate Armed Forces and Foreign Relations Committee, 1951.

The attack on Korea was . . . a challenge to the whole system of collective security, not only in the Far East, but everywhere in the world. It was a threat to all nations newly arrived at independence. . . .

This was a test which would decide whether our collective security system would survive or would crumble. It would determine whether other nations would be intimidated by this show of force. . . .

As a people we condemn aggression of any kind. We reject appeasement of any kind. If we stood with our arms folded while Korea was swallowed up, it would have meant abandoning our principles, and it would have meant the defeat of the collective security system on which our own safety ultimately depends.

4. Shigeru Yoshida, prime minister of Japan, speech before the Japanese Diet (parliament), July 14, 1950.

It is heartening . . . that America and so many members of the United Nations have gone to the rescue of an invaded country regardless of the heavy sacrifices involved. In case a war breaks out on an extensive scale how would Japan's security be preserved [since we are disarmed]? . . . This has been hotly discussed. However, the measures taken by the United Nations have done much to stabilize our people's minds.

5. John Foster Dulles, secretary of state (1953–1959), June 30, 1954, radio and television address to the American people. *In 1951, Jacobo Arbenz was elected president of Guatemala. Arbenz pursued reform policies that threatened large landholders, including the United Fruit Company. In 1954, the United States CIA engineered a coup that overthrew Arbenz and replaced him with Carlos Castillo Armas, a colonel in the Guatemalan military.*

Tonight I should like to speak with you about Guatemala. It is the scene of dramatic events. They expose the evil purpose of the Kremlin to destroy the inter-American system, and they test the ability of the American States to maintain the peaceful integrity of the hemisphere.

For several years international communism has been probing here and there for nesting places in the Americas. It finally chose Guatemala as a spot which it could turn into an official base from which to breed subversion which would extend to other American Republics.

This intrusion of Soviet despotism was, of course, a direct challenge to our Monroe Doctrine, the first and most fundamental of our foreign policies.

6. Guillermo Toriello, Guatemalan foreign minister, speech to delegates at the Tenth Inter-American Conference of the Organization of American States in Caracas, Venezuela, March 5, 1954.

What is the real and effective reason for describing our government as communist? From what sources comes the accusation that we threaten continental solidarity and security? Why do they [United States] wish to intervene in Guatemala?

The answers are simple and evident. The plan of national liberation being carried out with firmness by my government has necessarily affected the privileges of the foreign enterprises that are impeding the progress and the economic development of the country. . . . With construction of publically owned ports and docks, we are putting an end to the monopoly of the United Fruit Company. . . .

They wanted to find a ready expedient to maintain the economic dependence of the American Republics and suppress the legitimate desires of their peoples, cataloguing as "communism" every manifestation of nationalism or economic independence, any desire for social progress, any intellectual curiosity, and any interest in progressive and liberal reforms.

7. Herblock cartoon from the *Washington Post*, February 11, 1962. *Many Latin American countries were beset by a wide gap between a small wealthy elite and the mass of ordinary, much poorer citizens. American officials worried that this made social revolution an attractive alternative for those at the bottom.*

A 1962 Herblock Cartoon, by The Herb Block Foundation.

Sources: (1) The Avalon Project at avalon.law.yale.edu; (2) Reinhard Drifte, "Japan's Involvement in the Korean War," in *The Korean War in History*, ed. James Cotton and Ian Neary (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1989), 43; (3) Glenn D. Paige, *The Korean Decision* (New York: The Free Press, 1968), 175–176; (4) Drifte, 122; (5) Jonathan L. Fried et al., eds., *Guatemala in Rebellion: Unfinished History* (New York: Grove Press, 1983), 78; (6) Stephen C. Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982), 143–144.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. In source 1, Truman presents the choice facing the world in stark terms: totalitarianism or democracy. Why would he frame matters in this way in 1947? How did Truman anticipate the militarization of American foreign policy?
2. Analyze the audience, purpose, and point of view presented in the documents dealing with the war in Korea (sources 2–4). What does Acheson mean by "collective security"? Why is Yoshida thankful for the UN intervention? What can you infer about U.S. involvement in world affairs during the postwar period based on these documents?
3. In document 6, how does Toriello characterize accusations that the elected Guatemalan government is communist? What are his accusations of the United States?
4. How does source 7 express one of the obstacles to democracy in developing nations?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Using these documents, and based on what you have learned in class and in this chapter, write an essay in which you analyze the goals of American foreign policy during the early years of the Cold War.

The Marshall Plan

Officials from the United States and Britain watch as the first shipment of Caribbean sugar provided under the Marshall Plan arrives in England, lowered from the decks of the *Royal Victoria*. Passed by Congress in 1948, the Marshall Plan (known officially as the European Recovery Program) committed the United States to spend $17 billion over a four-year period to assist the war-ravaged nations of Western Europe. Marshall Plan funds helped the struggling British, French, and especially German economies, but they also benefitted the United States itself: the plan required European nations who participated to purchase most of their goods from American companies. Keystone/Getty Images.

and fostered economic interdependence between Europe and the United States. Notably, however, the Marshall Plan intensified Cold War tensions. U.S. officials invited the Soviets to participate but insisted on certain restrictions that would virtually guarantee Stalin's refusal. When Stalin refused, ordering Soviet client states to do so as well, the onus of dividing Europe appeared to fall on the Soviet leader and deprived his threadbare partners of assistance they sorely needed.

East and West in the New Europe The flash point for a hot war remained Germany, the most important industrial economy and the key strategic landmass in Europe. When no agreement could be reached to unify the four zones of occupation into a single state, the Western allies consolidated their three zones in 1947. They then prepared to establish an independent federal German republic. Marshall Plan funds would jumpstart economic recovery. Some of those funds were slated for West Berlin, in hopes of making the city a capitalist showplace 100 miles deep inside the Soviet zone.

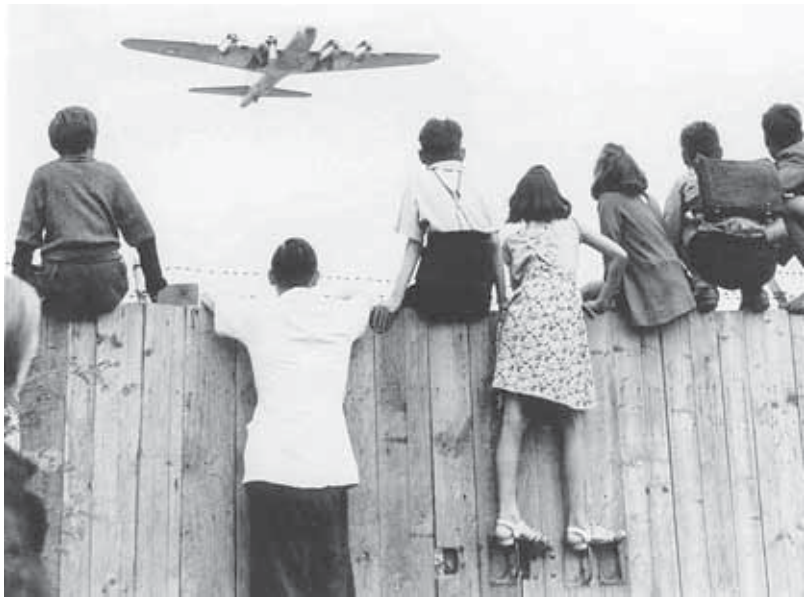
Stung by the West's intention to create a German republic, in June 1948 Stalin blockaded all traffic to West Berlin. Instead of yielding, as Stalin had expected, Truman and the British were resolute. "We are going to stay, period," Truman said plainly. Over the next year, American and British pilots, who had been dropping bombs on Berlin only four years earlier, improvised the Berlin Airlift, which flew 2.5 million tons of food and fuel into the Western zones of the city — nearly a ton for each resident. Military officials reported to Truman that General Lucius D. Clay, the American commander in Berlin, was nervous and on edge, "drawn as tight as a steel spring." But after a prolonged stalemate, Stalin backed down: on May 12, 1949, he lifted the blockade. Until the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, the Berlin crisis was the closest the two sides came to actual war, and West Berlin became a symbol of resistance to communism.

The crisis in Berlin persuaded Western European nations to forge a collective security pact with the United States. In April 1949, for the first time since the end of the American Revolution, the United States entered into a peacetime military alliance, the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**. Under the NATO pact, twelve nations — Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United States — agreed that "an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all." In May 1949, those nations also agreed to the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), which eventually joined NATO in 1955. In response, the Soviet Union established the German Democratic Republic (East Germany); the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON); and, in 1955, the **Warsaw Pact**, a military alliance for Eastern Europe that included Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union. In these parallel steps, the two superpowers had institutionalized the Cold War through a massive division of the continent.

By the early 1950s, West and East were the stark markers of the new Europe. As Churchill had observed

The Berlin Airlift

For 321 days U.S. planes like this one flew missions to bring food and other supplies to Berlin after the Soviet Union had blocked all surface routes into the former German capital. The blockade was finally lifted on May 12, 1949, after the Soviets conceded that it had been a failure. AP Images.



in 1946, the line dividing the two stretched "from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic," cutting off tens of millions of Eastern Europeans from the rest of the continent. Stalin's tactics had often been ruthless, but they were not without reason. The Soviet Union acted out of the sort of self-interest that had long defined powerful nations — ensuring a defensive perimeter of allies, seeking access to raw materials, and pressing the advantage that victory in war allowed.

NSC-68 Atomic developments, too, played a critical role in the emergence of the Cold War. As the sole nuclear power at the end of World War II, the United States entertained the possibility of international control of nuclear technology but did not wish to lose its advantage over the Soviet Union. When the American Bernard Baruch proposed United Nations oversight of atomic energy in 1946, for instance, the plan assured the United States of near-total control of the technology, which further increased Cold War tensions. America's brief tenure as sole nuclear power ended in September 1949, however, when the Soviet Union detonated an atomic bomb. Truman then turned to the U.S. National Security Council (NSC), established by the National Security Act of 1947, for a strategic reassessment.

In April 1950, the NSC delivered its report, known as **NSC-68**. Bristling with alarmist rhetoric, the document marked a decisive turning point in the U.S. approach to the Cold War. The report's authors described the Soviet Union not as a typical great power but as one with a "fanatic faith" that seeks to "impose its absolute authority." Going beyond even the stern language used by George Kennan, NSC-68 cast Soviet ambitions as nothing short of "the domination of the Eurasian landmass."

To prevent that outcome, the report proposed "a bold and massive program of rebuilding the West's defensive potential to surpass that of the Soviet world" (America Compared, p. 814). This included the development of a hydrogen bomb, a thermonuclear device that would be a thousand times more destructive than the atomic bombs dropped on Japan, as well as dramatic increases in conventional military forces. Critically, NSC-68 called for Americans to pay higher taxes to support the new military program and to accept whatever sacrifices were necessary to achieve national unity of purpose against the Soviet enemy. Many historians see the report as having "militarized" the American approach to the Cold War, which had to that point relied largely on economic measures such as aid to Greece and the Marshall Plan. Truman was reluctant to commit to a major defense buildup, fearing that it would overburden the national budget. But shortly after NSC-68 was completed, events in Asia led him to reverse course.

Containment in Asia

As with Germany, American officials believed that restoring Japan's economy, while limiting its military influence, would ensure prosperity and contain communism in East Asia. After dismantling Japan's military, American occupation forces under General Douglas MacArthur drafted a democratic constitution and

Arming for the Cold War

To fight the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union increased overall military spending and assembled massive arsenals of nuclear weapons.

TABLE 25.1

Worldwide Nuclear Stockpiles, 1945–1975

Country	1945	1955	1965	1975
United States	2	3,057	32,135	27,235
USSR	0	200	6,129	19,443
United Kingdom	0	10	310	350
France	0	0	32	188
China	0	0	5	185
Israel	0	0	0	20*

*Estimated

SOURCES: Adapted from *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, National Resources Defense Council, and *Nuclear Weapons and Nonproliferation* (2007).

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Do you see evidence of the effects of NSC-68 in this table? What kinds of changes did NSC-68 bring about?
2. In what ways does the data in this table suggest the emergence of two "superpowers" after World War II?

paved the way for the restoration of Japanese sovereignty in 1951. Considering the scorched-earth war that had just ended, this was a remarkable achievement, thanks partly to the imperious MacArthur but mainly to the Japanese, who embraced peace and accepted U.S. military protection. However, events on the mainland of Asia proved much more difficult for the United States to shape to its advantage.

Civil War in China A civil war had been raging in China since the 1930s as Communist forces led by Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung) fought Nationalist forces under Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek). Fearing a Communist victory, between 1945 and 1949 the United States provided $2 billion to Jiang's army. Pressing Truman to "save" China, conservative Republican Ohio senator Robert A. Taft predicted that "the Far East is ultimately even more important to our future peace than is Europe." By 1949, Mao's forces held the advantage. Truman reasoned that to save Jiang, the United States would have to intervene militarily. Unwilling to do so, he cut off aid and left the Nationalists to their fate. The People's Republic of China was formally established under Mao on October 1, 1949, and the remnants of Jiang's forces fled to Taiwan.

Both Stalin and Truman expected Mao to take an independent line, as the Communist leader Tito had just done in Yugoslavia. Mao, however, aligned himself with the Soviet Union, partly out of fear that the United States would re-arm the Nationalists and invade the mainland. As attitudes hardened, many Americans viewed Mao's success as a defeat for the United States. The pro-Nationalist "China lobby" accused Truman's State Department of being responsible for the "loss" of China. Sensitive to these charges, the Truman administration refused to recognize "Red China" and blocked China's admission to the United Nations. But the United States pointedly declined to guarantee Taiwan's independence, and in fact accepted the outcome on the

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
How did U.S. containment strategy in Asia compare to containment in Europe?

Communist China

People in Beijing raise their clenched fists in a welcoming salute for Chinese Communist forces entering the city after the Nationalists surrendered on January 31, 1949. The center portrait behind them is of General Mao Zedong, the leader of the Communist Party of China. Mao's victory in the civil war (1946–1950) meant that from East Germany to the Pacific Ocean, much of the Eurasian landmass (including Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and China) was ruled by Communist governments. AP Images.

mainland. (Since 1982, however, the United States has recognized Taiwanese sovereignty.)

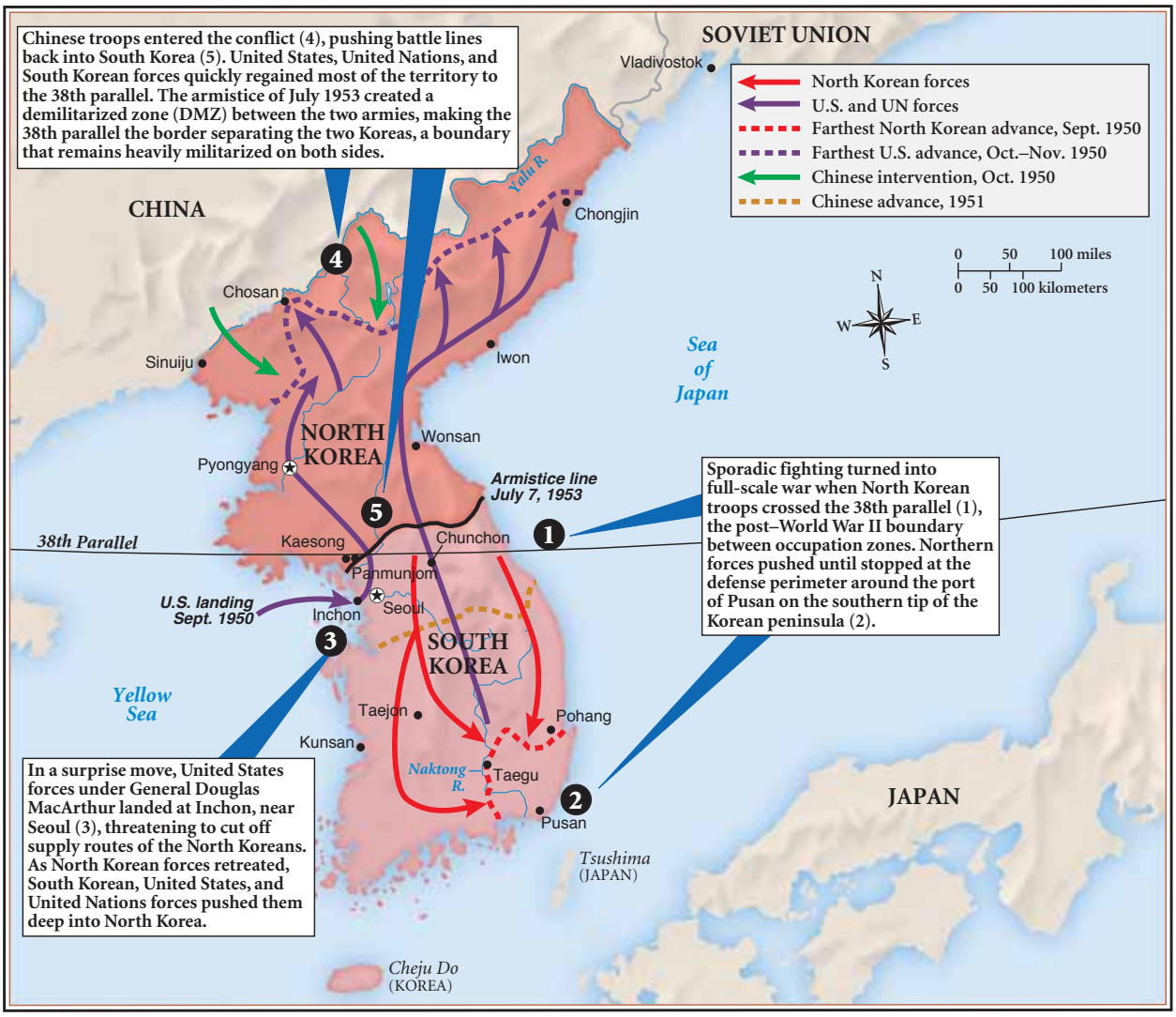
The Korean War The United States took a stronger stance in Korea. The United States and the Soviet Union had agreed at the close of World War II to occupy the Korean peninsula jointly, temporarily dividing the former Japanese colony at the 38th parallel. As tensions rose in Europe, the 38th parallel hardened into a permanent demarcation line. The Soviets supported a Communist government, led by Kim Il Sung, in North Korea; the United States backed a right-wing Nationalist, Syngman Rhee, in South Korea. The two sides had waged low-level war since 1945, and

The Korean War

As a result of President Truman's 1948 Executive Order 9981, for the first time in the nation's history all troops in the Korean War served in racially integrated combat units. This photo taken during the Battle of Ch'ongch'on in 1950 shows a sergeant and his men of the 2nd Infantry Division. National Archives.

both leaders were spoiling for a more definitive fight. However, neither Kim nor Rhee could launch an all-out offensive without the backing of his sponsor. Washington repeatedly said no, and so did Moscow. But Kim continued to press Stalin to permit him to reunify the nation. Convinced by the North Koreans that victory would be swift, the Soviet leader finally relented in the late spring of 1950.

On June 25, 1950, the North Koreans launched a surprise attack across the 38th parallel (Map 25.2). Truman immediately asked the UN Security Council to authorize a "police action" against the invaders. The Soviet Union was boycotting the Security Council to protest China's exclusion from the United Nations and could not veto Truman's request. With the Security Council's approval of a "peacekeeping force," Truman ordered U.S. troops to Korea. The rapidly assembled UN army in Korea was overwhelmingly American, with General Douglas MacArthur in command. At first, the North Koreans held a distinct advantage, but MacArthur's surprise amphibious attack at Inchon gave the UN forces control of Seoul, the South Korean



MAP 25.2

The Korean War, 1950–1953

The Korean War, which the United Nations officially deemed a "police action," lasted three years and cost the lives of more than 36,000 U.S. troops. South and North Korean deaths were estimated at more than 900,000. Although hostilities ceased in 1953, the South Korean Military (with U.S. military assistance) and the North Korean Army continue to face each other across the demilitarized zone, more than fifty years later.

capital, and almost all the territory up to the 38th parallel.

The impetuous MacArthur then ordered his troops across the 38th parallel and led them all the way to the Chinese border at the Yalu River. It was a major blunder, certain to draw China into the war. Sure enough, a massive Chinese counterattack forced MacArthur's forces into headlong retreat back down the Korean peninsula. Then stalemate set in. With weak public support for the war in the United States, Truman and his advisors decided to work for a negotiated peace. MacArthur disagreed and denounced the Korean stalemate, declaring, "There is no substitute for victory." On April 11, 1951, Truman relieved MacArthur of his command. Truman's decision was highly unpopular, especially among conservative Republicans, but he had likely saved the nation from years of costly warfare with China.

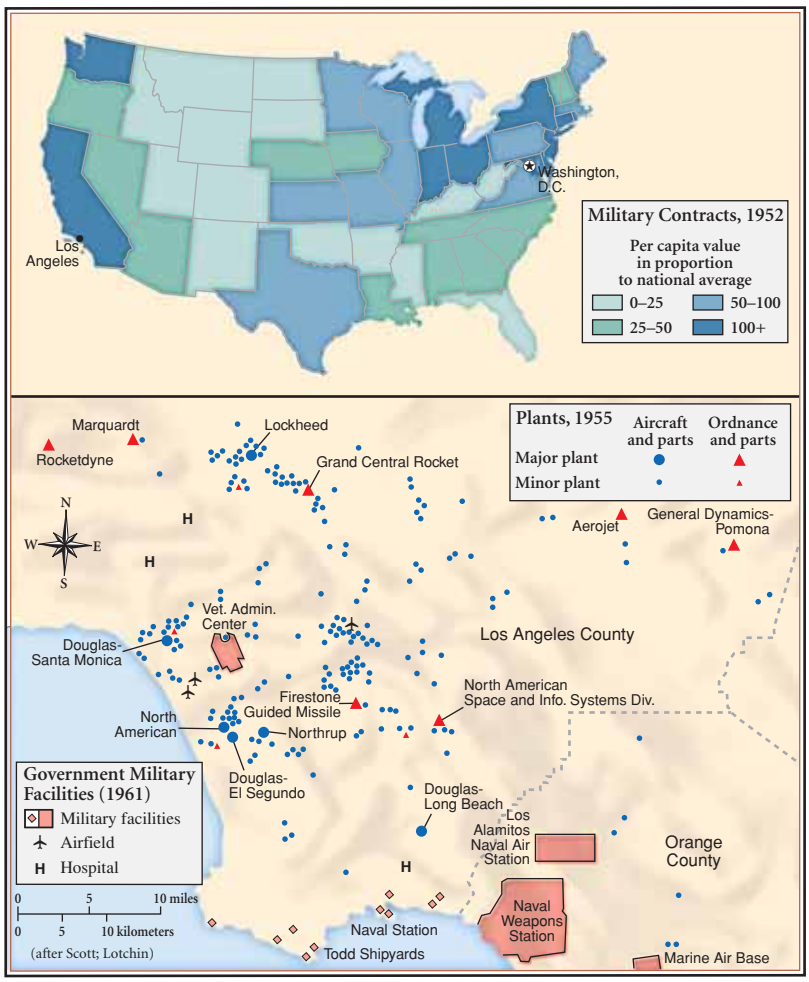
Notwithstanding MacArthur's dismissal, the war dragged on for more than two years. An armistice in July 1953, pushed by the newly elected president, Dwight D. Eisenhower, left Korea divided at the original demarcation line. North Korea remained firmly allied with the Soviet Union; South Korea signed a mutual defense treaty with the United States. It had been the first major proxy battle of the Cold War, in which the Soviet Union and United States took sides in a civil conflict. It would not be the last.

The Korean War had far-reaching consequences. Truman's decision to commit troops without congressional approval set a precedent for future undeclared wars. His refusal to unleash atomic bombs, even when American forces were reeling under a massive Chinese attack, set ground rules for Cold War conflict. The war also expanded American involvement in Asia, transforming containment into a truly global policy—and significantly boosting Japan's struggling postwar economy. Finally, the Korean War ended Truman's resistance to a major military buildup. Defense expenditures grew from $13 billion in 1950, roughly one-third of the federal budget, to $50 billion in 1953, nearly two-thirds of the budget (Map 25.3). American

MAP 25.3

The Military-Industrial Complex

Defense spending gave a big boost to the Cold War economy, but, as the upper map suggests, the benefits were by no means equally distributed. The big winners were the Middle Atlantic states, the industrialized Upper Midwest, Washington State (with its aircraft and nuclear plants), and California. The epicenter of California's military-industrial complex was Los Angeles, which, as is evident in the lower map, was studded with military facilities and major defense contractors like Douglas Aircraft, Lockheed, and General Dynamics. There was work aplenty for engineers and rocket scientists.



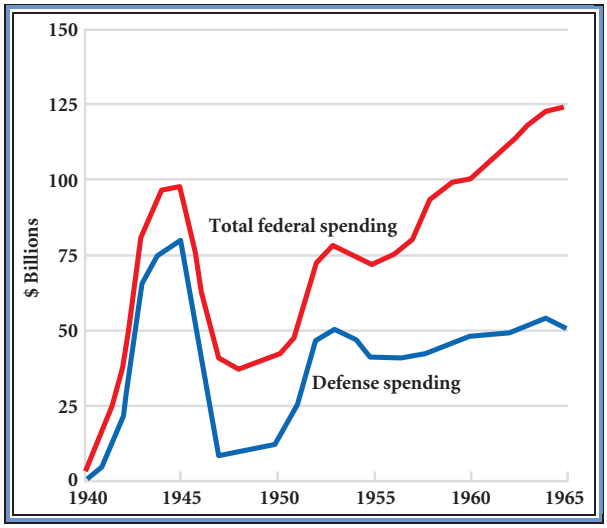


FIGURE 25.1
National Defense Spending, 1940–1965
In 1950, the U.S. defense budget was $13 billion, less than a third of total federal outlays. In 1961, U.S. defense spending reached $47 billion, fully half of the federal budget and almost 10 percent of the gross domestic product.

foreign policy had become more global, more militarized, and more expensive (Figure 25.1). Even in times of peace, the United States now functioned in a state of permanent military mobilization.

The Munich Analogy Behind much of U.S. foreign policy in the first two decades of the Cold War lay the memory of appeasement (Chapter 24). The generation of politicians and officials who designed the containment strategy had come of age in the shadow of Munich, the conference in 1938 at which the Western democracies had appeased Hitler by offering him part of Czechoslovakia, paving the road to World War II. Applying the lessons of Munich, American presidents believed that "appeasing" Stalin (and subsequent Soviet rulers Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev) would have the same result: wider war. Thus in Germany, Greece, and Korea, and later in Iran, Guatemala, and Vietnam, the United States staunchly resisted the Soviets — or what it perceived as Soviet influence. The Munich analogy strengthened the U.S. position in a number of strategic conflicts, particularly over the fate of Germany. But it also drew Americans into armed conflicts — and convinced them to support repressive, right-wing regimes — that compromised, as much as supported, stated American principles.

Cold War Liberalism

Harry Truman cast himself in the mold of his predecessor, Franklin Roosevelt, and hoped to seize the possibilities afforded by victory in World War II to expand the New Deal at home. But the crises in postwar Europe and Asia, combined with the spectacular rise of anticommunism in the United States, forced him to take a different path. In the end, Truman went down in history not as a New Dealer, but as a Cold Warrior. The Cold War consensus that he ultimately embraced — the notion that resisting communism at home and abroad represented America's most important postwar objective — shaped the nation's life and politics for decades to come.

Truman and the End of Reform

Truman and the Democratic Party of the late 1940s and early 1950s forged what historians call **Cold War liberalism**. They preserved the core programs of the New Deal welfare state, developed the containment policy to oppose Soviet influence throughout the world, and fought so-called subversives at home. But there would be no second act for the New Deal. The Democrats adopted this combination of moderate liberal policies and anticommunism — Cold War liberalism — partly by choice and partly out of necessity. A few high-level espionage scandals and the Communist victories in Eastern Europe and China reenergized the Republican Party, which forced Truman and the Democrats to retreat to what historian Arthur Schlesinger called the "vital center" of American politics. However, Americans on both the progressive left and the conservative right remained dissatisfied with this development. Cold War liberalism was a practical centrist policy for a turbulent era. But it would not last.

Organized labor remained a key force in the Democratic Party and played a central role in championing

Cold War liberalism. Stronger than ever, union membership swelled to more than 14 million by 1945. Determined to make up for their wartime sacrifices, unionized workers made aggressive demands and mounted major strikes in the automobile, steel, and coal industries after the war. Republicans responded. They gained control of the House in a sweeping repudiation of Democrats in 1946 and promptly passed — over Truman's veto — the **Taft-Hartley Act** (1947), an overhaul of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act.

Taft-Hartley crafted changes in procedures and language that, over time, weakened the right of workers to organize and engage in collective bargaining. Unions especially disliked Section 14b, which allowed states to pass "right-to-work" laws prohibiting the union shop. Additionally, the law forced unions to purge communists, who had been among the most successful labor organizers in the 1930s, from their ranks. Taft-Hartley effectively "contained" the labor movement. Trade unions would continue to support the Democratic Party, but the labor movement would not move into the largely non-union South and would not extend into the many American industries that remained unorganized.

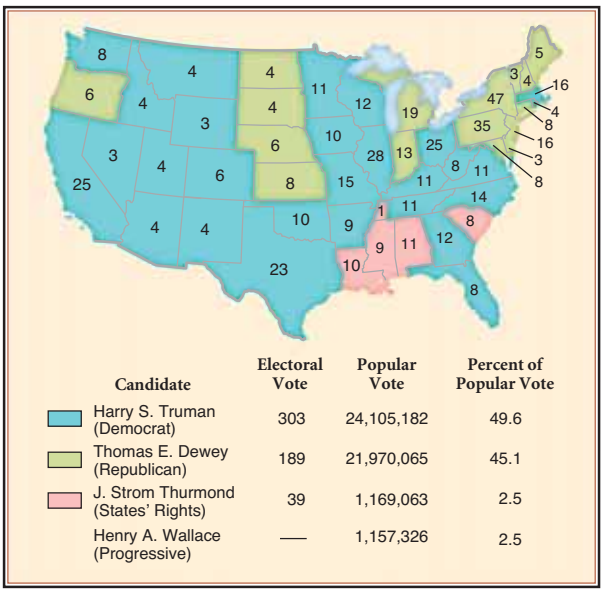
The 1948 Election Democrats would have dumped Truman in 1948 had they found a better candidate. But the party fell into disarray. The left wing split off and formed the Progressive Party, nominating Henry A. Wallace, an avid New Dealer whom Truman had fired as secretary of commerce in 1946 because Wallace opposed America's actions in the Cold War. A right-wing challenge came from the South. When northern liberals such as Mayor Hubert H. Humphrey of Minneapolis pushed through a strong civil rights platform at the Democratic convention, the southern delegations bolted and, calling themselves Dixiecrats, nominated for president South Carolina governor Strom Thurmond, an ardent supporter of racial segregation. The Republicans meanwhile renominated Thomas E. Dewey, the politically moderate governor of New York who had run a strong campaign against FDR in 1944.

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
How was the Democratic Party divided in 1948, and what were its primary constituencies?

Truman surprised everyone. He launched a strenuous cross-country speaking tour and hammered away at the Republicans for opposing progressive legislation and, in general, for running a "do-nothing" Congress. By combining these issues with attacks on the Soviet menace abroad, Truman began to salvage his troubled campaign. At his rallies, enthusiastic listeners shouted, "Give 'em hell, Harry!" Truman won, receiving 49.6 percent of the vote to Dewey's 45.1 percent (Map 25.4).

Truman Triumphant

In one of the most famous photographs in U.S. political history, Harry S. Truman gloats over an erroneous headline in the November 3 *Chicago Daily Tribune*. Pollsters had predicted an easy victory for Thomas E. Dewey. Their primitive techniques, however, missed the dramatic surge in support for Truman during the last days of the campaign.



Candidate	Electoral Vote	Popular Vote	Percent of Popular Vote
Harry S. Truman (Democrat)	303	24,105,182	49.6
Thomas E. Dewey (Republican)	189	21,970,065	45.1
J. Strom Thurmond (States' Rights)	39	1,169,063	2.5
Henry A. Wallace (Progressive)	—	1,157,326	2.5

MAP 25.4

The Presidential Election of 1948

Truman's electoral strategy in 1948 was to concentrate his campaign in areas where the Democrats had their greatest strength. In an election with a low turnout, Truman held on to enough support from Roosevelt's New Deal coalition of blacks, union members, and farmers to defeat Dewey by more than 2 million votes.

This remarkable election foreshadowed coming political turmoil. Truman occupied the center of FDR's sprawling New Deal coalition. On his left were progressives, civil rights advocates, and anti–Cold War peace activists. On his right were segregationist southerners, who opposed civil rights and were allied with Republicans on many economic and foreign policy issues. In 1948, Truman performed a delicate balancing act, largely retaining the support of Jewish and Catholic voters in the big cities, black voters in the North, and organized labor voters across the country. But Thurmond's strong showing—he carried four states in the Deep South—demonstrated the fragile nature of the Democratic coalition and prefigured the revolt of the party's southern wing in the 1960s. As he tried to manage contending forces in his own party, Truman faced mounting pressure from Republicans to denounce radicals at home and to take a tough stand against the Soviet Union.

The Fair Deal Despite having to perform a balancing act, Truman and progressive Democrats forged ahead. In 1949, reaching ambitiously to extend the New Deal, Truman proposed the **Fair Deal**: national health insurance, aid to education, a housing program, expansion of Social Security, a higher minimum wage, and a new agricultural program. In its attention to civil rights, the Fair Deal also reflected the growing role of African Americans in the Democratic Party. Congress, however, remained a huge stumbling block, and the Fair Deal fared poorly. The same conservative coalition that had blocked Roosevelt's initiatives in his second term continued the fight against Truman's. Cold War pressure shaped political arguments about domestic social programs, while the nation's growing paranoia over internal subversion weakened support for bold extensions of the welfare state. Truman's proposal for national health insurance, for instance, was a popular idea, with strong backing from organized labor. But it was denounced as "socialized medicine" by the American Medical Association and the insurance industry. In the end, the Fair Deal's only significant breakthrough, other than improvements to the minimum wage and Social Security, was the National Housing Act of 1949, which authorized the construction of 810,000 low-income units.

Red Scare: The Hunt for Communists

Cold War liberalism was premised on the grave domestic threat posed, many believed, by Communists and Communist sympathizers. Was there any significant Soviet penetration of the American government? Records opened after the 1991 disintegration of the Soviet Union indicate that there was, although it was largely confined to the 1930s. Among American suppliers of information to Moscow were FDR's assistant secretary of the treasury, Harry Dexter White; FDR's administrative aide Laughlin Currie; a strategically placed midlevel group in the State Department; and several hundred more, some identified only by code name, working in a range of government departments and agencies.

How are we to explain this? Many of these enlistees in the Soviet cause had been bright young New Dealers in the mid-1930s, when the Soviet-backed Popular Front suggested that the lines separating liberalism, progressivism, and communism were permeable (Chapter 24). At that time, the United States was not at war and never expected to be. And when war did come, the Soviet Union was an American ally. For critics of the informants, however, there remained the time between the Nazi-Soviet Pact and the German invasion of the Soviet Union, a nearly two-year period during which cooperation with the Soviet Union could be seen in a less positive light. Moreover,

passing secrets to another country, even a wartime ally, was simply indefensible to many Americans. The lines between U.S. and Soviet interests blurred for some; for others, they remained clear and definite.

After World War II, however, most suppliers of information to the Soviets apparently ceased spying. For one thing, the professional apparatus of Soviet spying in the United States was dismantled or disrupted by American counterintelligence work. For another, most of the well-connected amateur spies moved on to other careers. Historians have thus developed a healthy skepticism that there was much Soviet espionage in the United States after 1947, but this was not how many Americans saw it at the time. Legitimate suspicions and real fears, along with political opportunism, combined to fuel the national Red Scare, which was longer and more far-reaching than the one that followed World War I (Chapter 22).

Loyalty-Security Program To insulate his administration against charges of Communist infiltration, Truman issued Executive Order 9835 on March 21, 1947, which created the **Loyalty-Security Program**. The order permitted officials to investigate any employee of the federal government (some 2.5 million people) for "subversive" activities. Representing a profound centralization of power, the order sent shock waves through every federal agency. Truman intended the order to apply principally to actions designed to harm the United States (sabotage, treason, etc.), but it was broad enough to allow anyone to be accused of subversion for the slightest reason — for marching in a Communist-led demonstration in the 1930s, for instance, or signing a petition calling for public housing. Along with suspected political subversives, more than a thousand gay men and lesbians were dismissed from federal employment in the 1950s, victims of an obsessive search for anyone deemed "unfit" for government work.

Following Truman's lead, many state and local governments, universities, political organizations, churches, and businesses undertook their own antisubversion campaigns, which often included loyalty oaths. In the labor movement, charges of Communist domination led to the expulsion of a number of unions by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1949. Civil rights organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Urban League also expelled Communists and "fellow travelers," or Communist sympathizers. Thus the Red Scare spread from the federal government to the farthest reaches of American organizational, economic, and cultural life.

HUAC The Truman administration had legitimized the vague and malleable concept of "disloyalty." Others proved willing to stretch the concept even further, beginning with the **House Un-American Activities Committee** (HUAC), which Congressman Martin Dies of Texas and other conservatives had launched in 1938. After the war, HUAC helped spark the Red Scare by holding widely publicized hearings in 1947 on alleged Communist infiltration in the movie industry. A group of writers and directors dubbed the Hollywood Ten went to jail for contempt of Congress after they refused to testify about their past associations. Hundreds of other actors, directors, and writers whose names had been mentioned in the HUAC investigation were unable to get work, victims of an unacknowledged but very real blacklist honored by industry executives.

Other HUAC investigations had greater legitimacy. One that intensified the anticommunist crusade in 1948 involved Alger Hiss, a former New Dealer and State Department official who had accompanied Franklin Roosevelt to Yalta. A former Communist, Whitaker Chambers, claimed that Hiss was a member of a secret Communist cell operating in the government and had passed him classified documents in the 1930s. Hiss denied the allegations, but California Republican congressman Richard Nixon doggedly pursued the case against him. In early 1950, Hiss was found guilty not of spying but of lying to Congress about his Communist affiliations and was sentenced to five years in federal prison. Many Americans doubted at the time that Hiss was a spy. But the Venona transcripts in the 1990s corroborated a great deal of Chambers's testimony, and though no definitive proof has emerged, many historians now recognize the strong circumstantial evidence against Hiss.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
What factors led to the postwar Red Scare, and what were its ramifications for civil liberties in the United States?

McCarthyism The meteoric career of Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin marked first the apex and then the finale of the Red Scare. In February 1950, McCarthy delivered a bombshell during a speech in Wheeling, West Virginia: "I have here in my hand a list of 205 . . . a list of names that were made known to the Secretary of State as being members of the Communist Party and who nevertheless are still working and shaping policy in the State Department." McCarthy later reduced his numbers, gave different figures in different speeches, and never released any names or proof. But he had gained the attention he sought (American Voices, p. 822).

Hunting Communists and Liberals

The onset of the Cold War created an opportunity for some conservatives to use anticommunism as a weapon to attack the Truman administration. In Senator Joseph McCarthy's case, the charge was that the U.S. government was harboring Soviet spies. There was also a broader, more amorphous attack on people accused not of spying but of having communist sympathies; such "fellow travelers" were considered "security risks" and thus unsuitable for government positions. The basis of suspicion for this targeted group was generally membership in organizations that supported policies that either overlapped with or seemed similar to policies supported by the Communist Party.

Senator Joseph McCarthy

Speech Delivered in Wheeling, West Virginia, February 9, 1950

Though Senator McCarthy was actually late getting on board the anticommunist rocket ship, this was the speech that launched him into orbit. No one else ever saw the piece of paper he waved about during this speech with the names of 57 spies in the State Department. Over time, the numbers he cited fluctuated (in early versions of this speech he claimed to have a list of 205 names) and never materialized into a single indictment for espionage. Still, McCarthy had an extraordinary talent for whipping up anticommunist hysteria. His downfall came in 1954, when the U.S. Senate formally censured him for his conduct; three years later, he died of alcoholism at the age of forty-eight.

Today we are engaged in a final, all-out battle between communistic atheism and Christianity. The modern champions of communism have selected this as the time. And, ladies and gentlemen, the chips are down — they are truly down. . . .

The reason why we find ourselves in a position of impotency is not because our only powerful potential enemy has sent men to invade our shores, but rather because of the traitorous actions of those who have been treated so well by this Nation. It has not been the less fortunate or members of minority groups who have been selling this Nation out, but rather those who have had all the benefits that the wealthiest nation on earth has had to offer — the finest homes, the finest college education, and the finest jobs in Government we can give. . . .

I have in my hand 57 cases of individuals who would appear to be either card carrying members or certainly loyal to the Communist Party, but who nevertheless are still helping to shape our foreign policy.

Fulton Lewis Jr.

Radio Address, January 13, 1949

The groundwork for McCarthy's anticommunist crusade was laid by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), which had been formed in 1938 by conservative southern Democrats seeking to investigate alleged communist influence around the country. One of its early targets had been Dr. Frank P. Graham, the distinguished president of the University of North Carolina. A committed southern liberal, Graham was a leading figure in the Southern Conference on Human Welfare, the most prominent southern organization supporting the New Deal, free speech, organized labor, and greater rights for southern blacks—causes that some in the South saw as pathways for communist subversion. After the war, HUAC stepped up its activities and kept a close eye on Graham. Among Graham's duties was to serve as the head of the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies, a consortium of fourteen southern universities designed to undertake joint research with the federal government's atomic energy facility at Oak Ridge, Tennessee. To enable him to carry on his duties, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) granted Graham a security clearance, overriding the negative recommendation of the AEC's Security Advisory Board. That was the occasion for the following statement by Fulton Lewis Jr., a conservative radio commentator with a nationwide following.

About Dr. Frank P. Graham, president of the University of North Carolina, and the action of the Atomic Energy Commission giving him complete clearance for all atomic secrets despite the fact that the security officer of the commission flatly rejected him. . . .

President Truman was asked to comment on the matter today at his press and radio conference, and his reply was that he has complete confidence in Dr. Graham.

. . . The defenders of Dr. Graham today offered the apology that during the time he joined the various subversive and Communist front organizations [like the Southern Conference for Human Welfare] — organizations so listed by the Attorney General of the United States — this country was a co-belligerent with Soviet Russia, and numerous people joined such groups and causes. That argument is going to sound very thin to most American citizens, because the overwhelming majority of us would have no part of any Communist or Communist front connections at any time.

Frank Porter Graham

Telegram to Fulton Lewis Jr., January 13, 1949

One can imagine Graham's shock at hearing himself pilloried on national radio. (He had not even been aware of the AEC's investigation of him.) The following is from his response to Lewis.

In view of your questions and implications I hope you will use my statement to provide for my answers. . . . I have always been opposed to Communism and all totalitarian dictatorships. I opposed both Nazi and Communist aggression against Czechoslovakia and the earlier Russian aggression against Finland and later Communist aggression against other countries. . . .

During the period of my active participation, the overwhelming number of members of the Southern Conference were to my knowledge anti-Communists. There were several isolationist stands of the Conference with which I disagreed. The stands which I supported as the main business of the Conference were such as the following: Federal aid to the states for schools; abolition of freight rate discrimination against Southern commerce, agriculture, and industry; anti–poll tax bill; anti-lynching bill; equal right of qualified Negroes to vote in both primaries and general elections; the unhampered lawful right of labor to organize and bargain collectively in our region; . . . minimum wages and social security in the Southern and American tradition. . . .

I have been called a Communist by some sincere people. I have been called a spokesman of American capitalism by Communists and repeatedly called a tool of imperialism by the radio from Moscow. I shall simply continue to oppose Ku Kluxism, imperialism, fascism, and Communism whether in America . . . or behind the "iron curtain."

House Un-American Activities Committee

Report on Frank Graham, February 4, 1949

Because of the controversy, HUAC released a report on Graham.

A check of the files, records and publications of the Committee on Un-American Activities has revealed the following information: Letterheads dated September 22, 1939, January 17, 1940, and May 26, 1940, as well as the "Daily Worker" of March 18, 1939, . . . reveal that Frank P. Graham was a member of the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom. . . . In Report 2277, dated June 25, 1942, the Special Committee on Un-American Activities found that "the line of the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom has fluctuated in complete harmony with the line of the Communist Party." The organization was again cited by the Special Committee . . . as a Communist front "which defended Communist teachers." . . .

A letterhead of February 7, 1946, a letterhead of June 4, 1947 . . . and an announcement of the Third Meeting, April 19–21, 1942, at Nashville, Tennessee, reveal that Frank P. Graham was honorary President of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare. . . .

In a report on the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, dated June 16, 1947, the Committee on Un-American Activities found "the most conclusive proof of Communist domination of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare is to be found in the organization's strict and unvarying conformance to the line of the Communist Party in the field of foreign policy. It is also a clear indication of the fact that the real purpose of the organization was not 'human welfare' in the South, but rather to serve as a convenient vehicle in support of the current Communist Party line."

Source: # 1819 Frank Porter Graham Papers. Courtesy of the Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. On what grounds did Fulton Lewis Jr. and HUAC assert that Frank Graham was a security risk? Did they charge that he was a Communist? Is there any evidence in these documents that Graham might have been a security risk?
2. How did Graham defend himself? Are you persuaded by his argument?
3. Compare McCarthy's famous speech at Wheeling, West Virginia, and the suspicions voiced against Graham by Lewis and HUAC a year earlier. What similarities do you see?

For the next four years, from his position as chair of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, McCarthy waged a virulent smear campaign. Critics who disagreed with him exposed themselves to charges of being "soft" on communism. Truman called McCarthy's charges "slander, lies, [and] character assassination" but could do nothing to curb him. Republicans, for their part, refrained from publicly challenging their most outspoken senator and, on the whole, were content to reap the political benefits. McCarthy's charges almost always targeted Democrats.

Despite McCarthy's failure to identify a single Communist in government, several national developments gave his charges credibility with the public. The dramatic 1951 espionage trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, followed around the world, fueled McCarthy's allegations. Convicted of passing atomic secrets to the Soviet Union, the Rosenbergs were executed in 1953. As in the Hiss case, documents released decades later provided some evidence of Julius Rosenberg's guilt, though not Ethel's. Their execution nevertheless remains controversial — in part because some felt that anti-Semitism played a role in their sentencing. Also fueling McCarthy's charges were a series of trials of American Communists between 1949 and 1955 for violation of the 1940 Smith Act, which prohibited Americans from advocating the violent overthrow of the government. Though civil libertarians and two Supreme Court justices vigorously objected, dozens of Communist Party members were convicted. McCarthy was not involved in either the Rosenberg trial or the Smith Act convictions, but these sensational events gave his wild charges some credence.

In early 1954, McCarthy overreached by launching an investigation into subversive activities in the U.S. Army. When lengthy hearings — the first of their kind

The Army-McCarthy Hearings

These 1954 hearings contributed to the downfall of Senator Joseph McCarthy by exposing his reckless accusations and bullying tactics to the huge television audience that tuned in each day. Some of the most heated exchanges took place between McCarthy (center) and Joseph Welch (seated, left), the lawyer representing the army. When the gentlemanly Welch finally asked, "Have you no sense of decency sir, at long last? Have you left no sense of decency?" he fatally punctured McCarthy's armor. The audience broke into applause because someone had finally had the courage to stand up to the senator from Wisconsin.

broadcast on the new medium of television — brought McCarthy's tactics into the nation's living rooms, support for him plummeted. In December 1954, the Senate voted 67 to 22 to censure McCarthy for unbecoming conduct. He died from an alcohol-related illness three years later at the age of forty-eight, his name forever attached to a period of political repression of which he was only the most flagrant manifestation.

The Politics of Cold War Liberalism

As election day 1952 approached, the nation was embroiled in the tense Cold War with the Soviet Union and fighting a "hot" war in Korea. Though Americans gave the Republicans victory, radical change was not in the offing. The new president, Dwight D. Eisenhower, set the tone for what his supporters called modern Republicanism, an updated GOP approach that aimed at moderating, not dismantling, the New Deal state. Eisenhower and his supporters were more successors of FDR than of Herbert Hoover. Foreign policy revealed a similar continuity. Like their predecessors, Republicans saw the world in Cold War polarities.

Republicans rallied around Eisenhower, the popular former commander of Allied forces in Europe, but divisions in the party persisted. More conservative party activists preferred Robert A. Taft of Ohio, the Republican leader in the Senate who was a vehement opponent of the New Deal. A close friend of business, he particularly detested labor unions. Though an ardent anticommunist, the isolationist-minded Taft criticized Truman's aggressive containment policy and opposed U.S. participation in NATO. Taft ran for president three times, and though he was never the Republican nominee, he won the loyalty of conservative Americans who saw the welfare state as a waste and international affairs as dangerous foreign entanglements.

In contrast, moderate Republicans looked to Eisenhower and even to more liberal-minded leaders like Nelson Rockefeller, who supported international initiatives such as the Marshall Plan and NATO and were willing to tolerate labor unions and the welfare state. Eisenhower was a man without a political past. Believing that democracy required the military to stand aside, he had never voted. Rockefeller, the scion of one of the richest families in America, was a Cold War internationalist. He served in a variety of capacities under Eisenhower, including as an advisor on foreign affairs. Having made his political name, Rockefeller was elected the governor of New York in 1959 and became the de facto leader of the liberal wing of the Republican Party.

Dwight Eisenhower

In this photo taken during the 1952 presidential campaign, Dwight D. Eisenhower acknowledges cheers from supporters in Chicago. "Ike," as he was universally known, had been a popular five-star general in World War II (also serving as Supreme Allied Commander in the European theater) and turned to politics in the early 1950s as a member of the Republican Party. However, Eisenhower was a centrist who did little to disrupt the liberal social policies that Democrats had pursued since the 1930s.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW

What were the components of Cold War liberalism, and why did the Democratic Party embrace them?

For eight years, between 1952 and 1960, Eisenhower steered a precarious course from the middle of the party, with conservative Taft Republicans on one side and liberal Rockefeller Republicans on the other. His popularity temporarily kept the two sides at bay, though more ardent conservatives considered him a closet New Dealer. "Ike," as he was widely known, proved willing to work with the mostly Democratic-controlled Congresses of those years. Eisenhower signed bills increasing federal outlays for veterans' benefits, housing, highway construction (Chapter 26), and Social Security, and he increased the minimum wage from 75 cents an hour to $1. Like Truman, Eisenhower accepted some government responsibility for the economic security of individuals, part of a broad consensus in American politics in these years.

America Under Eisenhower The global power realities that had called forth containment guided Eisenhower's foreign policy. New developments, however, altered the tone of the Cold War. Stalin's death in March 1953 precipitated an intraparty struggle in the Soviet Union that lasted until 1956, when Nikita Khrushchev emerged as Stalin's successor. Khrushchev soon startled communists around the world by denouncing Stalin and detailing his crimes and blunders. He also surprised many Americans by calling for "peaceful coexistence" with the West and by dealing more flexibly with dissent in the Communist world. But the new Soviet leader had his limits, and when Hungarians rose up in 1956 to demand independence from Moscow, Khrushchev crushed the incipient revolution.

With no end to the Cold War in sight, Eisenhower focused on limiting the cost of containment. The president hoped to economize by relying on a nuclear arsenal and deemphasizing expensive conventional forces. Under this **"New Look"** defense policy, the Eisenhower administration stepped up production of the hydrogen bomb and developed long-range bombing capabilities. The Soviets, however, matched the United States weapon for weapon. By 1958, both nations had intercontinental ballistic missiles. When an American nuclear submarine launched an atomic-tipped Polaris missile in 1960, Soviet engineers raced to produce an equivalent weapon. This arms race was another critical feature of the Cold War. American officials believed the best deterrent to Soviet aggression was the threat of an all-out nuclear response by the United States, which was dubbed "massive retaliation" by Secretary of State Dulles.

To see a longer excerpt of the Dulles document, along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History***.

Although confident in the international arena, Eisenhower started out as a novice in domestic affairs. Doing his best to set a less confrontational tone after the rancorous Truman years, he was reluctant to speak out against Joe McCarthy, and he was not a leader on civil rights. Democrats meanwhile maintained a strong presence in Congress but proved weak in presidential elections in the 1950s. In the two presidential contests of the decade, 1952 and 1956, Eisenhower defeated the admired but politically ineffectual liberal Adlai Stevenson. In the 1952 election, Stevenson was hampered by the unpopularity of the Truman administration. The deadlocked Korean War and a series of scandals that Republicans dubbed "the mess in Washington" combined to give the war-hero general an easy victory. In 1956, Ike won an even more impressive victory over Stevenson, an eloquent and sophisticated spokesman for liberalism but no match for Eisenhower's popularity with the public.

During Eisenhower's presidency, new political forces on both the right and the left had begun to stir. But they had not yet fully transformed the party system itself. Particularly at the national level, Democrats and Republicans seemed in broad agreement about the realities of the Cold War and the demands of a modern, industrial economy and welfare state. Indeed, respected commentators in the 1950s declared "the end of ideology" and wondered if the great political clashes that had wracked the 1930s were gone forever. Below the apparent calm of national party politics, however, lay profound differences among Americans over the direction of the nation. Those differences were most pronounced regarding the civil rights of African Americans. But a host of other issues had begun to emerge as controversial subjects that would soon starkly divide the country and, in the 1960s, bring an end to the brief and fragile Cold War consensus.

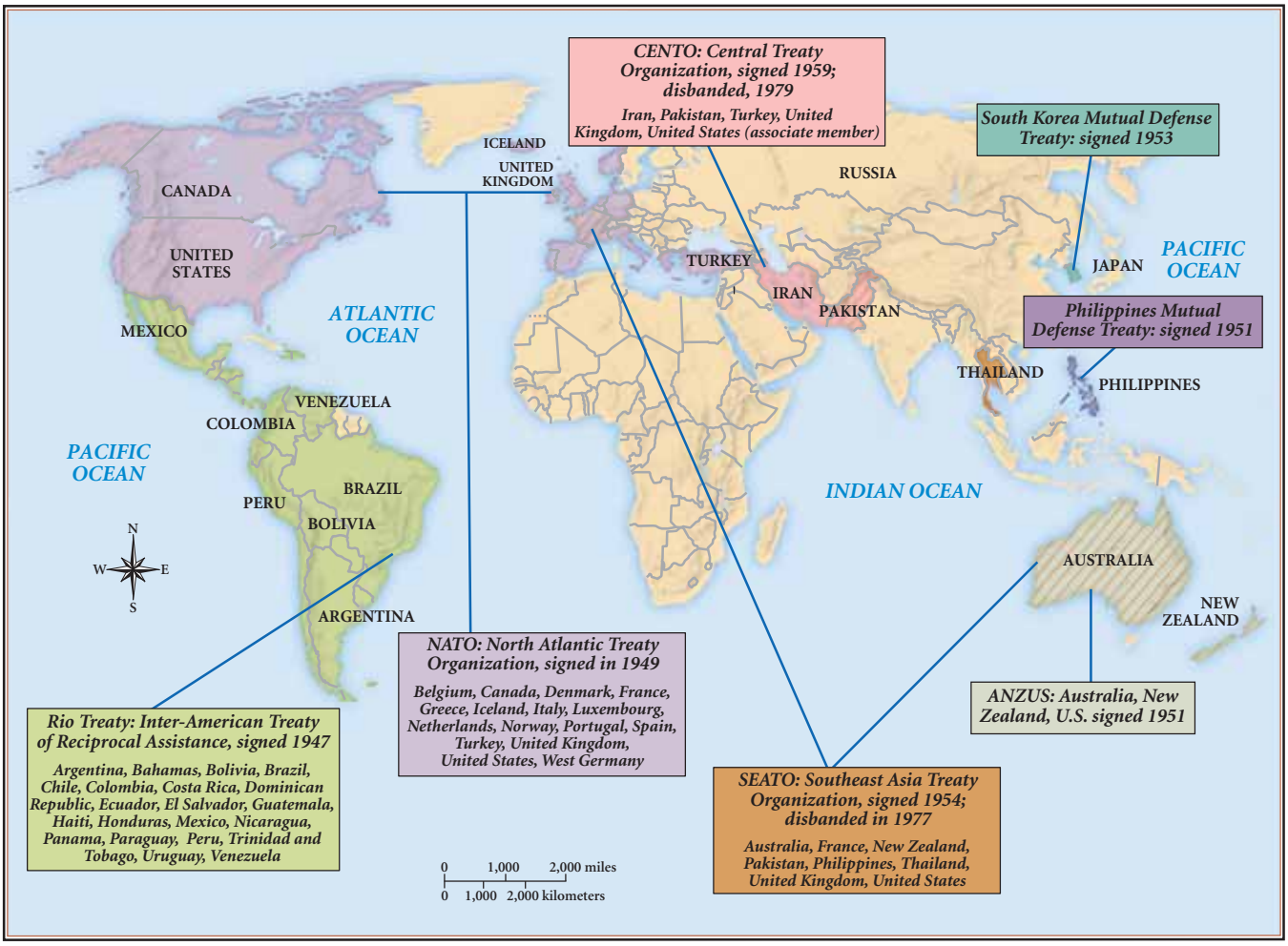
Containment in the Postcolonial World

As the Cold War took shape, the world scene was changing at a furious pace. New nations were emerging across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, created in the wake of powerful anticolonial movements whose origins dated to before World War II. Between 1947 and 1962, the British, French, Dutch, and Belgian empires all but disintegrated in a momentous collapse of European global reach. FDR had favored the idea of national self-determination, often to the fury of his British and French allies. He expected emerging democracies to be new partners in an American-led, free-market world system. But colonial revolts produced many independent- or socialist-minded regimes in the so-called Third World, as well. *Third World* was a term that came into usage after World War II to describe developing or ex-colonial nations in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East that were not aligned with the Western capitalist countries led by the United States or the socialist states of Eastern Europe led by the Soviet Union. The Truman and Eisenhower administrations often treated Third World countries as pawns of the Soviet Union to be opposed at all costs.

The Cold War and Colonial Independence

Insisting that all nations had to choose sides, the United States drew as many countries as possible into collective security agreements, with the NATO alliance in Europe as a model. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles orchestrated the creation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), which in 1954 linked the United States and its major European allies with Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. An extensive system of defense alliances eventually tied the United States to more than forty other countries (Map 25.5). The United States also sponsored a strategically valuable defensive alliance between Iraq and Iran, on the southern flank of the Soviet Union.

Despite American rhetoric, the United States was often concerned less about democracy than about stability. The Truman and Eisenhower administrations tended to support governments, no matter how repressive, that were overtly anticommunist. Some of America's staunchest allies—the Philippines, South Korea, Iran, Cuba, South Vietnam, and Nicaragua—were governed by dictatorships or right-wing regimes that lacked broad-based support. Moreover, Eisenhower's



MAP 25.5

American Global Defense Treaties in the Cold War Era

The advent of the Cold War led to a major shift in American foreign policy—the signing of mutual defense treaties. Dating back to George Washington's call "to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world," the United States had avoided treaty obligations that entailed the defense of other nations. As late as 1919, the U.S. Senate had rejected the principle of "collective security," the centerpiece of the League of Nations established by the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I. But after World War II, in response to fears of Soviet global expansion, the United States entered defense alliances with much of the non-Communist world.

secretary of state Dulles often resorted to covert operations against governments that, in his opinion, were too closely aligned with the Soviets.

For these covert tasks, Dulles used the newly created (1947) Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), run by his brother, Allen Dulles. When Iran's democratically elected nationalist premier, Mohammad Mossadegh, seized British oil properties in 1953, CIA agents helped depose him and installed the young Mohammad Reza Pahlavi as shah of Iran. Iranian resentment of the coup, followed by twenty-five years of U.S. support for the shah, eventually led to the 1979 Iranian Revolution (Chapter 30). In 1954, the CIA also engineered a coup in Guatemala against the democratically elected president, Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, who had seized land owned by the American-owned United Fruit Company. Arbenz offered to pay United Fruit the declared value of the land, but the company rejected the offer and turned to the U.S. government. Eisenhower specifically approved those CIA efforts and expanded the agency's mandate from gathering intelligence to intervening in the affairs of sovereign states.

Vietnam But when covert operations and coups failed or proved impractical, the American approach to emerging nations could entangle the United States in deeper, more intractable conflicts. One example was already unfolding on a distant stage, in a small country unknown to most Americans: Vietnam. In August 1945, at the close of World War II, the Japanese occupiers of Vietnam surrendered to China in the north and Britain in the south. The Vietminh, the nationalist movement that had led the resistance against the Japanese (and the French, prior to 1940), seized control in the north. But their leader, Ho Chi Minh, was a Communist, and this single fact outweighed American and British commitment to self-determination. When France moved to restore its control over the country, the United States and Britain sided with their European ally. President Truman rejected Ho's plea to support the Vietnamese struggle for nationhood, and France rejected Ho's offer of a negotiated independence. Shortly after France returned, in late 1946, the Vietminh resumed their war of national liberation.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
How did the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union affect disparate regions such as the Middle East and Southeast Asia?

Eisenhower picked up where Truman left off. If the French failed, Eisenhower argued, all non-Communist governments in the region would fall like dominoes. This so-called **domino theory**—which represented an extension of the containment doctrine—guided U.S. policy in Southeast Asia for the next twenty years. The United States eventually provided most of the financing for the French war, but money was not enough to defeat the determined Vietminh, who were fighting for the liberation of their country. After a fifty-six-day siege in early 1954, the French were defeated at the huge fortress of Dien Bien Phu. The result was the 1954 Geneva Accords, which partitioned Vietnam temporarily at the 17th parallel and called for elections within two years to unify the strife-torn nation.

The United States rejected the Geneva Accords and set about undermining them. With the help of the CIA, a pro-American government took power in South Vietnam in June 1954. Ngo Dinh Diem, an anticommunist Catholic who had been residing in the United States, returned to Vietnam as premier. The next year, in a rigged election, Diem became president of an independent South Vietnam. Facing certain defeat by the popular Ho Chi Minh, Diem called off the scheduled reunification elections. As the last French soldiers left in March 1956, the Eisenhower administration propped up Diem with an average of $200 million a year in aid and a contingent of 675 American military advisors. This support was just the beginning.

The Middle East If Vietnam was still of minor concern, the same could not be said of the Middle East, an area rich in oil and political complexity. The most volatile area was Palestine, populated by Arabs but also historically the ancient land of Israel and coveted by the Zionist movement as a Jewish national homeland. After World War II, many survivors of the Nazi extermination camps resettled in Palestine, which was still controlled by Britain under a World War I mandate. On November 29, 1947, the UN General Assembly voted to partition Palestine between Jewish and Arab sectors. When the British mandate ended in 1948, Zionist leaders proclaimed the state of Israel. A coalition of Arab nations known as the Arab League invaded, but Israel survived. Many Palestinians fled or were driven from their homes during the fighting. The Arab defeat left these people permanently stranded in refugee camps. President Truman recognized the new state immediately, which won him crucial support from Jewish voters in the 1948 election but alienated the Arab world.

Southeast of Palestine, Egypt began to assert its presence in the region. Having gained independence from Britain several decades earlier, Egypt remained a monarchy until 1952, when Gamal Abdel Nasser led a military coup that established a constitutional republic.

The Suez Crisis, 1956

In this photograph, Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser is greeted ecstatically by Cairo crowds after he nationalized the Suez Canal. Nasser's gamble paid off. Thanks to American intervention, military action by Britain, France, and Israel failed, and Nasser emerged as the triumphant voice of Arab nationalism across the Middle East. The popular emotions he unleashed against the West survived his death in 1970 and are more potent today than ever, although now expressed more through Islamic fundamentalism than Nasser's brand of secular nationalism. Getty Images.

Caught between the Soviet Union and the United States, Nasser sought an independent route: a pan-Arab socialism designed to end the Middle East's colonial relationship with the West. When negotiations with the United States over Nasser's plan to build a massive hydroelectric dam on the Nile broke down in 1956, he nationalized the Suez Canal, which was the lifeline for Western Europe's oil. Britain and France, in alliance with Israel, attacked Egypt and seized the canal. Concerned that the invasion would encourage Egypt to turn to the Soviets for help, Eisenhower urged France and Britain to pull back. He applied additional pressure through the UN General Assembly, which called for a truce and troop withdrawal. When the Western nations backed down, however, Egypt reclaimed the Suez Canal and built the Aswan Dam on the Nile with Soviet support. Eisenhower had likely avoided a larger war, but the West lost a potential ally in Nasser.

In early 1957, concerned about Soviet influence in the Middle East, the president announced the **Eisenhower Doctrine**, which stated that American forces would assist any nation in the region that required aid "against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism." Invoking the doctrine later that year, Eisenhower helped King Hussein of Jordan put down a Nasser-backed revolt and propped up a pro-American government in Lebanon. The Eisenhower Doctrine was further evidence that the United States had extended the global reach of containment, in this instance accentuated by the strategic need to protect the West's access to steady supplies of oil.

John F. Kennedy and the Cold War

Charisma, style, and personality — these, more than platforms and issues, defined a new brand of politics in the early 1960s. This was John F. Kennedy's natural environment. Kennedy, a Harvard alumnus, World War II hero, and senator from Massachusetts, had inherited his love of politics from his grandfathers — colorful, and often ruthless, Irish Catholic politicians in Boston. Ambitious and deeply aware of style, the forty-three-year-old Kennedy made use of his many advantages to become, as novelist Norman Mailer put it, "our leading man." His one disadvantage — that he was Catholic in a country that had never elected a Catholic president — he masterfully neutralized. And thanks to both media advisors and his youthful attractiveness, Kennedy projected a superb television image.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

How was Kennedy's approach to the Cold War similar to and different from Eisenhower's and Truman's?

At heart, however, Kennedy was a Cold Warrior who had

The Kennedy Magnetism

John F. Kennedy, the 1960 Democratic candidate for president, used his youth and personality (and those of his equally personable and stylish wife) to attract voters. Here the Massachusetts senator draws an enthusiastic crowd on a campaign stop in Elgin, Illinois. AP Images.

come of age in the shadow of Munich, Yalta, and McCarthyism. He projected an air of idealism, but his years in the Senate (1953–1960) had proved him to be a conventional Cold War politician. Once elected president, Kennedy would shape the nation's foreign policy by drawing both on his ingenuity and on old-style Cold War power politics.

The Election of 1960 and the New Frontier

Kennedy's Republican opponent in the 1960 presidential election, Eisenhower's vice president, Richard Nixon, was a seasoned politician and Cold Warrior himself. The great innovation of the 1960 campaign was a series of four nationally televised debates. Nixon, less photogenic than Kennedy, looked sallow and unshaven under the intense studio lights. Voters who heard the first debate on the radio concluded that Nixon had won, but those who viewed it on television favored Kennedy. Despite the edge Kennedy enjoyed in the debates, he won only the narrowest of electoral victories, receiving 49.7 percent of the popular vote to Nixon's 49.5 percent. Kennedy attracted Catholics, African Americans, and the labor vote; his vice-presidential running mate, Texas senator Lyndon Baines Johnson, helped bring in southern Democrats. Yet only 120,000 votes separated the two candidates, and a shift of a few thousand votes in key states would have reversed the outcome.

Kennedy brought to Washington a cadre of young, ambitious newcomers, including Robert McNamara, a renowned systems analyst and former head of Ford Motor Company, as secretary of defense. A host of trusted advisors and academics flocked to Washington to join the New Frontier — Kennedy's term for the challenges the country faced. Included on the team as attorney general was Kennedy's younger brother Robert, who had made a name as a hard-hitting investigator of organized crime. Relying on an old American trope, Kennedy's New Frontier suggested masculine toughness and adventurism and encouraged Americans to again think of themselves as exploring uncharted terrain. That terrain proved treacherous, however, as the new administration immediately faced a crisis.

Crises in Cuba and Berlin In January 1961, the Soviet Union announced that it intended to support "wars of national liberation" wherever in the world they occurred. Kennedy took Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev's words as a challenge, especially as they applied to Cuba, where in 1959 Fidel Castro had overthrown the right-wing dictator Fulgencio Batista and declared a revolution. Determined to keep Cuba out of the Soviet orbit, Kennedy followed through on Eisenhower administration plans to dispatch Cuban exiles to foment an anti-Castro uprising. The invaders, trained by the Central Intelligence Agency, were ill-prepared for their task. On landing at Cuba's **Bay of Pigs** on April 17, 1961, the force of 1,400 was crushed by Castro's troops. Kennedy prudently rejected CIA pleas for a U.S. air strike. Accepting defeat, Kennedy

went before the American people and took full responsibility for the fiasco (Map 25.6).

Already strained by the Bay of Pigs incident, U.S.-Soviet relations deteriorated further in June 1961 when Khrushchev stopped movement between Communist-controlled East Berlin and the city's Western sector. Kennedy responded by dispatching 40,000 more troops to Europe. In mid-August, to stop the exodus of East Germans, the Communist regime began constructing the Berlin Wall, policed by border guards under shoot-to-kill orders. Until the 12-foot-high concrete barrier came down in 1989, it served as the supreme symbol of the Cold War.

A perilous Cold War confrontation came next, in October 1962. In a somber televised address on October 22, Kennedy revealed that U.S. reconnaissance planes had spotted Soviet-built bases for intermediate-range ballistic missiles in Cuba. Some of those weapons had already been installed, and more were on the way. Kennedy announced that the United States would impose a "quarantine on all offensive military equipment" on its way to Cuba. As the world held its breath waiting to see if the conflict would escalate into war, on October 25, ships carrying Soviet missiles turned back. After a week of tense negotiations, both sides made concessions: Kennedy pledged not to invade Cuba, and Khrushchev promised to dismantle the missile bases. Kennedy also secretly ordered U.S. missiles to be removed from Turkey, at Khrushchev's insistence. The risk of nuclear war, greater during the **Cuban missile crisis** than at any other time in the Cold War, prompted a slight thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations. As National

MAP 25.6

The United States and Cuba, 1961–1962

Fidel Castro's 1959 Communist takeover of Cuba brought Cold War tensions to the Caribbean. In 1961, the United States tried unsuccessfully to overthrow Castro's regime by sponsoring the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuban exiles launched from Nicaragua and other points in the Caribbean. In 1962, the United States confronted the Soviet Union over Soviet construction of nuclear missile sites in Cuba. After President Kennedy ordered a naval blockade of the island, the Soviets backed down from the tense standoff and removed the missiles. Despite the 1991 dissolution of the Soviet Union and the official end of the Cold War, the United States continues to view Cuba, governed in 2012 by Raúl Castro, Fidel's brother, as an enemy nation.

The Berlin Wall

A West Berlin resident walks alongside a section of the Berlin Wall in August 1962, a year after its construction. Note the two border guards on the East Berlin side, plus the numerous loudspeakers, which East German Communists used to broadcast propaganda over the barricade that divided the city. © Bettmann/Corbis.

Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy put it, both sides were chastened by "having come so close to the edge."

Kennedy and the World Kennedy also launched a series of bold nonmilitary initiatives. One was the **Peace Corps**, which embodied a call to public service put forth in his inaugural address ("Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country"). Thousands of men and women agreed to devote two or more years as volunteers for projects such as teaching English to Filipino schoolchildren or helping African villagers obtain clean water. Exhibiting the idealism of the early 1960s, the Peace Corps was also a low-cost Cold War weapon intended to show the developing world that there was an alternative to communism. Kennedy championed space exploration, as well. In a 1962 speech, he proposed that the nation commit itself to landing a man on the moon within the decade. The Soviets had already beaten the United States into space with the 1957 *Sputnik* satellite and the 1961 flight of cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin. Capitalizing on America's fascination with space, Kennedy persuaded Congress to increase funding for the government's space agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), enabling the United States to pull ahead of the Soviet Union. Kennedy's ambition was realized when U.S. astronauts arrived on the moon in 1969.

Making a Commitment in Vietnam

Despite slight improvements, U.S.-Soviet relations stayed tense and containment remained the cornerstone of U.S. policy. When Kennedy became president, he inherited Eisenhower's commitment in Vietnam. Kennedy saw Vietnam in Cold War terms, but rather than practicing brinksmanship — threatening nuclear war to stop communism — Kennedy sought what at

The Cuban Missile Crisis

During the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, President Kennedy meets with U.S. Army officials. Over two tense weeks, the world watched as the United States and the Soviet Union went to the brink of war when it became known that Soviet military officials had begun to construct nuclear weapons bases in Cuba, a mere 90 miles from the southern tip of Florida. Kennedy's threat to intercept Soviet missile shipments with American naval vessels forced the Cold War adversary to back down. © Corbis.

the time seemed a more intelligent and realistic approach. In 1961, he increased military aid to the South Vietnamese and expanded the role of U.S. Special Forces ("Green Berets"), who would train the South Vietnamese army in unconventional, small-group warfare tactics.

South Vietnam's corrupt and repressive Diem regime, propped up by Eisenhower since 1954, was losing ground in spite of American aid. By 1961, Diem's opponents, with backing from North Vietnam, had formed a revolutionary movement known as the National Liberation Front (NLF). NLF guerrilla forces — the Vietcong — found allies among peasants alienated by Diem's "strategic hamlet" program, which had uprooted entire villages and moved villagers into barbed-wire compounds. Furthermore, Buddhists charged Diem, a Catholic, with religious persecution. Starting in May 1963, militant Buddhists staged dramatic demonstrations, including self-immolations recorded by reporters covering the activities of the 16,000 U.S. military personnel then in Vietnam.

These self-immolations, shown on television to an uneasy global audience, powerfully illustrated the dilemmas of American policy in Vietnam. To ensure a stable southern government and prevent victory for Ho Chi Minh and the North, the United States had to support Diem's authoritarian regime. But the regime's political repression of its opponents made Diem more unpopular. He was assassinated on November 3, 1963. Whether one supported U.S. involvement in Vietnam or not, the elemental paradox remained unchanged: in its efforts to win, the United States brought defeat ever closer.

SUMMARY

The Cold War began as a conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union over Eastern Europe and the fate of post–World War II Germany. Early in the conflict, the United States adopted a strategy of containment, which quickly expanded to Asia after China became a communist state under Mao Zedong. The first effect of that expansion was the Korean War, after which, under Dwight D. Eisenhower, containment of communism became America's guiding principle across the developing world — often called the Third World. Cold War tensions relaxed in the late 1950s but erupted again under John F. Kennedy with the Cuban

missile crisis, the building of the Berlin Wall, and major increases in American military assistance to South Vietnam. Cold War imperatives between 1945 and the early 1960s meant a major military buildup, a massive nuclear arms race, and unprecedented entanglements across the globe.

On the domestic front, Harry S. Truman started out with high hopes for an expanded New Deal, only to be confounded by resistance from Congress and the competing demands of the Cold War. The greatest Cold War–inspired development was a climate of fear over internal subversion by Communists that gave rise to McCarthyism. Truman's successor, Eisenhower, brought the Republicans back into power. Although personally conservative, Eisenhower actually proved a New Dealer in disguise. When Eisenhower left office and Kennedy became president, it seemed that a "liberal consensus" prevailed, with old-fashioned, *laissez-faire* conservatism mostly marginalized in American political life.

CHAPTER REVIEW

MAKE IT STICK Go to **LearningCurve** to retain what you've read.

TERMS TO KNOW

Identify and explain the significance of each term below.

Key Concepts and Events

Yalta Conference (p. 806)
United Nations (p. 807)
Potsdam Conference (p. 807)
containment (p. 808)
Truman Doctrine (p. 809)
Marshall Plan (p. 809)
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (p. 812)
Warsaw Pact (p. 812)
NSC-68 (p. 813)
Cold War liberalism (p. 818)
Taft-Hartley Act (p. 819)
Fair Deal (p. 820)
Loyalty-Security Program (p. 821)
House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) (p. 821)
"New Look" (p. 826)
domino theory (p. 828)
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Cuban missile crisis (p. 831)
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Key People

Joseph Stalin (p. 806)
George F. Kennan (p. 808)
Joseph McCarthy (p. 821)
Nikita Khrushchev (p. 826)
John F. Kennedy (p. 829)
Fidel Castro (p. 830)
Ho Chi Minh (p. 833)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of the chapter's main ideas.

1. What factors led to the Cold War?
2. What was the domestic impact of the anticommunist crusade of the late 1940s and 1950s?
3. Why did the United States become involved in Vietnam?
4. **THEMATIC UNDERSTANDING** Review the events listed under "Politics and Power" and "Identity" on the thematic timelines on pages 671 and 803. Radicalism played a significant role in American history between 1890 and 1945. What radical politics took root in the United States during this time, and how did the government, the business community, and different social groups respond to that radicalism?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Recognize the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters by answering these questions.

1. **ACROSS TIME AND PLACE** How was America's Cold War foreign policy an extension of principles and policies from earlier eras, and in what ways was it a break with those traditions? Was the Cold War inevitable? Why or why not?
2. **VISUAL EVIDENCE** Look at the map of the military-industrial complex (Map 25.3) on page 817 and the map of population changes (Chapter 26, Map 26.2) on page 862. Where were the majority of military weapons manufactured? What were the connections between weapons and geography? How did those connections affect population distribution in the United States and within individual metropolitan areas?

MORE TO EXPLORE

Start here to learn more about the events discussed in this chapter.

John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (2005), and Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945–2006*, 10th ed. (2008). Excellent overviews of the Cold War from distinct perspectives.

John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America* (1999). A thoughtful analysis of Soviet espionage.

W. J. Rorabaugh, *Kennedy and the Promise of the Sixties* (2002). A good starting point for Kennedy's presidency.

Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (1998). An excellent, detailed account of the McCarthy period.

The Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest's site, "The Cold War and Red Scare in Washington State," at **washington.edu/uwired/outreach/cspn/Website/Classroom Materials/Curriculum Packets/Cold War & Red Scare/Cold War and Red Scare.html**, provides detailed information on how the Red Scare operated in one state.

The Woodrow Wilson International Center has established the Cold War International History Project at **wilsoncenter.org/cwihp**.

TIMELINE

Ask yourself why this chapter begins and ends with these dates and then identify the links among related events.

1945	• End of World War II; Yalta and Potsdam conferences • Senate approves U.S. participation in United Nations
1946	• George F. Kennan outlines containment policy • U.S. sides with French in war between French and Vietminh over control of Vietnam
1947	• Truman Doctrine • House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigates film industry
1948	• Communist coup in Czechoslovakia • Marshall Plan aids economic recovery in Europe • State of Israel created • Stalin blockades West Berlin; Berlin Airlift begins
1949	• North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) founded • Soviet Union detonates atomic bomb • Mao Zedong establishes People's Republic of China
1950–1953	• Korean War
1950	• NSC-68 leads to nuclear buildup • Joseph McCarthy announces "list" of Communists in government
1952	• Dwight D. Eisenhower elected president
1954	• Army-McCarthy hearings on army subversion • Geneva Accords partition Vietnam
1956	• Nikita Khrushchev emerges as Stalin's successor • Suez Canal crisis
1960	• John F. Kennedy elected president
1961	• Kennedy orders the first contingent of Special Forces ("Green Berets") to Vietnam
1963	• Diem assassinated in South Vietnam

KEY TURNING POINTS: What turning points and crises defined American containment policy between 1946 and 1953? Explain your answer with evidence from the timeline and chapter.

CHAPTER 26

Triumph of the Middle Class
1945–1963

IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA

Why did consumer culture become such a fixture of American life in the postwar decades, and how did it affect politics and society?

At the height of the Cold War, in 1959, U.S. vice president Richard Nixon debated Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev on the merits of Pepsi-Cola, TV dinners, and electric ovens. Face-to-face at the opening of an American exhibition in Moscow, Nixon and Khrushchev strolled through a model American home, assembled to demonstrate the consumer products available to the typical citizen of the United States. Nixon explained to Khrushchev that although the Soviet Union may have had superior rockets, the United States was ahead in other areas, such as color television.

This was Cold War politics by other means—a symbolic contest over which country's standard of living was higher. What was so striking about the so-called **kitchen debate** was Nixon's insistence, to a disbelieving Khrushchev, that a modern home filled with shiny new toasters, televisions, and other consumer products was accessible to the average American worker. "Any steelworker could buy this house," Nixon told the Soviet leader. The kitchen debate settled little in the geopolitical rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. But it speaks to us across the decades because it reveals how Americans had come to see themselves by the late 1950s: as home owners and consumers, as a people for whom the middle-class American Dream was a commercial aspiration.

The real story of the postwar period was the growing number of Americans who embraced that aspiration. In the two decades following the end of World War II, a new middle class was born in the United States. *Fortune* magazine estimated that in the 1950s, the middle class—which *Fortune* defined as families with more than $5,000 in annual earnings after taxes (about $40,000 today)—was increasing at the rate of 1.1 million people per year. Riding a wave of rising incomes, American dominance in the global economy, and Cold War federal spending, the postwar middle class enjoyed the highest standard of living in the world.

However, the success of the middle class could not hide deeper troubles. This was an era of neither universal conformity nor diminishing social strife. Jim Crow laws, contradictions in women's lives, a rebellious youth culture, and changing sexual mores were only the most obvious sources of social tension. Suburban growth came at the expense of cities, hastening urban decay and exacerbating racial segregation. Nor was prosperity ever as widespread as the Moscow exhibit implied. The suburban lifestyle was beyond the reach of the working poor, the elderly, immigrants, Mexican Americans, and most African Americans—indeed, the majority of the country.

The Middle-Class Family Ideal A family eats breakfast at a campground in Zion National Park, Utah. Americans embraced a middle-class, nuclear family ideal in the postwar decades. Photo by Justin Locke/National Geographic/Getty Images.

Postwar Prosperity and the Affluent Society

The United States enjoyed enormous economic advantages at the close of World War II. While the Europeans and Japanese were still clearing the war's rubble, America stood poised to enter a postwar boom. As the only major industrial nation not devastated by war, the United States held an unprecedented global position. The American economy also benefitted from an expanding internal market and heavy investment in research and development. Two additional developments stood out: First, for the first time in the nation's history, employers generally accepted collective bargaining, which for workers translated into rising wages, expanding benefits, and an increasing rate of home ownership. Second, the federal government's outlays for military and domestic programs gave a huge boost to the economy.

Economy: From Recovery to Dominance

U.S. corporations, banks, and manufacturers so dominated the global economy that the postwar period has been called the Pax Americana (a Latin term meaning "American Peace" and harking back to the Pax Romana of the first and second centuries A.D.). *Life* magazine publisher Henry Luce was so confident in the nation's growing power that during World War II he had predicted the dawning of the "American century." The preponderance of American economic power in the postwar decades, however, was not simply an artifact of the world war — it was not an inevitable development. Several key elements came together, internationally and at home, to propel three decades of unprecedented economic growth.

The Bretton Woods System American global supremacy rested partly on the economic institutions created at an international conference in **Bretton Woods**, New Hampshire, in July 1944. The first of those institutions was the **World Bank**, created to provide loans for the reconstruction of war-torn Europe as well as for the development of former colonized nations — the so-called Third World or developing world. A second institution, the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**, was set up to stabilize currencies and provide a predictable monetary environment for trade, with the U.S. dollar serving as the benchmark. The World Bank and the IMF formed the cornerstones of the Bretton Woods system, which guided the global economy after the war.

The Bretton Woods system was joined in 1947 by the first General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which established an international framework for overseeing trade rules and practices. Together, the Bretton Woods system and GATT served America's conception of an open-market global economy and complemented the nation's ambitious diplomatic aims in the Cold War. The chief idea of the Bretton Woods system was to make American capital available, on cheap terms, to nations that adopted free-trade capitalist economies. Critics charged, rightly, that Bretton Woods and GATT favored the United States at the

The Kitchen Debate

At the American National Exhibition in Moscow in 1959, the United States put on display the technological wonders of American home life. When Vice President Richard Nixon visited, he and Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev got into a heated debate over the relative merits of their rival systems, with the up-to-date American kitchen as a case in point. This photograph shows the debate in progress. Khrushchev is the bald man pointing his finger at Nixon. To Nixon's left stands Leonid Brezhnev, who would be Khrushchev's successor. Getty Images.

expense of recently independent countries, because the United States could dictate lending terms and stood to benefit as nations purchased more American goods. But the system provided needed economic stability.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
What primary factors led to the growth of the American economy after World War II?

The Military-Industrial Complex

A second engine of postwar prosperity was defense spending. In his final address to the nation in 1961, President Dwight D. Eisenhower spoke about the power of what he called the **military-industrial complex**, which by then employed 3.5 million Americans. Even though his administration had fostered this defense establishment, Eisenhower feared its implications: "We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex," he said. This complex had its roots in the business-government partnerships of World War II. After 1945, though the country was nominally at peace, the economy and the government operated in a state of perpetual readiness for war.

Based at the sprawling Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, the Defense Department evolved into a massive bureaucracy. In the name of national security, defense-related industries entered into long-term relationships with the Pentagon. Some companies did so much business with the government that they in effect became private divisions of the Defense Department. Over 60 percent of the income of Boeing, General Dynamics, and Raytheon, for instance, came from military contracts, and the percentages were even higher for Lockheed and Republic Aviation. In previous peacetime years, military spending had constituted only 1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP); now it represented 10 percent. Economic growth was increasingly dependent on a robust defense sector.

The Military-Industrial Complex

Often, technology developed for military purposes, such as the complex design of jet airplanes, was easily transferred to the consumer market. The Boeing Aircraft Company—their Seattle plant is pictured here in the mid-1950s—became one of the leading commercial airplane manufacturers in the world in the 1960s, boosted in part by tax dollar–financed military contracts. Major American corporations—such as Boeing, McDonnell Douglas, General Electric, General Dynamics, and dozens of others—benefitted enormously from military contracts from the Department of Defense in the years after World War II.

As permanent mobilization took hold, science, industry, and government became intertwined. Cold War competition for military supremacy spawned both an arms race and a space race as the United States and the Soviet Union each sought to develop more explosive bombs and more powerful rockets. Federal spending underwrote 90 percent of the cost of research for aviation and space, 65 percent for electricity and electronics, 42 percent for scientific instruments, and even 24 percent for automobiles. With the government footing the bill, corporations lost little time in transforming new technology into useful products. Backed by the Pentagon, for instance, IBM and Sperry Rand pressed ahead with research on integrated circuits, which later spawned the computer revolution.

When the Soviet Union launched the world's first satellite, ***Sputnik***, in 1957, the startled United States went into high gear to catch up in the Cold War space competition. Alarmed that the United States was falling behind in science and technology, Eisenhower persuaded Congress to appropriate additional money for college scholarships and university research. The **National Defense Education Act** of 1958 funneled millions of dollars into American universities, helping institutions such as the University of California at Berkeley, Stanford University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the University of Michigan become the leading research centers in the world.

Corporate Power Despite its massive size, the military-corporate partnership was only one part of the nation's economy. For over half a century, the consolidation of economic power into large corporate firms had characterized American capitalism. In the postwar decades, that tendency accelerated. By 1970, the top four U.S. automakers produced 91 percent of all motor vehicles sold in the country; the top four firms in tires produced 72 percent; those in cigarettes, 84 percent; and those in detergents, 70 percent. Eric Johnston, former president of the American Chamber of Commerce, declared that "we have entered a period of accelerating bigness in all aspects of American life." Expansion into foreign markets also spurred corporate growth. During the 1950s, U.S. exports nearly doubled, giving the nation a trade surplus of close to $5 billion in 1960. By the 1970s, such firms as Coca-Cola, Gillette, IBM, and Mobil made more than half their profits abroad.

To staff their bureaucracies, the postwar corporate giants required a huge white-collar army. A new generation of corporate chieftains emerged, operating in a complex environment that demanded long-range forecasting. Companies turned to the universities, which grew explosively after 1945. Postwar corporate culture inspired numerous critics, who argued that the obedience demanded of white-collar workers was stifling creativity and blighting lives. In *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), the sociologist David Riesman mourned a lost masculinity and contrasted the independent businessmen and professionals of earlier years with the managerial class of the postwar world. The sociologist William Whyte painted a somber picture of "organization men" who left the home "spiritually as well as physically to take the vows of organization life." Andrew Hacker, in *The Corporation Take-Over* (1964), warned that a small handful of such organization men "can draw up an investment program calling for the expenditure of several billions of dollars" and thereby "determine the quality of life for substantial segments of society."

Many of these "investment programs" relied on mechanization, or automation — another important factor in the postwar boom. From 1947 to 1975, worker productivity more than doubled across the whole of the economy. American factories replaced manpower with machines, substituting cheap fossil energy for human muscle. As industries mechanized, they could turn out products more efficiently and at lower cost. Mechanization did not come without social costs, however. Over the course of the postwar decades, millions of high-wage manufacturing jobs were lost as machines replaced workers, affecting entire cities and regions. Corporate leaders approved, but workers and their union representatives were less enthusiastic. "How are you going to sell cars to all of these machines?" wondered Walter Reuther, president of the United Auto Workers (UAW).

The Economic Record The American economy produced an extraordinary postwar record. Annual GDP jumped from $213 billion in 1945 to more than $500 billion in 1960; by 1970, it exceeded $1 trillion (Figure 26.1). This sustained economic growth meant a 25 percent rise in real income for ordinary Americans between 1946 and 1959. Even better, the new prosperity featured low inflation. After a burst of high prices in the immediate postwar period, inflation slowed to 2 to 3 percent annually, and it stayed low until the escalation of the Vietnam War in the mid-1960s. Feeling secure about the future, Americans were eager to spend and rightly felt that they were better off than ever before. In 1940, 43 percent of American families owned their homes; by 1960, 62 percent did. In that period, moreover, income inequality dropped sharply. The share of total income going to the top tenth — the

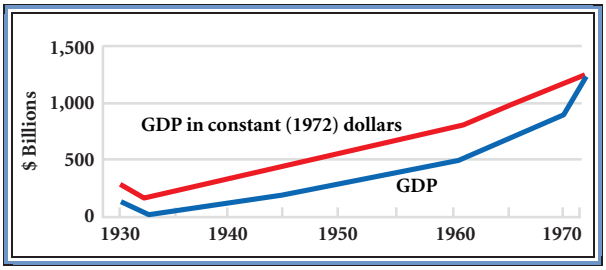


FIGURE 26.1
Gross Domestic Product, 1930–1972
After a sharp dip during the Great Depression, the GDP rose steadily in both real and constant dollars in the postwar period.

richest Americans — declined by nearly one-third from the 45 percent it had been in 1940. American society had become not only more prosperous but also more egalitarian.

However, the picture was not as rosy at the bottom, where tenacious poverty accompanied the economic boom. In ***The Affluent Society*** (1958), which analyzed the nation's successful, "affluent" middle class, economist John Kenneth Galbraith argued that the poor were only an "afterthought" in the minds of economists and politicians, who largely celebrated the new growth. As Galbraith noted, one in thirteen families at the time earned less than $1,000 a year (about $7,500 in today's dollars). Four years later, in ***The Other America*** (1962), the left-wing social critic Michael Harrington chronicled "the economic underworld of American life," and a U.S. government study, echoing a well-known sentence from Franklin Roosevelt's second inaugural address ("I see one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished"), declared "one-third of the nation" to be poorly paid, poorly educated, and poorly housed. It appeared that in economic terms, as the top and the middle converged, the bottom remained far behind.

A Nation of Consumers

The most breathtaking development in the postwar American economy was the dramatic expansion of the domestic consumer market. The sheer quantity of consumer goods available to the average person was without precedent. In some respects, the postwar decades seemed like the 1920s all over again, with an abundance of new gadgets and appliances, a craze for automobiles, and new types of mass media. Yet there was a significant difference: in the 1950s, consumption became associated with citizenship. Buying things, once a sign of personal indulgence, now meant participating fully in American society and, moreover, fulfilling a social responsibility. What the suburban family consumed, asserted *Life* magazine in a photo essay, would help to ensure "full employment and improved living standards for the rest of the nation."

The GI Bill

The new ethic of consumption appealed to the postwar middle class, the driving force behind the expanding domestic market. Middle-class status was more accessible than ever before because of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, popularly known as the GI Bill. In the immediate postwar years, more than half of all U.S. college students were veterans attending class on the government's dime. By the middle of the 1950s, 2.2 million veterans had attended college and another 5.6 million had attended trade school with government financing. Before the GI Bill, commented one veteran, "I looked upon college education as likely as my owning a Rolls-Royce with a chauffeur."

Government financing of education helped make the U.S. workforce the best educated in the world in the 1950s and 1960s. American colleges, universities, and trade schools grew by leaps and bounds to accommodate the flood of students — and expanded again when the children of those students, the baby boomers, reached college age in the 1960s. At Rutgers University, enrollment went from 7,000 before the war to 16,000 in 1947; at the University of Minnesota, from 15,000 to more than 27,000. The GI Bill trained nearly half a million engineers; 200,000 doctors, dentists, and nurses; and 150,000 scientists (among many other professions). Better education meant higher earning power, and higher earning power translated into the consumer spending that drove the postwar economy. One observer of the GI Bill was so impressed with its achievements that he declared it responsible for "the most important educational and social transformation in American history."

The GI Bill stimulated the economy and expanded the middle class in another way: by increasing home ownership. Between the end of World War II and 1966, one of every five single-family homes built in the United States was financed through a GI Bill mortgage — 2.5 million new homes in all. In cities and suburbs across the country, the **Veterans Administration** (VA), which helped former soldiers purchase new homes with no down payment, sparked a building boom that created jobs in the construction industry and fueled consumer spending in home appliances and automobiles. Education and home ownership were more than personal triumphs for the families of World

College on the GI Bill

In 1947—the year this photo was taken of a crowded lecture hall at the University of Iowa—more than 6,000 of this university's 10,000 students (60 percent) were veterans whose education was financed by the GI Bill. Across the country, American universities were bursting at the seams from the massive enrollment of World War II veterans. Government financing of college education for these vets made the U.S. workforce one of the best educated in the world in the 1950s and 1960s. Margaret Bourke-White/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images.

War II veterans (and Korean and Vietnam War veterans, after a new GI Bill was passed in 1952). They were concrete financial *assets* that helped lift more Americans than ever before into a mass-consumption-oriented middle class.

Trade Unions Organized labor also expanded the ranks of the middle class. For the first time ever, trade unions and **collective bargaining** became major factors in the nation's economic life. In the past, organized labor had been confined to a narrow band of craft trades and a few industries, primarily coal mining, railroading, and the building and metal trades. The power balance shifted during the Great Depression, and by the time the dust settled after World War II, labor unions overwhelmingly represented America's industrial workforce (Figure 26.2). By the beginning of the 1950s, the nation's major industries, including auto, steel, clothing, chemicals, and virtually all consumer product manufacturing, were operating with union contracts.

That outcome did not arrive without a fight. Unions staged major strikes in nearly all American industries in 1945 and 1946, and employers fought back. Head of the UAW Walter Reuther and CIO president Philip Murray declared that employers could afford a 30 percent wage increase, which would fuel postwar consumption. When employers, led by the giant General Motors, balked at that demand, the two sides seemed set for a long struggle. Between 1947 and 1950, however, a broad "labor-management accord" gradually

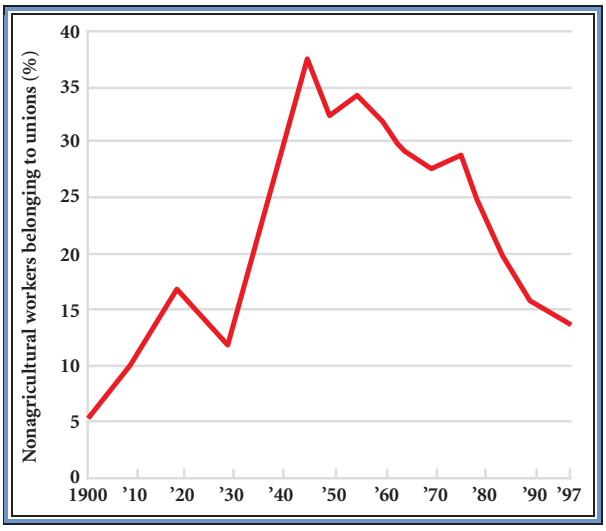


FIGURE 26.2
Labor Union Strength, 1900–1997

Labor unions reached their peak strength immediately after World War II, when they represented close to 40 percent of the nonfarm workforce. Although there was some decline after the mid-1950s, unions still represented nearly 30 percent in 1973. Thereafter, their decline was precipitous. AFL-CIO Information Bureau, Washington, DC.

emerged across most industries. This was not industrial peace, because the country still experienced many strikes, but a general acceptance of collective bargaining as the method for setting the terms of employment. The result was rising real income. The average worker with three dependents gained 18 percent in spendable real income in the 1950s.

In addition, unions delivered greater leisure (more paid holidays and longer vacations) and, in a startling departure, a social safety net. In postwar Europe, America's allies were constructing welfare states. But having lost the bruising battle in Washington for national health care during Truman's presidency, American unions turned to the bargaining table. By the end of the 1950s, union contracts commonly provided pension plans and company-paid health insurance. Collective bargaining, the process of trade unions and employers negotiating workplace contracts, had become, in effect, the American alternative to the European welfare state and, as Reuther boasted, the passport into the middle class.

The labor-management accord, though impressive, was never as durable or universal as it seemed. Vulnerabilities lurked. For one thing, the sheltered domestic markets — the essential condition for generous contracts — were quite fragile. In certain industries, the lead firms were already losing market share. Second, generally overlooked were the many unorganized workers with no middle-class passport — those consigned to unorganized industries, casual labor, or low-wage jobs in the service sector. A final vulnerability was the most basic: the abiding antiunionism of American employers. At heart, managers regarded the labor-management accord as a negotiated truce, not a permanent peace. The postwar labor-management accord turned out to be a transitory event, not a permanent condition of American economic life.

Houses, Cars, and Children Increased educational levels, growing home ownership, and higher wages all enabled more Americans than ever before to become members of what one historian has called a "consumer republic." But what did they buy? The postwar emphasis on nuclear families and suburbs provides the answer. In the emerging suburban nation, three elements came together to create patterns of consumption that would endure for decades: houses, cars, and children.

A feature in a 1949 issue of *McCall's*, a magazine targeting middle-class women, illustrates the connections. "I now have three working centers," a typical housewife explains. "The baby center, a baking center and a cleaning center." Accompanying illustrations reveal the interior of the brand-new house, stocked with the latest consumer products: accessories for the baby's room; a new stove, oven, and refrigerator; and a washer and dryer, along with cleaning products and other household goods. The article does not mention automobiles, but the photo of the house's exterior makes the point clear: father drives home from work in a new car.

Consumption for the home, including automobiles, drove the postwar American economy as much as, or more than, the military-industrial complex did. If we think like advertisers and manufacturers, we can see why. Between 1945 and 1970, more than 25 million new houses were built in the United States. Each required its own supply of new appliances, from refrigerators to lawn mowers. In 1955 alone, Americans purchased 4 million new refrigerators, and between 1940 and 1951 the sale of power mowers increased from 35,000 per year to more than 1 million. Moreover, as American industry discovered planned obsolescence — the encouragement of consumers to replace appliances and cars every few years — the home became a site of perpetual consumer desire.

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
How did the tastes and values of the postwar middle class affect the country?

Children also encouraged consumption. The baby boomers born between World War II and the late 1950s have consistently, throughout every phase of their lives, been the darlings of American advertising and consumption. When they were infants, companies focused on developing new baby products, from disposable diapers to instant formula. When they were toddlers and young children, new television programs, board games, fast food, TV dinners, and thousands of different kinds of toys came to market to supply the rambunctious youth. When they were teenagers, rock music, Hollywood films, and a constantly marketed "teen culture" — with its appropriate clothing, music, hairstyles, and other accessories — bombarded them. Remarkably, in 1956, middle-class American teenagers on average had a weekly income of more than $10, close to the weekly disposable income of an entire family a generation earlier.

Television The emergence of commercial television in the United States was swift and overwhelming. In the realm of technology, only the automobile and the personal computer were its equal in transforming everyday life in the twentieth century. In 1947, there were 7,000 TV sets in American homes. A year later, the CBS and NBC radio networks began offering regular

Teenagers

These teenage girls and boys are being restrained by police outside an Elvis Presley concert in Florida in 1956. Elvis, who was instrumental in popularizing rock 'n' roll music among white middle-class teenagers in the mid-1950s, was one example of a broader phenomenon: the creation of the "teenager" as a distinct demographic, cultural category and, perhaps most significantly, consumer group. Beginning in the 1950s, middle-class teenagers had money to spend, and advertisers and other entrepreneurs—such as the music executives who marketed Elvis or the Hollywood executives who invented the "teen film"—sought ways to win their allegiance and their dollars. Photo by Charles Trainor/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images.

programming, and by 1950 Americans owned 7.3 million sets. Ten years later, 87 percent of American homes had at least one television set. Having conquered the home, television would soon become the principal mediator between the consumer and the marketplace.

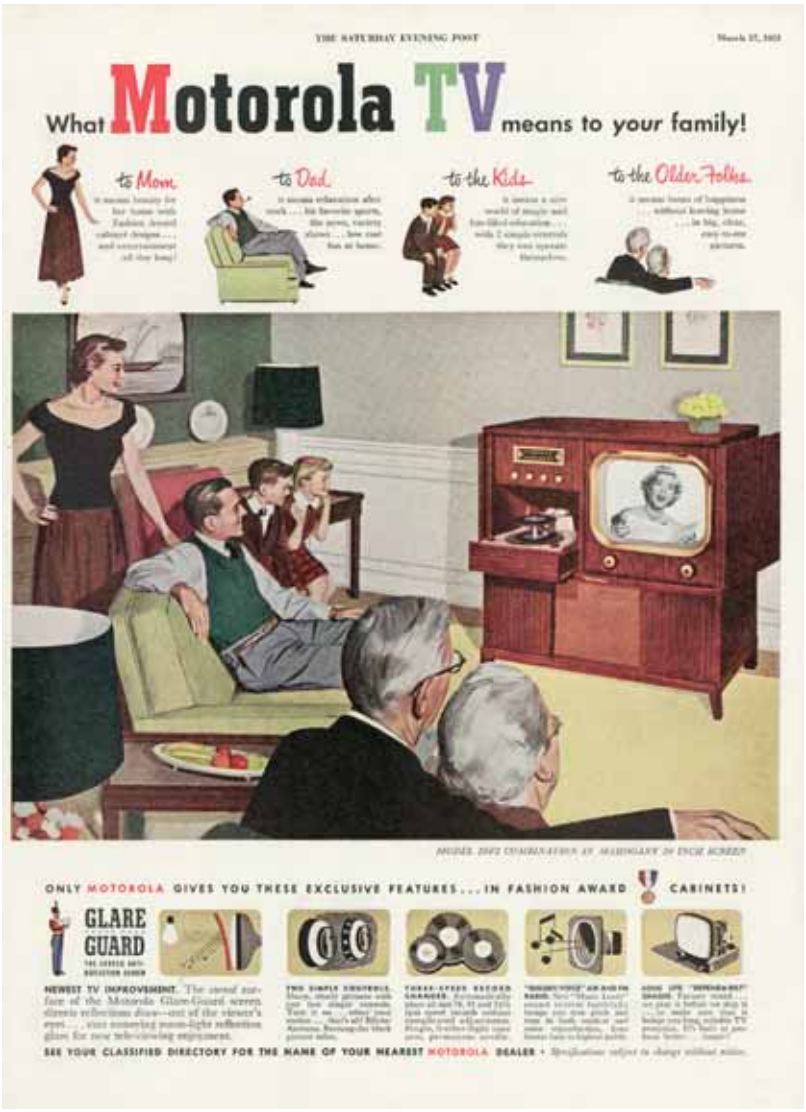
Television advertisers mastered the art of manufacturing consumer desire. TV stations, like radio stations before them, depended entirely on advertising for profits. The first television executives understood that as long as they sold viewers to advertisers they would stay on the air. Early corporate-sponsored shows (such as *General Electric Theater* and *U.S. Steel Hour*) and simple product jingles (such as "No matter what the time or place, let's keep up with that happy pace. 7-Up your thirst away!") gave way by the early 1960s to slick advertising campaigns that used popular music, movie stars, sports figures, and stimulating graphics to captivate viewers.

By creating powerful visual narratives of comfort and plenty, television revolutionized advertising and changed forever the ways products were sold to American, and global, consumers. On *Queen for a Day*, a show popular in the mid-1950s, women competed to see who could tell the most heartrending story of tragedy and loss. The winner was lavished with household products: refrigerators, toasters, ovens, and the like. In a groundbreaking advertisement for Anacin aspirin, a tiny hammer pounded inside the skull of a headache sufferer. Almost overnight, sales of Anacin increased by 50 percent.

By the late 1950s, what Americans saw on television, both in the omnipresent commercials and in the programming, was an overwhelmingly white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant world of nuclear families, suburban homes, and middle-class life. A typical show was *Father Knows Best*, starring Robert Young and Jane Wyatt. Father left home each morning wearing a suit and carrying a briefcase. Mother was a full-time housewife and stereotypical female, prone to bad driving and tears. *Leave It to Beaver*, another immensely popular series about suburban family life, embodied similar late-fifties themes. Earlier in the decade, however, television featured grittier realities. *The Honeymooners*, starring Jackie Gleason as a Brooklyn bus driver, and

Advertising in the TV Age

Aggressive advertising of new products such as the color television helped fuel the surge in consumer spending during the 1950s. Marketing experts emphasized television's role in promoting family togetherness, while interior designers offered decorating tips that placed the television at the focal point of living rooms and the increasingly popular "family rooms." In this 1951 magazine advertisement, the family is watching a variety program starring singer Dinah Shore, who was the television spokeswoman for Chevrolet cars. Every American probably could hum the tune of the little song she sang in praise of the Chevy. Courtesy of Motorola Museum © 1951 Motorola, Inc./Picture Research Consultants & Archives.



The Life of Riley, a situation comedy featuring a California aircraft worker, treated working-class lives. Two other early-fifties television series, *Beulah*, starring Ethel Waters and then Louise Beavers as an African American maid, and the comedic *Amos 'n' Andy,* were the only shows featuring black actors in major roles. Television was never a showcase for the breadth of American society, but in the second half of the 1950s broadcasting lost much of its ethnic, racial, and class diversity and became a vehicle for the transmission of a narrow range of middle-class tastes and values.

Youth Culture

One of the most striking developments in American life in the postwar decades was the emergence of the **teenager** as a cultural phenomenon. In 1956, only partly in jest, the CBS radio commentator Eric Sevareid questioned "whether the teenagers will take over the United States lock, stock, living room, and garage." Sevareid was grumbling about American youth culture, a phenomenon first noticed in the 1920s and with its roots in the lengthening years of education, the role of peer groups, and the consumer tastes of young people. Market research revealed a distinct teen market to be exploited. *Newsweek* noted with awe in 1951 that the aggregate of the weekly spending money of teenagers was enough to buy 190 million candy bars, 130 million soft drinks, and 230 million sticks of gum. Increasingly, advertisers targeted the young, both to capture their spending money and to exploit their influence on family purchases.

Hollywood movies played a large role in fostering a teenage culture. Young people made up the largest

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
How did rebellion become an integral part of consumer culture in the postwar period?

audience for motion pictures, and Hollywood studios learned over the course of the 1950s to cater to them. The success of films such as *The Wild One* (1953), starring Marlon Brando; *Blackboard Jungle* (1955), with Sidney Poitier; and *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), starring James Dean, convinced movie executives that films directed at teenagers were worthy investments. "What are you rebelling against?" Brando is asked in *The Wild One*. "Whattaya got?" he replies. By the early 1960s, Hollywood had retooled its business model, shifting emphasis away from adults and families to teenagers. The "teenpic" soon included multiple genres: horror, rock 'n' roll, dangerous youth, and beach party, among others.

Rock 'n' Roll What really defined the youth culture, however, was its music. Rejecting the romantic ballads of the 1940s, teenagers discovered rock 'n' roll, which originated in African American rhythm and blues. The Cleveland disc jockey Alan Freed took the lead in introducing white America to the black-created sound by playing what were called "race" records. "If I could find a white man who had the Negro sound and the Negro feel, I could make a billion dollars," a record company owner is quoted as saying. The performer who fit that bill was Elvis Presley, who rocketed into instant celebrity in 1956 with his hit records "Hound Dog" and "Heartbreak Hotel," covers of songs originally recorded by black artists such as Big Mama Thornton. Between 1953 and 1959, record sales increased from $213 million to $603 million, with rock 'n' roll as the driving force.

Many unhappy adults saw in rock 'n' roll music an invitation to interracial dating, rebellion, and a more flagrant sexuality. The media featured hundreds of stories on problem teens, and denunciations of the new music poured forth from many corners. Such condemnation only deflected off the new youth culture or, if anything, increased its popularity. Both Hollywood and the music industry had learned that youth rebellion sold tickets.

Cultural Dissenters Youth rebellion was only one aspect of a broader discontent with the sometimes

Motown
Mary Wilson, Diana Ross, and Florence Ballard (from left to right) were the founding members of the Motown singing group the Supremes (shown here in concert in 1964), which produced twelve number-one singles. Motown, a record label owned by African American entrepreneur Berry Gordy, specialized in so-called cross-over acts: black singers who sold records to white audiences. In the era of Jim Crow, Motown represented a small but noteworthy step toward a less racially segregated American culture. Photo by RB/Redferns/Getty Images.

saccharine consumer culture of the 1950s. Many artists, writers, and jazz musicians embarked on powerful new experimental projects in a remarkable flowering of intensely personal, introspective art forms. Black musicians developed a hard-driving improvisational style known as bebop. Whether the "hot" bebop of saxophonist Charlie Parker or the more subdued "cool" sound of the influential trumpeter Miles Davis, postwar jazz was cerebral, intimate, and individualistic. As such, it stood in stark contrast to the commercialized, dance-oriented "swing" bands of the 1930s and 1940s.

Black jazz musicians found eager fans not only in the African American community but also among young white **Beats**, a group of writers and poets centered in New York and San Francisco who disdained middle-class materialism. In his poem "Howl" (1956), which became a manifesto of the Beat generation, Allen Ginsberg lamented: "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked, dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry fix." In works such as Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road* (1957), the Beats glorified spontaneity, sexual adventurism, drug use, and spirituality. The Beats were apolitical, but their cultural rebellion would, in the 1960s, inspire a new generation of young rebels disenchanted with both the political and cultural status quo.

Religion and the Middle Class

In an age of anxiety about nuclear annihilation and the spread of "godless communism," Americans yearned for a reaffirmation of faith. Church membership jumped from 49 percent of the population in 1940 to 70 percent in 1960. People flocked to the evangelical Protestant denominations, beneficiaries of a remarkable new crop of preachers. Most eloquent was the young Reverend Billy Graham, who made brilliant use of television, radio, and advertising. His massive 1949 revival in Los Angeles and his 1957 crusade at Madison Square Garden in New York, attended or viewed by hundreds of thousands of Americans, established Graham as the nation's leading evangelical.

Rather than clashing with the new middle-class ethic of consumption, the religious reawakening was designed to mesh with it. Preachers such as Graham and the California-based Robert Schuller told Americans that so long as they lived moral lives, they deserved the material blessings of modern life. No one was more influential in this regard than the minister and author Norman Vincent Peale, whose best-selling book *The Power of Positive Thinking* (1952) embodied the therapeutic use of religion as an antidote to life's trials and tribulations. Peale taught that with faith in God and "positive thinking," anyone could overcome obstacles and become a success. Graham, Schuller, Peale, and other 1950s evangelicals laid the foundation for the rise of the televangelists, who created popular television ministries in the 1970s.

The postwar purveyors of religious faith cast Americans as a righteous people opposed to communist atheism. When Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were sentenced to death in 1953, the judge criticized them for "devoting themselves to the Russian ideology of denial of God." Cold War imperatives drew Catholics, Protestants, and Jews into an influential ecumenical movement that downplayed doctrinal differences. The phrase "under God" was inserted into the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954, and U.S. coins carried the words

Billy Graham

Charismatic and inspiring, Billy Graham wore down shoe leather to bring Christian conversion to hundreds of thousands of Americans in the 1940s and 1950s, preaching to large crowds such as this one in Columbia, South Carolina. He also migrated onto the radio and television airwaves, using technology to reach even wider audiences. Graham used the Cold War to sharpen his message, telling Americans that "godless communism" was an inferior system, but that democracy in America required belief in God and a constant struggle against "sin." Photo by John Dominis/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images.

"In God We Trust" after 1956. These religious initiatives struck a distinctly moderate tone, however, in comparison with the politicized evangelism that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s (Chapter 29).

The American Family in the Era of Containment

Marriage, family structure, and gender roles had been undergoing significant changes since the turn of the twentieth century (Chapter 18). Beginning in the nineteenth century, middle-class Americans increasingly saw marriage as "companionate," that is, based on romantic love and a lifetime of shared friendship. *Companionate* did not mean *equal*. In the mid-twentieth century, family life remained governed by notions of paternalism, in which men provided economic support and controlled the family's financial resources, while women cared for children and occupied a secondary position in public life.

The resurgent postwar American middle class was preoccupied with the virtues of paternalism. Everyone from professional psychologists to television advertisers and every organization from schools to the popular press celebrated nuclear families. Children were prized, and women's caregiving roles were valorized. This view of family life, and especially its emphasis on female "domesticity," was bolstered by Cold War politics. Americans who deviated from prevailing gender and familial norms were not only viewed with scorn but were also sometimes thought to be subversive and politically dangerous. The word *containment* could apply to the home as easily as to foreign policy. The family had become politicized by the Cold War.

The model of domesticity so highly esteemed in postwar middle-class morality hid deeper, longer-term changes in the way marriage, gender roles, women's work, and even sex were understood. To comprehend the postwar decades, we have to keep in mind both the value placed on domesticity and the tumultuous changes surging beneath its prescriptions.

The Baby Boom

A popular 1945 song was called "Gotta Make Up for Lost Time," and Americans did just that. Two things were noteworthy about the families they formed after World War II: First, marriages were remarkably stable. Not until the mid-1960s did the divorce rate begin to rise sharply. Second, married couples were intent on having babies. Everyone expected to have several children — it was part of adulthood, almost a citizen's responsibility. After a century and a half of decline, the birthrate shot up. More babies were born in the six years between 1948 and 1953 than in the previous thirty years (Figure 26.3).

One of the reasons for this **baby boom** was that people were having children at the same time. A second was a drop in the average marriage age — down to twenty-two for men and twenty for women. Younger parents meant a bumper crop of children. Women who came of age in the 1930s averaged 2.4 children; their counterparts in the 1950s averaged 3.2 children. Such a dramatic turnaround reflected couples' decisions during the Great Depression to limit childbearing and couples' contrasting decisions in the postwar years to have more children. The baby boom peaked in 1957 and remained at a high level until the early 1960s. Far from "normal," all of these developments were anomalies, temporary reversals of long-standing demographic trends. From the perspective of the whole of the twentieth century, the 1950s and early 1960s stand out as exceptions to declining birthrates, rising divorce rates, and the steadily rising marriage age.

The passage of time revealed the ever-widening impact of the baby boom. When baby boomers competed for jobs during the 1970s, the labor market became tight. When career-oriented baby boomers belatedly began having children in the 1980s, the birthrate jumped. And in our own time, as baby boomers

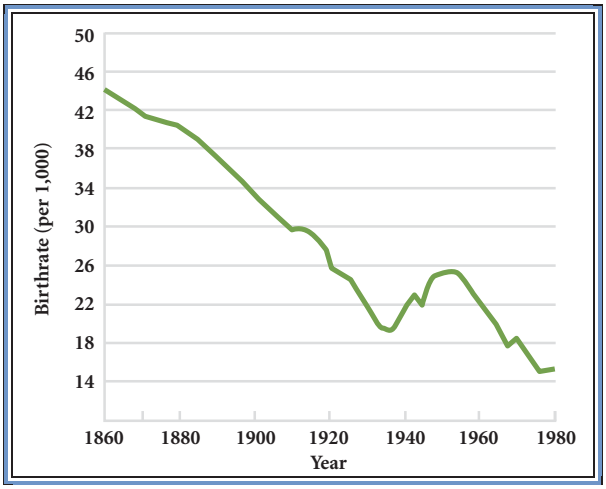


FIGURE 26.3
The American Birthrate, 1860–1980
When birthrates are viewed over more than a century, the postwar baby boom is clearly only a temporary reversal of the long-term downward trend in the American birthrate.

begin retiring, huge funding problems threaten to engulf Social Security and Medicare. The intimate decisions of so many couples after World War II continued to shape American life well into the twenty-first century.

Improving Health and Education Baby boom children benefitted from a host of important advances in public health and medical practice in the postwar years. Formerly serious illnesses became merely routine after the introduction of such "miracle drugs" as penicillin (introduced in 1943), streptomycin (1945), and cortisone (1946). When Dr. Jonas Salk perfected a polio vaccine in 1954, he became a national hero. The free distribution of Salk's vaccine in the nation's schools, followed in 1961 by Dr. Albert Sabin's oral polio vaccine, demonstrated the potential of government-sponsored public health programs.

The baby boom also gave the nation's educational system a boost. Postwar middle-class parents, America's first college-educated generation, placed a high value on education. Suburban parents approved 90 percent of school bond issues during the 1950s. By 1970, school expenditures accounted for 7.2 percent of the gross national product, double the 1950 level. In the 1960s, the baby boom generation swelled college enrollments. State university systems grew in tandem: the pioneering University of California, University of Wisconsin, and State University of New York systems added dozens of new campuses and offered students in their states a low-cost college education.

Dr. Benjamin Spock To keep baby boom children healthy and happy, middle-class parents increasingly relied on the advice of experts. Dr. Benjamin Spock's *Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* sold 1 million copies every year after its publication in 1946. Spock urged mothers to abandon the rigid feeding and baby-care schedules of an earlier generation. New mothers found Spock's commonsense approach liberating. "Your little paperback is still in my cupboard, with loose pages, rather worn from use because I brought up two babies using it as my 'Bible,'" a California housewife wrote to Spock.

Despite his commonsense approach to child rearing, Spock was part of a generation of psychological experts whose advice often failed to reassure women. If mothers were too protective, Spock and others argued, they might hamper their children's preparation for adult life. On the other hand, mothers who wanted to work outside the home felt guilty because Spock recommended that they be constantly available for their children. As American mothers aimed for the perfection demanded of them seemingly at every turn, many began to question these mixed messages. Some of them would be inspired by the resurgence of feminism in the 1960s.

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
Why was there an increase in births in the decades after World War II, and what were some of the effects of this baby boom?

Women, Work, and Family

Two powerful forces shaped women's relationships to work and family life in the postwar decades. One was the middle-class domestic ideal, in which women were expected to raise children, attend to other duties in the home, and devote themselves to their husbands' happiness. So powerful was this ideal that in 1957 the *Ladies' Home Journal* entitled an article, "Is College Education Wasted on Women?" The second force was the job market. Most working-class women had to earn a paycheck to help their family. And despite their education, middle-class women found that jobs in the professions and business were dominated by men and often closed to them. For both groups, the market offered mostly "women's jobs"—in teaching, nursing, and other areas of the growing service sector—and little room for advancement (American Voices, p. 852).

The idea that a woman's place was in the home was, of course, not new. The postwar obsession with femininity and motherhood bore a remarkable similarity to the nineteenth century's notion of domesticity. The updated version drew on new elements of twentieth-century science and culture. Psychologists equated motherhood with "normal" female identity and suggested that career-minded mothers needed therapy. "A mother who runs out on her children to work—except in cases of absolute necessity—betrays a deep dissatisfaction with motherhood or with her marriage," wrote one leading psychiatrist. Television shows and movies depicted career women as social misfits. The postwar consumer culture also emphasized women's domestic role as purchasing agents for home and family. "Can a woman ever feel right cooking on a dirty range?" asked one advertisement.

The postwar domestic ideal held that women's principal economic contribution came through consumption—women shopped for the family. In reality, their contributions increasingly took them outside their homes and into the workforce. In 1954, married women made up half of all women workers. Six years later, the 1960 census reported a stunning fact: the number of mothers who worked had increased four times, and over one-third of these women had children

Coming of Age in the Postwar Years

At the dawn of the postwar era, Americans faced new opportunities and new anxieties. Many former soldiers attended college and purchased new homes on the GI Bill, which forever changed their lives. Women faced new pressures to realize the ideal role of housewife and mother. On the horizon, both in reality and in the American imagination, lurked communism, which Americans feared but little understood. And racial segregation continued to shape the ordinary lives of Americans. Recorded here are several different reactions to these post-war tensions, distinct experiences of coming of age in the 1940s and 1950s.

Art Buchwald

Studying on the GI Bill

Art Buchwald was one of the best-known humorists in American journalism. But in 1946, he was an ordinary ex-serviceman using the GI Bill to go to college.

It was time to face up to whether I was serious about attending school. My decision was to go down to the University of Southern California and find out what I should study at night to get into the place. There were at least 4,000 ex-GIs waiting to register. I stood in line with them. Hours later, I arrived at the counter and said, "I would like to . . ." The clerk said, "Fill this out."

Having been accepted as a full-time student under the G.I. Bill, I was entitled to seventy-five dollars a month plus tuition, books, and supplies. Meanwhile, I found a boardinghouse a few blocks from campus, run by a cheery woman who was like a mother to her thirteen boarders. . . . At the time, just after the Second World War had ended, an undeclared class war was going on at USC. The G.I.s returning home had little use for the fraternity men, since most of the frat boys were not only much younger, but considered very immature.

The G.I.s were intent on getting their educations and starting new lives.

Source: From *Leaving Home: A Memoir*, by Art Buchwald (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1993). Used by permission of Joel Buchwald.

Betty Friedan

Living the Feminine Mystique

Like Buchwald, Betty Friedan would one day become famous as a writer—author of one of the most widely read books of the 1960s, *The Feminine Mystique*. In the late 1940s, Friedan was not yet a feminist, but she was deeply engaged in the politics of the era.

And then the boys our age had come back from the war. I was bumped from my job on a small labor news service by a returning veteran, and it wasn't so easy to find another job I really liked. I filled out the applications for *Time-Life* researcher, which I'd always scorned before. All the girls I knew had jobs like that, but it was official policy that no matter how good, researchers, who were women, could never become writers or editors. They could write the whole article, but the men they were working with would always get the by-line as writer. I was certainly not a feminist then — none of us were a bit interested in women's rights. But I could never bring myself to take that kind of job.

After the war, I had been very political, very involved, consciously radical. Not about women, for heaven's sake! If you were a radical in 1949, you were concerned about the Negroes, and the working class, and World War III, and the Un-American Activities Committee and McCarthy and loyalty oaths, and Communist splits and schisms, Russia, China and the UN, but you certainly didn't think about being a woman, politically.

Source: From *"It Changed My Life": Writings on the Women's Movement,* by Betty Friedan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976). Copyright © 1963 by Betty Friedan. Reprinted by permission of Curtis Brown, Ltd.

Susan Allen Toth

Learning About Communism

Toth is a writer who grew up in Ames, Iowa, surrounded by cornfields. She writes here about her experience learning just how anxious people could become in the 1950s when the issue of communism was raised.

Of course, we all knew there was Communism. As early as sixth grade our teacher warned us about its dangers. I listened carefully to Mr. Casper describe what Communists wanted, which sounded terrible. World domination. Enslavement. Destruction of our way of life. I hung around school one afternoon hoping to catch Mr. Casper, whom I secretly adored, to ask him why Communism was so bad. He stayed in another teacher's room so late I finally scrawled my question on our blackboard: "Dear Mr. Casper, why is Communism so bad . . . Sue Allen" and

went home. Next morning the message was still there. Like a warning from heaven it had galvanized Mr. Casper. He began class with a stern lecture, repeating everything he had said about dangerous Russians and painting a vivid picture of how we would all suffer if the Russians took over the city government in Ames. We certainly wouldn't be able to attend a school like this, he said, where free expression of opinion was allowed. At recess that day one of the boys asked me if I was a "dirty Commie": two of my best friends shied away from me on the playground; I saw Mr. Casper talking low to another teacher and pointing at me. I cried all the way home from school and resolved never to commit myself publicly with a question like that again.

Source: From Susan Allen Toth, "Boyfriend" from *Blooming: A Small-Town Girlhood*. Reprinted by permission of Molly Friedrich on behalf of the author.

Melba Patillo Beals

Encountering Segregation

Melba Patillo Beals was one of the "Little Rock Nine," the high school students who desegregated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957. Here she recounts an experience documenting what it was like to come of age as a black southerner under Jim Crow.

An experience I endured on a December morning would forever affect any decision I made to go "potty" in a public place. We were Christmas shopping when I felt the twinge of emergency. I convinced Mother and Grandmother that I knew the way to restroom by myself. I was moving as fast as I could when suddenly I knew I wasn't going to make it all the way down those stairs and across the warehouse walkway to the "Colored Ladies" toilet. So I pushed open the door marked "White Ladies" and, taking a deep breath, I crossed the threshold. It was just as bright and pretty as I had imagined it to be. . . . Across the room, other white ladies sat on a couch reading the newspaper. Suddenly realizing I was there, two of them looked at me in astonishment. Unless I was the maid, they said, I was in the wrong place. While they shouted at me to "get out," my throbbing bladder consumed my attention as I frantically headed for the unoccupied stall. They kept shouting "Good lord, do something." I was doing something by that time, seated comfortably on the toilet, listening to the hysteria building outside my locked stall. One woman even knelt down to peep beneath the door to make certain that I didn't put my bottom on the toilet seat. She ordered me not to pee.

Source: Reprinted with permission of Atria Publishing Group, a Division of Simon & Schuster, Inc. *Warriors Don't Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock* by Melba Patillo Beals. Copyright © 1994, 1995 by Melba Beals. All rights reserved.

David Beers

California Suburbia

David Beers grew up in the suburbs of California, in what would eventually become known as Silicon Valley. In his memoir, he recalls the ritual of buying a house.

"We never looked at a used house," my father remembers of those days in the early 1960s when he and my mother went shopping for a home of their own in the Valley of Heart's Delight. "A used house did not interest us." Instead, they roved in search of balloons and bunting and the many billboards advertising *Low Interest! No Money Down!* to military veterans like my father. They would follow the signs to the model homes standing in empty fields and tour the empty floor plans and leave with notes carefully made about square footage and closet space. "We shopped for a new house," my father says, "the way you shopped for a car." . . . We were blithe conquerors, my tribe. When we chose a new homeland, invaded a place, settled it, and made it over in our image, we did so with a smiling sense of our own inevitability. . . . We were drawn to the promise of a blank page inviting *our* design upon it.

Source: David Beers, *Blue Sky Dream: A Memoir of America's Fall from Grace* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Company, 1996), 31, 39.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What do you think Buchwald meant by "an undeclared class war"? Why would the influx of GI Bill veterans into colleges create conflict?
2. Why do you think Friedan "didn't think about being a woman, politically" in the 1940s and 1950s? Why do you think she was "bumped from" her job by a "returning veteran"?
3. What does Toth's experience as a young student suggest about American anxieties during the Cold War? Why would her question cause embarrassment and ridicule?
4. What does Beals's experience suggest about the indignities faced by young people on the front lines of challenging racial segregation? Does it help explain why youth were so important in breaking racial barriers?
5. What do you think Beers means by "our tribe"? What was the "blank page"?

Mom at Home and at Work

Middle-class women's lives grew increasingly complicated in the postwar decades. They may have dreamed of a suburban home with a brand-new kitchen, like the one shown in this 1955 photograph (left), but laboring all day over children, dirty dishes, and a hot stove proved dissatisfying to many. Betty Friedan called the confinement of women's identities to motherhood the "feminine mystique," but did the working woman have it much better? Hardly. Most women in the 1950s and 1960s were confined to low-level secretarial work (right), waitressing, and other service-sector work—or, worse, factory or domestic labor. By the end of the 1960s, women had begun to crack the "glass ceiling" and enter the professions in larger numbers. But regardless of their occupation, the majority of working women performed the "double day": a full day at work and a full day at home. Such were the expectations and double bind women faced. Elliott Erwitt/Magnum Photos./Inge Morath © The Inge Morath Foundation/Magnum Photos.

between the ages of six and seventeen. In that same year, 30 percent of wives worked, and by 1970, it was 40 percent. For working-class women, in particular, the economic needs of their families demanded that they work outside the home.

Despite rising employment rates, occupational segmentation still haunted women. Until 1964, the classified sections of newspapers separated employment ads into "Help Wanted Male" and "Help Wanted Female." More than 80 percent of all employed women did stereotypical women's work as salesclerks, health-care technicians, waitresses, stewardesses, domestic servants, receptionists, telephone operators, and secretaries. In 1960, only 3 percent of lawyers and 6 percent of physicians were women; on the flip side, 97 percent of nurses and 85 percent of librarians were women. Along with women's jobs went women's pay, which averaged 60 percent of men's pay in 1963.

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME
What transformations in women's economic role took place in the 1950s and 1960s?

Contrary to stereotype, however, women's paid work was not merely supplementary. It helped lift families into the middle class. Even in the prosperous 1950s, many men found that their wages could not pay for what middle-class life demanded: cars, houses, vacations, and college education for the children. Many families needed more than one wage earner just to get by. Among married women, the highest rates of labor-force participation in the 1950s were found in families at the lower end of the middle class. Over the course of the postwar decades, from 1945 to 1965, more and more women, including married women, from all class backgrounds, entered the paid workforce.

How could American society steadfastly uphold the domestic ideal when so many wives and mothers were out of the house and at work? In many ways, the contradiction was hidden by the women themselves. Fearing public disapproval, women would explain

their work in family-oriented terms — as a way to save money for the children's college education, for instance. Moreover, when women took jobs outside the home, they still bore full responsibility for child care and household management, contributing to the "double day" of paid work and family work. As one overburdened woman noted, she now had "two full-time jobs instead of just one — underpaid clerical worker and unpaid housekeeper." Finally, the pressures of the Cold War made strong nuclear families with breadwinning fathers and domesticated mothers symbols of a healthy nation. Americans wanted to believe this even if it did not perfectly describe the reality of their lives.

Challenging Middle-Class Morality

In many ways, the two decades between 1945 and 1965 were a period of cultural conservatism that reflected the values of domesticity. At the dawn of the 1960s, going steady as a prelude to marriage was the fad in high school. College women had curfews and needed permission to see a male visitor. Americans married young; more than half of those who married in 1963 were under the age of twenty-one. After the birth control pill came on the market in 1960, few doctors prescribed it to unmarried women, and even married women did not enjoy unfettered access to contraception until the Supreme Court ruled it a "privacy" right in the 1965 decision *Griswold v. Connecticut*.

Alfred Kinsey Yet beneath the surface of middle-class morality, Americans were less repressed than confused. They struggled to reconcile new freedoms with older moral traditions. This was especially true with regard to sex. Two controversial studies by an unassuming Indiana University zoologist named Alfred Kinsey forced questions about sexuality into the open. Kinsey and his research team published *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* in 1948 and followed it up in 1953 with *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* — an 842-page book that sold 270,000 copies in the first month after its publication. Taking a scientific, rather than moralistic, approach, Kinsey, who became known as "the sex doctor," documented the full range of sexual experiences of thousands of Americans. He broke numerous taboos, discussing such topics as homosexuality and marital infidelity in the detached language of science.

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
What were the contradictions in postwar domesticity and middle-class morality?

Both studies confirmed that a sexual revolution, although a largely hidden one, had already begun to transform American society by the early 1950s. Kinsey estimated that 85 percent of men had had sex prior to marriage and that more than 25 percent of married women had had sex outside of marriage by the age of forty. These were shocking public admissions in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and "hotter than the Kinsey

The Kinsey Reports

Like the woman on the cover of this lighthearted 1953 book of photographs, many Americans reacted with surprise when Alfred Kinsey revealed the country's sexual habits. In his 1948 book about men and his 1953 book about women, Kinsey wrote about American sexual practices in the detached language of science. But it still made for salacious reading. Evangelical minister Billy Graham (p. 849) warned: "It is impossible to estimate the damage this book will do to the already deteriorated morals of America." Picture Research Consultants & Archives.

report" became a national figure of speech. Kinsey was criticized by statisticians — because his samples were not randomly selected — and condemned even more fervently by religious leaders, who charged him with encouraging promiscuity and adultery. But his research opened a national conversation with profound implications for the future. Even if Kinsey's numbers were off, he helped Americans learn to talk more openly about sex.

The Homophile Movement Among the most controversial of Kinsey's claims was that homosexuality was far more prevalent than most Americans believed. Although the American Psychiatric Association would officially define homosexuality as a mental illness in 1952, Kinsey's research found that 37 percent of men had engaged in some form of homosexual activity by early adulthood, as had 13 percent of women. Even more important, Kinsey claimed that 10 percent of American men were *exclusively* homosexual. These claims came as little surprise, but great encouragement, to a group of gay and lesbian activists who called themselves "homophiles." Organized primarily in the Mattachine Society (the first gay rights organization in the country, founded in 1951) and the Daughters of Bilitis (a lesbian organization founded in 1955), homophiles were a small but determined collection of activists who sought equal rights for gays and lesbians. "The lesbian is a woman endowed with all the attributes of any other woman," wrote the pioneer lesbian activist Del Martin in 1956. "The salvation of the lesbian lies in her acceptance of herself without guilt or anxiety."

Building on the urban gay and lesbian communities that had coalesced during World War II, homophiles sought to change American attitudes about same-sex love. They faced daunting obstacles, since same-sex sexual relations were illegal in every state and scorned, or feared, by most Americans. To combat prejudice and change the laws, homophile organizations cultivated a respectable, middle-class image. Members were encouraged to avoid bars and nightclubs, to dress in conservative shirts and ties (for men) and modest skirts and blouses (for women), and to seek out professional psychologists who would attest to their "normalcy." Only in the 1960s did homophiles begin to talk about the "homophile vote" and their "rights as citizens," laying the groundwork for the gay rights movement of the 1970s.

Media and Morality The homophile movement remained unknown to most Americans. But other challenges to traditional morality received national media attention, and the media themselves became a controversial source of these challenges. Concerned that excessive crime, violence, and sex in comic books were encouraging juvenile delinquency, the U.S. Senate held nationally televised hearings in 1954. The Senate's final report, written largely by the Tennessee Democrat Estes Kefauver, complained of the "scantily clad women" and "penchant for violent death" common in comic books aimed at teenagers. Kefauver's report forced the comics industry to tame its wildest practices but did little to slow the growing frankness about both sex and violence in the nation's printed media and films.

To see a longer excerpt from the Senate hearing on juvenile delinquency, along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History***.

A magazine entrepreneur from Chicago named Hugh Hefner played a leading role in that growing frankness. Hefner founded *Playboy* magazine in 1953, in which he created a countermorality to domesticity: a fictional world populated by "hip" bachelor men and sexually available women. Hefner's imagined bachelors condemned marriage and lived in sophisticated apartments filled with the latest stereo equipment and other consumer products. While domesticated fathers bought lawn mowers and patio furniture, Hefner's magazine encouraged men to spend money on clothing and jazz albums for themselves, and for the "scantily clad women" that filled its pages. Hefner and his numerous imitators became powerful purveyors of sex in the media. But Hefner was the exception that proved the rule: marriage, not swinging bachelorhood, remained the destination for the vast majority of men. Millions of men read *Playboy*, but few adopted its fantasy lifestyle.

A Suburban Nation

Prosperity — how much an economy produces, how much people earn — is more easily measured than is quality of life. During the 1950s, however, the American definition of the good life emerged with exceptional distinctness: a high value on consumption, a devotion to family and domesticity, and preference for suburban living. In this section, we consider the third dimension of that definition: suburbanization. What drove the nation to abandon its cities for the suburbs, and what social and political consequences did this shift have?

The Postwar Housing Boom

Migration to the suburbs had been going on for a hundred years, but never before on the scale that the country experienced after World War II. Within a decade,

farmland on the outskirts of cities filled up with tract housing and shopping malls. Entire counties that had once been rural — such as San Mateo, south of San Francisco, or Passaic and Bergen in New Jersey, west of Manhattan — went suburban. By 1960, one-third of Americans lived in suburbs. Home construction, having ground to a halt during the Great Depression, surged after the war. One-fourth of the country's entire housing stock in 1960 had not even existed a decade earlier.

William J. Levitt and the FHA Two unique postwar developments remade the national housing market and gave it a distinctly suburban shape. First, an innovative Long Island building contractor, William J. Levitt, revolutionized suburban housing by applying mass-production techniques and turning out new homes at a dizzying speed. Levitt's basic four-room house, complete with kitchen appliances, was priced at $7,990 when homes in the first Levittown went on sale in 1947 (about $76,000 today). Levitt did not need to advertise; word of mouth brought buyers flocking to his developments (all called Levittown) in New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Dozens of other developers were soon snapping up cheap farmland and building subdivisions around the country.

Even at $7,990, Levitt's homes would have been beyond the means of most young families had the traditional home-financing standard — a down payment of half the full price and ten years to pay off the balance — still prevailed. That is where the second postwar development came in. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Veterans Administration (VA) — that is, the federal government — brought the home mortgage market within the reach of a broader range of Americans than ever before. After the war, the FHA insured thirty-year mortgages with as little as 5 percent down and interest at 2 or 3 percent. The VA was even more generous, requiring only a token $1 down for qualified ex-GIs. FHA and VA mortgages best explain why, after hovering around 45 percent for the previous half century, home ownership jumped to 60 percent by 1960.

What purchasers of suburban houses got, in addition to a good deal, were homogeneous communities. The developments contained few elderly people or unmarried adults. Even the trees were young. Levitt's company enforced regulations about maintaining lawns and not hanging out laundry on the weekends. Then there was the matter of race. Levitt's houses came with restrictive covenants prohibiting occupancy "by members of other than the Caucasian Race." (Restrictive covenants often applied to Jews and, in California, Asian Americans as well.) Levittowns were hardly alone. Suburban developments from coast to coast exhibited the same age, class, and racial homogeneity (Thinking Like a Historian, p. 858).

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
Place postwar suburbanization in the context of the growing size and influence of the federal government. How did the national government encourage suburbanization?

In ***Shelley v. Kraemer*** (1948), the Supreme Court outlawed restrictive covenants, but racial discrimination in housing changed little. The practice persisted long after *Shelley*, because the FHA and VA continued the policy of redlining: refusing mortgages to African Americans and members of other minority groups seeking to buy in white neighborhoods. Indeed, no federal law — or even Court decisions like *Shelley* — actually prohibited racial discrimination in housing until Congress passed the Fair Housing Act in 1968.

Interstate Highways Without automobiles, suburban growth on such a massive scale would have been impossible. Planners laid out subdivisions on the assumption that everybody would drive. And they did — to get to work, to take the children to Little League, to shop. With gas plentiful and cheap (15 cents a gallon), no one cared about the fuel efficiency of their V-8 engines or seemed to mind the elaborate tail fins and chrome that weighed down their cars. In 1945, Americans owned twenty-five million cars; by 1965, just two decades later, the number had tripled to seventy-five million (America Compared, p. 860). American oil consumption followed course, tripling as well between 1949 and 1972.

More cars required more highways, and the federal government obliged. In 1956, in a move that drastically altered America's landscape and driving habits, the **National Interstate and Defense Highways Act** authorized $26 billion over a ten-year period for the construction of a nationally integrated highway system — 42,500 miles (Map 26.1). Cast as a Cold War necessity because broad highways made evacuating crowded cities easier in the event of a nuclear attack, the law changed American cities forever. An enormous public works program surpassing anything undertaken during the New Deal, and enthusiastically endorsed by the Republican president, Dwight Eisenhower, federal highways made possible the massive suburbanization of the nation in the 1960s. Interstate highways rerouted traffic away from small towns, bypassed well-traveled main roads such as the cross-country Route 66, and cut wide swaths through old neighborhoods in the cities.

The Suburban Landscape of Cold War America

Between the end of World War II and the 1980s, Americans built and moved into suburban homes in an unprecedented wave of construction and migration that changed the nation forever. New home loan rules, and government backing under the Federal Housing Administration and Veterans Administration, made new suburban houses cheaper and brought home ownership within reach of a larger number of Americans than ever before. Commentators cheered these developments as a boon to ordinary citizens, but by the 1960s a generation of urban critics, led by journalist Jane Jacobs, had begun to find fault with the nation's suburban obsession. The following documents provide the historian with evidence of how these new suburban communities arose and how they began to transform American culture.

1. "Peacetime Cornucopia," *The New Yorker*, October 6, 1945.

2. *Life* magazine, "A *Life* Round Table on Housing," January 31, 1949.

The most aggressive member of *Life's* Round Table, whether as builder or debater, was William J. Levitt, president of Levitt and Sons, Inc. of Manhasset, NY. He feels that he has started a revolution, the essence of which is size. Builders in his estimation are a poor and puny lot, too small to put pressure on materials manufacturers or the local czars of the building codes or the bankers or labor. A builder ought to be a manufacturer, he said, and to this end must be big. He himself is a nonunion operator.

The Levitt prescription for cheaper houses may be summarized as follows: 1) take infinite pains with infinite details; 2) be aggressive; 3) be big enough to throw your weight around; 4) buy at wholesale; and 5) build houses in concentrated developments where mass-production methods can be used on the site.

3. Site plan sketch for Park Forest, Illinois, 1946.

The Park Forest Historical Society.

4. William H. Whyte Jr., *The Organization Man*, 1956. *Whyte, a prominent journalist, wrote about the decline of individualism and the rise of a national class of interchangeable white-collar workers.*

And is this not the whole drift of our society? We are not interchangeable in the sense of being people without differences, but in the externals of existence we are united by a culture increasingly national. And this is part of the momentum of mobility. The more people move about, the more similar American environments become, and the more similar they become, the easier it is to move about.

More and more, the young couples who move do so only physically. With each transfer the décor, the architecture, the faces, and the names may change; the people, the conversation, and the values do not — and sometimes the décor and architecture don't either. . . .

Suburban residents like to maintain that their suburbia not only looks classless but is classless. That is, they are apt to add on second thought, there are no extremes, and if the place isn't exactly without class, it is at least a one-class society — identified as the middle or upper middle, according to the inclination of the residents. "We are all," they say, "in the same boat."

5. Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1961. *A classic celebration of vibrant urban neighborhoods by a New York writer and architectural critic.*

Although it is hard to believe, while looking at dull gray areas, or at housing projects or at civic centers, the fact is that big cities are natural generators of diversity and prolific incubators of new enterprises and ideas of all kinds. . . .

This is because city populations are large enough to support wide ranges of variety and choice in these things. And again we find that bigness has all the advantages in smaller settlements. Towns and suburbs, for instance, are natural homes for huge supermarkets and for little else in the way of groceries, for standard movie houses or drive-ins and for little else in the way of theater. There are simply not enough people to support further variety, although there may be people (too few of them) who would draw upon it were it there. Cities, however, are the natural homes of supermarkets and standard movie houses plus delicatessens, Viennese bakeries, foreign groceries, art movies, and so on. . . .

The diversity, of whatever kind, that is generated by cities rests on the fact that in cities so many people are so close together, and among them contain so many different tastes, skills, needs, supplies, and bees in their bonnets.

6. Herbert J. Gans, *The Levittowners*, 1967. *One of the first sociological studies of the new postwar suburbs and their residents.*

The strengths and weakness of Levittown are those of many American communities, and the Levittowners closely resemble other young middle class Americans. They are not America, for they are not a numerical majority of the population, but they represent the major constituency of the latest and more powerful economic and political institutions in American society — the favored customers and voters whom these seek to attract and satisfy. . . .

Although they are citizens of a national polity and their lives are shaped by national economic, social, and political forces, Levittowners deceive themselves into thinking that the community, or rather the home, is the single most important unit of their lives. . . .

In viewing their homes as the center of life, Levitowners are still using a societal model that fit the rural America of self-sufficient farmers and the feudal Europe of self-isolating extended families.

Sources: (2) *Life*, January 31, 1949, 74; (4) William H. Whyte Jr., *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956), 276, 299; (5) Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Westminster, MD: Vintage, 1992), 145–147; (6) Herbert J. Gans, *The Levittowners* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 417–418.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. Compare sources 1, 4, and 6. How do they reinforce or contradict one another?
2. In source 4, what does Whyte mean by "classless"? Why would suburbanites wish to think of their communities as not beset by class inequality? Were they right in this point of view?
3. Do you see evidence in source 2 of the ways the postwar housing market was transformed? How does Levitt's vision of the home-building industry relate to other kinds of American industries?
4. In source 5, what advantages does Jacobs see in large cities over suburbs? Can you interpret source 3 from the perspective that Jacobs outlines in source 5?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Write an essay in which you use the knowledge you've gained from this chapter and the documents provided above to explore postwar suburbanization. What did it mean to the American economy? To ordinary Americans? What flaws did its critics see?

Hanoch Bartov: Everyone Has a Car

One of Israel's foremost writers and journalists, Hanoch Bartov spent two years in the United States working as a correspondent for the newspaper *Lamerchav*. As a newcomer to Los Angeles in the early 1960s, he was both fascinated and appalled by Americans' love affair with the automobile.

Our immediate decision to buy a car sprang from healthy instincts. Only later did I learn from bitter experience that in California, death was preferable to living without one. Neither the views from the plane nor the weird excursion that first evening hinted at what I would go through that first week.

Very simple — the nearest supermarket was about half a kilometer south of our apartment, the regional primary school two kilometers east, and my son's kindergarten even farther away. A trip to the post office — an undertaking, to the bank — an ordeal, to work — an impossibility. . . .

There are no tramways. No one thought of a subway. Railroads — not now and not in the future. Why? Because everyone has a car. A man invited me to his house, saying, "We are neighbors, within ten minutes of each other." After walking for an hour and a half I realized what he meant — "ten minute drive within the speed limit." Simply put, he never thought I might interpret his remark to refer to the walking distance. The moment a baby sees the light of day in Los Angeles, a car is registered in his name in Detroit. . . .

At first perhaps people relished the freedom and independence a car provided. You get in, sit down, and grab the steering wheel, your mobility exceeding that of any other generation. No wonder people refuse to live downtown, where they can hear their neighbors, smell their cooking, and suffer frayed nerves as trains pass by bedroom windows. Instead, they get a piece of the desert, far from town, at half price, drag a water hose, grow grass, flowers, and trees, and build their dream house.

The result? A widely scattered city, its houses far apart, its streets stretched in all directions. Olympic Boulevard from west to east, forty kilometers. Sepulveda Boulevard, from Long Beach in the south to the edge of the desert, forty kilometers. Altogether covering 1,200 square kilometers. As of now.

Source: "Measures of Affluence" by Hanoch Bartov (1963) in Chapter 16 from *The Outer World*, edited by Oscar Handlin and Lilian Handlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

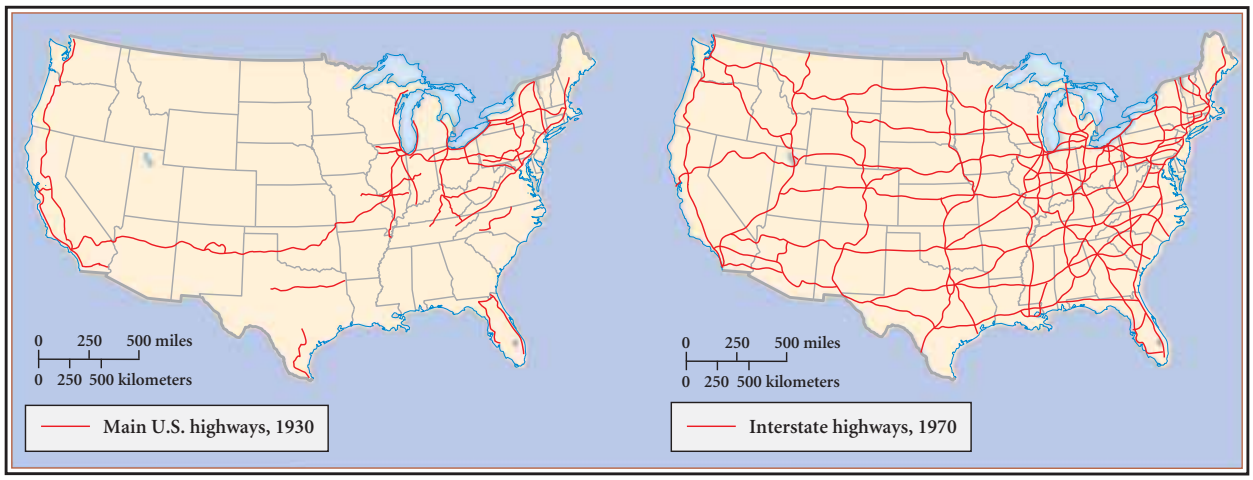
QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. From Bartov's observations, what are the pluses and minuses of America's car culture? In what ways was the automobile changing American society?
2. Why did Bartov find that owning a car was necessary, especially in southern California?
3. How would suburbanization have contributed to the construction of new highways in the United States? How would highway construction have facilitated suburbanization?

Fast Food and Shopping Malls Americans did not simply fill their new suburban homes with the latest appliances and gadgets; they also pioneered entirely new forms of consumption. Through World War II, downtowns had remained the center of retail sales and restaurant dining with their grand department stores, elegant eateries, and low-cost diners. As suburbanites abandoned big-city centers in the 1950s, ambitious entrepreneurs invented two new commercial forms that would profoundly shape the rest of the century: the shopping mall and the fast-food restaurant.

By the late 1950s, the suburban shopping center had become as much a part of the American landscape as the Levittowns and their imitators. A major developer of shopping malls in the Northeast called them "crystallization points for suburbia's community life." He romanticized the new structures as "today's village green," where "the fountain in the mall has replaced the downtown department clock as the gathering place for young and old alike." Romanticism aside, suburban shopping centers worked perfectly in the world of suburban consumption; they brought "the market to the people instead of people to the market," commented the *New York Times*. In 1939, the suburban share of total metropolitan retail trade in the United States was a paltry 4 percent. By 1961, it was an astonishing 60 percent in the nation's ten largest metropolitan regions.

No one was more influential in creating suburban patterns of consumption than a Chicago-born son of Czech immigrants named Ray Kroc. A former jazz



MAP 26.1

Connecting the Nation: The Interstate Highway System, 1930 and 1970

The 1956 National Interstate and Defense Highways Act paved the way for an extensive network of federal highways throughout the nation. The act not only pleased American drivers and enhanced their love affair with the automobile but also benefitted the petroleum, construction, trucking, real estate, and tourist industries. The new highway system promoted the nation's economic integration, facilitated the growth of suburbs, and contributed to the erosion of America's distinct regional identities.

musician and traveling salesman, Kroc found his calling in 1954 when he acquired a single franchise of the little-known McDonald's Restaurant, based in San Bernardino, California. In 1956, Kroc invested in twelve more franchises and by 1958 owned seventy-nine. Three years later, Kroc bought the company from the McDonald brothers and proceeded to turn it into the largest chain of restaurants in the world. Based on inexpensive, quickly served hamburgers that hungry families could eat in the restaurant, in their cars, or at home, Kroc's vision transformed the way Americans consumed food. "Drive-in" or "fast" food became a

Fast Food, 1949

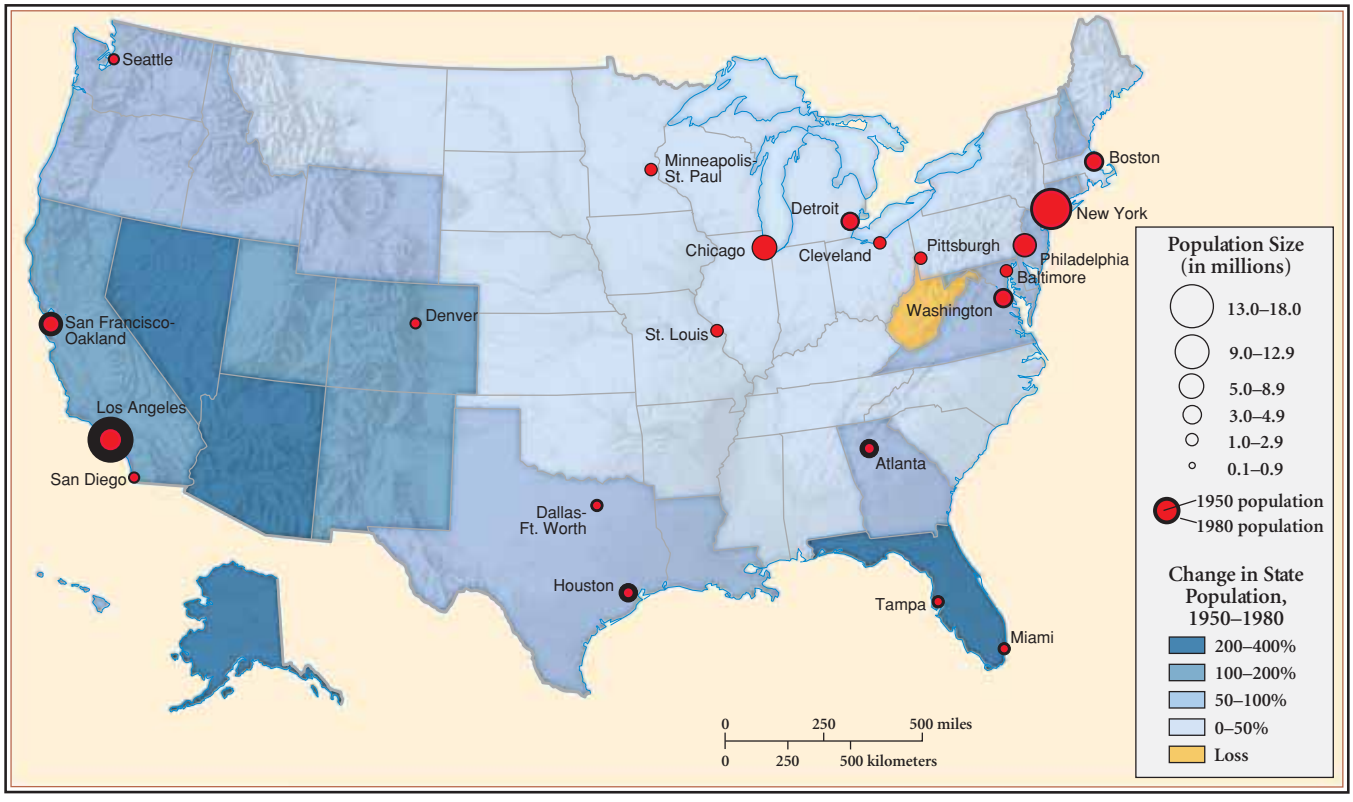
The sign atop this suburban Los Angeles restaurant says it all. Suburbanization laid the foundation for a unique post-war phenomenon that would forever change American life: the rise of fast food. Cheap, convenient, and "fast," the food served in the new restaurants, modeled after the industry's pioneer, McDonald's, was not necessarily nutritious, but its chief advantage was portability. Loomis Dean/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images.

staple of the American diet in the subsequent decades. By the year 2000, fast food was a $100 billion industry, and more children recognized Ronald McDonald, the clown in McDonald's television commercials, than Santa Claus.

Rise of the Sunbelt

Suburban living, although a nationwide phenomenon, was most at home in the **Sunbelt** (the southern and southwestern states), where taxes were low, the climate was mild, and open space allowed for sprawling subdivisions (Map 26.2). Florida added 3.5 million people, many of them retired, between 1940 and 1970. Texas profited from expanding petrochemical and defense industries. Most dramatic was California's growth, spurred especially by the state's booming defense-related aircraft and electronics industries. By 1970, California contained one-tenth of the nation's population and surpassed New York as the most populous state. At the end of the century, California's economy was among the top ten largest in the world — among nations.

A distinctive feature of Sunbelt suburbanization was its close relationship to the military-industrial complex. Building on World War II expansion, military bases proliferated in the South and Southwest in the postwar decades, especially in Florida, Texas, and California. In some instances, entire metropolitan regions — such as San Diego County, California, and the Houston area in Texas — expanded in tandem with nearby military outposts. Moreover, the aerospace, defense, and electronics industries were based largely in Sunbelt metropolitan regions. With government contracts fueling the economy and military bases providing thousands of jobs, Sunbelt politicians had every



MAP 26.2

Shifting Population Patterns, 1950–1980

This map shows the two major, somewhat overlapping, patterns of population movement between 1950 and 1980. Most striking is the rapid growth of the Sunbelt states. All the states experiencing increases of over 100 percent in that period are in the Southwest, plus Florida. The second pattern involves the growth of metropolitan areas, defined as a central city or urban area and its suburbs. The central cities were themselves mostly not growing, however. The metropolitan growth shown in this map was accounted for by the expanding suburbs. And because Sunbelt growth was primarily suburban growth, that's where we see the most rapid metropolitan growth, with Los Angeles the clear leader.

incentive to support vigorous defense spending by the federal government.

Sunbelt suburbanization was best exemplified by Orange County, California. Southwest of Los Angeles, Orange County was until the 1940s mostly just that — a land of oranges, groves of them. But during World War II, boosters attracted new bases and training facilities for the marines, navy, and air force (at the time the army air corps). Cold War militarization and the Korean War kept those bases humming, and Hughes Aircraft, Ford Aeronautics, and other defense-related manufacturers built new plants in the sunny, sprawling groves. So did subdivision developers, who built so many new homes that the population of the county jumped from 130,760 in 1940 to 703,925 in 1960. Casting his eye on all this development in the early 1950s, an entrepreneurial filmmaker and cartoonist named Walt Disney chose Anaheim in Orange County as the place for a massive new amusement park. Disneyland was to the new generation of suburbanites what Coney Island had been to an earlier generation of urbanites.

Two Societies: Urban and Suburban

While middle-class whites flocked to the suburbs, an opposite stream of working-class migrants, many of them southern African Americans, moved into the cities. In the 1950s, the nation's twelve largest cities lost 3.6 million whites while gaining 4.5 million nonwhites. These urban newcomers inherited a declining economy and a decaying infrastructure. To those enjoying prosperity, the "other America," as the social critic Michael Harrington called it, remained largely invisible. In 1968, however, a report by the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (informally known as the **Kerner Commission** and formed by the president to investigate the causes of the 1967 urban riots), delivered to President Lyndon Johnson, warned that "our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white, separate and unequal."

American cities had long been the home of poverty, slum housing, and the hardships and cultural dislocations brought on by immigration from overseas or migration from rural areas. But postwar American cities, especially those in the industrial Northeast and Midwest, experienced these problems with new intensity. By the 1950s, the manufacturing sector was contracting, and mechanization was eliminating thousands upon thousands of unskilled and semiskilled jobs, the kind traditionally taken up by new urban residents. The disappearing jobs were the ones "in which [African Americans] are disproportionately concentrated," noted the civil rights activist Bayard Rustin.

The Urban Crisis The intensification of poverty, the deterioration of older housing stock, and the persistence of racial segregation produced what many at the time called the urban crisis. Unwelcome in the shiny new suburbs built by men such as William J. Levitt, African Americans found low-paying jobs in the city and lived in aging, slumlike apartment buildings. Despite a thriving black middle class — indeed, larger than ever before — for those without resources, upward mobility remained elusive. Racism in institutional forms frustrated African Americans at every turn: housing restrictions, increasingly segregated schools, and an urban infrastructure that stood underfunded and decaying as whites left for the suburbs.

Housing and job discrimination were compounded by the frenzy of urban renewal that hit black neighborhoods in the 1950s and early 1960s. Seeking to revitalize declining city centers, politicians and real estate developers proposed razing blighted neighborhoods to make way for modern construction projects that would appeal to the fleeing middle class. In Boston, almost one-third of the old city — including the historic West End, a long-established Italian neighborhood — was demolished to make way for a new highway, high-rise housing, and government and commercial buildings. In San Francisco, some 4,000 residents of the Western Addition, a predominantly black neighborhood, lost out to an urban renewal program that built luxury housing, a shopping center, and an express boulevard. Between 1949 and 1967, urban renewal nationwide demolished almost 400,000 buildings and displaced 1.4 million people.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
In what sense was the United States becoming, in the language of the Kerner Commission report, "two societies"?

The urban experts believed they knew what to do with the dislocated: relocate them to federally funded housing projects, an outgrowth of New Deal housing policy, now much expanded. However well intended, these grim projects too often took the form of cheap high-rises that isolated their inhabitants from surrounding neighborhoods. The impact was felt especially strongly among African Americans, who often found that public housing increased racial segregation and concentrated the poor. The Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago, with twenty-eight buildings of sixteen stories each, housed 20,000 residents, almost all of them black. Despite the planners' wish to build

Urban Crisis

This Pittsburgh neighborhood, photographed in 1955, typified what many came to call the "urban crisis" of the 1950s and 1960s. As suburbanization drew middle-class residents, investment, and jobs away from the core of older cities, those cities began to rot from the inside. Urban neglect left many working-class neighborhoods, increasingly occupied by the nation's poor, with few jobs, little industry, and dilapidated housing. W. Eugene Smith/Black Star/Stockphoto.com.

decent affordable apartments, the huge complex became a notorious breeding ground for crime and hopelessness.

Urban Immigrants Despite the evident urban crisis, cities continued to attract immigrants from abroad. Since the passage of the National Origins Act of 1924 (Chapter 22), U.S. immigration policy had aimed mainly at keeping foreigners out. But World War II and the Cold War began slowly to change American policy. The Displaced Persons Act of 1948 permitted the entry of approximately 415,000 Europeans, many of them Jewish refugees. In a gesture to an important war ally, the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943. More far-reaching was the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act, which ended the exclusion of Japanese, Koreans, and Southeast Asians.

After the national-origins quota system went into effect in 1924, Mexico replaced Eastern and Southern Europe as the nation's labor reservoir. During World War II, the federal government introduced the Bracero Program to ease wartime labor shortages (Chapter 24) and then revived it in 1951, during the Korean War. The federal government's ability to force workers to return to Mexico, however, was strictly limited. The Mexican immigrant population continued to grow, and by the time the Bracero Program ended in 1964, many of that group — an estimated 350,000 — had settled permanently in the United States. Braceros were joined by other Mexicans from small towns and villages, who immigrated to the United States to escape poverty or to earn money to return home and purchase land for farming.

As generations of immigrants had before them, Mexicans gravitated to major cities. Mostly, they settled in Los Angeles, Long Beach, San Jose, El Paso, and other southwestern cities. But many also went north, augmenting well-established Mexican American communities in Chicago, Detroit, Kansas City, and Denver. Although still important to American agriculture, Mexican Americans were employed in substantial numbers as industrial and service workers by 1960.

Another major group of Spanish-speaking migrants came from Puerto Rico. American citizens since 1917, Puerto Ricans enjoyed an unrestricted right to move to the mainland United States. Migration increased dramatically after World War II, when mechanization of the island's sugarcane agriculture left many Puerto Ricans jobless. Airlines began to offer cheap direct flights between San Juan and New York City. With the fare at about $50 (two weeks' wages), Puerto Ricans became America's first immigrants to arrive en masse by air. Most Puerto Ricans went to New York, where they settled first in East ("Spanish") Harlem and then scattered in neighborhoods across the city's five boroughs. This massive migration, which increased the Puerto Rican population to 613,000 by 1960, transformed the ethnic composition of the city. More Puerto Ricans now lived in New York City than in San Juan.

Cuban refugees constituted the third-largest group of Spanish-speaking immigrants. In the six years after Fidel Castro's seizure of power in 1959 (Chapter 25), an

estimated 180,000 people fled Cuba for the United States. The Cuban refugee community grew so quickly that it turned Miami into a cosmopolitan, bilingual city almost overnight. Unlike other urban migrants, Miami's Cubans quickly prospered, in large part because they had arrived with money and middle-class skills.

Spanish-speaking immigrants — whether Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban — created huge barrios in major American cities, where bilingualism flourished, the Catholic Church shaped religious life, and families sought to join the economic mainstream. Though distinct from one another, these Spanish-speaking communities remained largely segregated from white, or Anglo, neighborhoods and suburbs as well as from African American districts.

SUMMARY

We have explored how, at the same time it became mired in the Cold War, the United States entered an unparalleled era of prosperity in which a new middle class came into being. Indeed, the Cold War was one of the engines of prosperity. The postwar economy was marked by the dominance of big corporations and defense spending.

After years of depression and war-induced insecurity, Americans turned inward toward religion, home, and family. Postwar couples married young, had several children, and — if they were white and middle class — raised their children in a climate of suburban comfort and consumerism. The profamily orientation of the 1950s celebrated traditional gender roles, even though millions of women entered the workforce in those years. Not everyone, however, shared in the postwar prosperity. Postwar cities increasingly became places of last resort for the nation's poor. Black migrants, unlike earlier immigrants, encountered an urban economy that had little use for them. Without opportunity, and faced with pervasive racism, many of them were on their way to becoming an American underclass, even as sparkling new suburbs emerged outside cities to house the new middle class. Many of the smoldering contradictions of the postwar period — Cold War anxiety in the midst of suburban domesticity, tensions in women's lives, economic and racial inequality — helped spur the protest movements of the 1960s.

CHAPTER REVIEW

MAKE IT STICK Go to **LearningCurve** to retain what you've read.

TERMS TO KNOW

Identify and explain the significance of each term below.

Key Concepts and Events

kitchen debate (p. 838)
Bretton Woods (p. 840)
World Bank (p. 840)
International Monetary Fund (IMF) (p. 840)
military-industrial complex (p. 841)
Sputnik (p. 842)
National Defense Education Act (p. 842)
The Affluent Society (p. 843)
The Other America (p. 843)
Veterans Administration (p. 843)
collective bargaining (p. 844)
teenager (p. 847)
Beats (p. 849)
baby boom (p. 850)
Shelley v. Kraemer (p. 857)
National Interstate and Defense Highways Act (p. 857)
Sunbelt (p. 862)
Kerner Commission (p. 863)

Key People

Dwight D. Eisenhower (p. 841)
Miles Davis (p. 849)
Allen Ginsberg (p. 849)
Jack Kerouac (p. 849)
Billy Graham (p. 849)
Dr. Benjamin Spock (p. 851)
William J. Levitt (p. 857)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of the chapter's main ideas.

1. What factors led to the economic prosperity of the postwar era?
2. Why did the suburbs become so significant for Americans in the 1950s? How was suburban life related to middle-class consumption?
3. Who were the people left out of the postwar boom? How do you account for their exclusion?
4. **THEMATIC UNDERSTANDING** Review the events listed under "America in the World" and "Work, Exchange, and Technology" for the period 1930–1945 on the thematic timeline on page 671 and for 1945–1960 on page 803. Explain how the United States began the 1930s in deep depression with unemployment near 25 percent and ended the 1950s with an expanded middle class and a consumption-driven economy.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Recognize the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters by answering these questions.

1. **ACROSS TIME AND PLACE** Think back to earlier chapters that discussed gender roles, marriage, and American family life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Chapters 18, 19, 22, 24). How had the American family changed by the 1950s? What aspects of family life remained similar across many decades? For example, how did the working-class immigrant family of the 1890s differ from the middle-class family of the 1950s?
2. **VISUAL EVIDENCE** Examine the Motorola TV advertisement featured on page 847. What different types of appeals does this advertisement make, and what do they suggest about family and gender roles in this period? How many distinct themes from the chapter can you explain using this image?

MORE TO EXPLORE

Start here to learn more about the events discussed in this chapter.

Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (2003). An important interpretation of the United States as a consumer society.

James Gilbert, *Men in the Middle: Searching for Masculinity in the 1950s* (2005). An engaging account of cultural figures from the 1950s, including Billy Graham and John Wayne.

David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (1993). An engaging and accessible introduction to postwar American society.

Karal Ann Marling, *As Seen on TV* (1996). An insightful explanation of the impact of television.

Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound* (1988). The classic introduction to postwar family life.

Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (1996). The best account of the urban crisis.

TIMELINE

Ask yourself why this chapter begins and ends with these dates and then identify the links among related events.

1944	• Bretton Woods economic conference • World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) founded • GI Bill (Servicemen's Readjustment Act)
1946	• First edition of Dr. Spock's *Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care*
1947	• First Levittown built
1948	• Beginning of network television • *Shelley v. Kraemer* • Alfred Kinsey's *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* published
1949	• Billy Graham revival in Los Angeles
1951	• Bracero Program revived • Mattachine Society founded
1952	• McCarran-Walter Act
1953	• Kinsey's *Sexual Behavior of the Human Female* published
1954	• Ray Kroc buys the first McDonald's franchise
1955	• Daughters of Bilitis founded
1956	• National Interstate and Defense Highways Act • Elvis Presley's breakthrough records • Allen Ginsberg's poem "Howl" published
1957	• Peak of postwar baby boom
1961	• Eisenhower warns nation against military-industrial complex
1965	• *Griswold v. Connecticut*

KEY TURNING POINTS: What were the major turning points in the creation of postwar suburbia?

CHAPTER 27

Walking into Freedom Land: The Civil Rights Movement 1941–1973

IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA

How did the civil rights movement evolve over time, and how did competing ideas and political alliances affect its growth and that of other social movements?

In June 1945, as World War II was ending, Democratic senator James O. Eastland of Mississippi stood on the floor of the U.S. Senate and brashly told his colleagues that "the Negro race is an inferior race." Raising his arms, his tie askew from vigorous gesturing, Eastland ridiculed black troops. "The Negro soldier was an utter and dismal failure in combat," he said.

Eastland's assertions were untrue. Black soldiers had served honorably; many won medals for bravery in combat. All-black units, such as the 761st "Black Panther" Tank Battalion and the famous Tuskegee Airmen, were widely praised by military commanders. But segregationists like Eastland were a nearly unassailable force in Congress, able to block civil rights legislation and shape national opinion.

In the 1940s, two generations after W. E. B. Du Bois famously wrote that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line," few white Americans believed wholeheartedly in racial equality. Racial segregation remained entrenched across the country. Much of the Deep South, like Eastland's Mississippi, was a "closed society": black people had no political rights and lived on the margins of white society, impoverished and exploited. Northern cities proved more hospitable to African Americans, but schools, neighborhoods, and many businesses remained segregated and unequal in the North as well.

Across the nation, however, winds of change were gathering. Between World War II and the 1970s, slowly at first, and then with greater urgency in the 1960s, the civil rights movement swept aside systematic racial segregation. It could not sweep away racial inequality completely, but the movement constituted a "second Reconstruction" in which African American activism reshaped the nation's laws and practices. Civil rights was the paradigmatic social movement of the twentieth century. Its model of nonviolent protest and its calls for self-determination inspired the New Left, feminism, the Chicano movement, the gay rights movement, the American Indian movement, and many others.

The black-led civil rights movement, joined at key moments by Latinos, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, redefined *liberalism*. In the 1930s, New Deal liberalism had established a welfare state to protect citizens from economic hardship. The civil rights movement forged a new **rights liberalism**: the notion that individuals require state protection from discrimination. This version of liberalism focused on identities—such as race or sex—rather than general social welfare, and as such would prove to be both a necessary expansion of the nation's ideals and a divisive force that produced political backlash. Indeed, the quest for racial justice would contribute to a crisis of liberalism itself.

The March from Selma to Montgomery, 1965 Leading a throng of 25,000 marchers, Martin Luther King Jr. holds the hand of his wife, Coretta Scott King, as they enter downtown Montgomery, Alabama, at the end of the Selma to Montgomery march. Bob Adelman/Magnum Photos, Inc.

The Emerging Civil Rights Struggle, 1941–1957

As it took shape during World War II and the early Cold War, the battle against racial injustice proceeded along two tracks: at the grass roots and in governing institutions — federal courts, state legislatures, and ultimately the U.S. Congress. Labor unions, churches, and protest organizations such as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) inspired hundreds of thousands of ordinary citizens to join the movement. But grassroots struggle was not African Americans' only weapon. They also had the Bill of Rights and the Reconstruction amendments to the Constitution. Civil rights lived in those documents — especially in the Fourteenth Amendment, which guaranteed equal protection under the law to all U.S. citizens, and in the Fifteenth, which guaranteed the right to vote regardless of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude" — but had been ignored or violated for nearly a century. The task was to restore the Constitution's legal force. Neither track — grassroots or legal/legislative — was entirely independent of the other. Together, they were the foundation of the fight for racial equality in the postwar decades.

Life Under Jim Crow

Racial segregation and economic exploitation defined the lives of the majority of African Americans in the postwar decades. Numbering 15 million in 1950, African Americans were approximately 10 percent of the U.S. population. In the South, however, they constituted between 30 and 50 percent of the population of several states, such as South Carolina and Mississippi. Segregation, commonly known as **Jim Crow** (Chapter 18), prevailed in every aspect of life in the southern states, where two-thirds of all African Americans lived in 1950. African Americans could not eat in restaurants patronized by whites or use the same waiting rooms at bus stations. All forms of public transportation were rigidly segregated by custom or by law. Public parks and libraries were segregated. Even drinking fountains were labeled "White" and "Colored."

This system of segregation underlay economic and political structures that further marginalized and disempowered black citizens. Virtually no African

Segregation in Mobile, 1956

As the law of the land in most southern states, racial segregation (known as Jim Crow) required the complete separation of blacks and whites in most public spaces. The "white only" drinking fountain shown in this 1956 photograph in Mobile, Alabama, was typical. Everything from waiting areas to libraries, public parks, schools, restrooms, and even cola vending machines was subject to strict racial segregation. Gordon Parks, courtesy of the Gordon Parks Foundation.

American could work for city or state government, and the best jobs in the private sector were reserved for whites. Black workers labored "in the back," cleaning, cooking, stocking shelves, and loading trucks for the lowest wages. Rural African Americans labored in a sharecropping system that kept them stuck in poverty, often prevented them from obtaining an education, and offered virtually no avenue of escape. Politically, less than 20 percent of eligible black voters were allowed to vote, the result of poll taxes, literacy tests, intimidation, fraud, and the "white primary" (elections in which only whites could vote). This near-total disenfranchisement gave whites power disproportionate to their numbers — black people were one-third of the residents of Mississippi, South Carolina, and Georgia but had virtually no political voice in those states.

In the North, racial segregation in everyday life was less acute but equally tangible. Northern segregation took the form of a spatial system in which whites increasingly lived in suburbs or on the outskirts of cities, while African Americans were concentrated in declining downtown neighborhoods. The result was what many called ghettos: all-black districts characterized by high rents, low wages, and inadequate city services. Employment discrimination and lack of adequate training left many African Americans without any means of support. Few jobs other than the most menial were open to African Americans; journalists, accountants, engineers, and other highly educated men from all-black colleges and universities often labored as railroad porters or cooks because jobs commensurate with their skills remained for whites only. These conditions produced a self-perpetuating cycle that kept far too many black citizens trapped on the social margins.

To be certain, African Americans found greater freedom in the North and West than in the South. They could vote, participate in politics, and, at least after the early 1960s, enjoy equal access to public accommodations. But we err in thinking that racial segregation was only a southern problem or that poverty and racial discrimination were not also deeply entrenched in the North and West. In northern cities such as Detroit, Chicago, and Philadelphia, for instance, white home owners in the 1950s used various tactics — from police harassment to thrown bricks, burning crosses, bombs, and mob violence — to keep African Americans from living near them. Moreover, as we saw in Chapter 26, Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and bank redlining excluded African American home buyers from the all-white suburbs emerging around major cities. Racial segregation was a national, not regional, problem.

Origins of the Civil Rights Movement

Since racial discrimination had been part of American life for hundreds of years, why did the civil rights movement arise when it did? After all, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), founded in 1909, had begun challenging racial segregation in a series of court cases in the 1930s. And other organizations, such as Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association in the 1920s, had attracted significant popular support. These precedents were important, but several factors came together in the middle of the twentieth century to make a broad movement possible.

An important influence was World War II. "The Jewish people and the Negro people both know the meaning of Nordic supremacy," wrote the African American poet Langston Hughes in 1945. In the war against fascism, the Allies sought to discredit racist Nazi ideology. Committed to fighting racism abroad, Americans increasingly condemned racism at home. The Cold War placed added pressure on U.S. officials. "More and more we are learning how closely our democracy is under observation," President Harry S. Truman commented in 1947. To inspire other nations in the global standoff with the Soviet Union, Truman explained, "we must correct the remaining imperfections in our practice of democracy."

Among the most consequential factors was the growth of the urban black middle class. Historically small, the black middle class experienced robust growth after World War II. Its ranks produced most of the civil rights leaders: ministers, teachers, trade unionists, attorneys, and other professionals. Churches, for centuries a sanctuary for black Americans, were especially important. Moreover, in the 1960s African American college students — part of the largest expansion of college enrollment in U.S. history — joined the movement, adding new energy and fresh ideas (Table 27.1). With access to education, media, and institutions, this new middle class had more resources than ever before. Less dependent on white patronage, and therefore less vulnerable to white retaliation, middle-class African Americans were in a position to lead a movement for change.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
How did the growth of the black middle class assist the civil rights movement?

Still other influences assisted the movement. White labor leaders were generally more equality-minded than the rank and file, but the United Auto Workers, the United Steelworkers, and the Communications Workers of America, among many other trade unions,

TABLE 27.1

African American College Enrollment

Year	Number of African Americans Enrolled (rounded to nearest thousand)
1940	60,000
1950	110,000
1960	185,000
1970	430,000
1980	1.4 million
1990	3.6 million

were reliable allies at the national level. The new medium of television, too, played a crucial role. When television networks covered early desegregation struggles, such as the 1957 integration of Little Rock High School, Americans across the country saw the violence of white supremacy firsthand. None of these factors alone was decisive. None ensured an easy path. The civil rights movement faced enormous resistance and required dauntless courage and sacrifice from thousands upon thousands of activists for more than three decades. Ultimately, however, the movement changed the nation for the better and improved the lives of millions of Americans.

World War II: The Beginnings

During the war fought "to make the world safe for democracy," the United States was far from ready to extend full equality to its own black citizens. Black workers faced discrimination in wartime employment, and the more than one million black troops who served in World War II were placed in segregated units commanded by whites. Both at home and abroad, World War II "immeasurably magnified the Negro's awareness of the disparity between the American profession

Postwar Desegregation

Picketers outside the July 1948 Democratic National Convention demand that the party include equal rights and anti–Jim Crow planks in its official platform and desegregate the armed services. Leading the pickets is A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Randolph headed the March on Washington Movement that pressured President Roosevelt to desegregate defense employment during World War II, and he led the committee that convinced President Truman to desegregate the armed forces in 1948. © Bettmann/Corbis.

and practice of democracy," NAACP president Walter White observed.

Executive Order 8802 On the home front, activists pushed two strategies. First, A. Philip Randolph, whose **Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters** was the most prominent black trade union, called for a march on Washington in early 1941. Randolph planned to bring 100,000 protesters to the nation's capital if African Americans were not given equal opportunity in war jobs—then just beginning to expand with President Franklin Roosevelt's pledge to supply the Allies with materiel. To avoid a divisive protest, FDR issued Executive Order 8802 in June of that year, prohibiting racial discrimination in defense industries, and Randolph agreed to cancel the march. The resulting Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC) had few enforcement powers, but it set an important precedent: federal action. Randolph's efforts showed that white leaders and institutions could be swayed by concerted African American action. It would be a critical lesson for the movement.

The Double V Campaign A second strategy jumped from the pages of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, one of the foremost African American newspapers of the era. It was the brainchild of an ordinary cafeteria worker from Kansas. In a 1942 letter to the editor, James G. Thompson urged that "colored Americans adopt the double VV for a double victory"—victory over fascism abroad and victory over racism at home. Edgar Rouzeau, editor of the paper's New York office, agreed: "Black America must fight two wars and win in both." Instantly dubbed the Double V Campaign, Thompson's notion, with Rouzeau's backing, spread like wildfire through black communities across the country. African Americans would demonstrate their loyalty and citizenship by fighting the Axis powers. But they would also demand, peacefully but emphatically, the defeat of racism at home. "The suffering and privation may be great," Rouzeau told his readers, "but the rewards loom even greater."

The Double V efforts met considerable resistance. In war industries, factories periodically shut down in Chicago, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and other cities because of "hate strikes": the refusal of white workers to labor alongside black workers. Detroit was especially tense. Referring to the potential for racial strife, *Life* magazine reported in 1942 that "Detroit is Dynamite. . . . It can either blow up Hitler or blow up America." In 1943, it nearly did the latter. On a hot summer day, whites from the city's ethnic neighborhoods taunted and beat African Americans in a local park. Three days of rioting ensued in which thirty-four people were killed, twenty-five of them black. Federal troops were called in to restore order.

Wartime Workers

During World War II, hundreds of thousands of black migrants left the South, bound for large cities in the North and West. There, they found jobs such as the welding work done by these African American women at the Landers, Frary, and Clark plant in New Britain, Connecticut. Fighting employment discrimination during the war represented one of the earliest phases in the long struggle against racial segregation in the United States. Library of Congress.

Despite and because of such incidents, a generation was spurred into action during the war years. In New York City, employment discrimination on the city's transit lines prompted one of the first bus boycotts in the nation's history, led in 1941 by Harlem minister Adam Clayton Powell Jr. In Chicago, James Farmer and three other members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), a nonviolent peace organization, founded the **Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)** in 1942. FOR and CORE adopted the philosophy of nonviolent direct action espoused by Mahatma Gandhi of India. Another FOR member in New York, Bayard Rustin, was equally instrumental in promoting direct action; he led one of

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
Why did World War II play such a critical role in the civil rights movement?

the earliest challenges to southern segregation, the 1947 Journey of Reconciliation. Meanwhile, after the war, hundreds of thousands of African American veterans used the GI Bill to go to college, trade school, or graduate school, placing themselves in a position to push against segregation. At the war's end, Powell affirmed that "the black man . . . is ready to throw himself into the struggle to make the dream of America become flesh and blood, bread and butter."

Cold War Civil Rights

Demands for justice persisted in the early years of the Cold War. African American efforts were propelled by symbolic victories—as when Jackie Robinson broke through the color line in major league baseball by joining the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947—but the growing black vote in northern cities proved more decisive. During World War II, more than a million African Americans migrated to northern and western cities, where they joined the Democratic Party of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal (Map 27.1). This newfound political leverage awakened northern liberals, many of whom became allies of civil rights advocates. Ultimately, the Cold War produced mixed results, as the nation's commitment to anticommunism opened some avenues for civil rights while closing others.

Civil Rights and the New Deal Coalition

African American leaders were uncertain what to expect from President Truman, inheritor of the New Deal coalition but not opposed to using racist language himself.

MAP 27.1
Internal Migrations

The migration of African Americans from the South to other regions of the country produced one of the most remarkable demographic shifts of the mid-twentieth century. Between World War I—which marked the start of the Great Migration—and the 1970s, more than 6 million African Americans left the South. Where they settled in the North and West, they helped change the politics of entire cities and even states. Seeking black votes, which had become a key to victory in major cities, liberal Democrats and Republicans alike in New York, Illinois, California, and Pennsylvania, for instance, increasingly made civil rights part of their platform. In this way, migration advanced the political cause of black equality.

Though he did not immediately support social equality for African Americans, Truman supported civil rights because he believed in equality before the law. Moreover, he understood the growing importance of the small but often decisive black vote in key northern states such as New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. Civil rights activists Randolph and Powell — along with vocal white liberals such as Hubert Humphrey, the mayor of Minneapolis, and members of Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), a liberal organization — pressed Truman to act.

With no support for civil rights in Congress, Truman turned to executive action. In 1946, he appointed the Presidential Committee on Civil Rights, whose 1947 report, **"To Secure These Rights,"** called for robust federal action to ensure equality for African Americans. With the report fresh in his mind, in 1948 Truman issued an executive order desegregating employment in federal agencies and, under pressure from Randolph's Committee Against Jim Crow in Military Service, desegregated the armed forces. Truman then sent a message to Congress asking that all of the report's recommendations — including the abolition of poll taxes and the restoration of the Fair Employment Practices Commission — be made into law. It was the most aggressive, and politically bold, call for racial equality by the leader of a major political party since Reconstruction.

Truman's boldness was too much for southern Democrats. Under the leadership of Strom Thurmond, governor of South Carolina, white Democrats from the South formed the **States' Rights Democratic Party**, known popularly as the Dixiecrats, for the 1948 election (Chapter 25). This brought into focus an internal struggle developing within the Democratic Party and its still-formidable New Deal coalition. Would the civil rights aims of the party's liberal wing alienate southern white Democrats, as well as many suburban whites in the North? It was the first hint of the discord that would eventually divide the Democratic Party in the 1960s.

Race and Anticommunism The Cold War shaped civil rights in both positive and negative terms. In a time of growing fear of communist expansionism, Truman worried about America's image in the world. He reminded Americans that when whites and blacks "fail to live together in peace," that failure hurt "the cause of democracy itself in the whole world." Indeed, the Soviet Union used American racism as a means of discrediting the United States abroad. "We cannot escape the fact that our civil rights record has been an issue in world politics," the Committee on Civil Rights wrote. International tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union thus appeared to strengthen the hand of civil rights leaders, because America needed to demonstrate to the rest of the world that its race relations were improving (America Compared, p. 876).

However, the Cold War strengthened one hand while weakening the other. McCarthyism and the hunt for subversives at home held the civil rights movement back. Civil rights opponents charged that racial integration was "communistic," and the NAACP was banned in many southern states as an "anti-American" organization. Black Americans who spoke favorably of the Soviet Union, such as the actor and singer Paul Robeson, or had been "fellow travelers" in the 1930s, such as the pacifist Bayard Rustin, were persecuted. Robeson, whose career was destroyed by such accusations, told House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) interrogators, "My father was a slave, and my people died to build this country, and I am going to . . . have a part of it just like you." The fate of people like Robeson showed that the Cold War could work *against* the civil rights cause just as easily as for it.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
How did the Cold War work in the favor of civil rights? How did it work against the movement?

Mexican Americans and Japanese Americans

African Americans were the most prominent, but not the only, group in American society to organize against racial injustice in the 1940s. In the Southwest, from Texas to California, Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans endured a "caste" system not unlike the Jim Crow system in the South. In Texas, for instance, poll taxes kept most Mexican American citizens from voting. Decades of discrimination by employers in agriculture and manufacturing — made possible by the constant supply of cheap labor from across the border — suppressed wages and kept the majority of Mexican Americans barely above poverty. Many lived in *colonias* or barrios, neighborhoods separated from Anglos and often lacking sidewalks, reliable electricity and water, and public services.

Developments within the Mexican American community set the stage for fresh challenges to these conditions in the 1940s. Labor activism in the 1930s and 1940s, especially in Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions with large numbers of Mexican Americans, improved wages and working conditions in some industries and produced a new generation of

Freedom in the United States and Africa

Hailou Wolde-Giorghis

Hailou Wolde-Giorghis was an Ethiopian student who visited the United States at the invitation of the State Department in the early 1960s.

"Negroes are dirty," say the whites, but in nearly all restaurants I saw Negro waiters and cooks. "They're lazy": I noticed that it is the Negro who does the hardest manual work. They are said to be uncultivated and are therefore denied access to culture. As George Bernard Shaw said, "The haughty American nation makes the Negro shine its shoes, and then demonstrates his physical and mental inferiority by the fact that he is a shoe-cleaner." . . .

What is known as integration in the South is the ability of a Negro to enter a shop and buy a record, or the fact that, of ten thousand students enrolled in a university, two of them are Negroes. "A miracle!" they cry. Real integration, however, does not exist, not even in the North, and by real integration I mean interracial communication, complete equality in the strict sense of the word. Still another example drawn from the South: the manager of a television studio told me in frigid terms that he would not hire Negroes; there would be a scandal and all his sponsors would protest.

Source: Hailou Wolde-Giorghis, "My Encounters with Racism in the United States," in *Views of America*, ed. Alan F. Westin et al. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1966), 228–231.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Here, the American civil rights leader celebrates the independence of the African nation of Ghana in 1957.

And it's a beautiful thing, isn't it that . . . [Ghana] is now free and is free without rising up with arms and ammunition. It is free through nonviolent means. Because of that the British Empire will not have the bitterness for Ghana that she has for China, so to speak. Because of that when the British Empire leaves Ghana she leaves with a different attitude than she would have left with if she had been driven out by armies. We've got to revolt in such a way that after revolt is over we can live with people as their brothers and sisters.

Source: Martin Luther King Jr., "The Birth of a New Nation," *Liberation* 28 (April 1957).

Kwame Nkrumah

Kwame Nkrumah was the first president of the independent nation of Ghana. In the 1930s and 1940s, Nkrumah studied in the United States, earning degrees at Lincoln University and the University of Pennsylvania.

The "wind of change" has become a raging hurricane, sweeping away the old colonialist Africa. The year 1960 was Africa's year. In that year alone, seventeen African States emerged as proud and independent sovereign nations. Now the ultimate freedom of the whole of Africa can no more be in doubt.

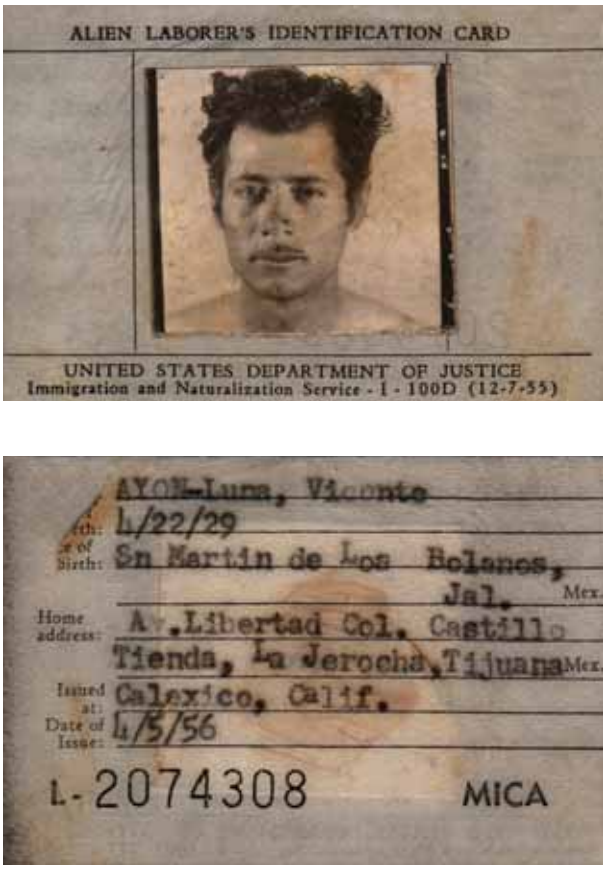
For centuries, Europeans dominated the African continent. The white man arrogated to himself the right to rule and to be obeyed by the non-white. . . .

All this makes a sad story, but now we must be prepared to bury the past with its unpleasant memories and look to the future. All we ask of the former colonial powers is their goodwill and cooperation to remedy past mistakes and injustices and to grant independence to the colonies in Africa.

Source: Kwame Nkrumah, *I Speak of Freedom: A Statement of African Ideology* (New York: Praeger, 1961), ix.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Wolde-Giorghis is especially critical of southern "integration." As an African, what kind of perspective would he bring to this question?
2. What values and goals do King and Nkrumah seem to share? How were their circumstances and goals different?
3. Compare the circumstances of African Americans in the United States and Africans in nations colonized by Europeans. What were the similarities and differences?



Bracero Worker Card

In the Southwest, Mexican immigrants and many Mexican Americans encountered a caste system not unlike Jim Crow segregation. Most of the hardest, lowest-paying work in states such as Texas, Arizona, and California was performed by people of Mexican descent. Under a government program, braceros, or migrant Mexican workers, were allowed into the United States for a limited time to harvest a variety of fruit and vegetable crops. A worker card issued to one such bracero is pictured here. National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Behring Center.

leaders. More than 400,000 Mexican Americans also served in World War II. Having fought for their country, many returned to the United States determined to challenge their second-class citizenship. Additionally, a new Mexican American middle class began to take shape in major cities such as Los Angeles, San Antonio, El Paso, and Chicago, which, like the African American middle class, gave leaders and resources to the cause.

In Texas and California, Mexican Americans created new civil rights organizations in the postwar years. In Corpus Christi, Texas, World War II veterans founded the **American GI Forum** in 1948 to protest the poor treatment of Mexican American soldiers and veterans. Activists in Los Angeles created the Community Service Organization (CSO) the same year. Both groups arose to address specific local injustices (such as the segregation of military cemeteries), but they quickly broadened their scope to encompass political and economic justice for the larger community. Among the first young activists to work for the CSO were Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, who would later found the United Farm Workers (UFW) and inspire the Chicano movement of the 1960s.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

How were the circumstances facing Mexican and Japanese Americans similar to those facing African Americans? How were they different?

Activists also pushed for legal change. In 1947, five Mexican American fathers in California sued a local school district for placing their children in separate "Mexican" schools. The case, *Mendez v. Westminster School District*, never made it to the U.S. Supreme Court. But the Ninth Circuit Court ruled such segregation unconstitutional, laying the legal groundwork for broader challenges to racial inequality. Among those filing briefs in the case was the NAACP's Thurgood Marshall, who was then developing the legal strategy to strike at racial segregation in the South. In another significant legal victory, the Supreme Court ruled in 1954—just two weeks before the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision—that Mexican Americans constituted a "distinct class" that could claim protection from discrimination.

Also on the West Coast, Japanese Americans accelerated their legal challenge to discrimination. Undeterred by rulings in the *Hirabayashi* (1943) and *Korematsu* (1944) cases upholding wartime imprisonment (Chapter 24), the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) filed lawsuits in the late 1940s to regain property lost during the war. The JACL also challenged the constitutionality of California's Alien Land Law, which prohibited Japanese immigrants from owning land, and successfully lobbied Congress to enable those same immigrants to become citizens—a right they were denied for fifty years. These efforts by Mexican and Japanese Americans enlarged the sphere of civil rights and laid the foundation for a broader notion of racial equality in the postwar years.

Fighting for Equality Before the Law

With civil rights legislation blocked in Congress by southern Democrats throughout the 1950s, activists looked in two different directions for a breakthrough: to northern state legislatures and to the federal courts. School segregation remained a stubborn problem in northern states, but the biggest obstacle to black

progress there was persistent job and housing discrimination. The states with the largest African American populations, and hence the largest share of black Democratic Party voters, became testing grounds for state legislation to end such discriminatory practices.

Winning antidiscrimination legislation depended on coalition politics. African American activists forged alliances with trade unions and liberal organizations such as the American Friends Service Committee (a Quaker group), among many others. Progress was slow and often occurred only after long periods of unglamorous struggle to win votes in state capitals such as Albany, New York; Springfield, Illinois; and Lansing, Michigan. The first fair employment laws had come in New York and New Jersey in 1945. A decade passed, however, before other states with significant black populations passed similar legislation. Antidiscrimination laws in housing were even more difficult to pass, with most progress not coming until the 1960s. These legislative campaigns in northern states received little national attention, but they were instrumental in laying the groundwork for legal equality outside the South.

Thurgood Marshall Because the vast majority of southern African Americans were prohibited from voting, state legislatures there were closed to the kind of organized political pressure possible in the North. Thus activists also looked to federal courts for leverage. In the late 1930s, NAACP lawyers Thurgood Marshall, Charles Hamilton Houston, and William Hastie had begun preparing the legal ground in a series of cases challenging racial discrimination. The key was prodding the U.S. Supreme Court to use the Fourteenth Amendment's "equal protection" clause to overturn its 1896 ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which upheld racial segregation under the "separate but equal" doctrine.

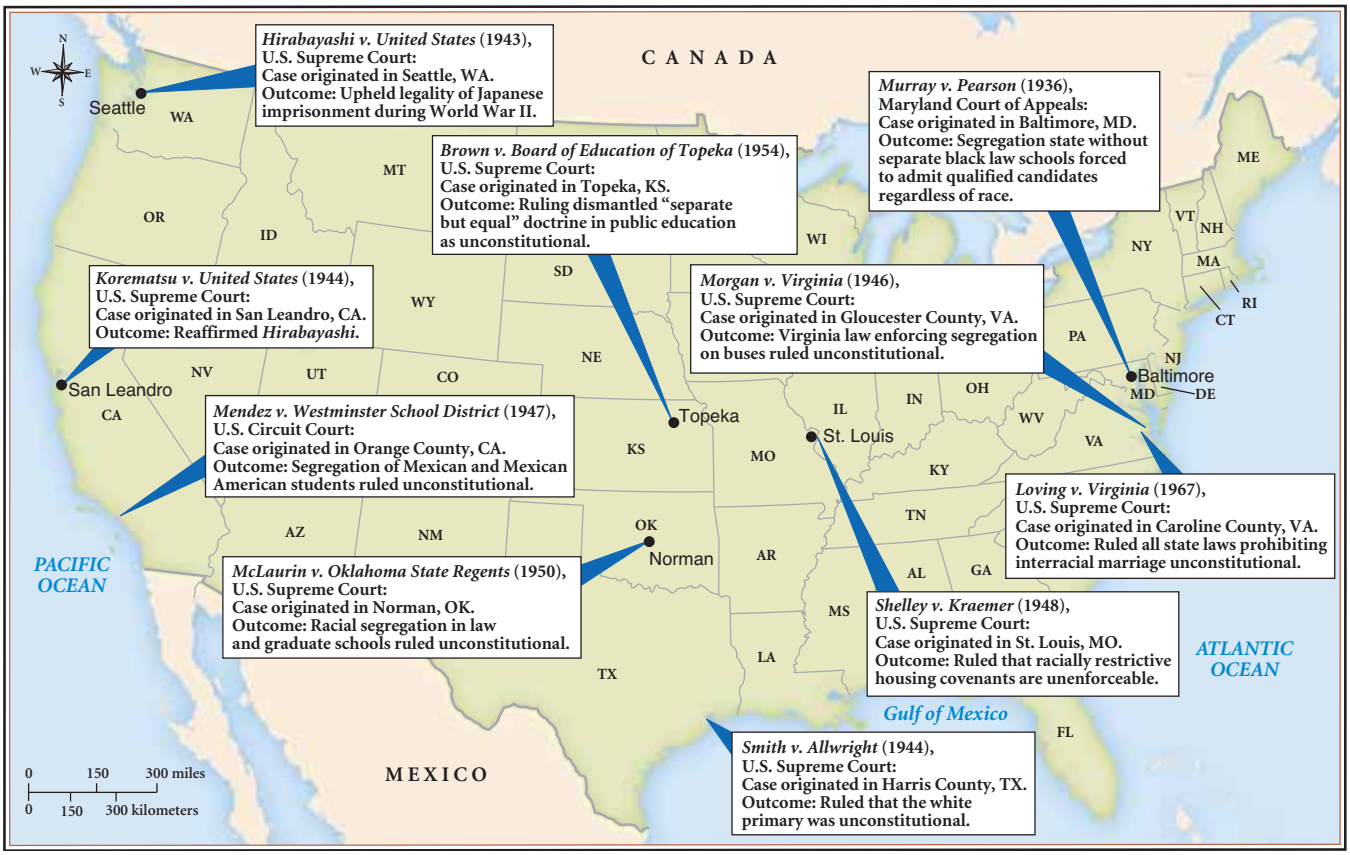
Marshall was the great-grandson of slaves. Of modest origins, his parents instilled in him a faith in law and the Constitution. After his 1930 graduation from Lincoln University, a prestigious African American institution near Philadelphia, Marshall applied to the University of Maryland Law School. Denied admission because the school did not accept black applicants, he enrolled at all-black Howard University. There Marshall met Houston, a law school dean, and the two forged a friendship and intellectual partnership that would change the face of American legal history. Marshall, with Houston's and Hastie's critical strategic input, would argue most of the NAACP's landmark cases. In the late 1960s, President Johnson appointed Marshall to the Supreme Court — the first African American to have that honor.

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME
How did the NAACP go about developing a legal strategy to attack racial segregation?

Marshall, Houston, Hastie, and six other attorneys filed suit after suit, deliberately selecting each one from dozens of possibilities. The strategy was slow and time-consuming, but progress came. In 1936, Marshall and Hamilton won a state case that forced the University of Maryland Law School to admit qualified African Americans — a ruling of obvious significance to Marshall. Eight years later, in *Smith v. Allwright* (1944), Marshall convinced the U.S. Supreme Court that all-white primaries were unconstitutional. In 1950, with Marshall once again arguing the case, the Supreme Court ruled in *McLaurin v. Oklahoma* that universities could not segregate black students from others on campus. None of these cases produced swift changes in the daily lives of most African Americans, but they confirmed that civil rights attorneys were on the right track.

Brown v. Board of Education The NAACP's legal strategy achieved its ultimate validation in a case involving Linda Brown, a black pupil in Topeka, Kansas, who had been forced to attend a distant segregated school rather than the nearby white elementary school. In ***Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*** (1954), Marshall argued that such segregation was unconstitutional because it denied Linda Brown the "equal protection of the laws" guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment (Map 27.2). In a unanimous decision on May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court agreed, overturning the "separate but equal" doctrine at last. Writing for the Court, the new chief justice, Earl Warren, wrote: "We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." In an implementing 1955 decision known as *Brown II*, the Court declared simply that integration should proceed "with all deliberate speed."

In the South, however, Virginia senator Harry F. Byrd issued a call for "massive resistance." Calling May 17 "Black Monday," the Mississippi segregationist Tom P. Brady invoked the language of the Cold War to discredit the decision, assailing the "totalitarian government" that had rendered the decision in the name of "socialism and communism." That year, half a million southerners joined White Citizens' Councils dedicated to blocking school integration. Some whites revived the old tactics of violence and intimidation, swelling the ranks of the Ku Klux Klan to levels not seen since the 1920s. The "Southern Manifesto," signed in 1956 by 101 members of Congress, denounced the



MAP 27.2
Desegregation Court Cases

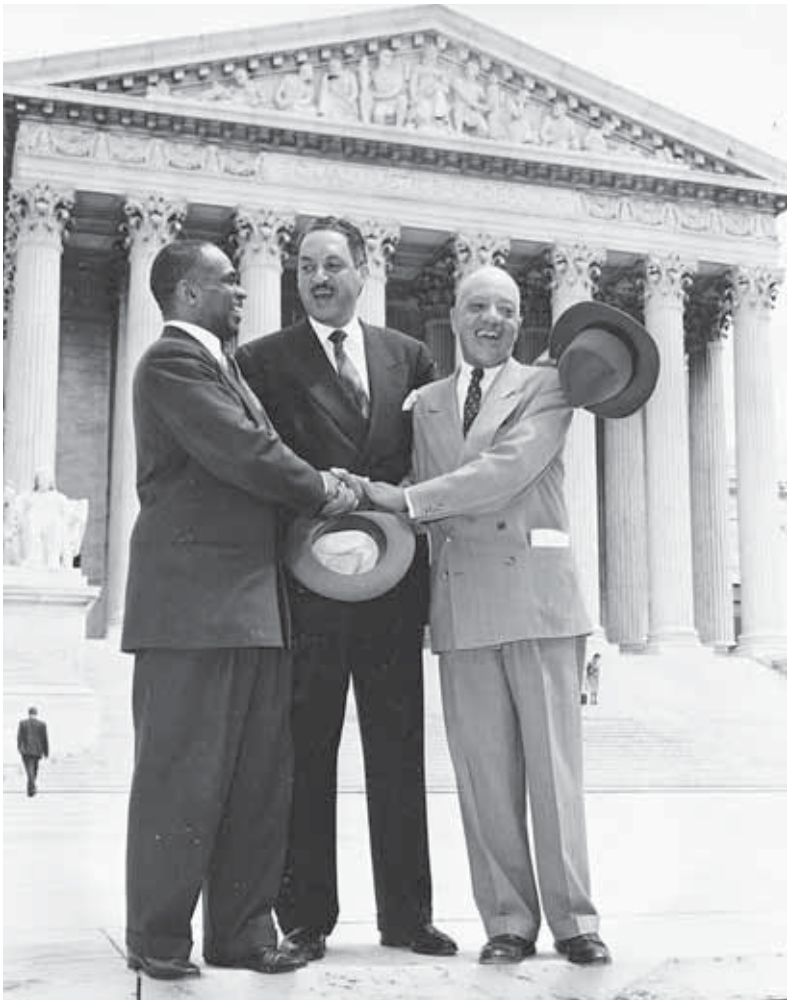
Desegregation court battles were not limited to the South. Note the important California cases regarding Mexican Americans and Japanese Americans. Two seminal decisions, the 1948 housing decision in *Shelley v. Kraemer* and the 1954 school decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, originated in Missouri and Kansas, respectively. This map helps show that racial segregation and discrimination were a national, not simply a southern, problem.

Brown decision as "a clear abuse of judicial power" and encouraged local officials to defy it. The white South had declared all-out war on *Brown*.

Enforcement of the Supreme Court's decision was complicated further by Dwight Eisenhower's presence in the White House — the president was no champion of civil rights. Eisenhower accepted the *Brown* decision as the law of the land, but he thought it a mistake. Ike was especially unhappy about the prospect of committing federal power to enforce the decision. A crisis in Little Rock, Arkansas, finally forced his hand. In September 1957, when nine black students attempted to enroll at the all-white Central High School, Governor Orval Faubus called out the National Guard to bar them. Angry white mobs appeared daily to taunt the students, chanting "Go back to the jungle." As the vicious scenes played out on television night after night, Eisenhower finally acted. He sent 1,000 federal troops to Little Rock and nationalized the Arkansas National Guard, ordering them to protect the black students. Eisenhower thus became the first president since Reconstruction to use federal troops to enforce the rights of African Americans. But Little Rock also showed that southern officials had more loyalty to local custom than to the law — a repeated problem in the post-*Brown* era.

Forging a Protest Movement, 1955–1965

Declaring racial segregation integral to the South's "habits, traditions, and way of life," the Southern Manifesto signaled that many whites would not accept African American equality readily. As Americans had



The Legal Strategy

On the steps of the Supreme Court, on the day in 1954 that *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* was decided, are the architects of the NAACP legal strategy in the *Brown* case and dozens of others. Together (from left to right), George E. C. Hayes, Thurgood Marshall, and James M. Nabrit pursued cases that undermined the constitutional foundation of racial segregation. Their efforts were not enough to destroy Jim Crow, however—that would take marches, protests, and sacrifices from ordinary citizens. AP Images.

witnessed in Little Rock, the unwillingness of local officials to enforce *Brown* could render the decision invalid in practice. If legal victories would not be enough, citizens themselves, black and white, would have to take to the streets and demand justice. Following the *Brown* decision, they did just that, forging a protest movement unique in the history of the United States.

Nonviolent Direct Action

Brown had been the law of the land for barely a year when a single act of violence struck at the heart of black America. A fourteen-year-old African American from the South Side of Chicago, Emmett Till, was visiting relatives in Mississippi in the summer of 1955. Seen talking to a white woman in a grocery store, Till was tortured and murdered under cover of night. His mutilated body was found at the bottom of a river, tied with barbed wire to a heavy steel cotton gin fan. Photos of Till's body in *Jet* magazine brought national attention to the heinous crime.

Two white men were arrested for Till's murder. During the trial, followed closely in African American communities across the country, the lone witness to Till's kidnapping—his uncle, Mose Wright—identified both killers. Feeling "the blood boil in hundreds of white people as they sat glaring in the courtroom," Wright said, "it was the first time in my life I had the courage to accuse a white man of a crime." Despite Wright's eyewitness testimony, the all-white jury found the defendants innocent. This miscarriage of justice—later, the killers even admitted their guilt in a *Look* magazine article—galvanized an entire generation of African Americans; no one who lived through the Till case ever forgot it.

Montgomery Bus Boycott In the wake of the Till case, civil rights advocates needed some good news.

School Desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas

Less well known than the crisis at Little Rock's Central High School the same year, the circumstances at North Little Rock were nonetheless strikingly similar: white resistance to the enrollment of a handful of black students. In this photograph, white students block the doors of North Little Rock High School, preventing six African American students from entering on September 9, 1957. This photograph is noteworthy because it shows a striking new feature of southern racial politics: the presence of film and television cameras that broadcast these images to the nation and the world. AP Images.

They received it three months later, as southern black leaders embraced an old tactic put to new ends: nonviolent protest. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a civil rights activist in Montgomery, Alabama, refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. She was arrested and charged with violating a local segregation ordinance. Parks's act was not the spur-of-the-moment decision that it seemed: a woman of sterling reputation and a longtime NAACP member, she had been contemplating such an act for some time. Middle-aged and unassuming, Rosa Parks fit the bill perfectly for the NAACP's challenge against segregated buses.

Once the die was cast, the black community turned for leadership to the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., the recently appointed pastor of Montgomery's Dexter Street Baptist Church. The son of a prominent Atlanta minister, King embraced the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Working closely, but behind the scenes, with Bayard Rustin, King studied nonviolent philosophy, which Rustin and others in the Fellowship of Reconciliation had first used in the 1940s. After Rosa Parks's arrest, King endorsed a plan proposed by a local black women's organization to boycott Montgomery's bus system. The **Montgomery Bus Boycott** was inspired by similar boycotts that had taken place in Harlem in 1941 and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1953.

For the next 381 days, Montgomery's African Americans formed car pools or walked to work. "Darling, it's empty!" Coretta Scott King exclaimed to her husband as a bus normally filled with black riders rolled by their living room window on the first day of the boycott. The transit company neared bankruptcy, and downtown stores complained about the loss of business. But only after the Supreme Court ruled in November 1956 that bus segregation was unconstitutional did the city of Montgomery finally comply. "My feets is tired, but my soul is rested," said one woman boycotter.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott catapulted King to national prominence. In 1957, along with the Reverend

Ralph Abernathy and dozens of black ministers from across the South, he founded the Atlanta-based **Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)**. The black church, long the center of African American social and cultural life, now lent its moral and organizational strength to the civil rights movement. Black churchwomen were a tower of strength, transferring the skills they had honed during years of church work to the fight for civil rights. The SCLC quickly joined the NAACP at the leading edge of the movement for racial justice.

Greensboro Sit-Ins The battle for civil rights entered a new phase in Greensboro, North Carolina, on February 1, 1960, when four black college students took seats at the whites-only lunch counter at the local Woolworth's five-and-dime store. This simple act was entirely the brainchild of the four students, who had discussed it in their dorm rooms over several preceding nights. A New York–based spokesman for Woolworth's said the chain would "abide by local custom," which meant refusing to serve African Americans at the lunch counter. The students were determined to "sit in" until they were served. For three weeks, hundreds of students inspired by the original foursome took turns sitting at the counters, quietly eating, doing homework, or reading. Taunted by groups of whites, pelted with food and other debris, the black students — often occupying more than sixty of the sixty-six seats — held strong. Although many were arrested, the tactic worked: the Woolworth's lunch counter was desegregated, and sit-ins quickly spread to other southern cities (American Voices, p. 884).

Ella Baker

Born in Virginia and educated at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, Ella Baker was one of the foremost theorists of grassroots, participatory democracy in the United States. Active all her life in the black freedom movement, in 1960 Baker cofounded the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Her advocacy of leadership by ordinary, nonelite people often led her to disagree with the top-down movement strategy of Martin Luther King Jr. and other ministers of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).
AP Images.

Ella Baker and SNCC Inspired by the developments in Greensboro and elsewhere, Ella Baker, an administrator with the SCLC, helped organize the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee** (**SNCC**, pronounced "Snick") in 1960 to facilitate student sit-ins. Rolling like a great wave across the Upper South, from North Carolina into Virginia, Maryland, and Tennessee, by the end of the year students had launched sit-ins in 126 cities. More than 50,000 people participated, and 3,600 were jailed. The sit-ins drew African American college students into the movement in significant numbers for the first time. Northern students formed solidarity committees and raised money for bail. SNCC quickly emerged as the most important student protest organization in the country and inspired a generation of students on college campuses across the nation.

Baker took a special interest in these students, because she found them receptive to her notion of participatory democracy. The granddaughter of slaves, Baker had moved to Harlem in the 1930s, where she worked for New Deal agencies and then the NAACP. She believed in nurturing leaders from the grass roots, encouraging ordinary people to stand up for their rights rather than to depend on charismatic figureheads. "My theory is, strong people don't need strong leaders," she once said. Nonetheless, Baker nurtured a generation of young activists in SNCC, including Stokely Carmichael, Anne Moody, John Lewis, and Diane Nash, who went on to become some of the most important civil rights leaders in the United States.

Freedom Rides Emboldened by SNCC's sit-in tactics, in 1961 the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) organized a series of what were called Freedom Rides

on interstate bus lines throughout the South. The aim was to call attention to blatant violations of recent Supreme Court rulings against segregation in interstate commerce. The activists who signed on — mostly young, both black and white — knew that they were taking their lives in their hands. They found courage in song, as civil rights activists had begun to do across the country, with lyrics such as "I'm taking a ride on the Greyhound bus line. . . . Hallelujah, I'm traveling down freedom's main line!"

Courage they needed. Club-wielding Klansmen attacked the buses when they stopped in small towns. Outside Anniston, Alabama, one bus was firebombed; the Freedom Riders escaped only moments before it exploded. Some riders were then brutally beaten. Freedom Riders and news reporters were also viciously attacked by Klansmen in Birmingham and Montgomery. Despite the violence, state authorities refused to intervene. "I cannot guarantee protection for this bunch of rabble rousers," declared Governor John Patterson of Alabama.

Once again, local officials' refusal to enforce the law left the fate of the Freedom Riders in Washington's hands. The new president, John F. Kennedy, was cautious about civil rights. Despite a campaign commitment, he failed to deliver on a civil rights bill. Elected by a thin margin, Kennedy believed that he could ill afford to lose the support of powerful southern senators. But civil rights was unlike other domestic issues. Its fate was going to be decided not in the halls of Congress, but on the streets of southern cities. Although President Kennedy discouraged the Freedom Rides, beatings shown on the nightly news forced Attorney General Robert Kennedy to dispatch federal marshals. Civil rights activists thus learned the value of nonviolent protest that provoked violent white resistance.

The victories so far had been limited, but the groundwork had been laid for a civil rights offensive that would transform the nation. The NAACP's legal strategy had been followed closely by the emergence of a major protest movement. And now civil rights leaders focused their attention on Congress.

Legislating Civil Rights, 1963–1965

The first civil rights law in the nation's history came in 1866 just after the Civil War. Its provisions were long ignored (Chapter 15). A second law was passed during Reconstruction in 1875, but it was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. For nearly ninety years, new civil rights legislation was blocked or filibustered by southern Democrats in Congress. Only a weak, largely symbolic act was passed in 1957 during the Eisenhower administration. But by the early 1960s, with legal precedents in their favor and nonviolent protest awakening the nation, civil rights leaders believed the time had come for a serious civil rights bill. The challenge was getting one through a still-reluctant Congress.

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME

What lessons did activists learn from the evolution of the civil rights movement between 1957 and 1961?

The Battle for Birmingham

The road to such a bill began when Martin Luther King Jr. called for demonstrations in "the most segregated city in the United States": Birmingham, Alabama. King and the SCLC needed a concrete victory in Birmingham to validate their strategy of nonviolent protest. In May 1963, thousands of black marchers tried to picket Birmingham's department stores. Eugene "Bull" Connor, the city's public safety commissioner, ordered the city's police troops to meet the marchers with violent force: snarling dogs, electric cattle prods, and high-pressure fire hoses. Television cameras captured the scene for the evening news.

While serving a jail sentence for leading the march, King, scribbling in pencil on any paper he could find, composed one of the classic documents of nonviolent direct action: "Letter from Birmingham Jail." "Why direct action?" King asked. "There is a type of constructive, nonviolent tension that is necessary for growth." The civil rights movement sought, he continued, "to create such a crisis and establish such a creative tension." Grounding his actions in equal parts Christian brotherhood and democratic liberalism, King argued that Americans confronted a moral choice: they could "preserve the evil system of segregation" or take the side of "those great wells of democracy . . . the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence."

Outraged by the brutality in Birmingham and embarrassed by King's imprisonment for leading a nonviolent march, President Kennedy decided that it was time to act. On June 11, 1963, after newly elected Alabama governor George Wallace barred two black students from the state university, Kennedy denounced racism on national television and promised a new civil rights bill. Many black leaders felt Kennedy's action was long overdue, but they nonetheless hailed this "Second Emancipation Proclamation." That night, Medgar Evers, president of the Mississippi chapter of the NAACP, was shot in the back in his driveway in

Challenging White Supremacy

Among the many challenges historians face is figuring out the processes by which long-oppressed ordinary people finally rise up and demand justice. During the 1950s, a liberating process was quietly under way among southern blacks, bursting forth dramatically in the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955 and then, by the end of the decade, emerging across the South. Here are excerpts of the testimony of two individuals who stepped forward and took the lead in those struggles.

Franklin McCain

Desegregating Lunch Counters

Franklin McCain was one of the four African American students at North Carolina A&T College in Greensboro, North Carolina, who sat down at the Woolworth's lunch counter on February 1, 1960, setting off a wave of student sit-ins that rocked the South and helped initiate a national civil rights movement. In the following interview, McCain describes how he and his friends took that momentous step.

The planning process was on a Sunday night, I remember it quite well. I think it was Joseph who said, "It's time that we take some action now. We've been getting together, and we've been, up to this point, still like most people we've talked about for the past few weeks or so — that is, people who talk a lot but, in fact, make very little action." After selecting the technique, then we said, "Let's go down and just ask for service." It certainly wasn't titled a "sit-in" or "sit-down" at that time. "Let's just go down to Woolworth's tomorrow and ask for service, and the tactic is going to be simply this: we'll just stay there."

. . . Once getting there . . . we did make purchases of school supplies and took the patience and time to get receipts for our purchases, and Joseph and myself went over to the counter and asked to be served coffee and doughnuts. As anticipated, the reply was, "I'm sorry, we don't serve you here." And of course we said, "We just beg to disagree with you. We've in fact already been served." . . . The attendant or waitress was a little bit dumbfounded, just didn't know what to say under circumstances like that. . . .

At that point there was a policeman who had walked in off the street, who was pacing the aisle . . . behind us, where we were seated, with his club in his hand, just sort of knocking it in his hand, and just looking mean and red and a little bit upset and a little bit disgusted. And you had the feeling that he didn't know what the hell to do. . . . Usually his defense is offense, and we've provoked him, yes, but we haven't provoked outwardly enough for him to resort to violence. And I think this is just killing him; you can see it all over him.

If it's possible to know what it means to have your soul cleansed — I felt pretty clean at that time. I probably felt better on that day than I've ever felt in my life. Seems like a lot of feelings of guilt or what-have-you suddenly left me, and I felt as though I had gained my manhood. . . . Not Franklin McCain only as an individual, but I felt as though the manhood of a number of other black persons had been restored and had gotten some respect from just that one day.

The movement started out as a movement of nonviolence and a Christian movement. . . . It was a movement that was seeking justice more than anything else and not a movement to start a war. . . .We knew that probably the most powerful and potent weapon that people have literally no defense for is love, kindness. That is, whip the enemy with something that he doesn't understand. . . . The individual who had probably the most influence on us was Gandhi. . . . Yes, Martin Luther King's name was well-known when the sit-in movement was in effect, but . . . no, he was not the individual we had upmost in mind when we started the sit-in movement.

Source: *My Soul Is Rested* by Howell Raines, copyright 1977 Howell Raines. Used by permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons, a division of Penguin Group (USA) Inc. and Russell & Volkening as agents for the author.

John McFerren

Demanding the Right to Vote

In this interview, given about ten years after the events he describes, John McFerren tells of the battle he undertook in 1959 to gain the vote for the blacks of Fayette County, Tennessee. By the time of the interview, McFerren had risen in life and become a grocery-store owner and property holder, thanks, he says, to the economic boycott imposed on him by angry whites. Unlike Greensboro, the struggle in Fayette County never made national headlines. It was just one of many local struggles that signaled the beginning of a new day in the South.

My name is John McFerren. I'm forty-six years old. I'm a Negro was born and raised in West Tennessee, the county of Fayette, District 1. My foreparents was brought here from North Carolina five years before the Civil War . . . because the rumor got out among the slaveholders that West Tennessee was still goin to be a slaveholdin state. And my people was brought over here and sold. And after the Civil War my people settled in West Tennessee. That's why Fayette and Haywood counties have a great number of Negroes.

Back in 1957 and '58 there was a Negro man accused of killin a deputy sheriff. This was Burton Dodson. He was brought back after he'd been gone twenty years. J. F. Estes was the lawyer defendin him. Myself and him both was in the army together. And the stimulation from the trial got me interested in the way justice was bein used. The only way to bring justice would be through the ballot box.

In 1959 we got out a charter called the Fayette County Civic and Welfare League. Fourteen of us started out in that charter. We tried to support a white liberal candidate that was named L. T. Redfearn in the sheriff election and the local Democrat party refused to let Negroes vote.

We brought a suit against the Democrat party and I went to Washington for a civil-rights hearing. Myself and Estes and Harpman Jameson made the trip. It took us twenty-two hours steady drivin. . . . I was lookin all up — lotsa big, tall buildins. I had never seen old, tall buildins like that before. After talkin to [John Doar] we come on back to the Justice Department building and we sat out in the hall while he had a meetin inside the attorney general's office. And when they come out they told us they was gonna indict the landowners who kept us from voting. . . .

Just after that, in 1960, in January, we organized a thousand Negroes to line up at the courthouse to register to vote. We started pourin in with big numbers — in this county it was 72 percent Negroes — when we started to register to vote to change the situation.

In the followin . . . October and November they started puttin our people offa the land. Once you registered you had to move. Once you registered they took your job. Then after they done that, in November, we had three hundred people forced to live in tents on Shepard Towles's land. And when we started puttin em in tents, then that's when the White Citizens Council and the Ku Klux Klan started shootin in the tents to run us out.

Tent City was parta an economic squeeze. The local merchants run me outa the stores and said I went to Washington and caused this mess to start. . . . They had a blacklist . . . And they had the list sent around to all merchants. Once you registered you couldn't buy for credit or cash. But the best thing in the world was when they run me outa them stores. It started me thinkin for myself. . . .

The southern white has a slogan: "Keep em niggers happy and keep em singin in the schools." And the biggest mistake of the past is that the Negro has not been teached economics and the value of a dollar. . . . Back at one time we had a teacher . . . from Mississippi — and he pulled up and left the county because he was teachin the Negroes to buy land, and own land, and work it for hisself, and the county Board of Education didn't want that taught in the county.

And they told him, "Keep em niggers singin and keep em happy and don't teach em nothin." . . . You cannot be free when you're beggin the man for bread. But when you've got the dollar in your pocket and then got the vote in your pocket, that's the only way to be free. . . . And I have been successful and made good progress because I could see the only way I could survive is to stay independent.

. . . The Negro is no longer goin back. He's goin forward.

Source: From *Looking for America*, second edition, 2 volumes, edited by Stanley I. Kutler (New York: Norton, 1979). Reprinted with permission of Stanley Kutler.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. McCain took a stand on segregated lunch counters. McFerren took a stand on the right to vote. How did these targets represent two different goals of the civil rights movement?
2. McCain speaks of the sense of "manhood" he felt as he sat at that Woolworth's counter. What does his personal feeling suggest about the civil rights movement as a whole?
3. Almost certainly, McCain and McFerren never met. Suppose they had. What would they have had in common? Would what they had in common have been more important than what separated them?
4. McCain speaks knowingly of the figures and ideas that influenced him. Why do you suppose McFerren is silent about such matters?

The Battle of Birmingham

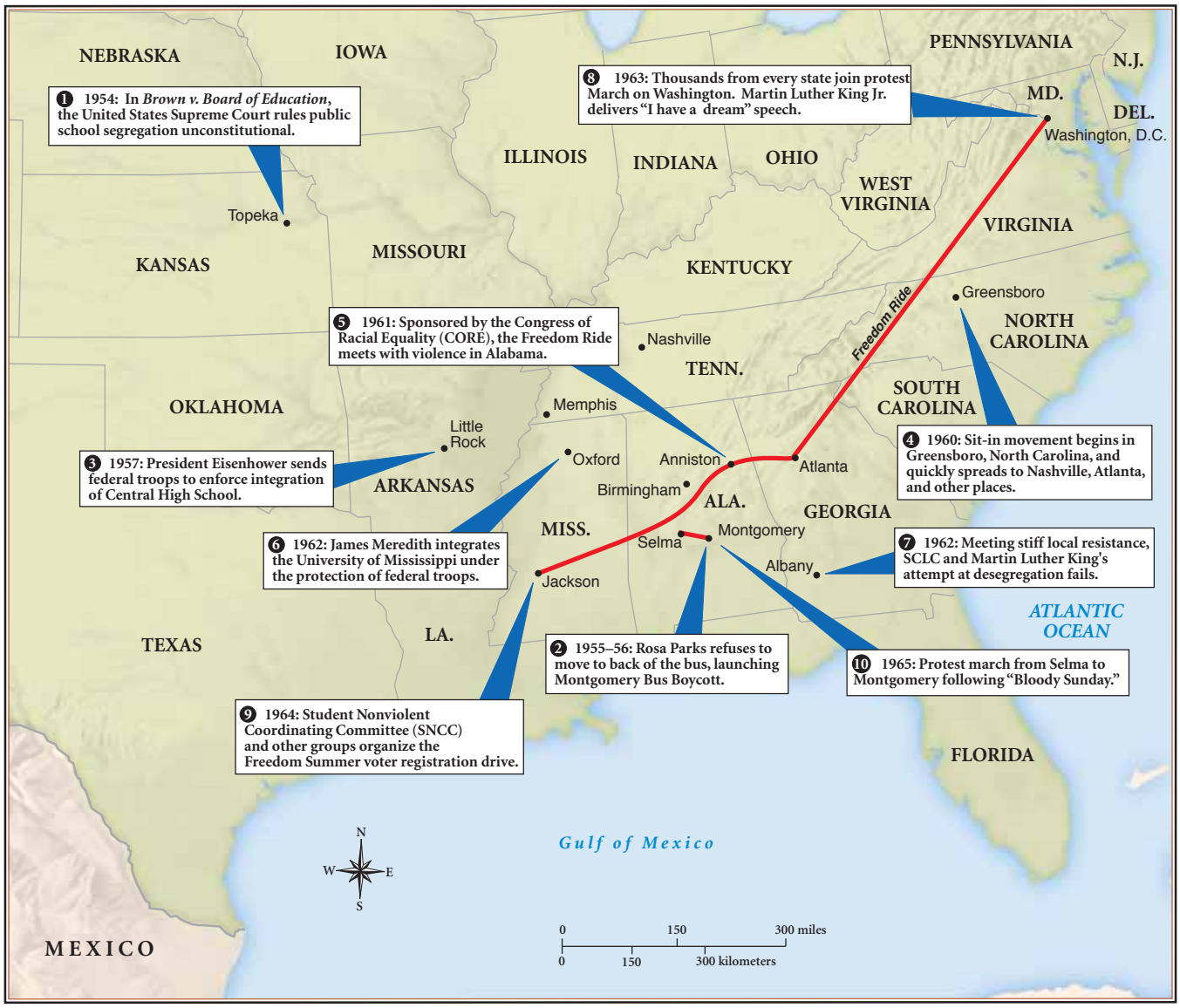
One of the hardest-fought desegregation struggles of the early 1960s took place in April and May 1963 in Birmingham, Alabama. In response to the daily rallies and peaceful protests, authorities cracked down, arresting hundreds. They also employed tactics such as those shown here, turning fire hoses on young, nonviolent student demonstrators and using police dogs to intimidate peaceful marchers. These protests, led by Martin Luther King Jr. and broadcast on television news, prompted President Kennedy to introduce a civil rights bill in Congress in June 1963.

Jackson by a white supremacist. Evers's martyrdom became a spur to further action (Map 27.3).

The March on Washington and the Civil Rights Act To marshal support for Kennedy's bill, civil rights leaders adopted a tactic that A. Philip Randolph had first advanced in 1941: a massive demonstration in Washington. Under the leadership of Randolph and Bayard Rustin, thousands of volunteers across the country coordinated car pools, "freedom buses," and "freedom trains," and on August 28, 1963, delivered a quarter of a million people to the Lincoln Memorial for the officially named **March on Washington** for Jobs and Freedom (Thinking Like a Historian, p. 888).

Although other people did the planning, Martin Luther King Jr. was the public face of the march. It was King's dramatic "I Have a Dream" speech, beginning with his admonition that too many black people lived "on a lonely island of poverty" and ending with the exclamation from a traditional black spiritual — "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God almighty, we are free at last!" — that captured the nation's imagination. The sight of 250,000 blacks and whites marching solemnly together marked the high point of the civil rights movement and confirmed King's position as the leading spokesperson for the cause.

To have any chance of getting the civil rights bill through Congress, King, Randolph, and Rustin knew they had to sustain this broad coalition of blacks and whites. They could afford to alienate no one. Reflecting a younger, more militant set of activists, however, SNCC member John Lewis had prepared a more provocative speech for that afternoon. Lewis wrote, "The time will come when we will not confine our marching to Washington. We will march through the South, through the Heart of Dixie, the way Sherman did." Signaling a growing restlessness among black youth, Lewis warned: "We shall fragment the South into a thousand pieces and put them back together again in the image of democracy." Fearing the speech would



MAP 27.3

The Civil Rights Struggle, 1954–1965

In the postwar battle for black civil rights, the first major victory was the NAACP litigation of *Brown v. Board of Education*, which declared public school segregation unconstitutional. As indicated on this map, the struggle then quickly spread, raising other issues and seeding new organizations. Other organizations quickly joined the battle and shifted the focus away from the courts to mass action and organization. The year 1965 marked the high point, when violence against the Selma, Alabama, marchers spurred the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

alienate white supporters, Rustin and others implored Lewis to tone down his rhetoric. With only minutes to spare before he stepped up to the podium, Lewis agreed. He delivered a more conciliatory speech, but his conflict with march organizers signaled an emerging rift in the movement.

Although the March on Washington galvanized public opinion, it changed few congressional votes. Southern senators continued to block Kennedy's legislation. Georgia senator Richard Russell, a leader of the opposition, refused to support any bill that would "bring about social equality and intermingling and amalgamation of the races." Then, suddenly, tragedies piled up, one on another. In September, white supremacists bombed a Baptist church in Birmingham, killing four black girls in Sunday school. Less than two months later, Kennedy himself lay dead, the victim of assassination.

Civil Rights and Black Power: Strategy and Ideology

The documents collected below reveal the range of perspectives and ideas at work within the broad civil rights, or "black freedom," struggle in the 1960s.

1. Martin Luther King Jr., "If the Negro Wins, Labor Wins" speech, 1962. *King, speaking to a meeting of the nation's trade union leaders, explained the economic objectives of the black freedom struggle.*

If we do not advance, the crushing burden of centuries of neglect and economic deprivation will destroy our will, our spirits and our hopes. In this way labor's historic tradition of moving forward to create vital people as consumers and citizens has become our own tradition, and for the same reasons.

This unity of purpose is not an historical coincidence. Negroes are almost entirely a working people. There are pitifully few Negro millionaires and few Negro employers. Our needs are identical with labor's needs: decent wages, fair working conditions, livable housing, old age security, health and welfare measures, conditions in which families can grow, have education for their children and respect in the community. That is why Negroes support labor's demands and fight laws which curb labor. . . .

The two most dynamic and cohesive liberal forces in the country are the labor movement and the Negro freedom movement. Together we can be architects of democracy in a South now rapidly industrializing.

2. Police in Birmingham, Alabama, use trained German shepherds against peaceful African American protesters, 1963.

Bill Hudson / AP Images.

3. Bayard Rustin, "From Protest to Politics," *Commentary*, February 1965.

. . . it would be hard to quarrel with the assertion that the elaborate legal structure of segregation and discrimination, particularly in relation to public accommodations, has virtually collapsed. On the other hand, without making light of the human sacrifices involved in the direct-action tactics (sit-ins, freedom rides, and the rest) that were so instrumental to this achievement, we must recognize that in desegregating public accommodations, we affected institutions which are relatively peripheral both to the American socio-economic order and to the fundamental conditions of life of the Negro people. In a highly-industrialized, 20th-century civilization, we hit Jim Crow precisely where it was most anachronistic, dispensable, and vulnerable — in hotels, lunch counters, terminals, libraries, swimming pools, and the like. . . . At issue, after all, is not civil rights, strictly speaking, but social and economic conditions.

4. James Farmer, *Freedom, When?*, 1965.

"But when will the demonstrations end?" The perpetual question. And a serious question. Actually, it is several questions, for the meaning of the question differs, depending upon who asks it.

Coming from those whose dominant consideration is peace — public peace and peace of mind — the question means: "When are you going to stop tempting violence and rioting?" Some put it more strongly: "When are you going to stop sponsoring violence?" Assumed is the necessary connection between demonstration and violence. . . .

"Isn't the patience of the white majority wearing thin? Why nourish the displeasure of 90 percent of the population with provocative demonstrations? Remember, you need allies." And the assumptions of these Cassandras of the backlash is that freedom and equality are, in the last analysis, wholly gifts in the white man's power to bestow. . . .

What the public must realize is that in a demonstration more things are happening, at more levels of human activity, than meets the eye. Demonstrations in the last

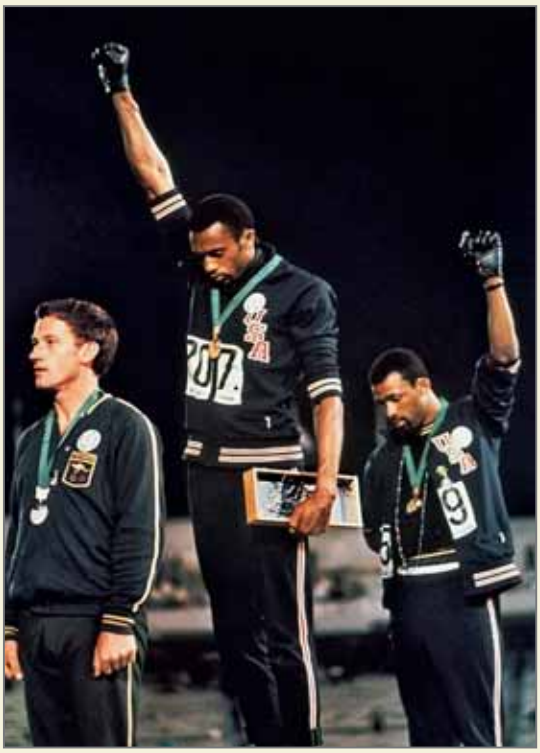
few years have provided literally millions of Negroes with their first taste of self-determination and political self-expression.

5. Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, 1967.

Black people must redefine themselves, and only they can do that. Throughout this country, vast segments of the black communities are beginning to recognize the need to assert their own definitions, to reclaim their history, their culture; to create their own sense of community and togetherness. There is a growing resentment of the word "Negro," for example, because this term is the invention of our oppressor; it is his image of us that he describes. . . .

The concept of Black Power rests on a fundamental premise: Before a group can enter the open society, it must first close ranks. By this we mean that group solidarity is necessary before a group can operate effectively from a bargaining position of strength in a pluralistic society.

6. Black Power salute at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. *Tommie Smith and John Carolos (right) won gold and bronze medals in the 200 meters. The silver medalist, Australian Peter Norman (left), is wearing an Olympic Project for Human Rights badge to show his support.*



AP images.

Sources: (1) "If the Negro Wins, Labor Wins," by Martin Luther King delivered February 12, 1962. Reprinted by arrangement with the Heirs to the Estate of Martin Luther King Jr., c/o Writers House as agent for the proprietor, New York, NY. Copyright © 1962 Martin Luther King Jr. Copyright renewed 1991 Coretta Scott King; (3) *Commentary*, February 1965; (4) James Farmer, *Freedom, When?* (New York: Random House, 1965), 25–27, 42–47; (5) Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation* (New York: Vintage, 1992, orig. 1967), 37, 44.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. Compare sources 1 and 3. What does Rustin mean when he says that ending segregation in public accommodations has not affected the "fundamental conditions" of African American life? How does King's point in document 1 address such issues?
2. Examine the two photographs. What do they reveal about different kinds of protest? About different perspectives among African Americans?
3. What does "self-determination" mean for Farmer and Carmichael and Hamilton?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Compose an essay in which you use the documents above, in addition to your reading of the chapter, to explore and explain different approaches to African American rights in the 1960s. In particular, think about how all of the documents come from a single movement, yet each expresses a distinct viewpoint and a distinct way of conceiving what "the struggle" is about. How do these approaches compare to the tactics of earlier struggles for civil rights?

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
In what ways did white resistance hinder the civil rights movement? In what ways did it help?

On assuming the presidency, Lyndon Johnson made passing the civil rights bill a priority. A southerner and former Senate majority leader, Johnson was renowned for his fierce persuasive style and tough political bargaining. Using equal parts moral leverage, the memory of the slain JFK, and his own brand of hardball politics, Johnson overcame the filibuster. In June 1964, Congress approved the most far-reaching civil rights law since Reconstruction. The keystone of the **Civil Rights Act of 1964**, Title VII, outlawed discrimination in employment on the basis of race, religion, national origin, and sex. Another section guaranteed equal access to public accommodations and schools. The law granted new enforcement powers to the U.S. attorney general and established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to implement the prohibition against job discrimination.

Freedom Summer The Civil Rights Act was a law with real teeth, but it left untouched the obstacles to black voting rights. So protesters went back into the streets. In 1964, in what came to be known as Freedom Summer, black organizations mounted a major campaign in Mississippi. The effort drew several thousand volunteers from across the country, including nearly one thousand white college students from the North. Led by the charismatic SNCC activist Robert Moses, the four major civil rights organizations (SNCC, CORE, NAACP, and SCLC) spread out across the state. They established freedom schools for black children and conducted a major voter registration drive. Yet so determined was the opposition that only about twelve hundred black voters were registered that summer, at a cost of four murdered civil rights workers and thirty-seven black churches bombed or burned.

The murders strengthened the resolve of the **Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party** (MFDP), which had been founded during Freedom Summer. Banned

Women in the Movement

Though often overshadowed by men in the public spotlight, women were crucial to the black freedom movement. Here, protesting at the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, are (left to right) Fannie Lou Hamer, Eleanor Holmes, and Ella Baker. The men are (left to right) Emory Harris, Stokely Carmichael, and Sam Block. Hamer had been a sharecropper before she became a leader under Baker's tutelage, and Holmes was a Yale University–trained lawyer who went on to become the first female chair of the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

from the "whites only" Mississippi Democratic Party, MFDP leaders were determined to attend the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, as the legitimate representatives of their state. Inspired by Fannie Lou Hamer, a former sharecropper turned civil rights activist, the MFDP challenged the most powerful figures in the Democratic Party, including Lyndon Johnson, the Democrats' presidential nominee. "Is this America?" Hamer asked party officials when she demanded that the MFDP, and not the all-white Mississippi delegation, be recognized by the convention. Democratic leaders, however, seated the white Mississippi delegation and refused to recognize the MFDP. Demoralized and convinced that the Democratic Party would not change, Moses told television reporters: "I will have nothing to do with the political system any longer."

Selma and the Voting Rights Act Martin Luther King Jr. and the SCLC did not share Moses's skepticism. They believed that another confrontation with southern injustice could provoke further congressional action. In March 1965, James Bevel of the SCLC called for a march from Selma, Alabama, to the state capital, Montgomery, to protest the murder of a voting-rights activist. As soon as the six hundred marchers left Selma, crossing over the Edmund Pettus Bridge, mounted state troopers attacked them with tear gas and clubs. The scene was shown on national television that night, and the day became known as Bloody Sunday. Calling the episode "an American tragedy," President Johnson went back to Congress.

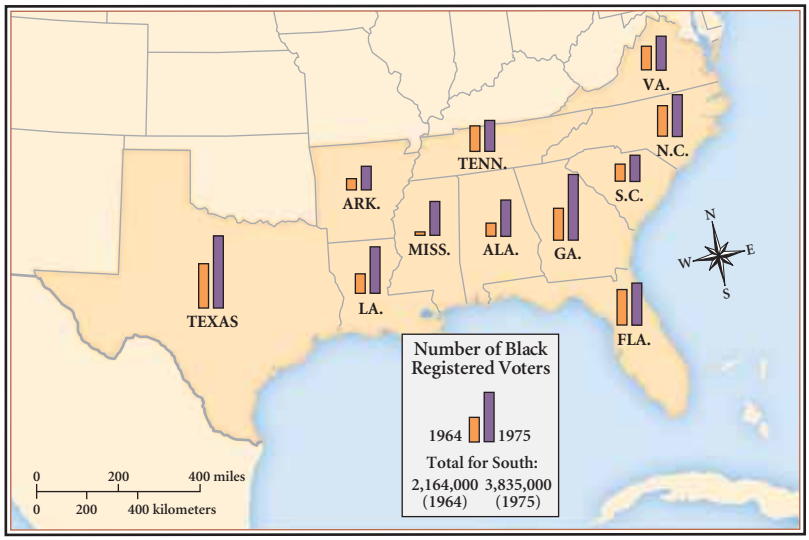
The **Voting Rights Act of 1965**, which was signed by President Johnson on August 6, outlawed the literacy tests and other devices that prevented African Americans from registering to vote, and authorized the attorney general to send federal examiners to register voters in any county where registration was less than 50 percent. Together with the Twenty-fourth Amendment (1964), which outlawed the poll tax in federal elections, the Voting Rights Act enabled millions of African Americans to vote for the first time since the Reconstruction era.

In the South, the results were stunning. In 1960, only 20 percent of black citizens had been registered to vote; by 1971, registration reached 62 percent (Map 27.4). Moreover, across the nation the number of black elected officials began to climb, quadrupling from 1,400 to 4,900 between 1970 and 1980 and doubling again by the early 1990s. Most of those elected held local offices — from sheriff to county commissioner — but nonetheless embodied a shift in political representation nearly unimaginable a generation earlier. As Hartman Turnbow, a Mississippi farmer who risked his life to register in 1964, later declared, "It won't never go back where it was."

Something else would never go back either: the liberal New Deal coalition. By the second half of the 1960s, the liberal wing of the Democratic Party had won its battle with the conservative, segregationist wing. Democrats had embraced the civil rights movement and made African American equality a cornerstone of a new "rights" liberalism. But over the next generation, between the 1960s and the 1980s, southern whites and many conservative northern whites would respond by switching to the Republican Party. Strom Thurmond, the segregationist senator from South Carolina, symbolically led the revolt by renouncing the

MAP 27.4
Black Voter Registration in the South, 1964 and 1975

After passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, black registration in the South increased dramatically. The bars on the map show the number of African Americans registered in 1964, before the act was passed, and in 1975, after it had been in effect for ten years. States in the Deep South, such as Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, had the biggest increases.



Democrats and becoming a Republican in 1964. The New Deal coalition — which had joined working-class whites, northern African Americans, urban professionals, and white southern segregationists together in a fragile political alliance since the 1930s — was beginning to crumble.

Beyond Civil Rights, 1966–1973

Activists had long known that Supreme Court decisions and new laws do not automatically produce changes in society. But in the mid-1960s, civil rights advocates confronted a more profound issue: perhaps even protests were not enough. In 1965, Bayard Rustin wrote of the need to move "from protest to politics" in order to build institutional black power. Some black leaders, such as the young SNCC activists Stokely Carmichael, Frances Beal, and John Lewis, grew frustrated with the slow pace of reform and the stubborn resistance of whites. Still others believed that addressing black poverty and economic disadvantage remained the most important objective. Neither new laws nor long marches appeared capable of meeting these varied and complex challenges.

The conviction that civil rights alone were incapable of guaranteeing equality took hold in many minority communities in this period. African Americans were joined by Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and American Indians. They came at the problem of inequality from different perspectives, but each group asked a similar question: As crucial as legal equality was, how much did it matter if most people of color remained in or close to poverty, if white society still regarded nonwhites as inferior, and if the major social and political institutions in the country were run by whites? Black leaders and representatives of other nonwhite communities increasingly asked themselves this question as they searched for ways to build on the achievements of the civil rights decade of 1954–1965.

Black Nationalism

Seeking answers to these questions led many African Americans to embrace **black nationalism**. The philosophy of black nationalism signified many things in the 1960s. It could mean anything from pride in one's community to total separatism, from building African American–owned businesses to wearing dashikis in honor of African traditions. Historically, nationalism had emphasized the differences between blacks and whites as well as black people's power (and right) to shape their own destiny. In the late nineteenth century, nationalists founded the Back to Africa movement, and in the 1920s the nationalist Marcus Garvey inspired African Americans to take pride in their racial heritage (Chapter 22).

In the early 1960s, the leading exponent of black nationalism was the **Nation of Islam**, which fused a rejection of Christianity with a strong philosophy of self-improvement. Black Muslims, as they were known, adhered to a strict code of personal behavior; men were recognizable by their dark suits, white shirts, and ties, women by their long dresses and head coverings. Black Muslims preached an apocalyptic brand of Islam, anticipating the day when Allah would banish the white "devils" and give the black nation justice. Although its full converts numbered only about ten thousand, the Nation of Islam had a wide popular following among African Americans in northern cities.

Malcolm X The most charismatic Black Muslim was Malcolm X (the *X* stood for his African family name, lost under slavery). A spellbinding speaker, Malcolm X preached a philosophy of militant separatism, although he advocated violence only for self-defense. Hostile to mainstream civil rights organizations, he caustically referred to the 1963 March on Washington as the "Farce on Washington." Malcolm X said plainly, "I believe in the brotherhood of man, all men, but I don't believe in brotherhood with anybody who doesn't want brotherhood with me." Malcolm X had little interest in changing the minds of hostile whites. Strengthening the black community, he believed, represented a surer path to freedom and equality.

In 1964, after a power struggle with founder Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X broke with the Nation of Islam. While he remained a black nationalist, he moderated his antiwhite views and began to talk of a class struggle uniting poor whites and blacks. Following an inspiring trip to the Middle East, where he saw Muslims of all races worshipping together, Malcolm X formed the Organization of Afro-American Unity to promote black pride and to work with traditional civil rights groups. But he got no further. On February 21, 1965, Malcolm X was assassinated while delivering a speech in Harlem. Three Black Muslims were later convicted of his murder.

Black Power A more secular brand of black nationalism emerged in 1966 when SNCC and CORE activists, following the lead of Stokely Carmichael, began to

Malcolm X

Until his murder in 1965, Malcolm X was the leading proponent of black nationalism in the United States. A brilliant and dynamic orator, Malcolm had been a minister in the Nation of Islam for nearly thirteen years, until he broke with the Nation in 1964. His emphasis on black pride and self-help and his unrelenting criticism of white supremacy made him one of the freedom movement's most inspirational figures, both in life and well after his death. ©Topham/The Image Works.

call for black self-reliance under the banner of Black Power. Advocates of Black Power asked fundamental questions: If alliances with whites were necessary to achieve racial justice, as King believed they were, did that make African Americans dependent on the good intentions of whites? If so, could black people trust those good intentions in the long run? Increasingly, those inclined toward Black Power believed that African Americans should build economic and political power in their own communities. Such power would translate into a less dependent relationship with white America. "For once," Carmichael wrote, "black people are going to use the words they want to use — not the words whites want to hear."

Spurred by the Black Power slogan, African American activists turned their attention to the poverty and social injustice faced by so many black people. President Johnson had declared the War on Poverty, and black organizers joined, setting up day care centers, running community job training programs, and working to improve housing and health care in urban neighborhoods. In major cities such as Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, and Pittsburgh, activists sought to open jobs in police and fire departments and in construction and transportation to black workers, who had been excluded from these occupations for decades. Others worked to end police harassment — a major problem in urban black communities — and to help black entrepreneurs to receive small-business loans. CORE leader Floyd McKissick explained, "Black Power is not Black Supremacy; it is a united Black Voice reflecting racial pride."

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW

Why were Black Power and black nationalism compelling to many African Americans?

The attention to racial pride led some African Americans to reject white society and to pursue more authentic cultural forms. In addition to focusing on economic disadvantage, Black Power emphasized black pride and self-determination. Those subscribing to these beliefs wore African clothing, chose natural hairstyles, and celebrated black history, art, and literature. The Black Arts movement thrived, and musical tastes shifted from the crossover sounds of Motown to the soul music of Philadelphia, Memphis, and Chicago.

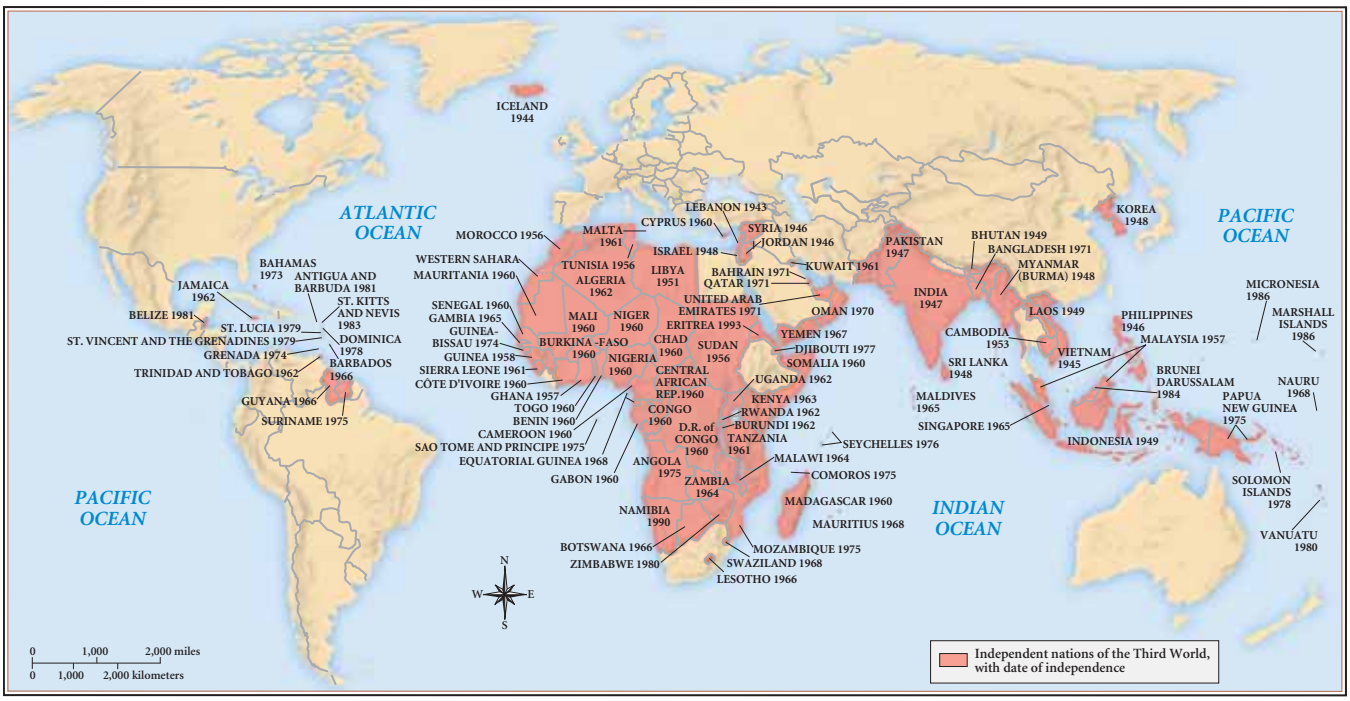
Black Panther Party One of the most radical nationalist groups was the **Black Panther Party**, founded in Oakland, California, in 1966 by two college students, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale. A militant organization dedicated to protecting African Americans from police violence, the Panthers took their cue from the slain Malcolm X. They vehemently opposed the Vietnam War and declared their affinity for Third World revolutionary movements and armed struggle (Map 27.5). In their manifesto, "What We Want, What We Believe," the Panthers outlined their Ten Point Program for black liberation.

The Panthers' organization spread to other cities in the late 1960s, where members undertook a wide range of community-organizing projects. Their free breakfast program for children and their testing program for sickle-cell anemia, an inherited disease with a high incidence among African Americans, were especially popular. However, the Panthers' radicalism and belief in armed self-defense resulted in violent clashes with police. Newton was charged with murdering a police officer, several Panthers were killed by police, and dozens went to prison. Moreover, under its domestic counterintelligence program, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had begun disrupting party activities.

Young Lords Among those inspired by the Black Panthers were Puerto Ricans in New York. Their vehicle was the **Young Lords Organization** (YLO), later renamed the Young Lords Party. Like the Black Panthers, YLO activists sought self-determination for Puerto Ricans, both those in the United States and those on the island in the Caribbean. In practical terms, the YLO focused on improving neighborhood conditions: city garbage collection was notoriously poor in East Harlem, where most Puerto Ricans lived, and slumlords had allowed the housing to become squalid. Women in the YLO were especially active, protesting sterilization campaigns against Puerto Rican women and fighting to improve access to health care. As was true of so many nationalist groups, immediate victories for the YLO were few, but their dedicated community

The Black Panther Party

One of the most radical organizations of the 1960s, the Black Panther Party was founded in 1966 by Bobby Seale and Huey Newton (shown together in the photograph on the left) in Oakland, California. Its members carried weapons, advocated socialism, and fought police brutality in black communities, but they also ran into their own trouble with the law. Nevertheless, the party had great success in reaching ordinary people, often with programs targeted at the poor. On the right, party members distribute free hot dogs to the public in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1969. LEFT: Bruno Barbey/Magnum Photos. RIGHT: Photo by David Fenton/Getty Images.



MAP 27.5

Decolonization and the Third World, 1943–1990

In the decades after World War II, African nations threw off the yoke of European colonialism. Some new nations, such as Ghana, the former British colony of Gold Coast, achieved independence rather peacefully. Others, such as Algeria and Mozambique, did so only after bloody anticolonial wars. American civil rights activists watched African decolonization with great enthusiasm, seeing the two struggles as linked. "Sure we identified with the blacks in Africa," civil rights leader John Lewis said. "Here were black people, talking of freedom and liberation and independence thousands of miles away." In 1960 alone, the year that student sit-ins swept across the American South, more than a dozen African nations gained independence.

organizing produced a generation of leaders (many of whom later went into politics) and awakened community consciousness.

The New Urban Politics Black Power also inspired African Americans to work within the political system. By the mid-1960s, black residents neared 50 percent of the population in several major American cities — such as Atlanta, Cleveland, Detroit, and Washington, D.C. Black Power in these cities was not abstract; it counted in real votes. Residents of Gary, Indiana, and Cleveland, Ohio, elected the first black mayors of large cities in 1967. Richard Hatcher in Gary and Carl Stokes in Cleveland helped forge a new urban politics in the United States. Their campaign teams registered thousands of black voters and made alliances with enough whites to create a working majority. Many saw Stokes's victory, in particular, as heralding a new day. As one of Stokes's campaign staffers said: "If Carl Stokes could run for mayor in the eighth largest city in America, then maybe who knows. We could be senators. We could be anything we wanted."

Having met with some political success, black leaders gathered in Gary for the 1972 National Black Political Convention. In a meeting that brought together radicals, liberals, and centrists, debate centered on whether to form a third political party. Hatcher recalled that many in attendance believed that "there was going to be a black third party." In the end, however, delegates decided to "give the Democratic Party one more chance." Instead of creating a third party, the convention issued the National Black Political Agenda, which included calls for community control of schools in black neighborhoods, national health insurance, and the elimination of the death penalty.

Democrats failed to enact the National Black Political Agenda, but African Americans were increasingly integrated into American political institutions. By the end of the century, black elected officials had become commonplace in major American cities. There were forty-seven African American big-city mayors by the 1990s, and blacks had led most of the nation's most prominent cities: Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.

These politicians had translated black power not into a wholesale rejection of white society but into a revitalized liberalism that would remain an indelible feature of urban politics for the rest of the century.

Poverty and Urban Violence

Black Power was not, fundamentally, a violent political ideology. But violence did play a decisive role in the politics of black liberation in the mid-1960s. Too many Americans, white and black, had little knowledge or understanding of the rage that existed just below the surface in many poor northern black neighborhoods. That rage boiled over in a wave of riots that struck the nation's cities in mid-decade. The first "long hot summer" began in July 1964 in New York City when police shot a black criminal suspect in Harlem. Angry youths looted and rioted there for a week. Over the next four years, the volatile issue of police brutality set off riots in dozens of cities.

In August 1965, the arrest of a young black motorist in the Watts section of Los Angeles sparked six days of rioting that left thirty-four people dead. "There is a different type of Negro emerging," one riot participant told investigators. "They are not going to wait for the evolutionary process for their rights to be a man." The riots of 1967, however, were the most serious, engulfing twenty-two cities in July and August. Forty-three people were killed in Detroit alone, nearly all of them black, and $50 million worth of property was destroyed. President Johnson called in the National Guard and U.S. Army troops, many of them having just returned from Vietnam, to restore order.

Johnson, who believed that the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act had immeasurably helped African Americans, was stunned by the rioting. Despondent at the news from Watts, "he refused to look at the cables from Los Angeles," recalled one aide. Virtually all black leaders condemned the rioting, though they understood its origins in poverty and deprivation. At a meeting in Watts, Martin Luther King Jr. admitted that he had "failed to take the civil rights movement to the masses of the people," such as those in the Los Angeles ghetto. His appearance appeased few. "We don't need your dreams; we need jobs!" one heckler shouted at King.

Following the gut-wrenching riots in Detroit and Newark in 1967, Johnson appointed a presidential commission, headed by Illinois governor Otto Kerner, to investigate the causes of the violence. Released in 1968, the Kerner Commission Report was a searing look at race in America, the most honest and forthright government document about race since the Presidential Committee on Civil Rights' 1947 report "To Secure These Rights." "Our nation is moving toward two societies," the Kerner Commission Report concluded, "one black, one white — separate and unequal." The report did not excuse the brick-throwing, firebombing, and looting of the previous summers, but it placed the riots in sociological context. Shut out of white-dominated society, impoverished African Americans felt they had no stake in the social order.

Stirred by turmoil in the cities, and seeing the limitations of his civil rights achievements, Martin Luther King Jr. began to expand his vision beyond civil rights to confront the deep-seated problems of poverty and racism in America as a whole. He criticized President Johnson and Congress for prioritizing the war in Vietnam over the fight against poverty at home, and he planned a massive movement called the Poor People's Campaign to fight economic injustice. To advance that cause, he went to Memphis, Tennessee, to support a strike by predominantly black sanitation workers. There, on April 4, 1968, he was assassinated by escaped white convict James Earl Ray. King's death set off a further round of urban rioting, with major violence breaking out in more than a hundred cities.

Tragically, King was murdered before achieving the transformations he sought: an end to racial injustice and a solution to poverty. The civil rights movement had helped set in motion permanent, indeed revolutionary, changes in American race relations. Jim Crow segregation ended, federal legislation ensured black Americans' most basic civil rights, and the white monopoly on political power in the South was broken. However, by 1968, the fight over civil rights had also divided the nation. The Democratic Party was splitting, and a new conservatism was gaining strength. Many whites felt that the issue of civil rights was receiving too much attention, to the detriment of other national concerns. The riots of 1965, 1967, and 1968 further alienated many whites, who blamed the violence on the inability of Democratic officials to maintain law and order.

Rise of the Chicano Movement

Mexican Americans had something of a counterpart to Martin Luther King: Cesar Chavez. In Chavez's case, however, economic struggle in community organizations and the labor movement had shaped his approach to mobilizing society's disadvantaged. He and Dolores Huerta had worked for the Community Service Organization (CSO), a California group founded in the 1950s to promote Mexican political participation and civil rights. Leaving that organization in 1962, Chavez concentrated on the agricultural region around Delano,

California. With Huerta, he organized the **United Farm Workers (UFW)**, a union for migrant workers.

Huerta was a brilliant organizer, but the deeply spiritual and ascetic Chavez embodied the moral force behind what was popularly called La Causa. A 1965 grape pickers' strike led the UFW to call a nationwide boycott of table grapes, bringing Chavez huge publicity and backing from the AFL-CIO. In a bid for attention to the struggle, Chavez staged a hunger strike in 1968, which ended dramatically after twenty-eight days with Senator Robert F. Kennedy at his side to break the fast. Victory came in 1970 when California grape growers signed contracts recognizing the UFW.

Mexican Americans shared some civil rights concerns with African Americans — especially access to jobs — but they also had unique concerns: the status of the Spanish language in schools, for instance, and immigration policy. Mexican Americans had been politically active since the 1940s, aiming to surmount factors that obstructed their political involvement: poverty, language barriers, and discrimination. Their efforts began to pay off in the 1960s, when the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) mobilized support for John F. Kennedy and worked successfully with other organizations to elect Mexican American candidates such as Edward Roybal of California and Henry González of Texas to Congress. Two other organizations, the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund (MALDF) and the Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project, carried the fight against discrimination to Washington, D.C., and mobilized Mexican Americans into an increasingly powerful voting bloc.

Younger Mexican Americans grew impatient with civil rights groups such as MAPA and MALDF, however. The barrios of Los Angeles and other western cities produced the militant Brown Berets, modeled on the Black Panthers (who wore black berets). Rejecting their elders' assimilationist approach (that is, a belief in adapting to Anglo society), fifteen hundred Mexican American students met in Denver in 1969 to hammer out a new political and cultural agenda. They proclaimed a new term, *Chicano* (and its feminine form, *Chicana*), to replace *Mexican American*, and later organized a political party, La Raza Unida (The United Race), to promote Chicano interests. Young Chicana feminists formed a number of organizations, including Las Hijas (The Daughters), which organized women both on college campuses and in the barrios. In California and many southwestern states, students staged demonstrations to press for bilingual education, the hiring of more Chicano teachers, and the creation of Chicano studies programs. By the 1970s, dozens of such programs were offered at universities throughout the region.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

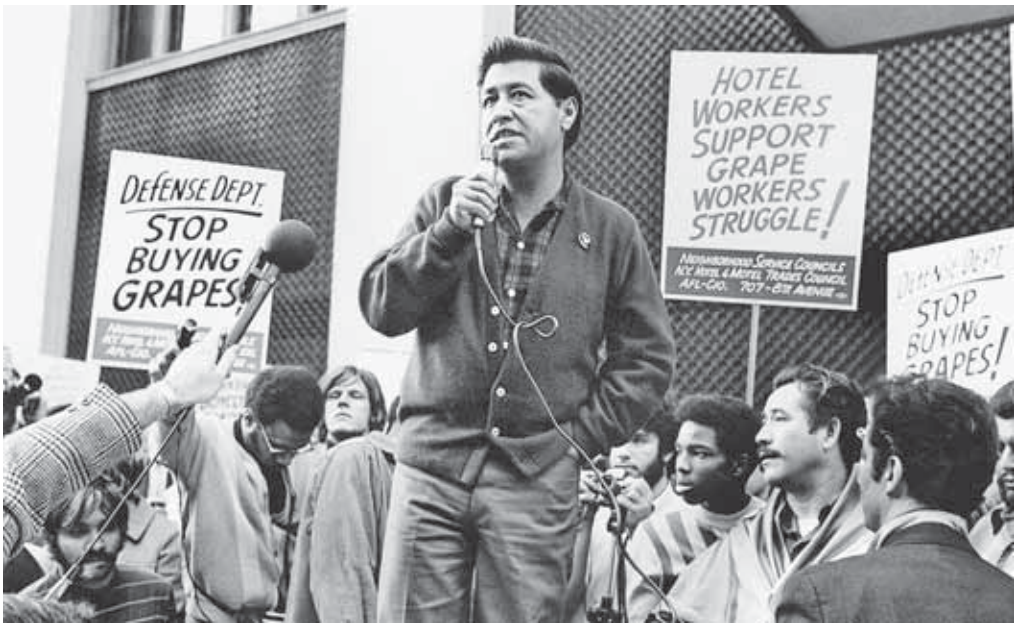
What did the Chicano and American Indian movements have in common with the black freedom movement?

The American Indian Movement

American Indians, inspired by the Black Power and Chicano movements, organized to address their unique circumstances. Numbering nearly 800,000 in the 1960s, native people were exceedingly diverse — divided by

Cesar Chavez

Influenced equally by the Catholic Church and Mahatma Gandhi, Cesar Chavez was one of the leading Mexican American civil rights and social justice activists of the 1960s. With Dolores Huerta, he cofounded the United Farm Workers (UFW), a union of primarily Mexican American agricultural laborers in California. Here he speaks at a rally in support of the grape boycott, an attempt by the UFW to force the nation's grape growers — and, by extension, the larger agriculture industry — to improve wages and working conditions and to bargain in good faith with the union. © Jason Laure/The Image Works.

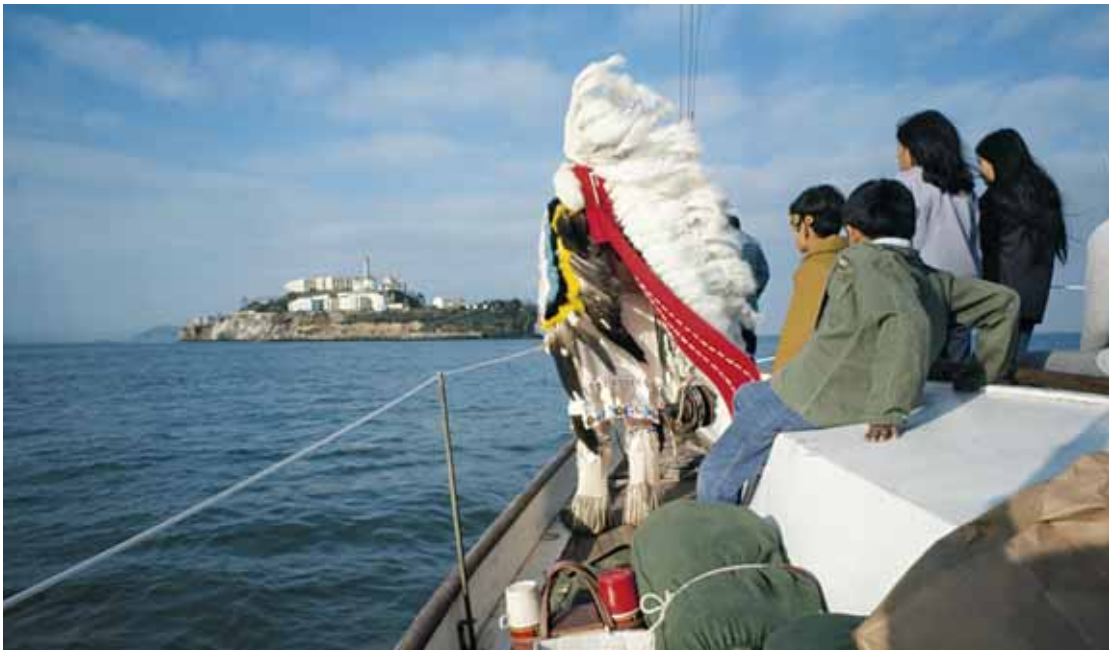


language, tribal history, region, and degree of integration into American life. As a group, they shared a staggering unemployment rate—ten times the national average—and were the worst off in housing, disease rates, and access to education. Native people also had an often troubling relationship with the federal government. In the 1960s, the prevailing spirit of protest swept through Indian communities. Young militants challenged their elders in the National Congress of American Indians. Beginning in 1960, the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC), under the slogan "For a Greater Indian America," promoted the ideal of Native Americans as a single ethnic group. The effort to both unite Indians and celebrate individual tribal culture proved a difficult balancing act.

The NIYC had substantial influence within tribal communities, but two other organizations, the militant Indians of All Tribes (IAT) and the **American Indian Movement (AIM)**, attracted more attention in the larger society. These groups embraced the concept of Red Power, and beginning in 1968 they staged escalating protests to draw attention to Indian concerns, especially the concerns of urban Indians, many of whom had been encouraged, or forced, to leave reservations by the federal government in earlier decades. In 1969, members of the IAT occupied the deserted federal penitentiary on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay and proclaimed: "We will purchase said Alcatraz Island for twenty-four dollars in glass beads and red cloth, a precedent set by the white man's purchase of a similar island [Manhattan] about 300 years ago." In 1972, AIM members joined the Trail of Broken Treaties, a march sponsored by a number of Indian groups. When AIM activists seized the headquarters of the hated Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C., and ransacked the building, older tribal leaders denounced them.

To see a longer excerpt of the "Proclamation To the Great White Father and All His People," along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History***.

However, AIM managed to focus national media attention on Native American issues with a siege at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, in February 1973. The site of the infamous 1890 massacre of the Sioux, Wounded Knee was situated on the Pine Ridge Reservation, where young AIM activists had cultivated ties to sympathetic elders. For more than two months, AIM members occupied a small collection of buildings, surrounded by a cordon of FBI agents and U.S. marshals. Several gun battles left two dead, and the siege was finally brought to a negotiated end. Although upsetting



Native American Activism

In November 1969, a group of Native Americans, united under the name *Indians of All Tribes*, occupied Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay. They claimed the land under a nineteenth-century treaty, but their larger objective was to force the federal government—which owned the island—to address the long-standing grievances of native peoples, including widespread poverty on reservations. Shown here is the view along the gunwale of the boat carrying Tim Williams, a chief of the Klamath River Hurek tribe in full ceremonial regalia, to the island. Ralph Crane/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images.

to many white onlookers and Indian elders alike, AIM protests attracted widespread mainstream media coverage and spurred government action on tribal issues.

SUMMARY

African Americans and others who fought for civil rights from World War II through the early 1970s sought equal rights and economic opportunity. That quest was also inspired by various forms of nationalism that called for self-determination for minority groups. For most of the first half of the twentieth century, African Americans faced a harsh Jim Crow system in the South and a segregated, though more open, society in the North. Segregation was maintained by a widespread belief in black inferiority and by a southern political system that denied African Americans the vote. In the Southwest and West, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, and Americans of Asian descent faced discriminatory laws and social practices that marginalized them.

The civil rights movement attacked racial inequality in three ways. First, the movement sought equality under the law for all Americans, regardless of race. This required patient work through the judicial system and the more arduous task of winning congressional legislation, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Second, grassroots activists, using nonviolent protest, pushed all levels of government (from city to federal) to abide by Supreme Court decisions (such as *Brown v. Board of Education*) and civil rights laws. Third, the movement worked to open economic opportunity for minority populations. This was embodied in the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Ultimately, the civil rights movement successfully established the principle of legal equality, but it faced more difficult problems in fighting poverty and creating widespread economic opportunity.

The limitations of the civil rights model led black activists — along with Mexican Americans, Native Americans, and others — to adopt a more nationalist stance after 1966. Nationalism stressed the creation of political and economic power in communities of color, the celebration of racial heritage, and the rejection of white cultural standards.

CHAPTER REVIEW

MAKE IT STICK Go to **LearningCurve** to retain what you've read.

TERMS TO KNOW

Identify and explain the significance of each term below.

Key Concepts and Events

rights liberalism (p. 868)
Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) (p. 870)
Jim Crow (p. 870)
Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (p. 873)
"To Secure These Rights" (p. 875)
States' Rights Democratic Party (p. 875)
American GI Forum (p. 877)
Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (p. 878)
Montgomery Bus Boycott (p. 881)
Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) (p. 882)
Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) (p. 882)
March on Washington (p. 886)
Civil Rights Act of 1964 (p. 890)
Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (p. 890)
Voting Rights Act of 1965 (p. 891)
black nationalism (p. 892)
Nation of Islam (p. 892)
Black Panther Party (p. 894)
Young Lords Organization (p. 894)
United Farm Workers (UFW) (p. 897)
American Indian Movement (AIM) (p. 898)

Key People

A. Philip Randolph (p. 873)
James Farmer (p. 873)
Cesar Chavez (p. 877)
Dolores Huerta (p. 877)
Thurgood Marshall (p. 877)
Rosa Parks (p. 881)
Martin Luther King Jr. (p. 881)
Malcolm X (p. 892)
Stokely Carmichael (p. 892)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of the chapter's main ideas.

1. Why did the civil rights movement begin when it did?
2. How would you explain the rise of the protest movement after 1955? How did nonviolent tactics help the movement?
3. How did the civil rights movement create a crisis in liberalism and in the Democratic Party?
4. How did the civil rights movement and other activist groups cause changes to government and society?
5. **THEMATIC UNDERSTANDING** One of the most significant themes of the period from 1945 to the 1980s is the growth of the power of the federal government. (See "Politics and Power" and "Identity" on the thematic timeline on p. 803.) In what ways is the civil rights movement also part of that story?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Recognize the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters by answering these questions.

1. **ACROSS TIME AND PLACE** Why is the decade of the 1960s often referred to as the "second Reconstruction"? Think broadly about the century between the end of the Civil War in 1865 and the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. What are the key turning points in African American history in that long period?
2. **VISUAL EVIDENCE** Examine the photograph of a confrontation at North Little Rock High School on page 881. How does this photograph reveal the role that the media played in the civil rights struggle? Can you find similar evidence in other photographs from this chapter?

MORE TO EXPLORE

Start here to learn more about the events discussed in this chapter.

Peniel Joseph, *Waiting 'til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* (2006). An important history of Black Power.

Ian F. Haney López, *Racism on Trial: The Chicano Fight for Justice* (2003). An exceptional case study of the Chicano movement in Los Angeles.

Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (1995). A detailed case study that provides a local view of movement activism.

Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement* (2003). A powerful biography of a key activist.

Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (2008). A significant, readable overview of the civil rights movement.

The Civil Rights in Mississippi Digital Archive, at **digilib.usm.edu/crmda.php**, offers 150 oral histories relating to Mississippi.

TIMELINE

Ask yourself why this chapter begins and ends with these dates and then identify the links among related events.

1941	• A. Philip Randolph proposes march on Washington • Roosevelt issues Executive Order 8802
1942	• Double V Campaign launched • Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) founded
1947	• "To Secure These Rights" published • Jackie Robinson integrates major league baseball • *Mendez v. Westminster School Distric*t
1948	• States' Rights Democratic Party (Dixiecrats) founded
1954	• *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*
1955	• Emmett Till murdered (August) • Montgomery Bus Boycott (December)
1956	• Southern Manifesto issued against *Brown* ruling
1957	• Integration of Little Rock High School • Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) founded
1960	• Greensboro, North Carolina, sit-ins (February) • Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) founded
1961	• Freedom Rides (May)
1963	• Demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama • March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom
1964	• Civil Rights Act passed by Congress • Freedom Summer
1965	• Voting Rights Act passed by Congress • Malcolm X assassinated (February 21) • Riot in Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles (August)
1966	• Black Panther Party founded
1967	• Riots in Detroit and Newark
1968	• Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated (April 4)
1969	• Young Lords founded • Occupation of Alcatraz
1972	• National Black Political Convention • "Trail of Broken Treaties" protest

KEY TURNING POINTS: The history of the civil rights movement is more than a list of significant events. Pick two or three events from this timeline and explain how their timing and the broader historical context contributed to the precise role each played in the movement as a whole.

CHAPTER 28

Uncivil Wars: Liberal Crisis and Conservative Rebirth 1961–1972

IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA

What were liberalism's social and political achievements in the 1960s, and how did debates over liberal values contribute to conflict at home and reflect tension abroad?

The civil rights movement stirred American liberals and pushed them to initiate bold new government policies to advance racial equality. That progressive spirit inspired an even broader reform agenda that came to include women's rights, new social programs for the poor and the aged, job training, environmental laws, and other educational and social benefits for the middle class. All told, Congress passed more liberal legislation between 1964 and 1972 than in any period since the 1930s. The great bulk of it came during the 1965–1966 legislative session, one of the most active in American history. Liberalism was at high tide.

It did not stay there long. Liberals quickly came under assault from two directions. First, young activists became frustrated with slow progress on civil rights and rebelled against the Vietnam War. At the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, police teargassed and clubbed antiwar demonstrators, who chanted (as the TV cameras rolled), "The whole world is watching!" Some of them had been among the young idealists inspired by Kennedy's inaugural address and the civil rights movement. Now they rejected everything that Cold War liberalism stood for. Inside the convention hall, the proceedings were chaotic, the atmosphere poisonous, the delegates bitterly divided over Vietnam.

A second assault on liberalism came from conservatives, who found their footing after being marginalized during the 1950s. Conservatives opposed the dramatic expansion of the federal government under President Lyndon B. Johnson and disdained the "permissive society" they believed liberalism had unleashed. Advocating law and order, belittling welfare, and resisting key civil rights reforms, conservatives leaped back to political life in the late sixties. Their champion was Barry Goldwater, a Republican senator from Arizona, who warned that "a government big enough to give you everything you want is also big enough to take away everything you have."

The clashing of left, right, and center made the decade between the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy in 1961 and the 1972 landslide reelection of Richard Nixon one of the most contentious, complicated, and explosive eras in American history. There were thousands of marches and demonstrations; massive new federal programs aimed at achieving civil rights, ending poverty, and extending the welfare state; and new voices among women, African Americans, and Latinos demanding to be heard. With heated, vitriolic rhetoric on all sides, these developments overlapped with political assassinations and violence both overseas and at home. In this chapter, we undertake to explain how the rekindling of liberal reform under the twin auspices of the civil rights movement and the leadership of President Johnson gave way to a profound liberal crisis and the resurgence of conservatism.

"I Want Out" Protest movements of all kinds shook the foundations of American society and national politics in the 1960s. No issue was more controversial and divisive than the war in Vietnam. Private Collection/ Peter Newark American Pictures/The Bridgeman Art Library.

Liberalism at High Tide

In May 1964, Lyndon Johnson, president for barely six months, delivered the commencement address at the University of Michigan. Johnson offered his audience a grand and inspirational vision of a new liberal age. "We have the opportunity to move not only toward the rich society and the powerful society," Johnson continued, "but upward to the **Great Society**." As the sun-baked graduates listened, Johnson spelled out what he meant: "The Great Society rests on abundance and liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice." Even this, Johnson declared, was just the beginning. He would push to renew American education, rebuild the cities, and restore the natural environment. Ambitious — even audacious — Johnson's vision was a New Deal for a new era. From that day forward, the president would harness his considerable political skills to make that vision a reality. A tragic irony, however, was that he held the presidency at all.

To see a longer excerpt of Johnson's commencement address, along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History***.

John F. Kennedy's Promise

In 1961, three years before Johnson's Great Society speech, John F. Kennedy declared at his inauguration: "Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans." He challenged his fellow citizens to "ask what you can do for your country," a call to service that inspired many Americans. The British journalist Henry Fairley called Kennedy's activism "the politics of expectation." Over time, the expectations Kennedy embodied, combined with his ability to inspire a younger generation, laid the groundwork for an era of liberal reform.

Kennedy's legislative record did not live up to his promising image. This was not entirely his fault; congressional partisanship and resistance stymied many presidents in the twentieth century. Kennedy's domestic advisors devised bold plans for health insurance for the aged, a new antipoverty program, and a tax cut. After enormous pressure from Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders — and pushed by the demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963 — they added a civil rights bill. None of these initiatives went anywhere in the Senate, where powerful conservative interests practiced an old legislative art: delay, delay, delay. All Kennedy's bills were at a virtual standstill when tragedy struck.

On November 22, 1963, Kennedy was in Dallas, Texas, on a political trip. As he and his wife, Jacqueline, rode in an open car past the Texas School Book Depository, he was shot through the head and neck by a sniper. He died within the hour. (The accused killer, twenty-four-year-old Lee Harvey Oswald, was himself killed while in custody a few days later by an assassin, a Dallas nightclub owner named Jack Ruby.) Before Air Force One left Dallas to take the president's body back to Washington, a grim-faced Lyndon Johnson was sworn in as Kennedy's successor.

Kennedy's youthful image, the trauma of his assassination, and the nation's sense of loss contributed to a powerful Kennedy mystique. His canonization after death capped what had been an extraordinarily stage-managed presidency. An admiring country saw in Jack and Jackie Kennedy an ideal American marriage (though JFK was, in fact, an obsessive womanizer); in Kennedy the epitome of robust good health (though he was actually afflicted by Addison's disease); and in the Kennedy White House a glamorous world of high fashion and celebrity. No other presidency ever matched the Kennedy aura, but every president after him embraced the idea that image mattered as much as reality in conducting a politically effective presidency.

Lyndon B. Johnson and the Great Society

In many ways, Lyndon Johnson was the opposite of Kennedy. A seasoned Texas politician and longtime Senate leader, Johnson was most at home in the back rooms of power. He was a rough-edged character who had scrambled his way up, with few scruples, to wealth and political eminence. But he never forgot his modest, hill-country origins or lost his sympathy for the downtrodden. Johnson lacked Kennedy's style, but he rose to the political challenge after Kennedy's assassination, applying his astonishing energy and negotiating skills to revive several of Kennedy's stalled programs, and many more of his own, in the ambitious Great Society.

On assuming the presidency, Johnson promptly pushed for civil rights legislation as a memorial to his slain predecessor (Chapter 27). His motives were complex. As a southerner who had previously opposed civil rights for African Americans, Johnson wished to prove that he was more than a regional figure — he would be the president of all the people. He also wanted to make a mark on history, telling Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders to lace up their sneakers

The Great Society

President Lyndon Johnson toured poverty-stricken regions of the country in 1964. Here he visits with Tom Fletcher, a father of eight children in Martin County, Kentucky. Johnson envisioned a dramatic expansion of liberal social programs, both to assist the needy and to strengthen the middle class, that he called the Great Society. © Bettmann/Corbis.

because he would move so fast on civil rights they would be running to catch up. Politically, the choice was risky. Johnson would please the Democratic Party's liberal wing, but because most northern African Americans already voted Democratic, the party would gain few additional votes. Moreover, southern white Democrats would likely revolt, dividing the party at a time when Johnson's legislative agenda most required unanimity. But Johnson pushed ahead, and the 1964 Civil Rights Act stands, in part, as a testament to the president's political risk-taking.

More than civil rights, what drove Johnson hardest was his determination to "end poverty in our time." The president called it a national disgrace that in the midst of plenty, one-fifth of all Americans — hidden from most people's sight in Appalachia, urban ghettos, migrant labor camps, and Indian reservations — lived in poverty. But, Johnson declared, "for the first time in our history, it is possible to conquer poverty."

The **Economic Opportunity Act** of 1964, which created a series of programs to reach these Americans, was the president's answer — what he called the War on Poverty. This legislation included several different initiatives. Head Start provided free nursery schools to prepare disadvantaged preschoolers for kindergarten. The Job Corps and Upward Bound provided young people with training and employment. Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), modeled on the Peace Corps, offered technical assistance to the urban and rural poor. An array of regional development programs focused on spurring economic growth in impoverished areas. On balance, the 1964 legislation provided services to the poor rather than jobs, leading some critics to charge the War on Poverty with doing too little.

The 1964 Election With the Civil Rights Act passed and his War on Poverty initiatives off the ground, Johnson turned his attention to the upcoming presidential election. Not content to govern in Kennedy's shadow, he wanted a national mandate of his own. Privately, Johnson cast himself less like Kennedy than as the heir of Franklin Roosevelt and the expansive liberalism of the 1930s. Johnson had come to Congress for the first time in 1937 and had long admired FDR's political skills. He reminded his advisors never to forget "the meek and the humble and the lowly," because "President Roosevelt never did."

In the 1964 election, Johnson faced Republican Barry Goldwater of Arizona. An archconservative, Goldwater ran on an anticommunist, antigovernment platform, offering "a choice, not an echo" — meaning he represented a genuinely conservative alternative to liberalism rather than the echo of liberalism offered by the moderate wing of the Republican Party (Chapter 25). Goldwater campaigned against the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and promised a more vigorous Cold War foreign policy. Among those supporting him was former actor Ronald Reagan, whose speech on behalf of Goldwater at the Republican convention, called "A

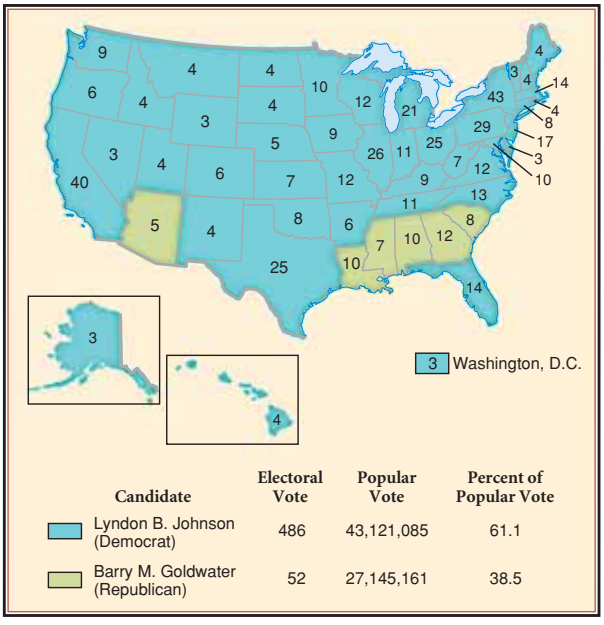
Time for Choosing," made him a rising star in the party.

But Goldwater's strident foreign policy alienated voters. "Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice," he told Republicans at the convention. Moreover, there remained strong national sentiment for Kennedy. Telling Americans that he was running to fulfill Kennedy's legacy, Johnson and his running mate, Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota, won in a landslide (Map 28.1). In the long run, Goldwater's candidacy marked the beginning of a grassroots conservative revolt that would eventually transform the Republican Party. In the short run, however, Johnson's sweeping victory gave him a popular mandate and, equally important, congressional majorities that rivaled FDR's in 1935—just what he needed to push the Great Society forward (Table 28.1).

Great Society Initiatives One of Johnson's first successes was breaking a congressional deadlock on education and health care. Passed in April 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act authorized $1 billion in federal funds for teacher training and other educational programs. Standing in his old Texas schoolhouse, Johnson, a former teacher, said: "I believe no law I have signed or will ever sign means more to the future of America." Six months later, Johnson signed the Higher Education Act, providing federal scholarships for college students. Johnson also had the votes he needed to achieve some form of national health insurance. That year, he also won passage of two new programs: **Medicare**, a health plan for the elderly funded by a surcharge on Social Security payroll taxes, and **Medicaid**, a health plan for the poor paid for by general tax revenues and administered by the states.

The Great Society's agenda included environmental reform as well: an expanded national park system, improvement of the nation's air and water, protection for endangered species, stronger land-use planning, and highway beautification. Hardly pausing for breath, Johnson oversaw the creation of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); won funding for hundreds of thousands of units of public housing; made new investments in urban rapid transit such as the new Washington, D.C., Metro and the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system in San Francisco; ushered new child safety and consumer protection laws through Congress; and helped create the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities to support the work of artists, writers, and scholars.

It even became possible, at this moment of reform zeal, to tackle the nation's discriminatory immigration policy. The Immigration Act of 1965 abandoned the quota system that favored northern Europeans, replacing it with numerical limits that did not discriminate among nations. To promote family reunification, the law also stipulated that close relatives of legal residents in the United States could be admitted outside the numerical limits, an exception that especially benefitted Asian and Latin American immigrants. Since 1965, as a result, immigrants from those regions have become increasingly visible in American society (Chapter 31).



Candidate	Electoral Vote	Popular Vote	Percent of Popular Vote
Lyndon B. Johnson (Democrat)	486	43,121,085	61.1
Barry M. Goldwater (Republican)	52	27,145,161	38.5

MAP 28.1
The Presidential Election of 1964

This map reveals how one-sided was the victory of Lyndon Johnson over Barry Goldwater in 1964. Except for Arizona, his home state, Goldwater won only five states in the Deep South—not of much immediate consolation to him, but a sure indicator that the South was cutting its historic ties to the Democratic Party. Moreover, although soundly rejected in 1964, Goldwater's far right critique of "big government" laid the foundation for a Republican resurgence in the 1980s.

Assessing the Great Society The Great Society enjoyed mixed results. The proportion of Americans living below the poverty line dropped from 20 percent to 13 percent between 1963 and 1968 (Figure 28.1). Medicare and Medicaid, the most enduring of the Great Society programs, helped millions of elderly and poor citizens afford necessary health care. Further, as millions of African Americans moved into the middle

TABLE 28.1

Major Great Society Legislation

	Civil Rights	
1964	Twenty-fourth Amendment	Outlawed poll tax in federal elections
	Civil Rights Act	Banned discrimination in employment and public accommodations on the basis of race, religion, sex, or national origin
1965	Voting Rights Act	Outlawed literacy tests for voting; provided federal supervision of registration in historically low-registration areas
	Social Welfare	
1964	Economic Opportunity Act	Created Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) to administer War on Poverty programs such as Head Start, Job Corps, and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)
1965	Medical Care Act	Provided medical care for the poor (Medicaid) and the elderly (Medicare)
1966	Minimum Wage Act	Raised hourly minimum wage from $1.25 to $1.40 and expanded coverage to new groups
	Education	
1965	Elementary and Secondary Education Act	Granted federal aid for education of poor children
	National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities	Provided federal funding and support for artists and scholars
	Higher Education Act	Provided federal scholarships for postsecondary education
	Housing and Urban Development	
1964	Urban Mass Transportation Act	Provided federal aid to urban mass transit
	Omnibus Housing Act	Provided federal funds for public housing and rent subsidies for low-income families
1965	Housing and Urban Development Act	Created Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
1966	Metropolitan Area Redevelopment and Demonstration Cities Acts	Designated 150 "model cities" for combined programs of public housing, social services, and job training
	Environment	
1964	Wilderness Preservation Act	Designated 9.1 million acres of federal lands as "wilderness areas," barring future roads, buildings, or commercial use
1965	Air and Water Quality Acts	Set tougher air quality standards; required states to enforce water quality standards for interstate waters
	Miscellaneous	
1964	Tax Reduction Act	Reduced personal and corporate income tax rates
1965	Immigration Act	Abandoned national quotas of 1924 law, allowing more non-European immigration
	Appalachian Regional and Development Act	Provided federal funding for roads, health clinics, and other public works projects in economically depressed regions

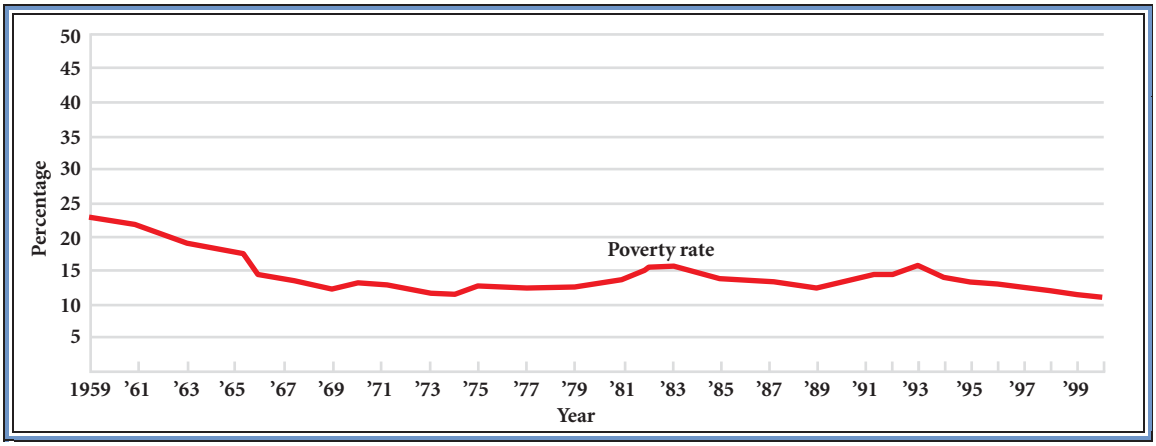


FIGURE 28.1
Americans in Poverty, 1959–2000

Between 1959 and 1973 the poverty rate among American families dropped by more than half—from 23 percent to 11 percent. There was, however, sharp disagreement about the reasons for that notable decline. Liberals credited the War on Poverty, while conservatives favored the high-performing economy, with the significant poverty dip of 1965–1966 caused by military spending, not Johnson's domestic programs.

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
What new roles did the federal government assume under Great Society initiatives, and how did they extend the New Deal tradition?

class, the black poverty rate fell by half. Liberals believed they were on the right track.

Conservatives, however, gave more credit for these changes to the decade's booming economy than to government programs. Indeed, conservative critics accused Johnson and other liberals of believing that every social problem could be solved with a government program. In the final analysis, the Great Society dramatically improved the financial situation of the elderly, reached millions of children, and increased the racial diversity of American society and workplaces. However, entrenched poverty remained, racial segregation in the largest cities worsened, and the national distribution of wealth remained highly skewed. In relative terms, the bottom 20 percent remained as far behind as ever. In these arenas, the Great Society made little progress.

Rebirth of the Women's Movement

The new era of liberal reform reawakened the American women's movement. Inspired by the civil rights movement and legislative advances under the Great Society, but frustrated by the lack of attention both gave to women, feminists entered the political fray and demanded not simply inclusion, but a rethinking of national priorities.

Labor Feminists

The women's movement had not languished entirely in the postwar years. Feminist concerns were kept alive in the 1950s and early 1960s by working women, who campaigned for such things as maternity leave and equal pay for equal work. One historian has called these women "labor feminists," because they belonged to unions and fought for equality and dignity in the workplace. "It became apparent to me why so many employers could legally discriminate against women—because it was written right into the law," said one female labor activist. Trade union women were especially critical in pushing for, and winning, congressional passage of the 1963 **Equal Pay Act**, which established the principle of equal pay for equal work.

Labor feminists were responding to the times. More women—including married women (40 percent by 1970) and mothers with young children (30 percent by 1970)—were working outside the home than ever before. But they faced a labor market that undervalued their contributions. Moreover, most working women faced the "double day": they were expected to earn a paycheck and then return home to domestic labor. One woman put the problem succinctly: "The working mother has no 'wife' to care for her children."

Betty Friedan and the National Organization for Women

When Betty Friedan's indictment of suburban domesticity, ***The Feminine Mystique***, appeared in 1963, it targeted a different audience: college-educated,

middle-class women who found themselves not working for wages but rather stifled by their domestic routine. Tens of thousands of women read Friedan's book and thought, "She's talking about me." *The Feminine Mystique* became a runaway best-seller. Friedan persuaded middle-class women that they needed more than the convenience foods, improved diapers, and better laundry detergents that magazines and television urged them to buy. To live rich and fulfilling lives, they needed education and work outside the home.

Paradoxically, the domesticity described in *The Feminine Mystique* was already crumbling. After the postwar baby boom, women were again having fewer children, aided now by the birth control pill, first marketed in 1960. And as states liberalized divorce laws, more women were divorcing. Educational levels were also rising: by 1970, women made up 42 percent of the college population. All of these changes undermined traditional gender roles and enabled many women to embrace *The Feminine Mystique*'s liberating prescriptions.

Government action also made a difference. In 1961, Kennedy appointed the **Presidential Commission on the Status of Women**, which issued a 1963 report documenting job and educational discrimination. A bigger breakthrough came when Congress added the word *sex* to the categories protected against discrimination in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Women suddenly had a powerful legal tool for fighting sex discrimination.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
What factors accounted for the resurgence of feminism in the 1960s?

To force compliance with the new act, Friedan and others, including many labor feminists from around the country, founded the **National Organization for Women (NOW)** in 1966. Modeled on the NAACP, NOW intended to be a civil rights organization for women, with the aim of bringing "women into full participation in . . . American society now, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men." Under Friedan's leadership, membership grew to fifteen thousand by 1971, and NOW became, like the NAACP, a powerful voice for equal rights.

One of the ironies of the 1960s was the enormous strain that all of this liberal activism placed on the New Deal coalition. Faced with often competing demands from the civil rights movement, feminists, the poor, labor unions, conservative southern Democrats, the suburban middle class, and urban political machines, the old Rooseveltian coalition had begun to fray. Johnson hoped that the New Deal coalition was strong enough to negotiate competing demands among its own constituents while simultaneously resisting conservative attacks. In 1965, that still seemed possible. It would not remain so for long.

National Organization for Women

Kathryn F. Clarenbach (left) and Betty Friedan (right) announced a "Bill of Rights for Women in 1968" to be presented to candidates in that election year. Clarenbach was the first chairwoman of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and Friedan the organization's first president. NOW became a fixture of the women's movement and the leading liberal voice for women's legal and social equality. © Bettmann/Corbis.

The Vietnam War Begins

As the accelerating rights revolution placed strain on the Democratic coalition, the war in Vietnam divided the country. In a CBS interview before his death, Kennedy remarked that it was up to the South Vietnamese whether "their war" would be won or lost. But the young president had already placed the United States on a course that would make retreat difficult. Like other presidents, Kennedy believed that giving up in Vietnam would weaken America's "credibility." Withdrawal "would be a great mistake," he said.

It is impossible to know how JFK would have managed Vietnam had he lived. What is known is that in the fall of 1963, Kennedy had lost patience with Ngo Dinh Diem, the dictatorial head of South Vietnam whom the United States had supported since 1955. The president let it be known in Saigon that the United States would support a military coup. Kennedy's hope was that if Diem, reviled throughout the South because of his brutal repression of political opponents, could be replaced by a popular general or other military figure, a stable government would emerge — one strong enough to repel the South Vietnam National Liberation Front (NLF), or Vietcong. But when Diem was overthrown on November 1, the South Vietnamese generals went further than Kennedy's team had anticipated and assassinated both Diem and his brother. This made the coup look less like an organic uprising and more like an American plot.

South Vietnam fell into a period of chaos marked by several coups and defined by the increasing ungovernability of both the cities and countryside. Kennedy himself was assassinated in late November and would not live to see the grim results of Diem's murder: American engagement in a long and costly civil conflict in the name of fighting communism.

Escalation Under Johnson

Just as Kennedy had inherited Vietnam from Eisenhower, so Lyndon Johnson inherited Vietnam from Kennedy. Johnson's inheritance was more burdensome, however, for by now only massive American intervention could prevent the collapse of South Vietnam (Map 28.2). Johnson, like Kennedy, was a subscriber to the Cold War tenets of global containment.

MAP 28.2
The Vietnam War, 1968

The Vietnam War was a guerrilla war, fought in skirmishes rather than set-piece battles. Despite repeated airstrikes, the United States was never able to halt the flow of North Vietnamese troops and supplies down the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which wound through Laos and Cambodia. In January 1968, Vietcong forces launched the Tet offensive, a surprise attack on cities and provincial centers across South Vietnam. Although the attackers were pushed back with heavy losses, the Tet offensive revealed the futility of American efforts to suppress the Vietcong guerrillas and marked a turning point in the war.

"I am not going to lose Vietnam," he vowed on taking office. "I am not going to be the President who saw Southeast Asia go the way China went" (Chapter 25).

Gulf of Tonkin It did not take long for Johnson to place his stamp on the war. During the summer of 1964, the president got reports that North Vietnamese torpedo boats had fired on the U.S. destroyer *Maddox* in the Gulf of Tonkin. In the first attack, on August 2, the damage inflicted was limited to a single bullet hole; a second attack, on August 4, later proved to be only misread radar sightings. To Johnson, it didn't matter if the attack was real or imagined; the president believed a wider war was inevitable and issued a call to arms, sending his national approval rating from 42 to 72 percent. In the entire Congress, only two senators voted against his request for authorization to "take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression." The **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution**, as it became known, gave Johnson the freedom to conduct operations in Vietnam as he saw fit.

Despite his congressional mandate, Johnson was initially cautious about revealing his plans to the American people. "I had no choice but to keep my foreign policy in the wings . . . ," Johnson later said. "I knew that the day it exploded into a major debate on the war, that day would be the beginning of the end of the Great Society." So he ran in 1964 on the pledge that there would be no escalation — no American boys fighting Vietnam's fight. Privately, he doubted the pledge could be kept.

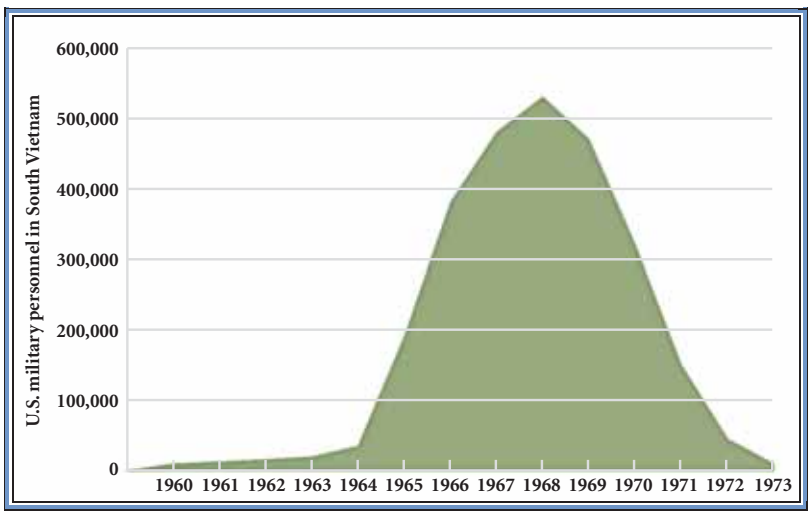
The New American Presence With the 1964 election safely behind him, Johnson began an American takeover of the war in Vietnam (American Voices, p. 912). The escalation, beginning in the early months of 1965, took two forms: deployment of American ground troops and the intensification of bombing against North Vietnam.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
In what larger context did President Johnson view the Vietnam conflict, and why was he determined to support South Vietnam?

On March 8, 1965, the first marines waded ashore at Da Nang. By 1966, more than 380,000 American soldiers were stationed in Vietnam; by 1967, 485,000; and by 1968, 536,000 (Figure 28.2). The escalating demands of General William Westmoreland, the commander of U.S. forces, and Robert McNamara, the secretary of defense, pushed Johnson to Americanize the ground war in an attempt to stabilize South Vietnam. "I can't run and pull a Chamberlain at Munich," Johnson privately told a reporter in early March 1965, referring to the British prime minister who had appeased Hitler in 1938.

Meanwhile, Johnson authorized **Operation Rolling Thunder**, a massive bombing campaign against North Vietnam in 1965. Over the entire course of the war, the United States dropped twice as many tons of bombs on Vietnam as the Allies had dropped in both Europe and the Pacific during the whole of World War II. To McNamara's surprise, the bombing had little effect on the Vietcong's ability to wage war in the South. The North Vietnamese quickly rebuilt roads and bridges and moved munitions plants underground. Instead of destroying the morale of the North Vietnamese, Operation Rolling Thunder hardened their will to fight. The massive commitment of troops and air power devastated Vietnam's countryside, however. After one harsh but not unusual engagement, a commanding officer reported that "it became necessary to destroy

FIGURE 28.2
U.S. Troops in Vietnam, 1960–1973
This figure graphically tracks America's involvement in Vietnam. After Lyndon Johnson decided on escalation in 1964, troop levels jumped from 23,300 to a peak of 543,000 personnel in 1968. Under Richard Nixon's Vietnamization program, beginning in the summer of 1969, levels drastically declined; the last U.S. military forces left South Vietnam on March 29, 1973.



The Toll of War

The Vietnam War produced a rich and graphic literature: novels, journalists' reports, interviews, and personal letters. These brief selections suggest the war's profound impact on those Americans who experienced it firsthand.

Donald Whitfield

Donald L. Whitfield was a draftee from Alabama who was interviewed some years after the war.

I'm gonna be honest with you. I had heard some about Vietnam in 1968, but I was a poor fellow and I didn't keep up with it. I was working at a Standard Oil station making eight dollars a day. I pumped gas and tinkered a little with cars. I had a girl I saw every now and then, but I still spent most of my time with a car. When I got my letter from the draft lady, I appealed it on the reason it was just me and my sister at home. We were a poor family and they needed me at home, but it did no good.

My company did a lot of patrolling. We got the roughest damn deal. Shit, I thought I was going to get killed every night. I was terrified the whole time. We didn't have no trouble with the blacks. I saw movies that said we done the blacks wrong, but it wasn't like that where I was. Let's put it like this: they make pretty good soldiers, but they're not what we are. White Americans, can't nobody whip our ass. We're the baddest son of a bitches on the face of this earth. You can take a hundred Russians and twenty-five Americans, and we'll whip their ass. . . .

I fly the Rebel flag because this is the South, Bubba. The American flag represents the whole fifty states. That flag represents the southern part. I'm a Confederate, I'm a Southerner. . . .

I feel cheated about Vietnam, I sure do. Political restrictions — we won every goddamned battle we was in, but didn't win the whole goddamn little country. . . . Before I die, the Democratic-controlled Congress of this country — and I blame it on 'em — they gonna goddamn apologize to the Vietnam veterans.

George Olsen

George Olsen served in Vietnam from August 1969 to March 1970, when he was killed in action. He wrote this letter to a close female friend.

31 Aug '69
Dear Red,
Last Monday I went on my first hunter-killer operation. . . . The frightening thing about it all is that it is so very easy to kill in war. There's no remorse, no theatrical "washing of the hands" to get rid of nonexistent blood, not even any regrets. When it happens, you are more afraid than you've ever been in your life — my hands shook so much I had trouble reloading. . . . You're scared, really scared, and there's no thinking about it. You kill because that little SOB is doing his best to kill you and you desperately want to live, to go home, to get drunk or walk down the street on a date again. And suddenly the grenades aren't going off any more, the weapons stop and, unbelievably fast it seems, it's all over. . . .

I have truly come to envy the honest pacifist who honestly believes that no killing is permissible and can, with a clear conscience, stay home and not take part in these conflicts. I wish I could do the same, but I can't see letting another take my place and my risks over here. . . . The only reason pacifists such as the Amish can even live in an orderly society is because someone — be they police or soldiers — is taking risks to keep the wolves away. . . . I guess that's why I'm over here, why I fought so hard to come here, and why, even though I'm scared most of the time, I'm content to be here.

Arthur E. Woodley Jr.

Special Forces Ranger Arthur E. Woodley Jr. gave this interview a decade after his return.

You had to fight to survive where I grew up. Lower east Baltimore. . . . It was a mixed-up neighborhood of Puerto Ricans, Indians, Italians, and blacks. Being that I'm lightskinned, curly hair, I wasn't readily accepted in the black community. I was more accepted by Puerto Ricans and some rednecks. They didn't ask what my

race classification was. I went with them to white movies, white restaurants, and so forth. But after I got older, I came to the realization that I was what I am and came to deal with my black peers. . . .

I figured I was just what my country needed. A black patriot who could do any physical job they could come up with. Six feet, one hundred and ninety pounds, and healthy. . . .

I didn't ask no questions about the war. I thought communism was spreading, and as an American citizen, it was my part to do as much as I could to defeat the Communist from coming here. Whatever America states is correct was the tradition that I was brought up in. And I thought the only way I could possibly make it out of the ghetto was to be the best soldier I possibly could. . . .

Then came the second week of February of '69. . . . We recon this area, and we came across this fella, a white guy, who was staked to the ground. His arms and legs tied down to stakes. . . . He had numerous scars on his face where he might have been beaten and mutilated. And he had been peeled from his upper part of chest to down to his waist.

Skinned. Like they slit your skin with a knife. And they take a pair of pliers or a instrument similar, and they just peel the skin off your body and expose it to the elements. . . .

And he start to cryin', beggin' to die.

He said, "I can't go back like this. I can't live like this. I'm dying. You can't leave me here like this dying." . . .

It took me somewhere close to 20 minutes to get my mind together. Not because I was squeamish about killing someone, because I had at that time numerous body counts. Killing someone wasn't the issue. It was killing another American citizen, another GI. . . . We buried him. We buried him. Very deep. Then I cried. . . .

When we first started going into the fields, I would not wear a finger, ear, or mutilate another person's body. Until I had the misfortune to come upon those American soldiers who were castrated. Then it got to be a game between the Communists and ourselves to see how many fingers and ears that we could capture from each other. After a kill we would cut his finger or ear off as a trophy, stuff our unit patch in his mouth, and let him die.

With 89 days left in country, I came out of the field. What I now felt was emptiness. . . . I started seeing the atrocities that we caused each other as human beings. I came to the realization that I was committing crimes against humanity and myself. That I really didn't believe in these things I was doin'. I changed.

Source: Wallace Terry, *Bloods: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Black Veterans* (New York: Ballantine, 1984), 243–263.

Gayle Smith

Gayle Smith was a nurse in a surgical unit in Vietnam in 1970–1971 and gave this interview a few years later.

I objected to the war and I got the idea into my head of going there to bring people back. I started thinking about it in 1966 and knew that I would eventually go when I felt I was prepared enough. . . .

Boy, I remember how they came in all torn up. It was incredible. The first time a medevac came in, I got right into it. I didn't have a lot of feeling at that time. It was later on that I began to have a lot of feeling about it, after I'd seen it over and over and over again. . . . I turned that pain into anger and hatred and placed it onto the Vietnamese. . . . I did not consider the Vietnamese to be people. They were human, but they weren't people. They weren't like us, so it was okay to kill them. It was okay to hate them. . . .

I would have dreams about putting a .45 to someone's head and see it blow away over and over again. And for a long time I swore that if the Vietnamese ever came to this country I'd kill them.

It was in a Vietnam veterans group that I realized that all my hatred for the Vietnamese and my wanting to kill them was really a reflection of all the pain that I had felt for seeing all those young men die and hurt. . . . I would stand there and look at them and think to myself, "You've just lost your leg for no reason at all." Or "You're going to die and it's for nothing." For nothing. I would never, never say that to them, but they knew it.

Source: Albert Santoli, ed., *Everything We Had* (New York: Random House, 1981), 141–148.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Why did these four young people end up in Vietnam? How are their reasons for going to war similar and different?
2. How would you describe their experiences there?
3. What are their attitudes about the war, and how were they changed by it? What do their reflections suggest about Vietnam's impact on American society?

the town in order to save it" — a statement that came to symbolize the terrible logic of the war.

The Johnson administration gambled that American superiority in personnel and weaponry would ultimately triumph. This strategy was inextricably tied to political considerations. For domestic reasons, policymakers searched for an elusive middle ground between all-out invasion of North Vietnam, which included the possibility of war with China, and disengagement. "In effect, we are fighting a war of attrition," said General Westmoreland. "The only alternative is a war of annihilation."

Public Opinion and the War

Johnson gradually grew more confident that his Vietnam policy had the support of the American people. Both Democrats and Republicans approved Johnson's escalation in Vietnam, and so did public opinion polls in 1965 and 1966. But then opinion began to shift (Thinking Like a Historian, p. 916).

Every night, Americans saw the carnage of war on their television screens, including images of dead and wounded Americans. One such incident occurred in the first months of fighting in 1965. Television reporter Morley Safer witnessed a marine unit burning the village of Cam Ne to the ground. "Today's operation is the frustration of Vietnam in miniature," Safer explained. America can "win a military victory here, but to a Vietnamese peasant whose home is [destroyed] it will take more than presidential promises to convince him that we are on his side."

With such firsthand knowledge of the war, journalists began to write about a "credibility gap." The Johnson administration, they charged, was concealing bad news about the war's progress. In February 1966, television coverage of hearings by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (chaired by J. William Fulbright, an outspoken critic of the war) raised further questions about the administration's policy. Johnson complained to his staff in 1966 that "our people can't stand firm in the face of heavy losses, and they can bring down the government." Economic problems put Johnson even more on the defensive. The Vietnam War cost taxpayers $27 billion in 1967, pushing the federal deficit from $9.8 billion to $23 billion. By then, military spending had set in motion the inflationary spiral that would plague the U.S. economy throughout the 1970s.

Out of these troubling developments, an antiwar movement began to crystallize. Its core, in addition to long-standing pacifist groups, comprised a new generation of peace activists such as SANE (the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy), which in the 1950s had protested atmospheric nuclear testing. After the escalation in 1965, the activist groups were joined by students, clergy, civil rights advocates, and even Dr. Benjamin Spock, whose book on child care had helped raise many of the younger activists. Despite their diversity, these opponents of the war shared a skepticism about U.S. policy in Vietnam. They charged variously that intervention was antithetical to American ideals; that an independent, anticommunist South Vietnam was unattainable; and that no American objective justified the suffering that was being inflicted on the Vietnamese people.

Rise of the Student Movement

College students, many of them inspired by the civil rights movement, had begun to organize and agitate for social change. In Ann Arbor, Michigan, they founded **Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)** in 1960. Two years later, forty students from Big Ten and Ivy League universities held the first national SDS convention in Port Huron, Michigan. Tom Hayden penned a manifesto, the **Port Huron Statement**, expressing students' disillusionment with the nation's consumer culture and the gulf between rich and poor. "We are people of this generation," Hayden wrote, "bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit." These students rejected Cold War foreign policy, including the war in Vietnam.

The New Left

The founders of SDS referred to their movement as the **New Left** to distinguish themselves from the Old Left — communists and socialists of the 1930s and 1940s. As New Left influence spread, it hit major university towns first — places such as Madison, Wisconsin, and Berkeley, California. One of the first major demonstrations erupted in the fall of 1964 at the University of California at Berkeley after administrators banned student political activity on university grounds. In protest, student organizations formed the Free Speech Movement and organized a sit-in at the administration building. Some students had just returned from Freedom Summer in Mississippi, radicalized by their experience. Mario Savio spoke for many when he compared the conflict in Berkeley to the civil rights struggle in the South: "The same rights are at stake in both places — the right to participate as citizens in a democratic society and to struggle against the same enemy." Emboldened by the Berkeley movement, students across the nation were soon protesting their

Free Speech at Berkeley, 1964

Students at the University of California's Berkeley campus protested the administration's decision to ban political activity in the school plaza. Free speech demonstrators, many of them active in the civil rights movement, relied on the tactics and arguments that they learned during that struggle. Dr. Jim Jumblatt, Free Speech Movement Archive.

universities' academic policies and then, more passionately, the Vietnam War.

One spur to student protest was the military's Selective Service System, which in 1967 abolished automatic student deferments. To avoid the draft, some young men enlisted in the National Guard or applied for conscientious objector status; others avoided the draft by leaving the country, most often for Canada or Sweden. In public demonstrations, opponents of the war burned their draft cards, picketed induction centers, and on a few occasions broke into Selective Service offices and destroyed records. Antiwar demonstrators numbered in the tens or, at most, hundreds of thousands — a small fraction of American youth — but they were vocal, visible, and determined.

Students were on the front lines as the campaign against the war escalated. The 1967 Mobilization to End the War brought 100,000 protesters into the streets of San Francisco, while more than a quarter million followed Martin Luther King Jr. from Central Park to the United Nations in New York. Another 100,000 marched on the Pentagon. President Johnson absorbed the blows and counterpunched — "The enemy's hope for victory . . . is in our division, our weariness, our uncertainty," he proclaimed — but it had become clear that Johnson's war, as many began calling it, was no longer uniting the country.

Young Americans for Freedom

The New Left was not the only political force on college campuses. Conservative students were less noisy but more numerous. For them, the 1960s was not about protesting the war, staging student strikes, and idolizing Black Power. Inspired by the group **Young Americans for Freedom (YAF)**, conservative students asserted their faith in "God-given free will" and their fear that the federal government "accumulates power which tends

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Contrast the political views of the SDS, the YAF, and the counterculture. How would you explain the differences?

Debating the War in Vietnam

The war in Vietnam divided Americans and ultimately divided world opinion. A product of the Cold War policy of containment, the war led many to question the application of that policy to Southeast Asia. Yet every American president from Truman to Nixon believed that opposing the unification of Vietnam under communist rule was essential. Historians continue to research, and debate, what led to the war and what effects the war had on both Vietnam and the United States. The following documents help us to consider different views of the war.

1. President Dwight Eisenhower's "Domino Theory" speech, April 7, 1954.

Finally, you have broader considerations that might follow what you would call the "falling domino" principle. You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have a beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences. . . .

But when we come to the possible sequence of events, the loss of Indochina, of Burma, of Thailand, of the Peninsula, and Indonesia following, now you begin to talk about areas that not only multiply the disadvantages that you would suffer through loss of materials, sources of materials, but now you're talking about millions and millions and millions of people.

2. Manifesto of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation (NLF), 1968.

Over the past hundred years the Vietnamese people repeatedly rose up to fight against foreign aggression for the independence and freedom of their fatherland. In 1945, the people throughout the country surged up in an armed uprising, overthrew the Japanese and French domination, and seized power. . . .

However, the American imperialists, who had in the past helped the French colonialists to massacre our people, have now replaced the French in enslaving the southern part of our country through a disguised colonial regime. They have been using their stooge — the Ngo Dinh Diem administration — in their downright repression and exploitation of our compatriots, in their maneuvers to permanently divide our country and to turn its southern part into a base in preparation for war in Southeast Asia.

3. President Lyndon Johnson, Johns Hopkins University speech, April 7, 1965.

Over this war — and all Asia — is another reality: the deepening shadow of Communist China. The rulers in Hanoi are urged on by Peiping [Peiking]. This is a regime which has destroyed freedom in Tibet, which has attacked India, and has been condemned by the United Nations for aggression in Korea. It is helping the forces of violence in almost every continent. The contest in Viet-Nam is part of a wider pattern of aggressive purposes.

4. James Fallows, "What Did You Do in the Class War, Daddy?" *Washington Monthly*, October 1975. *The journalist Fallows highlighted the economic unfairness of the Vietnam-era draft.*

The children of the bright, good parents were spared the more immediate sort of suffering that our inferiors were undergoing. And because of that, when our parents were opposed to the war, they were opposed in a bloodless, theoretical fashion, as they might be opposed to political corruption or racism in South Africa. As long as the little gold stars [sent to parents whose son was killed in war] kept going to homes in Chelsea [a working-class part of Boston] and the backwoods of West Virginia, the mothers of Beverly Hills and Chevy Chase and Great Neck and Belmont [all affluent suburbs] were not on the telephone to their congressman screaming, "*You killed my boy*." . . . It is clear by now that if the men of Harvard had wanted to do the very most they could to help shorten the war, they should have been drafted or imprisoned en masse.

5. Students for a Democratic Society, Call for a March on Washington to End the War, 1965.

The current war in Vietnam is being waged on behalf of a succession of unpopular South Vietnamese dictatorships, not in behalf of freedom. No American-supported South Vietnamese regime in the past few years has gained the support of its people, for the simple reason that the people overwhelmingly want peace, self-determination, and the opportunity for development. American prosecution of the war has deprived them of all three.

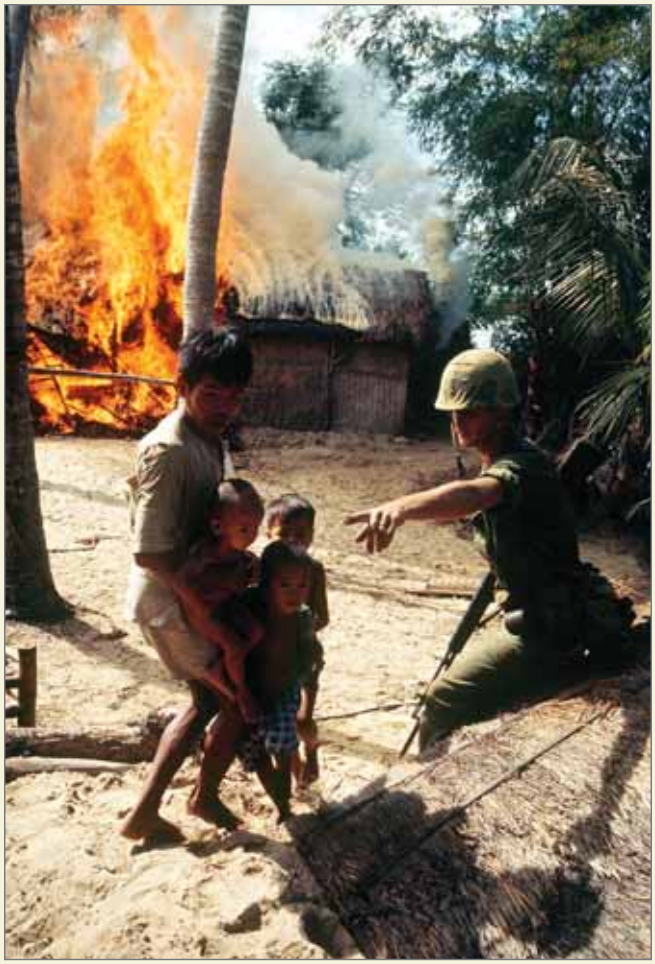
The war is fundamentally a *civil* war. . . .
It is a *losing* war. . . .
It is a *self-defeating* war. . . .
It is a *dangerous* war. . . .
It is a war never declared by Congress. . . .
It is a hideously *immoral* war.

6. Richard Nixon, address to the nation on the Vietnam War, November 3, 1969.

. . . President Eisenhower sent economic aid and military equipment to assist the people of South Vietnam in their efforts to prevent a Communist takeover. Seven years ago, President Kennedy sent 16,000 military personnel to Vietnam as combat advisors. Four years ago, President Johnson sent American combat forces to South Vietnam. . . .

For these reasons, I reject the recommendation that I should end the war by immediately withdrawing all our forces. I choose instead to change American policy on both the negotiating front and the battlefront. . . .

7. Evacuation of Vietnamese civilians in a burning village, c. 1965.



Source: Photo by Dominique BERETTY/Gamma-Rapho via Getty Images.

Sources: (1) George Katsiaficas, ed., *Vietnam Documents: American and Vietnamese Views of the War* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1992), pp. 120–121. Used by permission of the author; (2) Katsiaficas, 43–44; (3) John Clark Pratt, *Vietnam Voices: Perspectives on the War Years, 1941–1982* (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), 201; (4) *The Washington Monthly*, October 1975, 5–19; (5) Katsiaficas, 120–121; (6) Katsiaficas, 147.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. Three of the sources (1, 3, and 6) feature remarks by U.S. presidents. What common feature do they share? Are there differences among the comments? Source 2 is also an attempt by a political figure to persuade. How should historians evaluate such documents?
2. In source 4, which Americans does the author believe have sacrificed the most in fighting the war in Vietnam?
3. Compare sources 2 and 5. What is the intended audience of each? What common features do they share?
4. Journalists and electronic media (photography and television) played an important role in the war. How would images, such as that in source 7, shape opinion about the war both in the United States and globally?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Using the knowledge you have gained from this chapter, analyze the documents above to construct an essay in which you explore the Vietnam War's causes and effects, both domestic and international. Choose at least one domestic and one international theme and use the documents to providence evidence for your conclusions.

to diminish order and liberty." The YAF, the largest student political organization in the country, defended free enterprise and supported the war in Vietnam. Its founding principles were outlined in "The **Sharon Statement**," drafted (in Sharon, Connecticut) two years before the Port Huron Statement, and inspired young conservatives, many of whom would play important roles in the Reagan administration in the 1980s.

The Counterculture While the New Left organized against the political and economic system and the YAF defended it, many other young Americans embarked on a general revolt against authority and middle-class respectability. The "hippie" — identified by ragged blue jeans or army fatigues, tie-dyed T-shirts, beads, and long unkempt hair — symbolized the new **counterculture**. With roots in the 1950s Beat culture of New York's Greenwich Village and San Francisco's North Beach, the 1960s counterculture initially turned to folk music for its inspiration. Pete Seeger set the tone for the era's idealism with songs such as the 1961 antiwar ballad "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" In 1963, the year of the civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham and President Kennedy's assassination, Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind" reflected the impatience of people whose faith in America was wearing thin. Joan Baez emerged alongside Dylan and pioneered a folk sound that inspired a generation of female musicians.

By the mid-1960s, other winds of change in popular music came from the Beatles, four working-class Brits whose awe-inspiring music — by turns lyrical and driving — spawned a commercial and cultural phenomenon known as Beatlemania. American youths' embrace of the Beatles — as well as even more rebellious bands such as the Rolling Stones, the Who, and the Doors — deepened the generational divide between young people and their elders. So did the recreational

The Counterculture

The three-day outdoor Woodstock concert in August 1969 was a defining moment in the rise of the counterculture. The event attracted 400,000 young people, like those pictured here, to Bethel, New York, for a weekend of music, drugs, and sex. The counterculture was distinct from the New Left and was less a political movement than a shifting set of cultural styles, attitudes, and practices. It rejected conformity of all kinds and placed rebellion and contrariness among its highest values. Another concept held dear by the counterculture was, simply, "love." In an era of military violence abroad and police violence at home, many in the counterculture hoped that "peace and love" would prevail instead. Bill Eppridge/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images.

use of drugs — especially marijuana and the hallucinogen popularly known as LSD or acid — which was celebrated in popular music in the second half of the 1960s.

For a brief time, adherents of the counterculture believed that a new age was dawning. In 1967, the "world's first Human Be-In" drew 20,000 people to Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. That summer — called the Summer of Love — San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury, New York's East Village, Chicago's Uptown neighborhoods, and the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles swelled with young dropouts, drifters, and teenage runaways whom the media dubbed "flower children." Although most young people had little interest in all-out revolt, media coverage made it seem as though all of American youth was rejecting the nation's social and cultural norms.

Days of Rage, 1968–1972

By 1968, a sense of crisis gripped the country. Riots in the cities, campus unrest, and a nose-thumbing counterculture escalated into a general youth rebellion that seemed on the verge of tearing America apart. Calling 1968 "the watershed year for a generation," SDS founder Tom Hayden wrote that it "started with legendary events, then raised hopes, only to end by immersing innocence in tragedy." It was perhaps the most shocking year in all the postwar decades. Violent clashes both in Vietnam and back home in the United States combined with political assassinations to produce a palpable sense of despair and hopelessness (America Compared, p. 920).

War Abroad, Tragedy at Home

President Johnson had gambled in 1965 on a quick victory in Vietnam, before the political cost of escalation came due. But there was no quick victory. North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces fought on, the South Vietnamese government repeatedly collapsed, and American casualties mounted. By early 1968, the death rate of U.S. troops had reached several hundred a week. Johnson and his generals kept insisting that there was "light at the end of the tunnel." Facts on the ground showed otherwise.

The Tet Offensive On January 30, 1968, the Vietcong unleashed a massive, well-coordinated assault in South Vietnam. Timed to coincide with Tet, the Vietnamese new year, the offensive struck thirty-six provincial capitals and five of the six major cities, including Saigon, where the Vietcong nearly overran the U.S. embassy. In strictly military terms, the Tet offensive was a failure, with very heavy Vietcong losses. But psychologically, the effect was devastating. Television brought into American homes shocking live images: the American embassy under siege and the Saigon police chief placing a pistol to the head of a Vietcong suspect and executing him.

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME
What changed between 1965 and 1968, and how did these developments affect national political life?

The **Tet offensive** made a mockery of official pronouncements that the United States was winning the war. How could an enemy on the run manage such a large-scale, complex, and coordinated attack? Just before Tet, a Gallup poll found that 56 percent of Americans considered themselves "hawks" (supporters of the war), while only 28 percent identified with the "doves" (war opponents). Three months later, doves outnumbered hawks 42 to 41 percent. Without embracing the peace movement, many Americans simply concluded that the war was unwinnable.

The Tet offensive undermined Johnson and discredited his war policies. When the 1968 presidential primary season got under way in March, antiwar senators Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota and Robert Kennedy of New York, JFK's brother, challenged Johnson for the Democratic nomination. Discouraged, perhaps even physically exhausted, on March 31 Johnson stunned the nation by announcing that he would not seek reelection.

Political Assassinations Americans had barely adjusted to the news that a sitting president would not stand for reelection when, on April 4, James Earl Ray shot and killed Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis. Riots erupted in more than a hundred cities. The worst of them, in Baltimore, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., left dozens dead and hundreds of millions of dollars in property damaged or destroyed. The violence on the streets of Saigon had found an eerie parallel on the streets of the United States.

One city that did not erupt was Indianapolis. There, Robert Kennedy, in town campaigning in the Indiana primary, gave a quiet, somber speech to the black community on the night of King's assassination. Americans could continue to move toward "greater polarization," Kennedy said, "black people amongst blacks, white amongst whites," or "we can replace that violence . . . with an effort to understand, compassion and love." Kennedy sympathized with African

The Global Protests of 1968

Nineteen sixty-eight was a year of youthful protest, political unrest, and violence across the globe. The year of massive antiwar protests at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago as well as the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy saw equal or greater turmoil around the world. Half of Italy's universities were occupied; a massive student strike in France turned into a violent confrontation with police; prodemocracy students in Mexico City led huge protests that drew police gunfire; and protests and street battles with police took place in Prague, Berlin, Tokyo, Rome, and London.

René Bourrigaud, French Student

My most vivid memory of May '68? The new-found ability for everyone to speak — to speak of anything with anyone. In that month of talking during May you learnt more than in the whole of your five years of studying.

Source: Ronald Fraser, *1968: A Student Generation in Revolt* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), 9.

The "Two Thousand Words" Manifesto, June 27, 1968, Prague, Czechoslovakia

Throughout the spring and summer of 1968, the government of Czechoslovakia, under new communist leadership, pursued reforms pushed by students and other protesters. In August, the Soviet Union invaded and put an end to the new openness.

This spring a great opportunity was given to us once again, as it was at the end of the war [World War II]. Again we have the chance to take into our own hands our common cause, which for working purposes we will call socialism, and give it a form more appropriate to our once-good reputation and to the fairly good opinion we used to have of ourselves.

Source: Jaromír Navrátil, *The Prague Spring 1968: A National Security Archive Documents Reader* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1998), 181.

Interview with Participants in 1968 Protests in Mexico City

During the summer of 1968, hundreds of thousands of students protested against Mexico's authoritarian national government and brutal police repression.

Sergio Aguayo: It was, in a symbolic way, the clash of a new Mexico and an old Mexico.
Antonio Azuela: You have a middle class with eyes closed and a group of students saying, this was not a democracy. And this is not working.
Marcela Fernandez de Violante: And so we were together hundred and hundreds and hundreds. We had these big, big meetings at the campus crowded, crowded. And people singing, Que Vivan los Estudiantes . . . ta-ri-ra-ra-ra-ra.
Marcela Fernandez de Violante: We were very young, very naive. But for the first time, you had this notion that this country was going to be changed by the power of our convictions.
Miguel Breseda: You would get in a bus and give a speech and inform the people. Because newspaper wouldn't publish anything. And people would give you money, they would congratulate you and they would say, "We are with you young people. . . ."

Source: Produced by Radio Diaries (radiodiaries.org) and originally broadcast on NPR's *All Things Considered*. To hear the entire documentary, visit radiodiaries.org. Used by permission of Radio Diaries.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Why did free speech figure so prominently in the protests of the 1960s?
2. What do all of these activists seem to be struggling for, or against? How do their struggles seem similar to — or different from — those occurring simultaneously in the United States?

Americans' outrage at whites, but he begged them not to strike back in retribution. Impromptu and heartfelt, Kennedy's speech was a plea to follow King's nonviolent example, even as the nation descended into greater violence.

But two months later, having emerged as the frontrunner for the Democratic presidential nomination, Kennedy, too, would be gone. On June 5, as he was celebrating his victory in the California primary over Eugene McCarthy, Kennedy was shot dead by a young

Robert Kennedy

After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and with President Johnson out of the presidential race, Robert Kennedy emerged in 1968 as the leading liberal figure in the nation. A critic of the Vietnam War, a strong supporter of civil rights, and committed to fighting poverty, Kennedy (the brother of the late President John Kennedy) ran a progressive campaign for president. In this photograph he is shown shaking hands with supporters in Detroit in May 1968. However, less than three weeks after this picture was taken, Kennedy, too, was dead, the victim of yet another assassination. Andrew Sacks/Getty Images.

Palestinian named Sirhan Sirhan. Amid the national mourning for yet another political murder, one newspaper columnist declared that "the country does not work anymore." *Newsweek* asked, "Has violence become a way of life?" Kennedy's assassination was a calamity for the Democratic Party because only he had seemed able to surmount the party's fissures over Vietnam. In the space of eight weeks, American liberals had lost two of their most important national figures, King and Kennedy. A third, Johnson, was unpopular and politically damaged. Without these unifying leaders, the crisis of liberalism had become unmanageable.

The Antiwar Movement and the 1968 Election

Before their deaths, Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy had spoken eloquently against the Vietnam War. To antiwar activists, however, bold speeches and marches had not produced the desired effect. "We are no longer interested in merely protesting the war," declared one. "We are out to stop it." They sought nothing short of an immediate American withdrawal. Their anger at Johnson and the Democratic Party — fueled by news of the Tet offensive, the murders of King and Kennedy, and the general youth rebellion — had radicalized the movement.

Democratic Convention In August, at the **1968 Democratic National Convention** in Chicago, the political divisions generated by the war consumed the party. Thousands of protesters descended on the city. The most visible group, led by Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman, a remarkable pair of troublemakers, claimed to represent the Youth International Party. To mock those inside the convention hall, these "Yippies" nominated a pig, Pigasus, for president. The Yippies' stunts were geared toward maximum media exposure. But a far larger and more serious group of activists had come to Chicago to demonstrate against the war as well — and they staged what many came to call the Siege of Chicago.

Democratic mayor Richard J. Daley ordered the police to break up the demonstrations. Several nights of skirmishes between protesters and police culminated on the evening of the nominations. In what an official report later described as a "police riot," police officers attacked protesters with tear gas and clubs. As the nominating speeches proceeded, television networks broadcast scenes of the riot, cementing a popular impression of the Democrats as the party of disorder. "They are going to be spending the next four years picking up the pieces," one Republican said gleefully. Inside the hall, the party dispiritedly nominated Hubert H. Humphrey, Johnson's vice president. The delegates approved a middle-of-the-road platform that endorsed

continued fighting in Vietnam while urging a diplomatic solution to the conflict.

Richard Nixon On the Republican side, Richard Nixon had engineered a remarkable political comeback. After losing the presidential campaign in 1960 and the California gubernatorial race in 1962, he won the Republican presidential nomination in 1968. Sensing Democratic weakness, Nixon and his advisors believed there were two groups of voters ready to switch sides: northern working-class voters and southern whites.

Tired of the antiwar movement, the counterculture, and urban riots, northern blue-collar voters, especially Catholics, had drifted away from the Democratic Party. Growing up in the Great Depression, these families were admirers of FDR and perhaps even had his picture on their living-room wall. But times had changed over three decades. To show how much they had changed, the social scientists Ben J. Wattenberg and Richard Scammon profiled blue-collar workers in their study *The Real Majority* (1970). Wattenberg and Scammon asked their readers to consider people such as a forty-seven-year-old machinist's wife from Dayton, Ohio: "[She] is afraid to walk the streets alone at night. . . . She has a mixed view about blacks and civil rights." Moreover, they wrote, "she is deeply distressed that her son is going to a community junior college where LSD was found on campus." Such northern blue-collar families were once reliable Democratic voters, but their political loyalties were increasingly up for grabs — a fact Republicans knew well.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
Why might a Democratic supporter of FDR in the 1940s have decided to vote for Republican Richard Nixon in 1968?

George Wallace Working-class anxieties over student protests and urban riots were first exploited by the controversial governor of Alabama, George C. Wallace. Running in 1968 as a third-party presidential candidate, Wallace traded on his fame as a segregationist governor. He had tried to stop the federal government from desegregating the University of Alabama in 1963, and he was equally obstructive during the Selma crisis of 1965. Appealing to whites in both the North and the South, Wallace called for "law and order" and claimed that mothers on public assistance were, thanks to Johnson's Great Society, "breeding children as a cash crop."

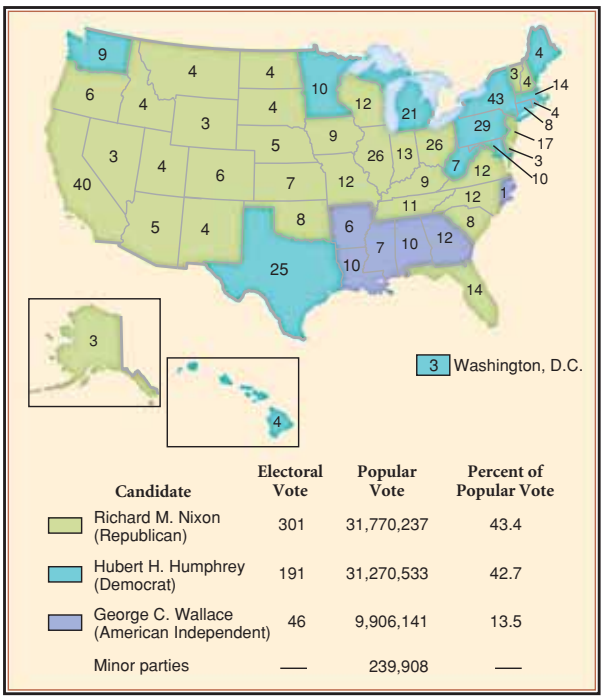
Wallace's hope was that by carrying the South, he could deny a major candidate an electoral majority and force the election into the House of Representatives. That strategy failed, as Wallace finished with just 13.5 percent of the popular vote. But he had defined hot-button issues — liberal elitism, welfare policies, and law and order — that became hallmarks for the next generation of mainstream conservatives.

Nixon's Strategy Nixon offered a subtler version of Wallace's populism in a two-pronged approach to the campaign. He adopted what his advisors called the "southern strategy," which aimed at attracting southern white voters still smarting over the civil rights gains by

George Wallace
George Wallace had become famous as the segregationist governor who stood "in the schoolhouse door" to prevent black students from enrolling at the University of Alabama in 1963 (though after being confronted by federal marshals, he stepped aside). In 1968, he campaigned for the Democratic presidential nomination on a populist "law and order" platform that appealed to many blue-collar voters concerned about antiwar protests, urban riots, and the rise of the counterculture. In this 1968 photograph, Wallace greets supporters on the campaign trail. Lee Balterman/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images.

African Americans. Nixon won over the key southerner, Democrat-turned-Republican senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, the 1948 Dixiecrat presidential nominee. Nixon informed Thurmond that while formally he had to support civil rights, his administration would go easy on enforcement. He also campaigned against the antiwar movement, urban riots, and protests, calling for a strict adherence to "law and order." He pledged to represent the "quiet voice" of the "great majority of Americans, the forgotten Americans, the nonshouters, the nondemonstrators." Here Nixon was speaking not just to the South, but to the many millions of suburban voters across the country who worried that social disorder had gripped the nation.

These strategies—southern and suburban—worked. Nixon received 43.4 percent of the vote to Humphrey's 42.7 percent, defeating him by a scant 500,000 votes out of the 73 million that were cast (Map 28.3). But the numerical closeness of the race could not disguise the devastating blow to the Democrats. Humphrey received almost 12 million fewer votes than Johnson had in 1964. The white South largely abandoned the Democratic Party, an exodus that would accelerate in the 1970s. In the North, Nixon and Wallace made significant inroads among traditionally Democratic voters. New Deal Democrats lost the unity of purpose that had served them for thirty years. A nation exhausted by months of turmoil and violence had chosen a new direction. Nixon's victory in 1968 foreshadowed—and helped propel—a national electoral realignment in the coming decade.



Candidate	Electoral Vote	Popular Vote	Percent of Popular Vote
Richard M. Nixon (Republican)	301	31,770,237	43.4
Hubert H. Humphrey (Democrat)	191	31,270,533	42.7
George C. Wallace (American Independent)	46	9,906,141	13.5
Minor parties	—	239,908	—

MAP 28.3

The Presidential Election of 1968

With Lyndon B. Johnson's surprise withdrawal and the assassination of the party's most charismatic contender, Robert Kennedy, the Democrats faced the election of 1968 in disarray. Governor George Wallace of Alabama, who left the Democrats to run as a third-party candidate, campaigned on the backlash against the civil rights movement. As late as mid-September Wallace held the support of 21 percent of the voters. But in November he received only 13.5 percent of the vote, winning five southern states. Republican Richard M. Nixon, who like Wallace emphasized "law and order" in his campaign, defeated Hubert H. Humphrey with only 43.4 percent of the popular vote, but it was now clear, given that Wallace's southern support would otherwise have gone to Nixon, that the South had shifted decisively to the Republican side.

The Nationalist Turn

Vietnam and the increasingly radical youth rebellion intersected with the turn toward racial and ethnic nationalism by young African American and Chicano activists. As we saw in Chapter 27, the Black Power and Chicano movements broke with the liberal "rights" politics of an older generation of leaders. These new activists expressed fury at the poverty and white racism that were beyond the reach of civil rights laws; they also saw Vietnam as an unjust war against other people of color.

In this spirit, the **Chicano Moratorium Committee** organized demonstrations against the war. Chanting "Viva la Raza, Afuera Vietnam" ("Long live the Chicano people, Get out of Vietnam"), 20,000 Mexican Americans marched in Los Angeles in August 1970. At another rally, Cesar Chavez said: "For the poor it is a terrible irony that they should rise out of their misery to do battle against other poor people." He and other Mexican American activists charged that the draft was biased against the poor—like most wars in history, Vietnam was, in the words of one retired army colonel, "a poor boy's fight."

Among African Americans, the Black Panther Party and the National Black Antiwar Antidraft League spoke out against the war. "Black Americans are considered to be the world's biggest fools," Eldridge Cleaver of the Black Panther Party wrote in his typically acerbic style, "to go to another country to fight for something they don't have for themselves." Muhammad Ali, the most famous boxer in the world, refused his army induction. Sentenced to prison, Ali was eventually acquitted on appeal. But his action cost him his heavyweight

Muhammad Ali Refuses Army Induction

On April 28, 1967, heavyweight champion boxer Muhammad Ali refused to be drafted into the U.S. Army, claiming that the war in Vietnam was immoral and that as a member of the Nation of Islam he was a conscientious objector. In this photograph, Ali stands outside the U.S. Army induction center in Houston, Texas. Ali's refusal, which was applauded by the anti-war movement, led to a five-year prison sentence. Though that conviction was overturned in 1971 after numerous appeals, Ali's stand against the war cost him his heavyweight boxing title. © Bettmann/Corbis.

title, and for years he was not allowed to box professionally in the United States.

Women's Liberation

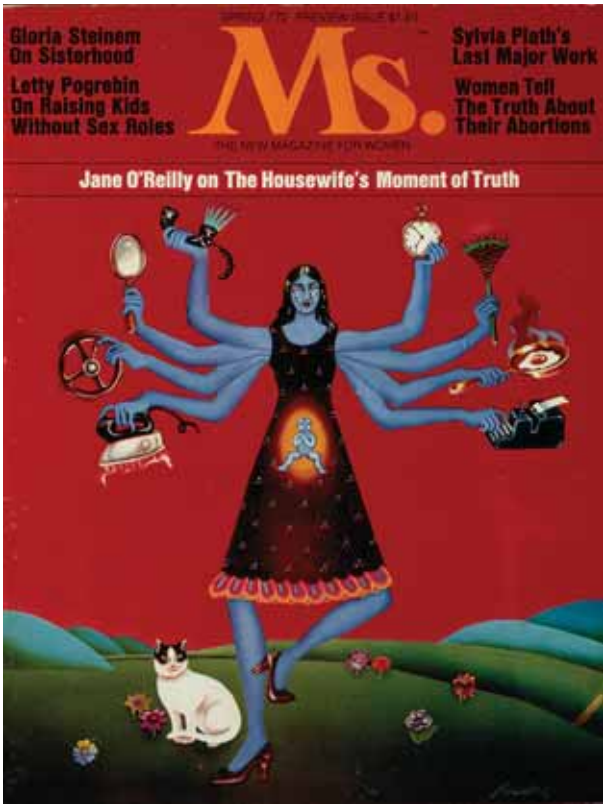
Among women, 1968 also marked a break with the past. The late 1960s spawned a new brand of feminism: **women's liberation**. These feminists were primarily younger, college-educated women fresh from the New Left, antiwar, and civil rights movements. Those movements' male leaders, they discovered, considered women little more than pretty helpers who typed memos and fetched coffee. Women who tried to raise feminist issues at civil rights and antiwar events were shouted off the platform with jeers such as "Move on, little girl, we have more important issues to talk about here than women's liberation."

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
How did women's liberation after 1968 differ from the women's movement of the early 1960s?

Fed up with second-class status, and well versed in the tactics of organization and protest, women radicals broke away and organized on their own. Unlike the National Organization for Women (NOW), the women's liberation movement was loosely structured, comprising an alliance of collectives in New York, San Francisco, Boston, and other big cities and college towns. "Women's lib," as it was dubbed by a skeptical media, went public in 1968 at the Miss America pageant. Demonstrators carried posters of women's bodies labeled as slabs of beef — implying that society treated them as meat. Mirroring the identity politics of Black Power activists and the self-dramatization of the counterculture, women's liberation sought an end to the denigration and exploitation of women. "Sisterhood is powerful!" read one women's liberationist manifesto. The national Women's Strike for Equality in August 1970 brought hundreds of thousands of women into the streets of the nation's cities for marches and demonstrations.

By that year, new terms such as *sexism* and *male chauvinism* had become part of the national vocabulary. As converts flooded in, the two branches of the women's movement began to converge. Radical women realized that key feminist goals — child care, equal pay, and reproduction rights — could best be achieved in the political arena. At the same time, more traditional activists, exemplified by Betty Friedan, developed a broader view of women's oppression. They came to understand that women required more than equal opportunity: the culture that regarded women as nothing more than sexual objects and helpmates to men had to change as well. Although still largely white and middle class, feminists began to think of themselves as part of a broad social crusade.

"Sisterhood" did not unite all women, however. Rather than joining white-led women's liberation organizations, African American and Latina women continued to work within the larger framework of the civil rights movement. New groups such as the Combahee River Collective and the National Black Feminist Organization arose to speak for the concerns of African American women. They criticized sexism but were reluctant to break completely with black men and the



***Ms.* Magazine**

Cofounded by the feminist Gloria Steinem, *Ms.* magazine made its initial appearance in 1972. Steinem and her cofounders believed that American women needed an explicitly feminist magazine distinct from the slew of available female-focused "lifestyle" magazines, such as *McCall's* and *Redbook*. *Ms.* would take on crucial, but neglected, issues relevant to women: reproductive rights, child care, employment and educational equality, sexual harassment, and marriage and relations between men and women. Inspired by women's liberation, *Ms.* has remained an important forum for feminist opinion and debate down to the present. Reprinted by permission of *Ms.* magazine, © 1972.

struggle for racial equality. Chicana feminists came from Catholic backgrounds in which motherhood and family were held in high regard. "We want to walk hand in hand with the Chicano brothers, with our children, our *viejitos* [elders], our Familia de la Raza," one Chicana feminist wrote. Black and Chicana feminists embraced the larger movement for women's rights but carried on their own struggles to address specific needs in their communities.

One of the most important contributions of women's liberation was to raise awareness about what feminist Kate Millett called sexual politics. Liberationists argued that unless women had control over their own bodies, they could not freely shape their destinies. They campaigned for reproductive rights, especially access to abortion, and railed against a culture that blamed women in cases of sexual assault and turned a blind eye to sexual harassment in the workplace.

Meanwhile, women's opportunities expanded dramatically in higher education. Dozens of formerly all-male bastions such as Yale, Princeton, and the U.S. military academies admitted women undergraduates for the first time. Colleges started women's studies programs, which eventually numbered in the hundreds, and the proportion of women attending graduate and professional schools rose markedly. With the adoption of **Title IX** in 1972, Congress broadened the 1964 Civil Rights Act to include educational institutions, prohibiting colleges and universities that received federal funds from discriminating on the basis of sex. By requiring comparable funding for sports programs, Title IX made women's athletics a real presence on college campuses.

Women also became increasingly visible in public life. Congresswomen Bella Abzug and Shirley Chisholm joined Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem, the founder of *Ms.* magazine, to create the National Women's Political Caucus in 1971. Abzug and Chisholm, both from New York, joined Congresswomen Patsy Mink from Hawaii and Martha Griffiths from Michigan to sponsor equal rights legislation. Congress authorized child-care tax deductions for working parents in 1972 and in 1974 passed the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, which enabled married women to get credit, including credit cards and mortgages, in their own names.

Antiwar activists, black and Chicano nationalists, and women's liberationists had each challenged the Cold War liberalism of the Democratic Party. In doing so, they helped build on the "rights liberalism" forged first by the African American–led civil rights movement. But they also created rifts among competing parts of the former liberal consensus. Many Catholics, for instance, opposed abortion rights and other freedoms sought by women's liberationists. Still other Democrats, many of them blue-collar trade unionists, believed that antiwar protesters were unpatriotic and that supporting one's government in time of war was a citizen's duty. The antiwar movement and the evolving rights liberalism of the sixties had made the old Democratic coalition increasingly unworkable.

Stonewall and Gay Liberation

The liberationist impulse transformed the gay rights movement as well. Homophile activists in the 1960s (Chapter 26) had pursued rights by protesting, but they adopted the respectable dress and behavior they knew

straight society demanded. Meanwhile, the vast majority of gay men and lesbians remained "in the closet." So many were closeted because homosexuality was considered immoral and was even illegal in the vast majority of states—sodomy statutes outlawed same-sex relations, and police used other morals laws to harass and arrest gay men and lesbians. In the late 1960s, however, inspired by the Black Power and women's movements, gay activists increasingly demanded immediate and unconditional recognition of their rights. A gay newspaper in New York bore the title *Come Out!*

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
How did the antiwar movement, women's liberation, and gay liberation break with an earlier liberal politics?

A Lesbian and Gay Rights Protest in Greenwich Village, New York City, 1970

Building on the momentum of the Black Power and women's liberation movements of the late 1960s, a gay liberation movement had emerged by the early 1970s. Its history was longer than most Americans recognized, dating to the homophile movement of the 1950s, but the struggle for gay and lesbian rights and freedoms gained new adherents after the Stonewall riots of 1969. Under the banner of "coming out," lesbian and gay Americans refused to accept second-class citizenship. Rue des Archives/The Granger Collection, NYC.

The new gay liberation found multiple expressions in major cities across the country, but a defining event occurred in New York's Greenwich Village. Police had raided gay bars for decades, making arrests, publicizing the names of patrons, and harassing customers simply for being gay. When a local gay bar called the **Stonewall Inn** was raided by police in the summer of 1969, however, its patrons rioted for two days, burning the bar and battling with police in the narrow streets of the Village. Decades of police repression had taken their toll. Few commentators excused the violence, and the Stonewall riots were not repeated, but activists celebrated them as a symbolic demand for full citizenship. The gay liberation movement grew quickly after Stonewall. Local gay and lesbian organizations proliferated, and activists began pushing for nondiscrimination ordinances and consensual sex laws at the state level. By 1975, the National Gay Task Force and other national organizations lobbied Congress, served as media watchdogs, and advanced suits in the courts. Despite all the activity, progress was slow; in most arenas of American life, gays and lesbians did not enjoy the same legal protections and rights as other Americans.

Richard Nixon and the Politics of the Silent Majority

Vietnam abroad and the antiwar movement and the counterculture at home tore at the fabric of the Democratic coalition and proved too difficult for Lyndon Johnson to navigate. Richard Nixon, in contrast, showed himself adept at taking advantage of the nation's unrest through carefully timed speeches and displays of moral outrage. A centrist by nature and temperament, Nixon was not part of the conservative Goldwater wing of the Republican Party. Though he was an ardent anticommunist like Goldwater, Nixon also shared some of Eisenhower's traits, including a basic acceptance of government's role in economic matters. Nixon is thus most profitably viewed as a transitional figure, a national politician who formed a bridge between the liberal postwar era and the much more conservative decades that followed the 1970s.

In late 1969, following a massive antiwar rally in Washington, President Nixon gave a televised speech in which he referred to his supporters as the **silent majority**. It was classic Nixonian rhetoric. In a single phrase, he summed up a generational and cultural

struggle, placing himself on the side of ordinary Americans against the rabble-rousers and troublemakers. It was an oversimplification, but the label *silent majority* stuck, and Nixon had defined a political phenomenon. For the remainder of his presidency, Nixon cultivated the impression that he was the defender of a reasonable middle ground under assault from the radical left.

Nixon in Vietnam

On the war in Vietnam, Nixon picked up where Johnson had left off. Cold War assumptions continued to dictate presidential policy. Abandoning Vietnam, Nixon insisted, would damage America's "credibility" and make the country seem "a pitiful, helpless giant." Nixon wanted peace, but only "peace with honor." The North Vietnamese were not about to oblige him. The only outcome acceptable to them was a unified Vietnam under their control.

Vietnamization and Cambodia To neutralize criticism at home, Nixon began delegating the ground fighting to the South Vietnamese. Under this new policy of **Vietnamization**, American troop levels dropped from 543,000 in 1968 to 334,000 in 1971 to barely 24,000 by early 1973. American casualties dropped correspondingly. But the killing in Vietnam continued. As Ellsworth Bunker, the U.S. ambassador to Vietnam, noted cynically, it was just a matter of changing "the color of the bodies."

Far from abating, however, the antiwar movement intensified. In November 1969, half a million demonstrators staged a huge protest in Washington called the Vietnam Moratorium. On April 30, 1970, as part of a secret bombing campaign against Vietcong supply lines, American troops destroyed enemy bases in neutral Cambodia. When news of the invasion of Cambodia came out, American campuses exploded in outrage—and, for the first time, students died. On May 4, 1970, at Kent State University in Ohio, panicky National Guardsmen fired into an antiwar rally, wounding eleven students

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
How was President Nixon's Vietnam policy different from President Johnson's?

Richard Nixon

Richard Nixon completed one of the more remarkable political rehabilitations in modern times. He had lost the 1960 presidential election and the 1962 California gubernatorial election. But he came back strong in 1968 to ride—and help direct—a growing wave of reaction among conservative Americans against Great Society liberalism, the antiwar movement, civil rights, and the counterculture. In this photograph, President Nixon greets supporters in June 1969, just a few months after his inauguration.

Prowar Rally

Under a sea of American flags, construction workers in New York City march in support of the Vietnam War. Wearing hard hats, tens of thousands of marchers jammed Broadway for four blocks opposite City Hall, and the overflow crammed the side streets. Working-class patriotism became a main source of support for Nixon's war. Paul Fusco/Magnum Photos, Inc.

and killing four. Less than two weeks later, at Jackson State College in Mississippi, Guardsmen stormed a dormitory, killing two black students. More than 450 colleges closed in protest. Across the country, the spring semester was essentially canceled.

My Lai Massacre Meanwhile, one of the worst atrocities of the war had become public. In 1968, U.S. Army troops had executed nearly five hundred people in the South Vietnamese village of **My Lai**, including a large number of women and children. The massacre was known only within the military until 1969, when journalist Seymour Hersh broke the story and photos of the massacre appeared in *Life* magazine, discrediting the United States around the world. Americans, *Time* observed, "must stand in the larger dock of guilt and human conscience." Although high-ranking officers participated in the My Lai massacre and its cover-up, only one soldier, a low-ranking second lieutenant named William Calley, was convicted.

Believing that Calley had been made a fall guy for official U.S. policies that inevitably brought death to innocent civilians, a group called Vietnam Veterans Against the War publicized other atrocities committed by U.S. troops. In a controversial protest in 1971, they returned their combat medals at demonstrations outside the U.S. Capitol, literally hurling them onto the Capitol steps. "Here's my merit badge for murder," one vet said. Supporters of the war called these veterans cowardly and un-American, but their heartfelt antiwar protest exposed the deep personal torment that Vietnam had caused many soldiers.

Détente As protests continued at home, Nixon pursued two strategies to achieve his declared "peace with honor," one diplomatic and the other brutal. First, he

sought **détente** (a lessening of tensions) with the Soviet Union and a new openness with China. In a series of meetings between 1970 and 1972, Nixon and Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev resolved tensions over Cuba and Berlin and signed the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I), the latter a symbolic step toward ending the Cold War arms race. Heavily influenced by his national security advisor, the Harvard professor Henry Kissinger, Nixon believed that he could break the Cold War impasse that had kept the United States from productive dialogue with the Soviet Union.

Then, in 1972, Nixon visited China, becoming the first sitting U.S. president to do so. In a televised weeklong trip, the president pledged better relations with China and declared that the two nations — one capitalist, the other communist — could peacefully coexist. This was the man who had risen to prominence in the 1950s by railing against the Democrats for "losing" China and by hounding communists and fellow travelers. Indeed, the president's impeccable anticommunist credentials gave him the political cover to travel to Beijing. He remarked genially to Mao: "Those on the right can do what those on the left only talk about." Praised for his efforts to lessen Cold War tensions, Nixon also had tactical objectives in mind. He hoped that by befriending both the Soviet Union and China, he could play one against the other and strike a better deal over Vietnam at the ongoing peace talks in Paris. His second strategy, however, would prove less praiseworthy and cost more lives.

Exit America In April 1972, in an attempt to strengthen his negotiating position, Nixon ordered B-52 bombing raids against North Vietnam. A month later, he approved the mining of North Vietnamese ports, something Johnson had never dared to do. The North Vietnamese were not isolated, however: supplies from China and the Soviet Union continued, and the Vietcong fought on.

With the 1972 presidential election approaching, Nixon sent Kissinger back to the Paris peace talks, which had been initiated under Johnson. In a key concession, Kissinger accepted the presence of North Vietnamese troops in South Vietnam. North Vietnam then agreed to an interim arrangement whereby the South Vietnamese government in Saigon would stay in power while a special commission arranged a final settlement. With Kissinger's announcement that "peace is at hand," Nixon got the election lift he wanted, but the agreement was then sabotaged by General Nguyen Van Thieu, the South Vietnamese president. So Nixon, in one final spasm of bloodletting, unleashed the two-week "Christmas bombing," the most intense of the entire war. On January 27, 1973, the two sides signed the Paris Peace Accords.

Nixon hoped that with massive U.S. aid, the Thieu regime might survive. But Congress was in revolt. It refused appropriations for bombing Cambodia after August 15, 1973, and gradually cut back aid to South Vietnam. In March 1975, North Vietnamese forces launched a final offensive, and on April 30, Vietnam was reunited. Saigon, the South Vietnamese capital, was renamed Ho Chi Minh City, after the founding father of the communist regime.

The collapse of South Vietnam in 1975 produced a powerful, and tragic, historical irony: an outcome little different from what would likely have resulted from the unification vote in 1954 (Chapter 25). In other words, America's most disastrous military adventure of the twentieth century barely altered the geopolitical realities in Southeast Asia. The Hanoi regime called itself communist but never intended to be a satellite of any country, least of all China, Vietnam's ancient enemy.

Many paid a steep price for the Vietnam War. America's Vietnamese friends lost jobs and property, spent years in "reeducation" camps, or had to flee the country. Millions of Vietnamese had died in a decade of war, which included some of the most intensive aerial bombing of the twentieth century. In bordering Cambodia, the maniacal Khmer Rouge, followers of Cambodia's ruling Communist Party, took power and murdered 1.7 million people in bloody purges. And in the United States, more than 58,000 Americans had sacrificed their lives, and 300,000 had been wounded. On top of the war's $150 billion price tag, slow-to-heal internal wounds divided the country, and Americans increasingly lost confidence in their political leaders.

The Silent Majority Speaks Out

Nixon placed himself on the side of what he called "the nonshouters, the nondemonstrators." But moderate and conservative Americans increasingly spoke out. They were not in the mood to simply remain silent. During Nixon's first presidential term, those opposed to the direction liberalism had taken since the early 1960s focused their discontent on what they believed were the excesses of the "rights revolution" — the enormous changes in American law and society initiated by the civil rights movement and advanced by feminists and others thereafter.

The Fall of Saigon

After the 1973 U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, the South Vietnamese government lasted another two years. In March 1975, the North Vietnamese forces launched a final offensive; by April, they had surrounded the capital, Saigon. As seen here, many Vietnamese, some of them associated with the fallen South Vietnamese regime, sought sanctuary at the U.S. embassy compound. Thousands of Vietnamese and Americans were evacuated before the last helicopter left the embassy on April 30. Nik Wheeler/Sipa/AP/Wide World Photos.

Law and Order and the Supreme Court The rights revolution found an ally in an unexpected place: the U.S. Supreme Court. The decision that stood as a landmark in the civil rights movement, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), triggered a larger judicial revolution. Following *Brown*, the Court increasingly agreed to hear human rights and civil liberties cases — as opposed to its previous focus on property-related suits. Surprisingly, this shift was led by the man whom President Dwight Eisenhower had appointed chief justice in 1953: Earl Warren. A popular Republican governor of California, Warren surprised many, including Eisenhower himself, with his robust advocacy of civil rights and civil liberties. The **Warren Court** lasted from 1954 until 1969 and established some of the most far-reaching liberal jurisprudence in U.S. history.

Right-wing activists fiercely opposed the Warren Court, which they accused of "legislating from the bench" and contributing to social breakdown. They pointed, for instance, to the Court's rulings that people who are arrested have a constitutional right to counsel (1963, 1964) and, in *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966), that arrestees have to be informed by police of their right to remain silent. Compounding conservatives' frustration was a series of decisions that liberalized restrictions on pornography. Trying to walk the fine line between censorship and obscenity, the Court ruled in *Roth v. United States* (1957) that obscene material had to be "utterly without redeeming social importance" to be banned. The "social importance" test, however, proved nearly impossible to define and left wide latitude for pornography to flourish.

That measure was finally abandoned in 1972, when the Court ruled in *Miller v. California* that "contemporary community standards" were the rightful measure of obscenity. But *Miller*, too, had little effect on the pornographic magazines, films, and peep shows proliferating in the 1970s. Conservatives found these decisions especially distasteful, since the Court had also ruled that religious ritual of any kind in public schools — including prayers and Bible reading — violated the constitutional separation of church and state. To many

religious Americans, the Court had taken the side of immorality over Christian values.

Supreme Court critics blamed rising crime rates and social breakdown on the Warren Court's liberal judicial record. Every category of crime was up in the 1970s, but especially disconcerting was the doubling of the murder rate since the 1950s and the 76 percent increase in burglary and theft between 1967 and 1976. Sensational crimes had always grabbed headlines, but now "crime" itself preoccupied politicians, the media, and the public. However, no one could establish a direct causal link between increases in crime and Supreme Court decisions, given a myriad of other social factors, including drugs, income inequality, enhanced statistical record-keeping, and the proliferation of guns. But when many Americans looked at their cities in the 1970s, they saw pornographic theaters, X-rated bookstores, and rising crime rates. Where, they wondered, was law and order?

Busing Another major civil rights objective—desegregating schools—produced even more controversy and fireworks. For fifteen years, southern states, by a variety of stratagems, had fended off court directives that they desegregate "with all deliberate speed." In 1968, only about one-third of all black children in the South attended schools with whites. At that point, the federal courts got serious and, in a series of stiff decisions, ordered an end to "dual school systems."

Where schools remained highly segregated, the courts increasingly endorsed the strategy of busing students to achieve integration. Plans differed across the country. In some states, black children rode buses from their neighborhoods to attend previously all-white schools. In others, white children were bused to black or Latino neighborhoods. In an important 1971 decision, the Supreme Court upheld a countywide busing plan for Charlotte-Mecklenburg, a North Carolina school district. Despite local opposition, desegregation proceeded, and many cities in the South followed suit. By the mid-1970s, 86 percent of southern black children were attending school with whites. (In recent years, this trend has reversed.)

In the North, where segregated schooling was also a fact of life—arising from suburban residential patterns—busing orders proved less effective. Detroit dramatized the problem. To integrate Detroit schools would have required merging city and suburban school districts. A lower court ordered just such a merger in 1971, but in *Milliken v. Bradley* (1974), the Supreme Court reversed the ruling, requiring busing plans to remain within the boundaries of a single school district. Without including the largely white suburbs in busing efforts, however, achieving racial balance in Detroit, and other major northern cities, was all but impossible. Postwar suburbanization had produced in the North what law had mandated in the South: entrenched racial segregation of schools.

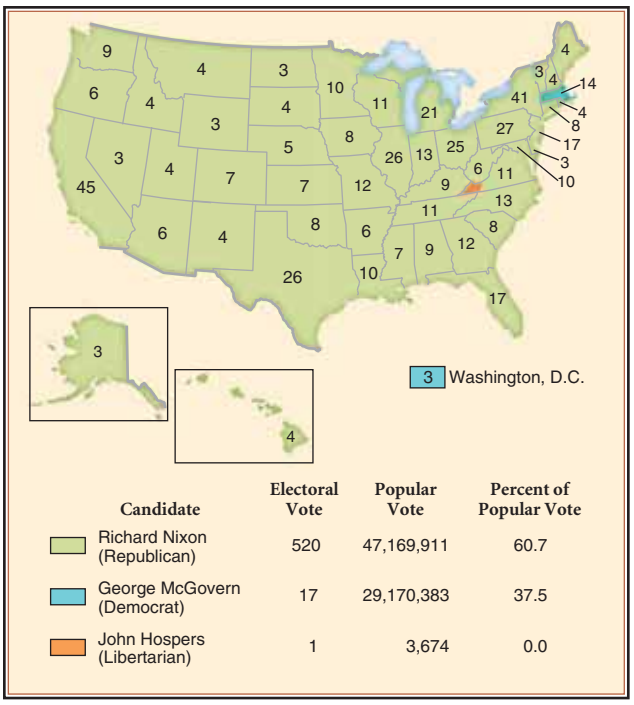
As the 1972 election approached, President Nixon took advantage of rising discontent over "law and order" and busing. He was the political beneficiary of a growing reaction against liberalism that had begun to take hold between 1968 and the early 1970s.

The 1972 Election

Political realignments have been infrequent in American history. One occurred between 1932 and 1936, when many Republicans, despairing over the Great Depression, had switched sides and voted for FDR. The

An Antibusing Confrontation in Boston

Where busing was implemented, it often faced stiff resistance. Many white communities resented judges dictating which children would attend which neighborhood school. In working-class Irish South Boston, mobs attacked African American students bused in from Roxbury in 1974. A police presence was required to keep South Boston High School open. When lawyer and civil rights activist Ted Landsmark tried to enter Boston's city hall during a 1976 antibusing demonstration, he was assaulted. Stanley Forman's Pulitzer Prize–winning photo for the Boston *Herald-American*—titled *The Soiling of Old Glory*—shows Joseph Rakes lunging at Landsmark with an American flag. Busing also had the perverse effect of speeding up "white flight" to city suburbs. Pulitzer Prize, 1977, www.stanleyformanphotos.com.



Candidate	Electoral Vote	Popular Vote	Percent of Popular Vote
Richard Nixon (Republican)	520	47,169,911	60.7
George McGovern (Democrat)	17	29,170,383	37.5
John Hospers (Libertarian)	1	3,674	0.0

MAP 28.4

The Presidential Election of 1972

In one of the most lopsided presidential elections of the twentieth century, Republican Richard Nixon defeated Democrat George McGovern in a landslide in 1972. It was a reversal of the 1964 election, just eight years before, in which Republican Barry Goldwater had been defeated by a similar margin. Nixon hoped that his victory signaled what Kevin Phillips called "the emerging Republican majority," but the president's missteps and criminal actions in the Watergate scandal would soon bring an end to his tenure in office.

years between 1968 and 1972 were another such pivotal moment. This time, Democrats were the ones who abandoned their party.

After the 1968 elections, the Democrats fell into disarray. Bent on sweeping away the party's old guard, reformers took over, adopting new rules that granted women, African Americans, and young people delegate seats "in reasonable relation to their presence in the population." In the past, an alliance of urban machines, labor unions, and white ethnic groups — the heart of the New Deal coalition — dominated the nominating process. But at the 1972 convention, few of the party faithful qualified as delegates under the changed rules. The crowning insult came when the convention rejected the credentials of Chicago mayor Richard Daley and his delegation, seating instead an Illinois delegation led by Jesse Jackson, a firebrand young black minister and former aide to Martin Luther King Jr.

Capturing the party was one thing; beating the Republicans was quite another. These party reforms opened the door for George McGovern, a liberal South Dakota senator and favorite of the antiwar and women's movements, to capture the nomination. But McGovern took a number of missteps, including failing to mollify key party backers such as the AFL-CIO, which, for the first time in memory, refused to endorse the Democratic ticket. A weak campaigner, McGovern was also no match for Nixon, who pulled out all the stops. Using the advantages of incumbency, Nixon gave the economy a well-timed lift and proclaimed (prematurely) a cease-fire in Vietnam. Nixon's appeal to the "silent majority" — people who "care about a strong United States, about patriotism, about moral and spiritual values" — was by now well honed.

Nixon won in a landslide, receiving nearly 61 percent of the popular vote and carrying every state except Massachusetts and the District of Columbia (Map 28.4). The returns revealed how fractured traditional Democratic voting blocs had become. McGovern received only 38 percent of the big-city Catholic vote and lost 42 percent of self-identified Democrats overall. The 1972 election marked a pivotal moment in the country's shift to the right. Yet observers legitimately wondered whether the 1972 election results proved the popularity of conservatism or merely showed that the country had grown weary of liberalism and the changes it had wrought in national life.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, we saw that the combined pressures of the Vietnam War and racial and cultural conflict fractured and split the New Deal coalition. Following John Kennedy's assassination in 1963, Lyndon Johnson

advanced the most ambitious liberal reform program since the New Deal, securing not only civil rights legislation but also many programs in education, medical care, transportation, environmental protection, and, above all, his War on Poverty. But the Great Society fell short of its promise as Johnson escalated American involvement in Vietnam.

The war bitterly divided Americans. Galvanized by the carnage of war and the draft, the antiwar movement spread rapidly among young people, and the spirit of rebellion spilled beyond the war. The New Left took the lead among college students, while the more apolitical counterculture preached liberation through sex, drugs, music, and personal transformation. Women's liberationists broke from the New Left and raised new concerns about society's sexism. Conservative students rallied in support of the war and on behalf of conservative principles, but they were often drowned out by the more vocal and demonstrative liberals and radicals.

In 1968, the nation was rocked by the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, as well as by a wave of urban riots, fueling a growing popular desire for law and order. Adding to the national disquiet was the Democratic National Convention that summer, divided by the Vietnam War and besieged by street riots outside. The stage was set for a new wave of conservatism to take hold of the country, and a resurgence of the Republican Party under Richard Nixon between 1968 and 1972. President Nixon ended the war in Vietnam, but only after five more years and many more casualties.

CHAPTER REVIEW

MAKE IT STICK Go to **LearningCurve** to retain what you've read.

TERMS TO KNOW

Identify and explain the significance of each term below.

Key Concepts and Events

Great Society (p. 904)
Economic Opportunity Act (p. 905)
Medicare (p. 906)
Medicaid (p. 906)
Equal Pay Act (p. 908)
The Feminine Mystique (p. 908)
Presidential Commission on the Status of Women (p. 909)
National Organization for Women (NOW) (p. 909)
Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (p. 911)
Operation Rolling Thunder (p. 911)
Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) (p. 914)
Port Huron Statement (p. 914)
New Left (p. 914)
Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) (p. 915)
Sharon Statement (p. 918)
counterculture (p. 918)
Tet offensive (p. 919)
1968 Democratic National Convention (p. 921)
Chicano Moratorium Committee (p. 923)
women's liberation (p. 924)
Title IX (p. 925)
Stonewall Inn (p. 926)
silent majority (p. 926)
Vietnamization (p. 927)
My Lai (p. 928)
détente (p. 929)
Warren Court (p. 930)

Key People

Lyndon B. Johnson (p. 904)
Barry Goldwater (p. 905)
Betty Friedan (p. 908)
Ngo Dinh Diem (p. 910)
Robert Kennedy (p. 919)
Richard M. Nixon (p. 922)
George C. Wallace (p. 922)
Henry Kissinger (p. 929)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of the chapter's main ideas.

1. How do you explain the liberal resurgence in the first half of the 1960s?
2. What were the main elements of Johnson's Great Society?
3. How did the debates over civil liberties, particularly with respect to Supreme Court decisions under Chief Justice Earl Warren, influence political life in the 1960s and 1970s?
4. In what ways was the Vietnam War part of the Cold War? How did the antiwar movement represent a break with Cold War assumptions?
5. **THEMATIC UNDERSTANDING** Look at the events listed under "America in the World" on the thematic timeline on page 803. American global leadership is a major theme of Part 8. How did the global role of the United States shift in the 1960s?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Recognize the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters by answering these questions.

1. **ACROSS TIME AND PLACE** In what ways was the Great Society an extension of the New Deal? In what ways was it different? What factors made the period between 1932 and 1972 a "liberal" era in American politics? What events and developments would you use to explain your answer?
2. **VISUAL EVIDENCE** Compare the photographs of the prowar rally (p. 928) and the counterculture (p. 918). Why did clothing and appearance become so important to many social movements in the 1960s — the women's movement, the Black Power movement, the antiwar movement, and others? How are these visual images historical evidence?

MORE TO EXPLORE

Start here to learn more about the events discussed in this chapter.

Robert Dallek, *Flawed Giant: Lyndon Johnson and His Times, 1961–1973* (1998). An engaging biography of Johnson and an account of his era.

Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (1999). A vivid account of dissent in the 1960s.

G. Calvin Mackenzie and Robert Weisbrot, *The Liberal Hour: Washington and the Politics of Change in the 1960s* (2008). A thoughtful account of the Great Society.

Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open* (2000). An accessible exploration of the women's movement and feminism.

Bruce Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (2001). A thoughtful explanation of Nixon and political realignment.

Marilyn Young, *The Vietnam Wars, 1945–1990* (1991). An excellent history of the decades-long conflict in Vietnam.

TIMELINE

Ask yourself why this chapter begins and ends with these dates and then identify the links among related events.

1963	• John F. Kennedy assassinated; Lyndon B. Johnson assumes presidency
1964	• Civil Rights Act • Economic Opportunity Act inaugurates War on Poverty • Free Speech Movement at Berkeley • Gulf of Tonkin Resolution
1965	• Immigration Act abolishes national quota system • Medicare and Medicaid programs established • Operation Rolling Thunder escalates bombing campaign (March) • First U.S. combat troops arrive in Vietnam
1967	• Hippie counterculture's "Summer of Love" • 100,000 march in antiwar protest in Washington, D.C. (October)
1968	• Tet offensive begins (January) • Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy assassinated • Women's liberation protest at Miss America pageant • Riot at Democratic National Convention in Chicago (August) • Richard Nixon elected president
1969	• Stonewall riots (June)
1970	• National Women's Strike for Equality
1971	• *Swan v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg* approves countywide busing
1972	• Nixon visits China (February) • Nixon wins a second term (November 7)
1973	• Paris Peace Accords end Vietnam War
1974	• *Milliken v. Bradley* limits busing to school district boundaries
1975	• Vietnam reunified under Communist rule

KEY TURNING POINTS: Which specific developments from this timeline made the years 1964, 1965, and 1968 turning points in politics, foreign policy, and culture and why?

CHAPTER 29

The Search for Order in an Era of Limits 1973–1980

IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA

How did the legacy of social changes—such as shifting gender roles, civil rights, and challenges to the family—in the 1960s continue to reverberate in the 1970s, leading to both new opportunities and political disagreement?

Early in 1971, a new fictional character appeared on national television. Archie Bunker was a gruff blue-collar worker who berated his wife and bemoaned his daughter's marriage to a bearded hippie. Prone to bigoted and insensitive remarks, Archie and his wife Edith sang "Those Were the Days" at the opening of each episode of *All in the Family*, a half-hour comedy. The song celebrated a bygone era, when "girls were girls and men were men." Disdainful of the liberal social movements of the 1960s, Archie professed a conservative, hardscrabble view of the world.

Archie Bunker became a folk hero to many conservative Americans in the 1970s; he said what they felt. But his significance went beyond his politics. *All in the Family* gave voice to a national search for order. His feminist daughter, liberal son-in-law, and black neighbors brought that changing world into Archie's modest home in Queens, New York. Not all Americans were as resistant to change as Archie. Most were ordinary, middle-of-the-road people confronting the aftermath of the tumultuous late 1960s and early 1970s. The liberalism of those years challenged Americans to think in new ways about race, gender roles, sexual morality, and the family. Vietnam and the Watergate scandal had compounded matters by producing a crisis of political authority. An "old order" had seemingly collapsed. But what would take its place was not yet clear.

Alongside cultural dislocation and political alienation, the country confronted economic setbacks. In 1973, inflation began to climb at a pace unprecedented in the post–World War II decades, and economic growth slowed. An energy crisis, aggravated by U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, produced fuel shortages. Foreign competition in manufacturing brought less expensive, and often more reliable, goods into the U.S. market from nations such as Japan and West Germany. As a result, more American plants closed. The great economic ride enjoyed by the United States since World War II was over.

What distinguishes the period between the energy crisis (1973) and the election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency (1980) is the collective national search for order in the midst of economic crisis, political realignment, and rapid social change. Virtually all the verities and touchstones of the postwar decades—Cold War liberalism, rising living standards, and the nuclear family—had come under question, and most agreed on the urgency to act. For some, this search demanded new forms of liberal experimentation. For others, it led instead to the conservatism of the emerging New Right.

Shifting Gender Roles As American society underwent dramatic changes in the 1970s, women seized new opportunities and expanded their role in national life. Donna Wright, shown here on break from her work at the Blue Ribbon Mine, was the only woman working at the mine in 1979. Photo by Kit Miniciler/The Denver Post via Getty Images.

An Era of Limits

The economic downturn of the early 1970s was the deepest slump since the Great Depression. Every major economic indicator — employment, productivity, growth — turned negative, and by 1973 the economy was in a tailspin. Inflation, brought on in part by military spending in Vietnam, proved especially difficult to control. When a Middle East embargo cut oil supplies in 1973, prices climbed even more. Unemployment remained high and productivity growth low until 1982. Overall, the 1970s represented the worst economic decade of the postwar period — what California governor Jerry Brown called an "era of limits." In this time of distress, Americans were forced to consider other limits to the growth and expansion that had long been markers of national progress. The environmental movement brought attention to the toxic effects of modern industrial capitalism on the natural world. As the urban crisis grew worse, several major cities verged on bankruptcy. Finally, political limits were reached as well: None of the presidents of the 1970s could reverse the nation's economic slide, though each spent years trying.

Energy Crisis

Modern economies run on oil. If the oil supply is drastically reduced, woe follows. Something like that happened to the United States in the 1970s. Once the world's leading oil producer, the United States had become heavily dependent on inexpensive imported oil, mostly from the Persian Gulf (Figure 29.1). American and European oil companies had discovered and developed the Middle Eastern fields early in the twentieth century, when much of the region was ruled by the British and French empires. When Middle Eastern states threw off the remnants of European colonialism, they demanded concessions for access to the fields. Foreign companies still extracted the oil, but now they did so under profit-sharing agreements with the Persian Gulf states. In 1960, these nations and other oil-rich developing countries formed a cartel (a business association formed to control prices), the **Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)**.

Conflict between Israel and the neighboring Arab states of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan prompted OPEC to take political sides between 1967 and 1973. Following Israel's victory in the 1967 Six-Day War, Israeli-Arab tensions in the region grew closer to boiling over with each passing year. In the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Egypt and Syria invaded Israel to regain territory lost in the 1967 conflict. Israel prevailed, but only after being resupplied by an emergency American airlift. In response to U.S. support for Israel, the Arab states in OPEC declared an oil embargo in October 1973. Gas prices in the United States quickly jumped by 40 percent and heating oil prices by 30 percent. Demand outpaced supply, and Americans found themselves parked for

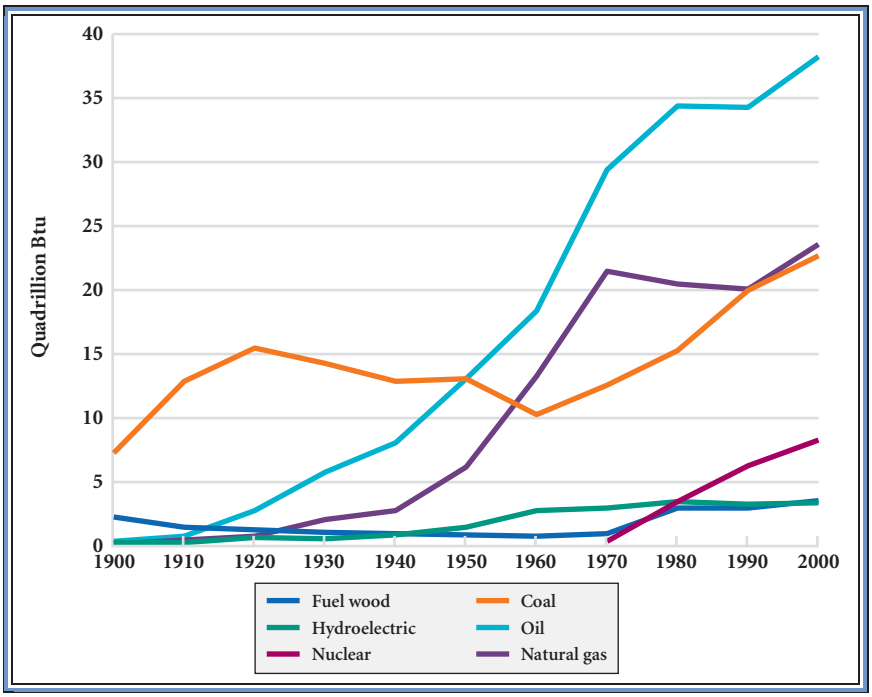


FIGURE 29.1
U.S. Energy Consumption, 1900–2000

Coal was the nation's primary source of energy until the 1950s, when it was surpassed by oil and natural gas. The revival of coal consumption after 1960 stemmed from new open-pit mining in the West that provided cheaper fuel for power plants. The decline in oil consumption in 1980 reflects the nation's response to the oil crisis of the 1970s, including, most notably, fuel-efficient automobiles. Nuclear energy became an important new fuel source, but after 1990 its contribution leveled off as a result of the safety concerns triggered by the Three Mile Island incident.

hours in mile-long lines at gasoline stations for much of the winter of 1973–1974. Oil had become a political weapon, and the West's vulnerability stood revealed.

The United States scrambled to meet its energy needs in the face of the oil shortage. Just two months after the OPEC embargo began, Congress imposed a national speed limit of 55 miles per hour to conserve fuel. Americans began to buy smaller, more fuel-efficient cars such as Volkswagens, Toyotas, and Datsuns (later Nissans) — while sales of Detroit-made cars (now nicknamed "gas guzzlers") slumped. With one of every six jobs in the country generated directly or indirectly by the auto industry, the effects rippled across the economy. Compounding the distress was the raging inflation set off by the oil shortage; prices of basic necessities, such as bread, milk, and canned goods, rose by nearly 20 percent in 1974 alone. "THINGS WILL GET WORSE," one newspaper headline warned, "BEFORE THEY GET WORSE."

Environmentalism

The **energy crisis** drove home the realization that the earth's resources are not limitless. Such a notion was also at the heart of the era's revival of **environmentalism**. The environmental movement was an offshoot of sixties activism, but it had numerous historical precedents: the preservationist, conservationist, and wilderness movements of the late nineteenth century; the conservationist ethos of the New Deal; and anxiety about nuclear weapons and overpopulation in the 1940s. Three of the nation's leading environmental organizations — the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, and the Natural Resources Council — were founded in 1892, 1935, and 1942, respectively. Environmental activists in the 1970s extended the movement's historical roots through renewed efforts to ensure a healthy environment and access to unspoiled nature (Thinking Like a Historian, p. 940).

The movement had received a hefty boost back in 1962 when biologist Rachel Carson published ***Silent Spring***, a stunning analysis of the pesticide DDT's toxic impact on the human and natural food chains. A succession of galvanizing developments followed in the late 1960s. The Sierra Club successfully fought two dams in 1966 that would have flooded the Grand Canyon. And in 1969, three major events spurred the movement: an offshore drilling rig spilled millions of gallons of oil off the coast of Santa Barbara; the Cuyahoga River near Cleveland burst into flames because of the accumulation of flammable chemicals on its surface; and Friends of the Everglades opposed an airport that threatened plants and wildlife in Florida. With these events serving as catalysts, environmentalism became a certifiable mass movement on the first **Earth Day**, April 22, 1970, when 20 million citizens gathered in communities across the country to express their support for a cleaner, healthier planet.

Earth Day, 1970

No single event better encapsulated the growing environmental awareness of Americans than the nationwide celebration of the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970. In this photograph, college students in California release a balloon as part of that day's activities. Julian Wasser/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images.

Environmental Protection Agency Earlier that year, on the heels of the Santa Barbara oil spill, Congress passed the National Environmental Policy Act, which created the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**. A bipartisan bill with broad support, including that of President Nixon, the law required developers to file environmental impact statements assessing the effect of their projects on ecosystems. A

IDENTIFY CAUSES
What major factors led to the birth of the environmental movement in the 1970s?

The Environmental Movement: Reimagining the Human-Earth Relationship

The 1970s witnessed the emergence of the environmental movement in the United States. Environmentalism took a variety of forms and initially was embraced by politicians across the political spectrum, including Republican president Richard Nixon, who signed the National Environmental Policy Act in 1970. Yet environmentalism also proved to be politically divisive. The following documents provide a range of perspectives on an important social and political movement discussed in this chapter.

1. Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, 1962.

For the first time in the history of the world, every human being is now subjected to contact with dangerous chemicals, from the moment of conception until death. In the less than two decades of their use, synthetic pesticides have been so thoroughly distributed throughout the animate and inanimate world that they occur virtually everywhere. They have been recovered from most of the major river systems and even from streams of groundwater flowing unseen through the earth.

2. Ralph Nader, foreword to *Ecotactics: The Sierra Club Handbook for Environmental Activists*, 1970. *In the Sierra Club's guide to environmental activism, environmental and consumer rights activist Nader discusses "environmental violence."*

Pollution is violence and environmental pollution is environmental violence. It is a violence that has different impacts, styles and time factors than the more primitive kinds of violence such as crime in the streets. Yet in the size of the population exposed and the seriousness of the harm done, environmental violence far exceeds that of street crime. . . .

To deal with a system of oppression and suppression, which characterizes the environmental violence in this country, the first priority is to deprive the polluters of their unfounded legitimacy.

3. President Richard Nixon, State of the Union Address, January 22, 1970.

I shall propose to this Congress a $10 billion nationwide clean waters program to put modern municipal waste treatment plants in every place in America where they are needed to make our waters clean again, and do it now. . . .

As our cities and suburbs relentlessly expand [. . .] priceless open spaces needed for recreation areas accessible to their people are swallowed up — often forever. Unless we preserve these spaces while they are available, we will have none to preserve. Therefore, I shall propose new financing methods for purchasing open space and parklands now, before they are lost to us.

The automobile is our worst polluter of the air. Adequate control requires further advances in engine design and fuel composition. We shall intensify our research, set increasingly strict standards, and strengthen enforcement procedures — and we shall do it now.

We can no longer afford to consider air and water common property, free to be abused by anyone without regard to the consequences. Instead, we should begin now to treat them as scarce resources, which we are no more free to contaminate than we are free to throw garbage into our neighbor's yard.

4. "Earthrise" over the moon's surface, December 24, 1968. *Photo taken by* Apollo 8 *crewmember Bill Anders, as the* Apollo *spacecraft orbited the moon.*

NASA.

5. Paul Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb*, 1969. *A best-selling book that warned of a coming global overpopulation straining the world's resources.*

Nothing could be more misleading to our children than our present affluent society. They will inherit a totally different world, a world in which the standards, politics, and economics of the 1960s are dead. As the most powerful nation in the world today, and its largest consumer, the United States cannot stand isolated. We are today involved in the events leading to famine; tomorrow we may be destroyed by its consequences.

Our position requires that we take immediate action at home and promote effective action world-wide. We must have population control at home, hopefully through a system of incentives and penalties, but by compulsion if voluntary methods fail. We must use our political power to push other countries into programs which combine agricultural development and population control. And while this is being done we must take action to reverse the deterioration of our environment before population pressure permanently ruins our planet.

6. President Ronald Reagan, speech at the Republican National Convention, July 17, 1980.

Make no mistake. We will not permit the safety of our people or our environmental heritage to be jeopardized, but we are going to reaffirm that the economic prosperity of our people is a fundamental part of our environment.

Our problems are both acute and chronic, yet all we hear from those in positions of leadership are the same tired proposals for more government tinkering, more meddling, and more control — all of which led us to this state in the first place.

7. "Waste Produced by a Typical Family in a Year."

Sources: (1) Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (New York: Mariner Books, 2002), 15; (2) John G. Mitchell and Constance L. Hastings, eds., *Ecotactics: The Sierra Club Handbook for Environmental Activists* (New York: Trident Press, 1970), 13–15; (3 & 6) Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, presidency.ucsb.edu; (5) Louis Warren, ed., *American Environmental History* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 296.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. Compare sources 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7. What are the different ways the environmental threat was understood and characterized? What kinds of solutions were proposed?
2. Source 4 is one of the first ever photographs of the earth taken from space. How would this visual perspective encourage viewers to think of the earth's resources as finite?
3. How does source 6 help us understand the opposition that developed to environmentalism? Why did some Americans oppose the environmental movement?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Using what you have learned about the environmental movement in this chapter and the documents above, construct an essay in which you make a historical argument about the origins of the movement, the issues that it raised, and the opposition that developed. How did the movement shape politics in the 1970s?

spate of new laws followed: the Clean Air Act (1970), the Occupational Health and Safety Act (1970), the Water Pollution Control Act (1972), and the Endangered Species Act (1973).

The Democratic majority in Congress and the Republican president generally found common ground on these issues, and *Time* magazine wondered if the environment was "the gut issue that can unify a polarized nation." Despite the broad popularity of the movement, however, *Time*'s prediction was not borne out. Corporations opposed environmental regulations, as did many of their workers, who believed that tightened standards threatened their jobs. "IF YOU'RE HUNGRY AND OUT OF WORK, EAT AN ENVIRONMENTALIST," read one labor union bumper sticker. By the 1980s, environmentalism starkly divided Americans, with proponents of unfettered economic growth on one side and environmental activists preaching limits on the other.

Nuclear Power An early foreshadowing of those divisions came in the brewing controversy over nuclear power. Electricity from the atom — what could be better? That was how Americans had greeted the arrival of power-generating nuclear technology in the 1950s. By 1974, U.S. utility companies were operating forty-two nuclear power plants, with a hundred more planned. Given the oil crisis, nuclear energy might have seemed a godsend; unlike coal- or oil-driven plants, nuclear operations produced no air pollutants.

Environmentalists, however, publicized the dangers of nuclear power plants: a reactor meltdown would be catastrophic, and so, in slow motion, would the dumping of the radioactive waste, which would generate toxic levels of radioactivity for hundreds of years. These fears seemed to be confirmed in March 1979, when the reactor core at the **Three Mile Island** nuclear plant near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, came close to meltdown. More than 100,000 people fled their homes. A prompt shutdown saved the plant, but the near catastrophe enabled environmentalists to win the battle over nuclear energy. After the incident at Three Mile Island, no new nuclear plants were authorized, though a handful with existing authorization were built in the 1980s. Today, nuclear reactors account for 20 percent of all U.S. power generation — substantially less than several European nations, but still fourth in the world.

Economic Transformation

In addition to the energy crisis, the economy was beset by a host of longer-term problems. Government spending on the Vietnam War and the Great Society made for a growing federal deficit and spiraling inflation. In the industrial sector, the country faced more robust competition from West Germany and Japan. America's share of world trade dropped from 32 percent in 1955 to 18 percent in 1970 and was headed downward. As a result, in a blow to national pride, nine Western European countries had surpassed the United States in per capita gross domestic product (GDP) by 1980.

Many of these economic woes highlighted a broader, multigenerational transformation in the United States: from an industrial-manufacturing economy to a postindustrial-service one. That transformation, which continues to this day, meant that the United States began to produce fewer automobiles, appliances, and televisions and more financial services, health-care services, and management consulting services — not to mention many millions of low-paying jobs in the restaurant, retail, and tourist industries.

In the 1970s, the U.S. economy was hit simultaneously by unemployment, stagnant consumer demand, and inflation — a combination called **stagflation** — which contradicted a basic principle taught by economists: prices were not supposed to rise in a stagnant economy (Figure 29.2). For ordinary Americans, stagflation meant a noticeable decline in purchasing power, as discretionary income per worker dropped 18 percent between 1973 and 1982. None of the three presidents of the decade — Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Jimmy Carter — had much luck tackling stagflation. Nixon's New Economic Policy was perhaps the most radical attempt. Nixon imposed temporary price and wage controls in 1971 in an effort to curb inflation. Then he took an even bolder step: removing the United States from the gold standard, which allowed the dollar to float in international currency markets and effectively ended the Bretton Woods monetary system established after World War II.

The underlying weaknesses in the U.S. economy remained, however. Ford, too, had little success. His Whip Inflation Now (WIN) campaign urged Americans to cut food waste and do more with less, a noble but deeply unpopular idea among the American public. Carter's policies, considered in a subsequent section of this chapter, were similarly ineffective. The fruitless search for a new economic order was a hallmark of 1970s politics.

Deindustrialization America's economic woes struck hardest at the industrial sector, which suddenly — shockingly — began to be dismantled. Worst hit was the steel industry, which for seventy-five years had been the economy's crown jewel. Unscathed by World

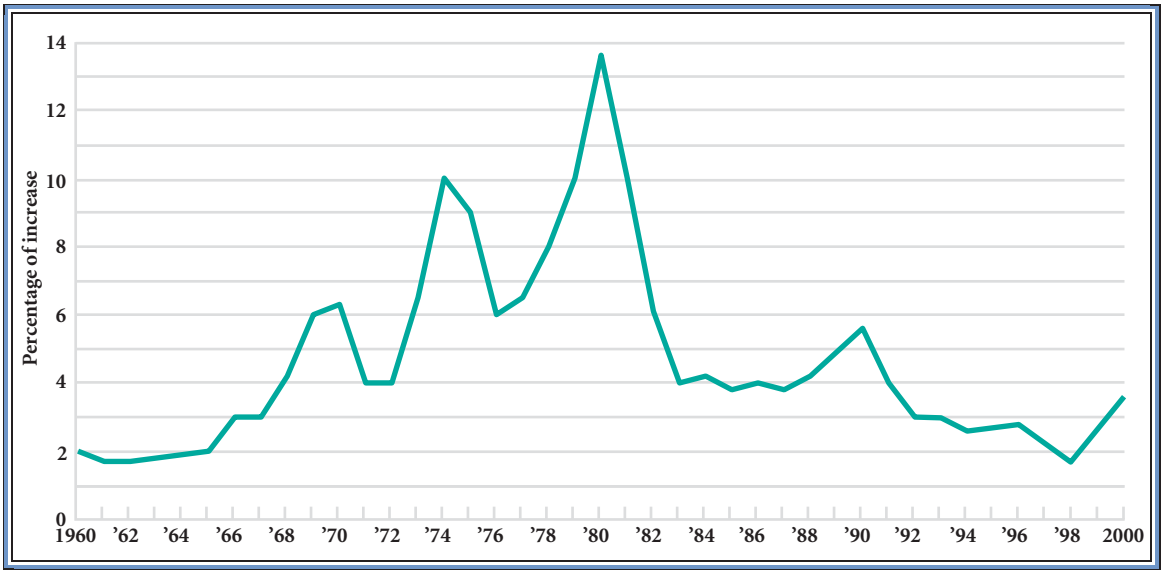
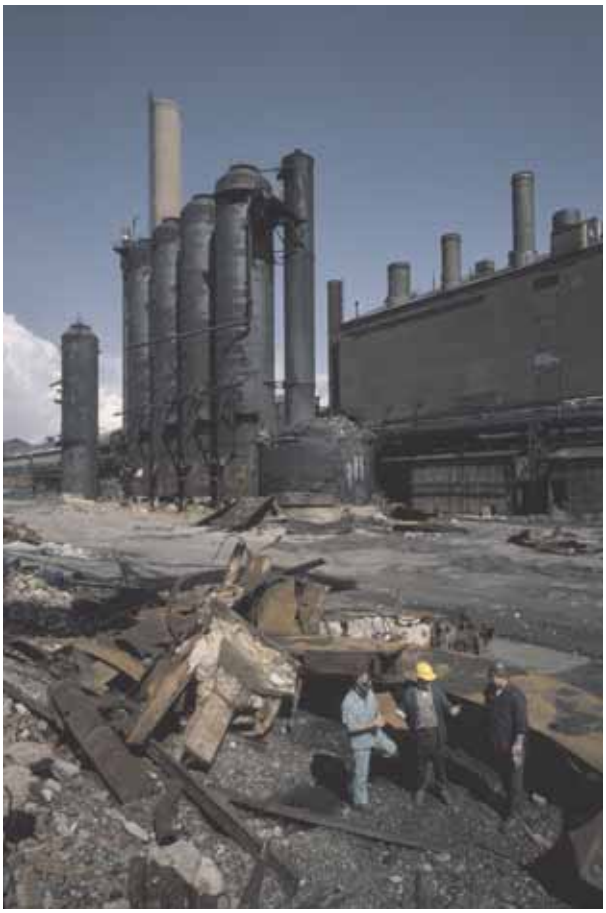


FIGURE 29.2
The Inflation Rate, 1960–2000
The impact of the oil crisis of 1973 on the inflation rate appears all too graphically in this figure. The dip in 1974 reflects the sharp recession that began that year, after which the inflation rate zoomed up to a staggering 14 percent in 1980. The return to normal levels after 1980 stemmed from very harsh measures by the Federal Reserve Board, which, while they succeeded, came at the cost of a painful slowdown in the economy.

War II, U.S. steel producers had enjoyed an open, hugely profitable market. But lack of serious competition left them without incentives to replace outdated plants and equipment. When West Germany and Japan rebuilt their steel industries, these facilities incorporated the latest technology. Foreign steel flooded into the United States during the 1970s, and the American industry was simply overwhelmed. Formerly titanic steel companies began a massive dismantling; virtually the entire Pittsburgh region, once a national hub of steel production, lost its heavy industry in a single generation. By the mid-1980s, downsizing, automation, and investment in new technologies made the American steel industry competitive again — but it was



Deindustrialization

Increasing economic competition from overseas created hard times for American industry in the 1970s and 1980s. Many of the nation's once-proud core industries, such as steel, declined precipitously in these decades. This photo shows a steel mill in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, being demolished in 1982. Once the center of American steel production, Pittsburgh suffered hard times in the 1970s and 1980s. The result of such closures was the creation of the so-called Rust Belt in the Northeast and Midwest (Map 29.1). Lynn Johnson/National Geographic/Getty Images.

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
What major developments shaped the American economy in the 1970s and contributed to its transformation?

a shadow of its former self, and it continues to struggle to this day.

The steel industry was the prime example of what became known as **deindustrialization**. The country was in the throes of an economic transformation that left it largely stripped of its industrial base. Steel was hardly alone. A swath of the Northeast and Midwest, the country's manufacturing heartland, became the nation's **Rust Belt** (Map 29.1), strewn with abandoned plants and distressed communities. The automobile, tire, textile, and other consumer durable industries (appliances, electronics, furniture, and the like) all started shrinking in the 1970s. In 1980, *Business Week* bemoaned "plant closings across the continent" and called for the "*re*industrialization of America."

Organized Labor in Decline Deindustrialization threw many tens of thousands of blue-collar workers out of well-paid union jobs. One study followed 4,100 steelworkers left jobless by the 1977 shutdown of the Campbell Works of the Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. Two years later, 35 percent had retired early at half pay; 10 percent had moved; 15 percent were still jobless, with unemployment benefits long gone; and 40 percent had found local work, but mostly in low-paying, service-sector jobs. In another instance, between 1978 and 1981, eight Los Angeles companies — including

MAP 29.1
From Rust Belt to Sunbelt, 1940–2000

One of the most significant developments of the post–World War II era was the growth of the Sunbelt. Sparked by federal spending for military bases, the defense industry, and the space program, states of the South and Southwest experienced an economic boom in the 1950s. This growth was further enhanced in the 1970s, as the heavily industrialized regions of the Northeast and Midwest declined and migrants from what was quickly dubbed the Rust Belt headed to the South and West in search of jobs.

such giants as Ford, Uniroyal, and U.S. Steel — closed factories employing 18,000 workers. These Ohio and California workers, like hundreds of thousands of their counterparts across the nation, had fallen from their perch in the middle class (America Compared, p. 946).

Deindustrialization dealt an especially harsh blow to the labor movement, which had facilitated the postwar expansion of that middle class. In the early 1970s, as inflation hit, the number of strikes surged; 2.4 million workers participated in work stoppages in 1970 alone. However, industry argued that it could no longer afford union demands, and labor's bargaining power produced fewer and fewer concrete results. In these hard years, the much-vaunted labor-management accord of the 1950s, which raised profits and wages by passing costs on to consumers, went bust. Instead of seeking higher wages, unions now mainly fought to save jobs. Union membership went into steep decline, and by the mid-1980s organized labor represented less than 18 percent of American workers, the lowest level since the 1920s. The impact on liberal politics was huge. With labor's decline, a main buttress of the New Deal coalition was coming undone.

Urban Crisis and Suburban Revolt

The economic downturn pushed already struggling American cities to the brink of fiscal collapse. Middle-class flight to the suburbs continued apace, and the "urban crisis" of the 1960s spilled into the "era of limits." Facing huge price inflation and mounting piles of debt — to finance social services for the poor and to replace disappearing tax revenue — nearly every major American city struggled to pay its bills in the 1970s. Surrounded by prosperous postwar suburbs, central cities seemingly could not catch a break.

New York, the nation's financial capital and its largest city, fared the worst. Its annual budget was in the billions, larger than that of most states. Unable to borrow on the tightening international bond market, New York neared collapse in the summer of 1975; bankruptcy was a real possibility. When Mayor Abraham Beame appealed to the federal government for assistance, President Ford refused. "Ford to City: Drop Dead" read the headline in the *New York Daily News*. Fresh appeals ultimately produced a solution: the federal government would lend New York money, and banks would declare a three-year moratorium on municipal debt. The arrangement saved the city from defaulting, but the mayor was forced to cut city services, freeze wages, and lay off workers. One pessimistic observer declared that "the banks have been saved, and the city has been condemned."

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
How did cities and suburbs experience the "era of limits" differently, and why?

Cities faced declining fortunes in these years for many reasons, but one key was the continued loss of

"Ford to City: Drop Dead"

In the summer of 1975, New York City nearly went bankrupt. When Mayor Abraham Beame appealed to President Gerald Ford for assistance, these newspaper headlines captured the chief executive's response. Though it was ultimately saved from financial ruin, the city's brush with insolvency symbolized the larger problems facing the nation: economic stagnation, high inflation, and unemployment. Hard times had seemingly spared no one. AP Images.

Economic Malaise in the Seventies

Most major economic indicators in the United States turned downward in the 1970s, as the long postwar expansion ground to an unmistakable halt. The figures below offer evidence of how developments in the United States compared with other industrialized countries.

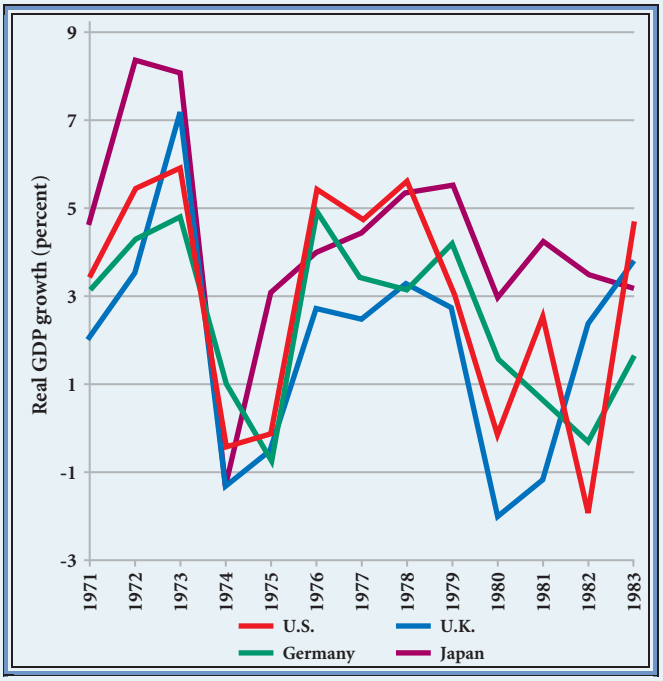


FIGURE 29.3
Falling Gross Domestic Product

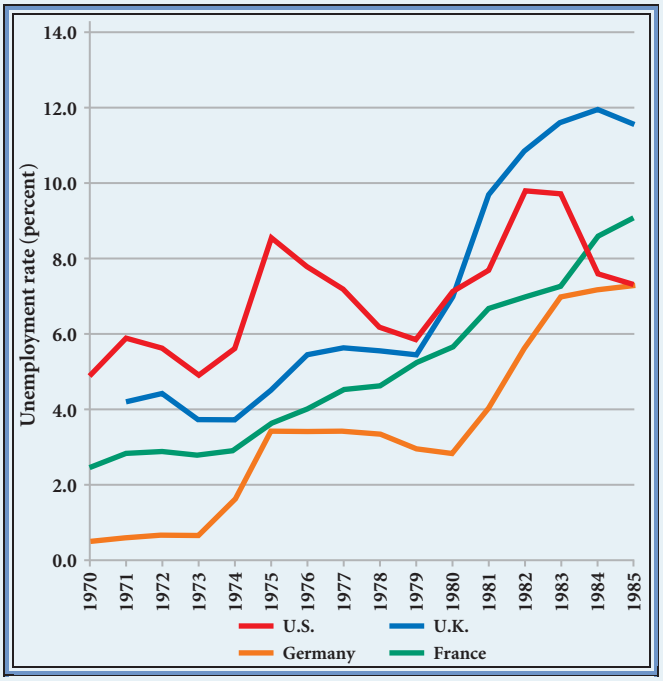


FIGURE 29.4
Rising Unemployment

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. In what ways do these figures demonstrate an integrated global economy?
2. What does the GDP graph indicate about how global economic integration affected the U.S. economy? Notice that Japan's GDP growth remained strong in the late 1970s and early 1980s. With what historical development within the U.S. does that correspond?

residents and businesses to nearby suburbs. In the 1970s alone, 13 million people (6 percent of the total U.S. population) moved to the suburbs. New suburban shopping centers opened weekly across the country, and other businesses — such as banks, insurance companies, and technology firms — increasingly sought suburban locations. More and more, people lived *and* worked in suburbs. In the San Francisco Bay area, 75 percent of all daily commutes were suburb-to-suburb, and 78 percent of New York's suburban residents worked in nearby suburbs. The 1950s "organization man," commuting downtown from his suburban home, had been replaced by the engineer, teacher, nurse, student, and carpenter who lived in one suburb and worked in another.

Beyond city limits, suburbanization and the economic crisis combined powerfully in what became known as the **tax revolt**, a dramatic reversal of the postwar spirit of generous public investment. The premier example was California. Inflation pushed real

estate values upward, and property taxes skyrocketed. Hardest hit were suburban property owners, along with retirees and others on fixed incomes, who suddenly faced unaffordable tax bills. Into this dire situation stepped Howard Jarvis, a conservative anti–New Dealer and a genius at mobilizing grassroots discontent. In 1978, Jarvis proposed **Proposition 13**, an initiative that would roll back property taxes, cap future increases for present owners, and require that all tax measures have a two-thirds majority in the legislature. Despite opposition by virtually the entire state leadership, including politicians from both parties, Californians voted overwhelmingly for Jarvis's measure.

Proposition 13 hobbled public spending in the nation's most populous state. Per capita funding of California public schools, once the envy of the nation, plunged from the top tier to the bottom, where it was second only to Mississippi. Moreover, Proposition 13's complicated formula benefitted middle-class and wealthy home owners at the expense of less-well-off citizens, especially those who depended heavily on public services. Businesses, too, came out ahead, because commercial property got the same protection as residential property. More broadly, Proposition 13 inspired tax revolts across the country and helped conservatives define an enduring issue: low taxes.

In addition to public investment, another cardinal marker of New Deal and Great Society liberalism had been a remarkable decline in income inequality. In the 1970s, that trend reversed, and the wealthiest Americans, those among the top 10 percent, began to pull ahead again. As corporations restructured to boost profits during the 1970s slump, they increasingly laid off high-wage workers, paid the remaining workers less, and relocated overseas. Thus upper-class Americans benefitted, while blue-collar families who had been lifted into the middle class during the postwar boom increasingly lost out. An unmistakable trend was apparent by the end of the 1970s. The U.S. labor market was dividing in two: a vast, low-wage market at the bottom and a much narrower high-wage market at the top, with the middle squeezed smaller and smaller.

Politics in Flux, 1973–1980

A search for order characterized national politics in the 1970s as well. It began with a scandal. Misbehavior is endemic to politics. Yet what became known as the Watergate affair — or simply **Watergate** — implicated President Richard Nixon in illegal behavior severe enough to bring down his presidency. Liberals benefitted from Nixon's fall in the short term, but their long-term retreat continued. Politics remained in flux because while liberals were on the defensive, conservatives had not yet put forth a clear alternative.

Watergate and the Fall of a President

On June 17, 1972, something strange happened at Washington's Watergate office/apartment/hotel complex. Early that morning, five men carrying wiretapping equipment were apprehended there attempting to break into the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee (DNC). Queried by the press, a White House spokesman dismissed the episode as "a third-rate burglary attempt." Pressed further, Nixon himself denied any White House involvement in "this very bizarre incident." In fact, the two masterminds of the break-in, G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt, were former FBI and CIA agents currently working for Nixon's Committee to Re-elect the President (CREEP).

The Watergate burglary was no isolated incident. It was part of a broad pattern of abuse of power by a White House obsessed with its enemies. Liddy and Hunt were on the White House payroll, part of a clandestine squad hired to stop leaks to the press. But they were soon arranging illegal wiretaps at DNC headquarters, part of a campaign of "dirty tricks" against the Democrats. Nixon's siege mentality best explains his fatal misstep. He could have dissociated himself from the break-in by firing his guilty aides or even just by letting justice take its course. But it was election time, and Nixon did not trust his political future to such a strategy. Instead, he arranged hush money for the burglars and instructed the CIA to stop an FBI investigation into the affair. This was obstruction of justice, a criminal offense.

Nixon kept the lid on until after the election, but in early 1973, one of the Watergate burglars began to talk. In the meantime, two reporters at the *Washington Post*, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, uncovered CREEP's links to key White House aides. In May 1973, a Senate investigating committee began holding nationally televised hearings, at which administration officials implicated Nixon in the illegal cover-up. The president kept investigators at bay for a year, but in June 1974, the House Judiciary Committee began to consider articles of impeachment. Certain of being convicted by the Senate, Nixon became, on August 9, 1974, the first U.S. president to resign his office. The next day, Vice President Gerald Ford was sworn in as president. Ford, the Republican minority leader in the House of Representatives, had replaced Vice President Spiro Agnew,

who had himself resigned in 1973 for accepting kickbacks while governor of Maryland. A month after he took office, Ford stunned the nation by granting Nixon a "full, free, and absolute" pardon.

Congress pushed back, passing a raft of laws against the abuses of the Nixon administration: the **War Powers Act** (1973), which reined in the president's ability to deploy U.S. forces without congressional approval; amendments strengthening the **Freedom of Information Act** (1974), which gave citizens access to federal records; the **Ethics in Government Act** (1978); and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (1978), which prohibited domestic wiretapping without a warrant.

Popular disdain for politicians, evident in declining voter turnout, deepened with Nixon's resignation in 1974. "Don't vote," read one bumper sticker in 1976. "It only encourages them." Watergate not only damaged short-term Republican prospects but also shifted the party's balance to the right. Despite mastering the populist appeal to the "silent majority," the moderate Nixon was never beloved by conservatives. His relaxation of tensions with the Soviet Union and his visit to communist China, in particular, won him no friends on the right. His disgraceful exit benefitted the more conservative Republicans, who proceeded to reshape the party in their image.

Watergate Babies As for the Democrats, Watergate granted them a reprieve, a second chance at recapturing their eroding base. Backed by a public deeply disenchanted with politicians, especially scandal-tainted Republicans, congressional Democrats had an opportunity to repair the party's image. Ford's pardon of Nixon saved the nation a prolonged and agonizing trial, which was Ford's rationale, but it was decidedly unpopular among the public. Pollster Louis Harris remarked that should a politician "defend that pardon in any part of this country, North or South, [he] is almost literally going to have his head handed to him." Democratic candidates in the 1974 midterm elections made Watergate and Ford's pardon their top issues. It worked. Seventy-five new Democratic members of the House came to Washington in 1975, many of them under the age of forty-five, and the press dubbed them Watergate babies.

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
What changed and what remained the same in American politics as a result of the Watergate scandal?

Young and reform-minded, the Watergate babies solidified huge Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress and quickly set to work. They eliminated the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), which had investigated alleged Communists in the 1940s and 1950s and antiwar activists in the 1960s. In the Senate, Democrats reduced the number of votes needed to end a filibuster from 67 to 60 — a move intended to weaken the power of the minority to block legislation. In both houses, Democrats dismantled the existing committee structure, which had entrenched power in the hands of a few elite committee chairs. And in 1978, the Ethics in Government Act forced political candidates to disclose financial contributions and limited the lobbying activities of former elected officials. Overall, the Watergate babies helped to decentralize power in Washington and bring greater transparency to American government.

In one of the great ironies of American political history, however, the post-Watergate reforms made government *less* efficient and *more* susceptible to special interests — the opposite of what had been intended. Under the new committee structure, smaller subcommittees proliferated, and the size of the congressional staff doubled to more than 20,000. A diffuse power structure actually gave lobbyists more places to exert influence. As the power of committee chairs weakened, influence shifted to party leaders, such as the Speaker of the House and the Senate majority leader. With little incentive to compromise, the parties grew more rigid, and bipartisanship became rare. Finally, filibustering, a seldom-used tactic largely employed by anti–civil rights southerners, increased in frequency. The Congress that we have come to know today — with its partisan rancor, its army of lobbyists, and its slow-moving response to public needs — came into being in the 1970s.

Political Realignment Despite Democratic gains in 1974, the electoral realignment that had begun with Richard Nixon's presidential victories in 1968 and 1972 continued. As liberalism proved unable to stop runaway inflation or speed up economic growth, conservatism gained greater traction with the public. The postwar liberal economic formula — sometimes known as the Keynesian consensus — consisted of microadjustments to the money supply coupled with federal spending. When that formula failed to restart the economy in the mid-1970s, conservatives in Congress used this opening to articulate alternatives, especially economic deregulation and tax cuts.

On a grander scale, deindustrialization in the Northeast and Midwest and continued population growth in the Sunbelt was changing the political geography of the country. Power was shifting, incrementally but perceptibly, toward the West and South (Table 29.1). As states with strong trade unions at the center of the postwar

TABLE 29.1

Political Realignment: Congressional Seats

State	Apportionment 1940	Apportionment 1990
Rust Belt		
Massachusetts	14	10
Connecticut	6	6
New York	45	31
New Jersey	14	13
Pennsylvania	33	21
Ohio	23	19
Illinois	26	20
Indiana	11	10
Michigan	17	16
Wisconsin	10	9
Total	199	155
Sunbelt		
California	23	52
Arizona	2	6
Nevada	1	2
Colorado	4	6
New Mexico	2	3
Texas	21	30
Georgia	10	11
North Carolina	12	12
Virginia	9	11
Florida	6	23
Total	90	156

In the fifty years between 1940 and 1990, the Rust Belt states lost political clout, while the Sunbelt states gained it—measured here in congressional seats (which are apportioned based on population). Sunbelt states gained 66 seats, with the Rust Belt losing 44. This shifting political geography helped undermine the liberal coalition, which was strongest in industrial states with large labor unions, and paved the way for the rise of the conservative coalition, which was strongest in southern and Bible Belt states, as well as California. Source: Office of the Clerk of the House, clerk.house.gov/art_history/house_history/congApp/bystate.html.

liberal political coalition—such as New York, Illinois, and Michigan—lost industry, jobs, and people, states with traditions of libertarian conservatism—such as California, Arizona, Florida, and Texas—gained greater political clout. The full impact of this shifting political geography would not be felt until the 1980s and 1990s, but its effects had become apparent by the mid-1970s.

Jimmy Carter: The Outsider as President

"Jimmy who?" was how journalists first responded when James Earl Carter, who had been a naval officer, a peanut farmer, and the governor of Georgia, emerged from the pack to win the Democratic presidential nomination in 1976. When Carter told his mother that he intended to run for president, she had asked, "President of what?" Trading on Watergate and his down-home image, Carter pledged to restore morality to the White House. "I will never lie to you," he promised voters. Carter played up his credentials as a Washington outsider, although he selected Senator Walter F. Mondale of Minnesota as his running mate, to ensure his ties to traditional Democratic voting blocs. Ford still might have prevailed, but his pardon of Nixon likely cost him enough votes in key states to swing the election to the Democratic candidate. Carter won with 50 percent of the popular vote to Ford's 48 percent.

For a time, Carter got some mileage as an outsider—the common man who walked to the White House after the inauguration and delivered fireside chats in a cardigan sweater. The fact that he was a born-again Christian also played well. But Carter's inexperience began to show. He responded to feminists, an important Democratic constituency, by establishing a new women's commission in his administration. But later he dismissed the commission's concerns and became embroiled in a public fight with prominent women's advocates. Most consequentially, his outsider strategy made for chilly relations with congressional leaders. Disdainful of the Democratic establishment, Carter relied heavily on inexperienced advisors from Georgia. And as a detail-oriented micromanager, he exhausted himself over the fine points of policy better left to his aides.

On the domestic front, Carter's big challenge was managing the economy. The problems that he faced defied easy solution. Most confounding was stagflation. If the government focused on inflation—forcing prices down by raising interest rates—unemployment became worse. If the government tried to stimulate employment, inflation became worse. None of the levers of government economic policy seemed to work. At heart, Carter was an economic conservative. He

Jimmy Carter

President Jimmy Carter is seen here at a family picnic in his hometown of Plains, Georgia, just after he received the Democratic nomination for president in 1976. Carter was content to portray himself as a political outsider, an ordinary American who could restore trust to Washington after the Watergate scandal. A thoughtful man and a born-again Christian, Carter nonetheless proved unable to solve the complex economic problems, especially high inflation, and international challenges of the late 1970s. © Owen Franken/Corbis.

toyed with the idea of an "industrial policy" to bail out the ailing manufacturing sector, but he moved instead in a free-market direction by lifting the New Deal–era regulation of the airline, trucking, and railroad industries. **Deregulation** stimulated competition and cut prices, but it also drove firms out of business and hurt unionized workers.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW

What kind of president did Jimmy Carter hope to be, and how successful was he at implementing his agenda?

The president's efforts failed to reignite economic growth. Then, the Iranian Revolution curtailed oil supplies, and gas prices jumped again. In a major TV address, Carter lectured Americans about the nation's "crisis of the spirit." He called energy conservation "the moral equivalent of war"—or, in the media's shorthand, "MEOW," which aptly captured the nation's assessment of Carter's sermonizing. By then, his approval rating had fallen below 30 percent. And it was no wonder, given an inflation rate over 11 percent, failing industries, and long lines at the pumps. It seemed the worst of all possible economic worlds, and the first-term president could not help but worry about the political costs to him and his party.

To see a longer excerpt of Carter's TV address, along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History***.

Reform and Reaction in the 1970s

Having lived through a decade of profound social and political upheaval—the Vietnam War, protests, riots, Watergate, recession—many Americans were exhausted and cynical by the mid-1970s. But while some retreated to private concerns, others took reform in new directions. Civil rights battles continued, the women's movement achieved some of its most far-reaching aims, and gay rights blossomed. These movements pushed the "rights revolution" of the 1960s deeper into American life. Others, however, pushed back. Social conservatives responded by forming their own organizations and resisting the emergence of what they saw as a permissive society.

Civil Rights in a New Era

When Congress banned job discrimination in the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the law required only that employers hire without regard to "race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." But after centuries of slavery and decades of segregation, would nondiscrimination bring African Americans into the economic mainstream? Many liberals thought not. They believed that government, universities, and private employers needed to take positive steps to open their doors to a wider, more diverse range of Americans—including other minority groups and women.

Among the most significant efforts to address the legacy of exclusion was **affirmative action**—procedures designed to take into account the disadvantaged position of minority groups after centuries

March for Affirmative Action

Following the Supreme Court's 1978 Bakke decision, Americans grew even more divided over the policy of affirmative action. For many people, such as African Americans and Latinos, affirmative action promised that groups who faced historical discrimination would have equal opportunity in jobs and education. For many whites, affirmative action looked like "reverse discrimination," and they fought its implementation. AP/Wide World Photos.

of discrimination. First advanced by the Kennedy administration in 1961, affirmative action received a boost under President Lyndon Johnson, whose Labor Department fashioned a series of plans in the late 1960s to encourage government contractors to recruit underrepresented racial minorities. Women were added under the last of these plans, when pressure from the women's movement highlighted the problem of sex discrimination. By the early 1970s, affirmative action had been refined by court rulings that identified acceptable procedures: hiring and enrollment goals, special recruitment and training programs, and set-asides (specially reserved slots) for both racial minority groups and women.

Affirmative action, however, did not please many whites, who felt that the deck was being stacked against them. Much of the dissent came from conservative groups that had opposed civil rights all along. They charged affirmative action advocates with "reverse discrimination." Legal challenges abounded, as employees, students, and university applicants went to court to object to these new procedures. Some liberal groups sought a middle position. In a widely publicized 1972 letter, Jewish organizations, seared by the memory of quotas that once kept Jewish students out of elite colleges, came out against all racial quotas but nonetheless endorsed "rectifying the imbalances resulting from past discrimination."

A major shift in affirmative action policy came in 1978. Allan Bakke, a white man, sued the University of California at Davis Medical School for rejecting him in favor of less-qualified minority-group candidates. Headlines across the country sparked anti–affirmative action protest marches on college campuses and vigorous discussion on television and radio and in the White House. Ultimately, the Supreme Court rejected the medical school's quota system, which set aside 16 of 100 places for "disadvantaged" students. The Court ordered Bakke admitted but indicated that a more flexible affirmative action plan, in which race could be considered along with other factors, would still pass constitutional muster. ***Bakke v. University of California*** thus upheld affirmative action but, by rejecting a quota system, also called it into question. Future court rulings and state referenda, in the 1990s and 2000s, would further limit

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME
How did affirmative action evolve between 1961 and 1978?

the scope of affirmative action. In particular, California voters passed Proposition 209 in 1996, prohibiting public institutions from using affirmative action to increase diversity in employment and education.

The Women's Movement and Gay Rights

Unlike the civil rights movement, whose signal achievements came in the 1960s, the women's and gay rights movements flourished in the 1970s. With three influential wings — radical, liberal, and "Third World" — the women's movement inspired both grassroots activism and legislative action across the nation. For their part, gay activists had further to go: they needed to convince Americans that same-sex relationships were natural and that gay men and lesbians deserved the same protection of the law as all other citizens. Neither movement achieved all of its aims in this era, but each laid a strong foundation for the future.

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
How did the idea of civil rights expand during the 1970s?

Women's Activism In the first half of the 1970s, the women's liberation movement reached its historic peak. Taking a dizzying array of forms — from lobbying legislatures to marching in the streets and establishing all-female collectives — women's liberation produced activism on the scale of the earlier black-led civil rights movement. Women's centers, as well as women-run child-care facilities, began to spring up in cities and towns. A feminist art and poetry movement flourished. Women challenged the admissions policies of all-male colleges and universities — opening such prestigious universities as Yale and Columbia and nearly bringing an end to male-only institutions of higher education. Female scholars began to transform higher education: by studying women's history, by increasing the number of women on college and university faculties, and by founding women's studies programs.

Much of women's liberation activism focused on the female body. Inspired by the Boston collective that first published *Our Bodies, Ourselves* — a groundbreaking book on women's health — the women's health movement founded dozens of medical clinics, encouraged women to become physicians, and educated millions of women about their bodies. To reform antiabortion laws, activists pushed for remedies in more than thirty state legislatures. Women's liberationists founded the antirape movement, established rape crisis centers around the nation, and lobbied state legislatures and Congress to reform rape laws. Many of these endeavors and movements began as shoestring operations in living rooms and kitchens: *Our Bodies, Ourselves* was first published as a 35-cent mimeographed booklet, and the antirape movement began in small consciousness-raising groups that met in churches and community centers. By the end of the decade, however, all of these causes had national organizations and touched the lives of millions of American women.

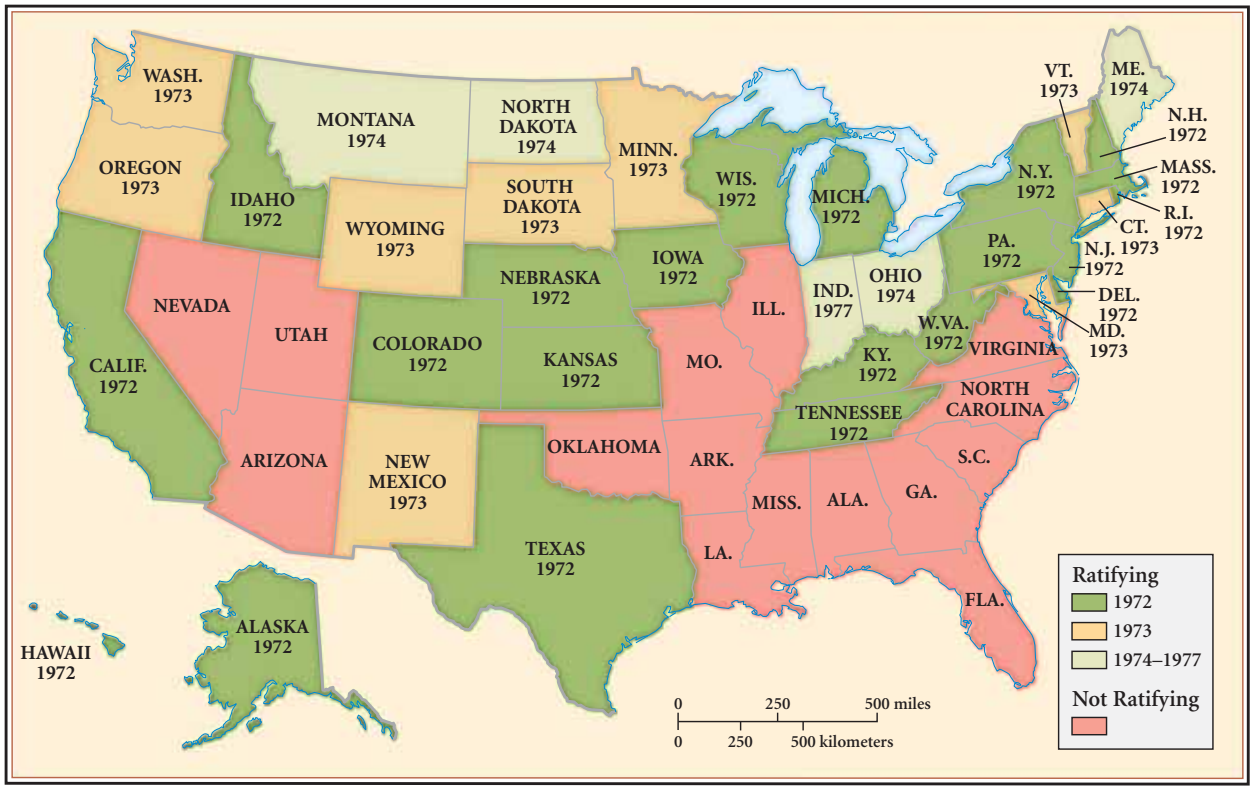
Equal Rights Amendment Buoyed by this flourishing of activism, the women's movement renewed the fight for an **Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)** to the Constitution. First introduced in 1923, the ERA stated, in its entirety, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on the basis of sex." Vocal congressional women, such as Patsy Mink (Democrat, Hawaii), Bella Abzug

Phyllis Schlafly
Phyllis Schlafly, leader of the organization STOP ERA, talks with reporters during a rally at the Illinois State Capitol on March 4, 1975, at a time when the state legislature was considering whether to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. Schlafly described herself as a housewife and called her strenuous political career a hobby. © Bettmann/Corbis.

(Democrat, New York), and Shirley Chisholm (Democrat, New York), found enthusiastic male allies — among both Democrats and Republicans — and Congress adopted the amendment in 1972. Within just two years, thirty-four of the necessary thirty-eight states had ratified it, and the ERA appeared headed for adoption. But then, progress abruptly halted (Map 29.2).

Credit for putting the brakes on ERA ratification goes chiefly to a remarkable woman: Phyllis Schlafly, a lawyer long active in conservative causes. Despite her own flourishing career, Schlafly advocated traditional roles for women. The ERA, she proclaimed, would create an unnatural "unisex society," with women drafted into the army and forced to use single-sex toilets. Abortion, she alleged, could never be prohibited by law. Led by Schlafly's organization, **STOP ERA** (founded in 1972), thousands of women mobilized, showing up at statehouses with home-baked bread and apple pies. As labels on baked goods at one anti-ERA rally expressed it: "My heart and hand went into this dough / For the sake of the family please vote no." It was a message that resonated widely, especially among those troubled by the rapid pace of social change (American Voices, p. 954). The ERA never was ratified, despite a congressional extension of the deadline to June 30, 1982.

Roe v. Wade In addition to the ERA, the women's movement had identified another major goal: winning reproductive rights. Activists pursued two tracks: legislative and judicial. In the early 1960s, abortion was illegal in virtually every state. A decade later, thanks to intensive lobbying by women's organizations, liberal ministers, and physicians, a handful of states, such as New York, Hawaii, California, and Colorado, adopted laws making legal abortions easier to obtain. But progress after that was slow, and women's advocates turned to the courts. There was reason to be optimistic. The



MAP 29.2

States Ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment, 1972–1977

The ratifying process for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) went smoothly in 1972 and 1973 but then stalled. The turning point came in 1976, when ERA advocates lobbied extensively, particularly in Florida, North Carolina, and Illinois, but failed to sway the conservative legislatures in those states. After Indiana ratified in 1977, the amendment still lacked three votes toward the three-fourths majority needed for adoption. Efforts to revive the ERA in the 1980s were unsuccessful, and it became a dead issue.

Debating the Equal Rights Amendment

Fifty years after its introduction, the Equal Rights Amendment ("Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex") finally met congressional approval in 1972 and was sent to the states for ratification. The amendment set off a furious debate, especially in the South and Midwest, and fell short of ratification. Following are four of the voices in that debate.

Phyllis Schlafly

Lawyer and political activist Phyllis Schlafly was the most prominent opponent of the ERA. Her organization, STOP ERA, campaigned against the amendment in critical states and helped to halt ratification.

Women's magazines, the women's pages of newspapers, and television and radio talk shows have been filled for months with a strident advocacy of the "rights" of women to be treated on an equal basis with men in all walks of life. But what about the rights of the woman who doesn't want to compete on an equal basis with men? Does she have the right to be treated as a woman — by her family, by society, and by the law? . . .

The laws of every one of our 50 states now guarantee the right to be a woman — protected and provided for in her career as a woman, wife, and mother. The proposed Equal Rights Amendment will wipe out all our laws which — through rights, benefits, and exemptions — guarantee this right to be a woman. . . . Is this what American women want? Is this what American men want?

The laws of every one of the 50 states now require the husband to support his wife and children — and to provide a home for them to live in. In other words, the law protects a woman's right to be a full-time wife and mother, her right not to take a job outside the home, her right to care for her own baby in her own home while being financially supported by her husband. . . .

There are two very different types of women lobbying for the Equal Rights Amendment. One group is the women's liberationists. Their motive is totally radical. They hate men, marriage, and children. They are out to destroy morality and the family. . . . There is another type of woman supporting the Equal Rights Amendment from the most sincere motives. It is easy to see why the business and professional women are supporting the Equal Rights Amendment — many of them have felt the keen edge of discrimination in their employment.

Source: From *The Phyllis Schlafly Report*, November 1972. Reprinted by permission.

Jerry Falwell

Jerry Falwell was a fundamentalist Baptist preacher in Virginia, a television evangelist, and the founder of the political lobbying organization known as the Moral Majority.

I believe that at the foundation of the women's liberation movement there is a minority core of women who were once bored with life, whose real problems are spiritual problems. Many women have never accepted their God-given roles. . . . God Almighty created men and women biologically different and with differing needs and roles. He made men and women to complement each other and to love each other. . . . Women who work should be respected and accorded dignity and equal rewards for equal work. But this is not what the present feminist movement and equal rights movement are all about.

The Equal Rights Amendment is a delusion. I believe that women deserve more than equal rights. And, in families and in nations where the Bible is believed, Christian women are honored above men. Only in places where the Bible is believed and practiced do women receive more than equal rights. Men and women have differing strengths. The Equal Rights Amendment can never do for women what needs to be done for them. Women need to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and be under His Lordship. They need a man who knows Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, and they need to be part of a home where their husband is a godly leader and where there is a Christian family. . . .

ERA is not merely a political issue, but a moral issue as well. A definite violation of holy Scripture, ERA defies the mandate that "the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church" (Ep. 5:23). In 1 Peter 3:7 we read that husbands are to give their wives honor as unto the weaker vessel, that they are both heirs together of the grace of life. Because a woman is weaker does not mean that she is less important.

Elizabeth Duncan Koontz

Elizabeth Duncan Koontz was a distinguished educator and the first black woman to head the National Education Association and the U.S. Women's Bureau. At the time she made this statement at state legislative hearings on the ERA in 1977, she was assistant state superintendent for public instruction in North Carolina.

A short time ago I had the misfortune to break my foot. . . . The pain . . . did not hurt me as much as when I went into the emergency room and the young woman upon asking me my name, the nature of my ailment, then asked me for my husband's social security number and his hospitalization number. I asked her what did that have to do with my emergency.

And she said, "We have to be sure of who is going to pay your bill." I said, "Suppose I'm not married, then." And she said, "Then give me your father's name." I did not go through that twenty years ago when I was denied the use of that emergency room because of my color.

I went through that because there is an underlying assumption that all women in our society are protected, dependent, cared for by somebody who's got a social security number and hospitalization insurance. Never once did she assume I might be a woman who might be caring for my husband, instead of him by me, because of some illness. She did not take into account the fact that one out of almost eight women heading families in poverty today [is] in the same condition as men in families and poverty. . . .

My greater concern is that so many women today . . . oppose the passage of the ERA very sincerely and . . . tell you without batting an eye, "I don't want to see women treated that way." And I speak up, "What way is that?" . . . Women themselves have been a bit misguided. We have mistaken present practice for law, and women have . . . assumed too many times that their present condition cannot change. The rate of divorce, the rate of desertion, the rate of separation, and the death rate of male supporters is enough for us to say: "Let us remove all legal barriers to women and girls making their choices — this state cannot afford it."

Source: William A. Link and Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, eds., *The South in the History of the Nation* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999), 295–296.

Caroline Bird

Caroline Bird was the lead author of *What Women Want*, a report produced by women's rights advocates following the 1977 National Women's Conference, held in Houston, Texas.

The Declaration of Independence, signed in 1776, stated that "all Men are created equal" and that governments derive their powers "from the Consent of the Governed." Women were not included in either concept. The original American Constitution of 1787 was founded on English common law, which did not recognize women as citizens or as individuals with legal rights. A woman was expected to obey her husband or nearest male kin, and if she was married her person and her property were owned by her husband. . . .

It has been argued that the ERA is not necessary because the Fourteenth Amendment, passed after the Civil War, guarantees that no state shall deny to "any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." . . .

Aside from the fact that women have been subjected to varying, inconsistent, and often unfavorable decisions under the Fourteenth Amendment, the Equal Rights Amendment is a more immediate and effective remedy to sex discrimination in Federal and State laws than case-by-case interpretation under the Fourteenth Amendment could ever be.

Source: Caroline Bird, *What Women Want* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1978), 120–121.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Schlafly and Koontz have different notions of what it means to be a woman. Explain what these differences are and how they inform the authors' distinct views of the ERA.
2. Why does Schlafly believe that women will be harmed by the ERA?
3. Schlafly and Falwell argue that women need the protection and support of men. Are they right? How would Koontz likely respond?
4. How do each of the four authors define women's roles and responsibilities in society?

Supreme Court had first addressed reproductive rights in a 1965 case, *Griswold v. Connecticut*. *Griswold* struck down an 1879 state law prohibiting the possession of contraception as a violation of married couples' constitutional "right of privacy." Following the logic articulated in *Griswold*, the Court gradually expanded the right of privacy in a series of cases in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Those cases culminated in ***Roe v. Wade*** (1973). In that landmark decision, the justices nullified a Texas law that prohibited abortion under any circumstances, even when the woman's health was at risk, and laid out a new national standard: Abortions performed during the first trimester were protected by the right of privacy. At the time and afterward, some legal authorities questioned whether the Constitution recognized any such privacy right and criticized the Court's seemingly arbitrary first-trimester timeline. Nevertheless, the Supreme Court chose to move forward, transforming a traditionally state-regulated policy into a national, constitutionally protected right.

For the women's movement, *Roe v. Wade* represented a triumph. For evangelical and fundamentalist Christians, Catholics, and conservatives generally, it was a bitter pill. In their view, abortion was, unequivocally, the taking of a human life. These Americans, represented by groups such as the National Right to Life Committee, did not believe that something they regarded as immoral and sinful could be the basis for women's equality. Women's advocates responded that illegal abortions — common prior to *Roe* — were often unsafe procedures, which resulted in physical harm to women and even death. *Roe* polarized what was already a sharply divided public and mobilized conservatives to seek a Supreme Court reversal or, short of that, to pursue legislation that would strictly limit the conditions under which abortions could be performed. In 1976, they convinced Congress to deny Medicaid funds for abortions, an opening round in a campaign against *Roe v. Wade* that continues today.

Harvey Milk The gay rights movement had achieved notable victories as well. These, too, proved controversial. More than a dozen cities had passed gay rights ordinances by the mid-1970s, protecting gay men and lesbians from employment and housing discrimination. One such ordinance in Dade County (Miami), Florida, sparked a protest led by Anita Bryant, a conservative Baptist and a television celebrity. Her "Save Our Children" campaign in 1977, which garnered national media attention, resulted in the repeal of the ordinance and symbolized the emergence of a conservative religious movement opposed to gay rights.

Across the country from Miami, developments in San Francisco looked promising for gay rights advocates, then turned tragic. No one embodied the combination of gay liberation and hard-nosed politics better than a San Francisco camera-shop owner named

Harvey Milk
In November 1977, Harvey Milk became the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in the United States, when he won a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Shockingly, almost exactly a year from the day of his election, Milk was assassinated.

Harvey Milk. A closeted businessman in New York until he was forty, Milk arrived in San Francisco in 1972 and threw himself into city politics. Fiercely independent, he ran as an openly gay candidate for city supervisor (city council) twice and the state assembly once, both times unsuccessfully.

By mobilizing the "gay vote" into a powerful bloc, Milk finally won a supervisor seat in 1977. He was not the first openly gay elected official in the country — Kathy Kozachenko of Michigan and Elaine Noble of Massachusetts share that distinction — but he became a national symbol of emerging gay political power. Tragically, after he helped to win passage of a gay rights ordinance in San Francisco, he was assassinated in 1978 — along with the city's mayor, George Moscone — by a disgruntled former supervisor named Dan White. When White was convicted of manslaughter rather than murder, five thousand gays and lesbians in San Francisco marched on city hall.

After the Warren Court

In response to what conservatives considered the liberal judicial revolution under the Warren Court, President Nixon came into the presidency promising to appoint "strict constructionists" (conservative-minded justices) to the bench. In three short years, between 1969 and 1972, he was able to appoint four new justices to the Supreme Court, including the new chief justice, Warren Burger. Surprisingly, despite the conservative credentials of its new members, the Burger Court refused to scale back the liberal precedents set under Warren. Most prominently, in *Roe v. Wade* the Burger Court extended the "right of privacy" developed under Warren to include women's access to abortion. As we saw above, few Supreme Court decisions in the twentieth century have disappointed conservatives more.

In a variety of cases, the Burger Court either confirmed previous liberal rulings or chose a centrist course. In 1972, for instance, the Court deepened its intervention in criminal procedure by striking down all existing capital punishment laws, in *Furman v. Georgia*. In response, Los Angeles police chief Ed Davis accused the Court of establishing a "legal oligarchy" that had ignored the "perspective of the average citizen." He and other conservatives vowed a nationwide campaign to bring back the death penalty — which was in fact shortly restored, in *Gregg v. Georgia* (1976). Other decisions advanced women's rights. In 1976, the Court ruled that arbitrary distinctions based on sex in the workplace and other arenas were unconstitutional, and in 1986 that sexual harassment violated the Civil Rights Act. These rulings helped women break employment barriers in the subsequent decades.

In all of their rulings on privacy rights, however, the Burger Court was reluctant to move ahead of public attitudes toward homosexuality. Gay men and lesbians still had no legal recourse if state laws prohibited same-sex relations. In a controversial 1986 case, *Bowers v. Hardwick*, the Supreme Court upheld a Georgia sodomy statute that criminalized same-sex sexual acts. The majority opinion held that homosexuality was contrary to "ordered liberty" and that extending sexual privacy to gays and lesbians "would be to cast aside millennia of moral teaching." Not until 2003 (*Lawrence v. Texas*) would the Court overturn that decision, recognizing for all Americans the right to sexual privacy.

The American Family on Trial

In 1973, the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) aired a twelve-part television series that followed the life of a real American family. Producers wanted the show, called simply *An American Family*, to document how a middle-class white family coped with the stresses of a changing society. They did not anticipate that the family would dissolve in front of their cameras. Tensions and arguments raged, and in the final episode, Bill, the husband and father (who had had numerous extramarital affairs), moved out. By the time the show aired, the couple was divorced and Pat, the former wife, had become a single working mother with five children.

An American Family captured a traumatic moment in the twentieth-century history of the family. Between 1965 and 1985, the divorce rate doubled, and children born in the 1970s had a 40 percent chance of spending part of their youth in a single-parent household. As wages stagnated and inflation pushed prices up, more and more families depended on two incomes for survival. Furthermore, the women's movement and the counterculture had called into question traditional sex roles — father as provider and mother as homemaker — and middle-class baby boomers rebelled against what they saw as the puritanical sexual values of their parents' generation. In the midst of such rapid change, where did the family stand?

Working Families in the Age of Deindustrialization

One of the most striking developments of the 1970s and 1980s was the relative stagnation of wages. After World War II, hourly wages had grown steadily ahead

of inflation, giving workers more buying power with each passing decade. By 1973, that trend had stopped in its tracks. The decline of organized labor, the loss of manufacturing jobs, and runaway inflation all played a role in the reversal. Hardest hit were blue-collar and pink-collar workers and those without college degrees.

Women Enter the Workforce Millions of wives and mothers had worked for wages for decades. But many Americans still believed in the "family wage": a breadwinner income, earned by men, sufficient to support a family. After 1973, fewer and fewer Americans had access to that luxury. Between 1973 and the early 1990s, every major income group except the top 10 percent saw their real earnings (accounting for inflation) either remain the same or decline. Over this period, the typical worker saw a 10 percent drop in real wages. To keep their families from falling behind, women streamed into the workforce. Between 1950 and 1994, the proportion of women ages 25 to 54 working for pay increased from 37 to 75 percent. Much of that increase occurred in the 1970s. Americans were fast becoming dependent on the two-income household (Figure 29.5).

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
Why did the struggles of working families become more prominent in the 1970s, and what social and economic concerns did those families have?

The numbers tell two different stories of American life in these decades. On the one hand, the trends unmistakably show that women, especially in blue-collar and pink-collar families, *had* to work for wages to sustain their family's standard of living: to buy a car, pay for college, afford medical bills, support an aging parent, or simply pay the rent. Moreover, the number of single women raising children nearly doubled between 1965 and 1990. Women's paid labor was making up for the declining earning power or the absence of men in American households. On the other hand, women's real income overall grew during the same period. This increase reflected the opening of professional and skilled jobs to educated baby-boomer women. As older barriers began to fall, women poured into law and medicine, business and government, and, though more slowly, the sciences and engineering. Beneficiaries of feminism, these women pursued careers of which their mothers had only dreamed.

Workers in the National Spotlight For a brief period in the 1970s, the trials of working men and women made a distinct imprint on national culture.

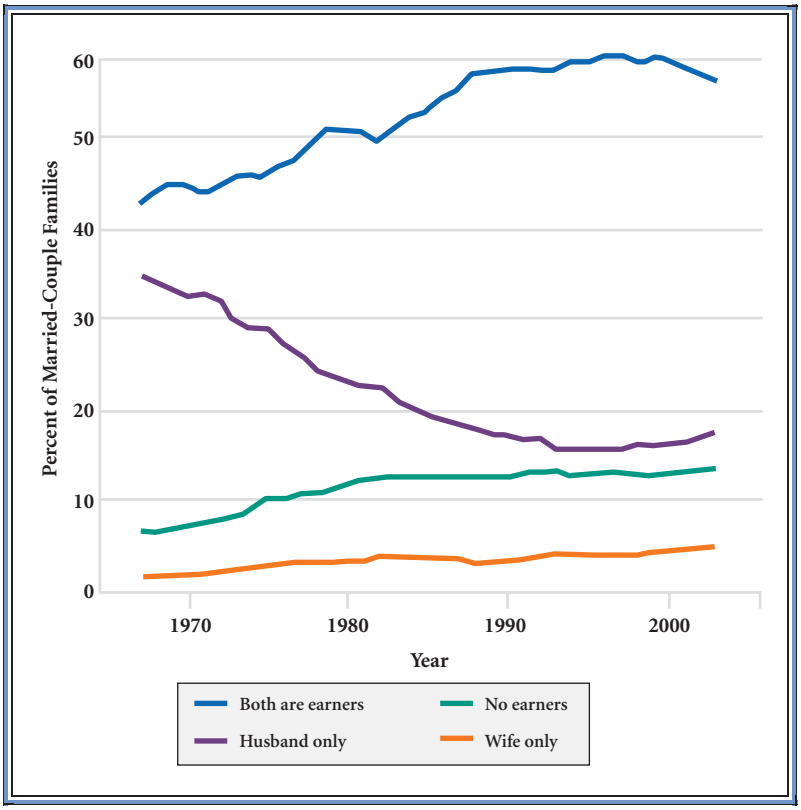


FIGURE 29.5
The Increase in Two-Worker Families
In 1968, about 43 percent of married couples sent both the husband and the wife into the workforce; thirty years later, 60 percent were two-earner families. The percentage of families in which the wife alone worked increased from 3 to 5 percent during these years, while those with no earners (welfare recipients and, increasingly, retired couples) rose from 8 to 13 percent. Because these figures do not include unmarried persons and most illegal immigrants, they do not give a complete picture of the American workplace. But there is no doubt that women now play a major role in the workforce.

Blue-Collar Blues

Unemployment in the 1970s affected blue-collar workers most, with many factories closing and new construction at a standstill. In many cities, joblessness among construction workers stood between 20 and 30 percent. In this 1976 photo, an unemployed carpenter in Cleveland, Ohio, files for unemployment insurance. The "blue-collar blues" caused by long unemployment lines, high inflation, and difficult economic times hit American workers hard in the late 1970s. © 1976 Settle/The New York Times Company. Reprinted with Permission.

Reporters wrote of the "blue-collar blues" associated with plant closings and the hard-fought strikes of the decade. A 1972 strike at the Lordstown, Ohio, General Motors plant captivated the nation. Holding out not for higher wages but for better working conditions — the plant had the most complex assembly line in the nation — Lordstown strikers spoke out against what they saw as an inhumane industrial system. Across the nation, the number of union-led strikes surged, even as the number of Americans in the labor movement continued to decline. In Lordstown and most other sites of strikes and industrial conflict, workers won a measure of public attention but typically gained little economic ground.

When Americans turned on their televisions in the mid-1970s, the most popular shows reflected the "blue-collar blues" of struggling families. *All in the Family* was joined by *The Waltons*, set during the Great Depression. *Good Times*, *Welcome Back, Kotter*, and *Sanford and Son* dealt with poverty in the inner city. *The Jeffersons* featured an upwardly mobile black couple. *Laverne and Shirley* focused on young working women

Good Times

The popular 1970s sitcom *Good Times* examined how the "blue-collar blues" affected a working-class black family struggling to make ends meet in tough economic times. The show's theme song spoke of "temporary layoffs . . . easy credit ripoffs . . . scratchin' and surviving." Its actors, many of them classically trained, brought a realistic portrait of working-class African American life to television. © Bettmann/Corbis.

in the 1950s and *One Day at a Time* on working women in the 1970s making do after divorce. The most-watched television series of the decade, 1977's eight-part *Roots*, explored the history of slavery and the survival of African American culture and family roots despite the oppressive labor system. Not since the 1930s had American culture paid such close attention to working-class life.

The decade also saw the rise of musicians such as Bruce Springsteen, Johnny Paycheck, and John Cougar (Mellencamp), who became stars by turning the hard-scrabble lives of people in small towns and working-class communities into rock anthems that filled arenas. Springsteen wrote songs about characters who "sweat it out in the streets of a runaway American dream," and, to the delight of his audience, Paycheck famously sang, "Take this job and shove it!" Meanwhile, on the streets of Harlem and the South Bronx in New York, young working-class African American men experimenting with dance and musical forms invented break dancing and rap music — styles that expressed both the hardship and the creativity of working-class black life in the deindustrialized American city.

Navigating the Sexual Revolution

The economic downturn was not the only force that placed stress on American families in this era. Another such force was what many came to call the "sexual revolution." Hardly revolutionary, sexual attitudes in the 1970s were, in many ways, a logical evolution of developments in the first half of the twentieth century. Beginning in the 1910s, Americans increasingly viewed sex as a component of personal happiness, distinct from reproduction. Attitudes toward sex grew even more lenient in the postwar decades, a fact reflected in the Kinsey studies of the 1940s and 1950s. By the 1960s, sex before marriage had grown more socially acceptable — an especially profound change for women — and frank discussions of sex in the media and popular culture had grown more common.

In that decade, three developments dramatically accelerated this process: the introduction of the birth control pill, the rise of the baby-boomer-led counterculture, and the influence of feminism. First made available in the United States in 1960, the birth control pill gave women an unprecedented degree of control over reproduction. By 1965, more than 6 million American women were taking advantage of this pharmaceutical advance. Rapid shifts in attitude accompanied the technological breakthrough. Middle-class baby boomers embraced a sexual ethic of greater freedom and, in many cases, a more casual approach to sex outside marriage. "I just feel I am expressing myself the way I feel at that moment in the most natural way," a female California college student, explaining her sex life, told a reporter in 1966. The rebellious counterculture encouraged this attitudinal shift by associating a puritanical view of sex with their parents' generation.

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
What were three major consequences of the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s?

Finally, women's rights activists reacted to the new emphasis on sexual freedom in at least two distinct ways. Many feminists felt that the sexual revolution was by and for men: the emphasis on casual sex seemed to perpetuate male privilege — the old double standard; sexual harassment was all too common in the workplace; and the proliferation of pornography continued to commercialize women as sex objects. On the other hand, they remained optimistic that the new sexual ethic could free women from those older moral constraints. They called for a revolution in sexual *values*, not simply behavior, that would end exploitation and grant women the freedom to explore their sexuality on equal terms with men.

Sex and Popular Culture In the 1970s, popular culture was suffused with discussions of the sexual revolution. Mass-market books with titles such as *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex*, *Human Sexual Response*, and *The Sensuous Man* shot up the best-seller list. William Masters and Virginia Johnson became the most famous sex researchers since Alfred Kinsey by studying couples in the act of lovemaking. In 1972, English physician Alex Comfort published *The Joy of Sex*, a guidebook for couples that became one of the most popular books of the decade. Comfort made certain to distinguish his writing from pornographic exploitation. "Sex is the one place where we today can learn to treat people as people," he wrote.

Hollywood took advantage of the new sexual ethic by making films with explicit erotic content that pushed the boundaries of middle-class taste. Films such as *Midnight Cowboy* (1969), *Carnal Knowledge* (1971), and *Shampoo* (1974), the latter starring Hollywood's leading ladies' man, Warren Beatty, led the way. Throughout the decade, and into the 1980s, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) scrambled to keep its guide for parents — the system of rating pictures G, PG, R, and X (and, after 1984, PG-13) — in tune with Hollywood's advancing sexual revolution.

On television, the popularity of social problem shows, such as *All in the Family*, and the fear of losing

Midnight Cowboy

In the mid-1970s, the movie industry embraced the "sexual revolution" and pushed the boundaries of middle-class taste. Movies such as *Midnight Cowboy* (1975)—starring Dustin Hoffman and Jon Voight—were part of a larger shift in American culture in which frank sexual discussions and the portrayal of sexual situations in various media grew more acceptable. John Springer Collection/Corbis.

advertising revenue moderated the portrayal of sex in the early 1970s. However, in the second half of the decade networks both exploited and criticized the new sexual ethic. In frivolous, lighthearted shows such as the popular *Charlie's Angels*, *Three's Company*, and *The Love Boat*, heterosexual couples explored the often confusing, and usually comical, landscape of sexual morality. At the same time, between 1974 and 1981, the major networks produced more than a dozen made-for-TV movies about children in sexual danger—a sensationalized warning to parents of the potential threats to children posed by a less strict sexual morality.

Middle-Class Marriage Many Americans worried that the sexual revolution threatened marriage itself. The notion of marriage as romantic companionship had defined middle-class norms since the late nineteenth century. It was also quite common throughout most of the twentieth century for Americans to see sexual satisfaction as a healthy part of the marriage bond. But what defined a healthy marriage in an age of rising divorce rates, changing sexual values, and feminist critiques of the nuclear family? Only a small minority of Americans rejected marriage outright; most continued to create monogamous relationships codified in marriage. But many came to believe that they needed help as marriage came under a variety of economic and psychological stresses.

A therapeutic industry arose in response. Churches and secular groups alike established marriage seminars and counseling services to assist couples in sustaining a healthy marriage. A popular form of 1960s psychotherapy, the "encounter group," was adapted to marriage counseling: couples met in large groups to explore new methods of communicating. One of the most successful of these organizations, Marriage Encounter, was founded by the Catholic Church. It expanded into Protestant and Jewish communities in the 1970s and became one of the nation's largest counseling organizations. Such groups embodied another long-term shift in how middle-class Americans understood marriage. Spurred by both feminism and psychotherapeutic models that stressed self-improvement, Americans increasingly defined marriage not simply by companionship and sexual fidelity but also by the deeply felt emotional connection between two people.

Religion in the 1970s: The Fourth Great Awakening

For three centuries, American society has been punctuated by intense periods of religious revival—what historians have called Great Awakenings (Chapters 4 and 8). These periods have seen a rise in church membership, the appearance of charismatic religious leaders, and the increasing influence of religion, usually of the evangelical variety, on society and politics. One such awakening, the fourth in U.S. history, took shape in the 1970s and 1980s. It had many elements, but one of its central features was a growing concern with the family.

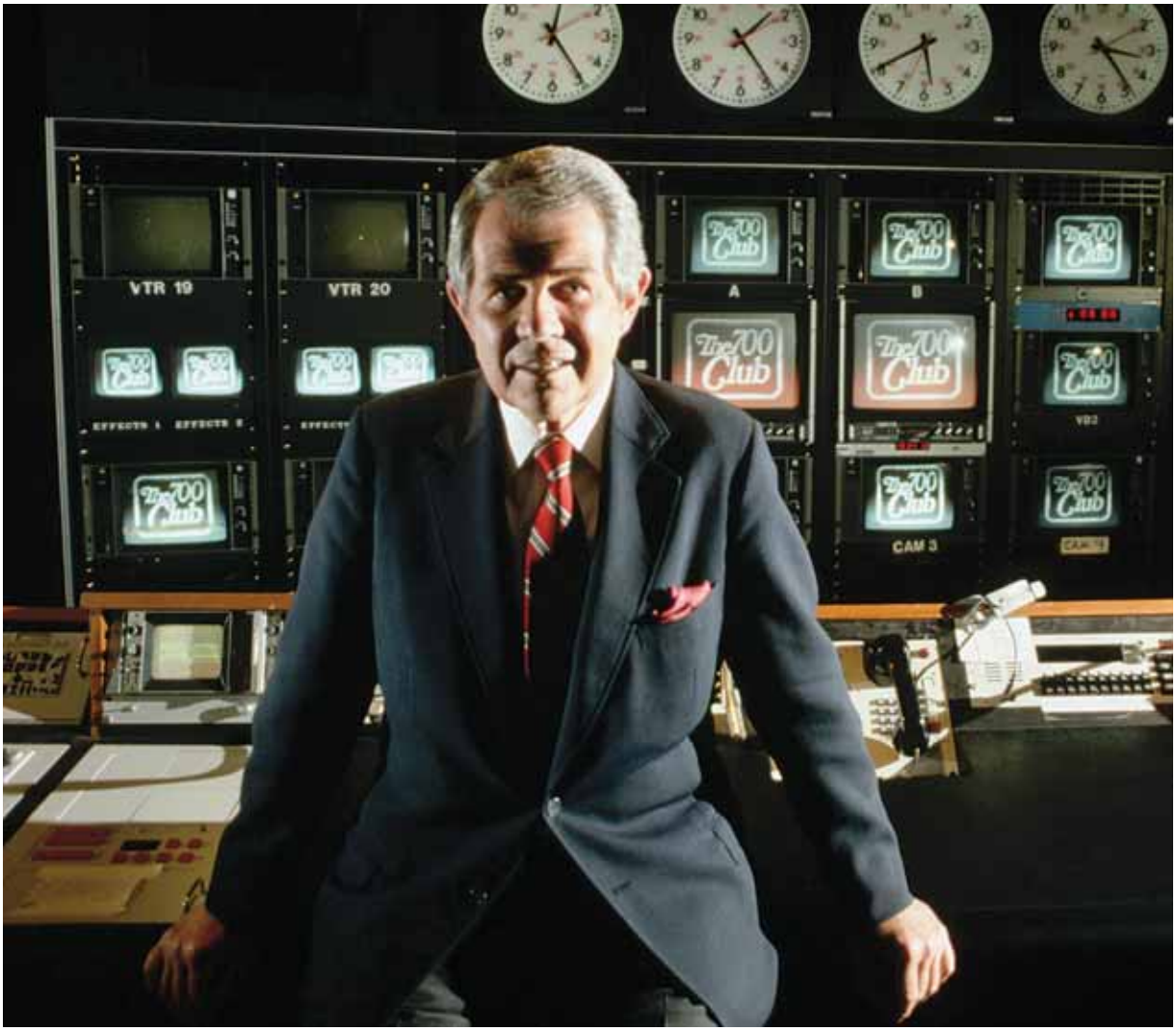
In the 1950s and 1960s, many mainstream Protestants had embraced the reform spirit of the age. Some of the most visible Protestant leaders were social activists who condemned racism and opposed the Vietnam War. Organizations such as the National Council of Churches—along with many progressive Catholics and Jews—joined with Martin Luther King Jr. and other African American ministers in the long battle for civil rights. Many mainline Protestant churches, among them the Episcopal, Methodist, and Congregationalist denominations, practiced a version

of the "Social Gospel," the reform-minded Christianity of the early twentieth century.

Evangelical Resurgence Meanwhile, **evangelicalism** survived at the grass roots. Evangelical Protestant churches emphasized an intimate, personal salvation (being "born again"); focused on a literal interpretation of the Bible; and regarded the death and resurrection of Jesus as the central message of Christianity. These tenets distinguished evangelicals from mainline Protestants as well as from Catholics and Jews, and they flourished in a handful of evangelical colleges, Bible schools, and seminaries in the postwar decades.

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
How did evangelical Christianity influence American society in the 1970s?

No one did more to keep the evangelical fire burning than Billy Graham. A graduate of the evangelical Wheaton College in Illinois, Graham cofounded Youth for Christ in 1945 and then toured the United States and Europe preaching the gospel. Following a stunning 1949 tent revival in Los Angeles that lasted eight weeks, Graham shot to national fame. His success in Los Angeles led to a popular radio program, but



Televangelism
Television minister ("televangelist") and conservative political activist Pat Robertson, shown here in the control room of his *700 Club* TV show, was a leading figure in the resurgence of evangelical Christianity in the 1970s and 1980s. Reaching millions of viewers through their television ministries, men such as Robertson built huge churches and large popular followings. © Wally McNamee/CORBIS

he continued to travel relentlessly, conducting old-fashioned revival meetings he called crusades. A massive sixteen-week 1957 crusade held in New York City's Madison Square Garden made Graham, along with the conservative Catholic priest Fulton Sheen, one of the nation's most visible religious leaders.

Graham and other evangelicals in the 1950s and 1960s laid the groundwork for the Fourth Great Awakening. But it was a startling combination of events in the late 1960s and early 1970s that sparked the evangelical revival. First, rising divorce rates, social unrest, and challenges to prevailing values led people to seek the stability of faith. Second, many Americans regarded feminism, the counterculture, sexual freedom, homosexuality, pornography, and legalized abortion not as distinct issues, but as a collective sign of moral decay in society. To seek answers and find order, more and more people turned to evangelical ministries, especially Southern Baptist, Pentecostal, and Assemblies of God churches.

Numbers tell part of the story. As mainline churches lost about 15 percent of their membership between 1970 and 1985, evangelical church membership soared. The Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Protestant denomination, grew by 23 percent, while the Assemblies of God grew by an astounding 300 percent. *Newsweek* magazine declared 1976 "The Year of the Evangelical," and that November the nation made Jimmy Carter the nation's first evangelical president. In a national Gallup poll, 34 percent of Americans answered yes when asked, "Would you describe yourself as a 'born again' or evangelical Christian?"

Much of this astonishing growth came from the creative use of television. Graham had pounded the pavement and worn out shoe leather to reach his converts. But a new generation of preachers brought religious conversion directly into Americans' living rooms through television. These so-called televangelists built huge media empires through small donations from millions of avid viewers — not to mention advertising. Jerry Falwell's *Old Time Gospel Hour*, Pat Robertson's *700 Club*, and Jim and Tammy Bakker's *PTL (Praise the Lord) Club* were the leading pioneers in this televised race for American souls, but another half dozen — including Oral Roberts and Jimmy Swaggart — followed them onto the airwaves. Together, they made the 1970s and 1980s the era of Christian broadcasting.

Religion and the Family Of primary concern to evangelical Christians was the family. Drawing on selected Bible passages, evangelicals believed that the nuclear family, and not the individual, represented the fundamental unit of society. The family itself was organized along paternalist lines: father was breadwinner and disciplinarian; mother was nurturer and supporter. "Motherhood is the highest form of femininity," the evangelical author Beverly LaHaye wrote in an influential book on Christian women. Another popular Christian author declared, "A church, a family, a nation is only as strong as its men."

Evangelicals spread their message about the Christian family through more than the pulpit and television. They founded publishing houses, wrote books, established foundations, and offered seminars. Helen B. Andelin, for instance, a California housewife, produced a homemade book called *Fascinating Womanhood* that eventually sold more than 2 million copies. She used the book as the basis for her classes, which by the early 1970s had been attended by 400,000 women and boasted 11,000 trained teachers. *Fascinating Womanhood* led evangelical women in the opposite direction of feminism. Whereas the latter encouraged women to be independent and to seek equality with men, Andelin taught that "submissiveness will bring a strange but righteous power over your man." Andelin was but one of dozens of evangelical authors and educators who encouraged women to defer to men.

Evangelical Christians held that strict gender roles in the family would ward off the influences of an immoral society. Christian activists were especially concerned with sex education in public schools, the proliferation of pornography, legalized abortion, and the rising divorce rate. For them, the answer was to strengthen what they called "traditional" family structures. By the early 1980s, Christians could choose from among hundreds of evangelical books, take classes on how to save a marriage or how to be a Christian parent, attend evangelical churches and Bible study courses, watch evangelical ministers on television, and donate to foundations that promoted "Christian values" in state legislatures and the U.S. Congress.

Wherever one looked in the 1970s and early 1980s, American families were under strain. Nearly everyone agreed that the waves of social liberalism and economic transformation that swept over the nation in the 1960s and 1970s had destabilized society and, especially, family relationships. But Americans did not agree about how to *re*stabilize families. Indeed, different approaches to the family would further divide the country in the 1980s and 1990s, as the New Right would increasingly make "family values" a political issue.

"Family Values"

During the 1980 presidential campaign, the Reverend Jerry Falwell, pictured here with Phyllis Schlafly, supported Ronald Reagan and the Republican Party with "I Love America" rallies around the country. Falwell, head of the Moral Majority, helped to bring a new focus on "family values" to American politics in the late 1970s. This was a conservative version of the emphasis on male-breadwinner nuclear families that had long been characteristic of American values. AP/Wide World Photos.

SUMMARY

For much of the 1970s, Americans struggled with economic problems, including inflation, energy shortages, income stagnation, and deindustrialization. These challenges highlighted the limits of postwar prosperity and forced Americans to consider lowering their economic expectations. A movement for environmental protection, widely supported, led to new laws and an awareness of nature's limits, and the energy crisis highlighted the nation's dependence on resources from abroad, especially oil.

In the midst of this gloomy economic climate, Americans also sought political and cultural resolutions to the upheavals of the 1960s. In politics, the Watergate scandal led to a brief period of political reform. Meanwhile, the battle for civil rights entered a second stage, expanding to encompass women's rights, gay rights, and the rights of alleged criminals and prisoners and, in the realm of racial justice, focusing on the problem of producing concrete results rather than legislation. Many liberals cheered these developments, but another effect was to strengthen a new, more conservative social mood that began to challenge liberal values in politics and society more generally. Finally, we considered the multiple challenges faced by the American family in the 1970s and how a perception that the family was in trouble helped to spur an evangelical religious revival that would shape American society for decades to come.

CHAPTER REVIEW

MAKE IT STICK Go to **LearningCurve** to retain what you've read.

TERMS TO KNOW

Identify and explain the significance of each term below.

Key Concepts and Events

Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) (p. 938)
energy crisis (p. 939)
environmentalism (p. 939)
Silent Spring (p. 939)
Earth Day (p. 939)
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (p. 939)
Three Mile Island (p. 942)
stagflation (p. 942)
deindustrialization (p. 944)
Rust Belt (p. 944)
tax revolt (p. 946)
Proposition 13 (p. 947)
Watergate (p. 947)
War Powers Act (p. 948)
Freedom of Information Act (p. 948)
Ethics in Government Act (p. 948)
deregulation (p. 950)
affirmative action (p. 950)
Bakke v. University of California (p. 951)
Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) (p. 952)
STOP ERA (p. 953)
Roe v. Wade (p. 956)
evangelicalism (p. 962)

Key People

Rachel Carson (p. 939)
Gerald Ford (p. 947)
Howard Jarvis (p. 947)
Jimmy Carter (p. 949)
Phyllis Schlafly (p. 953)
Harvey Milk (p. 956)
Billy Graham (p. 962)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of the chapter's main ideas.

1. Why did the U.S. economy struggle in the 1970s? How was the period after 1973 different from 1945–1972?
2. How was the "rights liberalism" of this era different from the "welfare liberalism" of the 1930s and 1940s?
3. How was the American family of the 1970s different from that of the 1950s? Without romanticizing either period, how would you account for the differences?
4. **THEMATIC UNDERSTANDING** Examine the category "Work, Exchange, and Technology" on the thematic timeline on page 803. How did economic developments in the 1970s reverse the course the national economy had been on since World War II? More broadly, can you identify events in each of the timeline categories that made the 1970s a decade of important historical transition?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Recognize the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters by answering these questions.

1. **ACROSS TIME AND PLACE** Consider the history of the American economy in the twentieth century. Compare the 1970s with other eras: the Great Depression of the 1930s, the industrial boom of the World War II years, and the growth and rising wages in the 1950s and 1960s. Using these comparisons, construct a historical narrative of the period from the 1920s through the 1970s.

2. **VISUAL EVIDENCE** Study the photographs on pages 943 and 959 and the map on page 944. How did the economic downturn of the 1970s affect the lives of ordinary Americans and American culture broadly? What connections can you draw between the two photographs and developments in the global economy and the rise of the Sunbelt?

MORE TO EXPLORE

Start here to learn more about the events discussed in this chapter.

Jeffrey Hadden and Anson Shupe, *Televangelism: Power and Politics on God's Frontier* (1988). A thought-provoking analysis of Christian broadcasting.

Daniel Horowitz, *Jimmy Carter and the Energy Crisis of the 1970s* (2005). Analysis and documents.

N. E. H. Hull and Peter Charles Hoffer, *Roe v. Wade: The Abortion Rights Controversy in American History* (2001). A sweeping treatment of the controversial decision.

Rick Perlstein, *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America* (2008). An excellent overview of the era.

Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Green Revolution: The American Environmental Movement, 1962–1992* (1993). A balanced account of environmentalism.

The Oyez Project at Northwestern University, at **oyez.org/oyez/frontpage**, is an invaluable resource for more than one thousand Supreme Court cases, with audio transcripts, voting records, and summaries.

TIMELINE

Ask yourself why this chapter begins and ends with these dates and then identify the links among related events.

1970	• Earth Day first observed • Environmental Protection Agency established
1972	• Equal Rights Amendment passed by Congress • Phyllis Schlafly founds STOP ERA • *Furman v. Georgia* outlaws death penalty • Watergate break-in (June)
1973	• *Roe v. Wade* legalizes abortion • Endangered Species Act • OPEC oil embargo; gas shortages • Period of high inflation begins • War Powers Act
1974	• Nixon resigns over Watergate • Congress imposes 55 miles-per-hour speed limit
1975	• New York nears bankruptcy • "Watergate babies" begin congressional reform
1976	• Jimmy Carter elected president
1978	• Proposition 13 reduces California property taxes • *Bakke v. University of California* limits affirmative action • Harvey Milk assassinated in San Francisco
1979	• Three Mile Island nuclear accident

KEY TURNING POINTS: Based on this timeline, what were the three or four major political turning points of the 1970s? Defend your answer by explaining the impact of the changes.