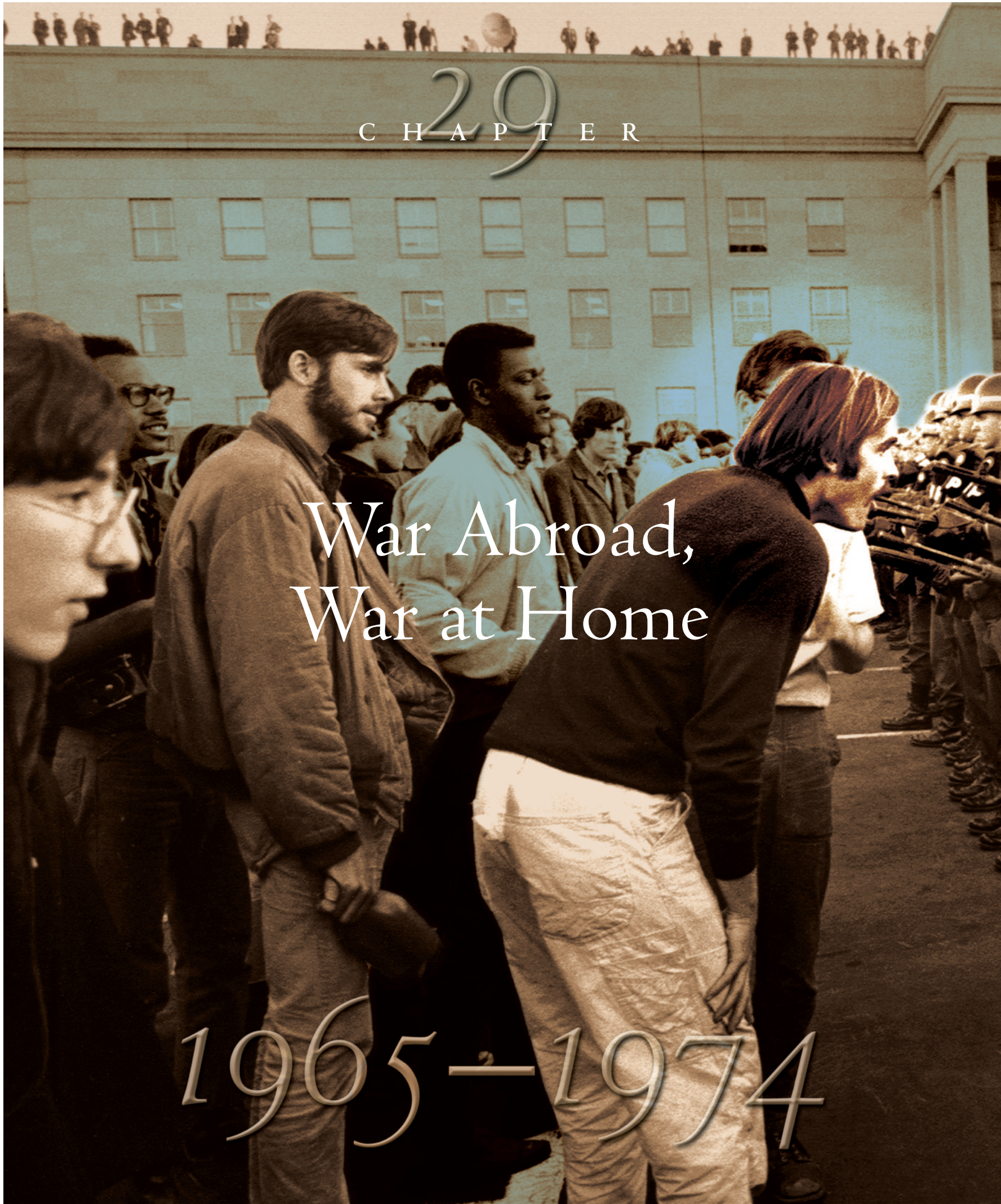
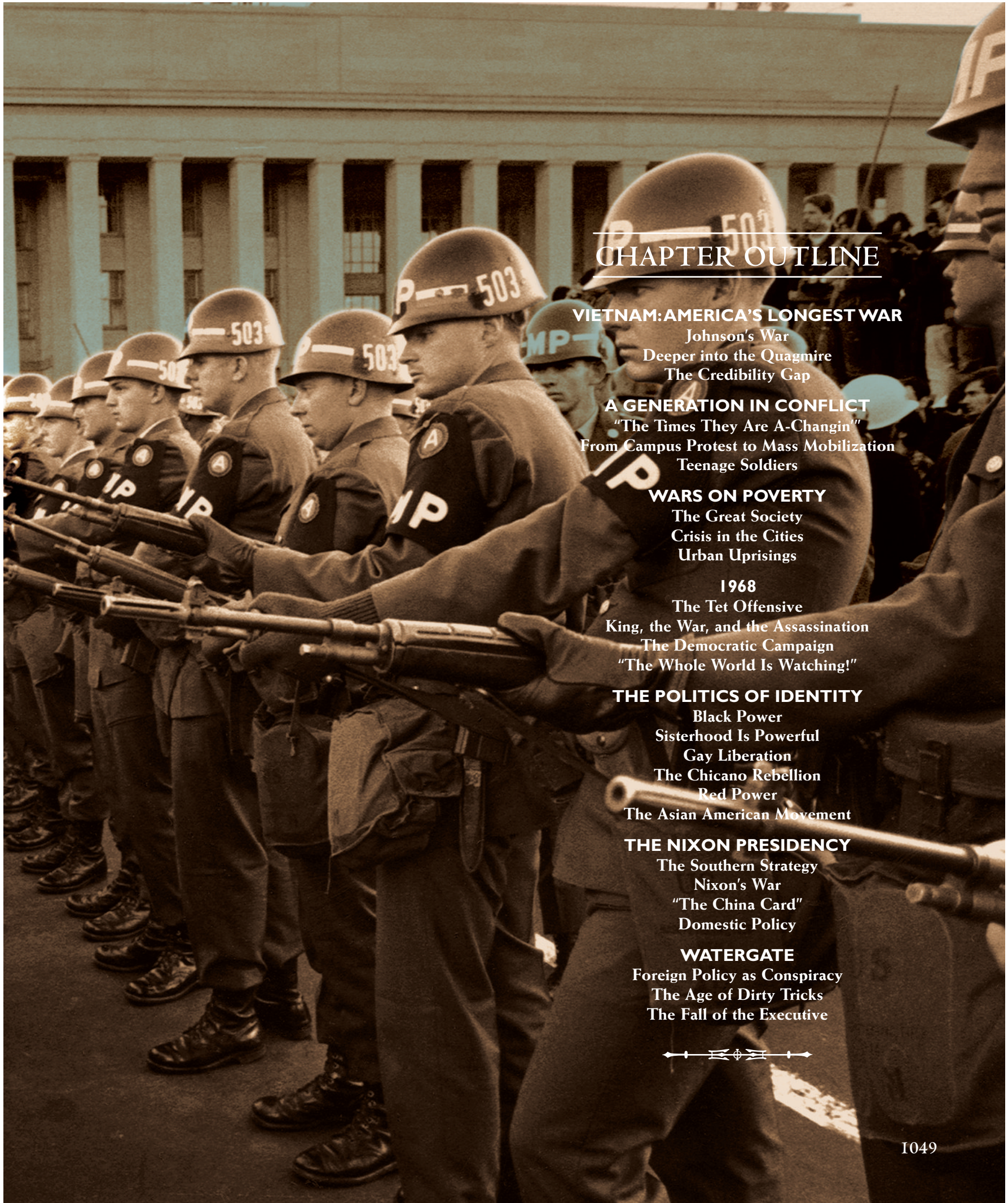


29
CHAPTER

War Abroad,
War at Home

1965-1974





CHAPTER OUTLINE

VIETNAM: AMERICA'S LONGEST WAR

Johnson's War
Deeper into the Quagmire
The Credibility Gap

A GENERATION IN CONFLICT

"The Times They Are A-Changin'"
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Teenage Soldiers

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Urban Uprisings

1968

The Tet Offensive
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"The Whole World Is Watching!"

THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY

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Gay Liberation
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Nixon's War
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Domestic Policy

WATERGATE

Foreign Policy as Conspiracy
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The Fall of the Executive



AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Uptown, Chicago, Illinois

During Freedom Summer of 1964, while teams of northern college students traveled south to join voter registration campaigns among African Americans, a small group moved to Chicago to help the city's poor people take control of their communities. They targeted a neighborhood known as Uptown, a one-mile-square section five miles north of the Loop, the city center. The residents, many transplanted from the poverty of the Appalachian South, lived in crowded tenements or in once-elegant mansions now subdivided into tiny, run-down apartments. Four thousand people lived on just one street running four blocks, 20 percent of them on welfare. The student organizers intended to mobilize the community “so as to demand an end to poverty and the construction of a decent social order.”

With the assistance of the Packinghouse Workers union, the students formed Jobs or Income Now (JOIN), opened a storefront office, and invited local residents to work with them to demand jobs and better living conditions. They spent hours listening to people, drawing out their ideas and helping them develop scores of programs. They campaigned against Mayor Richard Daley's policy of “police omnipresence” that had a fleet of squad cars and paddy wagons continually patrolling the neighborhood. They also helped establish new social clubs, a food-buying cooperative, a community theater, and a health clinic. Within a few years, Uptown street kids had formed the Young Patriots organization, put out a community newspaper, *Rising Up Angry*, and staffed free breakfast programs.



Chicago JOIN was one of ten similar projects sponsored by Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Impatient with the nation's chronic poverty and cold war politics, twenty-nine students from nine universities had met in June 1960 to form a new kind of campus-based political organization. SDS soon caught the attention of liberal students, encouraging them, as part of the nation's largest college population to date, to make their voices heard. By its peak in 1968, SDS had 350 chapters and between 60,000 and 100,000 members. Its principle of participatory democracy—with its promise to give people control over the decisions affecting their lives—appealed to a wider following of more than a million students.

In June 1962, in Port Huron, Michigan, SDS issued a declaration of principles, drafted mainly by graduate student Tom Hayden. “We are people ... bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities,” *The Port Huron Statement* opened, “looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit.” The dire effects of poverty and social injustice, it continued, were not the only problems. A deeper ailment plagued American society. Everyone, including middle-class students with few material wants, suffered from a sense of “loneliness, estrangement, and alienation.” *The Port Huron Statement* defined SDS as a new kind of political movement that would bring people “out of isolation and into community” so that not just the poor but all Americans could overcome their feelings of “powerlessness [and hence] resignation before the enormity of events.”

SDS began with a campaign to reform the university, especially to disentangle the financial ties between campus-based research programs and the military-industrial complex. In expanding to include the nation's cities, SDS sent small groups of students to live and organize in the poor communities of Boston, Louisville, Cleveland, and Newark as well as Chicago. Ultimately, none of these projects managed to recruit large numbers of people. Protests against local government did little to combat unemployment, and campaigns for better garbage collection or more playgrounds rarely evolved into lasting movements. Nevertheless, organizers did succeed, to some degree, in realizing the goal specified in its slogan: “Let the People Decide.” By late 1967,

SDS prepared to leave JOIN in the hands of the people it had organized, which was its intention from the beginning.

Initially, even Lyndon Baines Johnson promoted the ideal of civic participation. The Great Society, as the president called his domestic program, promised more than the abolition of poverty and racial inequality. In May 1964, at the University of Michigan, the president described his goal as a society “where every child can find knowledge to enrich his mind and to enlarge his talents,” where “the city of man serves not only the needs of the body and the demands of commerce but the desire for beauty and the hunger for community.”

By 1967 the Vietnam War had pushed aside such ambitions. If SDSers had once believed they could work with liberal Democrats like Johnson, they now interpreted social injustice at home as the inevitable consequence of the president’s dangerous and destructive foreign policies. SDS threw its energies into building a movement against the war in Vietnam. President Johnson, meanwhile, pursued a foreign policy that would swallow up the funding for his own plans for a war on poverty and would precipitate a very different war at home, Americans against

Americans. As hawks and doves lined up on opposite sides, the Vietnam War created a huge and enduring rift. SDS member Richard Flacks had warned that the nation had to “choose between devoting its resources and energies to maintaining military superiority and international hegemony or rechanneling those resources and energies to meeting the desperate needs of its people.” Ultimately, even President Johnson himself understood that the “bitch of a war” in Asia ruined “the woman I really loved—the Great Society.”

The dream of community did not vanish, but consensus became increasingly remote by the late 1960s. By this time, parents and children were at odds over values and aspirations, urban riots were rocking the nation, and political leaders were being struck down by assassins’ bullets. New protest groups—Black Power, Women’s Liberation, Gay Liberation, as well as Chicano, Native American, and Asian—were staking out a highly charged “politics of identity.” Political conservatives managed to triumph in the election of Richard Nixon, who went on to disgrace the office. Meanwhile, the United States continued to fight—and eventually lost—the longest war in its history.

KEY TOPICS

- Widening U.S. involvement in the war in Vietnam
- “The sixties generation” and the antiwar movement
- Poverty and urban crisis
- The election of 1968
- The rise of “liberation” movements
- The Nixon presidency and the Watergate conspiracy

VIETNAM: AMERICA’S LONGEST WAR

The Vietnam War had its roots in the Truman Doctrine and its goal of containing communism (see Chapter 26). After the defeat of the French by the Communist forces of Ho Chi Minh in 1954, Vietnam emerged as a major zone of cold war contention. President John Kennedy called it “the cornerstone of the Free World in Southeast Asia, the keystone in the arch, the finger in the dike,” a barrier to the spread of communism throughout the region and perhaps the world. President Lyndon Johnson sounded the same note at the beginning of his presidency. With American security at stake, he insisted, Americans had little choice but to fight for “the principle for which our ancestors fought in the valleys of Pennsylvania.”

WHAT EVENTS led up to and contributed to U.S. involvement in Vietnam?

AP* Guideline 25.3

Audio-Visual Aid, "Vietnam"

Lecture Suggestion 29.1, Why the United States Lost the Vietnam War

Class Discussion Question 29.1



Lyndon Johnson, The Tonkin Gulf Resolution Message (1964)

In this excerpt, President Johnson delivers a formal message to Congress in support of legislation for further power and possible military action against North Vietnam.

As President of the United States I have concluded that I should now ask the Congress, on its part, to join in affirming the national determination that all such attacks will be met, and that the United States will continue in its basic policy of assisting the free nations of the area to defend their freedom . . . We must make it clear to all that the United States is united in its determination to bring about the end of Communist subversion and aggression in the area . . .

Tonkin Gulf Resolution Request to Congress from President Lyndon Johnson in response to North Vietnamese torpedo boat attacks in which he sought authorization for "all necessary measures" to protect American forces and stop further aggression.

Vietnam was not Valley Forge, however, and the United States ultimately paid a huge price for its determination to turn back communism in Indochina. More than 50,000 Americans died in an unwinnable overseas war that only deepened divisions at home.

JOHNSON'S WAR

Although President Kennedy had greatly increased the number of military advisors in South Vietnam (see Chapter 27), it was his successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, who made the decision to engage the United States in a major war there. At first, Johnson simply hoped to stay the course. Facing a presidential election in November 1964, he knew that a major military setback would cripple his election campaign. But he was equally determined to avoid the fate of President Truman, who had bogged down politically after "losing" China to communism and producing a stalemate in Korea.

Throughout the winter and spring of 1964, as conditions grew steadily worse in South Vietnam, Johnson and his advisors quietly laid the groundwork for a sustained bombing campaign against North Vietnam. In early August, they found a pretext to set this plan in motion. After two U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin, off the coast of North Vietnam, reported attacks by North Vietnamese patrol boats, Johnson ordered retaliatory air strikes against bases in North Vietnam.

Johnson now appealed to Congress to pass a resolution giving him the authority "to take all necessary measures" and "all necessary steps" to defend U.S. armed forces and to protect Southeast Asia "against aggression or subversion." This **Tonkin Gulf resolution**, secretly drafted six weeks before the incident for which it was named, passed the Senate on August 7 with only two dissenting votes and moved unanimously through the House. It served, in Undersecretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach's words, as the "functional equivalent" of a declaration of war.

Ironically, Johnson campaigned for the presidency in 1964 with a call for restraint in Vietnam. He assured voters that "we are not about to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves." This strategy helped him win a landslide victory over conservative Republican Barry Goldwater of Arizona, who had proposed the deployment of nuclear weapons in Vietnam.

With the election behind him, Johnson now faced a hard decision. The limited bombing raids against North Vietnam had failed to slow the movement of the Communist Vietcong forces across the border into the South. Meanwhile, the government in Saigon, the capital city of South Vietnam, appeared near collapse. Faced with the prospect of a Communist victory, the president chose to escalate U.S. involvement in Vietnam massively.

DEEPER INTO THE QUAGMIRE

In early February 1965, Johnson found a rationale to justify massive bombing of the North. The Vietcong had fired at the barracks of the U.S. Marine base at Pleiku in the central highlands of Vietnam, killing nine and wounding more than 100 Americans. Waving the list of casualties, the president rushed into an emergency meeting of the National Security Council to announce that the time had passed for keeping "our guns over the mantel and our shells in the cupboard." He ordered immediate reprisal bombing and one week later, on February 13, authorized Operation Rolling Thunder, a campaign of gradually intensifying air attacks against North Vietnam.

Johnson and his advisers hoped that the air strikes against North Vietnam would demonstrate U.S. resolve "both to Hanoi and to the world" and make the

deployment of ground forces unnecessary. Intelligence reports, however, suggested that the bombing had little impact and noted, moreover, that North Vietnam was now sending troops into South Vietnam. With retreat his only alternative, Johnson decided to introduce ground troops for offensive operations.

Once Rolling Thunder had begun, President Johnson found it increasingly difficult to speak frankly with the American public about his policies. Initially, he announced that only two battalions of marines were being assigned to Danang to defend the airfields where bombing runs began. But six weeks later, 50,000 U.S. troops were in Vietnam. By November 1965 the total topped 165,000, and more troops were on the way. But even after Johnson authorized a buildup to 431,000 troops in mid-1966, victory was still nowhere in sight.

The strategy pursued by the Johnson administration and implemented by General William Westmoreland—a war of attrition—was based on the premise that continued bombing would eventually exhaust North Vietnam’s resources. Meanwhile, U.S. ground forces would defeat the Vietcong in South Vietnam and thereby restore political stability to South Vietnam’s pro-western government. As Johnson once boasted, the strongest military power in the world surely could crush a Communist rebellion in a “pissant” country of peasants.

In practice, the United States wreaked havoc in South Vietnam, tearing apart its society and bringing ecological devastation to its land. Intending to locate and eradicate the support network of the Vietcong, U.S. ground troops conducted search-and-destroy missions throughout the countryside. They attacked villagers and their homes. Seeking to ferret out Vietcong sympathizers, U.S. troops turned at any one time as many as 4 million people—approximately one-quarter of the population of South Vietnam—into refugees. By late 1968, the United States had dropped more than 3 million tons of bombs on Vietnam, and eventually delivered more than three times the tonnage dropped by the Allies on all fronts during World War II. Using herbicides such as Agent Orange to defoliate forest, the United States also conducted the most destructive chemical warfare in history.

Several advisers urged the president to inform the American people about his decisions in Vietnam, even to declare a state of national emergency. But Johnson feared he would lose momentum on domestic reform, including his antipoverty programs, if he drew attention to foreign policy. Seeking to avoid “undue excitement in the Congress and in domestic public opinion,” he held to a course of intentional deceit.

THE CREDIBILITY GAP

Johnson’s popularity had surged at the time of the Tonkin Gulf resolution, skyrocketing in one day from 42 to 72 percent, according to a Louis Harris poll. But afterward it waned rapidly. Every night network television news reported the soaring American body count, from 26 per week in 1965 to 180 in 1967. No president had worked so hard to control the news media, but by 1967 Johnson found himself badgered at press conferences by reporters who accused the president of creating a credibility gap.

Scenes of human suffering and devastation recorded by television cameras increasingly undermined the administration’s moral justification of the war as a defense of freedom and democracy in South Vietnam. During the early 1960s, network news had either ignored Vietnam or had been patriotically supportive of



The massive bombing and ground combat created huge numbers of civilian casualties in Vietnam. The majority killed were women and children.

Jim Pickerell/BlackStar.

QUICK REVIEW

Vietnam and the Media

- ◆ Network coverage of the war damaged Johnson’s popularity.
- ◆ Scenes of death and devastation undermined moral justification for the war.
- ◆ Coverage in the print media became more skeptical of Johnson over time.



Johnson's Defense of the U.S.
Presence in Vietnam (1965)

U.S. policy. Beginning with a report on a ground operation against the South Vietnamese village of Cam Ne by Morley Safer for CBS News in August 1965, however, the tenor of news reporting changed. Although government officials described the operation as a strategic destruction of “fortified Vietcong bunkers,” the *CBS Evening News* showed pictures of Marines setting fire to the thatched homes of civilians. After CBS aired Safer’s report, President Johnson complained bitterly to the news director. But more critical commentary soon followed. By 1967, according to a noted media observer, “every subject tended to become Vietnam.” Televised news reports now told of new varieties of American cluster bombs, which released up to 180,000 fiberglass shards, and showed the nightmarish effects of the defoliants used on forests in South Vietnam to uncover enemy strongholds.

Coverage of the war in the print media also became more skeptical of Johnson’s policies. By 1967 independent news teams were probing the government’s official claims. Harrison Salisbury, Pulitzer Prize-winning *New York Times* reporter, questioned the administration’s claims that its bombing of the North precisely targeted military objectives, charging that U.S. planes had bombed the population center of Hanoi, capital of North Vietnam, and intentionally ravaged villages in the South. As American military deaths climbed at the rate of more than 800 per month during the first half of 1967, newspaper coverage of the war focused yet more intently on such disturbing events.

The most vocal congressional critic of Johnson’s war policy was Democratic senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, who chaired the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and who had personally speeded the passage of the Tonkin Gulf resolution. A strong supporter of the cold war, Fulbright had decided that the war in Vietnam was unwinnable and destructive to domestic reform. In *Arrogance of Power*, which became a national bestseller in 1967, he proposed a negotiated withdrawal from a neutralized Southeast Asia. Fulbright persuaded prominent Democrats in Congress to put aside their personal loyalty to Johnson and oppose his conduct of the war. In 1967 the Congress passed a nonbinding resolution appealing to the United Nations to help negotiate an end to hostilities. Meanwhile, some of the nation’s most trusted European allies called for restraint in Vietnam.

The impact of the war, which cost Americans \$21 billion per year, was also felt at home. Johnson convinced Congress to levy a 10 percent surcharge on individual and corporate taxes. Later adjustments in the national budget tapped the Social Security fund, heretofore safe from interference. Inflation raced upward, fed by spending on the war. Johnson replaced advisers who questioned his policy, but as casualties multiplied, more and more Americans began to question his handling of the war.

HOW DID campus protests shape
national political debate?

AP*
Guideline 25.5

A GENERATION IN CONFLICT

As the war in Vietnam escalated, Americans from all walks of life demanded an end to U.S. involvement. But between 1965 and 1971, its years of peak activity, it had a distinctly generational character. At the forefront were the baby boomers who were just coming of age.

This so-called sixties generation, the largest generation in American history, was also the best educated. By the late 1960s, nearly half of all young adults between the ages of 18 and 21 were enrolled in college. In 1965 there were 5 million college students; in 1973 the number had doubled to 10 million. Public universities made the largest gains; by 1970 eight had more than 30,000 students apiece.

Although a small minority among their peers, groups of students began to combine protest against the war in Vietnam with a broader, penetrating critique of

American society. Through music, dress, and even hairstyle, they expressed a deep estrangement from the values and aspirations of their parents' generation. In 1967, when opposition to the war swelled, "flower children" put daisies in the rifle barrels of troops stationed to quash campus protests, providing a seemingly innocent counterpoint to the grim news of slaughter abroad. Meanwhile, campus organizations such as **SDS** encouraged college students to take a militant stand against the war, calling for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam.

"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

The first sign of a new kind of protest was the **free speech movement** at the University of California at Berkeley in 1964. That fall, civil rights activists returned to the 27,000-student campus from Freedom Summer in Mississippi. They soon began to picket Bay Area stores that practiced discrimination in hiring and to recruit other students to join them. When the university administration moved to prevent them from setting up information booths on campus, eighteen groups protested, including the archconservative Students for Goldwater, claiming that their right to free speech had been abridged. The administration responded by sending police to break up the protest rally and arrest participants. University president Clark Kerr met with students, agreed not to press charges, and seemed set to grant them a small space on campus for political activity. Then, under pressure from conservative regents, Kerr reversed himself and announced in November that the university planned to press new charges against the free speech movement's leaders. On December 2 a crowd of 7,000 gathered to protest this decision. Joining folk singer Joan Baez in singing "We Shall Overcome," a group of 1,000 people marched toward the university's administration building, where they planned to stage a sit-in until Kerr rescinded his order. The police arrested nearly 800 protestors in the largest mass arrest in California history.

Mario Savio, a Freedom Summer volunteer and philosophy student, explained that the free speech movement wanted more than just the right to conduct political activity on campus. He spoke for many students when he complained that the university had become a faceless bureaucratic machine rather than a community of learning. Regulating the activities of students while preparing them for colorless lives as corporation clerks, the university made them "so sick at heart" that they had decided to put their "bodies upon the gears" to make it stop.

Across the country college students began to demand a say in the structuring of their education. Brown University students, for example, demanded a revamp of the curriculum that would eliminate all required courses and make grades optional. Students also protested campus rules that treated students as children instead of as adults. After a string of campus protests, most large universities, including the University of California, relinquished *in loco parentis* (in the place of parents) policies and allowed students to live off-campus and to set their own hours.

Across the bay in San Francisco, other young adults staked out a new form of community—a **counterculture**. In 1967, the "Summer of Love," the population of the Haight-Ashbury district swelled by 75,000 as youthful adventurers gathered for the most celebrated "be-in" of the era. Although the *San Francisco Chronicle* featured a headline reading "Mayor Warns Hippies to Stay Out of Town," masses of long-haired young men and women dressed in bell-bottoms and tie-dyed T-shirts congregated in "the Haight" to listen to music, take drugs, and "be" with each other. "If you're going to San Francisco," a popular rock group sang, "be sure to wear some flowers in your hair . . . you're going to meet some gentle people there." In the fall, the majority returned to their own communities, often bringing with them a new lifestyle. *Time* magazine announced the appearance of new "hippie

[Class Discussion Question 29.2](#)

[Out of Class Activity 29.1, Counterculture](#)

[Audio-Visual Aid, "Counterculture"](#)

Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)

The leading student organization of the New Left of the early and mid-1960s.

Free speech movement Student movement at the University of California, Berkeley, formed in 1964 to protest limitations on political activities on campus.

Counterculture Various alternatives to mainstream values and behaviors that became popular in the 1960s, including experimentation with psychedelic drugs, communal living, a return to the land, Asian religions, and experimental art.



The Woodstock Festival, promoted as “3 Days of Peace and Music,” attracted more than 450,000 people to the rain-soaked pasture of Max Yasgur’s New York farm. The huge rock concert, staged in August 1969, became a landmark of the counterculture.

John Dominis/The Image Works.

enclaves” in every major U.S. city from Boston to Seattle, from Detroit to New Orleans.

The generational rebellion took many forms, including a revolution in sexual behavior that triggered countless quarrels between parents and their maturing sons and daughters. During the 1960s more teenagers experienced premarital sex—by the decade’s end three-quarters of all college seniors had engaged in sexual intercourse—and far more talked about it openly than in previous eras. With birth control widely available, including the newly developed “pill,” many young women were no longer deterred from sex by fear of pregnancy. “We’ve discarded the idea that the loss of virginity is related to degeneracy,” one college student explained. “Premarital sex doesn’t mean the downfall of society, at least not the kind of society that we’re going to build.” Many heterosexual couples chose to live together outside marriage, a practice few parents condoned. A much smaller but significant number formed communes—approximately 4,000 by 1970—where members could share housekeeping and child care as well as sexual partners.

Mood-altering drugs played a large part in this counterculture. In the 1950s, doctors had begun to freely prescribe tranquilizers and anti-depressants, and alcohol and tobacco were popular stimulants. The drug subculture that emerged in the 1960s, however, was associated primarily with illicit psychoactive substances and hallucinogenic drugs. Harvard professor Timothy Leary urged young people to “turn on, tune in, drop out” and also advocated the mass production and distribution of LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), which was not criminalized until 1968. Marijuana, illegal yet readily available, was often paired with rock music in a collective ritual of love and laughter. Singer Bob Dylan taunted adults with the lyrics of his hit single, “Everybody must get stoned.”

Music played a large part in defining the counterculture. With the emergence of rock ‘n’ roll in the 1950s, popular music had begun to express a deliberate generational identity (see Chapter 27), a trend that gained momentum with the emergence of the British rock group The Beatles in 1964. Folk music, which had gained popularity on campuses in the early 1960s with the successful recordings of Peter, Paul, and Mary, Phil Ochs, and Judy Collins, as well as Joan Baez, continued to serve the voice of protest. Shortly after Freedom Summer, folk singer Bob Dylan issued a warning to parents:

*Your sons and your daughters
are beyond your command
Your old road is
rapidly agin’.
Please get out of the new one
If you can’t lend your hand
For the times they are a-changin’.*

By 1965 Dylan himself had turned to the electric guitar and rock, which triumphed as the musical emblem of a generation.

At a farm near Woodstock, New York, more than 400,000 people gathered in August 1969 for a three-day rock concert and to give witness to the ideals of the counterculture. Richie Havens opened with “Freedom,” and performers including Joan Baez, Janis Joplin, Santana, and The Grateful Dead among others entertained the crowd. Thousands took drugs while security officials and local police stood by, some

stripped off their clothes to dance or swim, and a few even made love in the grass. "We were exhilarated," one reveler recalled. "We felt as though we were in liberated territory."

The Woodstock Nation, as the counterculture was mythologized, did not actually represent the sentiments of most young Americans. But its attitudes and styles, especially its efforts to create a new community, did speak for the large minority seeking a peaceful alternative to the intensifying climate of war. "We used to think of ourselves as little clumps of weirdos," rock star Janis Joplin explained. "But now we're a whole new minority group." The slogan "Make Love, Not War" linked generational rebellion and opposition to the U.S. invasion of Vietnam.

FROM CAMPUS PROTEST TO MASS MOBILIZATION

Three weeks after the announcement of Operation Rolling Thunder in 1965, peace activists called for a day-long boycott of classes so that students and faculty might meet to discuss the war. At the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, more than 3,000 students turned out for sessions held through the night because university administrators had bowed to the pressure of state legislators and had refused to cancel classes. During the following weeks, "teach-ins" spread across the United States and to Europe and Japan as well.

Students also began to protest against war-related research on their campuses. The expansion of higher education in the 1960s had depended largely on federally funded programs, including military research on counterinsurgency tactics and new chemical weapons. Student protesters demanded an end to these programs and, receiving no response from university administrators, turned to civil disobedience. In October 1967, the Dow Chemical Company, manufacturers of napalm, a form of jellied gasoline often used against civilians in Vietnam, sent job recruiters to the University of Wisconsin at Madison despite warnings that a group of students would try to prevent them from conducting interviews. A few hundred students staged a sit-in at the building where the recruitment interviews were scheduled, and 2,000 onlookers gathered outside. Ordered by university administrators to disperse the crowd, the city's police broke glass doors, dragged students through the debris, and clubbed those who refused to move. Suddenly the campus erupted. Students chanted *Sieg Heil* at the police, who attempted to disperse them with tear gas and Mace. Undergraduate students and their teaching assistants boycotted classes for a week. During the next three years, the momentum grew, and demonstrations took place on campuses in every region of the country.

Many student strikes and demonstrations merged opposition to the war with other campus and community issues. At Columbia University, students struck in 1968 against the administration's plans to build a new gymnasium in a city park used by residents of neighboring Harlem. In the Southwest, Mexican American students demonstrated against the use of funds for military projects that might otherwise be allocated to antipoverty and educational programs.

By the late 1960s, the peace movement had spread well beyond the campus. In April 1967, a day-long antiwar rally at the Sheep Meadow in Manhattan's Central Park drew more than 300,000 people. Meanwhile, 60,000 protesters turned out in San Francisco. By summer, Vietnam Veterans Against the War had begun to organize returning soldiers and sailors, encouraging them to cast off the medals and ribbons they had won in battle.

The steadily increasing size of antiwar demonstrations provoked conservatives and prowar Democrats to take a stronger stand in support of the war. Several newspaper and magazine editorialists called for the arrest of antiwar leaders on charges of treason. Secretary of State Dean Rusk, appearing on NBC's *Meet the Press*, expressed



On May 8, 1970 New York construction workers surged into Wall Street in Lower Manhattan, violently disrupting an antiwar rally and attacking the protesters with lead pipes and crowbars. Known as the “hard hat riots,” the well-publicized event was followed later in the month by a march, 100,000 strong, of hard-hat workers unfurling American flags and chanting “All the way U.S.A.”

AP Wide World Photos.

QUICK REVIEW

Opposition to the War

- ◆ Antiwar activists and students challenged the “Cold Warriors.”
- ◆ In 1966 and 1967 antiwar activity intensified.
- ◆ Antiwar activists directed their anger against the Selective Service System.

his concern that “authorities in Hanoi” might conclude, incorrectly, that the majority of Americans did not back their president and that “the net effect of these demonstrations will be to prolong the war, not to shorten it.”

Many demonstrators themselves concluded that mass mobilizations alone had little impact on U.S. policy. Making popular the slogan “From Protest to Resistance,” some sought to serve as moral witnesses. Despite a congressional act of 1965 providing for a five-year jail term and a \$10,000 fine for destroying a draft card, nearly 200 young men destroyed their draft cards at the April Sheep Meadow demonstration and encouraged approximately a half-million more to resist the draft or refuse induction. Two Jesuit priests, Daniel and Philip Berrigan, raided the offices of the draft board in Catonsville, Maryland, in May 1968 and poured homemade napalm over records. Other activists determined to “bring the war home.” An estimated 40,000 bombing incidents or bomb threats took place from January 1969 to April 1970; more than \$21 million of property was damaged, and forty-three people were killed. Most of the perpetrators were never identified.

Observers at the time noted a similarity between the violence in Vietnam and the violence in the United States. Parallel wars were now being fought, one between two systems of government in Vietnam, another between the American government and masses of its citizens. Those Americans sent to Vietnam were caught in between.

TEENAGE SOLDIERS

Whereas the average age of the World War II soldier was twenty-six, the age of those who fought in Vietnam hovered around nineteen. Until late 1969 the Selective Service System—the draft—gave deferments to college students and to workers in selected occupations while recruiting hard in poor communities by advertising the armed forces as a provider of vocational training and social mobility. Working-class young

men, disproportionately African American and Latino, signed up in large numbers under these inducements. They also bore the brunt of combat. Whereas college graduates constituted only 12 percent of the 2.5 million men who served in Vietnam and 9 percent of those who were killed in combat, high school dropouts were the most likely to serve in Vietnam and by far the most likely to die there. The casualty rate for African Americans was approximately 30 percent higher than the overall death rate for U.S. forces in Southeast Asia. These disparities created a rupture that would last well past the end of the war.

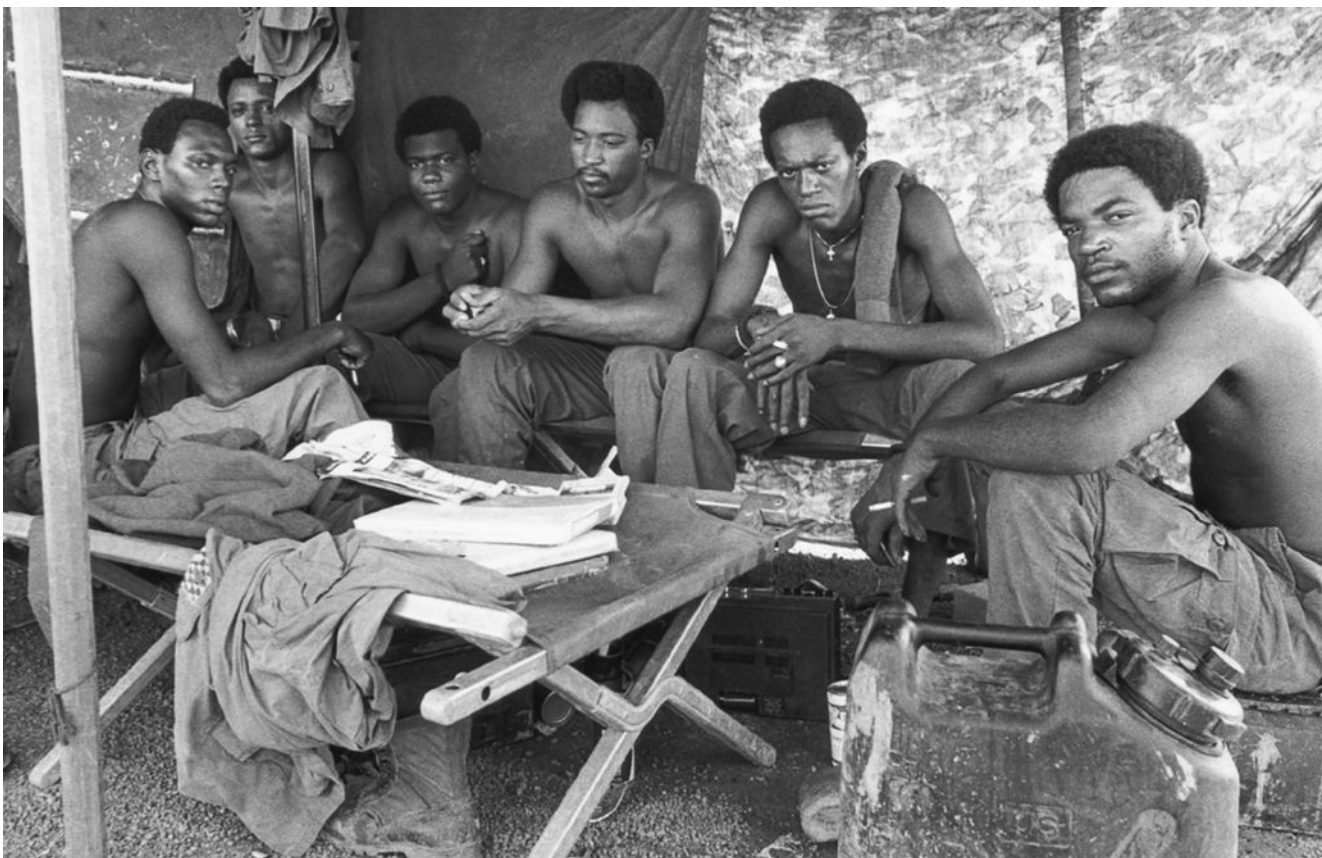
Yet the soldiers were not entirely isolated from the changes affecting their generation. G.I.s in significant numbers smoked marijuana, listened to rock music, hung psychedelic posters in their barracks, and participated in the sexual revolution. In 1968 more than 200 soldiers from Fort Hood, Texas, attended a "be-in." But most condemned antiwar protest as the expressions of their privileged peers who did not have to fight.


As the war dragged on, some soldiers began to show their frustration. By 1971 many G.I.s were putting peace symbols on their combat helmets, joining antiwar demonstrations, and staging their own events such as "Armed Farces Day." Sometimes entire companies refused to carry out duty assignments or even to enter battle. A smaller number took revenge by "fragging" reckless commanding officers with grenades meant for the enemy. Meanwhile African American soldiers closed ranks and often flaunted their racial solidarity by weaving their bootlaces into "slave bracelets" and carrying Black Power canes, which were topped with a clenched fist. Some openly complained about being asked to fight "a white man's war" and emblazoned their helmets with slogans like "No Gook Ever Called Me Nigger." By 1971, at least fourteen organizations claimed affiliation with RITA,

African American Troops in Vietnam, 1970.

Serving on the front lines in disproportionate numbers, many black soldiers echoed the growing racial militancy in the United States and increasingly chose to spend their off-duty time apart from white soldiers.

Mark Jury, *The Vietnam Photo Book*.





In this excerpt, Rodney R. Chastant of Mobile, Alabama, writes to his brother targeting President Lyndon Johnson's strategies and the realization of war in Vietnam.

One of the staggering facts is that most men here believe we will not win the war. And yet they stick their necks out every day and carry on their assigned tasks . . . One of the basic problems is that [President] Johnson is trying to fight this war the way he fights his domestic wars—he chooses an almost unattainable goal with a scope that is virtually undefinable, and he attacks his goal with poorly allocated funds, minimum manpower, limited time, and a few new ideas . . .

WHAT WERE the goals of Johnson's Great Society and their impact on urban poverty in the late 1960s?

AP* Guideline 25.1

Class Discussion Question 29.3

War on poverty Set of programs introduced by Lyndon Johnson between 1963 and 1966 designed to break the cycle of poverty by providing funds for job training, community development, nutrition, and supplementary education.

Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)

Federal agency that coordinated many programs of the War on Poverty between 1964 and 1975.

an acronym for “Resistance in the Army.” The largest was the American Servicemen’s Union, which claimed more than 10,000 members.

The nature of the war fed feelings of disaffection in the armed forces. U.S. troops entering South Vietnam expected a warm welcome from the people whose homeland they had been sent to defend. Instead, they encountered anti-American demonstrations and placards with slogans like “End Foreign Dominance of Our Country.” Hostile Vietnamese civilians viewed the Americans as invaders. The enemy avoided open engagements in which the Americans could benefit from their superior arms and air power. Soldiers found themselves instead stumbling into booby traps as they chased an elusive guerrilla foe through deep, leech-infested swamps and dense jungles swarming with fire ants. They could never be sure who was friend and who was foe. Patently false U.S. government press releases that heralded glorious victories and extolled the gratitude of Vietnamese civilians deepened bitterness on the front lines.

Approximately 8.6 million men and women served in the armed forces, and many returned to civilian life quietly and without fanfare, denied the glory earned by the combat veterans of previous wars. They reentered a society divided over the cause for which they had risked their lives. Tens of thousands suffered debilitating physical injuries. As many as 40 percent of them came back with drug dependencies or symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, haunted and depressed by troubling memories of atrocities. Moreover, finding and keeping a job proved to be particularly hard in the shrinking economy of the 1970s.

WARS ON POVERTY

During the early 1960s, the civil rights movement spurred a new awareness of and concern with poverty. What good was winning the right to sit at a lunch counter if one could not afford to buy a hamburger?

One of the most influential books of the times, Michael Harrington’s *The Other America* (1962), argued that one-fifth of the nation—as many as 40 to 50 million people—suffered from bad housing, malnutrition, poor medical care, and other deprivations of poverty. Harrington documented the miseries of the “invisible land of the other Americans,” the rejects of society who simply did not exist for affluent suburbanites or the mass media. The other America, Harrington wrote, “is populated by failures, by those driven from the land and bewildered by the city, by old people suddenly confronted with the torments of loneliness and poverty, and by minorities facing a wall of prejudice.”

These arguments motivated President Johnson to expand the antipoverty program that he had inherited from the Kennedy administration. Ironically, it was another kind of war that ultimately undercut his aspiration to wage “an unconditional **war on poverty**” (see Figures 29-1 and 29-2).

THE GREAT SOCIETY

In his State of the Union message in 1964, Johnson announced his plans to build a Great Society. Over the next two years, he used the political momentum of the civil rights movement and the overwhelming Democratic majorities in the House and Senate to push through the most ambitious reform program since the New Deal. In August 1964 the Economic Opportunity Act launched the War on Poverty.

The **Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)** coordinated a network of federal programs designed to increase opportunities in employment and education and achieved mixed results. The Job Corps provided vocational training mostly for

urban black youth considered unemployable. Housed in dreary barrackslike camps far from home, trainees often found themselves learning factory skills that were already obsolete. The Neighborhood Youth Corps managed to provide work for about 2 million young people aged sixteen to twenty-one, but nearly all the jobs were low paying and dead-end. Educational programs proved more successful. VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) was a kind of domestic Peace Corps that brought several thousand idealistic volunteers into poor communities for social service work.

The most innovative and controversial element of the OEO was the Community Action Program (CAP). The program invited local communities to establish community action agencies (CAAs), to be funded through the OEO. The Economic Opportunity Act included language requiring these agencies to be “developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups served.” In theory, as the SDS organizers had also believed, community action would empower the poor by giving them a direct say in mobilizing resources. By 1966 the OEO was funding more than 1,000 CAAs, mostly in black neighborhoods of big cities.

The traditional powers in cities—mayors, business elites, and political machines—who generally resisted institutional change, looked at CAAs as merely another way to dispense services and patronage, with the federal government picking up the tab. A continual tug-of-war over who should control funding and decision making plagued the CAP, sparking intense power struggles that helped to cripple

AP* Guideline 25.1

QUICK REVIEW

The Great Society

- ◆ Most ambitious reform program since the New Deal.
- ◆ Office of Economic Opportunity launched a War on Poverty.
- ◆ Programs had mixed results.

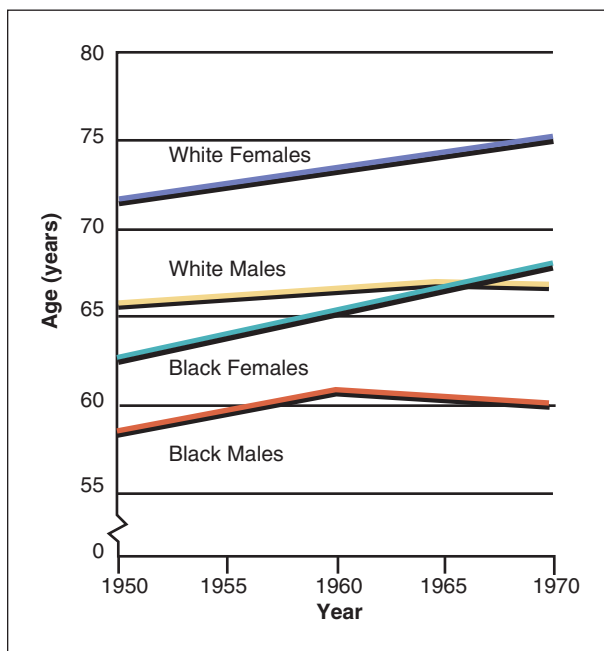


FIGURE 29-1
Comparative Figures on Life Expectancy at Birth by Race and Sex, 1950-70 Shifting mortality statistics suggested that the increased longevity of females increasingly cut across race lines, but did not diminish the difference between white people and black people as a whole.

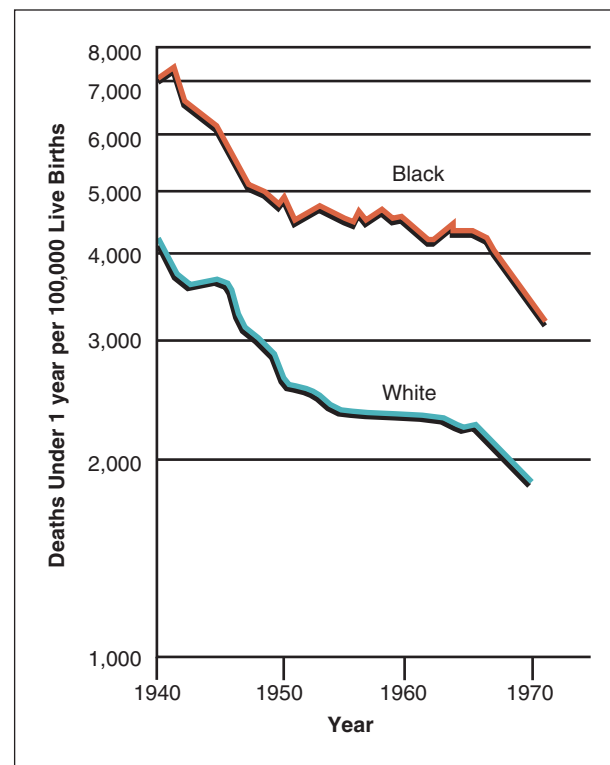


FIGURE 29-2
Comparative Figures on Infant Mortality by Race, 1940-70 The causes of infant mortality such as inadequate maternal diets, prenatal care, and medical services were all rooted in poverty, both rural and urban. Despite generally falling rates of infant mortality, nonwhite people continued to suffer the effects more than white people.

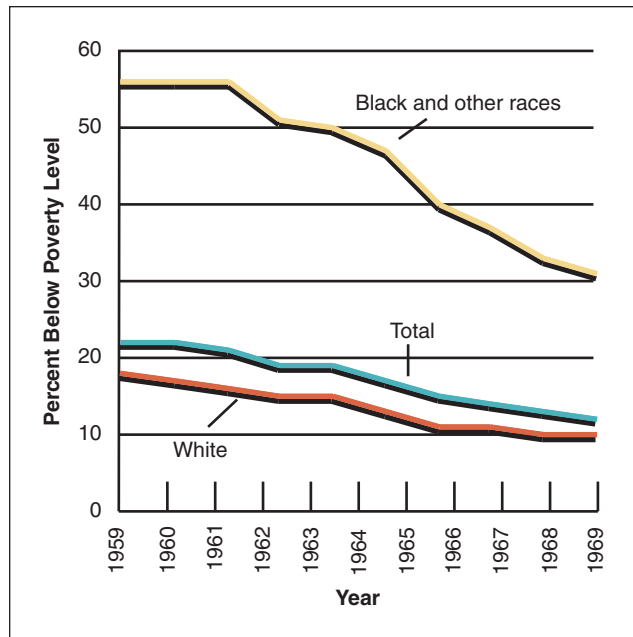


FIGURE 29-3
Percent of Population Below Poverty Level, by Race, 1959-69 Note:
 The poverty threshold for a nonfarm family of four was \$3,743
 in 1969 and \$2,973 in 1959.

Congressional Quarterly, Civil Rights: A Progress Report, 1971, p. 46.



Lyndon Johnson, *The War on Poverty* (1964)

Medicare Basic medical insurance for the elderly, financed through the federal government; program created in 1965.

the antipoverty effort. Such was the case in Chicago, where Mayor Richard Daley demanded absolute control over the allocation of federal funds.

The most successful and popular offshoots of the CAAs were the so-called national-emphasis programs, designed in Washington and administered according to federal guidelines. The Legal Services Program, staffed by attorneys, helped millions of poor people in legal battles with housing authorities, welfare departments, police, and slumlords. Head Start and Follow Through reached more than 2 million poor children and significantly improved the long-range educational achievement of participants. Comprehensive Community Health Centers provided basic medical services to poor patients who could not afford to see doctors. Upward Bound helped low-income teenagers develop the skills and confidence needed for college. Birth control programs dispensed contraceptive supplies and information to hundreds of thousands of poor women (see Figure 29-3).

But the root cause of poverty lay in unequal income distribution. The Johnson administration never committed itself to the redistribution of income or wealth. Spending on social welfare jumped from 7.7 percent of the gross national product in 1960 to 16 percent in 1974. But roughly three-quarters of social welfare payments went to the nonpoor. The largest sums went to **Medicare**, established by Congress in 1965 to provide basic health care for the aged, and to expanded Social Security payments and unemployment compensation.

The War on Poverty, like the Great Society itself, became a forgotten dream. “More than five years after the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act,” a 1970 study concluded, “the war on poverty has barely scratched the surface. Most poor people have had no contact with it, except perhaps to hear the promises of a better life to come.” The OEO finally expired in 1974. Having made the largest commitment to federal spending on social welfare since the New Deal, Johnson could take pride in the gains scored in the War on Poverty. At the same time, he had raised expectations higher than could be reached without a more drastic redistribution of economic and political power. Even in the short run, the president could not sustain the welfare programs and simultaneously fight a lengthy and expensive war abroad.

CRISIS IN THE CITIES

With funds for new construction limited during the Great Depression and World War II, and the postwar boom taking place in the suburbs, the housing stock in the nation’s cities deteriorated. The Federal Housing Administration had encouraged this trend by insuring loans to support the building of new homes in suburban areas (see Chapter 27). The federal government also encouraged “redlining,” which left people in poor neighborhoods without access to building loans. In these areas, the supply of adequate housing declined sharply. Slumlords took advantage of this situation, collecting high rents while allowing their properties to deteriorate. City officials meanwhile appealed for federal funds under Title I of the 1949 Housing Act to upgrade housing. Designed as a program of civic revitalization, these urban renewal projects more often than not sliced apart poor neighborhoods with new highways, demolished them in favor of new office complexes, or, as in Chicago’s Uptown, favored new developments for the middle class rather than the poor. In 1968 a federal survey showed that 80 percent of those residents who had been displaced under this program were nonwhite.

Urban employment opportunities declined along with the urban housing stock. The industries and corporations that had lured working men and women to the cities a century earlier either automated their plants, thus scaling back their workforces, or relocated to the suburbs or other regions, such as the South and Southwest, that promised lower corporate taxes and nonunion labor. Nationwide, military spending prompted by the escalation of the Vietnam War brought the unemployment rate down from 6 percent, where it was in 1960, to 4 percent in 1966, where it remained until the end of the decade. Black unemployment, however, was nearly twice that of white unemployment. In northern cities, the proportion of the workforce employed in the higher-paying manufacturing jobs declined precipitously while the proportion working in minimum-wage service industries rose at a fast rate. In short, African Americans were losing good jobs and steadily falling further behind whites.

Pollution, which had long plagued traffic-congested cities like Los Angeles and industrial cities like steel-producing Pittsburgh, became an increasingly pervasive urban problem. Cities like Phoenix that once had clean air began to issue smog alerts. Pointing to high levels of lead in the blood of urban children, scientists warned of the long-term threat of pollution to public health.

Despite deteriorating conditions, millions of Americans continued to move to the cities, mainly African Americans from the Deep South, white people from the Appalachian Mountains, and Latinos from Puerto Rico. By the mid-1960s, African Americans had become near majorities in the nation's decaying inner cities. Many had fled rural poverty only to find themselves earning minimum wages at best and living in miserable, racially segregated neighborhoods.

URBAN UPRISINGS

These deteriorating conditions brought urban pressures to the boiling point in the mid-1960s. In the “long, hot summers” of 1964 to 1968 the nation was rocked by more than 100 urban uprisings. As poet Imamu Amiri Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones) noted, these incidents were spontaneous rebellions against authority. Unlike the race riots of the 1920s and 1940s, when angry whites assaulted blacks, masses of African Americans now took revenge for the white domination of their communities and specifically for police abuse (see Map 29-1).

The first major uprising erupted in August 1965 in the Watts section of Los Angeles. Here, the male unemployment rate hovered around 30 percent. Watts lacked health-care facilities—the nearest hospital was twelve miles away—and in a city with little public transportation, fewer than one-fifth of its residents owned cars. It took only a minor arrest to set off the uprising, which quickly spread outward for fifty miles. Throwing rocks and bottles through store windows, participants reportedly shouted, “This is for Selma! This is for Birmingham!” and “Burn, baby, burn!” Nearly 50,000 people turned out, and 20,000 National Guard troops were sent in. After six days, 34 people lay dead, 900 were injured, and 4,000 more had been arrested. Los Angeles chief of police William H. Parker blamed civil rights workers, the mayor accused Communists, and both feigned ignorance when the media reported that white police assigned to “charcoal alley,” their name for the Watts district, had for years referred to their nightsticks as “nigger knockers.”

The following summer, large-scale uprisings occurred in San Francisco, Milwaukee, Dayton, and Cleveland. On July 12, 1967, in Newark, New Jersey, a city with severe housing shortages and the nation's highest black unemployment rate, the beating and arrest of a black taxi driver by a white police officer provoked a widespread protest. Five days of looting and burning of white-owned buildings ended with twenty-five people dead. One week later the Detroit “Great Rebellion” began. This time a

Map 29-1

In the period from 1965 to 1968, urban unrest escalated throughout the United States, most notably in the northeast and in southern cities. Deteriorating conditions in cities led to the riots. The housing stock in the nation's cities had declined following the postwar building boom in the suburbs; another factor was the government's encouragement of “redlining,” which left people in poor neighborhoods without access to building loans. In addition, urban unemployment contributed to the decay; the overall unemployment rate was 4 percent in 1966, but the unemployment level among blacks was twice that number on average. Exacerbating the problems of a poor housing stock and high unemployment was an increase in pollution. The combination of these conditions set the stage for urban uprisings, in which black Americans took revenge for white domination of their communities and police abuse. The first major riot took place in the Watts section of Los Angeles in 1965, where the male unemployment rate was about 30 percent. Thirty-four people were killed, 900 were injured, and 4,000 had been arrested. In Newark in 1967, 25 people were killed; in Detroit, 34 people died. In all there were about 100 urban riots between 1965 and 1968.



Donald Wheeldin, *The Situation in Watts Today* (1967)



To explore this map further, go to www.myhistorylab.com



MAP 29-1

Urban Uprisings, 1965–1968 After World War II urban uprisings precipitated by racial conflict increased in African American communities. In Watts in 1965 and in Detroit and Newark in 1967, rioters struck out at symbols of white control of their communities, such as white-owned businesses and residential properties.

WHAT WERE the main factors behind urban unrest?

vice squad of the Detroit police had raided a bar and arrested the after-hours patrons. Army tanks and paratroopers were brought in to quell the massive disturbance, which lasted a week and left 34 people dead and 7,000 under arrest.

The uprisings seemed at first to prompt badly needed reforms. After Watts, President Johnson set up a task force headed by Deputy Attorney General Ramsey Clark and allocated funds for a range of antipoverty programs. Several years later the Kerner Commission, headed by Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois, studied the riots and found that the participants in the uprisings were not the poorest or least-educated members of their communities. They suffered instead from heightened expectations sparked by the civil rights movement and Johnson's promise of a Great Society, expectations that were not to be realized. The Kerner Commission concluded its report by indicting "white racism" for creating an "explosive mixture" of poverty and police brutality.

But Congress ignored the commission's warning that "our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal." Moreover, the costs of the Vietnam War left little federal money for antipoverty programs. Senator

William Fulbright noted, “Each war feeds on the other, and, although the President assures us that we have the resources to win both wars, in fact we are not winning either of them.”

1968

The urban uprisings of the summer of 1967 marked the most drawn-out violence in the United States since the Civil War. But, rather than offering a respite, 1968 proved to be even more turbulent. The bloodiest and most destructive fighting of the Vietnam War resulted in a hopeless stalemate that soured most Americans on the conflict and undermined their faith in U.S. invincibility in world affairs. Disillusionment deepened in the spring when two of the most revered political leaders were struck down by assassins’ bullets. Once again protesters and police clashed on the nation’s campuses and city streets, and millions of Americans asked what was wrong with their country. Why was it so violent?

THE TET OFFENSIVE

On January 30, 1968, the North Vietnamese and their Vietcong allies launched the Tet Offensive (named for the Vietnamese lunar new year holiday), stunning the U.S. military command in South Vietnam. The Vietcong managed to push into the major cities and provincial capitals of the South, as far as the courtyard of the U.S. embassy in Saigon. U.S. troops ultimately halted the offensive, suffering comparatively modest casualties of 1,600 dead and 8,000 wounded. The North Vietnamese and Vietcong suffered more than 40,000 deaths, about one-fifth of their total forces. Civilian casualties ran to the hundreds of thousands. As many as 1 million South Vietnamese became refugees, their villages totally ruined (see Map 29-2).

The Tet Offensive, despite the U.S. success in stopping it, shattered the credibility of American officials who had repeatedly claimed the enemy to be virtually beaten. Television and press coverage—including scenes of U.S. personnel shooting from the embassy windows in Saigon—dismayed the public. Americans saw the beautiful, ancient city of Hue devastated almost beyond recognition and heard a U.S. officer casually remark about a village in the Mekong Delta, “We had to destroy it, in order to save it.” Television newscasters began to warn parents: “The following scenes might not be suitable viewing for children.”

The United States had chalked up a major military victory during the Tet Offensive but lost the war at home. For the first time, polls showed strong opposition to the war, 49 percent concluding that the entire operation in Vietnam was a mistake. The majority believed that the stalemate was hopeless. Meanwhile, in Rome, Berlin, Paris, and London, students and others turned out in huge demonstrations to protest U.S. involvement in Vietnam. At home, sectors of the antiwar movement began to shift from resistance to open rebellion.

WHAT DIVIDED the Democratic Party in 1968?

Between 1965 and 1968, racial tensions exploded into violence in more than seventy-five cities. Unlike earlier episodes of racial violence, which often took the form of clashes between black and white residents over contested neighborhoods, the riots of the 1960s were more often attacks by residents against retail establishments and property owned primarily by whites. Most deaths and injuries resulted from confrontations between police and rioters, not from fighting between black and white residents. This photograph, taken in 1967, shows police officers arresting suspected looters in Newark, New Jersey, where twenty-three people were killed in the course of the uprising.

CORBIS- NY.



Map 29-2

Determined to avoid the fate of President Truman and knowing that a major military setback would cripple his election campaign, in the winter and spring of 1964, President Johnson and his advisors laid the groundwork for a sustained bombing campaign against North Vietnam. In early August, after two U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin reported attacks by North Vietnamese patrol boats, Johnson ordered retaliatory strikes. He then appealed to Congress to authorize the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, the functional equivalent of a declaration of war. In February 1965, the Vietcong fired at the barracks of the U.S. Marine base at Pleiku, killing nine and wounding more than 100 Americans. Johnson then authorized Operation Rolling Thunder, a campaign of gradually intensifying air attacks against North Vietnam. By November 1965, there were 165,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam, with more on the way. In mid-1966, Johnson authorized a buildup of troops to 431,000, but still a victory was nowhere in sight.

PEARSON
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**MAP 29-2**

The Southeast Asian War The Indo-Chinese subcontinent, home to long-standing regional conflict, became the center of a prolonged war with the United States.

WHAT LED to the escalation of U.S. involvement in Vietnam?

The Tet Offensive also opened a year of political drama at home. Congress resoundingly turned down a request for a general increase in troops issued by General Westmoreland. President Johnson, facing the 1968 election campaign, knew the odds were now against him. He watched as opinion polls showed his popularity plummet to an all-time low. After he squeaked to a narrow victory in the New Hampshire primary, Johnson decided to step down. On March 31 he announced he would not seek the Democratic Party's nomination. He also declared a bombing halt over North Vietnam and called Hanoi to peace talks, which began in Paris in May. Like Truman almost thirty years earlier, and despite his determination not to repeat that bit of history, Johnson had lost his presidency in Asia.

KING, THE WAR, AND THE ASSASSINATION

By 1968 the civil rights leadership stood firmly in opposition to the war, and Martin Luther King, Jr. had reached a turning point in his life. The Federal Bureau of Investigation had been harassing King, tapping his telephones and spreading malicious rumors about him. Despite the threat from the FBI (Bureau Chief J. Edgar Hoover had sworn to “destroy the burrhead”), King abandoned his customary caution in criticizing U.S. policy in Vietnam. In the fall of 1965, he began to connect domestic unrest with the war abroad, calling the U.S. government the “greatest purveyor of violence in the world today.” As he became more militant in opposing the war, King lost the support of liberal Democrats who remained loyal to Johnson. King refused to compromise.

In the spring of 1968 King chose Memphis, Tennessee, home of striking sanitation workers, as the place to inaugurate a Poor People's Campaign for peace and justice. There he delivered, in what was to be his final speech, a message of hope. “I

AP* Guideline 25.2

“**Martin Luther King,**” Robert Kennedy said when he heard the news of the assassination of the civil rights leader, “dedicated his life to love and to justice for his fellow human beings, and he died because of that effort.” The funeral service for King was held in the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta on April 7, 1968.

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have a dream this afternoon that the brotherhood of man will become a reality,” King told the crowd. “With this faith, I will go out and carve a tunnel of hope from a mountain of despair.” The next evening, April 4, 1968, as he stepped out on the balcony of his motel, King was shot and killed by a lone assassin, James Earl Ray.

Throughout the world crowds turned out to mourn King’s death. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee leader Stokely Carmichael stormed, “When white America killed Dr. King, she declared war on us.” Riots broke out in more than 100 cities. Chicago Mayor Richard Daley ordered his police to shoot to kill. In Washington, D.C., U.S. Army units set up machine guns outside the Capitol and the White House. By week’s end, nearly 27,000 African Americans had been jailed. The physical scars of these riots remained for years, as banks redlined black neighborhoods and refused funds for rebuilding. The psychic scars survived even longer. With King’s death, his vision of humanity as a “Beloved Community” faded.

AP* Guideline 26.1

THE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN

The dramatic events of the first part of the year had a direct impact on the presidential campaign. For those liberals dissatisfied with Johnson’s conduct of the war, and especially for African Americans suffering the loss of their greatest national leader, New York senator Robert F. Kennedy emerged as the candidate of choice. Kennedy enjoyed a strong record on civil rights, and, like King, he had begun to interpret the war as a mirror of injustice at home. Kennedy insisted during the Tet Offensive that “our nation must be told the truth about this war, in all its terrible reality.” On this promise he began to build a campaign for the Democratic nomination.

Ironically, Kennedy faced an opponent who agreed with him, Minnesota senator Eugene McCarthy. The race for the Democratic nomination positioned McCarthy, the witty philosopher, against Kennedy, the charismatic campaigner. McCarthy garnered support from liberal Democrats and white suburbanites. On college campuses his popularity with antiwar students was so great that his campaign became known as the “children’s crusade.” Kennedy reached out successfully to African Americans and Latinos and won all but the Oregon primary.

Kennedy appeared to be the Democratic Party’s strongest candidate as June 4, the day of the California primary, dawned. But as the final tabulation of his victory came in just past midnight, Robert Kennedy was struck down by an assassin’s bullet.

Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, a longtime presidential hopeful, was now the sole Democrat with the credentials to succeed Johnson. But his reputation as a cold war Democrat had become a liability. In the 1950s Humphrey had delivered stirring addresses for civil rights and antipoverty legislation; yet he also sponsored repressive cold war measures and supported huge defense appropriations that diverted needed funds from domestic programs. He fully supported the Vietnam War and had publicly scorned peace activists as cowardly and un-American. Incongruously calling his campaign the “Politics of Joy,” Humphrey simultaneously courted Democrats who grimly supported the war and the King-Kennedy wing, which was sickened by it.

Humphrey skillfully cultivated the Democratic power brokers. Without entering a single state primary, he lined up delegates loyal to city bosses, labor leaders, and conservative southern Democrats. As the candidate least likely to rock the boat, he had secured his party’s nomination well before delegates met in convention.

“THE WHOLE WORLD IS WATCHING!”

The events surrounding the Democratic convention in Chicago, August 21–26, demonstrated how deep the divisions within the United States had become. Antiwar

QUICK REVIEW

The 1968 Democratic Convention

- ◆ August 26–29: Democrats met to nominate Hubert Humphrey.
- ◆ Antiwar protesters marched on the convention hall.
- ◆ Undisciplined police helped precipitate violence between the police and the protesters.

activists had called for a massive demonstration at the delegates' hotel and at the convention center. The media focused, however, on the plans announced by the "Yippies," or Youth International Party, a largely imaginary organization of politicized hippies led by jokester and counterculture guru Abbie Hoffman. Yippies called for a Festival of Life, including a "nude-in" on Lake Michigan beaches and the release of a greased pig—Pigasus, the Yippie candidate for president. Still reeling from the riots following King's assassination, Chicago's Mayor Richard Daley refused to issue parade permits. According to later accounts, he sent hundreds of undercover police into the crowds to encourage rock throwing and generally to incite violence so that retaliation would appear necessary and reasonable.

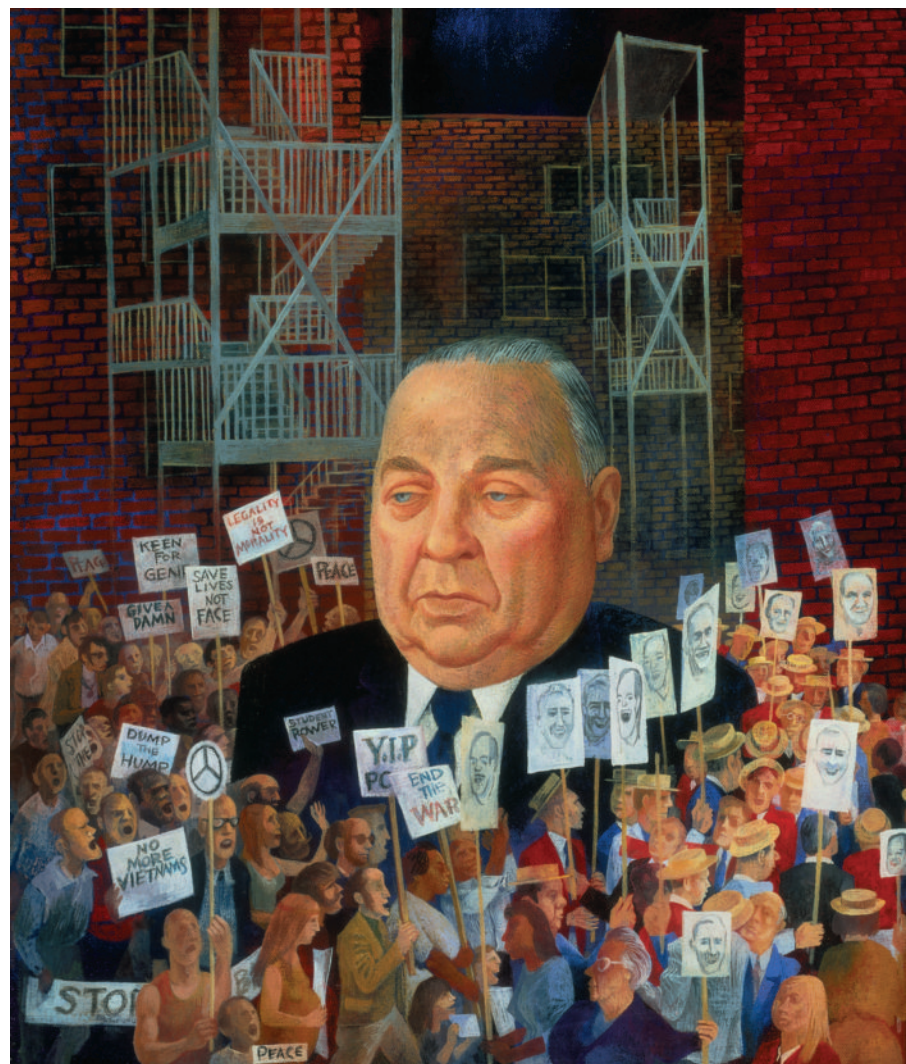
Daley's strategy boomeranged when his officers staged what a presidential commission later termed a "police riot," randomly assaulting demonstrators, casual passersby, and television crews filming the events. For one of the few times in American history, the media appeared to join a protest against civil authorities. Angered by the embarrassing publicity, Daley sent his agents to raid McCarthy's campaign headquarters, where Democrats opposed to the war had gathered.

Inside the convention hall, a raging debate over a peace resolution underscored the depth of the division within the party over the war. Representative Wayne Hays of Ohio lashed out at those who substituted "beards for brains . . . [and] pot [for] patriotism." When the resolution failed, McCarthy delegates put on black armbands and followed folk singer Theodore Bikel in singing "We Shall Overcome." Later, as tear gas used against the demonstrators outside turned the amphitheater air acrid, delegates heard the beaming Humphrey praise Mayor Daley and Johnson's conduct of the Vietnam War. When Senator Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut addressed the convention and protested the "Gestapo tactics" of the police, television cameras focused on Mayor Daley saying, "You Jew son of a bitch . . . , go home!" The crowd outside chanted, "The whole world is watching! The whole world is watching!" Indeed, through satellite transmission, it was.

Protest spread worldwide. Across the United States the antiwar movement picked up steam. In Paris, students took over campuses and workers occupied factories. Young people scrawled on the walls such humorous and half-serious slogans as "Be Realistic, Demand the Impossible!" Similar protests against authority occurred in eastern Europe. In Prague, Czechoslovakia, students wearing blue jeans and singing Beatles songs threw rocks at Soviet tanks. Meanwhile, demonstrations in Japan, Italy, Ireland, Germany, and England all brought young people into the streets to demand democratic reforms in their own countries and an end to the war in Vietnam.

In 1968, Richard J. Daley had been elected mayor of Chicago four times and held power as a traditional city boss. In December of that year, the National Commission on Violence released a report that concluded that Chicago police, acting under Mayor Daley's orders had been "unrestrained and indiscriminate" in their attacks on demonstrators at the National Democratic Convention held the previous August. In response, Mayor Daley brazenly announced a 22 percent salary increase for members of the city's police and fire personnel.

Library of Congress.



HOW WERE the “politics of identity” movements similar to and different from earlier civil rights organizations?

Lecture Suggestion 29.2, Civil Rights Movement, Politics of Identity

AP* Guideline 25.2

Audio-Visual Aid, “Civil Rights”

QUICK REVIEW

Black Panthers

- ◆ Founded in 1966 by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale.
- ◆ Adopted a strategy of armed self-defense, combined with community programs.
- ◆ Panthers faced raids, arrests, and prosecution.



Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton, from *Black Power* (1967)

Black Power Philosophy emerging after 1965 that real economic and political gains for African Americans could come only through self-help, self-determination, and organizing for direct political influence.

Black Panther Political and social movement among black Americans, founded in Oakland, California, in 1966 that emphasized black economic and political power.

THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY

The tragic events of 1968 brought whole sectors of the counterculture into political activism. With great media fanfare, gay liberation and women’s liberation movements emerged in the late 1960s. By the early 1970s, young Latinos, Asian Americans, and Indian peoples had pressed their own claims. In different ways, these groups drew their own lessons from the nationalist movement that formed in the wake of Malcolm X’s death—Black Power. Soon, “Brown Power,” “Yellow Power,” and “Red Power” became the slogans of movements constituted distinctly as new communities of protest.

BLACK POWER

Impatient with the strategies of social change based on voting rights and integration, many young activists spurned the tactics of civil disobedience of King’s generation for direct action and militant self-defense. In 1966, Stokely Carmichael, who had helped turn SNCC into an all-black organization, began to advocate Black Power as a means for African Americans to take control of their own communities.

Derived from a century-long tradition of black nationalism, the key tenets of **Black Power** were self-determination and self-sufficiency. National conferences of activists, held annually beginning in 1966, adopted separatist resolutions, including a plan to partition the United States into black and white nations. Black Power also promoted self-esteem by affirming the unique history and heritage of African peoples.

The movement’s boldest expression was the **Black Panther** Party for Self-Defense, founded in Oakland, California, in 1966 by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale. “We want freedom,” Newton demanded. “We want power. . . . We want full employment. . . . We want all black men to be exempt from military service. We want . . . an end to POLICE BRUTALITY. . . . We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, and justice.” Armed self-defense was the Panthers’ strategy, and they adopted a paramilitary style—black leather jackets, shoes, black berets, and firearms—that infuriated local authorities. Monitoring local police, a practice Panthers termed “patrolling the pigs,” was their major activity. In several communities, Panthers also ran free breakfast programs for schoolchildren, established medical clinics, and conducted educational classes. For a time the Panthers became folk heroes. Persecuted by local police and the FBI—there were more than thirty raids on Panther offices in eleven states during 1968 and 1969—the Panthers were arrested, prosecuted, and sentenced to long terms in jail that effectively destroyed the organization.

Black Power nevertheless continued to grow during the late 1960s and became a multifaceted movement. The Reverend Jesse Jackson, for example, rallied African Americans in Chicago to boycott the A&P supermarket chain until the firm hired 700 black workers. A dynamic speaker and skillful organizer, Jackson encouraged African Americans to support their own businesses and services. His program, Operation Breadbasket, strengthened community control. By 1970 it had spread beyond Chicago to fifteen other cities.

Cultural nationalism became the most enduring component of Black Power. In their popular book *Black Power* (1967), Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton urged African Americans “to assert their own definitions, to reclaim their history, their culture; to create their own sense of community and togetherness.” Thousands of college students responded by calling for more scholarships and for more classes on African American history and culture. At San Francisco State University, students, with help from the Black Panthers, demanded the creation of a black studies department. After a series of failed negotiations with the administration, the black students

called for a campus-wide strike and in December 1968 shut down the university. In the end, 134 school days later, the administration agreed to fund a black studies department but also fired about twenty-five faculty members and refused to drop charges against 700 arrested campus activists. Strikes for “third world studies” soon broke out on other campuses, including the University of Wisconsin at Madison, where the national guard was brought in to quell the protest.

Meanwhile, trendsetters put aside western dress for African-style dashikis and hairdos, and black parents gave their children African names. Many well-known African Americans such as Imamu Amiri Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones), Muhammad Ali (formerly Cassius Clay), and Kwame Touré (formerly Stokely Carmichael) rejected their “slave names.” The new African American holiday Kwanzaa began to replace Christmas as a seasonal family celebration. This deepening sense of racial pride and solidarity was summed up in the popular slogan “Black Is Beautiful.”

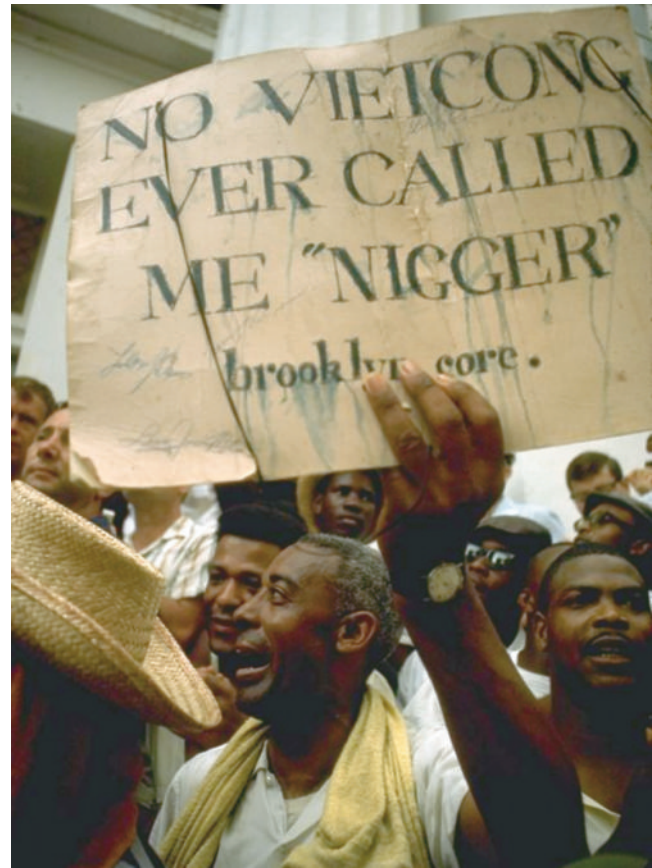
SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL

Betty Friedan’s best-selling *Feminine Mystique* (1963) had swelled feelings of discontent among many middle-class white women who had come of age in the 1950s (see Chapter 27) and sparked the formation of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. NOW pledged itself “to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now.” Members spearheaded campaigns for the enforcement of laws banning sex discrimination in work and in education, for maternity leaves for working mothers, and for government funding of day-care centers. NOW also came out for the Equal Rights Amendment, first introduced in Congress in 1923, and demanded the repeal of legislation that prohibited abortion or restricted birth control.

The second half of the decade produced a different kind of movement: women’s liberation. Like Black Power, the women’s liberation movement attracted young women who had been active in civil rights, SDS, and campus antiwar movements. Angered by the sexism of SNCC and SDS yet impatient with the legislative reforms promoted by NOW, these women took a militant stance, proclaiming “Sisterhood Is Powerful.” “Women are an oppressed class. Our oppression is total, affecting every facet of our lives,” read the Redstocking Manifesto of 1969. “We are exploited as sex objects, breeders, domestic servants, and cheap labor.”

The women’s liberation movement developed a scathing critique of patriarchy—that is, the power of men to dominate all institutions, from the family to business to the military to the protest movements themselves. Patriarchy, they argued, was the prime cause of exploitation, racism, and war. Outraged and sometimes outrageous, radical feminists, as they called themselves, conducted “street theater” at the 1968 Miss America Beauty Pageant in Atlantic City, crowning a live sheep as queen and “throwing implements of female torture” (bras, girdles, curlers, and copies of the *Ladies’ Home Journal*) into a “freedom trash can.” A few months later, the Women’s International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell (WITCH) struck in Lower Manhattan, putting a hex on the male-dominated New York Stock Exchange.

The media focused on the audacious acts and brazen pronouncements of radical feminists, but the majority involved in the women’s liberation movement were less flamboyant women who were simply trying to rise above the limitations imposed on them because of their gender. Most of their activism took place outside the lime-light in consciousness-raising (CR) groups. CR groups, which multiplied by the



The war in Vietnam contributed to the growing racial militancy in the United States. African Americans served on the front lines in Vietnam in disproportionate numbers, and many came to view the conflict as a “white man’s war.”

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Shirley Chisholm, Equal Rights for Women (1969)



National Organization for Women,
Statement of Purpose (1966)

thousands in the late 1960s and early 1970s, brought women together to discuss the relationship between public events and private lives, particularly between politics and sexuality. Here women shared their most intimate feelings toward men or other women and established the constituency for the movement's most important belief, expressed in the aphorism "The personal is political." Believing that no aspect of life

OVERVIEW

PROTEST MOVEMENTS OF THE 1960s

Year	Organization/Movement	Description
1962	<i>Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)</i>	Organization of college students that became the largest national organization of left-wing white students. Calling for "participatory democracy," SDS involved students in community-based campaigns against poverty and for citizens' control of neighborhoods. SDS played a prominent role in the campaign to end the war in Vietnam.
1964	<i>Free Speech Movement</i>	Formed at the University of California at Berkeley to protest the banning of on-campus political fund-raising. Decried the bureaucratic character of the "multiuniversity" and advocated an expansion of student rights.
1965	<i>Anti-Vietnam War Movement</i>	Advocated grass-roots opposition to U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia. By 1970 a national mobilization committee organized a demonstration of a half-million protesters in Washington, D.C.
1965	<i>La raza</i>	A movement of Chicano youth to advance the cultural and political self-determination of Mexican Americans. <i>La raza</i> included the Brown Berets, which addressed community issues, and regional civil rights groups such as the Crusade for Social Justice, formed in 1965.
1966	<i>Black Power</i>	Militant movement that emerged from the civil rights campaigns to advocate independent institutions for African Americans and pride in black culture and African heritage. The idea of Black Power, a term coined by Stokely Carmichael, inspired the formation of the paramilitary Black Panthers.
1968	<i>American Indian Movement (AIM)</i>	Organization formed to advance the self-determination of Indian peoples and challenge the authority of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Its most effective tactic was occupation. In February, 1973, AIM insurgents protesting land and treaty violations occupied Wounded Knee, South Dakota, the location of an 1890 massacre, until the FBI and BIA agents drove them out.
1968	<i>Women's Liberation</i>	Movement of mainly young women that took shape following a protest at the Miss America Beauty Pageant. Impatient with the legislative reforms promoted by the National Organization for Women, founded in 1966, activists developed their own agenda shaped by the slogan "The Personal Is Political." Activities included the formation of "consciousness-raising" groups and the establishment of women's studies programs.
1968	<i>Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA)</i>	Formed at the University of California at Berkeley, the AAPA was one of the first pan-Asian political organizations to struggle against racial oppression. The AAPA encouraged Asian Americans to claim their own cultural identity and to protest the war against Asian peoples in Vietnam.
1969	<i>Gay Liberation</i>	Movement to protest discrimination against homosexuals and lesbians that emerged after the Stonewall Riots in New York City. Unlike earlier organizations such as the Mattachine Society, which focused on civil rights, Gay Liberationists sought to radically change American society and government, which they believed were corrupt.

lacked a political dimension, women in these groups explored the power dynamics of the institutions of family and marriage as well as the workforce and government.

Participants in the women's liberation movement engaged in a wide range of activities. Some staged sit-ins at *Newsweek* to protest demeaning media depictions of women. Others established health clinics, day-care centers, rape crisis centers, and shelters for women fleeing abusive husbands or lovers. The women's liberation movement also had a significant educational impact. Feminist bookstores and publishing companies, such as the Feminist Press, reached out to eager readers. Scholarly books such as Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1970) found a wide popular audience. By the early 1970s, campus activists were demanding women's studies programs and women's centers. Like black studies, women's studies programs included traditional academic goals, such as the generation of new scholarship, but also encouraged personal change and self-esteem. Between 1970 and 1975, as many as 150 women's studies programs had been established. The movement continued to grow; by 1980 nearly 30,000 women's studies courses were offered at colleges and universities throughout the United States.

The women's liberation movement remained, however, a bastion of white middle-class women. The appeal to sisterhood did not unite women across race or class or even sexual orientation. Lesbians, who charged the early leaders of NOW with homophobia, found large pockets of "heterosexism" in the women's liberation movement and broke off to form their own organizations. Although some African American women were outraged at the posturing of Black Power leaders like Stokely Carmichael, who joked that "the only position for women in SNCC is prone," the majority remained wary of white women's appeals to sisterhood. African American women formed their own "wom-anist" movement to address their distinct cultural and political concerns. Similarly, by 1970 a Latina feminist movement had begun to address issues uniquely relevant to women of color in an Anglo-dominated society.

GAY LIBERATION

The gay community had been generations in the making but only gained visibility during World War II (see Chapter 25). By the mid-1950s, two pioneering homophile organizations, the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis, were campaigning to reduce discrimination against homosexuals in employment, the armed forces, and all areas of social and cultural life. Other groups, such as the Society for Individual Rights, rooted themselves in New York's Greenwich Village, San Francisco's North Beach, and other centers of gay night life. But it was during the tumultuous 1960s that gay and lesbian movements encouraged many men and women to proclaim publicly their sexual identity: "Say It Loud, Gay Is Proud."

The major event prompting gays to organize grew out of repeated police raids of gay bars and the harassment of their patrons. In February 1966 New York City's popular liberal mayor John Lindsay announced a crackdown against "promenading perverts" and assigned police to patrol the bars between Times Square and Washington Square. The American Civil Liberties Union responded by pointing out that the mayor was "confusing deviant social behavior with criminal activity." Lindsay's police commissioner soon announced the end of the entrapment policy by which undercover police had been luring homosexuals into breaking the law, but various forms of individual harassment continued. Finally, on Friday, June 27, 1969, New York police raided the Stonewall Inn, a well-known gay bar in Greenwich Village, and provoked




On August 26, 1970, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, women nationwide staged demonstrations for women's rights. The young women in this photograph gathered in Central Park, New York, in the largest demonstration ever held for women's rights. Proposed by Representative Bella Abzug and designated by Congress in 1971, Women's Equality Day is celebrated every year on August 26.

Jesse-Steve Rose/The Image Works.



The Gay Liberation Front (1970)

[Class Discussion Question 29.4](#)



In this excerpt from an interview from the Gay Liberation Front, *Come Out* (1970), they reassert that one goal of the gay movement was to have people publicly declare their sexual preference and not keep it secret.

Before GLF I was active in these movements, but anonymously—nobody was conscious of the fact that I was homosexual. I think the only way we can gain respect for ourselves and any of the help that we need from everyone else in overcoming our oppression is by showing that we participated . . . Although I haven't been a public homosexual, among my friends, it was always known. I think that we should—those of us who can—be public as well as open.

an uprising of angry homosexuals that lasted the entire night. The next day, “Gay Power” graffiti appeared on buildings and sidewalks throughout the neighborhood.

The Stonewall Riot, as it was called, sparked a new sense of collective identity among many gays and lesbians and touched off a new movement for both civil rights and liberation. Gay men and women in New York City formed the Gay Liberation Front (GLF), announcing themselves as “a revolutionary homosexual group of men and women formed with the realization that complete sexual liberation for all people cannot come about unless existing social institutions are abolished. We reject society’s attempt to impose sexual roles and definitions of our nature. We are stepping outside these roles and simplistic myths. We are going to be who we are.” The GLF also took a stand against the war in Vietnam and supported the Black Panthers. It quickly adopted the forms of public protest, such as street demonstrations and sit-ins, developed by the civil rights movement and given new direction by antiwar protesters.

Changes in public opinion and policies followed. As early as 1967 a group of Episcopal priests had urged church leaders to avoid taking a moral position against same-sex relationships. The San Francisco-based Council on Religion and Homosexuality established a network for clergy sympathetic to gay and lesbian parishioners. In 1973 the American Psychiatric Association, which since World War II had viewed homosexuality as a treatable mental illness, reclassified it as a normal sexual orientation. Meanwhile, there began a slow process of decriminalization of homosexual acts between consenting adults. In 1975 the U.S. Civil Service Commission ended its ban on the employment of homosexuals.

The founders of gay liberation encouraged not only legal changes and the establishment of supporting institutions but self-pride. “Gay Is Good” (like “Black Is Beautiful” and “Sisterhood Is Powerful”) expressed the aspiration of a large hidden minority to “come out” and demand public acceptance of their sexual identity. By the mid-1970s Gay Pride marches held simultaneously in several cities were drawing nearly 500,000 participants.

THE CHICANO REBELLION

By the mid-1960s young Mexican Americans adopted the slang term *Chicano*, in preference to Mexican American, to express a militant ethnic nationalism. Chicano militants demanded not only equality with white people but recognition of their distinctive culture and history. Tracing their roots to the heroic Aztecs, they identified *la raza* (the race or people) as the source of a common language, religion, and heritage.

Students played a large role in shaping the Chicano movement. In East Los Angeles, high school students staged “blowouts” or strikes to demand educational reform and a curricular emphasis on the history, literature, art, and language of Mexican Americans. Fifteen thousand students from five Los Angeles schools went on strike against poor educational facilities. The police conducted a mass arrest of protesters, and within a short time students in San Antonio and Denver were conducting their own blowouts, holding placards reading “Teachers, Sí, Bigots, No!” By 1969, on September 16, Mexican Independence Day, high school students throughout the Southwest skipped classes in the First National Chicano Boycott. Meanwhile, students organized to demand Mexican American studies on their campuses. In 1969, a group staged a sit-in at the administrative offices of the University of California at Berkeley, which one commentator called “the first important public appearance of something called Brown Power.”

In 1967 David Sanchez of East Los Angeles formed the Brown Berets, modeled on the Black Panthers, to address such community issues as housing and employment and generally to encourage teenagers to express *Chicanismo*, or pride in their

Mexican American identity and heritage. By 1972, when the organization disbanded, the Brown Berets had organized twenty chapters, published a newspaper, *La Causa*, and run a successful health clinic. From college campuses spread a wider cultural movement that spawned literary journals in “Spanglish” (a mixture of English and Spanish), theatrical companies and music groups, and murals illustrating ethnic themes on buildings in Los Angeles and elsewhere.

Chicano nationalism inspired a variety of regional political movements in the late 1960s. One of these, Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales’s Crusade for Justice, formed in 1965 to protest the failure of the Great Society’s antipoverty programs. A former boxer and popular poet, Gonzales was especially well liked by barrio youth and college students. He led important campaigns for greater job opportunities and land reform throughout the Southwest well into the 1970s. In Colorado and New Mexico, the *Alianza Federal de Mercedes*, formed in 1963 by Reies López Tijerina, fought to reclaim land fraudulently appropriated by white settlers. The Texas-based *La Raza Unida Party* (LRUP), meanwhile, increased Mexican American representation in local government and established social and cultural programs. The student-led Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO) worked closely with the LRUP to help Mexican Americans take political power in Crystal City, Texas. The two organizations registered voters, ran candidates for office, and staged a massive boycott of Anglo-owned businesses.

Mexican American activists, even those who won local office, soon discovered that economic power remained out of community hands. Stifled by poverty, ordinary Mexican Americans had less confidence in the political process, and many fell back into apathy after early hopes of great, sudden change. Despite these setbacks, a sense of collective identity had been forged among many Mexican Americans.

The Chicano movement found vivid expression in the performing and visual arts and in literature. *Teatro*, comprising film and drama, drew creatively on Mexican and Anglo cultural forms to explore the political dimensions of Mexican American society. *La Carpa de los Rasquachis* (*The Tent of the Underdogs*), appeared in 1974 as the first full-length Chicano play and was subsequently staged in many communities. One of the most popular and visible media was the mural, often based on the works of Mexican masters such as Diego Rivera. Chicano muralists painted an estimated 1,500 murals on public buildings throughout their communities, from the exteriors of retail shops to freeway overpasses, even to large drainage pipes. Artistic expression found its way into music and dance. The rock group *Los Lobos*, for example, dedicated their first recorded album to the United Farm Workers. One of the most important writers to capture the excitement of the Chicano movement was Oscar Zeta Acosta, whose *The Revolt of the Cockroach People*, published in 1973, renders into fiction some of the major events of the era.

RED POWER

The phrase “Red Power,” attributed to Vine Deloria Jr., commonly expressed a growing sense of pan-Indian identity. At the forefront of this movement was the **American Indian Movement (AIM)**, which was founded in 1968. Its members represented mainly urban Indian communities, and its leaders were young and militant. Like the Black Panthers and Brown Berets, AIM was initially organized to monitor law enforcement practices such as police harassment and brutality. It soon played a major role



Labor activist Cesar Chavez spearheaded the organization of Chicano agricultural workers into the United Farm Workers (UFW), the first successful union of migrant workers. In 1965, a strike of grape pickers in the fields around Delano, California, and a nationwide boycott of table grapes brought Chavez and the UFW into the media spotlight. Like Martin Luther King, Jr., he advocated nonviolent methods for achieving justice and equality.

Paul Fusco/Magnum Photos, Inc.



Cesar Chavez, From *He Showed Us the Way* (1978)

American Indian Movement (AIM) Group of Native-American political activists who used confrontations with the federal government to publicize their case for Indian rights.

in building a network of urban Indian centers, churches, and philanthropic organizations and in establishing the “powwow circuit” that publicized news of protest activities across the country. Skillful in attracting attention from the news media, AIM quickly inspired a plethora of new publications and local chapters. Many young Indians turned to their elders to learn tribal ways, including traditional dress and spiritual practices (see Map 29-3).

The major catalyst of Red Power was the occupation of the deserted federal prison on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay on November 20, 1969. A group of eighty-nine Indians, identifying themselves as “Indians of All Tribes,” claimed the island according to the terms of an 1868 Sioux treaty that gave Indians rights to unused federal property on Indian land. The group demanded federal funds for a multifaceted cultural and educational center. For the next year and a half, an occupation force averaging around 100 and a stream of visitors from a large number of tribes celebrated the occupation. Although the protestors ultimately failed to achieve their specific goals, they had an enormous impact on the Indian community. With

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MAP 29-3

Major Indian Reservations, 1976 Although sizable areas, designated Indian reservations represented only a small portion of territory occupied in earlier times.

HOW DID the reduction of major Indian reservations influence the growth of “Red Power” and reclamation of Native American tribal land?

the occupation at Alcatraz, a participant testified, “we got back our worth, our pride, our dignity, our humanity.”

The most dramatic series of events of the Red Power movement began in 1972, when Indian activists left the cities to return to their rural roots. In November, AIM staged an event known as the “**Trail of Broken Treaties**” that culminated in a week-long occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C. Emphasizing treaty violation rather than civil rights, AIM insurgents then moved to the Pine Ridge Reservation, the site of the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, where in the spring of 1973 they began a siege that lasted ten weeks. AIM activists demanded the removal of the leader of the Oglala Lakota, whom they believed to be a corrupt puppet of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the restoration of treaty rights. Dozens of FBI agents then invaded under shoot-to-kill orders, leaving two Indians dead and an unknown number of casualties on both sides.

The Red Power movement culminated in the “Longest Walk,” a five-month protest march that began in San Francisco and ended in Washington, D.C., in July 1978. The event emphasized the history of the forced removal of Indians from their homelands and protested the U.S. government’s repeated violation of treaty rights. By this time, several tribes had won in court, by legislation or by administrative fiat, small parts of what had earlier been taken from them. The sacred Blue Lake was returned to Pueblo Indians in Taos, New Mexico, and Alaskan natives were granted legal title to 40 million acres (and compensation of almost \$1 billion). The Native American Rights Fund (NARF), established in 1971, gained additional thousands of acres in Atlantic coast states. But despite these victories, many tribal lands continued to suffer from industrial and government waste dumping and other commercial uses. On reservations and in urban areas with heavy Indian concentrations, alcohol abuse and ill health remained serious problems.

The 1960s also marked the beginning of an “Indian Renaissance” in literature. New books like Vine Deloria Jr.’s *Custer Died for Your Sins* (1969) and the classic *Black Elk Speaks* (1961), reprinted from the 1930s, reached millions of readers inside and outside Indian communities. A wide variety of Indian novelists, historians, and essayists, such as Pulitzer Prize-winning N. Scott Momaday and Leslie Silko, followed up these successes, and fiction and nonfiction works about Indian life and lore continued to attract a large audience.

THE ASIAN AMERICAN MOVEMENT

In 1968 students at the University of California at Berkeley founded the Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA), one of the first pan-Asian political organizations bringing together Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino American activists. Similar organizations soon appeared on campuses throughout California and spread quickly to the East Coast and Midwest.

These groups took a strong stand against the war in Vietnam, condemning it as a violation of the national sovereignty of the small Asian country. They also protested the racism directed against the peoples of Southeast Asia, particularly the practice common among American soldiers of referring to the enemy as “Gooks.” This racist epithet, first used to denigrate Filipinos during the Spanish-American War, implied that Asians were something less than human and therefore proper targets for slaughter. In response, Asian American activists rallied behind the people of Vietnam and proclaimed racial solidarity with their “Asian brothers and sisters.”

In 1968 and 1969 students at San Francisco State College and the University of California at Berkeley, for example, rallied behind the slogan “Shut It Down!” and waged prolonged campus strikes to demand the establishment of ethnic studies programs. These

Map 29-3

The phrase “Red Power,” attributed to Vine Deloria Jr., commonly expressed a growing sense of pan-Indian identity. At the forefront of this movement was the American Indian Movement (AIM), which was founded in 1968. Its members represented mainly urban Indian communities, and its leaders were young and militant. The major catalyst of Red Power was the occupation of the deserted federal prison on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay on November 20, 1969. The most dramatic series of events of the Red Power movement began in 1972, when Indian activists left the cities to return to their rural roots. The Red Power movement culminated in the “Longest Walk,” a five-month protest march that began in San Francisco and ended in Washington, D.C., in July 1978. The event emphasized the history of the forced removal of Indians from their homelands and protested the U.S. government’s repeated violation of treaty rights. By this time, several tribes had won in court, by legislation or by administrative fiat, small parts of what had earlier been taken from them. The sacred Blue Lake was returned to Pueblo Indians in Taos, New Mexico, and Alaskan natives were granted legal title to 40 million acres (and compensation of almost \$1 billion). The Native American Rights Fund (NARF), established in 1971, gained additional thousands of acres in Atlantic Coast states.

Trail of Broken Treaties 1972 event staged by the American Indian Movement (AIM) that culminated in a week-long occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C.

students sought alternatives to the goal of assimilation into mainstream society, promoting instead a unique sense of ethnic identity, a pan-Asian counterculture. Berkeley students, for example, sponsored the “Asian American Experience in America–Yellow Power” conference, inviting their peers to learn about “Asian American history and destiny, and the need to express Asian American solidarity in a predominantly white society.”

Between 1968 and 1973, major universities across the country introduced courses on Asian American studies, and a few set up interdisciplinary departments. Meanwhile, artists, writers, documentary filmmakers, oral historians, and anthropologists worked to recover the Asian American past. Maxine Hong Kingston’s *Woman Warrior: A Memoir of a Girlhood among Ghosts* (1976) became a major bestseller.

Looking to the example of the Black Panthers, young Asian Americans also took their struggle into the community. In 1968, activists presented the San Francisco municipal government with a list of grievances about conditions in Chinatown, particularly the poor housing and medical facilities, and organized a protest march down the neighborhood’s main street. They led a community-wide struggle to save San Francisco’s International Hotel, a low-income residential facility mainly for Filipino and Chinese men, which was ultimately leveled for a new parking lot.

Community activists ranging from college students to neighborhood artists worked in a variety of campaigns to heighten public awareness. The Redress and Reparations Movement, initiated by Sansei (third-generation Japanese Americans), for example, encouraged students to ask their parents about their wartime experiences and prompted older civil rights organizations, such as the Japanese American Citizens League, to bring forward the issue of internment. At the same time, trade union organizers renewed labor organizing among new Asian workers, mainly in service industries, such as hotel and restaurant work, and in clothing manufacturing. Other campaigns reflected the growing diversity of the Asian population. Filipinos, the fastest-growing group, organized to protest the destructive role of U.S.-backed Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos. Students from South Korea similarly denounced the repressive government in their homeland. Samoans sought to publicize the damage caused by nuclear testing in the Pacific Islands. Ultimately, however, in blurring intergroup differences, the Asian American movement failed to reach the growing populations of new immigrants, especially the numerous Southeast Asians fleeing their devastated homeland.

Despite its shortcomings, the politics of identity would continue to grow through the next two decades of mainly conservative rule, broadening the content of literature, film, television, popular music, and even the curricula of the nation’s schools. Collectively, the various movements for social change pushed issues of race, gender, and sexual orientation to the forefront of American politics and simultaneously spotlighted the nation’s cultural diversity as a major resource.

HOW DID Nixon win the White House
in 1968?

AP* Guideline 26.1

THE NIXON PRESIDENCY

The sharp divisions among Americans in 1968, mainly due to President Johnson’s policies in Vietnam, paved the way for the election of Richard Milhous Nixon. The new Republican president inherited not only an increasingly unpopular war but a nation riven by internal discord. Without specifying his plans, he promised a “just and honorable peace” in Southeast Asia and the restoration of law and order at home. Yet, once in office, Nixon puzzled both friends and foes. He ordered unprecedented illegal government action against private citizens while agreeing with Congress to enhance several welfare programs and improve

environmental protection. He widened and intensified the war in Vietnam, yet made stunning moves toward détente with the People's Republic of China. An architect of the cold war in the 1950s, Nixon became the first president to foresee its end. Nixon worked hard in the White House, centralizing authority and reigning defiantly as an "Imperial President"—until he brought himself down.

THE SOUTHERN STRATEGY

In 1968, Republican presidential contender Richard Nixon deftly built on voter hostility toward youthful protesters and the counterculture. He represented, he said, the "silent majority"—those Americans who worked, paid taxes, and did not demonstrate, picket, or protest loudly, "people who are not haters, people who love their country." Recovering from defeats in elections for the presidency in 1960 and the governorship of California in 1962, Nixon declared himself the one candidate who could restore law and order to the nation (see Map 29-4).

After signing the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964, President Johnson said privately, "I think we just delivered the South to the Republicans for a long time to come." Republican strategists moved quickly to make this prediction come true. They also recognized the growing electoral importance of the Sunbelt, where populations grew with the rise of high-tech industries and retirement communities. A powerful conservatism dominated this region, home to many military bases, defense plants, and an increasingly influential Protestant evangelism. Nixon appealed directly to these voters by promising to appoint to federal courts judges who would undercut liberal interpretations of civil rights and be tough on crime.

Nixon selected as his running mate Maryland governor Spiro T. Agnew, known for his vitriolic oratory. Agnew treated dissent as near treason. He courted the silent majority by attacking all critics of the war as "an effete corps of impudent snobs" and blasted liberal newscasters as "nattering nabobs of negativism."

The 1968 campaign underscored the antiliberal sentiment of the voting public. The most dramatic example was the relative success of Alabama governor George Wallace's third-party bid for the presidency. Wallace took state office in 1963 promising white Alabamans "Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!" In 1968 he waged a national campaign around a conservative hate list that included school busing, antiwar demonstrations, and urban uprisings. Winning only five southern states, Wallace nevertheless captured 13.5 percent of the popular vote.

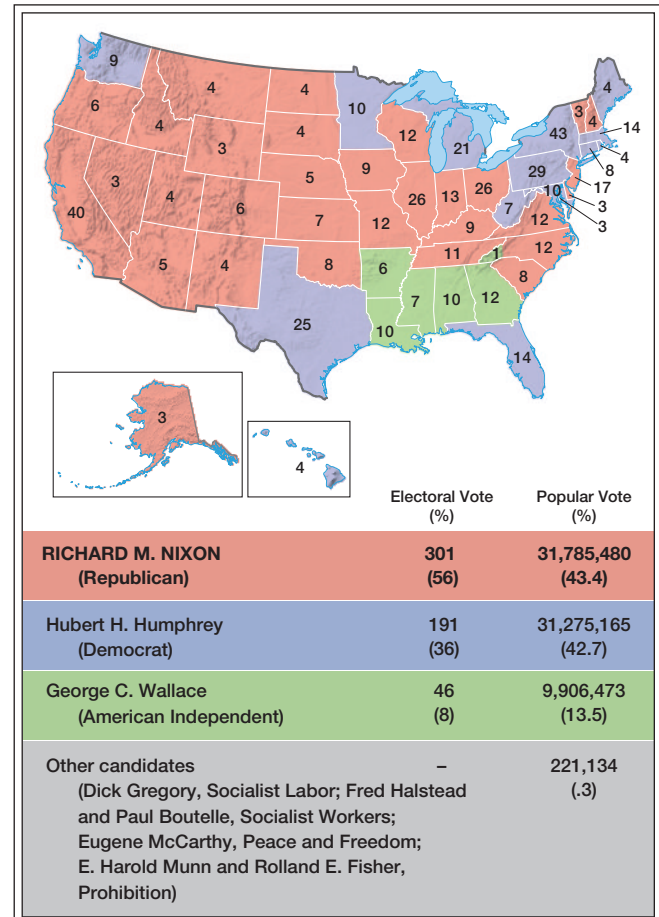
The Nixon-Agnew team squeaked to victory, capturing the popular vote by the slim margin of 43.6 percent to Democrat Hubert Humphrey and Maine senator Edmund Muskie's 42.7 percent but taking nearly all the West's electoral votes. Bitterly divided by the campaign, the Democrats would remain out of presidential contention for over two decades, except when the Republicans suffered scandal and disgrace. The Republicans in 1968 had paved the way for the conservative ascendancy.

NIXON'S WAR

Nixon promised to bring "peace with honor." Yet, despite this pledge, the Vietnam War raged for four more years before a peace settlement was reached (see Figure 29-4).

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MAP 29-4

The Election of 1968 Although the Republican Nixon-Agnew team won the popular vote by only a small margin, the Democrats lost in most of the northern states that had voted Democratic since the days of FDR. Segregationist Governor George Wallace of Alabama polled more than 9 million votes.

WHAT WERE the most important factors in Nixon's victory in 1968?

AP* Guideline 26.2

In view of the developments since we entered the fighting in Vietnam, do you think the United States made a mistake sending troops to fight in Vietnam?

Yes	52%
No	39
No opinion	9

Interviewing Date 1/22-28/1969, Survey #774-K,
Question #6/Index #45

FIGURE 29-4

Public Opinion on the War in Vietnam By 1969 Americans were sharply divided in their assessments of the progress of the war and peace negotiations. The American Institute of Public Opinion, founded in 1935 by George Gallup, charted a growing dissatisfaction with the war in Vietnam.

The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-74 (New York: Random House, 1974), p. 2189.

QUICK REVIEW

The Nixon Doctrine

- ◆ Nixon responded to antiwar protesters by reducing the role of U.S. ground forces in Vietnam.
- ◆ “Vietnamization”: The withdrawal of U.S. troops as fast as possible without undermining the South Vietnamese government.
- ◆ The Nixon Doctrine substituted weapons and money for troops.

In this excerpt, President Richard Nixon publicly explains his policy of “Vietnamization” and the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

We have adopted a plan which we have worked out in cooperation with the South Vietnamese for the complete withdrawal of all U.S. combat ground forces and their replacement by South Vietnamese forces on an orderly scheduled timetable. This withdrawal will be made from strength and not from weakness. As South Vietnamese forces become stronger, the rate of American withdrawal can become greater . . .

Much of the responsibility for the prolonged conflict rested with Henry A. Kissinger. A dominating personality on the National Security Council, Kissinger insisted that the United States could not retain its global leadership by appearing weak to either allies or enemies. Brilliant and ruthless, Kissinger helped Nixon centralize foreign policymaking in the White House. Together, they overpowered those members of the State Department who had concluded that the majority of Americans no longer supported the war (see Figure 29-5).

In public Nixon followed a policy of “Vietnamization.” On May 14, 1969, he announced that the time was approaching “when the South Vietnamese . . . will be able to take over some of the fighting.” During the next several months, he ordered the withdrawal of 60,000 U.S. troops. Hoping to placate public opinion, Nixon also intended to “demonstrate to Hanoi that we were serious in seeking a diplomatic settlement.” In private, with Kissinger’s guidance, Nixon mulled over the option of a “knockout blow” to the North Vietnamese.

On April 30, 1970, Nixon made one of the most controversial decisions of his presidency. Without seeking congressional approval, he ordered U.S. troops to invade the tiny nation of Cambodia. Nixon had hoped in this way to end North Vietnamese infiltration into the South, but he had also decided to live up to what he privately called his “wild man” or “mad bomber” reputation. The enemy would be unable to anticipate the location or severity of the next U.S. strike, Nixon reasoned, and would thus feel compelled to negotiate.

Nixon could not have predicted the outpouring of protest that followed the invasion of Cambodia. The largest series of demonstrations and police-student confrontations in the nation’s history took place on campuses and in city streets. At Kent State University in Ohio, twenty-eight National Guardsmen apparently panicked, shooting into an unarmed crowd of about 200 students, killing four and wounding nine. Ten days later, on May 14, at Jackson State University, a black school in Mississippi, state troopers entered a campus dormitory and began shooting wildly, killing two students and wounding twelve others. Demonstrations broke out on fifty campuses.

The nation was shocked. Thirty-seven college and university presidents signed a letter calling on the president to end the war. A few weeks later the Senate adopted a bipartisan resolution outlawing the use of funds for U.S. military operations in Cambodia, starting July 1, 1970. Although the House rejected the resolution, Nixon saw the writing on the wall. He had planned to negotiate a simultaneous withdrawal of North Vietnamese and U.S. troops, but he could no longer afford to hold out for this condition.

The president, still goaded by Kissinger, did not accept defeat easily. In February 1971 Nixon directed the South Vietnamese army to invade Laos and cut supply lines, but the demoralized invading force suffered a quick and humiliating defeat. Faced with enemy occupation of more and more territory during a major offensive in April 1972, Nixon ordered the mining of North Vietnamese harbors and directed B-52s to conduct massively destructive bombing missions in Cambodia and North Vietnam.

Nixon also sent Kissinger to Paris for secret negotiations with delegates from North Vietnam. They agreed to a cease-fire specifying the withdrawal of all U.S. troops and the return of all U.S. prisoners of war. Knowing these terms ensured defeat, South Vietnam’s president refused to sign the agreement. On Christmas Day 1972, hoping for a better negotiating position, Nixon ordered one final wave of bomb attacks on North Vietnam’s cities. To secure a halt to the bombing, the North Vietnamese offered to resume negotiations. But the terms of the Paris Peace Agreement, signed by North Vietnam and the United States in January 1973, differed little from the settlement Nixon could have procured in 1969, costing hundreds of thousands of deaths that

might have been prevented. Beginning in March 1973, the withdrawal of U.S. troops left the outcome of the war a foregone conclusion. By December of that year only fifty American military personnel remained, and the government of South Vietnam had no future.

In April 1975 North Vietnamese troops took over Saigon, and the Communist-led Democratic Republic of Vietnam soon united the small nation. The war was finally over. It had cost the United States 58,000 lives and \$150 billion. The country had not only failed to achieve its stated war goal but had lost an important post in Southeast Asia. Equally important, the policy of containment introduced by President Truman had proved impossible to sustain.

While Nixon was maneuvering to bring about “peace with honor,” the chilling crimes of war had already begun to haunt Americans. In 1971 the army court-martialed a young lieutenant, William L. Calley Jr. for the murder of “at least” twenty-two Vietnamese civilians during a 1968 search-and-destroy mission subsequently known as the **My Lai Massacre**. Calley’s platoon had destroyed a village and slaughtered more than 350 unarmed South Vietnamese, raping and beating many of the women before killing them. “My Lai was not an isolated incident,” one veteran attested, but “only a minor step beyond the standard official United States policy in Indochina.” Commander of the platoon at My Lai, Calley was first sentenced to life imprisonment before being given a reduced term of ten years. The secretary of the army paroled Calley after he served three years under house arrest in his apartment.

“THE CHINA CARD”

Apart from Vietnam, Nixon’s foreign policy defied the expectations of liberals and conservatives alike. Actually, he followed traditions of previous Republican moderates such as Herbert Hoover and Dwight Eisenhower, who had so effectively “proved” their anticommunism that they could conciliate international foes without undermining their popularity at home. Nixon added a new page, however—a policy of détente that replaced U.S.–Soviet bipolarity with multilateral relations. Nixon could cultivate relations with the People’s Republic of China, a rising world power more rigidly Communist than the Soviet Union, to form an alliance against the Soviet Union. And he could easily persuade the Soviet Union to cooperate on trade agreements, thus limiting the two nations’ ruthless competition to control governments in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Opponents of the Vietnam War accused Nixon of double dealing, while conservatives howled at any compromise with Communist governments. But Nixon persisted in his plans, anticipating an end to the cold war on American terms.

Playing the “China card” was the most dramatic of the president’s moves. Early in his political career Nixon had avidly supported the archconservative China lobby. But as president he considered the People’s Republic of China too important to be isolated by the West and too obviously hostile to the Soviet Union to be discounted as a potential ally.

“Ping-pong diplomacy” began in April 1971, when the Chinese hosted a table tennis team from the United States. Henry Kissinger embarked on a secret mission a few months later. Finally, in February 1972, Richard and Pat Nixon flew to Beijing, where they were greeted by foreign minister Zhou Enlai and a band playing “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

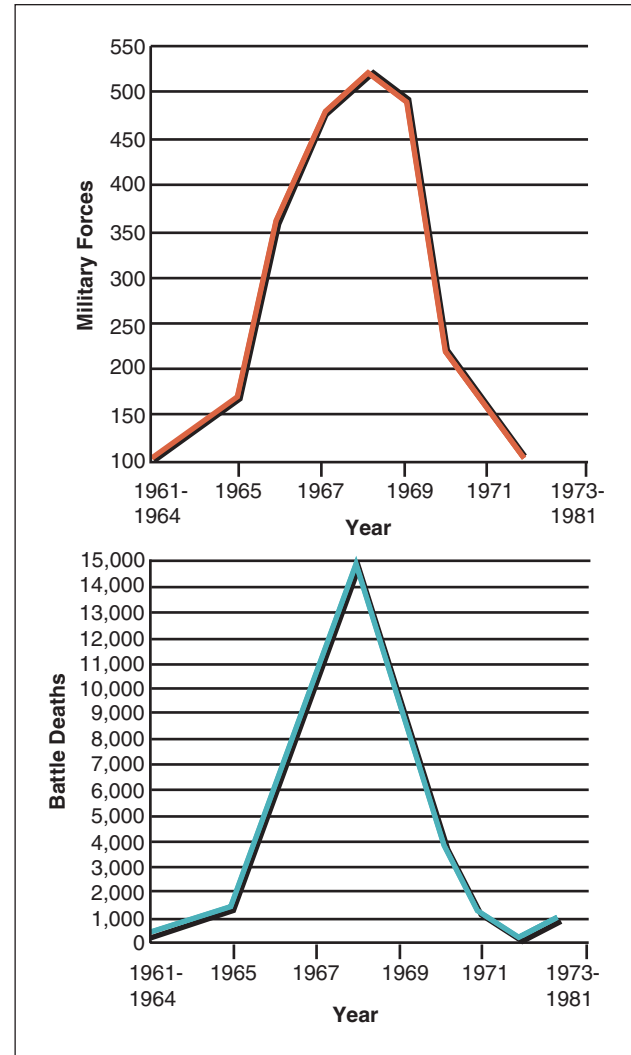


FIGURE 29-5
U.S. Military Forces in Vietnam and Casualties, 1961–81 The U.S. government estimated battle deaths between 1969 and 1973 for South Vietnamese troops at 107,504 and North Vietnamese and Vietcong at more than a half-million. Although the United States suffered fewer deaths, the cost was enormous.

U.S. Department of Defense, *Selected Manpower Statistics*, annual and unpublished data; beginning 1981, National Archives and Records Service, “Combat Area Casualty File” (3-330-80-3).



Richard Nixon, Peace With Honor (1973)



Guideline 25.4

My Lai Massacre Killing of twenty-two Vietnamese civilians by U.S. forces during a 1968 search-and-destroy mission.



On Monday, May 4, 1970, after a weekend of antiwar demonstrations against the invasion of Cambodia, Ohio National Guardsmen fired 67 bullets into a crowd of students, killing four and wounding nine others on the campus of Kent State University. As news of the killings spread, students at hundreds of colleges and universities turned out in mass demonstrations to protest widening the war in Southeast Asia and the increasing violence on campus. Approximately 5 million students joined the national student strike, boycotting classes for the remainder of the week. As news of the Kent State “massacre” spread to Vietnam, some U.S. troops refused orders to invade Cambodia; others wore black armbands to demonstrate their solidarity with students at home.

Getty Images Inc./Hulton Archive Photos.

Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty Treaty signed in 1972 by the United States and the Soviet Union to slow the nuclear arms race.

Environmental Protection Agency Federal agency created in 1970 to oversee environmental monitoring and cleanup programs.

It was a momentous and surprising event, one that marked a new era in East–West diplomacy. Nixon claimed that he had succeeded in bridging “16,000 miles and twenty-two years of hostility.” The president’s move successfully increased diplomatic pressure on the Soviet Union but simultaneously weakened the Nationalist Chinese government in Taiwan, which now slipped into virtual diplomatic obscurity.

Next the president went to Moscow to negotiate with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, who was anxious about U.S. involvement with China and eager for economic assistance. Declaring, “There must be room in this world for two great nations with different systems to live together and work together,” Nixon offered to sell \$1 billion of grain to the Soviets. Winning the favor of American wheat farmers, this deal simultaneously relieved U.S. trade deficits and crop surpluses. Afterward, the Soviet leader became visibly more cautious about supporting revolutions in the third world.

Nixon also completed negotiations of the **Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT, known later as SALT I)**. A limited measure, SALT I represented the first success at strategic arms control since the opening of the cold war and a major public relations victory for the leaders of the two superpowers.

Nixon’s last major diplomatic foray proved far less effective. The president sent Kissinger on a two-year mission of “shuttle diplomacy” to mediate Israeli–Arab disputes, to ensure the continued flow of oil, and to increase lucrative U.S. arms sales to Arab countries. The Egyptians and Israelis agreed to a cease-fire in their October 1973 Yom Kippur War, but little progress toward peace in the area was achieved.

DOMESTIC POLICY

Nixon deeply desired to restore order in American society. “We live in a deeply troubled and profoundly unsettled time,” he noted. “Drugs, crime, campus revolts, racial discord, draft resistance—on every hand we find old standards violated, old values discarded.” Despite his hostility to liberalism, however, Nixon had some surprises for conservatives. Determined to win reelection in 1972, he supported new Social Security benefits and subsidized housing for the poor and oversaw the creation of the **Environmental Protection Agency** and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Most notable was his support, under the guidance of Democratic adviser Daniel P. Moynihan, for the Family Assistance Plan, which proposed a minimal income for the poor in place of welfare benefits. Conservatives judged the plan too generous while liberals found it inadequate. Moreover, the plan was expensive. Bipartisan opposition ultimately killed the bill.

Nixon also embraced a policy of fiscal liberalism. Early in 1971 he accepted the idea of deficit spending. Later that year he ordered a first: he took the nation off the gold standard. Subsequently, the dollar’s value would float on the world market rather than being tied to the value of gold. His ninety-day freeze on wages, rents, and prices, designed to halt the inflation caused by the massive spending on the Vietnam War, also closely resembled Democratic policies. Finally, Nixon’s support of “black capitalism”—adjustments or quotas favoring minority contractors

in construction projects—created an explosive precedent for “set-aside” programs later blamed on liberals.

Nixon lined up with conservatives, however, on most civil rights issues and thus enlarged southern Republican constituencies. He accepted the principle of school integration but rejected the busing programs required to implement racial balance. His nominees to the Supreme Court were far more conservative than those appointed by Eisenhower. Warren E. Burger, who replaced Chief Justice Earl Warren, steered the Court away from the liberal direction it had taken since the 1950s.

One of the most newsworthy events of Nixon’s administration was a distant result of President Kennedy’s determination to outshine the Soviets in outer space (see Chapter 27). On July 21, 1969, the lunar module of Apollo 11 descended to the moon’s Sea of Tranquility. As millions watched on television, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin stepped out to plant an American flag and to bear the message, “We came in peace for all mankind.”

WATERGATE


At times Richard Nixon expressed his yearning for approval in strange ways. A few days after the bombing of Cambodia in May 1970, he wandered out of the White House alone at 5:00 in the morning to talk to antiwar demonstrators. He tried to engage them in small talk about football and pleaded, “I know that probably most of you think I’m an SOB, but I want you to know I understand just how you feel.” According to H. R. Haldeman, one of Nixon’s closest advisers, the student killings at Kent State deeply troubled the president.

Yet only a few months later Nixon ordered illegal wiretaps of news professionals. He also reaffirmed his support of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) surveillance of U.S. citizens and organizations—a policy specifically forbidden by the CIA charter—and encouraged members of his administration to spy on Democrats planning for the 1972 election campaign. When news of these illegal activities surfaced, one of the most canny politicians in American history found himself the first president since Andrew Johnson to face the likelihood of impeachment proceedings.

FOREIGN POLICY AS CONSPIRACY

Nixon’s conduct of foreign policy offered early clues into his political character. Although he had welcomed the publicity surrounding his historic moves toward détente with the Soviet Union and normalized relations with China, Nixon generally handled the nation’s foreign affairs in surreptitious fashion. But as opposition to the Vietnam War mounted in Congress, he began to face hard questions about this practice. As early as 1970, Republicans as well as Democrats had condemned covert operations in foreign countries. In response, the president, the Department of State, and the CIA developed plans to tighten security even further. Nixon issued a tough mandate against all leaks of information by government personnel, news specialists, or politicians.

At the time, apart from the highly publicized tour to China, Nixon revealed little about his policy for other parts of the globe. Unknown to most Americans, he accelerated the delivery of arms supplies to foreign dictators, including the shah of Iran, Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines, and the regime of Pieter William Botha in South Africa. His CIA assistants trained and aided SAVAK, the Iranian secret police force notorious for torturing political dissidents. They also stood behind the



In this excerpt, Leone Keegan, an undergraduate student at Kent State University in Ohio, recalls the dramatic events of campus protest against the war of Vietnam, which included the killing of four students by armed National Guard.

“There’s no class this morning. It’s been canceled.” I said, “Why?” “Because there’s been a bomb threat in this building.” So I went back to my apartment that morning . . . A couple of hours later I woke up to the sound of gunfire. It sounded like—you know, when you sit in your backyard and fireworks are going off on the Fourth of July? . . . There was a shooting on the commons, people were killed.

WHY DID Richard Nixon enjoy such a huge electoral victory in 1972, and what led to his sudden downfall?

[Lecture Suggestion 29.3, Watergate](#)

[Class Discussion Question 29.5](#)

Map 29-4

In the 1968 presidential election, Richard Nixon capitalized on voter hostility toward youthful protesters and the counterculture. He claimed to represent the “silent majority”—the law-abiding Americans who did not protest or demonstrate and who loved their country. Republican strategists recognized the growing importance of the Sunbelt, where populations grew with the rise of high-tech industries and retirement communities. These areas were dominated by conservatism, and Nixon appealed directly to those voters. Throughout the country, the 1968 election underscored the antiliberal sentiment of the voting public, paving the way to the conservative ascendancy.

South African government in its effort to curtail the activities of the antiapartheid African National Congress. In Latin America, Nixon provided financial assistance and military aid to repressive regimes such as that of Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua, notorious for its blatant corruption and repeated violations of human rights.

Still more controversial was Nixon's plan to overthrow the legally elected socialist government of Salvador Allende in Chile. With the assistance of nongovernment agencies, such as the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development, the CIA destabilized the regime by funding right-wing parties, launching demonstrations, and preparing the Chilean army for a coup. In September 1973, a military junta killed President Allende and captured, tortured, or murdered thousands of his supporters. Nixon and Kissinger warmly welcomed the new ruler, Augusto Pinochet, granting him financial assistance to restabilize the country.

Toward the end of Nixon's term, members of Congress who had been briefed on these policies began to break silence, and reports of clandestine operations flooded the media. Several former CIA agents issued anguished confessions of their activities in other countries. More troubling to Nixon, in spite of all his efforts the United States continued to lose ground as a superpower.

THE AGE OF DIRTY TRICKS

As Nixon approached the 1972 reelection campaign, he tightened his inner circle of White House staff who assisted him in withholding information from the public, discrediting critics, and engaging in assorted "dirty tricks." Circle members solicited illegal contributions for the campaign and laundered the money through Mexican bank accounts. They also formed a secret squad, "the plumbers," to halt the troublesome leaks of information. This team, headed by former CIA agent E. Howard Hunt and former FBI agent G. Gordon Liddy, assisted in conspiracy at the highest levels of government.

The first person on the squad's "hit list" was Daniel Ellsberg, a former researcher with the Department of Defense, who in 1971 had turned over to the press secret documents outlining the military history of American involvement in Vietnam. The so-called **Pentagon Papers** exposed the role of presidents and military leaders in deceiving the public and Congress about the conduct of the United States in Southeast Asia. Nixon sought to bar publication by *The New York Times*, but the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the newspaper on the basis of the First Amendment. Within weeks, a complete version of the Pentagon Papers became a best-selling book, and in 1972 *The New York Times* won a Pulitzer Prize for the series of articles. Frustrated in his attempt to suppress the report, Nixon directed the Department of Justice to prosecute Ellsberg on charges of conspiracy, espionage, and theft. Meanwhile, Hunt and Liddy, seeking to discredit Ellsberg, broke into the office of his former psychiatrist. They found nothing that would make their target less heroic in the eyes of an increasingly skeptical public, and by 1973 the charges against Ellsberg were dropped after the Nixon administration itself stood guilty of misconduct.

At the same time, Nixon ran a skillful negative campaign charging George McGovern, the liberal Democrat who had won his party's nomination on the first ballot, with supporting "abortion, acid [LSD], and amnesty" for those who had resisted the draft or deserted the armed forces. The Republicans also informed the news media that McGovern's running mate, Senator Thomas Eagleton, had once undergone electric shock therapy for depression, thus forcing his resignation from the Democratic team. Voter turnout fell to an all-time low, and McGovern lost every state

QUICK REVIEW

Dirty Tricks

- ◆ Inner circle aided Nixon in attacks on political enemies.
- ◆ Secret group known as the "plumbers" worked to halt leaks to the public.
- ◆ Installed listening devices in Democratic headquarters in Watergate building.

Pentagon Papers Classified Defense Department documents on the history of the United States' involvement in Vietnam, prepared in 1968 and leaked to the press in 1971.

but Massachusetts. (Later, when Nixon faced disgrace, bumper stickers appeared reading, “Don’t Blame Me, I’m from Massachusetts.”)

The Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP) enjoyed a huge war chest and spent a good portion on dirty tricks designed to divide the Democrats and discredit them in the eyes of the voting public. The most ambitious plan—wiretapping the Democratic National Committee headquarters—backfired.

On June 17, 1972, a security team had tripped up a group of intruders hired by CREEP to install listening devices in the Washington, D.C., Watergate apartment and office complex where the Democrats were headquartered. The police arrested five men, who were later found guilty of conspiracy and burglary. Although Nixon disclaimed any knowledge of the plan, two *Washington Post* reporters, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, followed a trail of evidence back to the nation’s highest office.

Televised Senate hearings opened to public view more than a pattern of presidential wrongdoing: they showed an attempt to impede investigations of the **Watergate** case. Testifying before the committee, a former Nixon aide revealed the existence of secret tape recordings of conversations held in the Oval Office. After special prosecutor Archibald Cox refused to allow Nixon to claim executive privilege and withhold the tapes, the president ordered Cox fired. This “Saturday Night Massacre,” as it came to be called, further tarnished Nixon’s reputation and swelled curiosity about the tapes. On June 24, 1974, the Supreme Court voted unanimously that Nixon had to release the tapes to a new special prosecutor, Leon Jaworski.

THE FALL OF THE EXECUTIVE

Although incomplete, the Watergate tapes proved damning. They documented Nixon’s ravings against his enemies, including anti-Semitic slurs, and his conniving

Watergate A complex scandal involving attempts to cover up illegal actions taken by administration officials and leading to the resignation of President Richard Nixon in 1974.

Richard Nixon bid a final farewell to his White House staff as he left Washington, D.C. on August 9, 1974. The first president to resign from office, Nixon had become so entangled in the Watergate scandal that his impeachment appeared certain. He was succeeded by Vice-President Gerald Ford. After taking the oath of office later that day, President Ford remarked that the wounds of Watergate were “more painful and more poisonous than those of foreign wars.”
CORBIS- NY.



efforts to harass private citizens through federal agencies. The tapes also proved that Nixon had not only known about plans to cover up the Watergate break-in but had ordered it. The news media enjoyed a field day with the revelations. In July 1974, the House Judiciary Committee adopted three articles of impeachment, charging Nixon with obstructing justice.

Charges of executive criminality had clouded the Nixon administration since his vice president had resigned in disgrace. In 1972 Spiro Agnew had admitted accepting large kickbacks while serving as governor of Maryland. Pleading no contest to this and to charges of federal income tax evasion, Agnew had resigned



House Judiciary Committee,
Conclusion on Impeachment
Resolution (1974)

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1964 President Lyndon Johnson calls for “an unconditional war on poverty” in his state of the union address</p> <p>Tonkin Gulf resolution</p> <p>The Economic Opportunity Act establishes the Office of Economic Opportunity</p> <p>Free speech movement gets under way at University of California at Berkeley</p> <p>Johnson defeats conservative Barry Goldwater for president</p> | <p>Richard Nixon elected president</p> <p>American Indian Movement (AIM) founded</p> |
| <p>1965 President Johnson authorizes Operation Rolling Thunder, the bombing of North Vietnam</p> <p>Teach-ins begin on college campuses</p> <p>First major march on Washington for peace is organized</p> <p>Watts uprising begins a wave of rebellions in black communities</p> | <p>1969 Woodstock music festival marks the high tide of the counterculture</p> <p>Stonewall Riot in Greenwich Village sparks the gay liberation movement</p> <p><i>Apollo 11</i> lands on the moon</p> |
| <p>1966 J. William Fulbright publishes <i>The Arrogance of Power</i></p> <p>Black Panther Party is formed</p> <p>National Organization for Women (NOW) is formed</p> | <p>1970 U.S. incursion into Cambodia sparks campus demonstrations; students killed at Kent State and Jackson State universities</p> <p>Women’s Strike for Equality marks the fiftieth anniversary of the woman suffrage amendment</p> |
| <p>1967 Antiwar rally in New York City draws 300,000</p> <p>Vietnam Veterans against the War is formed</p> <p>Uprisings in Newark, Detroit, and other cities</p> <p>Hippie “Summer of Love”</p> | <p>1971 Lieutenant William Calley Jr. court-martialed for My Lai Massacre</p> <p><i>The New York Times</i> starts publishing the Pentagon Papers</p> |
| <p>1968 U.S. ground troop levels in Vietnam number 500,000</p> <p>Tet Offensive in Vietnam, followed by international protests against U.S. policies</p> <p>Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated; riots break out in more than 100 cities</p> <p>Vietnam peace talks begin in Paris</p> <p>Robert Kennedy is assassinated</p> <p>Democratic National Convention, held in Chicago, nominates Hubert Humphrey; “police riot” against protesters</p> | <p>1972 Nixon visits China and Soviet Union</p> <p>SALT I limits offensive intercontinental ballistic missiles</p> <p>Intruders attempting to “bug” Democratic headquarters in the Watergate complex are arrested</p> <p>Nixon is reelected in a landslide</p> <p>Nixon orders Christmas Day bombing of North Vietnam</p> |
| | <p>1973 Paris Peace Agreement ends war in Vietnam</p> <p>FBI seizes Indian occupants of Wounded Knee, South Dakota</p> <p>Watergate burglars tried; congressional hearings on Watergate</p> <p>CIA destabilizes elected Chilean government, which is overthrown</p> <p>Vice President Spiro T. Agnew resigns</p> |
| | <p>1974 House Judiciary Committee adopts articles of impeachment against Nixon</p> <p>Nixon resigns the presidency</p> |

Kim Phuc, Fleeing a Napalm Attack near Trang Bang

In 1972, during the phase of the war termed “Vietnamization,” South Vietnamese aircraft bombed the village of Trang Bang, about twenty-five miles from Saigon. They were attacking North Vietnamese and Vietcong fighters but mistakenly targeted a Buddhist pagoda. The incendiary bombs contained black, oily napalm that burned the villagers gathered there.

News photographer Nick Ut had been assigned to meet up with the South Vietnamese army at Trang Bang. “When we [the reporters] moved closer to the village we saw the first people running,” he recalled in 1999. “I thought ‘Oh my God’ when I suddenly saw a woman with her left leg badly burned by napalm. Then came a woman carrying a baby, who died, then another woman carrying a small child with its skin coming off. When I took a picture of them I heard a child screaming and saw that young girl who had pulled off all her burning clothes. She yelled to her brother on her left. Just before the napalm was dropped sol-

diers [of the South Vietnamese Army] had yelled to the children to run but there wasn’t enough time.”

Ut, who took the severely burned girl to the hospital before delivering his film, won a Pulitzer Prize for the photograph. ■

WHAT DOES this photograph suggest about the role of the news media during the Vietnam war? In focusing on civilians, what does Nick Ut’s photograph suggest about the course of the war?



Nick Ut/AP Wide World Photos.

from office in October 1973. Gerald Ford, a moderate Republican representative from Michigan, had replaced him and now stood in the wings while the president's drama unfolded.

Facing certain impeachment by the House of Representatives, Richard Nixon became, on August 9, 1974, the first U.S. president to resign from office.

CONCLUSION

The resignations of Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew brought little to relieve the feeling of national exhaustion that attended the Vietnam War. U.S. troops had pulled out of Vietnam in 1973 and the war officially ended in 1975, but bitterness lingered over the unprecedented—and, for many, humiliating—defeat. Moreover, confidence in the government's highest office was severely shaken. The passage of the War Powers Act in 1973, written to compel any future president to seek congressional approval for armed intervention abroad, dramatized both the widespread suspicion of presidential intentions and a yearning for peace. But the positive dream of community that had inspired Johnson, King, and a generation of student activists could not be revived. No other vision took its place.

In 1968 seven prominent antiwar protesters had been brought to trial for allegedly conspiring to disrupt the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Just a few years later, the majority of Americans had concluded that presidents Johnson and Nixon had conspired to do far worse. They had intentionally deceived the public about the nature and fortunes of the war. This moral failure signaled a collapse at the center of the American political system. Since Dwight Eisenhower left office warning of the potential danger embedded in the “military-industrial complex,” no president had survived the presidency with his honor intact. Watergate, then, appeared to cap the politics of the cold war, its revelations only reinforcing futility and cynicism. The United States was left psychologically at war with itself.

Suggested Answer:

Successful essays should note:

- Why African Americans felt disappointed between 1950 and 1970, despite improved voting and civil rights (Figure 29-1, 29-2, 29-3, Map 28-2, and Document A)
- The reaction of the Middle America and Nixon's “silent majority” to the black dissatisfaction of the period (Document A)
- How groups such as AIM, Hispanics, and the women's movement felt concerning the strong focus on the rights and status of African Americans for the previous two decades (Document A)

AP* DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

Directions: This exercise requires you to construct a valid essay that directly addresses the central issues of the following question. You will have to use facts from the documents provided and from the chapter to prove the position you take in your thesis statement.

If the greater portion of social indexes indicates rising prosperity as well as improved social and living conditions between 1950 and 1970, what elements explain the dissatisfaction of the American people during 1965–1974? Choose two of the following groups and evaluate what reactions they had to the events of that period.

- Middle-class youth
- Minorities
- Nixon's “silent majority”

DOCUMENT A

Examine the graphs on pages 1061–1062. Look back at the voting rights map on page 1033 (Chapter 28) and the list of civil rights accomplishments on page 1028 (Chapter 28). These charts clearly demonstrate improvements in the social and living conditions of African Americans during the post-World War II era up to the 1980s.

- *Why would African Americans remain dissatisfied with these results?*
- *Were there other minorities who responded negatively to the Great Society and why?*

DOCUMENT B

Look at the antiwar protesters in the photos on the right. Examine the map of events in Vietnam during the 1960s and 1970s on page 1066. Examine the photos of war protesters on the following page and on page 1071.

- *Why would middle-class college students and African Americans particularly object to the Vietnam War?*
- *In the photo on page 1071 the Brooklyn CORE sign held up by the protester says: “No Vietcong Ever Called Me ‘Nigger’.” What message was that protester attempting to convey?*
- *What was the message of the Black Panthers and the Black Power movement?*

DOCUMENT C

Examine the table on page 1072 of protest movements in the 1960s.

- *What issues motivated these groups? Why were they dissatisfied?*
- *How did each group figure into the general dissatisfaction of this period?*

- *Other minorities who responded negatively to the Great Society and why (Document A)*
- *Why middle-class college students and African Americans particularly objected to the Vietnam War, focusing on the disproportionate numbers of African Americans serving on the front lines in Vietnam (Map 29-2, Image p. 1071, and Document B)*
- *The intended message of the protestor with the Brooklyn CORE sign (Image p. 1071 and Document B)*



Bernie Boston.



Jeffrey Blankfort/Jeroboam, Inc.

- *The message of the Black Panthers and the Black Power movement (Document B)*
- *The issues and motivators that led to the many protest movements in the 1960s and how each protest contributed to the social and political tensions of the period (Overview p. 1072 and Document C)*
- *The philosophy behind the “guns and butter” approach and its successes and failures (Document D)*
- *The reaction of minorities, idealistic middle-class youth, and Nixon’s “silent majority” in response to the “guns and butter” approach (Document D)*



LBJ Library, Photo by Blaine Hamilton Spectator.

DOCUMENT D

President Johnson attempted to continue financial support for his Great Society while at the same time maintaining the costs of the Vietnam War. This was called a “guns and butter” policy and it pleased no one because conservatives believed that domestic programs should be cut during time of war and liberals believed that defense funds were stealing from the needs of the poor.

- How would minorities, idealistic middle-class youth, and Nixon’s “silent majority” react to the conflict in this “guns and butter” approach?

AP*

PREP TEST

Answer Key

1-E	4-A	7-B	10-E	13-B
2-C	5-D	8-A	11-C	14-E
3-B	6-E	9-D	12-A	

Select the response that best answers each question or best completes each sentence.

- The Vietnam War:
 - grew out of the American desire to create a world-wide empire.
 - stemmed from repeated terrorists attacks against U.S. troops overseas.
 - was primarily an extension of the Pacific theater of World War II.
 - marked the first war fought against religious fundamentalists.
 - was rooted in the policy of containment and the Truman Doctrine.
- One result of American policy in Vietnam during the 1960s was:
 - a fairly healthy economy as long as the war lasted.
 - to eliminate funding for the Social Security program.
 - severe economic problems in the United States.
 - a sharp drop in taxes to gain support for the war.
 - a 20 percent surcharge added to individual and corporate taxes.
- The musician who articulated many of the problems facing American society during the 1960s was:
 - Pat Boone.
 - Bob Dylan.
 - Ricky Nelson.
 - Elvis Presley.
 - Paul McCarthy.
- President Lyndon Johnson’s domestic policy attempted to:
 - create a great society and eliminate poverty in the United States.
 - redistribute wealth and make all Americans equal economically.
 - reduce the role of the national government in the United States.
 - undo the reforms that had been enacted during the New Deal.
 - construct an agency to replace the failing Social Security program.
- The phrase “long, hot summers” referred to:
 - the influence of global warming on the environment.
 - the worst drought since the Dust Bowl of the 1930s.
 - the season when most of the fighting occurred in Vietnam.
 - a series of violent urban riots in the mid-1960s.
 - a span of months in which the Soviets threatened nuclear war.
- As a result of the Tet Offensive early in 1968:
 - the American military suffered its worst defeat in history.
 - the United States won the war against North Vietnam.
 - American support of the war in Vietnam dramatically grew.

- d. the United States lost the war being fought in Vietnam.
 - e. American support of the war in Vietnam dropped sharply.
7. In 1968:
- a. the racial and antiwar violence that had characterized the early 1960s came to an end.
 - b. Martin Luther King, Jr. and presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated.
 - c. the success of Lyndon Johnson's programs brought the civil rights movement to an end.
 - d. violent race riots and antiwar demonstrations broke out for the first time in American history.
 - e. President John F. Kennedy and civil rights leader Malcolm X were assassinated.
8. As the 1960s came to an end:
- a. more and more minority groups became increasingly vocal in their demands for civil rights.
 - b. the United States had created the most compassionate and equitable society ever to exist.
 - c. most Americans finally came to realize that the civil rights movement had failed completely.
 - d. racial groups had obtained social equality but other minorities had not improved their lives.
 - e. the racism against African Americans was eradicated as the civil rights movement was completed.
9. The feminist movement:
- a. ensured equality for all American females.
 - b. led to the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.
 - c. did nothing to improve the lives of women.
 - d. failed to unite women across all social lines.
 - e. was the most successful movement in the United States to date.
10. The Mexican-American effort to establish ethnic identity and pride was:
- a. Students for a Democratic Society.
 - b. MAFE (Mexican-Americans For Equality).
 - c. Cinco de Mayo.
 - d. el Grito Hidalgo.
 - e. the Chicano Movement.
11. Between 1965 and 1974:
- a. the various civil rights movements advocated the cultural homogenization of the United States.
 - b. most Americans came to realize that the United States was a true melting pot of different cultures.
 - c. movements for social change highlighted the importance of cultural diversity in the United States.
 - d. a growing awareness of cultural differences broke down all sense of a common identity in America.
 - e. had little if no impact on the cultural diversity or interpretation of long-term American society.
12. The incident that ultimately led to the shooting and killing of six college students in 1970 was the:
- a. American invasion of Cambodia.
 - b. final fall of Saigon and Vietnam.
 - c. institution of a military draft.
 - d. resignation of Spiro Agnew.
 - e. the news of the Tet Offensive.
13. The "Watergate Incident" was:
- a. a rather minor event that the press overemphasized.
 - b. a series of events that led to the downfall of Richard Nixon.
 - c. President Nixon's decision to give up the Panama Canal.
 - d. the first time in history that a president faced impeachment.
 - e. a secret military operation orchestrated by Richard Nixon.
14. By the early 1970s:
- a. Americans took deep pride in creating the Great Society and in winning the war in Vietnam.
 - b. the United States had resolved its domestic problems but not its international challenges.
 - c. the various civil rights movements had finally succeeded in establishing a truly united nation.
 - d. Since Dwight Eisenhower each president has survived his presidency with his honor intact.
 - e. American society seemed to be increasingly characterized by cynicism, division, and futility.