A Time of Upheaval,
1968–1974

Dorothy Burlage grew up in southeast Texas. She learned to be a proper southern belle as well as a self-reliant “frontier woman” who knew how to ride a horse, shoot a gun, and fix a flat tire. Her conservative Southern Baptist parents taught her to believe in the brotherhood of man and also to conform to the conservative values of her community, which was steeped in the lore of its slaveholding past. At the University of Texas she watched with awe as black students her age engaged in a civil-rights struggle she likened to a holy crusade.

Dorothy left the sorority that disapproved of her interest in the civil-rights movement and moved into the university’s only desegregated dormitory. She joined the Christian Faith-and-Life Community, a residential religious study center, where she imbibed a heady brew of liberal Christian existentialism. Its commitment to nonviolence and radical change propelled Burlage into the civil-rights movement and its quest for the “beloved community.” The young activists in SNCC became her political model, their ethos her moral beacon.

Dorothy Burlage attended the founding conference of SDS in 1962. She felt a part of history in the making. It exhilarated her to be together with like-minded idealists from different backgrounds, all eager to create a better world. “It was a rare moment in history and we were blessed to be given that opportunity,” she later recalled. She gloried in being surrounded by peers
who shared her values, who reaffirmed her view of the world, and who validated her activities. Burlage remained involved in the explosive activities of SDS for the rest of the decade, until disillusioned by the constant need to be "more radical and more willing to take risks to prove yourself." Turning away from political agitation, she initially thought the women's movement "frivolous, that there were people who were genuinely poor and people who were genuinely discriminated against because of color. And I didn't see women as such an oppressed class at that time." Later she would, and share their rage.

In 1970, feeling herself "a lost soul," Dorothy decided to go back to school to become a child psychologist. Dissatisfied with radical politics, she turned to providing better care for children and running a counseling center for women. Yet she still rejected the liberal consensus and longed to feel as committed to fundamental change, as engaged in unbridled protest, as she had in the 1960s.

Fiery commitment and engagement would be characteristic of many of Dorothy’s peers, on the right as well as the left. American youth spawned a tumultuous student movement and convulsive counterculture that gave the decade its distinctive aura of upheaval. They exploded the well-kept world of the 1950s, when “nice” girls did not have sex or pursue careers, when African Americans feared to vote or assert themselves. They revived both the left and right. Then, disillusioned with the slow pace of change, many became, and remained, preoccupied with themselves—which unexpectedly transformed the nation.

Richard Nixon was both an agent in and beneficiary of the era’s upheavals and political realignment. He barely won the presidency in 1968, but continuing convulsive events ensured him an overwhelming reelection victory in 1972. Presiding over the most radical changes in American foreign policy since the start of the Cold War, Nixon eschewed ideology and morality in favor of practical, realistic goals. He ended U.S. involvement in Vietnam and inaugurated a period of détente with China and the Soviet Union. But he flouted the very laws he had pledged to uphold, and Nixon’s abuse of power ignited new storms of protest and a constitutional crisis that did not end until he resigned in disgrace in 1974 to avoid impeachment. Nixon’s legacy was the further disillusionment of many citizens and a public disrespect for politics seldom matched in U.S. history.

This chapter focuses on five major questions:

■ In what ways did the furor over the war in Vietnam affect the student movement?
■ What were the main causes and consequences of the politics of upheaval in 1968?
■ What fundamental changes in American foreign policy were made by President Nixon?
■ How did Richard Nixon’s political strategy reflect the racial upheavals and radicalism of this era?
■ What were the main causes of the Watergate scandal?

The Youth Movement

In the 1950s the number of American students pursuing higher education rose from 1 million to 4 million, and the number doubled to 8 million in the 1960s. By then, more than half the U.S. population was under thirty years of age. Their sheer numbers gave the young a collective identity and guaranteed that their actions would have force.

Most baby boomers followed conventional paths in the 1960s. They sought a secure place in the system, not its overthrow. They preferred beer to drugs, and football to political demonstrations. They joined fraternities and sororities and majored in subjects that would equip them for the job market. Whether or not they went to college—and fewer than half did—the vast majority had their eyes fixed on a good salary, a new car, and a traditional family. Many disdained the long-haired protesters and displayed the same bumper stickers as their elders: “My Country—Right or Wrong” and “America-Love It or Leave It.”

Tens of thousands of young people mobilized on the right, joining organizations like Young Americans for Freedom (YAF). These youths idolized Barry Goldwater, not John Kennedy. They supported the war in Vietnam as a necessary part of the long struggle for victory over communism. While many adhered to traditional values, other young conservatives embraced libertarian notions. Yet all student activists, the New Right and the New Left, saw themselves as part of an upheaval that would fundamentally change America.

Toward a New Left

In the 1960s an insurgent minority of liberal arts majors and graduate students got the lion’s share of attention. This liberal-minded minority welcomed the idealism of the civil-rights movement and the rousing call of President Kennedy for service to the nation. They admired the mavericks and outsiders of the fifties: Martin Luther King, Jr.; iconoclastic comedian Mort Sahl; Beat poet Allen Ginsberg; and pop-culture rebel James Dean.
Determined not to be a “silent generation,” sixty students adopted the Port Huron Statement in June 1962. A broad critique of American society and a call for more genuine human relationships, it proclaimed “a new left” and gave birth to the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Inspired by the young black activists, SDS envisioned a nonviolent youth movement transforming the United States into a “participatory democracy” in which individuals would directly control the decisions that affected their lives. SDS assumed that such a system would value love and creativity and would end materialism, militarism, and racism.

The generation of activists who found their agenda in the Port Huron Statement had their eyes opened by the images of police dogs and fire hoses in Birmingham, the assassination of President Kennedy, and the destruction of Vietnam brought so graphically into their homes by television. Most never joined SDS, instead associating with what they vaguely called “the Movement” or “the New Left.” Unlike the Leftists of the 1930s, they rejected Marxist ideology; emulated SNCC’s rhetoric and style; and were radicalized by the rigidity of campus administrators and mainstream liberalism’s inability to achieve swift, fundamental change. Only a radical rejection of compromise and consensus, they presumed, could restructure society along humane and democratic lines.

From Protest to Resistance

Returning from the Mississippi Freedom Summer to the Berkeley campus of the University of California in fall 1964, Mario Savio and other student activists ventured to solicit funds and recruit volunteers near the campus gate, a spot traditionally open to political activities. Prodded by local conservatives, the university suddenly banned such practices. That led Savio to found the Berkeley Free Speech Movement (FSM), a coalition of student groups insisting on the right to campus political activity. Savio claimed that the university served the interests of corporate America and treated students as interchangeable machine parts. He called on students to resist, “There is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick to heart, that you’ve got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels … and you’ve got to make it stop.” More than a thousand students followed Savio into Sproul Hall to stage a sit-in. Their arrests led to more demonstrations and strikes by students holding signs that read “I Am a Student: Do Not Fold, Bend, or Mutilate” and “Shut This Factory Down.”

By 1965 Mario Savio’s call for students to throw their bodies upon “the machine” until it ground to a halt had reverberated on campuses nationwide. Students sat in to halt compulsory ROTC (Reserve Officer’s Training Corps) programs, rallied to protest dress codes and parietal rules, and marched to demand changes in the grading system. They demanded fewer required courses, smaller classes, and teaching-oriented rather than research-oriented professors. They threatened to close down universities unless they admitted more minority students and stopped doing research for the military-industrial complex.

The escalation of the war in Vietnam, and the abolition of automatic student deferments from the draft in
January 1966, turned the Movement into a mass movement. Popularizing the slogan “Make Love—Not War,” SDS organized teach-ins, sponsored antiwar marches and rallies, and harassed campus recruiters for the military and for the Dow Chemical Company, the chief producer of napalm and Agent Orange, chemicals used in Vietnam to burn villages and defoliate forests. While the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (1967) did much to legitimize antiwar activism, SDS leaders encouraged even more provocative acts in 1967. With the rallying cry “From Protest to Resistance,” they supported draft resistance and civil disobedience in selective service centers, and clashed with federal marshals during the “siege of the Pentagon” in October’s “Stop the Draft Week.” At the Spring Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam, which attracted a half-million antiwar protesters to New York’s Central Park, SDS members led the chants of “Burn cards, not people” and “Hell, no, we won’t go!” By 1968 SDS claimed one hundred thousand members on three hundred campus chapters.

That spring saw at least forty thousand students on a hundred campuses demonstrate against war and racism. Most, but not all, stayed peaceful. In April militant Columbia University students shouting “Gym Crow must go” took over the administration building and held a dean captive to denounce the university’s proposed expansion into Harlem to construct a gymnasium for student use only. The protest then expanded into a demonstration against the war and the university’s military research. A thousand students barricaded themselves inside campus buildings, declaring them “revolutionary communes.” Outraged by the harshness of the police who retook the buildings by storm and sent more than a hundred demonstrators to the hospital, the moderate majority of Columbia students joined a boycott of classes that shut down the university and brought the academic year to a premature end. Elsewhere, students in France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, and Mexico rose up to demand reform that year. In Prague, Czechoslovakian students singing Beatles songs battled Soviet tanks.

The highpoint of Movement activism came in mid-1969 with the New Mobilization, a series of huge antiwar demonstrations culminating in mid-November with a March Against Death. Three hundred thousand protesters came to Washington, D.C., to march through a cold rain carrying candles and signs with the names of soldiers killed and villages destroyed in Vietnam. By then, antiwar sentiment pervaded many national institutions, including Congress; and by 1972 it would be dominant. In sharp contrast to the image of apolitical students of the 1950s, youth in the 1960s saw themselves as a political force, able to influence what affected their own lives.

**Kent State—Jackson State**

A storm of violence in the spring of 1970 marked the effective end of the student movement as a political force. On April 30, 1970, Richard M. Nixon, LBJ’s successor, jolted a war-weary nation by announcing that he had ordered U.S. troops to invade Cambodia. Nominally neutral, Cambodia was being used by North Vietnam as a staging area for its troops. Nixon had previously decided to extricate the United States from Vietnam by “Vietnamizing” the ground fighting (that is, using South Vietnamese troops instead of Americans). Students, lulled by periodic announcements of troop withdrawals from Vietnam, now felt betrayed. They exploded in hatred for Nixon and the war.
At Kent State University in Ohio, as elsewhere, student frustrations unleashed new turmoil. Radicals broke windows and tried to firebomb the ROTC building. Nixon branded the protesters “bums,” and his vice president compared them to Nazi storm troopers. Ohio governor James Rhodes slapped martial law on the university. Three thousand National Guardsmen in full battle gear rolled onto the campus in armored personnel carriers.

The day after the guard’s arrival, six hundred Kent State students demonstrated against the Cambodian invasion. Suddenly a campus policeman boomed through a bullhorn, “This assembly is unlawful! This is an order—disperse immediately!” Students shouted back, “Pigs off campus!” Some threw stones. With bayonets fixed, the guardsmen moved toward the rally and laid down a blanket of tear gas. Hundreds of demonstrators and onlookers, choking and weeping, ran from the advancing troops. Guardsmen in Troop G, poorly trained in crowd control, raised their rifles and fired a volley into the retreating crowd. When the shooting stopped, four students lay dead, two of them women merely passing by on their way to lunch.

Ten days later, Mississippi state patrolmen fired into a women’s dormitory at Jackson State College, killing two black students. Nationwide, students reeled from shock and exploded in protest. A wave of student strikes closed down four hundred colleges, many of which had seen no previous unrest. Hundreds of thousands of once-moderate students now identified themselves as “radical or far Left.”

The upheaval polarized the United States. Although most students blamed Nixon for widening the war and applauded the demonstrators’ goals, more Americans blamed the victims for the violence and criticized students for undermining U.S. foreign policy. Both class resentment of privileged college students and a fear of social chaos animated working-class people’s condemnation of protesters. Many Kent townspeople shared the view of a local merchant who asserted that the guard had “made only one mistake—they should have fired sooner and longer.” A local ditty promised, “The score is four, and next time more.”

Legacy of Student Frenzy

The campus disorders after the invasion of Cambodia were the final spasm of a tumultuous movement. When a bomb planted by three antiwar radicals destroyed a
science building at the University of Wisconsin in summer 1970, killing a graduate student, most young people condemned the tactic. With the resumption of classes in the fall, the fad of “streaking”—racing across campus in the nude—more reminiscent of the 1920s than the 1960s, signaled a change in the student mood. Frustrated by their failure to end the war, much less to revolutionize American society, antiwar activists turned to other causes. Some became involved in the women’s and ecology movements. Others sought refuge in mystic cults and rural communes. Many settled into careers and parenthood. A handful of radicals went underground, committing terrorist acts that resulted in government repression of what remained of the antiwar movement. The New Left was finished, a victim of government harassment, its own internal contradictions, and Nixon’s winding down of the Vietnam War.

The consequences of campus upheavals outlived the New Left. Student radicalism spurred the resentment of millions of Americans, helping shatter the liberal consensus. Religious fundamentalists, southern segregationists, and blue-collar workers united in a conservative resurgence. This backlash propelled conservatives like Ronald Reagan to prominence. In 1966 he won California’s governorship by denouncing Berkeley demonstrators and Watts rioters. The actor-turned-politician then won a resounding reelection victory by condemning young radicals. “If it takes a bloodbath, let’s get it over with,” he declared. “No more appeasement!” Conservatives gained office nationwide by sounding the same theme. Images of student radicalism, moreover, would be used to strengthen conservatism’s appeal for the rest of the century.

The New Left had, however, helped mobilize public opposition to the Vietnam War. It energized campuses into a force that the government could not ignore, and it made continued U.S. involvement in Vietnam difficult. The Movement also liberalized many facets of campus life and made university governance less authoritarian. Dress codes and curfews virtually disappeared; ROTC went from a requirement to an elective; minority recruitment increased; and students assisted in shaping their education. History and literature courses began to include the contributions of minorities and women; what would later be called “multiculturalism” emerged.

Some New Left veterans continued their activism into the 1970s, joining the environmental, consumer rights, and antinuclear movements. Female students in the Movement formed the backbone of a women’s liberation movement. These separate movements fell short of the New Left vision of remaking the social and political order. While masses of students could be mobilized in the short run for a particular cause, only a few made long-term commitments to radical politics. The generation that the New Left had hoped to organize as the vanguard of radical change preferred pot to politics, and rock to revolution.

The Counterculture

The alienation and hunger for change that drew some youths into radical politics led many more to cultural rebellion, to focusing on personal rather than political change, to rejecting the prevailing middle-class values, attitudes, and practices. Often called hippies, they dis-
dained regular employment and consumerism, preferring to make what they needed, share it with others, and not want what they did not have. In the second half of the 1960s they joined communes and tribes that glorified liberation from traditional social rules. They rejected monogamy and reason as “hang-ups.” In urban areas such as Seattle’s University District and Atlanta’s Fourteenth Street—“places where you could take a trip without a ticket”—they experimented with drugs and rejected the work ethic, materialism, and inhibited sexuality. In 1969 historian Theodore Roszack called them “a ‘counter culture’: meaning, a culture so radically disaffiliated from the mainstream assumptions of our society that it scarcely looks to many as a culture at all, but takes on the alarming appearance of a barbarian intrusion.”

**Hippies and Drugs**

Illustrative of the gap between the two cultures, one saw marijuana as a “killer weed,” a menace to health and life, and the other thought it a harmless social relaxant. In the absence of scientific evidence that the drug was dangerous, at least half the college students in the late sixties tried marijuana. A minority used hallucinogenic or mind-altering drugs, particularly LSD. The high priest of LSD was Timothy Leary, a former Harvard psychologist fired in 1963 for encouraging students to experiment with drugs—to “tune in, turn on, drop out.” On the West Coast, writer Ken Kesey and his followers, the Merry Pranksters, promoted hallucinogens by conducting “acid tests” (distributing free tablets of LSD in orange juice). They created the “psychedelic” craze of Day-Glo-painted bodies gyrating to electrified rock music under flashing strobe lights to simulate the use of LSD. Musicals like *Hair* (1967) and such films as *Alice’s Restaurant* (1969) depicted “tripping” on drugs as natural and safe.

Influenced by LSD’s reality-bending effects, the counterculture sought a world in which magic and mysticism replaced science and reason, and where competitive individuals became caring and loving. Jim Morrison’s rock group the Doors took inspiration and its name from Aldous Huxley’s paean to hallucinogens, *The Doors of Perception*. Bands like the Jefferson Airplane launched the San Francisco sound of “acid rock,” an electronically dazzling experience of sights and sounds—the perfect marriage of “sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll”—in the mid-1960s.

Distancing themselves from middle-class respectability, youths flaunted outrageous personal styles (“do your own thing”). They showed disdain for consumerism by wearing surplus military clothing, torn jeans, and tie-dyed T-shirts. Citing R. Buckminster Fuller—”There is no such thing as genius; some children are less damaged than others”—they started “free schools” that emphasized student autonomy and curricular experimentation. Young men sported shaggy beards and long hair. Young people saw doing as they pleased as a sign of freedom; their elders saw it as and contempt for social conventions. Typical of the generation that had been schooled in the deprivation and duty of the 1930s and 1940s, Ronald Reagan, then governor of California, defined a hippie as one “who looked like Tarzan, walked like Jane, and smelled like Cheetah.”

**Musical Revolution**

Popular music both echoed and developed a separate generational identity, a distinct youth culture. Early in the 1960s folk music was the vogue on college campuses. Songs protesting war and racism, such as “Where Have All the Flowers Gone?” and “If I Had a Hammer,” mirrored the early decade’s idealism. Bob Dylan sang hopefully of changes “Blowin’ in the Wind” that would transform society. His “The Times They Are a-Changing” proclaimed youth’s impatience in 1964.
That year Beatlemania swept the country. The Beatles offered visions of pleasure and freedom. They embodied playful hedonism. Moving quickly beyond “I Want to Hold Your Hand,” the English group soon gloried in the counterculture’s drugs (“I’d love to turn you on”), sex (“why don’t we do it in the road?”), and radicalism (“you say you want a revolution?”). They would be joined by the aggressively uninhibited Rolling Stones, the Motown rhythm-and-blues beat, and eardrum-shattering acid rockers. A phalanx of young musicians fought for social justice with guitars, their angry songs upbraiding the status quo, energizing the antiwar and racial struggles, and contributing to the upheavals of the 1960s.

In August 1969, four hundred thousand young people gathered for the Woodstock festival in New York’s Catskill Mountains to celebrate their vision of freedom and harmony. For three days and nights they reveled in rock music and openly shared drugs, sexual partners, and contempt for the Establishment. Woodstock became a community. The counterculture heralded the festival as the dawning of an era of love and sharing, the Age of Aquarius.

In fact, the counterculture’s luster had already dimmed. The pilgrimage of “flower children” to the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco (see A Place in Time: Haight-Ashbury) and to New York’s East Village in 1967 brought in its wake a train of rapists and dope peddlers. In December 1969 Charles Manson and his “family” of runaways ritually murdered a pregnant movie actress and four of her friends. Then a Rolling Stones concert at the Altamont Raceway near San Francisco, in which the Hell’s Angels motorcycle gang had been hired for five hundred dollar’s worth of beer to maintain order, deteriorated into a violent melee in which several concertgoers died. In 1970 the Beatles disbanded. On his own, John Lennon sang, “The dream is over. What can I say?”

Advertisers awoke to the economic potential of the youth culture, using “rebellion” and “revolution” to sell cars, cigarettes, and jeans. Many if not most youths moved into conventional jobs and conventional lifestyles, recreational drug use notwithstanding. In films like The Big Chill (1983), cynics concluded that counterculture values were not deeply held. However, the optimistic view of humankind and skeptical view of authority continued to influence American education and society long after the 1960s. Self-fulfillment remained a popular goal, and Americans did not return to the puritanical, repressive sexual standards of the 1950s.

The Sexual Revolution

The counterculture’s “if it feels good, do it” approach to sex fit into the overall atmosphere of greater permissiveness in the 1960s. This shift in attitude and behavior constituted a sexual revolution. Although the AIDS epidemic and the graying of the baby boomers in the late 1980s chilled the ardor of heedless promiscuity, liberalized sexual mores were more publicly accepted than ever before.

Many commentators linked the increase in sexual permissiveness to waning fears of unwanted pregnancy. In 1960 oral contraceptives reached the market, and by 1970 ten million women were taking the Pill. Still other women used the intrauterine device (IUD, later banned as unsafe) or the diaphragm for birth control. Some states legalized abortion. In New York in 1970 one fetus was legally aborted for every two babies born. The Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade (1973) struck down all remaining state laws infringing on a woman’s right to abortion during the first trimester (three months) of pregnancy.

By the end of the 1960s, the Supreme Court had ruled unconstitutional any laws restricting “sexually explicit” art with “redeeming social importance,” and had upheld the right of individuals to own and use pornographic materials in their own homes. Mass culture exploited the new permissiveness. Playboy featured ever-more-explicit erotica, and women’s periodicals encouraged their readers to enjoy recreational sex. The commercial success of films given “R” or “X” ratings led Broadway producers to present plays featuring full-frontal nudity (Hair) and simulated sexual orgies (Oh, Calcutta!). Even television taboos tumbled as network censors allowed blatantly sexual jokes and frank discussions of previously forbidden subjects.

Identifying pornography and obscenity as “a matter of national concern,” in 1967 Congress established a special commission to suggest a plan of attack. Instead, in 1970 the commission recommended the repeal of all obscenity and pornography legislation. By then, most barriers to expressions of sexuality had fallen. A year before, the best-selling novels were Gore Vidal’s Myra Breckenridge (transsexualism) and Philip Roth’s Portnoy’s Complaint (masturbation). The two most popular films were Easy Rider, which romanticized the drug and hippie culture, and Midnight Cowboy, an X-rated movie about homosexuality, male prostitution, and drug dealing that won the Academy Award.

Attitudinal changes brought behavioral changes, and vice versa. The song “D-I-V-O-R-C-E” topped the
charts in 1968, and the practice became as acceptable as premarital sex. The divorce rate rose from 2.2 per thousand in 1960 to 3.5 in 1970, then nearly doubled in the 1970s. Cohabitation—living together without marriage—became thinkable to average middle-class Americans. Experts even touted “open marriage” (in which spouses are free to have sex with other partners) and “swinging” (sexual sharing with other couples) as cures for stale relationships. The use of contraceptives (and to some extent, even of abortion) spread to women of all religious backgrounds, including Roman Catholics, despite the Catholic Church’s stand against “artificial” birth control. The national birthrate plunged steadily throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

Gay Liberation

Stimulated by the other protest movements in the sixties, gay liberation emerged publicly in late June 1969. During a routine raid by New York City police, the homosexual patrons of the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Greenwich Village, unexpectedly fought back. The furor triggered a surge of “gay pride,” a new sense of identity and self-acceptance, and widespread activism. The new Gay Liberation movement that emerged built on the reform-minded Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis, as well as other “homophile” groups interested in ending discrimination and legal oppression. But adherents went far beyond these groups in brazenly asserting their sexual orientation, “We are going to be who we are.”

Supporters of the Gay Liberation Front came primarily from the gay subcultures found in the largest cities. By 1973 some eight hundred openly gay groups were fighting for equal rights for homosexuals, for incorporating lesbianism into the women’s movement, and for removing the stigma of immorality and depravity attached to being gay. That year, they succeeded in getting the American Psychiatric Association to rescind its official view of homosexuality as a mental disorder, and to reclassify it as a normal sexual orientation.

Simultaneously, several cities and states began to broaden their civil-rights statutes to include “sexual orientation” as a protected status, and in 1975 the U.S. Civil Service Commission officially ended its ban on the employment of homosexuals. Millions of gays had “come out,” demanding public acceptance of their sexual identity.

In a few years, the baby boomers had transformed sexual relations as well as gender and racial relations. The institutions of marriage and family were fundamentally altered. Women could have access to birth control, abortion, and an active sex life with or without a male partner. But what some hailed as liberation others bemoaned as moral decay. Offended by the sudden visibility of openly gay men and lesbians and by “topless” bars, X-rated theaters, and “adult” bookstores, many Americans applauded politicians who promised a war on smut. The public association of the counterculture and the sexual revolution with student demonstrations and ghetto riots swelled the tide of conservatism as the decade ended.

1968: THE POLITICS OF UPEHAVAL

The social and cultural upheavals of the late sixties unfolded against a backdrop of frustration with the war in Vietnam and an intensifying political crisis. The stormy events of 1968 would culminate in a tempest of a political campaign and a turbulent realignment in American politics, the first since the New Deal.

The Tet Offensive in Vietnam

In January 1968 liberal Democratic Senator Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota, a critic of the Vietnam War, announced that he would challenge LBJ for the presidential nomination. Experts scoffed that McCarthy had no chance of unseating Johnson, who had won the presidency in 1964 by the largest margin in U.S. history. The last time such an insurgency had been attempted, in 1912, even the charismatic Teddy Roosevelt had failed. Yet McCarthy persisted, determined that at least one Democrat would enter the primaries on an antiwar platform.

Suddenly, on January 31—the first day of Tet, the Vietnamese New Year—America’s hopes for victory in Vietnam exploded, mortally wounding LBJ’s reelection plans. National Liberation Front (NLF) and North Vietnamese forces mounted a huge Tet offensive, attacking more than a hundred South Vietnamese cities and towns and even the U.S. embassy in Saigon (see Map 29.1). U.S. troops repulsed the offensive after a month of ferocious fighting, killing thirty-seven thousand enemy forces and inflicting a major military defeat on the communists.

The media, however, emphasized the staggering number of American casualties and the daring scope of the Tet offensive. Americans at home reacted sharply to the realization that no area of South Vietnam was secure from the enemy, and that a foe that the president had
Bordering Golden Gate Park, the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco became a haven for young people seeking an alternative to the “straight” world in 1965. They were attracted to the two-square-mile area of ornate Victorian homes by the seemingly carefree lifestyle of the artists and “beatniks” who had moved there after being forced out of nearby North Beach. Fittingly, in a city once notorious for its opium dens and whose original name, Yerba Buena, meant “good herb,” Haight-Ashbury emerged as the capital of hippiedom, mainly because of the easy availability of hallucinogenic drugs, which California did not outlaw until late 1966.

A distinctive counterculture developed in “Hashbury,” as some called it. “We used to think of ourselves as little clumps of weirdos,” Janis Joplin blared. “But now we’re a whole new minority group.” The I/Thou Coffee Shop served organic or macrobiotic meals. The Psychedelic Shop sold drug paraphernalia; hippie clothing could be had at the Blushing Peony. The Free Medical Clinic dispensed aid for bad drug trips and venereal diseases. Disciples of the Radha Krishna Temple roamed the streets in flowing orange robes, preaching universal peace and chanting the Hare Krishna. Underground newspapers like *The Oracle* provided commentaries on drugs, politics, mysticism, and rock music.

Local music groups like the Grateful Dead lived
there communally, gave free concerts in the park, played
benefits to legalize marijuana and raise funds for the
Black Panthers, and invited their fans, dubbed Dead
Heads, to tape concerts—withstanding the loss of
record revenues. The Diggers—who took their name
from seventeenth-century English radicals who defined
property owning as theft—distributed free food and
clothing. Many residents shared work, meals, and sex.

Early in 1967 the first Human Be-In at Golden Gate
Park made Haight-Ashbury a focus of media attention.
Seeking to titillate their audiences, reporters and televi-
sion crews dwelled on the twenty thousand “flower chil-
dren” who rang bells, danced ecstatically, and did drugs.
Accounts of the festival played up Timothy Leary’s
preaching of the virtues of LSD, Beat poet Allen
Ginsberg’s chanting of Buddhist mantras, and the
Jefferson Airplane’s “acid rock” music. Soon everyone
was talking about hippies. Time put them on its cover.
About seventy-five thousand runaways, drug addicts,
and bewildered children crowded into the Haight for the
1967 “summer of love.”

“If you’re going to San Francisco,” the song went, “be
sure to wear some flowers in your hair . . . you’re going
to meet some gentle people there.” But close behind
them came gawking tourists, “weekend hippies” looking
for easy sex and exotic drugs, heroin addicts, and a
legion of robbers and rapists. The Haight-Ashbury
denizens’ trust in strangers and faith in love and peace
faded as crime soared, drugs took the lives of rock stars,
and narcotics agents cracked down on abusers. “Love is
the password in the Haight-Ashbury,” observed one
reporter, “but paranoia is the style. Nobody wants to go
to jail.”

“Hashbury” deteriorated into an overcrowded, over-
commercialized slum. In October 1967 a Death of Hippie
ceremony marked its unofficial end as mecca and
haven. Those who could pursued their dream of living a
life of sharing closer to nature on rural communes. Some
were inspired by the Transcendentalists of Brook Farm
or the Rappites of Harmony. Others were influenced by
Robert Rimmer’s novel, The Harrad Experiment or B. F.
Skinner’s Walden Two. Most of the more than two thou-
sand communes in existence by 1970, found, as a disillu-
sioned hippie said, that “we were together at the level of
peace and freedom and love. We fell apart over who
would cook and wash the dishes and pay the bills.” Yet
the Haight-Ashbury ethos lingered, promoting recrea-
tional drug use, popularizing health foods and vegetar-
ianism, influencing rock music, making fashion more
colorful and comfortable, and creating greater tolerance
for alternative lifestyles.
claimed was beaten could initiate such bravado attacks. Many stopped believing reports of battlefield success coming from the White House and doubted that the United States could win the war at an acceptable cost.

After Tet, McCarthy’s criticism of the war won new sympathizers. *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the most influential newspapers published editorials urging a negotiated settlement. NBC news anchorman Frank McGee concluded that “the grand objective—the building of a free nation—is not nearer, but further, from realization.” The nation’s premier newscaster, Walter Cronkite of CBS, observed, “it seems now more certain than ever that the bloody experience of Vietnam is to end in a stalemate.” “If I’ve lost Walter,” President Johnson sighed, “then it’s over. I’ve lost Mr. Average Citizen.” Johnson’s approval

**MAP 29.1**
**The Tet Offensive, January–February 1968**
Although the Tet offensive proved a major tactical defeat for the communists, it effectively undermined American public support for the war.
rating dropped to 35 percent. The number of Americans who described themselves as prowar “hawks” slipped from 62 percent in January to 41 percent in March, while the proportion of antiwar “doves” climbed from 22 percent to 42 percent.

A Shaken President

Beleaguered, Johnson pondered a change in American policy. When the Joint Chiefs of Staff sought 206,000 more men for Vietnam, he turned to old friends for advice. Former secretary of state and venerable Cold Warrior Dean Acheson told the president that “the Joint Chiefs of Staff don’t know what they’re talking about.” Clark Clifford, once a hawk and now secretary of defense, said he was “convinced that the military course we were pursuing was not only endless but hopeless.”

Meanwhile, nearly five thousand college students had dropped their studies to stuff envelopes and ring doorbells for Eugene McCarthy in the New Hampshire primary contest. To be “clean for Gene,” they cut their long hair and dressed conservatively so as not to alienate potential supporters. McCarthy astonished the experts by winning nearly half the popular vote as well as twenty of the twenty-four nominating-convention delegates in a state usually regarded as conservative.

After this upset, twice as many students swarmed to Wisconsin to canvass its more liberal Democratic voters. They expected a resounding McCarthy triumph in the nation’s second primary. Hurriedly, Senator Robert Kennedy, also promising to end the war, entered the Democratic contest on March 16. Projecting Kennedy’s glamor and magnetism, Robert Kennedy was the one candidate whom Johnson feared could deny him renomination. Indeed, millions viewed Kennedy as the rightful heir to the White House. Passionately supported by minorities, the poor, and working-class ethnic whites, Kennedy was described by a columnist as “our first politician for the pariahs, our great national outsider.”

On March 31, exactly three years after the marines had splashed ashore at Danang, Johnson surprised a television audience by announcing a halt to the bombing in North Vietnam. Adding that he wanted to devote all his efforts to the search for peace, LBJ startled listeners when he concluded, “I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your president.” Reluctant to polarize the nation further, LBJ called it quits. “I tried to make it possible for every child of every color to grow up in a nice house, eat a solid breakfast, to attend a decent school and to get a good and lasting job,” he grumbled privately. “But look at what I got instead. Riots in 175 cities. Looting. Burning. Shooting. . . . Young people by the thousands leaving the university, marching in the streets.” He lamented, “The only difference between the [John F.] Kennedy assassination and mine is that I am alive and it has been more tortuous.” Two days later, pounding the final nail into Johnson’s political coffin, McCarthy trounced the president in the Wisconsin primary.

Ignored and often forgotten in retirement, LBJ would die of a heart attack on the same day in January 1973 that the United States signed the Paris Peace Accords that ended America’s direct combat role in the Vietnam War. In many ways a tragic figure, Johnson largely carried out Vietnam policies initiated by his predecessors and received little acclaim for his enduring domestic achievements, especially in civil rights. Although he had often displayed high idealism and generosity of spirit, the enduring images of LBJ remained those of a crude, over-bearing politician with an outsized ego that masked deep insecurities.

Assassinations and Turmoil

On April 4, three days after the Wisconsin primary, Martin Luther King, Jr., was killed in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had gone to support striking sanitation workers. The assassin was James Earl Ray, an escaped convict and white racist. Ray would confess, be found guilty, and then recant, leaving aspects of the killing unclear. Some believed that other conspirators were involved both before and after the assassination. As in the assassination of John Kennedy, it seemed too insignificant that one misfit was alone responsible for murdering such a great man. More people must be involved, many thought, fueling conspiracy theories. What was clear in 1968 was that the greatest national symbol of nonviolent protest and progressive social change was dead.

As the news spread, black ghettos in 125 cities burst into violence. Twenty blocks of Chicago’s West Side went up in flames, and Mayor Richard Daley ordered police to shoot to kill arsonists. In Washington, D.C., under night skies illuminated by seven hundred fires, army units in combat gear set up machine-gun nests outside the Capitol and White House. The rioting left 46 dead, 3,000 injured, and nearly 27,000 in jail—an ironic contrast to King’s dream of reconciliation.

Entering the race as the favorite of the party bosses and labor chieftains, LBJ’s vice president, Hubert Humphrey, turned the Democratic contest for the presidential nomination into a three-cornered scramble.
McCarthy remained the candidate of the “new politics,” a moral crusade against the war directed mainly to affluent, educated liberals. Kennedy campaigned as the tribune of the less privileged, the sole candidate who appealed to white ethnics and the minority poor. He also matched McCarthy’s moral outrage at the war. “Don’t you understand,” Kennedy lectured students, “that what we are doing to the Vietnamese is not very different than what Hitler did to the Jews.” On June 5, 1968, after his victory in the California primary, the brother of the murdered president was himself assassinated by a Palestinian refugee, Sirhan Sirhan, who loathed Kennedy’s pro-Israeli views.

The deaths of King and Kennedy further estranged activists, convinced many people that nonviolent strategies were futile, and made it yet more difficult for the Democrats to unite against the Republicans. No one of national stature could speak effectively across the abyss of race. The dream of peace and justice turned to despair. “I won’t vote,” a youth said. “Every good man we get they kill.” “We shall not overcome” concluded a Kennedy speechwriter. “From this time forward things would get worse, not better. Our best political leaders were part of memory now, not hope.”

Some Democrats turned to third-party candidate George Wallace’s thinly-veiled appeal for white supremacy or to the GOP nominee Richard M. Nixon. The Republican appealed to those disgusted with inner-city riots and antiwar demonstrations. He promised to end the war in Vietnam honorably and to restore “law and order.” Nixon also said he would heed “the voice of the great majority of Americans, the forgotten Americans, the non-shouters, the non-demonstrators, those who do not break the law, people who pay their taxes and go to work, who send their children to school, who go to their churches, . . . who love this country.” Tapping the same wellsprings of anger and frustration, Wallace pitched a fiery message to those fed up with black militants and student protesters. If elected, Wallace vowed to crack down on rioters and “long-hair, pot-smoking, draft-card-burning youth.”

In August 1968 violence outside the Democratic National Convention in Chicago reinforced the appeal of both Wallace and Nixon. Thousands descended on the city to protest the Vietnam War. Some radicals wanted to provoke a confrontation to discredit the Democrats. A handful of anarchistic “Yippies” (the Youth International Party led by counterculture guru Abbie Hoffman) sought to ridicule the political system by threatening to dump LSD in Chicago’s water system and to release greased pigs in the city’s crowded Loop area.

Determined to avoid the rioting that had wracked Chicago after King’s assassination, Mayor Richard Daley gave police a green light to attack “the hippies, the Yippies, and the flippies.” The savagery of the Chicago police fulfilled the radicals’ desire for mass disorder. On August 28, as a huge national television audience looked on and protesters chanted “The whole world is watching,” Daley’s bluecoats randomly clubbed demonstrators, casual bystanders, and television crews filming the melee. The brutality on the streets overshadowed Humphrey’s nomination and tore the Democrats farther apart, fixing Americans’ image of them as the party of dissent and disorder.

**Conservative Resurgence**

Nixon capitalized on the televised turmoil to attract the support of socially conservative white voters. His TV commercials flashed images of campus and ghetto upheavals. He portrayed himself as the candidate of the Silent Majority, “the working Americans who have become forgotten Americans.” He criticized the Supreme Court for safeguarding the rights of criminals and radicals, promised to appoint tough “law and order” judges, vowed to get people off welfare rolls and on payrolls, and asserted that “our schools are for education—not integration.”

Capitalizing on similar resentments, George Wallace raged across the political landscape. He stoked the fury of the working class against welfare mothers, school integrationists, “bearded anarchists, smart-aleck editorial writers, and pointy-headed professors looking down their noses at us.” Promising to keep peace in the streets if it took “thirty thousand troops armed with three-foot bayonets,” he vowed that “if any demonstrator ever lays down in front of my car, it’ll be the last car he’ll ever lie down in front of.”

By September Wallace had climbed to 21 percent in voter-preference polls. Although many shared his views, few believed he had any chance of winning, and either did not vote or switched to his opponents. Still, 14 percent of the electorate—primarily young, lower-middle-class, small-town workers—cast their votes for Wallace.

Nixon and Humphrey split the rest of the vote almost evenly (see Map 29.2). Nixon garnered just 43.4 percent of the popular vote and only 301 electoral votes, the narrowest triumph since Woodrow Wilson’s in 1916. But, with Humphrey receiving just 38 percent of the white vote (12 million votes less than Johnson in 1964) and not even close to half the labor vote, the long-
dominant New Deal coalition was shattered. The 1968 election brought both the inauguration of a new president and the end of the liberal era.

The 57 percent of the electorate who chose Nixon or Wallace would dominate American politics for the rest of the century. While the Democratic party fractured into a welter of contending groups, the Republicans attracted a new majority who lived in the suburbs, the West, and the Sunbelt. The GOP appealed to those most concerned with traditional values, most upset by high taxes, and most opposed to racial integration and special efforts to assist minorities and people on welfare. Of all the states in the South and West, the Democrats would carry only Texas and Washington in 1968, and not a single one four years later. The new conservative coalition looked hopefully to the Republican president to end the Vietnam War and restore social harmony.

**NIXON AND WORLD POLITICS**

A Californian of Quaker origins, Richard Milhous Nixon had worked with the wartime Office of Price Administration before joining the navy. Elected to Congress in 1946, he won prominence for his role in the House Un-Americans Committee investigation of Alger Hiss (see Chapter 26) and advanced to the Senate in 1950 by accusing his Democratic opponent of disloyalty. After two terms as Eisenhower’s vice president, Nixon lost to Kennedy in 1960 and made an unsuccessful 1962 bid for the California governorship, which seemingly ended his political career. But Nixon persevered, campaigned vigorously for GOP candidates in 1966, and won...
his party’s nomination and the presidency in 1968 by promising to restore domestic tranquility.

Nixon focused mainly on foreign affairs. Considering himself a master of realpolitik—a pragmatic approach stressing national interest rather than ethical goals—he sought to check Soviet expansionism and to reduce superpower conflict, to limit the nuclear-arms race and to enhance America’s economic well-being. He planned to get the United States out of Vietnam and into a new era of détente—an easing of tensions—with the communist world. To manage diplomacy, Nixon chose Henry Kissinger, a refugee from Hitler’s Germany and professor of international relations, who shared Nixon’s penchant for secrecy and for the concentration of decision- making power in the White House.

**Vietnamization**

Nixon’s grand design hinged on ending the Vietnam War. It was sapping American military strength, worsening inflation, and thwarting détente. Announcing the Nixon Doctrine in August 1969, the president redefined America’s role in the Third World as that of a helpful partner rather than a military protector. Nations facing communist subversion could count on U.S. support, but they would have to defend themselves. Sales of American military supplies abroad jumped from $1.8 billion to $15.2 billion in the next six years.

The Nixon Doctrine reflected the president’s understanding of the war weariness of both the electorate and the U.S. troops in Vietnam. Johnson’s decision to negotiate rather than escalate had left American troops with the sense that little mattered except survival. Morale plummeted. Discipline collapsed. Army desertions rocketed from twenty-seven thousand in 1967 to seventy-six thousand in 1970, and absent-without-leave (AWOL) rates rose even higher. Racial conflict became commonplace. Drug use soared; the Pentagon estimated that two out of three soldiers in Vietnam were smoking marijuana and that one in three had tried heroin. The army reported hundreds of cases of “fragging,” the assassination of officers and noncommissioned officers by their own troops.

The toll of atrocities against the Vietnamese also mounted. Increasing instances of Americans’ dismembering enemy bodies, torturing captives, and murdering civilians came to light. In March 1968, in the hamlet of My Lai, an army unit led by Lieutenant William Calley massacred several hundred South Vietnamese. The soldiers gang-raped girls, lined up women and children
in ditches and shot them, and burned the village. Revelations of such incidents, and the increasing number of returning soldiers who joined Vietnam Veterans Against the War, undercut the already-diminished support for the war.

Despite pressure to end the war, Nixon claimed that he would not sacrifice U.S. prestige. Seeking “peace with honor,” he acted on three fronts. First was “Vietnamization,” replacing American troops with South Vietnamese. It was hardly a new idea; the French had tried jaunissement or “yellowing” in 1951, and it had not worked. By 1972 the U.S. forces in Vietnam had been reduced to thirty thousand, down from more than half a million when Nixon took office in 1969, and the policy still had not worked. Second, bypassing South Vietnamese leaders who feared that any accord with the communists would doom them, Nixon sent Kissinger to secretly negotiate with North Vietnam’s foreign minister, Le Duc Tho. Third, to force the communists to compromise despite the withdrawal of U.S. combat troops, Nixon escalated the bombing of North Vietnam and secretly ordered air strikes on their supply routes in Cambodia and Laos. He told an aide,

I want the North Vietnamese to believe I’ve reached the point where I might do anything to stop the war. We’ll just slip the word to them that “for God’s sake, you know Nixon is obsessed about communism. We can’t restrain him when he’s angry—and he has his hand on the nuclear button”—and Ho Chi Minh himself will be in Paris in two days begging for peace.

LBJ’s War Becomes Nixon’s War

The secret B-52 raids against Cambodia neither made Hanoi beg for peace nor disrupted communist supply bases. They did, however, undermine the stability of that tiny republic and precipitated a civil war between pro-American and communist factions. In early 1970 North Vietnam increased its infiltration of troops into Cambodia both to aid the Khmer Rouge (Cambodian communists) and to escalate its war in South Vietnam. Nixon ordered a joint U.S.-South Vietnamese incursion into Cambodia at the end of April 1970. The invaders seized large caches of arms and bought time for Vietnamization. But the costs were high. The invasion ended Cambodia’s neutrality, widened the war throughout Indochina, and provoked massive American protests against the war, culminating in the student deaths at Kent State and Jackson State Universities.

In 1971 Nixon combined Vietnamization with renewed blows against the enemy. In February he had South Vietnamese troops invade Laos to destroy communist bases there and to restrict the flow of supplies and men southward from North Vietnam. The South Vietnamese were routed. Emboldened by its success, North Vietnam mounted a major campaign in April 1972—the Easter Offensive—their largest since 1968. Nixon retaliated by mining North Vietnam’s harbors and unleashing B-52s on its major cities. “The bastards have never been bombed like they are going to be bombed this time,” he vowed.

America’s Longest War Ends

The 1972 bombing helped break the impasse in the Paris peace talks, stalemated since 1968. In late October, just days before the 1972 presidential election, Kissinger announced that “peace is at hand.” The cease-fire agreement he had secretly negotiated with Le Duc Tho required the withdrawal of all U.S. troops, provided for the return of American prisoners of war, and allowed North Vietnamese troops to remain in South Vietnam.

Kissinger’s negotiation sealed Nixon’s reelection, but South Vietnam’s President Thieu refused to sign a cease-fire permitting North Vietnamese troops to remain in the South. An angry Le Duc Tho then pressed Kissinger for additional concessions. Nixon again resorted to massive B-52 raids. The 1972 Christmas bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong, the most destructive of the war, roused fierce opposition in Congress and the United Nations, but broke the deadlock. Nixon’s secret reassurance to Thieu that the United States would “respond with full force should the settlement be violated by North Vietnam” ended Saigon’s recalcitrance.

The Paris Accords, signed in late January 1973, essentially restated the terms of the October truce. Nixon and Kissinger knew well that it would not end the war or bring an honorable peace. At best they hoped that the war would remain stalemated until Nixon was safely out of office. The agreement ended hostilities between the United States and North Vietnam, but left unresolved the differences between North and South Vietnam, guaranteeing that Vietnam’s future would yet be settled on the battlefield. Even before the ink on the treaty had dried, both North and South Vietnam, seeking military advantage, began to violate its terms (see Table 29.1).

The war in Vietnam would continue despite fifty-eight thousand American dead, three hundred thousand wounded, and an expenditure of at least $150 billion.
**TABLE 29.1 The Vietnam War: A Chronology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh announces Declaration of Independence from France.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>National Liberation Front (Vietcong) formed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>President John Kennedy markedly increases military aid to South Vietnam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Strategic-hamlet program put in operation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Buddhist protests commence. ARVN coup overthrows and assassinates Diem. 16,000 U.S. military personnel in Vietnam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>United States and South Vietnamese forces join in Cambodian incursion. Student protests force some four hundred colleges and universities to close following Kent State killings. Cooper-Church amendment limits U.S. role in Cambodia. Senate repeals Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. 334,600 U.S. military personnel in Vietnam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>South Vietnam announces new outbreak of war.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Twenty percent of the Americans who served in Vietnam, nearly five hundred thousand, received less-than-honorable discharges—a measure of the desertion rate, drug usage, antiwar sentiment in the military, and immaturity of the troops (the average U.S. soldier in Vietnam was just nineteen years old, seven years younger than the average American GI in World War II).

Virtually all who survived, wrote one marine, returned “as immigrants to a new world. For the culture we had known dissolved while we were in Vietnam, and the culture of combat we lived in so intensely . . . made us aliens when we returned.” Reminders of a war that Americans wished to forget, most veterans were ignored. Other than media attention to their psychological difficulties in readjusting to civilian life, which principally fostered an image of them as disturbed and dangerous, the nation paid little heed to its Vietnam veterans.

Relieved that the long nightmare had ended, most Americans wanted “to put Vietnam behind us” and just forget. The bitterness of many veterans, as of embattled hawks and doves, moderated with time. Few gave much thought to the 2 million casualties and the devastation in Vietnam, or to the suffering in Laos, or the price paid by Cambodia. After the war had spread there, the fanatical Khmer Rouge took power and killed 3 million Cambodians, 40 percent of the population.

“We’ve adjusted too well,” complained Tim O’Brien, a veteran and novelist of the war, in 1980. “Too many of us have lost touch with the horror of war. . . . It would seem that the memories of soldiers should serve, at least in a modest way, as a restraint on national bellicosity. But time and distance erode memory. We adjust, we lose the intensity. I fear that we are back where we started. I wish we were more troubled.”

**Déjà vu**

Disengagement from Vietnam helped Nixon achieve a turnabout in Chinese-American relations and détente with the communist powers. These developments, the most significant shift in U.S. foreign policy since the start of the Cold War, created a new relationship among the United States, the Soviet Union, and China.

Presidents from Truman to Johnson had refused to recognize the People’s Republic of China, allow its admission to the United Nations, or permit American allies to trade with it. But by 1969 a widening Sino-Soviet split made the prospect of improved relations attractive to both Mao Zedong and Nixon. China wanted to end its isolation; the United States wanted to play one communist power off against the other; and both wanted to thwart USSR expansionism in Asia.

In fall 1970 Nixon opened what Kissinger called “the three-dimensional game” by calling China “the People’s Republic” rather than “Red China.” Kissinger began secret negotiations with Beijing, and in mid-1971 Nixon announced that he would go to the People’s Republic “to seek the normalization of relations.” In February 1972
Air Force One landed in China, the first visit ever by a sitting American president to the largest nation in the world. Although differences between the two powers delayed official diplomatic relations until 1979, Nixon’s trip, the Chinese foreign minister said, bridged “the vastest ocean in the world, twenty-five years of no communication.”

Equally significant, Nixon went to Moscow in May 1972 to sign agreements with the Soviets on trade, technological cooperation, and the limitation of nuclear weapons. The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I), ratified by the Senate in October 1972, limited each nation to two antiballistic missile systems, froze each side’s offensive nuclear missiles for five years, and committed both countries to strategic equality rather than nuclear superiority. SALT I reflected the belief that the fear of destruction offered the surest guarantee against nuclear war and that mutual fear could be maintained only if neither side built nationwide missile-defense systems. Although it did not end the arms race, SALT I reduced Soviet-American tensions and, in an election year, enhanced Nixon’s stature.

**Shuttle Diplomacy**

Not even rapprochement with China and détente with the Soviet Union could ensure global stability. The Middle East, in particular, remained an arena of conflict. After the Six-Day War of 1967 in which Israeli forces routed the forces of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria and seized strategic territories from the three nations, the Arab states continued to refuse to negotiate with Israel or to recognize its right to exist. Palestinians, many of them refugees since the creation of Israel in 1948, turned increasingly to the militant Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), which demanded Israel’s destruction.

War exploded again in October 1973 when Egypt and Syria launched surprise attacks against Israel on Yom Kippur, the most sacred Jewish holy day. Only massive shipments of military supplies from the United States enabled a reeling Israel to stop the assault and counterattack. In retaliation, the Arab states launched their biggest weapon, cutting off oil shipments to the United States and its allies. The five-month embargo dramatized U.S. dependence on foreign energy sources. It spawned acute fuel shortages, which spurred coal production in Montana and Wyoming, triggered an oil boom on Alaska’s North Slope, and provided the impetus for constructing more nuclear-power plants. Most immediately, the hike in the price of crude oil from three dollars to more than twelve dollars a barrel sharply intensified inflation.

The dual shocks of the energy crisis and rising Soviet influence in the Arab world spurred Kissinger to engage in “shuttle diplomacy.” Flying from one Middle East capital to another for two years, he negotiated a cease-fire, pressed Israel to cede captured Arab territory, and persuaded the Arabs to end the oil embargo. Although Kissinger’s diplomacy left the Palestinian issue festering, it successfully excluded the Soviets from a major role in Middle Eastern affairs.

To counter Soviet influence, the Nixon administration also supplied arms and assistance to the shah of Iran, the white supremacist regime of South Africa, and President Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines. Nixon-Kissinger realpolitik based American aid on a nation’s willingness to oppose the Soviet Union, not on the nature of its government. Thus, the administration gave aid to antidemocratic regimes in Argentina, Brazil, Nigeria, and South Korea, as well as to Portuguese colonial authorities in Angola.

When Chileans elected a Marxist, Salvador Allende, president in 1970, Nixon secretly funneled $10 million to the CIA to fund opponents of the leftist regime. The United States also cut off economic aid to Chile, blocked banks from granting loans, and pressed the World Bank to lower Chile’s credit rating. In September 1973 a military junta overthrew the Chilean government and killed Allende. Nixon quickly recognized the dictatorship, and economic aid and investment again flowed to Chile.

The administration’s active opposition to Allende reflected the extent to which American policy remained committed to containing communist influence. At the same time, Nixon understood the limits of U.S. power and the changed realities of world affairs. Discarding the model of a bipolar conflict that had shaped American foreign policy since 1945, Nixon took advantage of the Chinese-Soviet rift to improve American relations with both nations. His administration also improved the U.S. position in the Middle East and ended American involvement in Vietnam. The politician who had built his reputation as a hard-line Cold Warrior had initiated a new era of détente.

**Domestic Problems and Divisions**

Richard Nixon yearned to be remembered as an international statesman, but domestic affairs kept intruding. He displayed creativity in seeking to reform the welfare sys-
tem and in grappling with complex economic problems. But the underside of Nixon's personality appealed to the darker recesses of national character and intensified the fears and divisions among Americans.

**Richard Nixon: Man and Politician**

Close observers of Nixon noted the multiple levels of his character. Beneath the calculated public persona hid a shadowy man who rarely revealed himself. Nixon the politician was highly intelligent, yet also displayed the rigid self-control of a man monitoring his own every move. Largely hidden was the insecure Nixon, suspicious and filled with anger. Seething with resentments, he saw life as a series of crises to be met and surmounted. His conviction that enemies lurked everywhere, waiting to destroy him, verged on paranoia. Accordingly, he sought to annihilate, not merely defeat, his partisan enemies, particularly the “eastern liberal establishment” that had long opposed him.

Probing the source of his furies, some viewed him as the classic outsider: reared in pinched surroundings, physically awkward, unable to relate easily to others. Even at the height of national power, Nixon remained fearful that he would never be accepted. At the beginning of his administration, his strengths stood out. He spoke of national reconciliation, took bold initiatives internationally, and dealt with domestic problems responsibly. But the darker side ultimately prevailed and drove him from office in disgrace.

**The Nixon Presidency**

Nixon began his presidency in a moderate manner reminiscent of Eisenhower. Symbolic of this harmonious start, a united nation joined the president in celebrating the first successful manned mission to the moon. On July 21, 1969, the Apollo 11 lunar module, named *Eagle*, descended to the Sea of Tranquillity. As millions watched on television, astronaut Neil Armstrong, the first human to set foot on another celestial body, walked on the moon’s surface and proclaimed, “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.” Americans were proud that the United States had come from behind to win the space race. They thrilled as Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin planted an American flag, collected rock and soil
and more intrusive; under Nixon, the number of pages to the idea of “living lightly on the earth.” Organic gardening, vegetarianism, solar power, recycling, composting, and preventive health care came into vogue, as did zero population growth—the birthrate should not exceed the death rate.

Conservatives grumbled as government grew larger and more intrusive; under Nixon, the number of pages in the Federal Register detailing federal regulations tripled. Race-conscious employment regulations for all federal contractors (including quotas to increase minority access to skilled jobs) displeased them even more. Conservatives grew still angrier when Nixon unveiled the Family Assistance Plan (FAP) in 1969. A bold effort to overhaul the welfare system, FAP proposed a guaranteed minimum annual income for all Americans. Caught between liberals who thought the income inadequate and conservatives who disliked both the cost and the principle of the program, FAP died in the Senate.

**A Troubled Economy**

Nixon inherited the fiscal consequences of President Johnson’s effort to wage the Vietnam War and finance the Great Society—to have both “guns and butter”—by deficit financing. He faced a “whopping” budget deficit of $25 billion in 1969 and an inflation rate of 5 percent (see Figure 29.1). As mounting energy prices threatened worse inflation, Nixon cut government spending and encouraged the Federal Reserve Board to raise interest rates. The result was the first recession since Eisenhower plus inflation, a combination economists called “stagflation” and Democrats termed “Nixonomics.”

Accelerating inflation wiped out some families’ savings and lowered the standard of living of many more. It sparked a wave of strikes as workers sought wage hikes to keep up with the cost of living. It encouraged the wealthy to invest in art and real estate rather than technology and factories. That meant more plant shutdowns, fewer industrial jobs, and millions of displaced workers whose savings were depleted, mortgages foreclosed, and health and pension benefits lost.

Throughout 1971 Nixon lurched from policy to policy in an effort to curb inflation and cure the recession. Early in the year, declaring “I am now a Keynesian,” Nixon increased deficit spending to stimulate the private sector. That resulted in the largest budget deficit since World War II, yet economic decline continued. Then, in mid–1971, Nixon changed course, devaluing the dollar to correct the balance-of-payment deficit and imposing a ninety-day freeze on wages, prices, and rents. This “Band-Aid” gave the economy a shot in the arm that worked until after the 1972 election.

In January 1973, safely reelected, Nixon again reversed course, replacing wage-and-price ceilings with “voluntary restraints” and “guidelines.” Inflation zoomed to 9 percent, then to 12 percent in 1974 as the
Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) boycott quadrupled the price of crude oil (see Figure 29.2). Inflation and sluggish growth would dog the U.S. economy throughout the decade.

**Law and Order**

Despite his public appeals for unity, Nixon hoped to divide the American people in ways that would make him unbeatable in the 1972 election. He understood the appeal of Merle Haggard’s “Okie from Muskogee,” ridiculing “the hippies up in San Francisco” and bragging of drinking “white lightning” instead of doing drugs. He knew that circulation of the *National Review* had more than doubled in the 1960s, and that editor William Buckley’s once-fringe denunciations of the welfare state, campus unrest, black violence, and the radical Left had become mainstream. To outflank George Wallace and win the support of blue-collar workers, southern segregationists, and northern ethnics—voters whom political strategist Kevin Phillips described as “in motion between a Democratic past and a Republican future”—Nixon opposed court-ordered busing and took a tough stand against criminals, drug users, and radicals.

The president used the full resources of the government against militants. The IRS audited their tax returns; the Small Business Administration denied them loans; and the National Security Agency illegally wiretapped them and intercepted their communications. While the FBI worked with local law officials to disrupt and immo-
bilibize the Black Panthers, the CIA illegally investigated and compiled dossiers on thousands of American citizens, and the Justice Department prosecuted antiwar activists and black radicals in highly publicized trials. Nixon himself drew up an “enemies list” of adversaries to be harassed by the government. “Anyone who opposes us, we’ll destroy,” warned a top White House official. “As a matter of fact, anyone who doesn’t support us, we’ll destroy.”

In 1970 Nixon widened his offensive against the antiwar movement by approving the Huston Plan. It called for extensive wiretapping and infiltrating of radical organizations by White House operatives, as well as their breaking into the homes and offices of militants to gather or plant evidence. FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover opposed the Huston Plan as a threat to the bureau’s power. Blocked, Nixon secretly created his own operation to discredit his opposition and to ensure executive secrecy. Nicknamed “the plumbers” because of their assignment to plug government leaks, the team was head by former FBI agent G. Gordon Liddy and former CIA operative E. Howard Hunt.

The plumbers first targeted Daniel Ellsberg, a former Defense Department analyst who had given the press the Pentagon Papers, a secret documentary history of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. On June 13 the New York Times began publishing the Pentagon Papers, revealing a long history of White House lies to Congress, foreign leaders, and the American people. Although the papers contained nothing damaging about his administration, Nixon, fearing that they would undermine trust in government and establish a precedent for publishing classified material, sought to bar their publication. The Supreme Court, however, ruled that their publication was protected by the First Amendment. Livid, Nixon directed the Justice Department to indict Ellsberg for theft and ordered the plumbers to break into the office of Ellsberg’s psychiatrist in search of information to discredit the man who had become a hero to the antiwar movement.

**The Southern Strategy**

Nixon especially courted whites who were upset by the drive for racial equality. The administration opposed extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, sought to cripple enforcement of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, pleaded for the postponement of desegregation in Mississippi’s schools, and filed suits to prohibit busing schoolchildren in order to desegregate public schools.
In 1971, when the Supreme Court upheld busing as a constitutional and necessary tactic in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, Nixon condemned the ruling and asked Congress to enact a moratorium on busing. That pleased white parents who disliked the inconvenience of having their children transported to schools farther from home, feared for the children’s safety in strange schools, and opposed the integration of black and white schoolchildren for racist reasons. Busing to desegregate education, combined with conflicts between whites and African Americans over jobs and housing, had made working-class ethnic white voters in metropolitan areas an inviting target for the GOP.

The strategy of wooing white southerners also dictated Nixon’s Supreme Court nominations. To reverse the Warren court’s liberalism, he sought strict constructionists, judges who would not “meddle” in social issues or be “soft” on criminals. In 1969 he appointed Warren Burger as chief justice. Although the Senate then twice rejected southern conservatives nominated by Nixon, by 1973 the president had appointed three additional justices to the Supreme Court. Harry Blackmun of Minnesota, Lewis Powell of Virginia, and William Rehnquist of Arizona, along with Burger, steered the Court in a decidedly more moderate direction. Although ruling liberally in cases involving abortion, desegregation, and the death penalty, the Burger court shifted to the right on civil liberties, community censorship, and police power.

As the 1970 congressional elections neared, Nixon encouraged his vice president, Spiro T. Agnew, to step up attacks on “hooligans, hippies, and radical liberals.” Agnew assailed the Democrats as “sniveling hand-wringers,” intellectuals as “an effete corps of impudent snobs,” and the news media as “nattering nabobs of negativism.” Liberals deplored Agnew’s alarming alliterative allegations, but conservatives found them on target. The 1970 elections ended in a draw, with the GOP losing nine House seats and winning two Senate seats.

**The Crisis of the Presidency**

President Nixon won a resounding reelection in 1972 and pledged, in his second inaugural, “to make these four years the best four years in America’s history.” Ironically, they would rank among its sorriest. His vice president would resign in disgrace; his closest aides would go to jail; and he would serve barely a year and a half of his second term before resigning to avoid impeachment.

**The Election of 1972**

Nixon’s reelection appeared certain. He faced a deeply divided Democratic party. His diplomatic successes and the winding down of the Vietnam War appealed to moderate voters. The southern strategy and law-and-order posture attracted Democrats who had voted for George Wallace in 1968. Nixon’s only possible worry, another third-party candidacy by Wallace, vanished on May 15, 1972. During a campaign stop in Maryland, Wallace was shot and paralyzed from the waist down. He withdrew from the race, leaving Nixon a monopoly on the white backlash.

Capitalizing on the support of antiwar activists, the Senate’s most outspoken dove, George McGovern of South Dakota, blitzed the Democratic primaries. He gained additional support from new party rules requiring state delegations to include minority, female, and youthful delegates in approximate proportion to their numbers. Actress Shirley MacLaine approvingly described California’s delegation as “looking like a couple of high schools, a grape boycott, a Black Panther rally, and four or five politicians who walked in the wrong door.” A disapproving labor leader grumbled about “too much hair and not enough cigars at this convention.” McGovern won the nomination on the first ballot.
Perceptions of McGovern as inept and radical drove away all but the most committed supporters. After pledging to stand behind his vice presidential running mate Thomas Eagleton "1,000 percent" when it became known that Eagleton had received electric-shock therapy for depression, McGovern dumped him and suffered the embarrassment of having several prominent Democrats publicly decline to run with him. McGovern’s endorsement of income redistribution, decriminalization of marijuana, immediate withdrawal from Vietnam, a $30 billion defense-budget cut, and pardons for those who had fled the United States to avoid the draft exposed him to GOP ridicule as the candidate of the radical fringe.

Remembering his narrow loss to Kennedy in 1960 and too-slim victory in 1968, Nixon left no stone unturned. To do whatever was necessary to win, he appointed his attorney general, John Mitchell, to head the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP). Millions of dollars in campaign contributions finananced “dirty tricks” to create dissension in Democratic ranks and an espionage unit to spy on the opposition. Led by Liddy and Hunt of the White House plumbers, the Republican undercover team received Mitchell’s approval to wiretap telephones at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate apartment and office complex in Washington. Early one morning in June 1972, a security guard foiled the break-in to install the bugs. Arrested were James McCord, the security coordinator of CREEP, and several other Liddy and Hunt associates.

A White House cover-up began immediately. Nixon claimed that “no one in the White House staff, no one in this administration, presently employed, was involved in this bizarre incident.” He then ordered staff members to expunge Hunt’s name from the White House telephone directory. To buy the silence of those arrested, he approved $400,000 in hush money and hints of a presidential pardon. On the pretext that an inquiry would damage national security, the President directed the CIA to halt the FBI’s investigation of the Watergate break-in. With the McGovern campaign a shambles and Watergate seemingly contained, Nixon won overwhelmingly, amassing nearly 61 percent of the popular vote and 520 electoral votes. The southern strategy had worked to perfection. Strongly supported only by minorities and low-income voters, McGovern carried only Massachusetts and the District of Columbia. The election solidified the 1968 realignment.

The GOP, however, gained only twelve seats in the House and lost two in the Senate, demonstrating the growing difficulty of unseating incumbents, the rise in ticket-splitting, and the decline of both party loyalty and voter turnout. Only 55.7 percent of eligible voters went to the polls (down from 63.8 percent in 1960). Whether indifferent to politics or disenchanted with the choices offered, a growing number of citizens no longer bothered to participate in the electoral process.

**The Watergate Upheaval**

The scheme to conceal links between the White House and the accused Watergate burglars had succeeded during the 1972 campaign. But after the election, federal judge “Maximum John” Sirica, known for his tough treatment of criminals, refused to accept the defendants’ claim that they had acted on their own. Threatening severe prison sentences, Sirica coerced James McCord of CREEP into confessing that White House aides had known in advance of the break-in and that the defendants had committed perjury during the trial. Two *Washington Post* reporters, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, following clues furnished by a secret informant named “Deep Throat” (the title of a notorious pornographic film of the time), wrote a succession of front-page stories tying the break-in to illegal contributions and “dirty tricks” by CREEP.

In February 1973 the Senate established the Special Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities to investigate. As the trail of revelations led closer to the Oval Office, Nixon fired his special counsel, John Dean, who refused to be a scapegoat, and announced the resignations of his two principal aides, H. R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman. Pledging to get to the bottom of the scandal, the president appointed Secretary of Defense Elliot Richardson, a Boston patrician of unassailable integrity, as his new attorney general, and instructed Richardson to appoint a special Watergate prosecutor with broad powers of investigation and subpoena. Richardson selected Archibald Cox, a Harvard law professor and a Democrat.

In May the special Senate committee began a televised investigation. Chaired by Sam Ervin of North Carolina, the hearings revealed the existence of a White House “enemies list,” the president’s use of government agencies to harass opponents, and administration favoritism in return for illegal campaign donations. Most damaging to Nixon, the hearings exposed the White House’s active involvement in the Watergate cover-up. But the Senate still lacked concrete evidence of the president’s criminality, the “smoking gun” that would prove Nixon’s guilt. Because it was his word against that of John Dean, who testified that the presi-
dent directed the cover-up, Nixon expected to survive the crisis.

Then another presidential aide dropped a bombshell by revealing that Nixon had installed a secret tapping system that recorded all conversations in the Oval Office. The Ervin committee and Cox insisted on access to the tapes, but Nixon refused, claiming executive privilege. In October, when Cox sought a court order to obtain the tapes, Nixon ordered Richardson to fire him. Richardson instead resigned in protest, as did the deputy attorney general, leaving it to the third-ranking official in the Department of Justice, Solicitor General Robert Bork, to dump Cox. The furor stirred by this “Saturday Night Massacre” sent Nixon's public-approval rating rapidly downward. Even as Nixon named a new special prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, the House Judiciary Committee began impeachment proceedings.

**A President Disgraced**

Adding to Nixon’s woes that October, Vice President Agnew, charged with income-tax evasion and accepting bribes, pleaded no contest—“the full equivalent to a plea of guilty,” according to the trial judge. Dishonored, Agnew left office with a three-year suspended sentence, a $10,000 fine, and a letter from Nixon expressing “a great sense of personal loss.” Popular House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford of Michigan replaced Agnew.

In March 1974 Jaworski and the House Judiciary Committee subpoenaed the president for the tape recordings of Oval Office conversations after the Watergate break-in. Nixon released edited transcripts of the tapes, filled with gaps and the phrase “expletive deleted.” Despite the excisions, the president emerged as petty and vindictive. “We have seen the private man and we are appalled,” declared the staunchly Republican Chicago Tribune.

Nixon's sanitized version of the tapes satisfied neither Jaworski nor the House Judiciary Committee. Both pressed for unedited tapes. In late July the Supreme Court rebuffed the president's claim to executive privilege. Citing the president’s obligation to provide evidence necessary for the due process of law, Chief Justice Burger ordered Nixon to release the unexpurgated tapes.

In late July the House Judiciary Committee adopted three articles of impeachment, accusing President Nixon of obstruction of justice for impeding the Watergate investigation, abuse of power for his partisan use of the FBI and IRS, and contempt of Congress for refusing to obey a congressional subpoena for the tapes. Checkmated, Nixon conceded in a televised address on August 5 that he had withheld relevant evidence. He then surrendered the subpoenaed tapes, which contained the “smoking gun” proving that the president had ordered the cover-up, obstructed justice, subverted one government agency to prevent another from investigating a crime, and lied about his role for more than two years. Impeachment and conviction were now certain. On August 9, 1974, Richard Nixon became the first president to resign, and Gerald Ford took office as the nation's first chief executive who had not been elected either president or vice president.

**Conclusion**

Unlike the generations that preceded and succeeded them, baby boomers took material comfort and their own importance for granted. Many came from affluent, liberal, and indulgent households. They longed for
meaning in their lives, as well as personal liberty. They sought a more humane democracy and a less racist and materialist society. Above all, as the war in Vietnam escalated, a growing number of students took to the streets in protest. Unable to force a quick end to the war, some became increasingly radical and violent. Most of the young, however, were more interested in enjoying “sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll.” Ultimately, the youth movement helped prod the United States into becoming a more tolerant, diverse, and open society, and end America’s longest war, which had cost the nation dearly in lives and dollars, in turning Americans against one another, and in diverting the society from its pressing needs.

The behavior of the young, along with increasing frustration with the war in Vietnam, brought politics to a boil in 1968. The result was a narrow victory for Richard Nixon in 1968 and a major political realignment that gave him a landslide reelection victory in 1972. Pursuing the national interest by realpolitik, he had withdrawn most American troops from Vietnam and lessened hostilities with China and the Soviet Union. Most vital to his political success, Nixon had pursued a “southern strategy” that appealed to whites upset by black militancy and radicalism, and emphasized law-and-order to attract those concerned with the upsurge of criminality and breakdown of traditional values.

In 1972 the secret schemes Nixon had put in place to spy upon and destroy those who opposed his Vietnam policies began to unravel. His obsession for secrecy and paranoia about those who opposed him brought his downfall. The arrest of the Watergate burglars and the subsequent attempted cover-up of White House involvement led to revelations of a host of “dirty

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**Chronology, 1968-1974**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Birth-control pill marketed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Bob Dylan releases “Blowin’ in the Wind.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Berkeley Free Speech Movement (FSM). The Beatles arrive in the United States, and “I Want to Hold Your Hand” tops the charts.</td>
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<td>1965</td>
<td>Ken Kesey and Merry Pranksters stage first “acid test.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Abolition of automatic student deferments from the draft.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>March on the Pentagon. Israeli-Arab Six-Day War.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>United States invades Cambodia. Students killed at Kent State and Jackson State Universities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Vietnam cease-fire agreement signed. Trial of Watergate burglars. Senate establishes Special Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities to investigate Watergate. President Salvador Allende ousted and murdered in Chile. Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns; Gerald Ford appointed vice president. Row v. Wade. Yom Kippur War; OPEC begins embargo of oil to the West. Saturday Night Massacre.</td>
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tricks” and criminal acts. These resulted in the indictment of nearly fifty Nixon administration officials, and the jailing of a score of the president’s associates, including his attorney general. Nixon’s actions also led to a House Judiciary Committee vote to impeach him. To avoid certain conviction, Nixon resigned.

When his successor, Gerald Ford, took the oath of office, many Americans took pride in the smooth continuity of the political system and in its ability to curb excesses and abuses. Others worried that so many Americans had for so long just shrugged off Watergate as politics as usual, and that the Nixon scandals might never have come to light if not for coercion by a federal judge and the president’s desire to tape and preserve his conversations. The consequent public distrust of politicians and disillusionment with government would last into the next century.

For Further Reference

Readings


Websites

The Free Speech Movement
http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/BANC/FSM
The best site for materials on and links to the Free Speech Movement.

The Sixties Project
http://lists.village.virginia.edu/sixties
“The Sixties Project” is a wide-ranging site hosted by the University of Virginia, especially rich on the counterculture

The Vietnam War
http://servercc.oakton.edu/~wittman
A good source for research materials and resources on the Vietnam War, and links to other valuable Vietnam sites.

Watergate
Two comprehensive sites for the Watergate scandal are
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/national/longterm/watergate/front.htm. and
http://vcepolitics.com/watergate

For additional readings, please consult the bibliography at the end of the book.