



Berkin Miller Cherny Gormly Egerton Woestman

# Making America

*A History of the United States*

Brief  
Fifth Edition





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Fifth Edition

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# Preface

Our goal for this textbook is deceptively simple: We want to tell the story of America from its earliest settlement to the present, to make that story complete and interesting, and to tell it in a language and format that will help students enjoy learning that history. We have been faithful to the narrative of American history contained in the full version of *Making America*, but we have been determined in our effort to reduce the length by one-third. The clear chronology, straightforward narrative, and strong thematic structure of the full text remain. We have also retained what is now a hallmark feature of *Making America*, that is, pedagogical tools that allow students to master complex material and enable them to develop analytical skills. Chapter outlines, Chronologies, focus questions, and in-text glossaries provide guidance in every chapter. We also introduce a new feature called “Investigating America” that gets to the heart of learning history. Last but not least, a more open, one-column, page design allows students to access and use the pedagogy to improve their learning.

Streamlining a well-developed narrative is never easy, but wherever possible, to retain the book’s narrative flow, we have cut words and avoided excising larger sections. Of necessity, fewer details may appear on some topics, but we have been careful not to lose the many examples that give the narrative its rich flavor. We trust that in pruning the text with a discerning eye, we have allowed the major themes of *Making America* to stand out clearly.

From the beginning, our goal has been to create a different kind of textbook, one that meets the real needs of the modern college student. Nearly every history classroom reflects the strong cultural diversity of today’s student body, with its mixture of students born in the United States and recent immigrants, both of whom come from many different cultural backgrounds, and its significant number of serious-minded men and women whose formal skills lag behind their interest and enthusiasm for learning. As professors in large public universities, we know the basic elements that both the professor and the students need in the survey text for that classroom. These elements include a historical narrative that does not demand a lot of prior knowledge about the American past; information organized sequentially, or chronologically, so that students are not confused by too many topical digressions; and a full array of integrated and supportive learning aids to help students at every level of preparedness comprehend and retain what they read.

In *Making America*, Brief Fifth Edition, students will find a genuine effort to communicate with them rather than impress them. And *Making America* presents history as a dynamic process shaped by human expectations, difficult choices, and often surprising consequences. With this focus on history as a process, *Making America* encourages students to think historically and to develop into citizens who value the past.

Yet as veteran teachers, the authors of *Making America* know that any history project, no matter how good, can be improved. For every edition of *Making America*, we have subjected our text to critical reappraisal. We eliminated features that professors and students told us did not work as well as we had hoped; we added features that we believed would be more effective; and we tested our skills as storytellers and biographers more



rigorously each time around. This Brief Fifth Edition reflects our willingness to revise and improve the textbook we offer to you.

## The Approach

Professors and students who have used previous editions of *Making America* will recognize immediately that we have preserved many of its central features. We have again set the nation's complex story within an explicitly political chronology, relying on a basic and familiar structure that is nevertheless broad enough to accommodate generous attention to social, economic, and diplomatic aspects of our national history. We remain confident that this political framework allows us to integrate the experiences of all Americans into a meaningful and effective narrative of our nation's development. *Making America* continues to be built on the premise that all Americans are historically active figures, playing significant roles in creating the history that we and other authors narrate.

This approach has guided us in choosing the names by which we identify ethnic groups. As a general rule, we have tried to use terms that members of the group used themselves at the time under consideration. However, when this usage would distract readers from the topic to the terminology, we have used terms in use today among members of that group, while acknowledging variations by region and preference.

## Themes

This edition continues to thread the five central themes through the narrative of *Making America*. The first of these themes, the political development of the nation, is evident in the text's coverage of the creation and revision of the federal and local governments, the contests waged over domestic and diplomatic policies, the internal and external crises faced by the United States and its political institutions, and the history of political parties and elections.

The second theme is the diversity of a national citizenry created by both Native Americans and immigrants. To do justice to this theme, *Making America* explores not only English and European immigration but immigrant communities from Paleolithic times to the present. The text attends to the tensions and conflicts that arise in a diverse population, but it also examines the shared values and aspirations that define middle-class American lives.

*Making America's* third theme is the significance of regional subcultures and economies. This regional theme is developed for society before European colonization and for the colonial settlements of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is evident in our attention to the striking social and cultural divergences that existed between the American Southwest and the Atlantic coastal regions and between the antebellum South and North, as well as significant differences in social and economic patterns in the West.

A fourth theme is the rise and impact of large social movements, from the Great Awakening in the 1740s to the rise of youth cultures in the post-World War II generations, movements prompted by changing material conditions or by new ideas challenging the status quo.

The fifth theme is the relationship of the United States to other nations. In *Making America* we explore in depth the causes and consequences of this nation's role in world conflict and diplomacy, whether in the era of colonization of the Americas, the eighteenth century independence movement, the removal of Indian nations from their traditional lands, the impact of the rhetoric of manifest destiny, American policies of isolationism and interventionism, or the modern role of the United States as a domi-

nant player in world affairs. In this edition, we have continued to broaden this theme to encompass American history in a global context. This new focus allows us to set our national development within the broadest context and to integrate the exciting new scholarship in this emerging field of world or global history.

## Learning Features

The chapters in *Making America*, Brief Fifth Edition, follow a format that provides students with essential study aids for mastering the historical material. Each chapter contains a topical outline of the material students will encounter in the chapter and a compelling introduction. “Individual Choices” provides a brief biography of a woman or man whose life reflects the central themes of the chapter and whose choices demonstrate the importance of individual agency, or ability to make choices and act on them. A chapter Chronology provides a detailed list of key events during the chapter’s period. To help students focus on the broad questions and themes as they read, we provide critical thinking, or focus, questions at the beginning of each major chapter section. Each chapter also contains two or three “Investigating America” features, each of which contains a brief primary source or primary source excerpt related to the text, along with a series of thought-provoking questions about that source. “Investigating America” allows historical figures to speak for themselves and encourages students to engage directly in historical analysis. “Investigating America Online” icons placed next to relevant content in the chapter direct students to additional primary source material/pedagogy found on the chapter’s website—offering a variety of opportunities for examining historical evidence throughout the course. Each chapter concludes with a summary that reinforces the most important themes and information the student has read, and a list of key historical terms, with page numbers that will guide students back through the chapter.

The key terms are also highlighted and defined in *Making America*’s on-page glossary. The brief explanations of major events, people, or documents as they appear in the narrative provide a handy roadmap for test review. But our on-page glosses go one step further. We have also highlighted and defined vocabulary terms that could be unfamiliar to students with limited language proficiency or for whom English is a second language. By defining these words the first time they appear, the on-page glossary helps students build their vocabularies and ensures that they have full access to the narrative. Perhaps most important, the on-page glossary of historical key terms and vocabulary allows us to communicate fully to student readers the precise usage and character of a complex historical narrative.

The illustrations and maps in each chapter provide a visual connection to the past and its context, and their captions analyze the subject and relate it concretely to the narrative.

## New to the Fifth Edition

In this new edition we have preserved what our colleagues and their students considered the best and most useful aspects of *Making America*. We also have replaced what was less successful, revised what could be improved, and added new elements to strengthen the book.

You will find many features you told us worked well in the past: Individual Choices, focus questions, Chronologies, and maps. You will also find new features that you told us you would like to see. “Investigating America” was developed in response to reviewers who asked for more opportunities for their students to work with primary source material. Both instructors and students have told us how important it is for students

to be able to relate to the history they are studying. To that end, our boxed feature, “It Matters Today,” points out connections between current events and past ones and asks discussion and reflection questions that challenge students to see the links between past and present. We encourage faculty and students to challenge each other with additional “It Matters Today” questions and even to create their own “It Matters Today” for other aspects of the textbook’s chapters.

We the authors of *Making America* believe that this new edition will be effective in the history classroom. Please let us know what you think by sending us your views through <http://www.cengage.com/highered>.

## Learning and Teaching Ancillaries

The program for this edition of *Making America* includes a number of useful learning and teaching aids. These ancillaries are designed to help students get the most from the course and to provide instructors with useful course management and presentation tools.

Kelly Woestman has been involved with *Making America* through previous editions and has taken an even more substantive role in the fifth edition. We suspect that no other technology author has been so well integrated into the author team as Kelly has been with our team, and we are certain that this will add significantly to the value of these resources.

## Website Tools

The **PowerLecture CD-ROM** features the **Instructor’s Resource Manual** written by Kelly Woestman of Pittsburg State University, primary sources with instructor notes in addition to hundreds of maps, images, audio and video clips, and PowerPoint slides for classroom presentation. The **Examview™** test bank is also found on the **PowerLecture CD-ROM** provides flexible test-editing capabilities of the Test Items written by Volker Jannsen of Cal State Fullerton.

**HistoryFinder** helps instructors create rich and exciting classroom presentations. This online tool offers thousands of online resources, including art, photographs, maps, primary sources, multimedia content, Associated Press interactive modules, and ready-made PowerPoint slides. HistoryFinder’s assets can easily be searched by keyword, or browsed from pull-down menus of topic, media type, or by textbook. Instructors can then browse, preview, and download resources straight from the website.

The **Student Website** contains a variety of tutorial resources including the **Study Guide** written by Kelly Woestman, ACE quizzes with feedback, interactive maps, primary sources, chronology exercises, flashcards, and other activities. The website for this edition of *Making America* will feature two different audio tools for students. These audio files are downloadable as MP3 files. **Audio Summaries** help students review each chapter’s key points.

The *Making America e-book*, an interactive multimedia e-book links out to rich media assets such as video and MP3 chapter summaries. Through this e-book, students can also access self-test quizzes, chapter outlines, focus questions, chronology and matching exercises, essay and critical thinking questions (for which the answers can be emailed to their instructors), primary source documents with critical thinking questions, and interactive maps.

Please contact your local Cengage Learning sales representative for more information about these learning and teaching tools in addition to the **Rand McNally Atlas of**

**American History**, WebCT and Blackboard cartridges, and transparencies for United States History.

## Acknowledgments

*Making America*, Brief Fifth Edition, has benefited from the critical reading of instructors from across the country. We would like to thank these scholars and teachers: **Robert Cray, Montclair State University; Jennifer Fry, King's College; Michael Gabriel, Kutztown University; Stephen Katz, Community College of Philadelphia; Kurt Korten**hof, Saint Paul College; Mark Kuss, Our Lady of Holy Cross College; Suzanne McCormack, Community College of Rhode Island; Bryant Morrison, South Texas College; David Parker, California State University Northridge; Laura Perry, The University of Memphis; Steven Rauch, Augusta State University; and Kathryn Rokitski, Old Dominion University.

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# A Note for the Students: Your Guide to *Making America*

Dear Student:

History is about people—brilliant and insane, brave and treacherous, loveable and hateful, murderers and princesses, daredevils and visionaries, rule breakers and rule makers. It has exciting events, major crises, turning points, battles, and scientific breakthroughs. We, the authors of *Making America*, believe that knowing about the past is critical for anyone who hopes to understand the present and chart the future. In this book, we want to tell you the story of America from its earliest settlement to the present, and to tell it in a language and format that helps you enjoy learning that history.

This book is organized and designed to help you master your American History course. The narrative is chronological, telling the story as it happened, decade by decade or era by era. We have developed special tools to help you learn. The paragraphs following this note will introduce you to the unique features of this book that will help you understand the complex and fascinating story of American history.

At the back of the book, you will find some additional resources. In the Appendix, you will find an annotated, chapter-by-chapter list of suggested readings. You will also find reprinted the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Here, too, a table gives you quick access to data on presidential elections. Finally, you will see the index, which will help you locate a subject quickly if you want to read about it.

In addition, you will find a number of useful study tools on the Making America companion site. These include ACE quizzes with feedback, primary sources, and other activities—all geared to help you study, do research, and take tests effectively.

We hope that our textbook conveys to you our own fascination with the American past and sparks your curiosity about the nation's history. We invite you to share your feedback on the book: you can reach us through Cengage Learning's website: <http://www.cengage.com/highered/>.

Carol Berkin, Chris Miller, Bob Cherny, Jim Gormly, Doug Egerton, and Kelly Woestman

Each chapter of *Making America*, Brief Fifth Edition, includes the following features:

Each chapter opens with “Individual Choices.” These biographies show how historical events are the results of real people making real choices. Some of the featured individuals are famous historical figures. Others are ordinary people who played an important role in shaping the events of their era.

Alongside Individual Choices on the first page of each chapter, a **chapter outline** shows, section by section, the topics you will encounter in the chapter. Turn the page, and on the chapter's third page, the **Chronology** provides a detailed list of key events during the chapter's period.

Within the chapter, you'll find **Focus Questions** at the beginning of the chapter's major sections. These questions guide you to the most important themes in each section.

The **On-Page Glossary** briefly explains key terms and vocabulary in the margin of the page where the term first appears. The glossary will help with difficult words you find



in this chapter, which may be especially useful if English is not your first language. Key historical study terms are also listed at the end of the chapter, with page numbers, so that you can use the glossary as a review tool. Glossary terms are also bolded in the index for your reference.

At a couple of appropriate points in the chapter, one-page **Investigating America** features present a document related to the chapter narrative. These documents (also called primary sources) include personal letters, speeches, and other types of writing from the time. By answering the questions following the document, you'll analyze each primary source the way a historian would.

**It Matters Today** shows how a person, event, or idea in every chapter is meaningful today. The questions at the end of each essay prompt you to consider specific connections between the past, the present—and the future.

**Maps** provide visual representations of how historical events and trends have impacted different regions of the United States. The captions below the maps supply information on ways to interpret what you see.

Each chapter concludes with a **Summary** that reinforces the most important themes and information in the chapter. Following the Summary, a list of Key Terms identifies the chapter's key historical study terms and includes the page where each is explained in the margin.

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Born in Mobile, Alabama, Carol Berkin received her undergraduate degree from Barnard College and her Ph.D. from Columbia University. Her dissertation won the Bancroft Award. She is now Presidential Professor of history at Baruch College and the Graduate Center of City University of New York. She has written *Jonathan Sewall: Odyssey of an American Loyalist* (1974); *First Generations: Women in Colonial America* (1996); *A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution* (2002); and *Revolutionary Mothers: Women in the Struggle for America's Independence* (2005). She has edited *Women of America: A History* (with Mary Beth Norton, 1979); *Women, War and Revolution* (with Clara M. Lovett, 1980); *Women's Voices, Women's Lives: Documents in Early American History* (with Leslie Horowitz, 1998) and *Looking Forward/Looking Back: A Women's Studies Reader* (with Judith Pinch and Carole Appel, 2005). She was contributing editor on southern women for *The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* and has appeared in the PBS series *Liberty! The American Revolution*; *Ben Franklin*; and *Alexander Hamilton* and The History Channel's *Founding Fathers*. Professor Berkin chaired the Dunning Beveridge Prize Committee for the American Historical Association, the Columbia University Seminar in Early American History, and the Taylor Prize Committee of the Southern Association of Women Historians, and she served on the program committees for both the Society for the History of the Early American Republic and the Organization of American Historians. She has served on the Planning Committee for the U.S. Department of Education's National Assessment of Educational Progress, and chaired the CLEP Committee for Educational Testing Service. She serves on the Board of Trustees of The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and The National Council for History Education.

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### KELLY WOESTMAN

Kelly Woestman (Ph.D. University of North Texas) is professor of history and history education director at Pittsburg State University in Kansas. She has received a number of prestigious teaching and technology grants including: Teaching American History Grant from the U.S. Department of Education; and Improving Teacher Quality Grant for Assessment from Pittsburg State University. Professor Woestman is a past president of H-Net Humanities and Social Sciences Online and co-editor of *The Teaching American History Project: Lessons for Historians and History Educators* (Routledge/Taylor & Francis, 2009).

# Making America

# Making a “New” World to 1588

## CHAPTER 1

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Hienwatha

Life was getting worse for the people who lived in North America’s northeastern woodlands. For generations they had lived peacefully in their largely self-sufficient villages on the corn that the women grew and the game that the men hunted. But around six hundred years ago, a long-lasting change in the weather made corn production less dependable, and the people were forced to hunt and gather more wild foods to supplement their diets. As hunters from individual villages roamed deeper and deeper into the forests looking for food, they encountered others who, like themselves, were desperate to harvest the diminishing resources. Conflicts became common. “Everywhere there was peril and everywhere mourning,” says one version of the story. “Feuds with outer nations and feuds with brother nations, feuds of sister towns and feuds of families and clans made every warrior a stealthy man who liked to kill.”

In the midst of the crisis, a child who would be called Hienwatha (or Hia-watha, Maker of Rivers) was born among the Haudenosaunee, or Longhouse People (sometimes called Iroquois). According to some sources, Hienwatha was born among the Onondaga Nation sometime shortly after 1400 but came to live with the neighboring Mohawks. If that story is true, he may well have been a war captive, taken to replace a Mohawk killed in the ever-accelerating violence that raged through the woodlands.

Having grown to adulthood among the Mohawks, the still young and unmarried outsider left his village to seek survival on his own in the woods. Food was scarce, and Hienwatha became a cannibal, killing lone travelers to eat their flesh. One day, as Hienwatha was butchering a victim, he discovered that he had a visitor. The man, a Huron called Dekanahwideh (Two River Currents Flowing Together), shamed Hienwatha for his dishonorable state. The stranger then told him of a spirit being called Peacemaker, who had given Dekanahwideh a vision and a mission: he was to unify all the Haudenosaunee into a great and peaceful

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### *A World of Change*

American Origins

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** Native Americans  
Shape a New World

Change and Restlessness in the  
Atlantic World

The Complex World of Indian  
America

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** The Origin  
of the League of Peace

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** A Moroccan  
Visits Sub-Saharan Africa

#### *Exploiting Atlantic Opportunities*

The Portuguese, Africa, and  
Plantation Slavery

The Continued Quest for Asian  
Trade

A New Transatlantic World

#### *The Challenges of Mutual Discovery*

A Meeting of Minds in America

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Columbus  
Meets the Tiano

The Columbian Exchange

New Worlds in Africa and America

A New World in Europe

#### *Summary*



### HIEWATHA

*New conditions in North America led to increasing conflicts among the five Haudenosaunee tribes during the fifteenth century. Hienwatha overcame resistance—even the murder of his family—to convince Haudenosaunee leaders to form the League of Peace, a political, military, and religious alliance that helped them survive massive changes and made them a major force in Atlantic diplomacy.*

Frontispiece from *The Song of Hiawatha* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–82), pub. by George G. Harrap & Company Ltd., 1911 (soft-ground etching), Wyeth, Newell Convers (1882–1945) (after)/Private Collection/The Stapleton Collection/The Bridgeman Art Library

nation. Inspired by the stranger’s words, Hienwatha vowed never to eat human flesh again and to spend his life making Dekanahwideh’s vision a reality.

Hienwatha moved back among the Mohawks, married, and began telling the people about Dekanahwideh’s vision and Peacemaker’s message. Hienwatha was determined to find a way to convince his enemies among the Haudenosaunee to accept the idea of cooperation. His solution was to weave a belt of wampum-shell strings that showed a great chain connecting the five Haudenosaunee nations—Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca. Carrying his belt, Hienwatha traveled among the five nations, telling them that they could survive only if they began cooperating. He finally won over even Tadadaho, whose Onondaga Nation became the keeper of the council fires. Together, Hienwatha, Dekanahwideh, Tadadaho, and the other leaders of the Five Nations created a confederation government, the League of Peace, that Europeans later would call the League of the Iroquois. Under its provisions each member nation maintained complete sovereignty in its own affairs, but all agreed fully to defend the others, share resources, and promote the confederation’s overall welfare. They also vowed to carry forward Peacemaker’s design by offering peace to all who would agree to live with them under the Great Tree of Peace that symbolized the new covenant. Although few historians accept the popular myth that the League later served as a model for the U.S. Constitution, the alliance created the first extensive political confederation in North America.

As remarkable as Hienwatha’s story is, his experience was not entirely unique. Faced with changing conditions, natural ones at first and then those brought by invading Europeans, Indians throughout the Americas struggled valiantly and creatively to restructure their societies and their lives. Sometimes the effort brought success, as it did for the Haudenosaunee, but the new political, diplomatic, and spiritual alignments just as often triggered more struggle and war. But whatever else might be said for the achievements of Hienwatha and his contemporary visionaries, they succeeded in reshaping America, crafting what Europeans naively—but in this one sense quite correctly—called the New World. And in the process, they helped shape the entire Atlantic world, where the making of America would soon take center stage.

For nearly a thousand years before the Haudenosaunee formed their league, a combination of natural and human forces truly global in scope was having a profound impact throughout the Atlantic world. For example, in 632, a vibrant new religion swept out of the Arabian Peninsula to conquer much of the Mediterranean world. Eventually Europeans, who had themselves adopted a new and dynamic religion, Christianity, only a few centuries earlier, struck back in a protracted series of Crusades designed to break Islamic power. Together these expansive societies introduced new technologies and knowledge of distant and mysterious worlds that would engender an air of restlessness throughout Europe.

One of those mysterious worlds lay to the south of the forbidding Sahara Desert in Africa. There, as in both America and Europe, people had been dealing with changing conditions by crafting societies and economies that made the most of varying environments. When Islamic trading caravans began penetrating this region in the eighth



# Chronology

<b>ca. 70,000–8,000 BCE</b>	Human migration from Asia into Beringia	<b>ca. 800–1700</b>	Rise of Mississippian culture
<b>ca. 7000 BCE</b>	Plant cultivation begins in North America	<b>1096–1291</b>	The Crusades
<b>ca. 3000 BCE</b>	Farming begins in central Mexico	<b>ca. 1200</b>	Aztecs arrive in the Valley of Mexico
<b>ca. 1400 BCE</b>	Sub-Saharan Africans perfect iron smelting	<b>ca. 1400</b>	Beginning of Little Ice Age
<b>ca. 34 CE</b>	Death of Jesus of Nazareth and beginning of Christianity	<b>ca. 1450</b>	Hienwatha and Dekanahwideh found League of Peace
<b>ca. 300 CE</b>	Farming introduced to southwest North America	<b>1492</b>	Reconquista completed; Columbus's first voyage
<b>632</b>	Death of Mohammed and beginning of Islamic expansion	<b>1500</b>	Portuguese begin to transport and trade African slaves
<b>ca. 750</b>	Islamic caravans travel to West Africa; African slave trade begins	<b>1517</b>	Martin Luther presents Ninety-five Theses
<b>ca. 800 CE</b>	Rise of Anasazi civilization	<b>1527–1535</b>	Henry VIII initiates English Reformation
<b>ca. 500–1000</b>	Rise of Hopewell culture	<b>1558</b>	Elizabeth I becomes queen of England

Note: BCE means “before the common era.”

century, they found highly developed cities that could draw on populations and natural resources to produce goods that were in great demand throughout the evolving Atlantic world. Like Native Americans, Africans, too, would be drawn into the restlessness that characterized this dynamic age.

Within decades after the Five Nations united, Christopher Columbus, a Genoese navigator in Spain's employ, washed into the **Western Hemisphere** while trying to find the distant worlds known to Islamic traders. Columbus's accident brought two historical streams together, and from that point onward, the history of each helped to form the future of both. On a global scale, this event launched a new era in human history. On a more local scale, it began a process we call *Making America*.

## A World of Change

- ★ **How did environmental changes influence the development of various societies in North America during the millennia before the emergence of the Atlantic world?**
- ★ **What forces came into play in the centuries before 1500 that would launch Europeans on a program of outward exploration?**
- ★ **What factors in sub-Saharan African history helped lead to the development of the slave trade?**

Christopher Columbus's accidental encounter with the Western Hemisphere came after nearly a thousand years of increasing restlessness and dramatic change that affected all of the areas surrounding the Atlantic Ocean. After **millennia** of relative isolation, the natural and human environments in America were opened to the flow of people, animals, and goods from the rest of the Atlantic world. During the centuries before 1492, Christian monarchs and church leaders conducted a series of **Crusades** to wrest

**Western Hemisphere** When discussing the world longitudinally (lengthwise), geographers often divide the globe into two halves (hemispheres). The **Western Hemisphere** includes North America, Mexico, Central America, and South America; the **Eastern Hemisphere** includes Europe, Asia, and Africa.

**millennia** The plural of *millennium*, a period of one thousand years.

**Crusades** Military expeditions undertaken by European Christians in the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries to recover the Holy Land from the Muslims.



**Holy Land** Palestine, which now is divided into Israel, Jordan, and Syria; called the Holy Land because it is the region in which the events described in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible took place; it is sacred to Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

**Muslims** People who practice the religion of Islam, a monotheistic faith that accepts Mohammed as the chief and last prophet of God.

control of the **Holy Land** from the **Muslims**. As armies of Crusaders pushed their way into the region, they came into contact with many desirable commodities—silks, spices, and precious metals. As word spread of the finery Muslims obtained through trade with Africa and Asia, enterprising individuals began looking for ways to profit by supplying such luxuries to European consumers. Both Crusaders and explorers came into contact with equally restless and vibrant societies in Africa and the Western Hemisphere, lending greater impetus to continuing journeys.

### American Origins

American history, both before and after Columbus’s intrusion, was shaped by the peculiar landscape that had developed over millennia in the Western Hemisphere. About 2.5 million years ago, a new force came to dominate the landscape with the onset of the Great Ice Age. During the height of the Ice Age, great sheets of ice advanced and withdrew across the world’s continents. Glaciers moved southward, grinding away at the central part of North America, carving a flat corridor all the way from the Arctic Circle to the Gulf of Mexico. During the last ice advance, the Wisconsin glaciation, a sheet of ice more than 8,000 feet thick, covered the northern half of both Europe and North America.

Not only did this massive ice sheet affect the underlying geology, but so much water was frozen into the glaciers that sea levels dropped as much as 450 feet. Migratory animals found vast regions closed to them by the imposing ice fields and ventured into areas exposed by the receding sea. One such region, Beringia, lay between present-day Siberia on the Asian continent and Alaska in North America. Now covered by the waters of the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean, Beringia during the Ice Age was a dry, frigid grassland—a perfect grazing ground for animals such as giant bison and huge-tusked woolly mammoths.

Sea levels were low enough to expose Beringia about seventy thousand years ago, and the area remained above sea level more or less continually until about ten thousand years ago. Although movement southward into North America would have been difficult because of the rugged terrain and mountainous glaciers, determined migrating species may have begun populating the continent at any time between these dates.

What was true for other species may also have been true for humans. Each of the indigenous peoples who continue to occupy this hemisphere has its own account of its origins, some of which involve migration. Biological evidence suggests that the majority of Native Americans did migrate here—three distinct groups arriving seemingly at different times. The first of these groups, called the Paleo-Indians, probably entered the continent between thirty thousand and forty thousand years ago, and their descendants eventually occupied the entire area of the Western Hemisphere. The second group, collectively called the Na-Dene people, appears to have arrived very near the end of the Wisconsin era, between ten thousand and eleven thousand years ago, and their descendants are concentrated in the subarctic regions of Canada and the southwestern United States. The final group, the Arctic-dwelling Inuits, or Eskimos, arrived sometime later, perhaps after Beringia had flooded again. A great many anomalies exist regarding this process, however. Recent archaeological finds and isolated discoveries such as that of the **Kenniwick Man** suggest that many different groups of migrating or indigenous people may have coexisted over this sixty-thousand-year period.

Until about nine thousand years ago, the presence of Ice Age animals supplied human hunters with their primary source of meat and set the tempo for Paleo-Indian life. However, as temperatures warmed, these species began to die out. The hunters faced the

**Kenniwick Man** The name given to a human skeleton discovered next to the Columbia River near Kennewick, Washington, in 1996. The skeleton is believed to be over 9,000 years old and appears to have facial features unlike those of other ancient Indian relics.



# It Matters Today

## NATIVE AMERICANS SHAPE A NEW WORLD

It might be hard to imagine why understanding the original peopling of North America during the millennia before Columbus could possibly matter to how we live our lives today. Without this chapter in our history, there would likely have been no United States history at all. Fifteenth-century Europeans lacked the tools, the organization, the discipline, and the economic resources to conquer a wilderness—such a feat would be the equivalent of our establishing a successful colony on the moon today. But the environmental and genetic engineering conducted through the millennia of North American history created a hospitable environment into which European crops, animals, and people could easily

insinuate themselves. Although the descendants of those Europeans may fool themselves into thinking that they constructed an entirely new world in North America, the fact is that they simply grafted new growth onto ancient rootstock, creating the unique hybrid that is today's America.

1. Describe what you think it would take technologically, economically, and politically for the United States to establish a successful permanent colony on the moon. How would the presence of a biologically identical indigenous population change those requirements?
2. In what ways are the Indian heritages of America still visible in our society today?

unpleasant prospect of following the large animals into extinction if they kept trying to survive by hunting big game. Instead, people everywhere in North America began to explore the newly emerging local environments for new sources of food, clothing, shelter, and tools. In the forests that grew to cover the eastern half of the continent, they developed finely polished stone tools, which they used to make functional and beautiful implements out of wood, bone, shell, and other materials. There and along the Pacific shore, people used large, heavy stone tools to hollow out massive tree trunks, making boats from which they could harvest food from inland waterways and from the sea. During this time domesticated dogs were introduced into North America, probably by newly arriving migrants from Asia. With boats for river transportation and dogs to help carry loads on land, Native people were able to make the best use of their local environments by moving around to different spots as the seasons of the year changed. They followed an annual round of movement from camp to camp—perhaps collecting shellfish for several weeks at the mouth of a river, then moving on to where wild strawberries were ripening, and later in the summer relocating to fields in which maturing wild onions or sunflower seeds could be harvested.

Although these ancestors of modern Indians believed in and celebrated the animating spirits of the plants and animals on which they depended for survival, they nonetheless engaged in environmental engineering. They used fire to clear forests of unwanted scrub and to encourage the growth of berries and other plants. **Maize** (corn), along with other engineered plants like beans, squash, and chilies, formed the basis for an agricultural revolution in North America, allowing many people to settle in larger villages for longer periods. Successful adaptation—including plant cultivation and eventually agriculture—along with population growth and the constructive use of spare time allowed some Indians in North America to build large, ornate cities. The map of ancient America is dotted with such centers. Beginning about three thousand years ago, the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys became the home for a number of **mound builder** societies whose cities became trading and ceremonial centers that had enormous economic and social

**Maize** Corn; the word maize comes from an Indian word for this plant.

**mound builder** Name applied to a number of Native American societies, including the Adena, Hopewell, and Mississippian cultures, that constructed massive earthen mounds as monuments and building foundations.

outreach. Then, about eight hundred years ago, midwestern mound builder sites fell into decline, and the people who once had congregated there withdrew to separated villages or bands. No single satisfactory explanation accounts for why this happened, but it is interesting to note that other changes were taking place at around this time elsewhere in the Atlantic world that would have profound effects on the American story.

**Mohammed** Born ca. 570 into an influential family in Mecca, on the Arabian Peninsula, around 610 Mohammed began having religious visions in which he was revealed as “the Messenger of God.” The content of his various visions was recorded as the Qur’an, the sacred text that is the foundation for the Islamic religion.

**Moors** Natives of northern Africa who converted to Islam in the eighth century, becoming the major carriers of the Islamic religion and culture both to southern Africa and to the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal), which they conquered and occupied from the eighth century until their ouster in the late fifteenth century.

**Reconquista** The campaign undertaken by European Christians to recapture the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors.

### Change and Restlessness in the Atlantic World

During the few centuries following the death of the prophet **Mohammed** in 632, Muslim Arabs, Turks, and **Moors** made major inroads into western Asia and northern Africa, eventually encroaching on Europe’s southern and eastern frontiers.

Although Europeans repulsed Islamic invasions into what is now France in 732, the newcomers introduced new technologies, food items, and knowledge, just as the Crusaders returned home with new information about distant lands. These contributions not only enriched European culture but also improved the quality of life. For example, new farming methods increased food production so much that Europe began to experience a population explosion. Soon Europeans would begin turning this new knowledge and these new tools against the people who brought them.

Iberians launched a **Reconquista**, an effort to break Islamic rule on the peninsula and, in 1096, European Christians launched the first in a series of Crusades to sweep the Muslims from the Holy Land. With the aid of English Crusaders, Portugal attained independence in 1147. In the Holy Land, Crusaders captured key points only to be expelled by Muslim counterattacks. The effort to dislodge Islamic forces from Jerusalem and other sacred sites came largely to an end in 1291, but the struggle continued in the Iberian Peninsula. By 1380, Portugal’s King John I had united that country’s various principalities under his rule. In Spain, unification took much longer, but in 1469 **Ferdinand and Isabella**, heirs to the rival thrones of Aragon and Castile, married and forged a united Spanish state. Twenty-three years later, in 1492, the Spanish subdued the last Moorish stronghold on the peninsula, completing the Reconquista.

Consolidation began in France in around 1480, when Louis XI took control of five rival provinces to create a unified kingdom. Five years later in England, Henry Tudor and the House of Lancaster defeated the rival House of York in the Wars of the Roses, ending nearly a hundred years of civil war. Tudor, now styling himself King Henry VII, cemented this victory by marrying into the rival house, wedding Elizabeth of York to unify the English throne. As in Spain and Portugal, the formation of unified states in France and England opened the way to new, expansive activity that would accelerate the creation of an Atlantic world.

### The Complex World of Indian America

The world into which Europeans would intrude was not some static realm stuck in the Stone Age. Native American societies were every bit as progressive, adaptable, and historically dynamic as those that would invade their homes. In fact,

adaptive flexibility characterized Indian life throughout North America, and so the vast variety in environmental conditions that characterized the continent led to the emergence of enormous differences between various Indian groups. **Anthropologists** have tried to make the extremely complicated cultural map of North America understandable by dividing the continent into a series of culture areas—regions where the similarities among native societies were greater than the differences. Map 1.1 shows eleven such areas: Arctic, Subarctic, Northwest Coast, Plateau, California, Great Basin, Southwest, Great Plains, Eastern Woodlands, Southeast, and Mexico Middle-America.

**anthropologists** Scholars who study human behavior and culture in the past or the present.

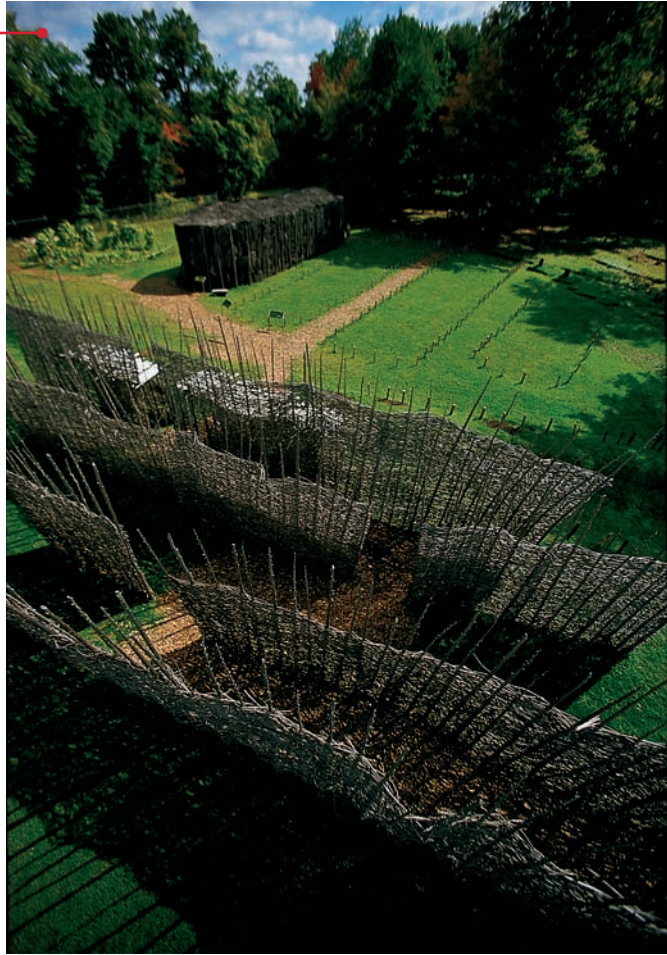




**MAP I.1** Indian Culture Areas in North America

Social scientists who study Native American societies have divided them into a complex of “culture areas”: regions in which cultural similarities outnumber differences between resident groups. Although there is some disagreement among scholars about the exact number and extent of specific areas, this map provides a representative view of the various culture areas in North America.

Haudenosaunee towns consisted of rows of longhouses, often surrounded by defensive walls. This partial reconstruction of a sixteenth-century Haudenosaunee town that stood near what is now London, Ontario, illustrates how such sites looked. The staked areas to the right of the rebuilt longhouses show where neighboring longhouses used to stand. Richard Alexander Cooke III.



In the southeastern region of North America, peoples speaking Siouan, Caddoan, and Muskogean languages formed vibrant agricultural and urban societies that had ties with exchange centers farther north as well as with adventurous traders from Mexico. At places like Natchez, fortified cities housed gigantic pyramids, and farmland radiating outward provided food for large residential populations. These were true cities and, like their counterparts in Europe and Asia, they were magnets attracting ideas, technologies, and religious notions from the entire hemisphere.

Farther north, in the region called the Eastern Woodlands, people lived in smaller villages and combined agriculture with hunting and gathering. The Haudenosaunee, for example, lived in towns numbering three thousand or more people, changing locations only as soil fertility was lost and game became exhausted. Before Hienwatha and the formation of the League of Peace, each village was largely self-governed by clan mothers and their chosen male civil servants. Each town was made up of a group of **longhouses**, structures often 60 feet or more in length.

Tradition dictated that men and women occupied different spheres of existence. The women's world was the world of plants, healing, and nurturing. The men's was the world of animals, hunting, and war. By late **pre-Columbian** times, the Haudenosaunee had become strongly agricultural, and because plants were in the women's sphere, women occupied places of high social and economic status in Haudenosaunee society. Families

**longhouses** Communal dwellings, usually built of poles and bark and having a central hallway with family apartments on either side (see illustration).

**pre-Columbian** Existing in the Americas before the arrival of Columbus.

# Investigating America

## The Origin of the League of Peace

Pressed on all sides by radically changing conditions, five Indian nations among the Iroquoian-speaking peoples in the Eastern Woodlands embraced the message of Dekanahwideh. According to Hienwatha, parts of the message include the following:

.....  
**I** am Dekanawidah and with the Five Nations' Confederate Lords I plant the Tree of Great Peace. I plant it in your territory, Adodarhoh, and the Onondaga Nation, in the territory of you who are Firekeepers.

I, Dekanawidah, appoint the Mohawk Lords the heads and the leaders of the Five Nations Confederacy. The Mohawk Lords are the foundation of the Great Peace and it shall, therefore, be against the Great Binding Law to pass measures in the Confederate Council after the Mohawk Lords have protested against them.

No council of the Confederate Lords shall be legal unless all the Mohawk Lords are present.

Rights of the People of the Five Nations: Whenever a specially important matter or a great emergency is presented before the Confederate Council and the nature of the matter affects the entire body of the Five Nations, threatening their utter ruin, then the Lords of the Confederacy must submit the matter to the decision of their people and the decision of the people shall affect the decision of the Confederate Council. This decision shall be a confirmation of the voice of the people.

The men of every clan of the Five Nations shall have a Council Fire ever burning in readiness for a council of the

clan. When it seems necessary for a council to be held to discuss the welfare of the clans, then the men may gather about the fire. This council shall have the same rights as the council of the women.

When the Confederate Council of the Five Nations has for its object the establishment of the Great Peace among the people of an outside nation and that nation refuses to accept the Great Peace, then by such refusal they bring a declaration of war upon themselves from the Five Nations. Then shall the Five Nations seek to establish the Great Peace by a conquest of the rebellious nation.

- .....
- Clearly, Dekanahwideh chose the image of the "great tree" for a reason. What do you see as the meaning behind this image? What do you think the four "great, long, white roots" symbolize?
  - What does the Great Law suggest about the responsibility of each of the Five Nations to the confederacy as a whole?
  - How would the scheme advocated here help the Haudenosaunee deal with changing historical conditions?
  - Among whites, the law was first mentioned by missionaries in the mid-eighteenth century, and it was not written down in English until a century after that. What problems do oral traditions raise as primary sources? Are any sources, oral or written, ever truly objective?

were matrilineal, meaning that they traced their descent through the mother's line, and matrilocal, meaning that a man left his home to move in with his wife's family upon marriage. Women distributed the rights to cultivate specific fields and controlled the harvest. Variations on this pattern were typical throughout the Eastern Woodlands and in the neighboring Great Plains and Southwest.

For most of the people who inhabited the eastern edge of North America, political life was decentralized, with a tribal council and a sachem—later known to whites as a "chief"—who governed by consensus. Rarely did larger confederations make decisions above the local level. The few exceptions included the Tsenacommacah (or Powhatan) Confederation the English settlers would encounter in Jamestown, and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy described in the Hienwatha chronicle, which was organized on the shores of Onondaga Lake around 1450 and ultimately stretched from southern Canada



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through New York into Pennsylvania. According to tradition, the possibly mythical Peacegiver presented a plan for government, often referred to as “The Great Law.” Remembered by sachems and passed down from generation to generation, the Great Law grew to include 116 paragraphs that governed both tribal and personal behavior.

In the Southwest, groups with strong ties to Mexico began growing corn as early as 3,200 years ago, but they continued to follow a migratory life until about 400, when they began building larger and more substantial houses and limiting their migrations. The greatest change, however, came during the eighth century, when a shift in climate made the region drier and a pattern of late-summer thunderstorms triggered dangerous and erosive flash floods.

There seem to have been two quite different responses to this change in climate. A group called the Anasazi expanded their agricultural ways, cooperating to build flood-control dams and irrigation canals. The need for cooperative labor meant forming larger communities, and between about 900 and 1300, the Anasazi built whole cities of multi-story apartment houses along the high cliffs, safe from flooding but near their irrigated fields. In these densely populated towns, Anasazi craft specialists such as potters, weavers, basket makers, and tool smiths manufactured goods for the community while farmers tended fields and priests attended to the spiritual needs of the society.

Other major changes occurred in the Southwest after 1300. During the last quarter of the thirteenth century, a long string of summer droughts and bitterly cold winters forced the Anasazi to abandon their cities. They disappeared as a people, splitting into smaller communities that eventually became the various Pueblo groups. At the same time, an entirely new population of hunter-gatherers entered the region, bringing new technologies, including the bow and arrow, into the Southwest. About half of them continued to be hunter-gatherers, while the rest borrowed cultivating and home-building techniques from the Pueblos. Europeans who later entered the area called the hunter-gatherers Apaches and the settled agriculturalists Navajos.

Agriculture was practiced only marginally, if at all, in other regions. In areas like the Great Basin, desert conditions made agriculture too risky, and in California, the Northwest Coast, and the intermountain Plateau (see Map 1.1), the bounty of available wild foods made it unnecessary. In these regions, hunting and gathering remained the chief occupations. For example, the Nez Percés and their neighbors living in the Plateau region occupied permanent village sites in the winter but did not stay together in a single group all year. Rather, they formed task groups—temporary villages that came together to share the labor required to harvest a particular resource—and then went their separate ways when they completed the task. These task groups brought together not only people who lived in different winter villages but often people from different tribes and even different language groups. In such groups, political authority passed among those who were best qualified to supervise particular activities. If the task group was hunting, the best and most senior hunters—almost always men—exercised political authority. If the task group was gathering roots, then the best and most senior diggers—almost always women—ruled. Thus among such hunting-gathering people, political organization changed from season to season, and social status depended on what activities were most important to the group at a particular time.

As these examples illustrate, variations in daily life and social arrangements in pre-Columbian North America reflected variations in climate, soil conditions, food supplies, and cultural heritages from place to place across the vast continent. But despite the enormous size of the continent and the amazing variety of cultures spread across it, economic and social connections within and between ecological regions tied the people



together in complex ways. For example, varieties of shell found only along the Northwest Pacific Coast passed from hand to hand over thousands of miles of social and physical space to settlements as far away as Florida.

### A World of Change in Africa

Like North America, Africa was home to an array of societies that developed in response to varying natural and historical conditions. But unlike contemporary Indian groups, Africans maintained continual, if perhaps only sporadic, contacts with societies in Europe and Asia, societies to which they had at one time been intimately linked.

Tendrils of trade between the Mediterranean and **sub-Saharan Africa** can be traced back to ancient Egypt and before, but the creation of the Sahara Desert, the product of a 1,500-year-long drought that began about 4,500 years ago, cut most of Africa off from the fertile areas of the Mediterranean coast. The people living south of the new desert were forced largely to reinvent civilization in response to changing conditions. They abandoned the wheat and other grain crops that had predominated in earlier economies, domesticating new staples such as **millet** and native strains of rice. They also abandoned the cattle and horses that had been common in earlier times, adopting sheep and goats, which were better suited to arid environments. Depending on immediate conditions, groups could establish large villages and live on a balance of vegetables, meat, and milk or, if necessary, shift over to a purely nomadic lifestyle following their herds.

Social organization tended to follow a similar adaptive strategy. The entire region was dominated by a single group of people, speakers of closely related dialects of the common Bantu language (see Map 1.2). Among these Bantu descendants and their neighbors, the social structure was based on the belief that large subgroups were descended from a common **fictional ancestor**. These larger organizations were then subdivided into smaller and smaller groups, each independent—as a modern nuclear family might be—but tied through an elaborate family tree to hundreds or even thousands of other similar groups.

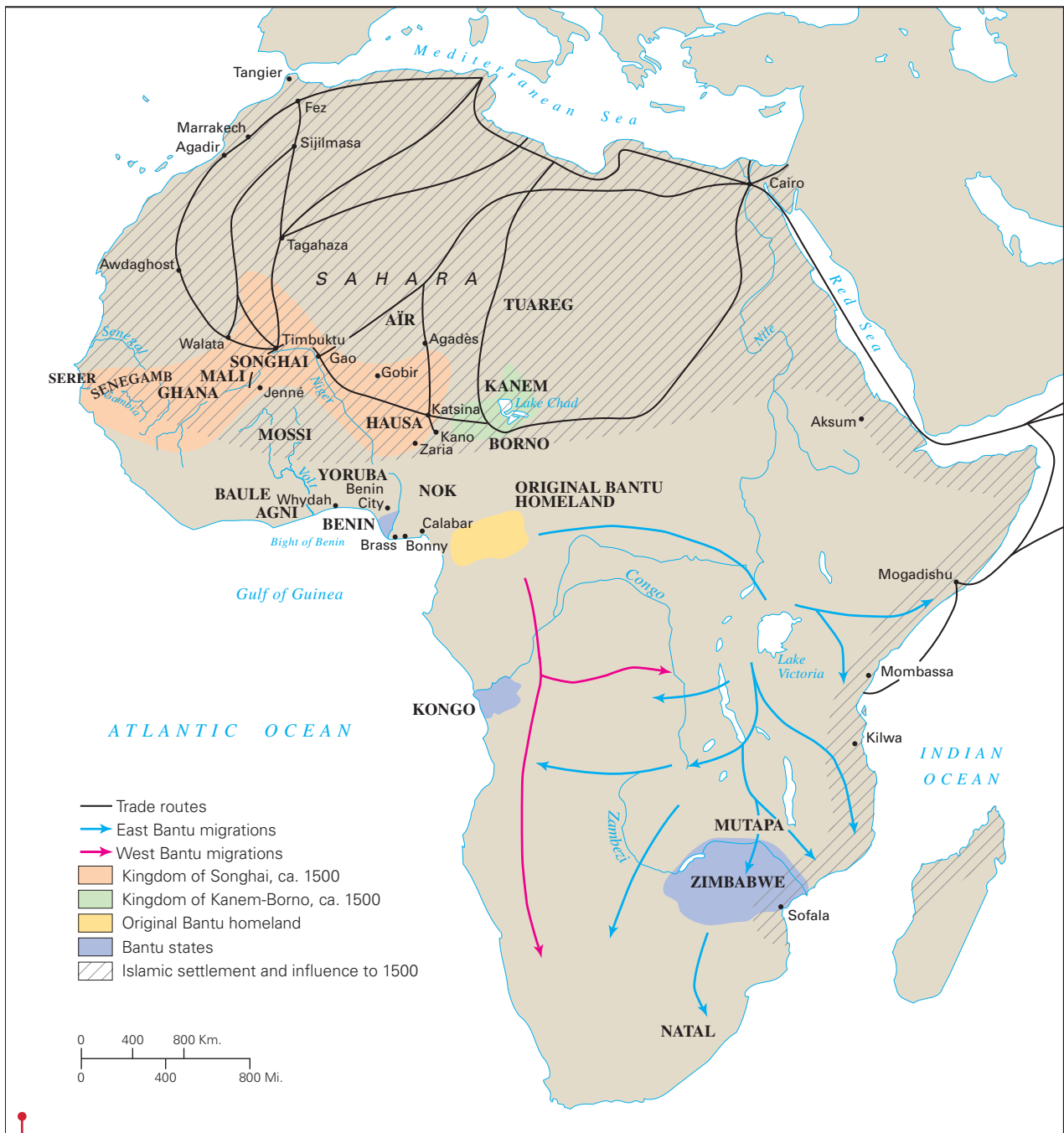
The status of each group was determined by seniority in the line of descent—those descended from the oldest offspring of the common ancestor were socially and politically superior to those descended from younger branches. This fundamental hierarchy created an organizational structure that permitted large-group cooperation and management when appropriate, but also permitted each small band to function independently when conditions required. Within each group, seniority also determined political and social status: the eldest descendant of the common ancestor within each group held superior power, whereas those on the lowest branch of the family tree were treated more or less as slaves.

Much of the technology in place in sub-Saharan Africa can be traced to common roots that preceded the formation of the desert. Evidence suggests that pottery and simple metallurgy were part of an ancient pan-African technological tradition. However, sometime between two and three thousand years ago, sub-Saharan groups appear to have discovered iron smelting. Craftsmen invented a furnace shaped like a long tube that permitted both the high heat and the air draft necessary for melting iron ore, thus making use of abundant raw iron deposits common in southern Africa to produce tools, vessels, and weapons. This discovery may, in fact, have aided the Bantu-speakers in their extensive expansion throughout most of the continent. It certainly gave African groups an edge in carving settlements out of the jungles and grasslands. Often, large cities with elaborate social hierarchies grew in neighborhoods where iron and other ores were

**sub-Saharan Africa** The region of Africa south of the Sahara Desert.

**millet** A large family of grain grasses that produce nutritious, carbohydrate-rich seeds used for both human and animal feed.

**fictional ancestor** A mythical figure believed by a social group to be its founder and from whom all members are believed to be biologically descended.



**MAP 1.2** Sub-Saharan Africa Before Sustained European Contact

During the many centuries that followed the formation of the Sahara Desert, Bantu people expanded throughout the southern half of Africa. They and other groups established a number of powerful kingdoms whose capitals served as major trading centers among these kingdoms and for Islamic traders, who finally penetrated the desert after the year 750.

# Investigating America

## A Moroccan Visits Sub-Saharan Africa

Ibn Battuta was 22 years old when he left his home in coastal Tangiers in 1325 for an extended trip to the Middle East and the great kingdoms of Sub-Saharan Africa. The young Muslim—a near contemporary of fellow traveler Marco Polo—made a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, the burial place of the prophet Mohammad, but then crossed the desert in a traders' caravan. The following is from his account of the trip.

.....  
“I reached the city of Mali, the capital of the king of the blacks. I stopped at the cemetery and went to the quarter occupied by the whites, where I asked for Muhammad ibn al-Faqih. I found that he had hired a house for me and went there. His son-in-law brought me candles and food, and next day Ibn al-Faqih himself came to visit me, with other prominent residents. I met the qadi of Malli, ‘Abd ar-Rahman, who came to see me; he is a negro, a pilgrim, and a man of fine character. I met also the interpreter Dugha, who is one of the principal men among the blacks. All these persons sent me hospitality-gifts of food and treated me with the utmost generosity—may God reward them for their kindnesses!

The sultan of Mali is Mansa Sulayman, “mansa” meaning [in Mandingo] sultan, and Sulayman being his proper name. He is a miserly king, not a man from whom one might hope for a rich present. It happened that I spent these two months without seeing him, on account of my illness. Later on he held a banquet in commemoration of our master [the late sultan of Morocco] Abu’l-Hasan, to which the commanders, doctors, qadi and preacher were invited, and I went along

with them. Reading-desks were brought in, and the Koran was read through, then they prayed for our master Abu’l-Hasan and also for Mansa Sulayman.

The negroes are of all people the most submissive to their king and the most abject in their behaviour before him. They swear by his name, saying ‘Mansa Sulayman ki’ [in Mandingo, ‘the emperor Sulayman has commanded’]. If he summons any of them while he is holding an audience in his pavilion, the person summoned takes off his clothes and puts on worn garments, removes his turban and dons a dirty skullcap, and enters with his garments and trousers raised knee-high. He goes forward in an attitude of humility and dejection and knocks the ground hard with his elbows, then stands with bowed head and bent back listening to what he says. If the sultan delivers any remarks during his audience, those present take off their turbans and put them down, and listen in silence to what he says.”  
.....

- Ibn Battuta’s Moroccan family was light-skinned Berbers, the descendants of the Arab Muslims who conquered North Africa shortly after the death of Muhammad. How did he regard the people of Mali?
- Why did Battuta, like Columbus after him, describe skin color? As with the Great Law of the Haudenosaunee, this document presents problems for the historian.
- How did the language barrier affect his perceptions? Battuta wrote in Arabic. How might later English translations of this document pose even greater obstacles to an understanding of the past?

particularly abundant. These would then become centers for trade as well as political hubs—the seeds from which later kingdoms and empires would sprout.

These trading centers became particularly important when Islamic expansion brought new, outside sources for trade into the sub-Saharan world. The first mention of trade between Islamic adventurers and African communities stems from the eighth century, and it seems to have developed slowly over the next several hundred years. One catalyst to the trade growth was the introduction of the camel as a draft animal. Native to Asia and the Arabian Peninsula, camels were ideally suited for crossing the inhospitable desert, making it possible to establish regular caravan routes that linked sub-Saharan trading centers with the outside world. Increasingly after 1100, metal goods—iron, gold, and precious gems—and slaves were carried across the desert by Arab, Berber, and other



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Muslim traders, who gave African middlemen silks, spices, and other foreign goods in exchange. This trade tended to enhance the power of African elites, leading to ever larger and more elaborate states.

## Exploiting Atlantic Opportunities

- ★ **How did various groups of Europeans seek to exploit opportunities that arose from new discoveries leading up to and following 1492?**
- ★ **Why did Columbus’s entry into the Western Hemisphere prove to be a major turning point in the development of the Atlantic world?**
- ★ **How did Native Americans and Africans respond initially to European expansion?**

Dynamic forces in America, Europe, Africa, and beyond seemed unavoidably to be drawing the disparate societies that occupied the Atlantic shore into a complex world of mutual experience. But this process was not automatic. Enterprising people throughout the globe seized opportunities created by the spirit of restlessness and the merging of historical streams, advancing the process and giving it peculiar shape. Those who sought to exploit the emerging new world, while generally seeking profits for themselves and advancement for their own nations, tribes, or classes, nonetheless had enormous impact on the lives of all who occupied it. The process of outreach and historical evolution that helped to launch the American experience grew directly from these efforts at exploitation.

### The Portuguese, Africa, and Plantation Slavery

The first of the European states to pull itself together was also the first to challenge Islamic dominance in both the Asian and African trade. Portugal’s John I encouraged exploration by establishing a school of navigation on his kingdom’s southwestern shore. Under the directorship of John’s son, **Henry the Navigator**, the school sent numerous expeditions in search of new sources of wealth. By the 1430s, the Portuguese had discovered and taken control of islands off the western shore of Africa, and within thirty years Prince Henry’s protégés had pushed their way to Africa itself, opening relations with the Songhai Empire.

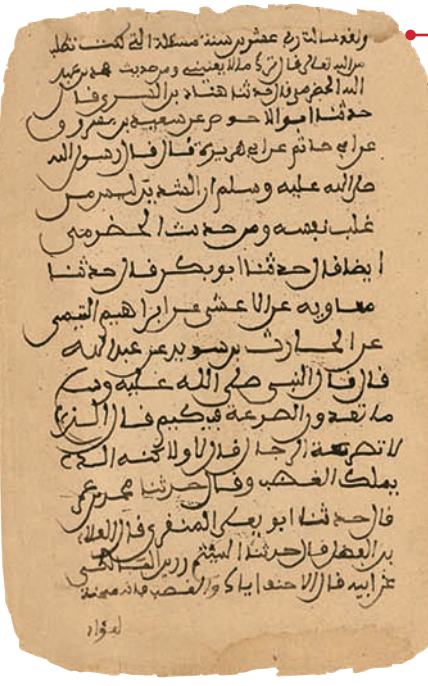
The **Songhai Empire** was typical of the sub-Saharan trading states that emerged through Muslim contacts (see Map 1.2). As was common in the region, the Songhai state consisted of numerous smaller societies, all related through a common ancestor and organized along hierarchical lines. Society remained largely village based, with slaves at the bottom, skilled craftsmen in the middle, and a small noble class at the top. These nobles assembled in Timbuktu, a trading hub and the Songhai capital, which became a cosmopolitan center where African and Islamic influences met. Its art, architecture, and the accomplishments of its scholars impressed all who ventured there. From Timbuktu, Songhai traders shipped valuable trade goods across the Sahara by means of caravans. The Portuguese, however, offered speedier shipment and higher profits by carrying trade goods directly to Europe by sea.

By the end of the fifteenth century, Portuguese navigators had gained control over the flow of prized items such as gold, ivory, and spices out of West Africa, and Portuguese colonizers were growing sugar and other crops on the newly conquered Azores and Canary Islands. From the beginning of the sixteenth century onward, the Portuguese also became increasingly involved in slave trafficking, at first to their own plantations and then to Europe itself. By 1550, Portuguese ships were carrying African slaves throughout the world.

**Henry the Navigator** Prince who founded an observatory and school of navigation and directed voyages that helped build Portugal’s colonial empire.

**Songhai Empire** A large empire in West Africa whose capital was Timbuktu; its rulers accepted Islam around the year 1000.





During the years before European penetration into the region, western Africa became a center for Islamic culture. Islamic scholars congregated at holy sites like the Sankoré Mosque in Timbuktu (left). Here they discussed Islamic law and wrote scholarly treatises like Sayyid al-Mukhtar ibn Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr al-Kunti al-Kabir's "An Argument for Peace," which emphasized the Qur'an's message of peace and harmony (right). Writings like these not only helped win more Africans over to Islam but also influenced Qur'anic scholarship throughout the expanding Muslim world. Left: Photo © www.danheller.com; right: Mamma Haidara Commemorative Library, Timbuktu, Mali.

### The Continued Quest for Asian Trade

Despite this, the Portuguese continued to venture eastward. In 1487, Bartolomeu Dias became the first European to reach the **Cape of Good Hope** at the southern tip of Africa. Ten years later, Vasco da Gama sailed around the cape and launched the Portuguese exploration of eastern Africa and the Indian Ocean.

By the end of the fifteenth century, England, Spain, and France were vying with Portugal to find the shortest, cheapest, and safest sea route between Europe and Asia. Because of its early head start, Portugal remained fairly cautious in its explorations, hugging the coast around Africa before crossing the ocean to India. As latecomers, Spain and England could not afford to take such a conservative approach to exploration. Voyagers from those countries took advantage of technologies borrowed from China and the Arab world to expand their horizons. From China, Europeans acquired the magnetic compass, which allowed mariners to know roughly in what direction they were sailing, even when out of sight of land. The **astrolabe**, an Arab invention that allowed seafarers to calculate the positions of heavenly bodies, also reduced the uncertainty of navigation. These inventions—together with improvements in steering mechanisms and hull design that improved a captain's control over his ship's direction, speed, and stability—made voyages much less risky.

Eager to capitalize on the new technology and knowledge, **Christopher Columbus**, an ambitious sailor from the Italian port city of Genoa, approached John II of Portugal in 1484 and asked him to support a voyage westward from Portugal, across the Atlantic, to the East Indies. The king refused when his geographers warned that Columbus had underestimated the distance. Undeterred, Columbus peddled his idea to various European governments over the next several years but found no one willing to take the risk. Finally, in 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella's defeat of the Moors provided Columbus with an opportunity.

The Spanish monarchs had just thrown off Islamic rule in the coastal province of Granada and were eager to break into overseas trading, dominated in the east by the

**Cape of Good Hope** A point of land projecting into the Atlantic Ocean at the southern tip of Africa; to trade with Asia, European mariners had to sail around the cape to pass from the South Atlantic into the Indian Ocean.

**astrolabe** An instrument for measuring the position of the sun and stars; using these readings, navigators could calculate their latitude—their distance north or south of the equator.

**Christopher Columbus** (Cristoforo Colombo) Italian explorer in the service of Spain who attempted to reach Asia by sailing west from Europe, thereby arriving in America in 1492.

**Bahamas** A group of islands in the Atlantic Ocean, east of Florida and Cuba.

**John Cabot** (Giovanni Caboto) Italian explorer who led the English expedition that sailed along the North American mainland in 1497.

**Amerigo Vespucci** Italian explorer of the South American coast; Europeans named America after him.

**New World** A term that Europeans used during the period of early contact and colonization to refer to the Americas, especially in the context of their discovery and colonization.

**Northwest Passage** The rumored and much-hoped-for water route from Europe to Asia by way of North America was sought by early explorers.

**Jacques Cartier** French explorer who, by navigating the St. Lawrence River in 1534, gave France its primary claim to territories in the New World.

Arabs and in the south and west by the Portuguese. Ferdinand and Isabella agreed to equip three ships in exchange for a short, safe route to the Orient. On August 3, 1492, Columbus and some ninety sailors departed on the *Niña*, *Pinta*, and *Santa Maria* for the uncharted waters of the Atlantic. More than three months later, they finally made landfall. Columbus thought he had arrived at the East Indies but, in fact, he had reached the islands we now call the **Bahamas**.

Over the next ten weeks, Columbus explored the mysteries of the Caribbean, making landfalls on the islands now known as Cuba and Hispaniola. He collected spices, coconuts, bits of gold, and some native captives. He described the natives as “a loving people” who, he thought, would make excellent servants. Columbus then returned to Spain, where he was welcomed with great celebration and rewarded with backing for three more voyages. Over the next several years, the Spanish gained a permanent foothold in the region that Columbus had discovered and became aware that the area was a world entirely new to them.

England, like Spain, was jealous of Portugal’s trade monopoly and, in 1497, Henry VII commissioned another Italian mariner, Giovanni Caboto, to search for a sea route to India. **John Cabot**, as the English called him, succeeded in crossing the North Atlantic. Shortly thereafter, another Italian, **Amerigo Vespucci**, sailing under the Spanish flag, sighted the northeastern shore of South America and sailed northward into the Caribbean in search of a passage to the East. Finally, in 1524, Giovanni da Verrazano, sailing for France, explored the Atlantic coast of North America, charting the coastline of what later became the English mainland colonies.

### A New Transatlantic World

At first, European monarchs greeted the discovery of a new world as bad news: they wanted access to the riches of Asia, not contact with some undiscovered place. As knowledge of the **New World** spread, the primary goal of exploration became finding a route around or through it—the fabled **Northwest Passage**. But gradually Europeans learned that the new land had attractions of its own.

Ambitious adventurers from Britain, France, and Iberia began exploring the fertile fishing grounds off the northern shores of North America. By 1506, such voyages became so commonplace and so profitable that the king of Portugal placed a 10 percent tax on fish imported from North America in an effort to harness this new source of wealth. But these voyages did more than feed the European imagination and the continent’s appetite for seafood. It appears that these fishermen established temporary camps along the shores of North America to provide land support for their enterprises. Gradually, as the Native Americans and the fishermen came to know each other, they began to exchange goods. Europeans, even relatively poor fishermen, had many things that the Indians lacked: copper pots, knives, jewelry, woolen blankets, and hundreds of other novelties. For their part, the Indians provided firewood, food, ivory, and furs. Apparently the trade grew quickly. By 1534, when **Jacques Cartier** made the first official exploration of the Canadian coast for the French government, he was approached by party after party of Indians offering to trade furs for the goods he carried. He could only conclude that many other Europeans had come before him.

The presence of explorers such as Verrazano and Cartier and of unknown numbers of anonymous fishermen and part-time traders had several effects on the native population. The Micmacs, Hurons, and other northeastern Indian groups approached the invading Europeans in friendship, eager to trade and to learn more about the strangers. In part this response was a sign of natural curiosity, but it also reflected some serious changes taking place in the native world of North America.

The onset of the Little Ice Age had far-reaching effects. As the climate grew colder, hunter-gatherers in the subarctic responded by withdrawing farther south, where they began to encroach on Algonquin and Iroquoian Indians. Meanwhile, the deteriorating climate made it more difficult for groups like the Haudenosaunee to depend on their corn crops for food. Forced to rely more on hunting and gathering, the Haudenosaunee had to expand their territory, and in doing so they came into conflict with their neighbors. As warfare became more common, groups increasingly formed alliances for mutual defense—systems like the Haudenosaunee League. And Indians found it beneficial to welcome European newcomers into their midst—as trading partners bearing new tools, as allies in the evolving conflicts with neighboring Indian groups, and as powerful magicians whose **shamans** might provide explanations and remedies for the hard times that had befallen them.

**shamans** People who act as a link between the visible material world and an invisible spirit world; a shaman's duties include healing, conducting religious ceremonies, and foretelling the future.

## The Challenges of Mutual Discovery

- ★ **How did Native Americans respond to increasing contact with European explorers and settlers?**
- ★ **In what ways did Europeans seek to incorporate Africans and Native Americans into their world of understanding?**
- ★ **In what ways was the world made different through the process called the Columbian Exchange?**

Europeans approached the New World with certain ideas in mind and defined what they found there in terms that reflected what they already believed. American Indians approached Europeans in the same way. Both of these groups—as well as Africans—were thrown into a new world of understanding that challenged many of their fundamental assumptions. They also exchanged material goods that affected their physical well-being profoundly.

### A Meeting of Minds in America

Most Europeans had a firm sense of how the world was arranged, who occupied it, and how they had come to be where they were. The existence of America—and even more the presence there of American Indians—challenged that secure knowledge. In the first stages of mutual discovery in America, most Europeans were content mentally to reshape what they found in the New World to fit with what they expected to find. Columbus expected to find India and Indians, and he believed that was precisely what he had found. Other Europeans understood that America was a new land and that the Indians were a new people, but they attempted to fit both into the cosmic map outlined in the Bible.

Columbus's initial comments about the American Indians set the tone for many future encounters. "Of anything that they possess, if it be asked of them, they never say no," Columbus wrote; "on the contrary, they invite you to share it and show as much love as if their hearts went with it." Such writings were widely circulated in Europe and led to a perception of the Indians as noble savages, men and women free from the temptations and vanities of modern civilization.

Not all Europeans held this view of American Indians. Amerigo Vespucci, for one, found them less than noble. "They marry as many wives as they please," he explained. "The son cohabits with mother, brother with sister, male cousin with female, and any man with the first woman he meets....Beyond the fact that they have no church, no



# Investigating America

## Columbus Meets the Tiano

The commercial nature of Columbus's expedition helps explain his initial reaction to the people he encountered on the island they called Guanahani. His description of the island's inhabitants includes not merely their appearance but their potential as trading partners. Columbus was primarily in search of gold, but he also asked the Tiano where he could find slaves. Columbus, a former resident of Madeira when captive Portuguese and African slaves were imported to plant sugar for European markets, was as interested in laborers as he was in trading partners. The following excerpt is from one of his letters to the Spanish monarchs.

.....  
**A**s I saw that they were very friendly to us, and perceived that they could be much more easily converted to our holy faith by gentle means than by force, I presented them with some red caps, and strings of beads to wear upon the neck, and many other trifles of small value, wherewith they were much delighted, and became wonderfully attached to us. Afterwards they came swimming to the ships' boats, bringing parrots, balls of cotton thread, spears and many other things which they exchanged for articles we gave them, such as glass beads, and hawks' bells; which trade was carried on with the utmost good will. But they seemed on the whole to me, to be a very poor people. They all go completely naked, even the women, though I saw but one girl. All whom I saw were young, not above thirty years of age, well made, with fine shapes and faces; their hair short, and coarse like that of a horse's tail, combed toward the forehead, except a small portion which they suffer to hang down behind, and never cut. Some paint themselves with black, which makes them appear like those of the Canaries [islands], neither black nor white; others with white, others with red, and others with such colors as they can find. Some paint the face, and some

the whole body; others only the eyes, and others the nose. Weapons they have none, nor are acquainted with them, for I showed them swords which they grasped by the blades, and cut themselves through ignorance. They have no iron. Their spears are certain reeds, without iron, though some have fish-bones or other things at the ends. They are all of a good size and stature, and handsomely formed. I saw some with scars of wounds upon their bodies, and demanded by signs the cause of them; they answered me in the same way, that there came people from the other islands in the neighborhood who endeavored to make prisoners of them, and they defended themselves. I thought then, and still believe, that these were from the continent. It appears to me, that the people are ingenious, and would be good servants and I am of opinion that they would very readily become Christians, as they appear to have no religion. They very quickly learn such words as are spoken to them. If it please our Lord, I intend at my return to carry home six of them to your Highnesses, that they may learn our language. I saw no beasts in the island, nor any sort of animals except parrots.

.....

- Why did Columbus's cultural perceptions lead him to believe that the Tiano would easily or willingly adopt Christianity?
- What evidence is there that people living in the Caribbean were not as impoverished as he reported? Why did he believe them to be poor?
- His report was written for Ferdinand and Isabella, who hoped to hear of precious metals and eastern spices. Still, given the Tianos' lack of iron, solid build, and alleged pacifism, why might Spain be pleased with this report?



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**idolaters** A person who practices *idolatry*—idol worship—a practice forbidden in the Judeo-Christian and Muslim traditions.

religion and are not **idolaters**, what more can I say?" Much more, actually. Vespucci reported that the Indians practiced cannibalism and prostitution and decorated themselves in gaudy and "monstrous" ways.

In some ways, the arrival of Europeans may have been easier for American Indians to understand and explain than the existence of American Indians was for the Europeans. To Indians, the world was alive, animated by a spiritual force that was both universal and intelligent. This force took on many forms. Some of these forms were visible in the everyday world of experience, some were visible only at special times, and some

were never visible. Social ties based on fictive kinship and **reciprocal trade** linked all creatures—human and nonhuman—together into a common cosmos. These connections were chronicled in myth and were maintained through ritual, which often involved the exchange of ceremonial items believed to have spiritual value. Such objects included quartz and volcanic-glass crystals, copper, mica, shells, and other rare and light-reflecting objects. In the pre-Columbian trading world, such prized goods passed from society to society, establishing a spiritual bond between the initial givers and the eventual receivers, even though the two groups might never meet.

Europeans and European goods slipped easily into this ceremonial trading system. The trade items that the Europeans generally offered to American Indians on first contact—glass beads, mirrors, brass bells—resembled closely the items that the Indians traditionally used to establish friendly spiritual and economic relations with strangers. The perceived similarity of the trade goods offered by the Europeans led Indians to accept the newcomers as simply another new group in the complex social cosmos uniting the spiritual and material worlds.

On the other hand, Europeans perceived such items as worthless trinkets, valuing instead Indian furs and Indian land. This difference in perception became a major source of misunderstanding and conflict. To the Indians, neither the furs nor the land was of much value because by their understanding, they did not “own” either. According to their beliefs, all things had innate spirits and belonged to themselves. Thus passing animal pelts along to Europeans was simply extending the social connection that had brought the furs into Indian hands in the first place. Similarly, according to Indian belief, people could not own land: the land was seen as a living being—a mother—who feeds, clothes, and houses people as long as she receives proper respect. The idea of buying or selling land was unthinkable to Indians. When Europeans offered spiritually significant objects in exchange for land on which to build, farm, or hunt, Indians perceived the offer as an effort to join an already existing relationship, and not as a contract transferring ownership.

### The Columbian Exchange

Even though Europeans and American Indians saw some similarities in each other, their worlds differed greatly, sometimes in ways hidden to both groups. The natural environments of these worlds were different, and the passage of people, plants, and animals among Europe, Africa, and North America wrought profound changes in all three continents. Historians call this process the **Columbian Exchange**.

Perhaps the most tragic trade among the three continents came about as the direct and unavoidable consequence of human contact. During the period leading up to the age of exploration, many Europeans lost their lives to epidemic diseases. The Black Death of the fourteenth century, for example, wiped out over a third of Europe’s population. Exposure to smallpox, measles, typhus, and other serious diseases often had devastating results, but Europeans gradually developed resistance to infection. In contrast, the Indian peoples whom Columbus and other European explorers encountered lived in an environment in which contagious diseases were never a serious threat until the Europeans arrived. They had no **acquired immunity** to the various bacteria and viruses that Europeans carried. As a result, the new diseases spread very rapidly and were much more deadly among the native peoples than they were among Europeans.

Controversy rages over the number of Indians killed by imported European diseases. Estimates of how many people lived in America north of Mexico in 1492 run from a high of 25 million to a low of 1 million. At the moment, most scholars accept a range of 3 to

**reciprocal trade** A system of trading in which the objective is equal exchange of commodities rather than profit.

**Columbian Exchange** The exchange of people, plants, and animals among Europe, Africa, and North America that occurred after Columbus’s arrival in the New World.

**acquired immunity** Resistance or partial resistance to a disease; acquired immunity develops in a population over time as a result of exposure to harmful bacteria or viruses.

10 million. Even if the most conservative estimate is correct, the raw numbers of people who died of smallpox, typhus, measles, and other imported diseases were enormous. In areas of early and continuing association between Europeans and Indians, between 90 and 95 percent of the native population appear to have died of disease during the first century of contact. Although the percentage was probably lower in areas where contact was infrequent and where native populations were sparse, disease took a terrible toll as it followed the lines of kinship and trade that held native North America together.

Disease, however, did not flow in only one direction. Some diseases that originated in Africa found their way to both North America and Europe and at least one, **syphilis**, may have originated in the Western Hemisphere and migrated eastward. American Indians appear to have been less debilitated physically by syphilis, to which they may have possessed partial immunity. Africans were largely unaffected by various **malarial** fevers that ravaged both European and native populations. Europeans found measles to be a mildly unpleasant childhood disease, but it was a mass killer for both Africans and Indians. The march of exchanged diseases across the North American landscape and their effects on various populations provided a constant backdrop for the continent's and for global history.

Less immediate but perhaps equally extreme ecological effects arose from the passage of plants among Europe, North America, and Africa. The introduction of plants into the New World extended a process that had been taking place for centuries in the Old World. Trade with Asia had carried exotic plants such as bananas, sugar cane, and rice into Africa as early as 2,300 years ago. From Africa, these plants were imported to Iberian-claimed islands such as the Canaries and eventually to America, where, along with cotton, indigo, coffee, and other imports, they would become **cash crops** on European-controlled plantations. Grains such as wheat, barley, and millet were readily transplanted to some areas in North America, as were grazing grasses and various vegetables, including turnips, spinach, and cabbage.

North American plants also traveled from west to east in the Columbian Exchange. Leading the way in economic importance was tobacco, a stimulant used widely in North America for ceremonial purposes and broadly adopted by Europeans and Africans as a recreational drug. Another stimulant, cocoa, also enjoyed significant popularity among Old World consumers. In addition, New World vegetables helped to revolutionize world food supplies. Remarkably easy to grow, maize thrived virtually everywhere. In addition, the white potato, tomato, **manioc**, squash, and beans native to the Western Hemisphere were soon cultivated throughout the world. Animals also moved in the Columbian Exchange. Europeans brought horses, pigs, cattle, oxen, sheep, goats, and domesticated fowl to America, where their numbers soared.

The transplanting of European grain crops and domesticated animals reshaped the American landscape. The contours of the land changed as trees and undergrowth were cleared; and the flow of water, the distribution of seeds, the nesting of birds, and the movement of native animals were altered by plowing and fencing. Gradually, imported livestock pushed aside native species, and imported plants choked out indigenous ones.

Probably the most important and far-reaching environmental impact of the Columbian Exchange was its overall influence on human populations. Although exchanged diseases killed many millions of Indians and lesser numbers of Africans and Europeans, the transplantation of North American plants significantly expanded food production in what had been marginal areas of Europe and Africa. At the same time, the environmental changes that Europeans wrought along the Atlantic shore of North America permitted

**syphilis** An infectious disease usually transmitted through sexual contact; if untreated, it can lead to paralysis and death.

**malarial** Related to malaria, an infectious disease characterized by chills, fever, and sweating; malaria is often transmitted through mosquito bites.

**cash crops** A crop raised in large quantities for sale rather than for local or home consumption.

**manioc** Also called cassava, a root vegetable native to South America that became a staple food source throughout the tropical world after 1500.



the region to support many more people than it had sustained under Indian cultivation. The overall result in Europe and Africa was a population explosion that eventually spilled over to repopulate a devastated North America.

### New Worlds in Africa and America

As the Columbian Exchange redistributed plants, animals, and populations among Europe, Africa, and North America, it permanently altered the history of both hemispheres. In North America, for example, the combination of disease, environmental transformation, and immigrant population pressure changed American Indian life and culture in profound ways.

Clearly, imported disease had the most ruinous influence on the lives of Indians. Cooperative labor was required for hunting and gathering, and native groups that continued to depend on those activities faced extinction if disease caused a shortage of labor. Also, most societies in North America were **nonliterate**: elders and storytellers passed on their collective knowledge from one generation to another. Wholesale death by disease wiped out these bearers of practical, religious, and cultural knowledge. The result of this loss was confusion and disorientation among survivors. In an effort to avert extinction, remnant groups banded together to share labor and lore. Members of formerly self-sustaining kinship groups joined together in composite villages or, in some cases, intertribal leagues or confederacies. And the devastation that European diseases wrought eased the way for the

**nonliterate** Lacking a system of reading and writing, relying instead on storytelling and mnemonic (memory-assisting) devices such as pictures.



Parties of captured villagers from Africa's interior were bound together and marched to trading centers on the coast, where they were sold to European or Arab traders. The slave drivers were heavily influenced by outside contact. One of those shown here is wearing an Arab-influenced turban, whereas the clothing of the other is more European. Note, too, that the latter carries both a gun and a traditional African spear. The Granger Collection.

deeper penetration of Europeans into North America as Indians sought alliances with the newcomers in order to gain new tools, new sources of information, and new military partners, pushing Indians into increasingly tangled relationships with Europeans.

The Columbian Exchange also severely disrupted life in Africa. Africa had long been a key supplier of labor in the Old World. The ancient Egyptians had imported slaves from Ethiopia and other regions south of the Sahara Desert, a practice that continued through Roman times. But it was Islamic traders who turned the enslavement of Africans into a thriving enterprise. When North African Muslims established regular caravan routes across the desert into sub-Saharan Africa, slaves quickly became a dominant trade item, second only to gold in overall value. Perhaps as many as 4 million slaves were carried across the desert between 800 and the time the Portuguese redirected the trade in the sixteenth century.

Portuguese entry revolutionized this economy. European technology, wealth, and ideas fostered the development of aggressive centralized states along the **Slave Coast** on the western shore of Africa’s Gulf of Guinea (see Map 1.3). Armed with European firearms, aggressive tribes such as the Ashanti engaged in large-scale raiding deep into the Niger and Congo River regions. These raiders captured millions of prisoners, whom they herded back to the coast and sold to Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, and other European traders to supply labor for mines and plantations in the New World.

It is difficult to determine the number of people sold in the West African slave trade between 1500 and 1870. The most recent estimates suggest that more than 9.5 million enslaved Africans arrived in the New World during this three-hundred-year period. And they were only a small portion of the total number of Africans victimized by the system. On average, between 10 and 20 percent of the slaves shipped to the Americas died in transit. Adding in the numbers who were shipped to other locations in the Eastern Hemisphere, who were kept in slavery within Africa, and who died during the raids and on the marches to the coast yields a staggering total.

**Slave Coast** A region of coastal West Africa adjacent to the Gold Coast; it was the principal source of the slaves taken out of West Africa from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth century.

### A New World in Europe

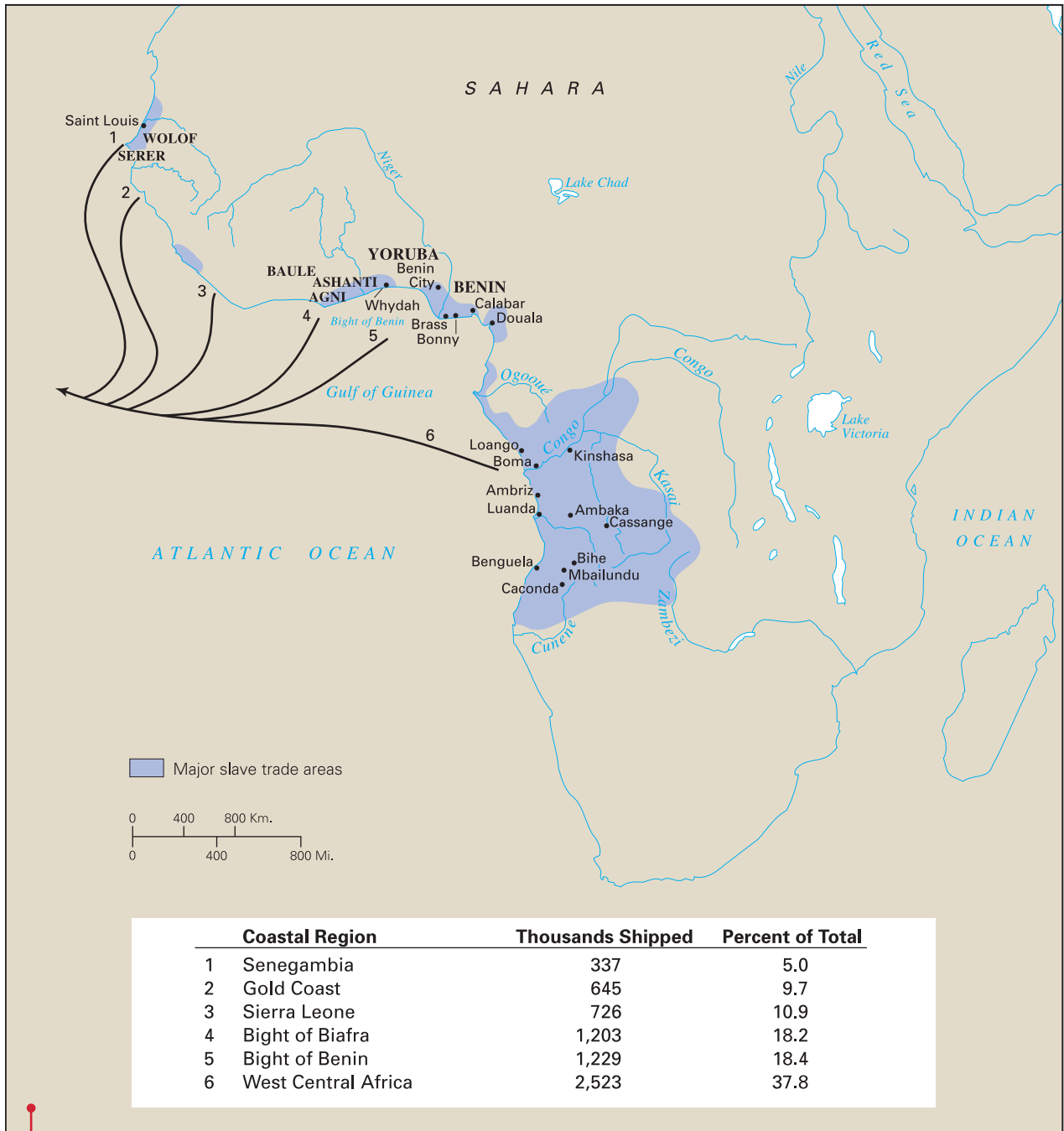
The discovery of America and the Columbian Exchange also had staggering repercussions on life in Europe. New economic opportunities and new ideas demanded new kinds of political and economic organization. The discovery of the New World clearly forced a new and more modern society onto Europeans.

Europe’s population was already rising when potatoes, maize, and other New World crops began to revolutionize food production. Populations then began to soar despite nearly continuous wars and a flood of migration to the New World. With populations on the rise and overseas empires to run, European rulers and their advisers saw that centralized states appeared to offer the most promising device for harnessing the riches of the New World while controlling ever-increasing numbers of people at home. The sons and daughters of Europe’s first generation of **absolute monarchs** chose to continue the consolidation of authority begun by their parents.

As Europeans responded to social, political, and economic changes, traditional patterns of authority broke down, especially in the realm of religion. A particularly devastating blow to religious authority came from the pen of Martin Luther, a German monk. Luther preached that salvation was God’s gift to the faithful. In 1517 he presented a set of arguments, the **Ninety-five Theses**, maintaining that only individual repentance and the grace of God could save sinners. The implications of this simple formula were profound: if Luther was right, then Christians could achieve salvation without the intercession of the Roman Catholic or any other church, undermining the keystone of both religious and political authority upon which order in Europe was based.

**absolute monarchs** The ruler of a kingdom in which every aspect of national life—including politics, religion, the economy, and social affairs—comes under royal authority.

**Ninety-five Theses** A document prepared by Martin Luther in 1517 protesting certain Roman Catholic practices that he believed were contrary to the will of God as revealed in Scripture.



**MAP 1.3 Western Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade**

Africa's western shore was the major source for slaves that were transported to European colonies on the Atlantic islands, the Caribbean islands, and mainland North and South America. Powerful coastal kingdoms mounted organized raids into many inland areas to capture people who were then marched to the coast for shipment to the New World. This map shows the several regions from which slaves were extracted, and the accompanying table gives approximate numbers of people who were exported from each.

**Reformation** The sixteenth-century rise of Protestantism, with the establishment of state-sponsored Protestant churches in England, the Netherlands, parts of Germany and Switzerland, and elsewhere.

**the Elect** According to Calvinism, the people chosen by God for salvation.

**Protestantism** From the root word protest, the beliefs and practices of Christians who broke with the Roman Catholic Church; rejecting church authority, the doctrine of “good works,” and the necessity of the priesthood, Protestants accepted the Bible as the only source of revelation, salvation as God’s gift to the faithful, and a direct, personal relationship with God as available to every believer.

**divine right** The idea that monarchs derive their authority to rule directly from God and are accountable only to God.

**Holy Roman Empire** A political entity, authorized by the Catholic Church in 1356, unifying central Europe under an emperor elected by four princes and three Catholic archbishops.

**Henry VIII** King of England (r. 1509–1547); his desire to annul his first marriage led him to break with Catholicism and establish the Church of England.

**Elizabeth I** Queen of England (r. 1558–1603); she succeeded the Catholic Mary I and reestablished Protestantism in England; her reign was a time of domestic prosperity and cultural achievement.

**dissenters** People who do not accept the doctrines of an established or national church.

Luther’s ideas took root among a generation of theologians who were dissatisfied with the corruption and superstition they found in the medieval Catholic Church, launching the period known as the **Reformation**. A Frenchman, John Calvin, further undermined the church’s authority by suggesting that God had preselected only some people for salvation. Calvin called these individuals **the Elect**. For all others, no earthly effort—no good works, no prayers, no church intervention—could save them. Thus neither popes nor kings had any claim to authority, and no one held the keys to salvation except God, but happiness on earth might be attained by wresting worldly authority from the hands of kings and putting it into the hands of the Elect.

The doctrines of Luther, Calvin, and others who wanted to reform the Catholic Church formed an ideology known as **Protestantism** that appealed to a broad audience in the rapidly changing European world of the sixteenth century. Ever critical of entrenched authority, the new doctrines attracted lawyers, bureaucrats, merchants, and manufacturers, whose economic and political status was on the rise thanks to increased prosperity generated by the Columbian Exchange. But many in the ruling classes also found aspects of the new theology attractive. In Germany, Luther’s challenge to the priesthood, and by extension to the Catholic Church itself, led many local princes to question the **divine right** to authority claimed by the ruler of the **Holy Roman Empire**. Similarly, **Henry VIII** of England, at one time a critic of Luther’s ideas, found Protestantism convenient when he wanted to resist the authority of the pope and expand English national power.

Henry VIII, the son of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, was the first undisputed heir to the English throne in several generations, and he was consumed with the desire to avoid renewed civil war by having a son who could inherit the Crown. When his wife, Catherine of Aragon, daughter of Spain’s Ferdinand and Isabella, failed to bear a boy, Henry demanded in 1527 that Pope Clement VII grant him an annulment and permission to marry someone else. Fearful of Spanish reprisals on Catherine’s behalf, Clement refused. In desperation, Henry launched an English Reformation by seizing the Catholic Church in England, gaining complete control of it by 1535.

Henry was not a staunch believer in the views aired by Luther and others, but the idea of unifying religious and civil authority under his personal control did appeal to him. In addition, the Catholic Church owned extensive and valuable lands in England, estates that Henry could use to enhance his wealth and power. He needed Protestant support in his war against the pope’s authority, so he reluctantly opened the door to Protestant practices in his newly created Church of England.

After Henry’s death, his sickly, 9-year-old son—finally born to his third wife, Jane Seymour—ascended the throne as Edward VI. In the absence of a strong king, Protestants had virtual free rein, and the pace of reform quickened. Young King Edward, however, died after ruling for only six years. Mary, his oldest half-sister, succeeded him. The daughter of Henry’s first wife, Mary, had married Philip II of Spain and was a devout Roman Catholic. She attempted to reverse the reforming trend, cruelly suppressing Protestantism by executing several hundred leading reformers. But her brutality only drove the movement underground and made it more militant. By the time her half-sister Elizabeth, who was born and raised a Protestant, inherited the crown in 1558, the Protestant underground had become powerful and highly motivated. In fact, **Elizabeth I** spent her entire half-century reign trying to reach a workable settlement with Protestant **dissenters** that would permit them free worship without endangering her control over church and state.



# Summary

Making America began many thousands of years ago. Over millennia, the continent's residents continually crafted economic strategies, social arrangements, and political systems to preserve and enhance their lives. The result was a rich and flourishing world of different cultures, linked by common religious and economic bonds.

At first, the arrival of Europeans only added another society to an already cosmopolitan sphere. But ultimately, the dynamic European society that arose after the Crusades and plagues of the Middle Ages became more intrusive. As a result, Native Americans faced challenges that they had never imagined: economic crises, disease, war, and the unfolding environmental changes wrought by the Europeans who followed Columbus.

In addition, influences from the New World reached out to accelerate processes that were already affecting the Old. The flow of wealth and food out of the West was

increasing populations, and this growth, with the accompanying rise of powerful kings and unified nations, led to continuing conflict over newfound resources. In Africa, strong coastal states raided weaker neighboring groups, more than doubling the flow of slaves out of Africa. This, in turn, influenced further developments in America. As disease destroyed millions of Indians, newcomers from the entire Atlantic rim poured in to replace them. These newcomers came from very different physical environments and had distinctly foreign ideas about nature. Their novel practices and ideas helped to create a new America on top of the old, rendering drastic changes to the landscape. Continuing interactions among these various newcomers, and between them and the survivors of America's original people, would launch the process of Making America.

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## CHAPTER 2

# A Continent on the Move 1400–1725

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### *The New Europe and the Atlantic World*

Spanish Expansion in America  
Dreams of an English Eden  
The Decline of Spanish Power

#### *European Empires in America*

The Troubled Spanish Colonial Empire  
The Dutch Enterprise

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Las Casas  
Debates Indian Rights, 1550

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** The Felt Hat Fad  
The French Presence in America

#### *Indians and the European Challenge*

The Indian Frontier in New Spain

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** The Pueblo Revolt of 1680

The Indian World in the Southeast

The Indian World in the Northeast

The New Indian World of the Plains

#### *Conquest and Accommodation in a Shared New World*

New Spain's Northern Frontiers

The Dutch Settlements

Life in French Louisiana

#### *Summary*

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Bartolomé de Las Casas

In 1550, Spanish church officials ordered a council of learned theologians to assemble in the city of Valladolid to hear a debate over an issue so important that it challenged the entire underpinning of Spain's New World empire. At issue was the question of whether Native American Indians were human beings. Arguing that they were not was the well-respected scholar Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda. Arguing on the Indians' behalf was a former conquistador and **encomendero** named Bartolomé de Las Casas.

Born in 1474, Las Casas was the son of a merchant in Seville. His family was privileged enough that young Bartolomé had both access and the leisure time to study at Seville's cathedral school. Like many of his contemporaries, Las Casas decided to pursue a military career, going to Granada as a soldier in 1497. Then, in 1502, he embarked to the West Indies to seek his fortune in the conquest of the Americas.

Las Casas was successful as a **conquistador**: within a few years he had earned an imperial land grant with a full complement of Indian laborers. Meeting the demands of both church and king, he taught the Indians Catholicism but exploited their labor. Unlike many of his neighbors, Las Casas came to believe that Indians were every bit as much the children of God as the Spanish, and he took his religious duty to them seriously. Las Casas eventually took the vows to become a priest and devoted himself to the spiritual protection of the Indians. He devised a plan that would organize Indians into farming communities under church protection, allowing them to become self-sufficient contributors to the Spanish Empire. His plan won support from the archbishop of Toledo and the Spanish Parliament. In 1519 he was given permission to start an experimental community in what is now Venezuela, but Indians in the region understandably were suspicious and Spanish landlords were hostile. Despite this setback, Las Casas remained convinced that

### BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS

A former conquistador, Bartolomé de Las Casas was ordained as a Catholic priest in 1512 and became one of the most vocal opponents of Spain's brutal exploitation of Native American people. He was responsible for major reforms in the way Spaniards were supposed to treat Indians. Las Casas brought his biblical learning and his New World experience to bear, winning the debate and Catholic support for continued reforms in Spanish colonial policy.

Bartholome de Las Casas (1474–1566) (oil on panel) (see also 129762), Spanish School, (16th century)/(Archivo de Indias, Seville, Spain/Mithra-Index/The Bridgeman Art Library



Indians deserved full Christian recognition. He joined the Dominican order in 1523 and began writing a history of the Spanish Empire in America. Las Casas then took his case personally to Spain. In 1540, he petitioned for an audience with King Charles V. As he waited for Charles to respond, he wrote a report, *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (“A Brief Report on the Destruction of the Indians”) summarizing his experiences and views.

By the time he finally met with Charles V, Las Casas was well prepared to argue for wholesale reform of Spanish Indian policy in America. And Charles was convinced. He signed a series of new laws in 1542—the *Leyes Nuevas*—reforming the *encomienda* system and placing Indian relations under church authority. To ensure that these reforms would be carried out, Las Casas was appointed bishop of Chiapas and sent back to the New World with forty fellow Dominicans to oversee the enforcement of the laws.

Las Casas served as bishop until 1547, when hostility from landowners in America and growing opposition to humane colonization at home prompted him to return to Spain. The chief spokesman for that growing opposition was Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, a well-respected scholar. Speaking for Spanish investors and politicians who, like himself, had never been to the Western Hemisphere, Sepúlveda based his argument solely on logic and Scripture. According to his view, it was impossible for Native Americas to be descendants of Adam and Eve; they were, in his words, “as apes are to men.” As such, Indians did not deserve protection from the church. Las Casas countered with firsthand evidence, drawing on his varied experiences as priest, historian, conquistador, and *encomendero* in an attempt to prove that Indians truly were human beings.

Despite Sepúlveda’s great learning and his influence at court, he lost the debate: his writings were denied official recognition by the church, whereas Las Casas’s were accepted. But this official victory for Las Casas made little immediate difference. Although Sepúlveda’s views were rejected by the church, they were embraced by conquistadors. In arguing effectively for the recognition of Indians as human beings, however, Las Casas established an undercurrent of official disapproval that served as a braking mechanism against the extreme abuse of the Native population. The resulting three-way tension—between those who would exploit the Indians, those who sought to protect them, and the Indians themselves—would shape the colonial process and would punctuate life in the Americas for generations to come.

**encomendero** A land owner/proprietor in the *encomienda* system, Spain’s system of bonded labor in which Indians were assigned to Spanish plantation and mine owners in exchange for a tax payment and an agreement to “civilize” and convert them to Catholicism.

**conquistadors** Spanish soldiers who conquered Indian civilizations in the New World.

This debate focused early attention on a situation that all European colonizers would have to face. Despite Sepúlveda’s claims, the population native to the Americas *was* human. Of course, changing natural conditions and the influx of new forces such as epidemic disease had weakened them, but for centuries successful European settlement continued to require Indian cooperation. Court-based scholars like Sepúlveda might fool themselves into thinking that the Indians did not matter, but experienced veterans like Las Casas knew better. Conflicts with the Indians could spell disaster for vulnerable overseas colonies.

Conflicts with other imperial powers could lead to disaster as well. It was virtually inevitable that other nations would join Spain in seeking a share of the wealth promised

# Chronology

<b>1494</b>	Treaty of Tordesillas	<b>1608</b>	French-Huron alliance
<b>1500</b>	Portuguese discover Brazil	<b>1609</b>	Henry Hudson sails up Hudson River; Spanish found Santa Fe in present-day New Mexico
<b>1512</b>	Creation of the <i>encomienda</i> system	<b>1623</b>	Beginning of Dutch-Iroquois League alliance
<b>1519–1521</b>	Hernando Cortés invades Mexico	<b>1627</b>	Creation of Company of New France
<b>1532</b>	Pizarro conquers Peru	<b>ca. 1640</b>	Dutch take over Atlantic slave trade
<b>1542</b>	Las Casas convinces Spain to implement the Leyes Nuevas	<b>1645</b>	Dutch West India Company reorganized under Peter Stuyvesant
<b>1551</b>	Council of Valladolid rules that American Indians are human beings with souls	<b>1680</b>	Pueblo Revolt
<b>1558</b>	Elizabeth I becomes queen of England	<b>1683</b>	La Salle expedition down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico
<b>1565</b>	Spanish found St. Augustine in present-day Florida	<b>ca. 1700</b>	Beginning of French-Choctaw alliance
<b>1588</b>	English defeat Spanish Armada		West Indies dominate world sugar production
<b>1598</b>	Don Juan de Oñate destroys Ácoma pueblo		

by the New World. Forced into a defensive posture and unable to fend off the ambitions of numerous European rivals, Spain had to watch as the Dutch and the French carved out substantial inroads into North America.

The presence of so many, and such varied, Europeans presented both challenges and exceptional opportunities for Indians. In areas where a single European power was asserting dominance, Indians could often do little but bear up under relentless economic and religious pressures. Sometimes the encounter facilitated friendship, intermarriage, and the formation of complex composite societies; sometimes it led to open hostilities and even war. But in areas where two or more European powers were contesting for control, Indians could take advantage of their pivotal position and play one side against the other in seeking their own ends.

The constant interplay among different European traditions, a novel physical environment, and a dynamic Indian presence forged a series of new societies across the North American continent. Throughout the colonial era and beyond, these hybrid societies continued to influence historical development and to color the life of the people and the nation.

## The New Europe and the Atlantic World

- ★ **Why did European rulers promote exploration and colonization in North America?**
- ★ **How did religious and political rivalries influence how each European power approached New World colonization?**

Expansion into the New World and the subsequent economic and political pressures of colonization aggravated the crisis of authority in Europe. Eager to enlist political allies against Protestants, popes of this era used land grants in the New World as rewards to



faithful monarchs. At the same time, Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, constantly fearful of being outflanked by Catholic adversaries, promoted the development of a powerful English navy and geographical exploration as defensive measures.

### Spanish Expansion in America

Spain's entry into Atlantic exploration first sparked a diplomatic crisis between the Spanish and Portuguese. Portugal feared that Spain's intrusion might endanger its hard-won trading enterprises in Africa and the Atlantic islands. Spain, however, claimed the right to explore freely. In 1493, the pope settled the dispute by drawing a line approximately 300 miles west of Portugal's westernmost holdings. Spanish exploration, he declared, was to be confined to areas west of the line (that is, to the New World) and Portuguese activity to areas east of it (to Africa and India). A year later, Spain and Portugal updated the agreement in the **Treaty of Tordesillas**, which moved the line an additional 1,000 miles westward. Most of the Western Hemisphere fell exclusively to Spain.

Over the next several decades, the Spanish monarchs recruited hardened veterans of the Reconquista (see page 6) to lead its New World colonization efforts. **Hernando Cortés** was one such figure. Cortés landed on the mainland of Mexico in 1519 with an army of six hundred soldiers. Within three years he and his small force had conquered the mighty Aztec Empire. Although it is tempting to suppose that Cortés's victory was the product of technological superiority, his weapons made less difference in the outcome than did several other factors. More important than guns were the warhorses and attack dogs that Cortés used to instill fear. Even more important than these, however, was the Spanish philosophy of war, which emphasized hard strikes against both armed and civilian targets. This type of campaign stood in stark contrast to the Aztec art of war, which was much more ceremonial in nature and limited in scope. Cortés was also adept at cultivating diplomatic advantages. An Indian woman whom he called Doña Marina served as his translator and cultural adviser, and with her help the conquistadors gained military support from numerous tribes of Mexican Indians who resented the Aztecs' power and their continuous demands for tribute. And finally, smallpox and other European germs weakened the Aztecs during the two years in which Cortés maintained strained but peaceful relations with them.

The Spanish Crown supported many other exploratory ventures designed to bring new regions under Spain's control. In 1513 and again in 1521, Juan Ponce de León led expeditions to Florida. Following up on these voyages, Pánfilo de Narváez embarked on a colonizing mission to Florida in 1527. Traveling with him was an enslaved Moor, Esteban, perhaps the first African to step foot in what is now the United States. When the party became stranded, Apalachees killed most of its members but took a few captives. One of these captives, Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, escaped with three others in 1534. The stories they told upon returning to Mexico led the Spanish to send Hernando de Soto to claim the Mississippi River, and he penetrated into the heart of the mound builders' territory in present-day Louisiana and Mississippi. One year later, **Francisco Vázquez de Coronado** left Mexico to look for seven cities that Cabeza de Vaca had heard glittered with gold. Coronado eventually crossed what are now the states of New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

Coronado never found Cabeza de Vaca's "cities of gold," but other Spaniards located enormous sources of wealth. In Bolivia, Colombia, and north-central Mexico, rich silver deposits rewarded the conquistadors. Enslaving local Indians for labor, Spanish officials everywhere in the New World quickly moved to rip precious metals out of the ground

**Treaty of Tordesillas** The agreement, signed by Spain and Portugal in 1494, that moved the line separating Spanish and Portuguese claims to territory in the non-Christian world, giving Spain most of the Western Hemisphere.

**Hernando Cortés** Spanish soldier and explorer who conquered the Aztecs and claimed Mexico for Spain.

### Francisco Vázquez de Coronado

Spanish soldier and explorer who led an expedition northward from Mexico in search of fabled cities of gold, passing through present-day New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Oklahoma, and Kansas, giving Spain a claim to most of the American Southwest.



Acting on information collected from Indians on Mexico's frontiers, in 1540 Francisco Vázquez de Coronado set out to find seven cities of gold rumored to exist in the northern wilderness. Though his party crisscrossed much of the American Southwest, venturing as far as modern-day Kansas, they found no golden cities. Such parties, however, increased the Spaniards' knowledge of America and, through numerous encounters, increased Americans' knowledge of these strange invaders. The Granger Collection, New York.

and from what they characterized as “heathen temples.” Between 1545 and 1660, Indian and later African slaves extracted over 7 million pounds of silver from Spanish-controlled areas, twice the volume of silver held by all of Europe before 1492. In the process, Spain became the richest nation in Europe, perhaps in the world.

### **Dreams of an English Eden**

Given the stormy political and religious climate that prevailed during the sixteenth century, it is not surprising that Spain's successes in the New World stirred up conflict with the other emerging states in Europe. To England and France especially, the massive flow of wealth made Spanish power a growing threat that had to be checked. The continuing religious controversies that accompanied the Reformation worsened the situation. Economic, religious, and political warfare was the rule throughout the century. One of the most celebrated of these early conflicts involved Spain and England.

Tension between Spain and England had been running high ever since Henry VIII had annulled the marriage to his Spanish wife, Catherine of Aragon. That he quit the Catholic Church to do so and began permitting Protestant reforms in England added to the affront. Firmly wedded to the Catholic Church politically and religiously, Spain was aggressive in denouncing England. For his part, Henry was concerned primarily with domestic issues and steered away from direct confrontations with Spain or any of the other outraged Catholic countries.

The main exception to Henry's isolationism was an effort to bring Ireland and other outlying parts of his realm more firmly under his control. In 1541 Henry assumed the title “King of Ireland” and used his new status to institute both religious and political reforms. He confiscated lands controlled by Irish Catholic monasteries and the estates

of local lords who opposed him, channeling the money into building a stronger administrative structure. During the years to come, both Henry's heirs and the **Stuart kings** who would follow them continued a systematic policy of colonization in Ireland. In the process, English authorities instituted a new set of colonial offices and encouraged generations of military adventurers, both of which would shape and advance later ventures in North America.

During the reign of Henry's younger daughter, Elizabeth, the continuing flow of New World wealth into Spain and that nation's anti-Protestant aggression led to an upturn in hostile activity. When Philip II of Spain, Elizabeth's brother-in-law and most vehement critic, sent an army of twenty thousand soldiers to root out Protestantism in **the Netherlands**, only a few miles across the English Channel, the queen began providing covert aid to the Protestants rebels. Elizabeth also struck at Philip's most valuable and vulnerable possession: his New World empire. In 1577 Elizabeth authorized English **privateer** and explorer Francis Drake to attack Spanish ships in the area reserved for Spain under the Treaty of Tordesillas.

Elizabeth was open to virtually any venture that might vex her troublesome brother-in-law. New World colonizing efforts promised to do that and had the potential for enriching the kingdom as well. Although Elizabeth's father had confiscated and redistributed large tracts of church-owned land, farmland was becoming extremely scarce, and members of both the traditional nobility and the **gentry**—a class that was becoming increasingly important because of its investments in manufacturing and trading ventures—wanted more space for expansion. A relatively small kingdom, England could acquire more territory only by carving it out of the New World.

Thus in 1578, when Sir Humphrey Gilbert claimed that John Cabot's voyages gave England rightful ownership of the North American coast, Elizabeth granted him permission to settle two hundred colonists between the St. Lawrence River and what is now Newfoundland. Though he succeeded in reaching the site, one disaster after another plagued the effort, and Gilbert himself vanished at sea. Thereafter, Gilbert's half-brother, **Sir Walter Raleigh**, took over the colonizing effort. This time, Elizabeth commanded Raleigh to locate farther south near the border of Spanish Florida, where an English base could facilitate raids on Philip's treasure fleets. Raleigh chose an island off the coast of present-day North Carolina. He advertised **Roanoke Island** as an "American Eden," where "the earth bringeth forth all things in abundance, as in the first Creation, without toile or labour." To honor his benefactor, he called this paradise Virginia, tribute to the unwed, and thus officially virgin, queen.

In 1585 Elizabeth further angered the Spanish king by openly sending an army of six thousand troops across the Channel to aid Dutch rebels. Philip responded by supporting Catholic plots within England to subvert Elizabeth's authority and bring down her Protestant state. As tensions increased, so did English piracy. Drake intensified his campaign, not only raiding Spanish ships at sea but attacking settlements in the Caribbean. By 1586, British troops were fighting the Spanish alongside Dutch rebels in Holland; Spanish spies were encouraging rebellion in England, Scotland, and Ireland; and British ships were raiding Spanish settlements in the New World. War loomed on the horizon.

**Stuart kings** The dynasty of English kings who claimed the throne after the death of Elizabeth I, who left no heirs.

#### **the Netherlands/Holland/Dutch**

Often used interchangeably, the first two terms refer to the low-lying area in Western Europe north of France and Belgium and across the English Channel from Great Britain; the Dutch are the inhabitants of the Netherlands.

**privateer** A captain who owned his own boat, hired his own crew, and was authorized by his government to attack and capture enemy ships.

**gentry** The class of English landowners ranking just below the nobility.

**Sir Walter Raleigh** English courtier, soldier, and adventurer who attempted to establish the Virginia Colony.

**Roanoke Island** Island off North Carolina that Raleigh sought to colonize beginning in 1585.

### **The Decline of Spanish Power**

The enormous inflow of wealth from the New World brought Spain power that no European country since the Roman Empire had enjoyed, but such rapid enrichment was a mixed blessing. Starting in Spain and radiating out-

ward, prices began to climb as the growth of the money supply outpaced the growth of



**inflation** Rising prices that occur when the supply of currency or credit grows faster than the available supply of goods and services.

European economies. Too much money was chasing too few goods. Between 1550 and 1600, prices doubled in much of Europe, and **inflation** continued to soar for another half-century.

In addition, the social impact of the new wealth was forcing European monarchs to expand geographically and crack down domestically. As prices rose, the traditional landholding classes earned enormous profits from the sale of food and other necessities. Other groups fared less well. Artisans, laborers, and landless peasants—by far the largest class of people in Europe—found the value of their labor constantly shrinking. Throughout Europe, social unrest increased as formerly productive and respected citizens were reduced to poverty and begging. Overseas expansion seemed an inviting solution to the problem of an impoverished population. It was a safety valve that relieved a potentially dangerous source of domestic pressure while opening opportunities to enhance national wealth through the development of colonies.

Sitting at the center of the new economy, Philip's Spain had the most to lose from rapid inflation and popular unrest. It also had the most to lose from New World expansion by any other European nation. Each New World claim asserted by a rival country represented the loss of a piece of treasure that Spain claimed as its own. Philip finally chose to confront building tensions by taking a desperate gamble: he would destroy England. This ploy, he thought, would effectively remove the Protestant threat, rid him of Elizabeth's ongoing harassment, and demonstrate to the rest of Europe that Spain intended to exercise absolute authority over the Atlantic world. In the spring of 1585, when tensions were at their peak, Philip began massing what was to be the largest marine force Europe had ever witnessed.

**armada** A fleet of warships.

In 1588 Philip launched an **armada** of 132 warships carrying more than three thousand cannon and an invasion force of thirty thousand men. Arriving off the shores of England in July, the so-called Invincible Armada ran up against small, maneuverable British defense ships commanded by Elizabeth's skilled captains. Drake and his fleet harassed the Spanish ships, preventing them from launching a successful attack. Then a storm blowing down from the North Sea scattered the Spanish fleet. Although Spanish power remained great for some time to come, the Armada disaster effectively ended Spain's near-monopoly over New World colonization.

## European Empires in America

- ★ **What similarities and differences characterized Spanish, French, and Dutch patterns of empire building in North America?**
- ★ **How did the colonists' experiences challenge and help to reshape imperial policies?**

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Spain, France, England, and a number of other European nations vied for control of the Americas and for domination of the transatlantic trade (see Map 2.1). England was somewhat delayed in its colonizing efforts, and by the time it became deeply involved in New World ventures, Spain, France, and Holland had already made major progress toward establishing empires in America. These European settlements not only affected England's colonization process profoundly, but through their interactions among themselves and with the Native Americans, they also created unique societies in North America whose presence influenced the entire course of the continent's history.



**MAP 2.1** European and Indian Settlements in the Americas

Although Europeans were at first unsure about the implications of stumbling over a portion of the world that was new to them, they quickly came to grasp the economic and military potential involved in American colonization. As this map shows, exploration continued into the seventeenth century as Europeans scrambled to claim individual pieces of New World real estate.

**cabildo secular** Secular municipal council that provided local government in Spain's New World empire.

**feudal** Relating to a system in which landowners held broad powers over peasants or tenant farmers, providing protection in exchange for loyalty and labor.

**requiremento** A provision in Spanish colonial law that required conquistadors to inform Indians that they were subject to Spanish authority and to absorb them peacefully.

**serfs** Peasants who were bound to a particular estate but, unlike slaves, were not the personal property of the estate owner and received traditional feudal protections.

**Henry Hudson** Dutch ship captain and explorer who sailed up the Hudson River in 1609, giving the Netherlands a claim to the area now known as New York.

### The Troubled Spanish Colonial Empire

Although the destruction of the Armada in 1588 struck a terrible blow at Madrid's New World monopoly, the Spanish Empire continued to grow. By the end of the seventeenth century, it stretched from New Mexico southward through Central America and much of South America into the Caribbean islands and northward again into Florida. Governing such a vast empire was difficult, and periodic efforts to reform the system usually failed. Two agencies in Spain, the House of Trade and the Council of the Indies, set Spanish colonial policy. In the colonies, Crown-appointed viceroys wielded military and political power in each of the four divisions of the empire. The Spanish colonies set up local governments as well; each town had a **cabildo secular**, a municipal council, as well as judges and other minor officials. The colonial administrators were appointed rather than elected, and most were envoys from Spain rather than nativeborn individuals.

Over the centuries, as the layers of bureaucracy developed, corruption and inefficiency expanded as well. One major source of unrest stemmed from a persistent New World problem: the shortage of labor. In Spain, work was directed by **feudal** landlords—*encomenderos*—whose military service to the king entitled them to harness the labor of Spanish peasants. In New Spain, Indians took the place of the peasants in what was called the *encomienda* system. Under a law passed in 1512, when an Indian group was first encountered by the Spanish, the conquistador was required to explain to them that they were subject to the king and to the Catholic Church. Having satisfied this **requiremento**, the *encomenderos* gained the right to use the Indians' labor for nine months each year. For his part, the *encomendero* paid a tax to the Crown for each Indian he received and agreed to teach his workers the Catholic faith, Spanish language and culture, and a "civilized" vocation.

Despite promises to uplift local Indians, the system in reality was brutally exploitative. As Bartolomé de Las Casas reported both to the Council of the Indies and to the king himself, landlords frequently overworked their Indian **serfs** and failed in their "civilizing" responsibilities. As the result of Las Casas's appeal, the *Leyes Nuevas* turned Indian relations in New Spain over to the church, and priests were instructed to enforce the laws. Among the new regulations was a stipulation that a priest accompany all expeditions to certify the proper execution of the *requiremento* and serve as witnesses that Indians were treated lawfully. Colonists often ignored even these slim protections. Some simply forged a priest's signature, anticipating that by the time the document reached administrators in faraway Madrid, no one would know the difference. Others disregarded the law altogether.

Bureaucratic and church interference in the labor system was one source of tension. Taxes were another. Spanish colonists were taxed to support the huge and largely corrupt, unrepresentative, and self-serving imperial bureaucracy. But for many decades the wealth produced within this empire overshadowed all governing problems. The gold, silver, and copper mined by Indian and later African slaves so dazzled Spanish officials that imperial authorities took few serious steps toward practical reform until the end of the seventeenth century.

### The Dutch Enterprise

Interestingly, it was a former colony, the Netherlands, that presented one of the most serious threats to Spain's New World monopoly. The Armada disaster in 1588 had tipped the scales in favor of Dutch Protestant rebels, and the newly independent nation quickly developed a thriving commercial economy. Holland's first serious claim to American territory came in 1609, when Dutch sea captain **Henry Hudson**

# Investigating America

## Las Casas Debates Indian Rights, 1550

In his lengthy debate with Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda before the Council of Valladolid, Bartolomé de Las Casas repeatedly stressed the remarkable accomplishments made by Indians, both in creating advanced civilizations of their own and in adapting to Spanish civilization. Many witnesses disputed these claims, whereas others argued that such accomplishments were irrelevant. Though perhaps clever, Sepúlveda argued, Indians lacked souls and therefore could never become truly civilized Christians. Like animals, then, they could be exploited but never embraced. In this excerpt from the lengthy public debate, Las Casas drew on Church doctrine to refute this claim, and in the end, his argument won the day and became the official position for the Catholic Church and the Crown:

.....

Who, therefore, except one who is irreverent toward God and contemptuous of nature, has dared to write that countless numbers of natives across the ocean are barbarous, savage, uncivilized, and slow witted when, if they are evaluated by an accurate judgment, they completely outnumber all other men? This is consistent with what Saint Thomas writes: "The good which is proportionate to the common state of nature is to be found in most men and is lacking only in a few. . . . Thus it is clear that the majority of men have sufficient knowledge to guide their lives, and the few who do not have this knowledge are said to be half-witted or fools." Therefore, since barbarians of that kind, as Saint Thomas says, lack that good of the intellect which is knowledge of the truth, a good proportionate to the common condition of rational nature, it is evident that in each part of the world, or anywhere among the nations, barbarians of this sort or freaks of rational nature can only be quite rare. For since God's love of mankind is so great and it is his will to save all men, it is in accord with his

wisdom that in the whole universe, which is perfect in all its parts, his supreme wisdom should shine more and more in the most perfect thing: rational nature. Therefore, the barbarians of the kind we have placed in the third category are most rare, because with such natural endowments they cannot seek God, know him, call upon him, or love him. They do not have a capacity for doctrine or for performing the acts of faith or love.

Again, if we believe that such a huge part of mankind is barbaric, it would follow that God's design has for the most part been ineffective, with so many thousands of men deprived of the natural light that is common to all peoples. And so there would be a great reduction in the perfection of the entire universe—something that is unacceptable and unthinkable for any Christian.

.....

- What, exactly, was Las Casas asserting in this passage? How does this proposition set up the rest of his argument?
- What does the reference to writings by Saint Thomas tell us about Las Casas's view of human nature? How does it refute Sepúlveda's claims concerning Indians?
- Judging from this brief excerpt from Las Casas's argument, why do you suppose he won the debate?
- Why would the Catholic Church have chosen to endorse and publicize his views and not Sepúlveda's?

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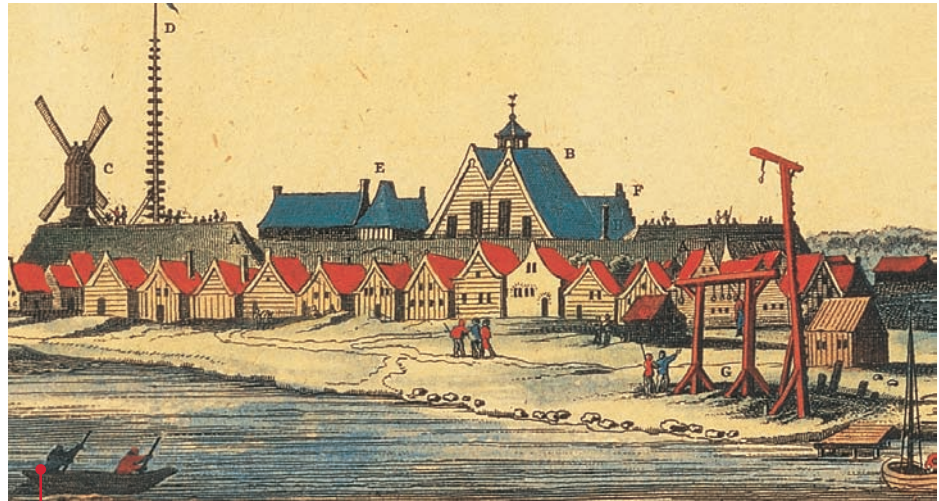
Source: *Bartolomé de las Casas, In Defense of the Indians: The Defense of the Most Reverend Lord, Don Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, of the Order of Preachers, Late Bishop of Chiapa, Against the Persecutors and Slanderers of the Peoples of the New World Discovered Across the Seas*. Translated, edited and annotated by Stafford Poole (Dekalb, Northern Illinois University Press, © 1974). Used by permission of Northern Illinois University Press.

explored the East Coast in search of the elusive Northwest Passage. He sailed up a large river that he hoped would lead him west to the Pacific. After realizing that he had not found the hoped-for route to the Far East, he returned to Holland and reported to his sponsor, the Dutch East India Company, that the territory surrounding this river—which he named after himself—was "pleasant with Grasse & Flowers and Goodly Trees" and that the Indians were friendly.



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.





Its location at the mouth of the Hudson River made the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam a particularly important colonial trading center. Furs flowed down the river from Fort Orange (near modern Albany, New York), while guns, tools, and other trade goods traveled the other way. This etching (detail), based on a watercolor illustration painted around 1653, captures the city's colorful vibrancy after Peter Stuyvesant and the Dutch burghers merged their power to bring order and prosperity. The weighing beam in the foreground illustrates both the prosperity and quest for order: it was used not only to weigh the loads of goods flowing through the town, but was also used as a whipping post and gallows. Museum of the City of New York. Gift of Dr. N. Sulzberger.

**Dutch West India Company** Dutch investment company formed in 1621 to develop colonies for the Netherlands in North America.

Hudson's employers did not share his dream of settlement; however, a fashion trend that seized Europe late in the sixteenth century provided a powerful incentive for investment in the region. The immense popularity of the broad-brimmed beaver felt hat created an insatiable demand for fur, and the experiences of early explorers and fishermen along America's North Atlantic shore indicated that a near-endless supply was ripe for the trapping. Seeking to tap in on this "brown gold," the Dutch built a trading post on the Hudson River at Albany and an export station on Manhattan Island in 1614. Real Dutch efforts at New World colonization, however, did not begin until investors formed the **Dutch West India Company** in 1621. The new company financed Dutch privateers who successfully raided Spanish and Portuguese treasure ships and, in 1634, overcame weak Spanish and Portuguese resistance to conquer a number of islands in the Caribbean.

The Dutch also pushed the Portuguese aside to take control of the transatlantic slave trade.

Farther north, the Company instructed official Peter Minuit to negotiate a lease for the entire island of Manhattan from the Manhatas Indians in 1626. This acquisition gave it control over the mouth of the river that Hudson had discovered and the lands that it drained. The Dutch focus remained upriver, however; the company did nothing to attract settlers, and by 1629 only three hundred colonists had spread themselves in a thin ribbon from the capital, New Amsterdam, on Manhattan Island, upriver to Albany. But in that year, the Dutch West India Company drew up a comprehensive business plan to maximize profits and minimize dependence on local Indians for food and other support. To encourage the agricultural development necessary to support the fur industry, the company offered huge estates called **patroonships** to any company stockholder willing

**patroonships** Huge grants of land given to any Dutch West India Company stockholder who, at his own expense, brought fifty colonists to New Netherland; the colonists became the tenants of the estate owner, or patroon.



# It Matters Today

## THE FELT HAT FAD

Changes in fashion come and go, and we seldom give much thought to them as being historically significant. But the sudden popularity of felt hats in the late sixteenth century had a profound impact on not just America's history, but the history of the entire world. The flood of new wealth flowing into Europe from America permitted people of means to keep up with the latest fashion trends. Being in style became increasingly important to status-conscious merchants and other beneficiaries of the New World boom. Demand for the beaver fur to make the felt became so steep that virtually the entire population of Old World beavers was wiped out, and entire industries arose in France, the Netherlands, Great Britain, and Russia to import this "brown gold" from the

Americas. Fur drew Europeans up virtually every waterway in North America, leading to the founding of many of the most prominent cities in America today. It is safe to say that without this seemingly silly fashion trend, little in the United States would be as we know it today.

- Another important trade item during this era was deerskins. Research the demand for deerskins and then discuss what this tells us about socioeconomic changes during this era.
- Identify a current fashion trend and discuss its impact on global society. What differences do you think this trend will make on the future?

to bring fifty colonists to **New Netherland** at his own expense. In exchange, the patroons would enjoy near-feudal powers over their tenants. But few prosperous Dutchmen were interested in becoming New World barons. Rensselaerswyck, the estate of Kilian van Rensselaer, was the only patroonship to develop in accordance with the company's plan. The colony's development came to rely instead on many poorer migrants who were drawn by unofficial promises of land ownership and economic betterment.

Settlers from just about anywhere were welcome in New Netherland—the colony attracted an extremely diverse population, including German and French Protestants, free and enslaved Africans, Catholics, Jews, and Muslims. In 1638 the Dutch even encouraged Swedish fur traders to create their own colony, New Sweden, within its boundaries. Although the Dutch West India Company was officially in charge, the actual conduct of day-to-day affairs was run by an elite group of **burghers**—men in New Amsterdam whose economic and political successes gave them significant influence. In an effort to reassert its power, the company reorganized its operations in 1645, appointing Peter Stuyvesant to manage all of its affairs in the Western Hemisphere. Stuyvesant immediately came into conflict with the local burghers in New Amsterdam, and in 1647 he was forced to create a compromise government that gave the burghers an official voice through a council of nine appointed representatives. Six years later, Stuyvesant and the council created a municipal government modeled on those back home in Holland. Despite this nod to democratic government, Stuyvesant ran company affairs with an iron hand, significantly tightening operations throughout the colony.

**New Netherland** The colony founded by the Dutch West India Company in present-day New York; its capital was New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island.

**burghers** Town dwellers who were free from feudal obligations and were responsible for civic government during the medieval period in Europe; in New Amsterdam these were men who were not Dutch West India Company officials, but who governed civic affairs through their political influence.

### The French Presence in America

Although France made a number of efforts to compete with Spain's New World projects during the sixteenth century, Spanish power was sufficient to prevent any major successes. After Madrid founded the city of **Saint Augustine** in 1565, the French concentrated their efforts farther north. Early in the seventeenth century,

**Saint Augustine** First colonial city in the present-day United States; located in Florida and founded by Pedro Menéndez de Aviles for Spain in 1565.



**Samuel de Champlain** French explorer who traced the St. Lawrence River inland to the Great Lakes, founded the city of Quebec, and formed the French alliance with the Huron Indians.

**New France** The colony established by France in what is now Canada and the Great Lakes region of the United States.

**Company of New France** Company established by Cardinal Richelieu to bring order to the running of France's North American enterprises.

***coureurs de bois*** Literally, “runners of the woods”; independent French fur traders who lived among the Indians and sold furs to the French.

**Community of Habitants of New France** Company chartered by Anne of Austria to make operations in New France more efficient and profitable; it gave significant political power to local officials in Canada.

**Company of the West** Company chartered by Colbert after New France became a royal colony; modeled on the Dutch West India Company, it was designed to maximize profits to the Crown.

**Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle** French explorer who followed the Mississippi River from present-day Illinois to the Gulf of Mexico, giving France a claim to the entire river-way and adjoining territory.

**Louisiana** French colony south of New France; it included the entire area drained by the Mississippi River and all of its tributary rivers.

**Samuel de Champlain**, the “father of **New France**,” established trading posts in Nova Scotia and elsewhere, founded the city of Quebec, and in 1608 formed an enduring alliance with the Huron Indians. But, despite these efforts and the potential profitability of the fur trade, French colonial authorities at first took little interest in overseas enterprises.

In 1627 French minister Cardinal Richelieu chartered the **Company of New France**, awarding a group of the king's favorites a license to establish plantations in Canada, but the venture failed to attract much interest. French Protestants, who might have emigrated to avoid religious persecution, were forbidden to move to the colony, and few French Catholics wanted to migrate to America. The colonizing effort did not attract enough rent-paying tenants to make the envisioned estates profitable. Equally important was the fact that the few French peasants and small farmers who did venture to the New World found life in the woods and the company of Indians preferable to life as tenant farmers. So-called *coureurs de bois*, or “runners of the woods,” married Indian women and lived among the tribes, returning to the French settlements only when they had enough furs to sell to make the trip worthwhile.

Frustrated by the lack of profits, Richelieu reorganized the Company of New France in 1633, dispatching Champlain, now bearing the title Lieutenant of New France, with three ships of supplies, workmen, and soldiers who, it was hoped, would breathe new life into the colony. The Company set up posts in Quebec, Montreal, and a few more remote locations, and became the primary outfitter of and buyer from the *coureurs de bois* and amassed huge profits by reselling the furs in Europe. After Richelieu's death in 1642, queen mother and French regent Anne of Austria acted on complaints filed by both fur trade investors and Jesuit missionaries that the Company of New France was not governing effectively. She chose to empower a new company, the **Community of Habitants of New France**, with a monopoly on the fur trade and the privilege of granting land claims. Then, in 1647, Anne approved the formation of a council that consisted of the governor, the local director of the Jesuits, the colony's military commandant, and three elected officials. Meanwhile, the Company of New France continued technically to own the land and retained the power to appoint the governor and court officials in the colony.

Local authorities managed most of the colony's affairs until 1663, when the Crown began to intervene seriously in Canada. Having taken the functions of state into his own hands, young Louis XIV gave his finance minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, considerable authority over all monetary matters, including colonial enterprises. Seeking to make New France more efficient and to increase its contribution to the empire at large, Colbert founded the **Company of the West**, modeled on the highly successful Dutch West India Company. He also revoked the land titles held by the Company of New France, putting them directly into the king's hands, and overturned the political power of the Community of Habitants, making New France a royal colony.

Although the king reaped enormous profits from the fur trade, his colonial interests ranged beyond this single source of income. In 1683, a French expedition led by **Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle**, followed the Mississippi River all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. La Salle immediately claimed the new territory for Louis XIV of France, naming it **Louisiana** in his honor. The king sent settlers to the lower Mississippi Valley in 1698 under the leadership of Pierre LeMoyne d'Iberville, who in 1699 raised Louisiana's first French fort, near present-day Biloxi, Mississippi. In 1718, French authorities built the city of New Orleans to serve as the capital of the new territory.

The acquisition of Louisiana was a major accomplishment for La Salle and for France. The newly discovered riverway gave the French a rich, untapped source of furs as well as an alternative shipping route, allowing them to avoid the cold, stormy North Atlantic.

Also, if an agricultural venture could be started in the new territory, it might serve as an inexpensive source of supplies to support both the fur trade in Canada and France's sugar plantations in the Caribbean. But, perhaps of greatest importance was Louisiana's strategic location between Spain's claims in the Southwest and the Dutch and other colonies along the eastern seaboard. Controlling this piece of real estate gave Louis considerable leverage in international diplomacy.

## Indians and the European Challenge

- ★ **How did changes in the natural environment affect Indian societies during the early colonial period?**
- ★ **How did the arrival of Europeans influence continuing adaptations by Native American groups?**

Native Americans did not sit idly by while the European powers carved out empires in North America. Some joined the newcomers, serving as advisers and companions. Others sought to use the Europeans as allies to accomplish their own economic, diplomatic, or military goals. Still others, overwhelmed by the onset of European diseases and shifting population pressures, withdrew into the interior. The changes in native America created both obstacles and opportunities, giving shape to the patterns of expansion and conflict that characterized the colonial world.

### The Indian Frontier in New Spain

Indian assistance had been critical in Spain's successful campaigns against the Aztecs and Incas. In Mexico, for example, groups who had been forced to pay tribute to the Aztec Empire gladly allied themselves with the Spanish in what the natives perceived as an opportunity to win their independence. Their hopes were soon dashed when the Spanish simply replaced the Aztecs as the new lords of a tributary empire.

Once their New World empire was firmly rooted, Spanish expansion met little native resistance until 1598, when a particularly brutal conquistador named **Don Juan de Oñate** led a large expedition to the Rio Grande region of New Mexico. When some Pueblos resisted Oñate's efforts to impose Spanish culture and religion, the conquistador chose to make an example of **Ácoma pueblo**. It took Oñate's troops three days to subdue the settlement, but Spanish steel finally overcame Ácoma clubs and stone knives. When the battle was over, Oñate ordered eight hundred Indians executed and made slaves of the nearly seven hundred survivors, mostly women and children. In addition, each male survivor over the age of 25 had one foot chopped off to prevent his escape from slavery. Two **Hopi Indians** who had been visiting Ácoma at the time of the battle had their right hands cut off and then were sent home as examples of the price of resistance.

This blatant cruelty disgusted even the most cynical authorities in New Spain, and both the church and state stepped in. Oñate was removed, and the surviving Indians were placed under joint military and religious protection. Some members of Oñate's company remained, however, founding the town of **Santa Fe** in 1609. Others scattered to set up ranches throughout the region.

Thanks in part to Las Casas's efforts, the church played a key role in developing the colonies, especially in the stark regions along Mexico's northern frontier where there were no gold mines or profitable plantations. The Franciscan order led church efforts in New Mexico and put a peculiar stamp on the pattern of Indian relations. A highly **ascetic** and disciplined order, the Franciscans were particularly offended by the Pueblos' religion

**Don Juan de Oñate** Spaniard who conquered New Mexico and claimed it for Spain in the 1590s.

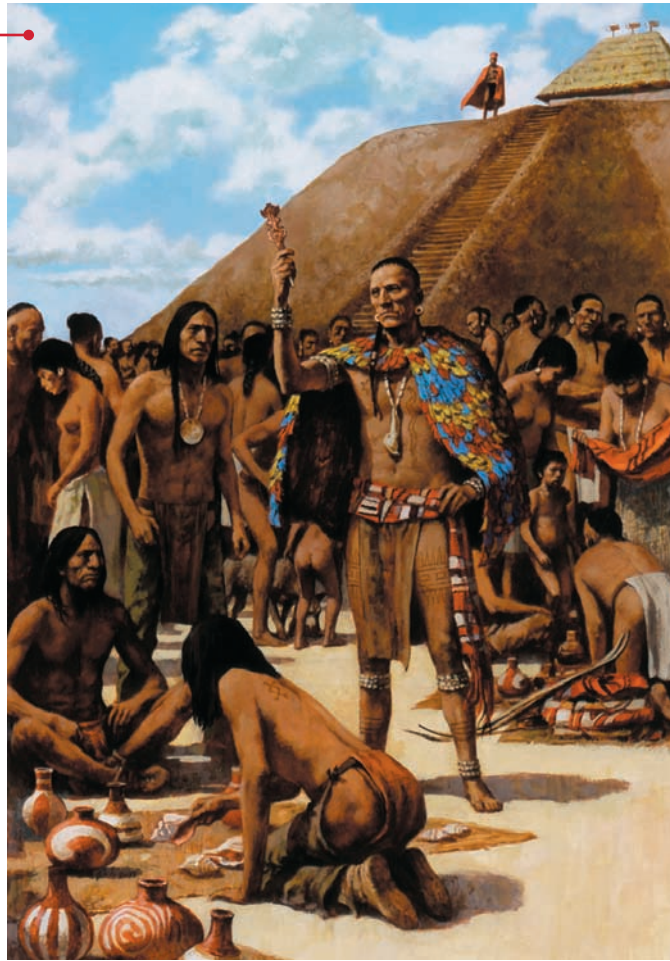
**Ácoma pueblo** Pueblo Indian community that resisted Spanish authority in 1598 and was subdued by the Spanish.

**Hopi Indians** Indians who were related to the Comanches and Shoshones and took up residence among the Pueblo Indians as agricultural town-dwellers; their name means "peaceful ones."

**Santa Fe** Spanish colonial town established in 1609; eventually the capital of the province of New Mexico.

**ascetic** Practicing severe abstinence or self-denial, generally in pursuit of spiritual awareness.

Before the arrival of European explorers like Hernando de Soto in the early 1540s, Indians in the American Southeast had lived in huge cities characterized by monumental architecture and a stratified class system with priest kings at the top, skilled craftsmen and traders in the middle, and common farmers and laborers at the bottom. This painting by archaeological reconstruction artist Tom Hall captures the bustling marketplace at Moundville, a large pre-Columbian city in present-day Alabama. Moundville appears to have begun to decline in around 1350—perhaps a consequence of climate change—and collapsed altogether following the introduction of European diseases. Scholars are unsure about what became of Moundville’s survivors, but it is likely that they formed smaller villages that were easier to support in the new environment. All of the Southeastern Indian societies—the Cherokees, Choctaws, Creeks, Natchez, and many others—went through a similar transition during this period. Tom Hall/National Geographic Society Image Collection.



and lifestyle. Indian ceremonies that involved various types of traditional religious objects smacked of idolatry to the Franciscans. Seeking to root out what they viewed as evil, the priests embarked on a wholesale effort to destroy every vestige of the Indians’ religion. One priest, Fray Alonso de Benavides, bragged in the 1620s that in one day he confiscated “more than a thousand idols of wood,” which he then burned. The priests also interfered in the most intimate social aspects of Pueblo life, imposing foreign ideas about sexual relations and family structure, punishing most of the Pueblos’ traditional practices as sinful.

After nearly a century of enduring these assaults on their most fundamental values, the Pueblos struck back. In 1680 a traditional leader named Popé led an uprising that united virtually all of the Indians in New Mexico against Spanish rule. The **Pueblo Revolt** left four hundred Spaniards dead as the rebels captured Santa Fe and drove the invaders from their land. It took almost a decade for the Spanish to regroup. In 1689 troops moved back into the region and over the next several years waged a brutal war to recapture the territory. The fighting continued off and on until the end of the century, but Spanish settlers began returning to New Mexico after the recapture of Santa Fe in 1693.

**Pueblo Revolt** Indian rebellion against Spanish authority in 1680 led by Popé; succeeded in driving the Spanish out of New Mexico for nearly a decade.



# Investigating America

## The Pueblo Revolt of 1680

Unhappy with the inability of either the Crown or the church to protect them from famine or attacks by other tribes, the Pueblo turned to their old religions. In response, Governor Juan Francisco Treviño ordered the arrest of forty-seven Pueblo medicine men in 1675 and accused them of practicing witchcraft. Three were hanged by Spanish authorities, and a fourth prisoner committed suicide. Other Pueblo men were publicly whipped and released from custody, among them was Popé, who then planned what became known as the Pueblo Revolt. After the rebellion ended, an Indian known to the Spanish as Juan gave this testimony to authorities by way of a translator:

[Juan] said that what he knows concerning this question is that not all of them joined the said rebellion willingly; that the chief mover of it is an Indian who is a native of the pueblo of San Juan, named El Pope, and that from fear of this Indian all of them joined in the plot that he made. Thus he replied. Asked why they held the said Pope in such fear and obeyed him, and whether he was the chief man of the pueblo, or a good Christian, or a sorcerer, he said that the common report that circulated and still is current among all the natives is that the said Indian Popé talks with the devil, and for this reason all held him in terror, obeying his commands. . . .

The said persons asking him what he thought about the actions of the Indians and whether their peaceful actions were sincere, he told them, 'I do not know what to say to you. If there should be any treason, I will warn you.' And in virtue of what they had communicated, he asked the said Luis de Quintana for the loan of a horse, saying to him, "Lend me a horse."

.....

- Historians have to recreate the past using any materials available to them, and sometimes documents like these must be used with special care. What motivation might Juan have had to speak with authorities? What evidence suggests that some of the words used were supplied by the translator, or altered by him?
- Should historians even use documents obtained under what today would be regarded as duress?
- Is it possible that what Juan told authorities about Popé was partly true, even if the larger testimony itself is suspect?

Source: Charles Wilson Hackett, ed., and Charmion Clair Shelby, trans. *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Otermin's Attempted Reconquest, 1680–1682*. (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1942). Volume 9, 232–253.

### The Indian World in the Southeast

Members of Spanish exploring expeditions under would-be conquistadors such as Ponce de León and de Soto were the first Europeans to contact the mound builder societies and other Indian groups in the Southeast. Although their residential and ceremonial centers often impressed the Spaniards, these Mississippian agricultural groups had no gold and could not easily be enslaved. The conquistadors moved on without attempting to force Spanish rule or the Catholic religion on them.

Although the Spanish presence in the region was small, its impact was enormous. The Spanish introduced European diseases into the densely populated towns in the Mississippi River region. Epidemics wiped out entire Native American civilizations and forced survivors to abandon their towns and entirely modify their ways of life. Certain groups, among them the Cherokees and Creeks, formed village-based economies that combined agriculture, hunting, and gathering. As had happened earlier in the



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

**Creek Confederacy** Alliance of Indians living in the Southeast; formed after the lethal spread of European diseases to permit a cooperative economic and military system among survivors.

Northeast among the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) and others, this change in economy led to increasing intergroup warfare. And like the Haudenosaunee, many southeastern groups created formal confederacies as a way of coping. One example is the **Creek Confederacy**, a union of many groups who had survived the Spanish epidemics. Internally, members created an economic and social system in which each population contributed to the welfare of all and differences were settled through athletic competition—a ballgame not unlike modern lacrosse—rather than warfare. And when new Europeans arrived in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Creeks and other confederacies found it beneficial to welcome them as trading partners and allies, balancing the competing demands of the Spanish and French, and later the English. To some degree, they took advantage of the European rivalries to advance their own interests against those of neighboring confederacies.

### The Indian World in the Northeast

By the time Europeans had begun serious exploration and settlement of the Northeast, the economic and cultural changes among Eastern Woodlands Indians that had begun between 1350 and 1450 had resulted in the creation of two massive—and opposing—alliance systems. On one side were the Hurons, Algonquins, Abenakis, Micmacs, Ottawas, and several smaller tribes. On the other was the Haudenosaunee Confederacy that Europeans called the Iroquois League.

The costs and benefits of sustained European contact first fell to the Hurons and their allies. The Abenakis, Micmacs, and others who lived along the northern shore of the Atlantic were the first groups drawn into trade with the French, and it was among them that the *coureurs de bois* settled and intermarried. These family ties became firm economic bonds when formal French exploration brought these groups into more direct contact with the European trading world. This partnership, however, posed a serious threat to the Haudenosaunee. Much of the territory being harvested for furs by the Hurons had once belonged to the Haudenosaunee, and the Confederacy wanted it back. If they could push the Hurons and their allies out and take control of the St. Lawrence River, the French would then have to trade exclusively with them.

The arrival of the Dutch in Albany, however, offered the Haudenosaunee an attractive diplomatic alternative. In 1623 the Dutch West India Company invited representatives from the Iroquois League to a meeting at **Fort Orange**, offering them friendship and trade. The Haudenosaunee responded enthusiastically, but in a way that the Dutch had not anticipated. Instead of entering peacefully into the trade, the Haudenosaunee imposed their authority over all of the Indian groups already trading with the Dutch. They began a bloody war with the **Mohicans**, who had been the Dutch traders' source for furs in the Hudson Valley. By 1627 the Haudenosaunee had driven the Mohicans out of the region and reclaimed control over the flow of furs.

Trade was so vigorous that the Haudenosaunee soon wiped out fur supplies in their own territory and began a serious push to acquire new sources. Beginning in the late 1630s, the Iroquois Confederacy entered into a long-term aggressive war against the Hurons and their allies in New France; against the Munsees, Delawares, and other groups in the Susquehanna and Delaware River valleys to the south; and even against the Iroquois-speaking Eries to the west. Citing Hienwatha's legacy, the Haudenosaunee justified their aggression by claiming that their conquests were simply bringing more people into the shelter of the Great Tree of Peace, expanding the confederacy to include all the northeastern Indians.

**Fort Orange** Dutch trading post established near present-day Albany, New York, in 1614.

**Mohicans** Algonquin-speaking Indians who lived along the Hudson River, were dispossessed in a war with the Haudenosaunee confederacy, and eventually were all but exterminated.



## The New Indian World of the Plains

The vast area of the Great Plains, though largely unexplored and untouched by Europeans, also underwent profound transformation during the period of initial contacts. Climate change, the pressure of shifting populations, and the introduction of novel European goods through lines of kinship and trade created an altogether new culture and economy among the Indians in this region.

Before about 1400, Indians living on the plains rarely strayed far from the riverways that form the Missouri River drainage, where they lived in villages sustained by agriculture, hunting, and gathering (see pages 9–10). The climate cooldown that affected their neighbors to the east had a similar effect on the Plains Indians: growing seasons became shorter, and the need to hunt became greater. But at the same time, this shift in climate produced an increase in one food source, **buffalo**, a survivor of the great ice ages. Between 1300 and 1800, herds numbering in the millions emerged in the new environment created by the climate change.

Some groups—such as the **Caddoan**-speaking Wichitas, Pawnees, and Arikaras—virtually abandoned their agricultural villages and became hunters. Others, such as the Hidatsas, split in two: a splinter group calling itself Crows went off permanently to the grasslands to hunt while the remainder stayed in their villages growing corn and tobacco. These and others who chose to continue their agricultural ways—the Mandans, for example—established a thriving trade with the hunters, exchanging vegetables and tobacco for fresh meat and other buffalo products.

The increase in buffalo not only provided a welcome resource for the Indians already on the Great Plains but also drew new populations to the area. As the climate farther north became unbearably severe, the Blackfeet and other Algonquin-speaking Indians swept down from the subarctic Northeast to hunt on the plains. These were soon followed by other northeastern groups fleeing the violence and disease that were becoming endemic in the Eastern Woodlands. Some groups, even war-weary Hurons and Haudenosaunee, came as small parties and sought adoption among Great Plains societies. Others came en masse. The **Lakotas**, for example, once the westernmost family of Siouan agriculturalists, were pushed onto the plains by continuing pressure from the east, but they maintained close relations with their **Dakota** neighbors in Minnesota, who continued to farm and harvest wild rice and other crops. This continued tie, like that between the Crows and Hidatsas, increased both the hunters' and the farmers' chances for survival in an ever-more hostile world by expanding available resources. Intergroup trade became the key to the welfare of all.

One unintentional outcome of the Pueblo Revolt was the liberation of thousands of Spanish horses. The Pueblos had little use for these animals, but their trading partners, the Kiowas and Comanches, quickly adopted them. Horses could carry much larger loads than dogs were able to carry and could survive on a diet of grass rather than taking a share of the meat. In less than a generation, horses became a mainstay of the buffalo-hunting cultures on the southern plains. And from there, horses spread quickly to other hunting people.

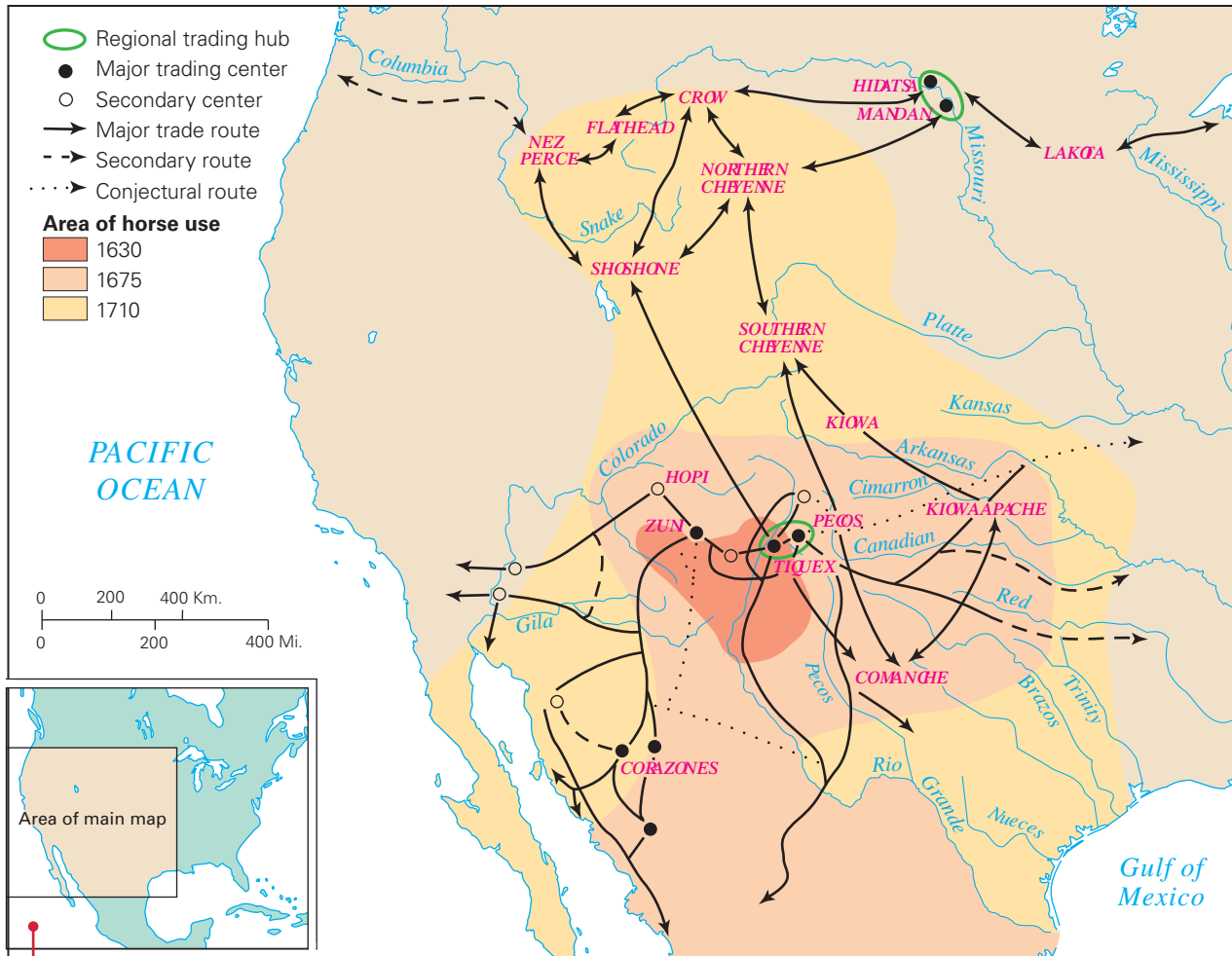
Northern plains dwellers such as the Shoshones quickly began acquiring horses from their southwestern kinsmen. Following a northward path along the eastern flank of the Rocky Mountains, horses were passed from one group to another in the complex trading system that had come into existence in the plains region. Well adapted to grasslands, virtually free from natural predators or diseases, and highly prized and thus well protected by their new human owners, horses greatly increased in number. By 1730, virtually all of the plains hunting peoples had some horses and were clamoring for more.

The steady demand for horses and hunting grounds created a new dynamic on the Great Plains and set a new economy into motion (see Map 2.2). After the Spanish reconquest of New Mexico, Indians could obtain horses only through warfare and trade, and

**buffalo** The American bison, a large member of the ox family, native to North America and the staple of the Plains Indian economy between the fifteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries.

**Caddoan** A family of languages spoken by the Wichitas, Pawnees, Arikaras, and other Plains Indians.

**Lakotas/Dakotas** Subgroups of the Sioux Nation of Indians; Lakotas make up the western branch, living mostly on the Great Plains; Dakotas, the eastern branch, live mostly in the prairie and lakes region of the Upper Midwest.



**MAP 2.2** Intergroup Trading on the Plains

Although movies portray Plains Indians as unsophisticated hunters and warriors, Native American societies in America's midsection maintained extremely complex and cosmopolitan trading networks. As this map shows, trade routes that existed before Europeans entered the region acquired added importance in distributing the novel technologies and ideas that the newcomers brought with them. The most important of these was horses, which were passed very quickly from group to group along these trade routes.

both increased significantly. Surprise raids to steal horses from neighboring Indian groups and European settlements brought both honor and wealth to those who were successful.

## Conquest and Accommodation in a Shared New World

- ★ **What forces shaped the day-to-day lives of settlers in New Mexico, Louisiana, and New Netherland?**
- ★ **How did settlers and American Indians adapt to changing conditions in the different regions of colonial occupation?**

Old World cultures, Native American historical dynamics, and New World environmental conditions combined to create vibrant new societies in European pioneer settlements. Despite the regulatory efforts of Spanish bureaucrats, French royal officials, and Dutch

company executives, life in the colonies developed in its own peculiar ways. Entire regions in what would become the United States assumed cultural contours that would shape all future developments in each.

### New Spain's Northern Frontiers

Life along New Spain's northern fringe was punctuated by friction between the empire's highly organized official structure and the disorderliness common to frontier settings. For the Spanish, notions of civil order were rooted in the local community—city, town, or village—and its ruling elite. Responsibility for maintaining order belonged to the *cabildo secular*, the municipal town council composed of members of the elite or their appointees. Spain established towns in all of its New World colonies and immediately turned over local authority to a ruling *cabildo*. This practice was usually successful in Mexico and Peru, but in the desert of New Mexico, the *cabildo* system was at odds with environmental and cultural conditions.

After suppressing the Pueblo Revolt during the 1690s, Spaniards began drifting back into New Mexico. Unlike areas to the South, New Mexico offered no rich deposits of gold or silver, and the climate was unsuitable for large-scale agriculture; the most rewarding economic enterprise in the region was ranching. The small flocks of sheep abandoned by the fleeing Spanish grew dramatically. By the time the Spanish returned, sheep ranching had become a reliable way to make a living. Thus, rather than concentrating near the municipal center in Santa Fe, the population in New Mexico spread out across the land, forming two sorts of communities. South of Santa Fe, people settled on scattered ranches. Elsewhere, they gathered in small villages along streams and pooled their labor to make a living from irrigated **subsistence farming**.

Like colonists elsewhere in Spain's New World empire, the New Mexico colonists were almost entirely male. Isolated on sheep ranches or in small villages, these men sought Indian companionship and married into local populations. These marriages gave birth not only to a new hybrid population but also to lines of kinship, trade, and authority that were in sharp contrast to the imperial ideal. For example, when Navajo or Apache raiding parties struck, ranchers and villagers turned to their Indian relatives for protection rather than to Spanish officials in Santa Fe. In this frontier world, a man's social status came to depend less on his Spanish connections than on his ability to work effectively in the complicated world of kinship that prevailed in the Indian community. The people who eventually emerged as the elite class in New Mexico were those who best perfected these skills.

**subsistence farming** Farming that produces enough food for survival but no surplus that can be sold.

### The Dutch Settlements

The existence of Rensselaerswyck and other great landed estates made it seem as though the New Netherland colony was prosperous and secure, but it actually was neither. Few of the wealthy stockholders in the Dutch West India Company wanted to trade their lives as successful gentleman investors for a pioneering existence on a barely tamed frontier. The economy in Holland was booming, and only the most desperate or adventurous wanted to leave. But having no one to pay their way, even the few who were willing were hard-pressed to migrate to the colony.

Desperate to draw settlers, the Dutch West India Company created an alternative to patroonship, agreeing to grant a tract of land to any free man who would agree to farm it. This offer appealed to many groups in Europe who were experiencing hardship in their own countries but who, for one reason or another, were unwelcome in the colonies of their homelands. French Protestants, for example, were experiencing terrible persecution in France but were forbidden from going to Canada or Louisiana. Roman Catholics, Quakers, Jews, Muslims, and a wide variety of others also chose to migrate to New Netherland.

**bosch loopers** Dutch term meaning “woods runners”; independent Dutch fur traders.

**Dutch Reform Church** Calvinistic Protestant denomination; the established church in the Dutch Republic and the official church in New Netherland.

Farming was the dominant activity among these emigrants, but some followed the example of the French *coueurs de bois* and went alone or in small groups into the woods to live and trade with the Indians. These travelers, called **bosch loopers**, traveled through the forests, trading brandy and rum for the Indians’ furs, which they then sold for enormous profits.

In fact, the Dutch West India Company was unable to control much of anything in New Netherland. The incredible diversity of the settlers no doubt contributed to this administrative impotence. For example, Dutch law and company policy dictated that the **Dutch Reform Church** was to be the colony’s official and only religion. But instead of drawing everyone into one congregation, the policy had the opposite effect. As late as 1642, not a single church of any denomination had been planted. Poor leadership and unimaginative policies also contributed to the general air of disorder. Following Peter Minuit’s dismissal by the company in 1631, a long line of incompetent governors ruled the colony. In the absence of any legislative assembly or other local body to help keep matters on track, for years one bad decision followed another. It took a major reorganization by the West India Company and its appointment of Peter Stuyvesant in 1645 to turn the colony around.

### Life in French Louisiana

France’s colony in Louisiana had many of the same qualities and faced many of the same problems as Holland’s and Spain’s North American possessions. Like most European settlements, Louisiana suffered from a critical shortage of



The French had difficulty persuading settlers to come to their New World province in Louisiana. As a result, the region’s development depended on a mixture of various European refugees, native Indians, and imported Africans for labor. Alexander de Batz’s 1735 painting gives us a good idea of what the population around New Orleans looked like at that time. As in neighboring New Mexico, a multiracial and multicultural society emerged in Louisiana that left a permanent legacy in the region. Peabody Museum, Harvard University 41-72-10/20 T2377.



labor, leading first to dependence on the Indians and eventually to the wholesale adoption of African slavery. And Louisianans, like all Europeans who settled in North America, found themselves embroiled in a complicated Native American world that usually defied European understanding.

The **Natchez**, **Chickasaws**, and **Choctaws** were all close by and well provisioned. The Chickasaws refused to deal with the French, and the Natchez, divided into quarreling factions, were sometimes helpful and sometimes hostile. But the Choctaws, locked into a war with the Chickasaws and a tense relationship with the Natchez, found the prospect of an alliance with the French quite attractive. In the realignment process, the Choctaws helped shape France's Indian policies and expansion plans. For example, they were able to convince the French to expand onto Natchez land rather than in Choctaw territory. When the Natchez resisted French incursion, the Choctaws helped their European allies destroy the tribe. The Choctaws also assisted the French in a thirty-year-long conflict with the Chickasaws, although with less success.

Despite the Choctaw alliance, which guaranteed ample food supplies and facilitated territorial acquisitions, Louisiana remained unappealing to Frenchmen. Although local officials advised against it, the French government finally resorted to recruiting paupers, criminals, and religious or political refugees from Central Europe and elsewhere to people the new land. But even with these newcomers, labor was inadequate to ensure survival, much less prosperity. Increasingly, settlers in Louisiana followed their Spanish neighbors' example by importing African slaves to do necessary work. By 1732, slaves made up two-thirds of the population.

As unappealing as the colony was to Frenchmen, it was even more so to French women. As a result, French men, like their Spanish neighbors, married Indians and, later, African slaves, creating a hybrid **creole** population that would come to dominate the region and set its cultural tone.

**Natchez** An urban, mound-building Indian people who lived on the lower Mississippi River until they were destroyed in a war with the French in the 1720s; survivors joined the Creek Confederacy.

**Chickasaws** An urban, mound-building Indian people who lived on the lower Mississippi River and became a society of hunters after the change in climate and introduction of disease after 1400; they were successful in resisting French aggression throughout the colonial era.

**Choctaws** Like the Chickasaws, a mound-building people who became a society of hunters after 1400; they were steadfast allies of the French in wars against the Natchez and Chickasaws.

**creole** In colonial times, a term referring to anyone of European or African heritage who was born in the colonies; in Louisiana, refers to the ethnic group resulting from intermarriage by people of mixed languages, races, and cultures.

## Summary

Spain's opening ventures in the Americas had been wildly successful, making the Iberian kingdom the envy of the world. Hoping to cash in on the bounty, other European nations challenged Spain's monopoly on American colonization, creating an outward explosion. Although slow to consolidate an imperial presence in North America, England was the first to confront the Spanish in force, wounding them severely. France and the Netherlands took advantage of the situation to begin building their own American empires.

Presented with this new challenge, Indians sought new ways to solve their problems and created altogether new societies. This often involved difficult choices: perhaps allying with the newcomers, resisting them, or fleeing. As different groups exercised varying options, the

outcome was a historically dynamic world of interaction involving all of the societies that were coming together in North America. In New Spain, New France, Louisiana, New Netherland, and throughout the Great Plains, truly cosmopolitan societies emerged. These new transatlantic societies, bearing cultural traits and material goods from throughout the world, set the tone for future development in North America. As we will see in Chapter 3, societies on the Atlantic coast, too, were evolving as English colonists interacted with the land and its many occupants. The outcome of such interchange, over the centuries, was the emergence of a multicultural, multiethnic, and extraordinarily rich culture—an essential element in Making America.



## Key Terms

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conquistador, *p. 27*  
Treaty of Tordesillas, *p. 29*  
Hernando Cortés, *p. 29*  
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# Founding the English Mainland Colonies

## 1585–1732

## CHAPTER 3

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Nathaniel Bacon

In 1674, a charismatic young Englishman named Nathaniel Bacon arrived in Virginia. He bought a large plantation near Jamestown and a tract of land on the frontier, and he was quickly appointed to Governor William Berkeley's advisory council. Yet, within two years, Bacon had become the leader of a rebellion of poor farmers that almost toppled the government.

Bacon could have lived out his days comfortably among the planter elite. Why, then, did he become a rebel? He arrived in Virginia at a tense moment when the colony's backcountry farmers' dream of prosperity was threatened by drought, Indian raids, a drop in the price of tobacco, and the Berkeley administration's unfair taxing policies. When Susquehannocks attacked, Bacon sympathized with these farmers. When they attacked his own frontier farm, he threw in his lot with his neighbors.

Bacon demanded that the Governor raise a militia to rid the area of all Indians. The Governor refused—and Bacon took matters into his own hands. He raised a vigilante army and began a war against all nearby Indians, even the peaceful tribes. The enraged governor branded Bacon a traitor. Bacon quickly struck back. Over five hundred men flocked to join “General” Bacon, and together they seized control of the colony's capital. By mid-October, Bacon's rebels controlled over two-thirds of Virginia. But on October 26, 1676, Nathaniel Bacon died of dysentery. Without his leadership, the revolution faltered and by spring of 1677, it had been crushed.

For the next hundred years, the royal governors and coastal planters dominated Virginia political life. To these elite colonists, Bacon symbolized a dangerous breakdown of law and order. To backcountry families, Bacon remained a frontier hero. But villain or hero, Nathaniel Bacon would not be the last colonist to fight against unfair treatment.



### NATHANIEL BACON

*Nathaniel Bacon came to Virginia as a gentleman in the 1670s, but his resentment of the economic and political domination of the colony by a small group of planters transformed him into a backwoods rebel. In 1676, Bacon led an army of discontented farmers, servants, and slaves against the coastal planters—and almost won. In this stained glass window, Bacon's social class and commanding presence are both evident.*

Courtesy of The Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities.

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** Grassroots Movements, Then and Now

#### ***England and Colonization***

England's First Attempts at Colonization

Turmoil and Tensions in England

#### ***Settling the Chesapeake***

The Jamestown Colony

Maryland: A Catholic Refuge

Troubles on the Chesapeake

Colonial Chesapeake Life

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**

Nathaniel Bacon's "Declaration of the People"

#### ***New England:***

##### ***Colonies of Dissenters***

The Plymouth Colony

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**

The Mayflower Compact

Massachusetts Bay and Its Settlers

Government in Puritan Massachusetts

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**

Anne Hutchinson

Indian Suppression

Change and Reaction in England and New England

#### ***The Pluralism***

##### ***of the Middle Colonies***

From New Netherland to New York

Leisler's Rebellion

William Penn's Holy Experiment

#### ***The Colonies of the Lower South***

The Carolina Colony

Georgia, the Last Colony

#### ***Summary***

# Chronology

<b>1585</b>	English colonize Roanoke Island	<b>1660</b>	Restoration of English monarchy
<b>1607</b>	Virginia Company founds Jamestown	<b>1663</b>	Carolina chartered
<b>1608</b>	Quebec City founded in New France	<b>1664</b>	New Netherland becomes New York
<b>1619</b>	Virginia House of Burgesses meets	<b>1675</b>	King Philip's War in New England
<b>1620</b>	Pilgrims found Plymouth Plantations	<b>1676</b>	Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia
<b>1625</b>	Charles I becomes king of England	<b>1681</b>	Pennsylvania chartered
<b>1630</b>	Puritans found Massachusetts Bay Colony	<b>1685</b>	James II becomes king of England
<b>1634</b>	Lord Baltimore establishes Maryland	<b>1686</b>	Dominion of New England established
<b>1635</b>	Roger Williams founds Providence	<b>1688</b>	Glorious Revolution in England
<b>1636</b>	Anne Hutchinson banished from Massachusetts; Pequot War in New England	<b>1689</b>	Leisler's Rebellion in New York
<b>1642–1648</b>	English civil war	<b>1691</b>	Massachusetts becomes royal colony
<b>1649</b>	Charles I executed; Cromwell and Puritans come to power in England	<b>1692</b>	Salem witch trials
<b>1655</b>	Civil war in Maryland	<b>1718</b>	French found the city of New Orleans
		<b>1732</b>	Georgia chartered

Bacon's Rebellion reflects many of the contradictions of the early colonial period: the determination to create new communities and the willingness to uproot Native American communities in the process; the sense of new opportunities for success and the continuing influence of wealth and social prestige in a frontier world; and the challenge of creating a unified society in the face of the conflicting economic interests of coastal planters and backcountry farmers.

The seventeenth century saw thousands of English men and women risk the dangers of the Atlantic crossing, the hardships of frontier life, the threat of violence from other settlers and local Indians, and the often overwhelming sense of isolation that were all part of the colonizing experience. What motivated them? Many left England to escape discrimination and harassment because of their dissenting religious views. Puritans, Catholics, and Quakers all felt compelled to resist demands for allegiance to the Church of England. These English religious radicals were not alone in seeking freedom of worship. Jews, French Protestants, and German Pietists also came to America to escape persecution.

Still other colonists faced the difficult choice of poverty or flight. The economic transformation of England from a feudal society to a market society disrupted the lives of the country's rural population of tenant farmers. Thrown off their land as wealthy landlords turned to raising sheep, thousands of these victims of an emerging capitalism became nomads and vagabonds, traveling from country towns to seaport cities in search of work. Desperation drove them to sign away several years of their lives to a ship captain or a plantation owner in exchange for passage to America.

But if desperation prompted them to leave England, dreams and expectations often motivated them, too. These young men and woman agreed to years of servitude and



# It Matters Today

## GRASSROOTS MOVEMENTS: THEN AND NOW

Bacon's Rebellion is one of the first instances of a grassroots movement in American history. These movements often give voice to people who feel they are not being heard by the government on important issues. Many things we take for granted today began as demands by grassroots movements, including the end to slavery, the direct election of senators, and women's suffrage. The antiwar movement of the 1960s, the environmental movement of the 1990s, and the antismoking movement of today are recent examples of grassroots movements. Often grassroots movements provide

insights into changing values in American society and, equally often, they arise as part of a cluster of reform movements.

- Research a modern grassroots movement. What tactics has it employed to win support? How successful do you think these tactics have been?
- Do you think grassroots protest is a valuable part of the American political process today, or do we have institutions and political processes that make such protests unnecessary?

backbreaking labor in the tobacco fields of the **Chesapeake**, without wages and with the most meager rations, because they hoped to acquire land when they were released from bondage. The promise of land was perhaps the most powerful appeal to more fortunate colonists as well. Families of modest means sold off their belongings and said their good-byes to familiar faces and a familiar landscape, determined to build new and more independent lives for themselves in the colonies.

Colonists recorded their experiences in diaries, letters, and reports to government, church, or trading company officials. These accounts dramatize the hardships and risks that settlers confronted and testify that many did not survive. Ships carrying colonists sank in ocean storms. Diseases unknown in England decimated settlements. Poor planning and simple ignorance of survival techniques destroyed others. Conflicts with local Indian populations produced violence, bloodshed, and atrocities on both sides. And though colonists lived far from the seats of power in Europe, the rivalries between English, French, Dutch, and Spanish governments spilled across the ocean, erupting in border raids and full-scale wars throughout the century.

**Chesapeake** The Chesapeake was the common term for the two colonies of Maryland and Virginia, both of which border on Chesapeake Bay.

## England and Colonization

- ★ **What was the impact of the failure of the Roanoke Colony on England's colonizing effort?**
- ★ **What circumstances or conditions in England prompted people to migrate to America?**

By the end of the century, twelve distinct colonies hugged the Atlantic coastline of English America. The thirteenth, Georgia, was founded in 1732. Although each colony had its own unique history, climate and geography produced four distinct regions: New England, the Middle Colonies, the Chesapeake, and the Lower South. The colonies within each region shared a common economy and labor system, or a similar religious heritage, or a special character that defined the population, such as ethnic diversity. And by the

end of the century, certain institutions emerged in every colony. Whether its founders had been religious refugees or wealthy businessmen, each colony developed a representative assembly, established courts, and built houses of worship. Carolinians may have thought they shared little in common with the people of Connecticut, but both sets of colonists were subject to English law, English trade policies, and English conflicts with rival nations. Separate, yet linked to one another and to what they affectionately called the “Mother Country” in crucial ways, between 1607 and 1700 the colonies transformed themselves from struggling settlements to complex societies.

### England's First Attempts at Colonization

In July 1584, two ships entered the calm waters between the barrier islands and the mainland of North Carolina. On board was a group of Englishmen, sent by the wealthy nobleman Walter Raleigh with orders to reconnoiter the area and locate a likely spot for settlement. The men were impressed by the forest of cypress, pines, and flowering dogwood rising up from the sandy shores. The exhausted travelers could not fail to see the contrast between this exotic, lush environment, seemingly untamed by human efforts, and the carefully cultivated farmlands and pastures of their native land. But if they were awed, they were not naive. To protect themselves from unseen dangers, each man wore a suit of armor and carried weapons. Sometime that afternoon, the Englishmen got their first glimpse of the local population as three Croatans approached in a canoe. Despite all that they had read, and the many sketches they had seen, the Englishmen found them strange to behold, dressed as they were in loincloths, their bodies decorated with tattoos and adorned with necklaces and bracelets of shells. The Indians were equally astonished by the sight of strangers, encased in heavy metal on a humid summer's day.

The encounter passed without incident. Within a month, the Englishmen were gone, returning to make their report to Raleigh. But the following year, a new group of Englishmen sank anchor off the North Carolina shore. These men, many of them soldiers, settled on Roanoke Island. Among them was a 25-year-old historian, surveyor, and cartographer, Thomas Harriot, who published his remarkable account of his nation's first colonizing attempt, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, in 1588. In his account, Harriot described the Indians the colonists encountered but failed to report the almost immediate clashes between natives and invaders. The Englishmen's unshakable sense of superiority, despite their dependence on the Indians for food, destroyed the possibility of cooperation. Before the year was over, Harriot and his shipmates returned to England.

Raleigh tried a second time in 1587, spending most of his remaining fortune to send over a hundred colonists to the area. Unfortunately, war with Spain made it impossible for Raleigh to send supplies to his colony for over three years. When a ship finally did reach the colony, the men on board could find no trace of the colonists. Instead they found abandoned ruins, and a single word carved into the bark of a nearby tree: “Croatan.” Whether the Roanoke colonists had fled from attack by the Croatans, or been rescued by them in the face of starvation or some other natural disaster, such as a severe drought, no one knows. News of the Roanoke mystery spread rapidly. So too did news that Raleigh had lost his entire fortune in his attempts at colonization, discouraging others from following his lead.

### Turmoil and Tensions in England

Although no one was willing to risk personal fortune on colonizing America, many English aristocrats believed the country needed to get rid of its growing population of impoverished men and women. Pamphlets suggested that the



solution to crime was to find a dumping ground for the thousands who had been displaced by the changing economy—desperate people without money or shelter. As farmlands were turned into pastures for sheep that supplied the new woolens industries, the resentful evicted farmers carried signs reading “Sheep Eat Men.”

The kings and their advisers also worried about the unrest stirred by growing demands for religious reform within the **Church of England**. The movement to “purify” the church had grown steadily, led by those who believed it had kept too many Catholic rituals despite its claim to be Protestant. For the seventeenth-century monarchs, the Stuart kings, this Puritan criticism smacked of treason because the king was not only leader of the nation but also head of the Anglican Church. Mistrust between Puritan reformers and the Crown grew under King James I and his son Charles I, for both men were rumored to be secretly practicing Catholicism.

There were other tensions in English society in the early decades of the century. A political struggle between the Crown and the legislative branch of the English government, the **Parliament**, was building to a crisis. In 1642 a civil war erupted, bringing together many of the threads of discontent and conflict. A Puritan army led by Oliver Cromwell overthrew the monarchy and, in 1649 took the radical step of executing King Charles I. Cromwell’s success established the supremacy of the Parliament. For almost a dozen years, the nation was a Commonwealth—a republic dominated by Puritans, merchants, and gentry rather than noblemen. Cromwell headed the government until his death in 1658, but to many English citizens his rule was as dictatorial as an absolute monarch’s. In 1660 the Stuart family was invited to take the throne once again. For twenty-five years, a period called the **Restoration**, Charles II ruled the nation. But when the Crown passed to his brother James II, an avowed Catholic, a second revolution occurred. This time, no blood was shed in England. James fled to France, and his Protestant daughter Mary and her Dutch husband, William, came to the English throne. This **Glorious Revolution** of 1688 ended almost a century of political, ideological, and economic instability. By then, twelve American colonies were already perched on the mainland shores.

**Church of England** The Protestant church established in the sixteenth century by King Henry VIII as England’s official church; also known as the Anglican Church.

**Parliament** The lawmaking branch of the English government, composed of the House of Lords, representing England’s nobility, and the House of Commons, an elected body of untitled English citizens.

**Restoration** The era following the return of monarchy to England, beginning in 1660 with King Charles II and ending in 1688 with the exile of King James II.

**Glorious Revolution** A term used to describe the removal of James II from the English throne and the crowning of the Protestant monarchs, William and Mary.

## Settling the Chesapeake

- ★ **What were the goals of the Virginia Company and of the Calvert family in creating their Chesapeake colonies? Did the colonies achieve these goals?**
- ★ **What events illustrate the racial, class, and religious tensions in the Chesapeake?**

Fears of financial ruin had prevented any Englishman from following in Raleigh’s footsteps. But English **entrepreneurs** had developed a new method of financing high-risk ventures—the **joint-stock company**—and it was soon applied to planting colonies. In a joint-stock company, investors joined together and purchased shares in a venture. Any profits had to be shared by all; likewise, any losses would be absorbed by all. In 1603 both the Plymouth Company and the London Company asked King James I for a charter to settle Virginia. The king agreed to both requests.

The Plymouth Company chose a poor site for its colony, however. The rocky coast of Maine proved uninviting to the settlers, and sickness and Indian attacks soon sent the survivors scurrying home to England. In December 1606, the London Company (now calling itself simply the Virginia Company) sent its first colonists far to the south of the ill-fated Maine colony. Here, near the Chesapeake Bay, they would create the first successful English colony in America.

**entrepreneur** A person who organizes and manages a business enterprise that involves risk and requires initiative.

**joint-stock company** A business financed through the sale of shares of stock to investors; the investors share in both the profits and losses from a risky venture.

**Jamestown** First permanent English settlement in mainland America, established in 1607 by the Virginia Company and named in honor of King James I.

### The Jamestown Colony

The 105 men and boys sent by the Virginia Company aboard the *Susan Constant*, the *Godspeed*, and the *Discovery* had been tossed on the Atlantic waters for over five months when at last they entered the calm waters of the Chesapeake Bay and made their way up a river they named the James in honor of their king. Happy at last to feel dry land under their feet, the men disembarked on a small peninsula that jutted out into the river. They called their settlement **Jamestown**.

The early years of this Jamestown colony were a seemingly endless series of survival challenges. The colonists discovered, too late, that they had encamped in an unhealthy spot. Summer brought intense heat, and the men were attacked by swarms of insects, bred in the wetlands that surrounded them. The water of the James was polluted by ocean salt water, making it dangerous to drink. One by one, the settlers fell ill, suffering typhus, malaria, or dysentery. Few of the men had any experience in wilderness survival. Most were gentlemen adventurers, hoping to discover gold and other precious metals just as the Spanish had in Central America. These adventurers, as one Englishman put it, “never knew what a day’s labour meant.” They assumed that they could enslave the local Indians and force them to do all the work.

Had they known more about the local Indians, they might not have relied on this solution. The Powhatan Confederacy, made up of some thirty Algonquin-speaking tribes on the coastal plains, was a powerful force in the Indian world of the east coast of North America. The chief of the Powhatans had forged this confederacy in the 1570s, in response to Spanish attempts at colonization. When the English arrived, the confederacy was led by Wahunsonacock, who effectively controlled tidewater Virginia and the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay. Although Wahunsonacock’s Powhatan tribe had only about forty warriors, he could count on the assistance of some three thousand others, drawn from member tribes such as the Pamunkeys, Mattaponis, and Arrohatocks. Although the English adventurers expended their energies on a futile search for gold rather than on building shelters or stockpiling food for the winter, the Indians harvested their corn—and waited to see what this group of Europeans would do.

Lacking any farming skills, disorganized, and unaccustomed to following orders or working hard, the colonists soon faced disease, starvation, and exposure to the elements. Temporary relief came when John Smith took command. Although overconfident and self-centered, Smith did have some survival knowledge and knew how to discipline men. He established a “no work, no food” policy and negotiated with the Powhatans for corn and other supplies. When Smith left in 1609, the discipline and order he had established quickly collapsed. The original colonists and those who joined them the following spring remembered that winter as “the starving time.” The desperate colonists burned their housing to keep warm and ate dogs, cats, mice, snakes, even shoe leather in their struggle to survive. Only sixty settlers were alive at winter’s end.

Across the Atlantic, the Virginia Company seemed caught in an investor’s nightmare, pumping good money after bad in hopes of delaying a total collapse of the colony. But tobacco, a weed native to the Americas, proved to be the colony’s salvation. Pipe smoking had been a steady habit in England since the mid-sixteenth century, and Englishmen were a reliable market for this “brown gold.” The local strain of tobacco in Virginia was too harsh for English tastes, but one of the colonists, an enterprising young planter named John Rolfe, managed to transplant a milder strain of West Indian tobacco to the colony. This success changed Rolfe’s life, earning him both wealth and the admiration of his neighbors. Rolfe made a second contribution to the colony soon afterward, easing the strained Indian-white relationships by his marriage to Pocahontas, who John Smith insisted had saved his life.



The relationship between the Powhatans and the Virginia colonists deteriorated quickly, despite early signs of cooperation. In this engraving, the adventurer and mercenary John Smith, who claimed to have once been saved by Pocahontas, is shown capturing a Powhatan warrior. Note the difference in weaponry used by the two opponents. The Granger Collection, New York.

By 1612, the Virginia Colony settlers engaged in a mad race to plant and harvest as many acres of tobacco as possible. Yet, the Virginia Company was unable to take full advantage of this unexpected windfall, for it had changed its policies in an effort to ease its financial burdens. In the beginning the company owned all the land but also bore all the costs of colonization. But by 1618, the company's new policy allowed individual colonists to own land if they paid their own immigration expenses. This **head right system** granted each male colonist a deed for 50 acres of land for himself and for every man, woman, or child whose voyage he financed. In this way the Virginia Company shifted the cost of populating and developing the colony to others. But the head rights also ended the company's monopoly on the suddenly valuable farmland.

Other important concessions to the colonists soon followed. The military-style discipline instituted by Smith and continued by later leaders was abandoned. At the same time, a measure of self-government was allowed. In 1619 the company created an elected, representative lawmaking body called the **House of Burgesses**, which gave the landholders—tobacco planters—of Virginia some control over local political matters. In effect, a business enterprise had finally become a colonial society.

The Virginia Company did retain one of the colony's earliest traditions—a bad relationship with the Powhatans. By 1622, the English seemed to have the upper hand, for the population had grown and tobacco had brought a measure of prosperity. As Virginia planters pressed farther inland, seizing Indian land along local rivers, the new Powhatan chief, Opechancanough, decided to strike back. On what the Christian settlers called

**head right system** The grant of 50 acres of land for each settler brought over to Virginia by a colonist.

**House of Burgesses** The elected lawmaking body of Virginia, established by the Virginia Company; the assembly first met in 1619.



Good Friday, he mounted a deadly attack on Jamestown, killing a quarter of the colonists in a single day. The company responded as quickly as it could, sending weapons to the Virginians. For two years, war raged between Indians and the English. Although the bloodshed became less frequent by 1625, a final peace was not reached for a decade. By that time, disease and violence had taken its toll on the Powhatans. Once over forty thousand strong, they had dwindled to fewer than five hundred people.

The Good Friday Massacre, as the English called it, brought important changes for the colony. King James I had already begun an investigation of the Virginia Company's management record. By 1624, only 1,275 of the 8,500 settlers who had arrived since 1607 remained alive. When James learned of the renewed conflict between Indians and colonists, he decided to take action. The king took away the company's charter and declared Virginia to be a royal possession.

### **Maryland: A Catholic Refuge**

As Virginians spread out along the riverways of their colony, searching for good tobacco land, plans for a second Chesapeake colony were brewing in England. The man behind this project was not a merchant or entrepreneur, and profit was not his motive. George Calvert, a wealthy Catholic who King Charles I had just made Lord Baltimore, was motivated by a strong concern about growing harassment and discrimination against England's dwindling number of Catholics. He envisioned a religious refuge in America for members of his faith. Calvert acquired a charter from the king that granted him a generous tract of land east and north of Chesapeake Bay. Here, he planned to establish a highly traditional society, dominated by powerful noblemen and populated by obedient tenant farmers.

Calvert died before a single colonist could be recruited for his Maryland. But his oldest son, Cecilius Calvert, the second Lord Baltimore, took on the task of establishing the colony. To Calvert's surprise, few English Catholics showed any enthusiasm for the project. When the first boatload of colonists sailed up the Chesapeake Bay in 1634, most of these two hundred volunteers were young Protestants seeking a better life. Calvert wisely adopted the head right system developed by the Virginia Company to attract additional settlers. The lure of land ownership, he realized, was the key to populating Maryland.

Calvert's colony quickly developed along the same lines as neighboring Virginia. Marylanders turned to planting the profitable **staple crop**, tobacco, and joined the scramble for good riverfront land. Like the Virginians, these colonists used trickery and violence to pry acres of potential farmland from resisting Indians. By midcentury, the Chesapeake colonies could claim a modest prosperity, even though their populations grew slowly. But they could not claim a peaceful existence. The political crises that shook England during the mid-seventeenth century sent shock waves across the Atlantic Ocean to the American shores. These crises intertwined with local tensions among colonists, or between colonists and Indians, to produce rebellions, raids, and civil wars.

### **Troubles on the Chesapeake**

In Maryland, tensions ran high between the Catholic minority, who had political influence beyond their numbers because of Lord Baltimore's support, and the Protestant majority in the colony. But with the rise to power of the Puritan leader Cromwell and his Commonwealth government in England, Calvert realized that his power to protect Maryland's Catholics was in jeopardy. Hoping to avoid persecution of the Catholic colonists, Calvert offered religious toleration to all Marylanders. In 1649 he issued the innovative Toleration Act, protecting all Christians from being "troubled [or]

**staple crop** A basic or necessary agricultural item, produced for sale or export.

molested” in respect to religion. Calvert’s liberal policy offended the staunchly Puritan Cromwell, who promptly repealed the act. In 1654 the Puritan-dominated Parliament went further, seizing Maryland from the Calvert family and establishing a Protestant assembly in the colony. The outcome was exactly as Calvert had feared: a wave of anti-Catholic persecution swept over Maryland.

Within a year, a bloody civil war was raging in Maryland. Protestant forces won the fiercely fought Battle of the Severn, but their victory proved futile when Cromwell died and the monarchy was restored. Charles II returned Maryland to the Calvert family, who had always been loyal supporters of the Stuart dynasty. Despite this reversal of fortunes, Protestants in Maryland continued their struggle, organizing unsuccessful rebellions in 1659, 1676, and again in 1681. Then, in 1689, William and Mary ascended to the throne of England in the Glorious Revolution, and Maryland’s Protestants rallied once again. Led by an unlikely looking hero, the stooped and crippled minister John Coode, colonists formed an army they called the Protestant Association. By 1691, Coode had persuaded the Crown to make Maryland a royal colony. The story did not end here, however. In 1715 the fourth Lord Baltimore gave up the Catholic faith and joined the Church of England. Maryland was once again returned to the Calverts.

Virginia was less affected by religious controversy than its neighbor. There, colonists were primarily Anglicans, although small communities of Quakers and Puritans were scattered throughout Virginia. Religious differences, however, did not spark hostilities. Instead, the fault lines in Virginia society developed between the wealthy planters of the tidewater region and the ambitious newcomers seeking to make their fortunes in the backcountry. This was the volatile atmosphere surrounding Bacon’s rebellion, as described at the start of the chapter.

### Colonial Chesapeake Life

Every aspect of life in the Chesapeake colonies was shaped by tobacco. Its cultivation set rhythms of work and play that were dramatically different from those in England. Planting, tending, harvesting, and drying tobacco leaves took almost ten months of the year, beginning in late winter and ending just before Christmas. In the short period between the holiday and the start of a new planting cycle, Chesapeake planters, their families, and their servants worked frantically to catch up on other, neglected farm chores. They also compressed what meager social life they had into these winter weeks, engaging—whenever possible—in hasty courtships followed by marriage.

Because tobacco quickly exhausted the soil in which it grew, planters moved frequently to new acres on their estates or to newly acquired lands farther west. They rarely stayed in one place very long, so planters placed little value on permanent homes or on creating permanent social institutions such as schools. Throughout the century, Chesapeake colonists sacrificed many of the familiar forms of community life to the demands of their profitable crop.

Planters needed a labor force large enough and cheap enough to ensure their profits. As long as poverty and social unrest plagued England, they found the workers they needed from their homeland. Over 175,000 young, single, and impoverished immigrants flooded the Chesapeake during the seventeenth century, their passages paid by the ship captain or the planter. In exchange for their transatlantic voyage, these **indentured servants** worked for several years in the tobacco fields without pay. Planters preferred a male work force, for they shared the general European assumption that farming was a masculine activity. As a result, these colonies had an unusual population profile: men outnumbered women in most areas of Virginia and Maryland by 3 to 1. In some areas, the ratio was a remarkable 6 to 1 until the end of the century.

**indentured servants** People working out their compulsory service for a fixed period of time, usually from four to seven years, in exchange for passage to the colonies; a labor contract called an *indenture* spelled out the agreement.



# Investigating America

## Nathaniel Bacon's "Declaration of the People"

Nathaniel Bacon began his defiance of the colonial government with the objective of removing Indians from the backcountry of Virginia. Yet, Bacon soon found himself the leader of a civil war between backcountry farmers and servants on the one hand and the wealthy coastal planters and the royal governor on the other. Labeled a traitor by Governor Berkeley, Bacon defended himself and his actions in "The Declaration of the People." In it, he also listed his followers' many grievances against the governor.

.....

If virtue be a sin, if piety be guilt, all the principles of morality, goodness and justice be perverted, we must confess that those who are now called rebels may be in danger of those high imputations. Those loud and several bulls would affright innocents and render the defense of our brethren and the inquiry into our sad and heavy oppressions, treason. But if there be, as sure there is, a just God to appeal to; if religion and justice be a sanctuary here; if to plead the cause of the oppressed; if sincerely to aim at his Majesty's honour and die public good without any reservation or by interest; if to stand in the gap after so much blood of our dear brethren bought and sold; if after the loss of a great part of his Majesty's colony deserted and dispeopled, freely with our lives and estates to endeavour to save the remainders be treason; God Almighty judge and let guilty die. But since we cannot in our hearts find one single spot of rebellion or treason, or that we have in any manner aimed at the subverting of the settled government or attempting of the person of any either magistrate or private man, notwithstanding the several reproaches and threats of some who for sinister ends were disaffected to us and censured our innocent and honest designs, and since all people in all places where we have yet been can attest our civil, quiet, peaceable behaviour far different from that of rebellion and tumultuous persons, let truth be bold and all the world know the real foundations of pretended guilt. We appeal to the country itself what and

of what nature their oppressions have been, or by what cabal and mystery the designs of many of those whom we call great men have been transacted and carried on; but let us trace these men in authority and favour to whose hands the dispensation of the country's wealth has been committed. Let us observe the sudden rise of their estates composed with the quality in which they first entered this country, or the reputation, they have held here amongst wise and discerning men. And let us see whether their extractions and education have not been vile, and by what pretence of learning and virtue they could so soon [come] into employments of so great trust and consequence. Let us consider their sudden advancement and let us also consider whether any public work for our safety and defence or for the advancement and propagation of trade, liberal arts, or sciences is here extant in any way adequate to our vast charge. Now let us compare these things together and see what sponges have sucked up the public treasure, and whether it has not been privately contrived away by unworthy favourites and juggling parasites whose tottering fortunes have been repaired and supported at the public charge. Now if it be so, judge what greater guilt can be than to offer to pry into these and to unriddle the mysterious wiles of a powerful cabal; let all people judge what can be of more dangerous import than to suspect the so long safe proceedings of some of our grantees, and whether people may with safety open their eyes in so nice a concern.

.....

- On what grounds did Bacon justify his attacks on the Indian population?
- What does the source suggest about how Bacon's revolt evolved into a class rebellion against the wealthy planters?
- What lessons might the royal governor and the planter class have drawn from this affair about the need to replace dangerous indentured labor?



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For these indentured servants, and often for their masters as well, life was short and brutal. They spent long, backbreaking days in the fields. Their food rations were meager, their clothing and bedding inadequate, and their shoulders frequently scarred by the master's whip. Some came to doubt that they would survive to win their freedom. Disease and malnutrition took the lives of perhaps a quarter of these bound laborers. Free colonists fared little better than servants. Typhus, dysentery, and malaria killed

thousands. Over one-quarter of the infants born in the Chesapeake did not live to see their first birthdays; another quarter of the population died before reaching the age of 20. Early death, the skewed ratio of men to women, and high infant mortality combined to create a demographic disaster that continued until the last decades of the century.

## New England: Colonies of Dissenters

- ★ **Why did English religious dissenters settle in New England?**
- ★ **How did the Puritan authorities deal with dissent?**

While Captain John Smith was barking orders at the settlers in Jamestown, some religious dissenters in a small English village were preparing to escape King James's wrath. These residents of Scrooby Village were people of modest means, without powerful political allies or a popular cause. But they had gone one step further than the majority of Puritans, who continued to be members of the Anglican Church despite their criticisms of it. The Scrooby villagers had left the church altogether, forming a separate sect of their own. James I despised these **separatists** and declared his intention to drive them out of England—or worse.

The Scrooby separatists took James's threats seriously. In 1611 they fled to the city of Leyden in the Netherlands. They saw themselves as **Pilgrims** on a spiritual journey to religious freedom. The Dutch welcomed them warmly, but several Pilgrims feared that the comfortable life they had found in Holland was diminishing their devotion to God. By 1620, **William Bradford** was leading a small group of these transplanted English men and women on a second pilgrimage—to America.

**separatists** English Protestants who chose to leave the Church of England because they believed it was corrupt.

**Pilgrims** A small group of separatists who left England in search of religious freedom and sailed to America on the *Mayflower* in 1620.

**William Bradford** The separatist who led the Pilgrims to America; he became the first governor of Plymouth Plantations.

### The Plymouth Colony

The Leyden Pilgrims were joined by other separatists in England. Together, they set sail on an old, creaky ship called the *Mayflower*. On board, too, were a band of “strangers,” outsiders to the religious sect who simply wanted passage to America.

Crammed together in close and uncomfortable quarters, they weathered a nightmare voyage of violent storms and choppy waters. After nine weeks at sea, the captain anchored the *Mayflower* at Cape Cod, almost 1,000 miles north of the original Virginia destination (see Map 3.1). The exhausted passengers did not complain; they fell to the ground to give thanks. Once the thrill of standing on dry land had passed, however, many of them sank into depression. The early winter landscape of New England was dreary and disturbingly empty. Bradford's own wife, Dorothy, may have committed suicide in the face of this bleak landscape.

Talk of setting sail for Virginia spread through the ranks of the ship's crew and the passengers. Mutiny was in the air. To calm the situation, Bradford negotiated an unusual contract with every man aboard the ship—Pilgrim, crew, servant, and stranger. Known as the **Mayflower Compact**, this document granted political rights to any man willing to remain and to abide by whatever laws the new colony enacted. Here was an unheard-of opportunity for poor men to participate in governing themselves. All agreed, and the new colony of Plymouth Plantations began to prepare for the long winter ahead.

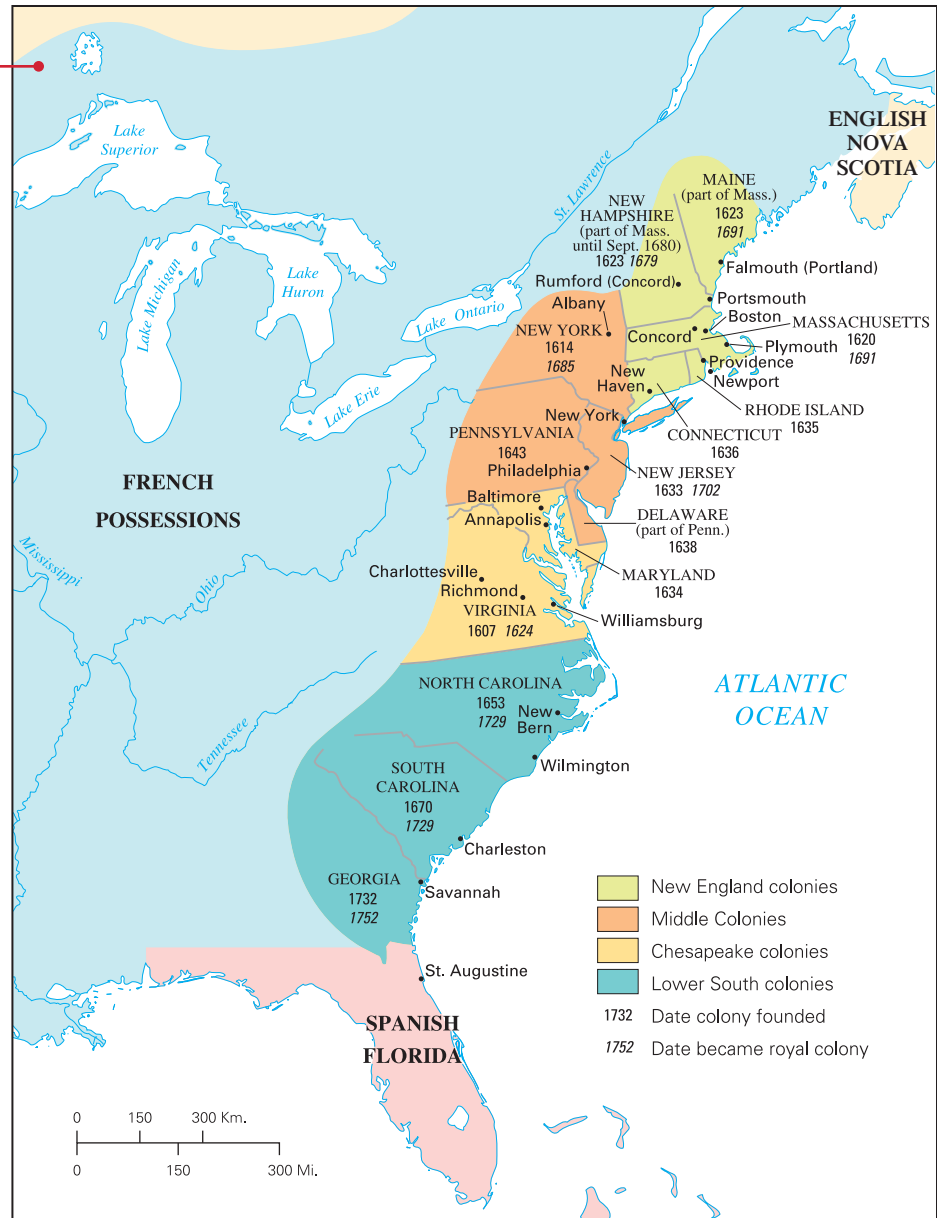
In Plymouth Plantations, as in Virginia, the first winter brought sickness, hunger, and death. Half of the colonists did not survive. When **Squanto**, a Patuxet, came upon the remaining men and women in the spring of 1621, he found them huddled in flimsy shelters. Squanto sympathized with their confusion and their longings for home, for he

**Mayflower Compact** An agreement drafted in 1620 when the Pilgrims reached America that granted political rights to all male colonists who would abide by the colony's laws.

**Squanto** A Patuxet who taught the Pilgrims' survival techniques in America and acted as translator for the colonists.

**MAP 3.1** The Colonies and Their Major Cities

The creation of the English mainland colonies spanned almost 125 years, from the first settlement at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607 to the founding of the last colony of Georgia in 1732. This map indicates the year each colony was founded, the type of charter governing it, and the date in which eight of these colonies came directly under royal control. The map also locates the major colonial cities in each region.



had crossed the Atlantic in 1605 aboard an English trading ship and spent several years in an alien environment. Ironically, the Pilgrims had settled where Squanto's own village had once stood. His entire family and tribe had been wiped out by diseases carried by English traders and fishermen.

Squanto helped the colonists, teaching them how to plant corn, squash, and pumpkins. Perhaps his greatest service, however, was in helping William Bradford negotiate a peace treaty with Massasoit, leader of the local Wampanoag Indians. The Wampanoags also agreed to spread the word to neighboring Indian communities that the Pilgrims were allies rather than enemies. The combined efforts of Squanto and Massasoit saved the Plymouth Colony, and in the fall of 1621, English settlers and Indian guests sat down together in a traditional harvest celebration of thanksgiving.

# Investigating America

## The Mayflower Compact

Although the original document was lost, the following transcription of the Mayflower Compact is taken from William Bradford's journal. In theory, the signers based their government on their allegiance to the king, but in reality the agreement was a social contract crafted by desperate settlers far from home in the name of survival.

.....

**I**n the name of God, Amen, We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c. Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the northern Parts of Virginia; Do by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the Presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better Ordering and Preservation, and Furtherance of the Ends aforesaid: And by Virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions, and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and

convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due Submission and Obedience. IN WITNESS whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape-Cod the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, Anno Domini; 1620.

.....

- Of the 102 settlers who set sail on the *Mayflower*, only the forty-one grown men signed the compact. What does the omission of women suggest about their view of a proper "Body Politick"?
- Even though many of those aboard the *Mayflower* were Calvinist critics of the English government, why might this document have pledged loyalty to King James I?
- To what extent did the ideas included here form the basis for future American governments?

Francis N. Thorpe, ed., *The Federal and State Constitutions Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the States, Territories, and Colonies* (Washington, 1909).

### Massachusetts Bay and Its Settlers

A second colony soon appeared beside Plymouth Plantations. In 1629 a group of prosperous Puritans, led by the 41-year-old lawyer **John Winthrop**, secured a charter for their Massachusetts Bay Company from King Charles I. Increasing concern about the government's harassment of dissenters, coupled with a deepening economic depression in England, spurred these Puritans to set sail for New England. Advertising the colony as "a refuge for many who [God] means to save out of the general calamity," Winthrop had no trouble recruiting like-minded Puritans to migrate.

From the beginning, the Massachusetts Bay Colony had several advantages over Jamestown and Plymouth Plantations. The colonists were well equipped and well prepared for their venture. The company had even sent an advance crew over to clear fields and build shelters. As religious tensions and economic distress increased in England, Massachusetts attracted thousands of settlers. This "**Great Migration**" continued until Oliver Cromwell's Puritan army took control of England.

Although profit motivated the Virginia colonists and a desire to worship in peace prompted the Pilgrims to sail to America, the Puritans were people with a mission. They hoped to create a model Christian community, a "city upon a hill" that would persuade all English men and women that the reforms they proposed in the Anglican Church were correct. Winthrop set out their mission in a speech to the passengers aboard the *Arabella*.



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**John Winthrop** One of the founders of Massachusetts Bay Colony and the colony's first governor.

**Great Migration** The movement of Puritans from England to America in the 1630s, caused by political and religious unrest in England.



“The eyes of all peoples are upon us,” Winthrop warned, and, more importantly, God was watching them as well. If they abandoned or forgot their mission, the consequences would surely include divine punishment.

This sense of mission influenced the physical as well as spiritual shape of the colony. Massachusetts colonists created tight-knit farming villages and small seaport towns in which citizens could monitor one another’s behavior as well as come together in prayer. This settlement pattern fit well with the realities of New England’s climate and terrain because the short growing season and the rocky soil made large, isolated plantations based on staple crops impossible. The colonists, homesick for English villages, did their best to reproduce familiar architecture and placement of public buildings. The result was a hub-and-spoke design, with houses tightly clustered around a village green, a church beside it, and most of the fields and farms within walking distance of the village center. This design set natural limits on the size of any village because beyond a certain point—usually measured in a winter’s walk to church—a farm family was considered outside the community circle. As a town’s population grew and the available farmland was farther from the green, settlers on the outer rim of the town chose to create a new community for themselves—a process that increasingly encroached on Indian lands.

Massachusetts and other New England settlements that followed were societies of families. Many, although not all, of the colonists arriving during the Great Migration

This statue of Anne Hutchinson portrays a courageous and determined woman. Massachusetts Bay’s Puritan officials, however, considered her a dangerous heretic who overstepped her proper place as a woman. Like Roger Williams, Hutchinson was exiled from the colony for her unorthodox views. Picture Research Consultants & Archives.





came as members of a family, so the gender ratio in the northern colonies was never dramatically skewed. On the whole, the number of men and women was roughly equal. And, unlike their Chesapeake counterparts, New Englanders never endured a demographic disaster. The cool temperatures and clean drinking water made the region a healthy place for Europeans, healthier than England itself. Infant mortality was low, and most children lived to marry and produce families of their own. A couple could expect to live a long life together and raise a family of five to seven children. One outcome of this longevity was a rare phenomenon in the seventeenth-century English world: grandparents.

Both Puritans and neighboring Pilgrims spoke of the family as “a little commonwealth,” the building block on which the larger society was constructed. A wife was expected to obey her husband. Puritan ministers reinforced this ideal of a **hierarchy**, or well-defined chain of command, within a family. “Wives,” they preached, “are part of the House and Family, and ought to be under a Husband’s Government: they should Obey their own Husbands.” A husband, however, was bound by sacred obligations to care for and be respectful toward his wife. Marriage involved many practical duties as well. Wives were expected to strive to be “notable housewives”—industrious, economical managers of resources and skilled at several crafts. They were to spin yarn, sew, cook, bake, and butcher farm animals. In close-knit New England communities, women were able to help one another by exchanging butter for eggs, assisting with a neighbor’s childbirth, or nursing the sick back to health. Husbands were expected to labor in the fields, or in the shop, in order to provide for their families.

Although obligated to be tender and loving, the husband controlled the resources of the family. This was true in all English colonies, although in the Chesapeake, a husband’s early death often left the wife in charge of the family farm and its profits until sons came of age. Under English law, a married woman, as a *femme couverte*, lost many of her legal rights because, in law, she came under the protection and governance of her husband. Married women could not acquire or sell property or claim the use of any wages they earned. They could gain such basic legal rights only through special contracts made with their husbands. Puritan communities, however, frowned on any such arrangements. In the “little commonwealth” of the family, a man was the undisputed head of the household and thus had authority over all its economic resources and all its members. He also represented the family’s interests in the realm of politics. No matter how wise or wealthy a woman might become, she was denied a political voice.

### Government in Puritan Massachusetts

To create the “city upon a hill,” the directors of the Massachusetts Bay Company needed, and expected, the full cooperation of all colonists. This did not mean that all colonists had an equal voice or an equal role in fulfilling this vision of a perfect community. The “wilderness Zion” was not intended to be an egalitarian society. Winthrop believed that it was natural and correct for some people to be rich and some to be poor—“some high and eminent in power and dignity, others mean and in subjugation.” Women, children, servants, young men, and adult men without property owed obedience to others in most English communities. But in Massachusetts, there were further limitations on participation. Not even all free males with property were granted a voice in governing the colony, and the qualifications for political participation in the representative assembly were dramatically different from those set by Maryland or Virginia. No man in Massachusetts had a full political voice unless he was an acknowledged church member, not just a churchgoer. Church membership, or **sainthood**, was granted only after a person testified to an experience of “saving grace,” a moment

**hierarchy** A system in which people or things are ranked above one another.

**femme couverte** From the French for “covered woman”; a legal term for a married woman; this legal status limited women’s rights, denying them the right to sue or be sued, own or sell property, or earn wages.

**sainthood** Full membership in a Puritan church.

**Quakers** Members of the Society of Friends, a radical Protestant sect that believed in the equality of men and women, pacifism, and the presence of a divine “inner light” in every individual.

**heretic** A person who does not behave in accordance with an established attitude, doctrine, or principle, usually in religious matters.

**Roger Williams** Puritan minister banished from Massachusetts for criticizing its religious rules and government policies; in 1635, he founded Providence, a community based on religious freedom and the separation of church and state.

**Anne Hutchinson** A religious leader banished from Massachusetts in 1636 because of her criticism of the colonial government and what were judged to be heretical beliefs.

**magistrates** Civil officers charged with administering the law.

of intense awareness of God’s power and a reassuring conviction of personal salvation. Massachusetts made religious qualifications as important as gender or economic status in the colony’s political life.

In the early decades of the colony, moreover, the Puritan sense of mission left little room for religious toleration. Colonial leaders saw no reason to welcome anyone who disagreed with their religious views. English America was large, they argued, and people of other faiths could settle elsewhere. Winthrop’s government was particularly aggressive against members of a new sect called the **Quakers**, who came to Massachusetts on a mission of their own—to convert Puritans to their faith. Quakers entering the colony were beaten, imprisoned, or branded with hot irons. If they returned, they were hanged. Puritan leaders showed just as little tolerance toward members of their own communities who criticized or challenged the rules of the Bay Colony or the beliefs of its church. They drove out men and women who they perceived to be **heretics**, or religious traitors, including Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson.

Almost anyone could be labeled a heretic—even a popular Puritan minister. Only a year after the colony was established, the church at Salem made **Roger Williams** its assistant minister. His electrifying sermons and his impressive knowledge of Scripture attracted a devoted following. But he soon attracted the attention of local authorities as well, for his sermons were highly critical of the colonial government. From his pulpit, Williams condemned political leaders for seizing Indian land. He also denounced laws requiring church attendance. True religious faith, he said, was a matter of personal commitment. It could not be compelled. “Forced religion,” he lectured his congregation, “stinks in God’s nostrils.”

In 1635 Winthrop’s government banished Williams from the colony. Wading through deep snow, Williams left Salem and sought refuge with the Narragansett Indians. When spring came, many of his Salem congregation joined him in exile. Together, in 1635, they created a community called Providence that welcomed dissenters of all kinds, including Quakers, Jews, and Baptists. In 1644 the English government granted Williams a charter for his colony, which he eventually called Rhode Island. Within their borders, Rhode Islanders firmly established the principle of separation of church and state.

Soon after the Massachusetts authorities rid the colony of Roger Williams, a new challenge arose. In 1634 **Anne Hutchinson**, her husband, William, and their several children emigrated to Massachusetts. The Hutchinsons made an impressive addition to the colonial community. He was a successful merchant. She had received an exceptionally fine education from her father and was eloquent, witty, and well versed in Scripture. Like Williams, Hutchinson put little stock in the power of a minister or in any rules of behavior to assist an individual in the search for salvation. She believed that only God’s grace could save a person’s soul. And she declared that God made a “covenant of grace,” or a promise of salvation, that did not depend on any church, minister, or worship service.

Hutchinson’s opinions, aired in popular meetings at her home, disturbed the Puritan authorities. That she was a woman made her outspoken defiance even more shocking. Men like Winthrop believed that women ought to be silent in the church and had no business criticizing male authorities, particularly ministers and **magistrates**, or government officials. A surprising number of Puritans, however, were untroubled by Hutchinson’s sex. Male merchants and craftsmen who lacked political rights because they were not members of the saintly elect welcomed her attacks on these authorities. Hutchinson also attracted Puritan saints who resented the tight grip of the colonial government on their business and personal lives.

# Investigating America

## Anne Hutchinson, 1637

Winthrop's questioning of Anne Hutchinson at the court in Newton turned into a battle of wits in which the governor, trained in England in the law, often found himself out-argued by the quick-witted goodwife. In the following excerpt, taken from the lengthy interrogation, Winthrop lectures about the proper role of women in New England society.

*Winthrop:* We do not mean to discourse with those of your sex but only this; you so adhere unto [the leaders of the colony] and do endeavor to set forward this faction and so you do dishonour us.

*Hutchinson:* I do acknowledge no such thing. Neither do I think that I ever put any dishonour upon you.

*Winthrop:* Why do you keep such a meeting at your house as you do every week upon a set day?

*Hutchinson:* It is lawful for me to do so, as it is all your practices, and can you find a warrant for yourself and condemn me for the same thing?

*Winthrop:* By what warrant do you continue such a course?

*Hutchinson:* I conceive there lies a clear rule in Titus that the elder women should instruct the younger and then I must have a time wherein I must do it.

*Winthrop:* All this I grant you, I grant you a time for it, but what is this to the purpose that you, Mrs. Hutchinson, must call a company together from their callings to come to be taught by you?

*Hutchinson:* Will it please you to answer me this and to give me a rule for then I will willingly submit to any truth....Do you think it not lawful for me to teach women, and why do you call me to teach the court?

*Winthrop:* We do not call you to teach the court but to lay open yourself....Your course is not to be suffered for.

- Do you think Hutchinson would have attracted less attention if she only taught women, or was the governor's problem deeper than that?
- Winthrop also had problems with men like Roger Williams. What was it about their theology that made Calvinists so difficult to govern? That is, why were separatists likely to disagree with their governments?

Excerpted from *THE TRIAL OF ANNE HUTCHINSON: LIBERTY, LAW, AND INTOLERANCE IN PURITAN NEW ENGLAND: REACTING TO THE PAST* by Marc C. Carnes (ed). Copyright © 2004 by Longman Publishers.

In the end, none of Hutchinson's supporters could protect her against the determined opposition of the Puritan leadership. In 1637 she was arrested and brought to trial. Although she was in the last months of a troubled pregnancy, her judges forced her to stand throughout the lengthy examination. Hutchinson seemed to be winning the battle of words despite her physical discomfort, but eventually she blundered. In one of her answers, she seemed to claim that she had direct communication with God. Such a claim went far beyond the acceptable bounds of Puritan belief. Triumphantly, Winthrop and his colleagues declared her a heretic and banished her from Massachusetts.

### Indian Suppression

Although the Puritan colonists hoped to create a godly community, they were often motivated by greed and jealousy. Between 1636 and the 1670s, New Englanders came into conflict with one another over desirable land. They also waged particularly violent warfare against the Indians of the region.

The first to feel pressure were the Pequots of the Connecticut Valley. By 1636, the **Pequot War** had begun, with the Indians under attack from both Massachusetts and

**Pequot War** Conflict in 1636 between the Pequot Indians inhabiting eastern Connecticut and the colonists of Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut: the Indians were destroyed and driven from the area.



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Connecticut armies and their Indian allies, the Narragansetts and the Mohicans. Mounting a joint effort, the colonists targeted the Pequot town of Mystic Village. Although the village was defenseless and contained mostly civilians, Captain John Mason gave the orders for the attack. Captain John Underhill of the Massachusetts army recorded the slaughter with obvious satisfaction: “Many [Pequots] were burnt in the fort, both men, women, and children.” When the survivors tried to surrender to the Narragansetts, Puritan soldiers killed them. The brutal war did not end until all the Pequot men had been killed and the women and children sold into slavery. If the Narragansett Indians believed their alliance with Winthrop would protect them, they were mistaken. Within five years the Puritans had assassinated the Narragansett chief, an act of insurance against problems with these Indian allies.

For almost three decades, an uneasy peace existed between New England colonists and Indians. But the struggle over the land continued. When war broke out again, it was two longtime allies—the Plymouth colonists and the Wampanoags—who took up arms against each other. By 1675, the friendship between these two groups had been eroded by Pilgrim demands for new Indian lands. Chief **Metacom**, known to the English as King Philip, made the difficult decision to resist. When Metacom used **guerrilla tactics** effectively, staging raids on white settlements, the colonists retaliated by burning Indian crops and villages and selling captives into slavery. By the end of the year, Metacom had forged an alliance with the Narragansetts and several small regional tribes. Metacom’s devastating raids on white settlements terrified the colonists, but soon the casualties grew on both sides. Atrocities were committed by everyone involved in this struggle, which the English called King Philip’s War. With the help of Iroquois troops sent by the governor of New York, the colonists finally defeated the Wampanoags. Metacom was murdered, and his head was impaled on a stick.

**Metacom** A Wampanoag chief, known to the English as King Philip, who led the Indian resistance to colonial expansion in New England in 1675.

**guerrilla tactics** A method of warfare in which small bands of fighters in occupied territory harass and attack their enemies, often in surprise raids; the Indians used these tactics during King Philip’s War.

### Change and Reaction in England and New England

Both Pilgrim and Puritan leaders had expected the broad expanse of the Atlantic Ocean to protect their colonies from the political and religious tensions that wracked seventeenth-century England. Like their Chesapeake counterparts, they were wrong. From the beginning, of course, Puritan migration to New England had been prompted by Charles I’s hostility to dissenters. When Puritan armies challenged the Stuart king in 1642, Bay Colony settlers rejoiced. Many chose to return home to fight in this Puritan Revolution. Throughout the decade, the Massachusetts population shrank.

Massachusetts faced a crisis in the post-civil war years. The sense of mission that had accompanied its founding seemed to be declining. Few new saints migrated to the Bay Colony after Cromwell’s victory or during the Restoration era. In fact, most of the newcomers in the 1660s were not Puritans at all but Anglicans or members of other Protestant groups seeking economic opportunities. The decline in religious zeal troubled ministers and government officials alike, for it marked a sharp decline in eligible voters and officeholders. The problem was made worse by the growing demands of prosperous non-Puritan men for an active role in the government. Some towns began to compromise, allowing men of property and good standing in the community to participate in local decision making. But the saints were not willing to set aside the church membership requirement. In 1662 they decided to introduce the **Half-Way Covenant**, an agreement that allowed the children of church members to join the church even if they did not make a convincing declaration of their own salvation. This compromise kept political power in the hands of Puritans—for the moment.

**Half-Way Covenant** An agreement (1662) that gave partial membership in Puritan churches to the children of church members even if they had not had a “saving faith” experience.



Pressures from England could not be dealt with so easily, however. Charles II cast a doubtful eye on a colony that sometimes ignored English civil law if it conflicted with biblical demands. In 1683 Charles insisted that the Bay Colony revise its charter to weaken the influence of biblical teachings and eliminate the stringent voting requirements. The Massachusetts government refused. With that, Charles revoked the charter. Massachusetts remained in political limbo until 1685, when James II came to the throne. Then conditions worsened. In an effort to centralize administration of his growing American empire, James combined several of the northern colonies into one large unit under direct royal control. This megacolony, the **Dominion of New England**, included Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Plymouth Plantations, and the newly acquired colonies of New Jersey and New York. James expected the Dominion to increase the **patronage**, or political favors, he could provide to his loyal supporters and hoped to increase revenues by imposing taxes on colonial goods in the vast region.

What King James did not expect was how strongly colonists resented his Dominion and the man he chose to govern it, the arrogant Sir Edmund Andros. When Boston citizens received news of the Glorious Revolution, they imprisoned Andros and shipped him back to England to stand trial as a traitor to the nation's new Protestant government. Massachusetts Puritans hoped to be rewarded for their patriotism, but they were quickly disappointed. Although William and Mary abolished the Dominion, they chose not to restore the Bay Colony charter. In 1691 Massachusetts became a royal colony, its governor appointed by the Crown. **Suffrage**, or voting rights, was granted to all free males who met a **property requirement**. Church membership would never again be a criterion for citizenship in the colony.

Over the course of its sixty-year history, Massachusetts had undergone many significant changes. The Puritan ideal of small, tightly knit farming communities had been replaced by bustling seaport cities, diverse beliefs, and a more secular, or nonreligious, orientation to daily life. This transition increased tensions in every community. Those tensions contributed to one of the most dramatic events in the region's history: the Salem witch trials.

In 1692 a group of young women and girls in Salem Village began to show signs of what seventeenth-century society diagnosed as bewitchment. They fell into violent fits, contorting their bodies and showing great emotional distress. Under questioning, they named several local women, including a West Indian slave named Tituba, as their tormentors. More accusations followed, and by summer, more than a hundred women, men, and children were crowded into local jails, awaiting trial. Accusations, trials, and even executions—nineteen in all—continued until the new royal governor, Sir William Phips, arrived in the colony and forbade any further arrests. Phips dismissed the court that had passed judgment based on “spectral evidence”—that is, testimony by the alleged victims that they had seen the spirits of those tormenting them. In January 1693, Phips assembled a new court that acquitted the remaining prisoners.

What had prompted this terrible episode in colonial history? In part, the witch trials reflected a struggle between Puritan farmers of Salem Village and the town's more worldly merchants, for the accusers were often members of the farming community whereas the accused were often associated with commercial activities. In part, they reflected the fact that danger continued to lurk nearby, despite the busy port towns and the prosperity of the older farming communities. French and Indian attacks on the border settlements were frequent and brutal, and refugees from this violence could be seen in many older towns. In the despair that followed these attacks, colonists looked for someone to blame for their losses.

#### **Dominion of New England**

A megacolony created in 1686 by James II under the control of one royal governor; William and Mary dissolved the Dominion when they came to the throne in 1689.

#### **patronage**

Jobs or favors distributed on a political basis, usually as rewards for loyalty or service.

#### **suffrage**

The right to vote.

#### **property requirement**

The limitation of voting rights to citizens who own certain kinds or amounts of property.



## The Pluralism of the Middle Colonies

- ★ **What cultural and economic tensions came to a head in Leisler's Rebellion?**
- ★ **What made William Penn's vision for Pennsylvania so distinctive?**

Between the Chesapeake and New England lay the vast stretch of forest and farmland called New Netherland, a Dutch colony that was home to settlers from Holland, Sweden, France, and the German states. In the 1660s, Charles II seized the area and drove the Dutch from the Atlantic coast of North America. The English divided the conquered territory into three colonies: New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Although the region changed hands, it did not change its character: the Middle Colonies remained a multicultural, commercially oriented, and competitive society no matter whose flag flew over them.

### From New Netherland to New York

Before 1650, Europe's two major Protestant powers, England and Holland, had maintained a degree of cooperation, and their American colonies remained on friendly terms. But a growing rivalry over the transatlantic trade and conflicting land claims in the Connecticut Valley soon eroded this neighborliness. Beginning in 1652, these rivals fought three naval wars as both nations tried to control the transatlantic trade in raw materials and manufactured goods. After each, the Dutch lost ground, and their decline made it likely that the New Netherland settlement would be abandoned.

King Charles II of England wanted New Netherland, and James, Duke of York (later King James II), was eager to satisfy his brother's desires. In 1664 Charles agreed to give James control of the region lying between the Connecticut and Delaware Rivers—if James could wrest it from the Dutch (see Map 3.1). The promise and the prize amounted to a declaration of war on New Netherland.

When the duke's four armed ships arrived in New Amsterdam harbor and aimed their cannon at the town, Governor Peter Stuyvesant tried to rally the local residents to resist. They declined. Life under the English, they reasoned, would probably be no worse than life under the Dutch. Perhaps it might be better. The humiliated governor surrendered the colony, and in 1664 New Netherland became New York without a shot being fired.

James's colony did not develop as he had hoped, however. Settlement did not expand to the north and east as he wished. He could not enlist the aid of influential New Yorkers in his expansion plans, even though he offered them the incentive of a representative assembly in 1682. By 1685, James—now king of England—had lost interest in the colony, abandoning his schemes for its growth and abolishing the representative assembly as well.

### Leisler's Rebellion

Although James viewed New York as a failure, the colony actually grew rapidly during his rule. The population doubled between 1665 and 1685, reaching fifteen thousand. These new settlers added to the cultural diversity that had always characterized the region. The colony became a religious refuge for French Protestants, English Quakers, and Scottish **Presbyterians**. New York's diverse community, however, did not always live in harmony. English, Dutch, and German merchants competed fiercely for control of New York City's trade and for dominance in the city's cultural life. Only one thing united these competitors: a burning resentment of James's political control

**Presbyterians** Members of a Protestant sect that eventually became the established church of Scotland; in the seventeenth century, the sect was sometimes persecuted by Scotland's rulers.

and the men he chose to enforce his will. Their anger increased when James created the Dominion of New England, merging New York with the Puritan colonies.

In 1689, news of the Glorious Revolution prompted a revolt in New York City similar to the one that shook Boston. **Jacob Leisler**, a German merchant, emerged as its leader. Although Leisler lacked the charisma and commanding presence that had allowed Nathaniel Bacon to rise to power in 1667, he was able to take control of the entire colony. Acting in the name of the new English monarchs, he not only removed Dominion officials but imprisoned several of his local opponents, declaring them enemies of Protestantism. He then called for city elections, expecting an era of home rule to follow his rebellion. But England's new monarchs had no intention of leaving a local merchant in charge of a royal colony. When William and Mary sent a new governor to New York, Leisler refused to surrender the reins of government. This time, the abrasive, headstrong merchant found few supporters, and eventually he was forced to step down. To Leisler's surprise, he was then arrested and charged with treason. Both he and his son-in-law were tried, found guilty, and executed. In death, Leisler became a hero and a martyr. Popular anger was so great that to quiet the discontent, the new governor had to permit formation of a representative assembly. Several of the men elected to this new legislature were ardent Leislerians, and for many years New York politics remained a battleground between home rule advocates and supporters of the royal governor and the king.

**Jacob Leisler** German merchant who led a revolt in New York in 1689 against royal officials representing the Dominion of New England; he was executed as a traitor.

### William Penn's Holy Experiment

More than most dissenting sects, Quakers had paid a high price for their strongly held convictions. Members of the Society of Friends had been jailed in England and Scotland and harassed by their neighbors throughout the empire. Quaker leaders had strong motives to create a refuge for members of their beleaguered church. In the 1670s, a group of wealthy Friends purchased New Jersey from its original proprietors and offered religious freedom and generous political rights to its current and future colonists, many of whom were Puritans. The best known of these Quaker proprietors was **William Penn**, who had given up a life of privilege, luxury, and self-indulgence in Restoration society and embraced the morally demanding life of the Friends.

Penn's father, Admiral Sir William Penn, was a political adviser to King Charles II, and his son was equally loyal. Eventually, Charles rewarded the Penns' devotion. In 1681, he granted the younger Penn a charter to a huge area west of the Delaware River. (The southernmost section of Penn's grant, added later by Charles II, developed independent of Penn's control and in 1776 became the state of Delaware.) This gave Penn the opportunity to create for Quakers a refuge that fully embodied their religious principles. Called Pennsylvania, meaning "Penn's Woods," the colony was founded upon the conviction that the divine spirit, or "inner light," resided in every human being. Quakers thus were expected to respect all individuals. By their plain dress and their refusal to remove their hats in the presence of their social "betters," Quakers demonstrated their belief that all men and women were equal. In keeping with their egalitarian principles, Quakers recognized no distinctions of wealth or social status in their places of worship. At the strikingly simple Quaker meeting, or worship service, any member who felt moved to speak was welcome to participate, no matter how poor or uneducated and no matter what sex or age. Although they actively sought converts, Quakers were always tolerant of other religions.

Penn's land policy also reflected Quaker principles. Unlike many proprietors, he wanted no politically powerful landlords and no economically dependent tenant farmers. Instead, he actively promoted a society of independent, landowning farm families.

**William Penn** English Quaker who founded the colony of Pennsylvania in 1681.

This sketch of a Quaker meeting highlights one of the most radical of Quaker practices: allowing women to speak in church. Most Protestant denominations, because of their reading of Saint Paul, enforced the rule of silence on women. But Quakers struck a blow at seventeenth-century gender notions by granting women an active ministerial role and a voice in church policy. “The Quaker Meeting” (detail) by Egbert Van Heemskerck. The Quaker Collection, Haverford College Library.



Penn also insisted that all land be purchased fairly from the Indians, and he pursued a policy of peaceful coexistence between the two cultures. He took an active role in making Pennsylvania a multicultural society, recruiting non-English settlers through pamphlets that stressed the religious and political freedoms and economic opportunities his colony offered. Many immigrants came from England, but Irish, Scottish, Welsh, French, Scandinavian, and German settlers arrived as well. To their English neighbors who did not speak German, newcomers from Germany such as the Mennonites and Amish were known as the “Pennsylvania Dutch,” from *Deutsch*, meaning “German.” By the time of Penn’s death in 1717, Philadelphia was already emerging as a great shipping and commercial center, rivaling the older seaports of Boston and New York City. But as in New England, this success came at some cost to the colony’s original vision and principles.

## The Colonies of the Lower South

- ★ **What type of society did the founders of Carolina hope to create? How did the colony differ from their expectations?**
- ★ **Why did philanthropists create Georgia? Why did the king support this project?**

Penn was not the only Englishman to benefit from the generosity of King Charles II. In 1663 the king surprised eight of his favorite supporters by granting them several million acres lying south of Virginia and stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. This gesture by Charles was both grand and calculated. France, Spain, Holland, and the Indian tribes that inhabited this area all laid claim to it, and Charles thought it would be wise to secure England’s control of the region. The eight new colonial proprietors named their colony Carolina to honor the king’s late father, who had lost his head to the Puritan Commonwealth (and whose name in Latin was Carolus; see Map 3.1).

### The Carolina Colony

The proprietors’ plan for Carolina was similar to Lord Baltimore’s medieval dream. The philosopher John Locke helped draw up the Fundamental Constitution of Carolina, an elaborate blueprint for a society of great landowners, **yeomen** (small, independent farmers), and serfs (agricultural laborers) bound to work for their

**yeoman** Independent landowner entitled to suffrage.

landlords. Locke later became famous for his essays on freedom and human rights (see Chapter 4)—a far cry from the social hierarchy proposed in the Carolina constitution. Like the Calverts, however, the Carolina proprietors discovered that few English people were willing to travel 3,000 miles across the ocean to become serfs. Bowing to reality, the proprietors offered the incentive of the head right system used in Virginia and Maryland decades earlier.

The early settlers in Carolina, many of them relocating from the Caribbean island of Barbados, made their way to the southeastern portion of the colony, drawn there by the fine natural harbor of the port city, Charles Town (later Charleston), and its fertile surroundings. Despite the dangers of the Spanish to the south in Florida and the Yamasee to the southwest, Charles Town grew rapidly, becoming the most important city in the southern colonies. Some settlers established trade with the Indians of the region, exchanging English goods for deerskins and for captive victims of tribal warfare, who were shipped as slaves to the Caribbean. Other colonists tapped the region's pine forests to produce naval stores—the timber, tar, and turpentine that were used in building and maintaining wooden ships. But in the 1680s, Carolina cattlemen turned to a new and very profitable enterprise in rice cultivation. These planters quickly became the richest English colonists on the mainland.

The northern region of Carolina did not fare as well. Bordered by the Great Dismal Swamp to the north, this isolated area attracted few colonists. The land around Albemarle Sound was fertile enough, but the remaining coastline was cut off from the Atlantic by a chain of barrier islands that blocked access to oceangoing vessels. Despite these constraints, some poor farm families drifted in from Virginia, searching for unclaimed land and a fresh start. They had modest success in growing tobacco and producing naval stores. By 1729 they were numerous enough to take control from the original proprietors, as their elite neighbors around Charleston had done in 1719. Then these North Carolinians went one step further and officially separated from the rice-rich southern section of the colony.

### Georgia, the Last Colony

More than one hundred years after the first Jamestown colonists struggled against starvation and disease in Virginia, the last of the original thirteen colonies was established in the Lower South. In 1732, **James Oglethorpe**, a wealthy English social reformer, and several of his friends requested a charter for a colony on the Florida border. Oglethorpe did not seek to make a profit from this colony; instead he hoped to provide a new, moral life for English men and women imprisoned for minor debts. King George II was also anxious to create a protective buffer between the valuable rice-producing colony of South Carolina and the Spanish in Florida. The king inserted a clause in the Georgia charter requiring military service from every male settler. Thus he guaranteed that the poor men of Georgia would protect the rich men of South Carolina (see Map 3.1).

Oglethorpe and his associates added their own special restrictions on the lives of the Georgia colonists. Because they believed that poverty was the result of a weak character or, worse, of an addiction to vice, they did not think debtors could govern themselves. They forbade a representative assembly and denied the settlers a voice in selecting political leaders and military officers. In an effort to reform the character of their colonists, the trustees set other rules, including a ban on all alcoholic beverages. To ensure that these settlers worked hard, they kept individual land grants small, and they banned slavery.

Oglethorpe interviewed many imprisoned debtors, searching for members of the “deserving poor” who would benefit from settling in Georgia. But few of these debtors met

**James Oglethorpe** English philanthropist who established the colony of Georgia in 1732 as a refuge for debtors.



his standards. In the end, most of the colony's settlers turned out to be middle-class English immigrants and South Carolinians looking for new land. These colonists did not welcome the trustees' paternalistic attitudes, and they soon challenged all the restrictive rules and regulations in the charter, including the ban on slave labor. By the 1740s, illegal slave auctions were a common sight in Georgia's largest town, Savannah. In 1752, Oglethorpe and his fellow trustees had lost enthusiasm for their reform project and, with relief, returned Georgia to the king.

## Summary

In 1607, the English created their first permanent colony at Jamestown. By 1732, thirteen English colonies hugged the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. Some, like Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, were founded as religious refuges; others were founded for profit. Four distinct regions soon emerged, based primarily on how the settlers made their livings: the Chesapeake, where tobacco was the staple crop; New England, with its small farms, shipping, and lumbering industries; the Middle Colonies, which grew and exported wheat through the major port cities of New York and Philadelphia; and the Lower South, where rice plantations, worked by African slaves, dominated.

Virginia and Maryland made up the Chesapeake region. Here tobacco shaped every aspect of life. Thousands of poor young Englishmen were brought over as indentured servants to work in the tobacco fields. Few women were recruited, and the combination of an unbalanced sex ratio and frequent deaths caused by an unhealthy climate, grueling labor, and poor diet produced what historians call a "demographic disaster" in the seventeenth-century Chesapeake.

The colonies of the Lower South—the Carolinas and Georgia—were established many decades after the Chesapeake. Carolina's proprietors tried to create a feudal society, and Georgia's founders wanted to build a haven for debtors. In the end, however, neither goal was achieved. South Carolina focused on rice production, using African slave labor, and these planters became the richest group in the colonies.

Plymouth Plantations, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and later New Hampshire made up the New England colonies. Here, the earliest settlers were dissenters who sought religious freedom. In 1620, separatists known as the Pilgrims founded the first New England

colony, Plymouth Plantations. Their leaders drafted a radical document known as the Mayflower Compact, which assured broad political rights to all the men on board their ship. In 1630, Massachusetts Bay was founded by the Puritans who intended it to be a model Protestant community. When Puritans like Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson challenged the colony's leadership and its religious practices, they were exiled. Williams went on to found Rhode Island on the principle of separation of church and state. In 1691, Massachusetts was taken over by the King, and the Puritans' religious experiment ended. The anxiety produced by political and economic change, coupled with dangers on the frontier, contributed to the Salem witch hunts.

The Middle Colonies region was originally settled by the Dutch and the Swedes, but the English seized the area in 1664. New Sweden and New Netherland became New Jersey and New York. In 1681, William Penn created the colony of Pennsylvania, west of New Jersey, as a home for Quakers. Unlike the Puritans, however, he welcomed people of all faiths into his "holy experiment." The Middle Colonies were noted for their diverse populations and policies of religious tolerance.

Religious, economic, and political conflicts were common back in England, and it was often no more peaceful in the colonies. In Maryland, Protestants and Catholics warred with each other and in Virginia, poor backcountry farmers, led by Nathaniel Bacon, rose up against the wealthier coastal planters in 1676. The desire for land led colonists in Virginia and New England into war against Indians. Finally, English policies prompted rebellions, as colonists in Boston and New York rose up to overthrow the hated Dominion of New England in 1689. Amid this turmoil, one thing was certain: great changes would take place in the eighteenth century.



## Key Terms

Chesapeake, *p. 51*

Church of England, *p. 53*

Parliament, *p. 53*

Restoration, *p. 53*

Glorious Revolution, *p. 53*

entrepreneurs, *p. 53*

joint-stock company, *p. 53*

Jamestown, *p. 54*

head right system, *p. 55*

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indentured servants, *p. 57*

separatists, *p. 59*

Pilgrims, *p. 59*

William Bradford, *p. 59*

Mayflower Compact, *p. 59*

Squanto, *p. 59*

John Winthrop, *p. 61*

Great Migration, *p. 61*

hierarchy, *p. 63*

*femme couverte*, *p. 63*

sainthood, *p. 63*

Quakers, *p. 64*

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# CHAPTER 4

# The English Colonies in the Eighteenth Century 1689–1763

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

### *The English Transatlantic Communities of Trade*

Regions of Commerce  
The Cords of Commercial Empire  
**IT MATTERS TODAY:** Women's  
Opportunities, Then and Now

### *Community and Work in Colonial Society*

The Emergence of the “Yankee”  
Planter Society and Slavery  
Slave Experience and Slave Culture  
**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**  
Eliza Lucas, 1740s  
The Urban Culture of the Middle  
Colonies  
Life in the Backcountry

### *Conflicts Among the Colonists*

Slave Revolts, North and South  
Conflicts Between the Rich and  
the Poor  
**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** The Stono  
Rebellion, 1739

### *Reason and Religion in Colonial Society*

The Impact of the Enlightenment  
Religion and Religious Institutions  
The Great Awakening  
**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**  
George Whitefield, 1740

### *Government and Politics in the Mainland Colonies*

Imperial Institutions and Policies  
Local Colonial Government  
Conflicting Views of the Assemblies

### *North America and the Struggle for Empire*

An Age of Imperial Warfare  
The Great War for Empire  
The Outcomes of the Great War  
for Empire

### *Summary*

## INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Eliza Lucas Pinckney

Eliza Lucas of South Carolina was only 16 when her father was called away to war and left her in charge of his three plantations. The decision would have surprised most eighteenth-century colonists, but George Lucas believed Eliza was no ordinary young woman. Eliza quickly proved her father right for, under her management, the family plantations prospered. She introduced a new crop, **indigo**, from which a valuable blue dye was made. While other wealthy young women thought about marriage, Eliza busied herself with planting, paying bills, directing overseers, and selling crops. But she also made time for traditional female tasks like attending teas, visiting the sick, and learning to play the piano. She set herself a grueling daily schedule, beginning each day at 5:00 A.M.

Eliza's father had encouraged many nontraditional skills in his daughter. He opened his legal library to her and educated her fully on her legal rights as a single woman, or **femme sole**. She put her legal expertise to good use, helping her neighbors write their wills and sue for their debts.

Eliza stubbornly protected her independence. When she finally married, it was to an old and respected friend, Charles Pinckney, a widower twice her age who was a leading lawyer and political figure in the colony. As a wife, Eliza turned her full attention to domestic concerns and to the education of her five children. She rejected the traditional notion that children were burdened by original sin and raised her family according to John Locke's theories of the power of nurture and encouragement. Locke's advice served her well: Eliza and Charles's two surviving sons grew up to be political leaders during the revolutionary struggle and her only daughter followed in Eliza's footsteps, eventually running her own plantation.

### ELIZA LUCAS PINCKNEY'S GOWN

As the daughter of one prosperous South Carolina planter and the wife of another, Eliza Lucas Pinckney could afford luxuries most colonists could not hope to enjoy. But the gown shown in this photograph was made of silk produced on her plantation and sent to England to be woven and dyed. Pinckney, who became the manager of her father's three plantations when she was a teenager, took great pride in experimenting with new crops, including silk from silkworms and the blue dye indigo.

National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Behring Center.



# Chronology

<b>1690–1691</b>	Understanding and Two Treatises of Government	<b>1734</b>	Great Awakening spreads to New England
<b>1701</b>	Yale College founded	<b>1739</b>	Stono Rebellion in South Carolina
<b>1702</b>	Queen Anne's War begins	<b>1740</b>	King George's War begins George Whitefield begins his preaching tour
<b>1704</b>	Pro-French Indians attack Deerfield, Massachusetts	<b>1756</b>	Great War for Empire begins
<b>1711</b>	Tuscarora War begins in North Carolina	<b>1759</b>	British capture Quebec
<b>1712</b>	New York City slave revolt	<b>1760</b>	George III becomes British king
<b>1715</b>	Colonists defeat Creek and Yamasee Indians of Georgia	<b>1763</b>	Treaty of Paris

Even the most casual observer of colonial society could not fail to note major regional changes and developments during the eighteenth century. A new system of slave labor was defining the Southern colonies; cities were growing dramatically in the Middle Colonies; in New England, a Puritan world was transforming into a world of enterprising Yankees.

These differences among the regions were offset by many shared experiences. The colonists were all part of a common imperial structure. They were also part of a sprawling transatlantic community, in which goods, people, and ideas steadily flowed between England, Europe, the Americas, and Africa. Although some 3,000 miles of ocean separated New Yorkers from Londoners, colonists journeyed between the two worlds, bringing news of developments in politics, changes in fashion, and popular books. Events in Europe and in the Caribbean had an impact on everything in colonial life from the religious background of new immigrants to debates over slavery in Virginia to the safety of life on the Maine frontier.

Although Americans eagerly awaited news from an England they still called “home,” few members of the English elite followed American developments closely. Most continued to think of the colonies as a dumping ground for misfits who would struggle to survive on a violent frontier. Members of the English Parliament viewed the colonists as a collective source of endless problems. They expected insubordinate colonial legislatures, defiant merchants who violated trade regulations, and a dangerously unstable political atmosphere in a society that gave common men an **unprecedented** voice in government. Yet it was the colonists who often suffered from decisions made by Parliament and King. England's fierce rivalries with European nations produced a long series of imperial wars that disrupted colonial life and cast a long shadow over communities from the Maine border to Georgia. In the end, England would triumph over every rival for a North American empire. The outcome of this victory would prove surprising to everyone.

**indigo** Shrublike plant with clusters of red or purple flowers, grown on plantations in the South; it was a primary source of blue dye in the eighteenth century.

**femme sole** From the French for “woman alone”; a legal term for an unmarried, widowed, or divorced woman who has the legal right to own or sell property, sue or be sued, or earn wages.

**unprecedented** Unheard of or novel.

## The English Transatlantic Communities of Trade

- ★ **What were the main regional differences in colonial commerce?**
- ★ **In which region, and for what reasons, did new immigrants seem to have the best economic choices?**

Although the English spoke of “the colonial trade,” British America did not have a single, unified economy. Instead, four distinctive regional economies had developed on the

**subsistence society** A society that produces the food and supplies necessary for its survival but does not produce a surplus that can be marketed.

**absentee planter** An estate owner who collects profits from farming or rent but does not live on the land or help cultivate it.

**tidewater** Low coastal land drained by tidal streams in Maryland and Virginia.

**carrying trade** The business of transporting goods across the Atlantic or to and from the Caribbean.

mainland, concentrated along the Atlantic coastline and bordered on the west by the primarily **subsistence society** that was commonly found on the edge of white settlements. To the south, the English sugar islands of the Caribbean made up a fifth unique regional economy. Each of these economies was shaped by environmental conditions, natural resources, commercial policy, and the available labor force.

### Regions of Commerce

The sugar-producing islands of the West Indies were the brightest jewels in the English imperial crown. By the eighteenth century, the English flag flew over St. Kitts, Barbados, Nevis, Montserrat, and Jamaica. On each island, English plantation owners built fabulous fortunes on the sugar that African slaves produced. While the **absentee planters** lived in luxury in England, black slaves lived—and died in staggering numbers—on the islands, working the cane fields and tending the fires that burned day and night under the sugar vats of the “great Boiling houses.”

Tobacco continued to dominate the economy of the Chesapeake, although by the eighteenth century, “brown gold” was no longer the only crop Virginians and Marylanders were willing to plant. In fact, at the turn of the century, when the price of tobacco was driven down by high taxes and competition from Mediterranean sources, many **tidewater** planters chose to diversify. They began producing wheat and other grains for export. The second major shift came in the labor force used in tobacco cultivation. By the eighteenth century, African slaves had replaced indentured servants in the fields. Planters who could afford to purchase a number of slaves enjoyed a competitive advantage over their neighbors because they had enough workers to plant and harvest bigger crops. This large-scale production kept tobacco the number one export of the mainland colonies.

By contrast, the New England economy depended far less on Britain as a market. The rocky soil of the region made large-scale farming unfeasible for New Englanders. Instead, they developed both a lumbering and a fishing industry, and shipped the timber and dried fish to the West Indies. But it was shipbuilding and the ambitious **carrying trade** connected to it that dominated New England’s economy. Colonists made great profits from an extensive shipping network that carried colonial exports across the Atlantic and distributed foreign goods and English manufactured products to the colonies. Some merchant-shippers—the slave traders of Newport, Rhode Island, for example—specialized in a certain commodity, but most were willing to carry any cargo that promised a profit. By the eighteenth century, New England shipping made these colonists rivals of English merchants rather than useful sources of profit for the Mother Country.

### The Cords of Commercial Empire

England’s mainland colonists traded, both directly and indirectly, with many European nations and their colonies. Salt, wine, and spices reached colonial tables from southern Europe, and sugar, rum, molasses, and cotton came to their households from the West Indies. But the deepest and broadest channels in the transatlantic trade were those that connected the Mother Country and the colonies. The British purchased over half of all the crops, furs, and mined resources that colonists produced for market and supplied 90 percent of all colonial imports. Strong cords of exchange bound America to England, even if many colonists were second-generation Americans and others traced their roots to different nations or different continents. The English mainland colonies were also bound to one another. In the shops and on the wharfs,



# It Matters Today

## WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITIES, THEN AND NOW

In her character and her life choices, Eliza Lucas Pinckney seems remarkably modern. Yet she lived in an era when women were assumed to be best suited for the domestic duties known as "housewifery." Of course, Pinckney had advantages many other eighteenth-century women did not enjoy: wealth, social standing, and a father who had confidence in her abilities. Without these advantages, Pinckney might never have been able to venture outside the domestic realm. Today, Pinckney would find herself in the company of many women who are able to succeed in careers in business, medicine, and in an area completely closed out to Pinckney—politics. The contrast between a

life that was extraordinary in the eighteenth century but ordinary in the twenty-first century prompts us to examine what changes have occurred in women's lives between the colonial era and today.

- Choose a profession such as law, medicine, or the military. Research the entrance of women into that profession. What arguments have been offered for and against allowing women into this profession? What factors do you feel have been most significant in opening up opportunities for women in this field? What obstacles still remain?

Pennsylvania flour, Massachusetts mackerel, Carolina rice, and scores of domestic products changed hands in a lively and cheerful commerce. Domestic trade was greater in volume, although lower in value, than all foreign trade in this eighteenth-century world.

## Community and Work in Colonial Society

- ★ **How did Yankee society differ from Puritan society in early eighteenth-century New England?**
- ★ **Why did colonists in the Chesapeake and Lower South shift from indentured servants to slaves as their primary labor force? What problems faced Africans in slavery?**

Despite the belief of many observers that there was an "American character," visitors could not fail to note striking physical and social differences as they traveled from New England to the Lower South. Moving from the carefully laid-out towns of New England, through the crowded seaport cities of the Middle Colonies, and into the isolated rural worlds of the plantation South, they could see that the Yankee culture of Connecticut was strikingly different from the elegant lifestyle of Charles Town planter elite.

### The Emergence of the "Yankee"

In the early eighteenth century, New England's seaport towns and cities grew steadily in size and economic importance. With the rise of a profitable international commerce, the Puritan culture of the village gave way to a more secular "Yankee" culture. In this milieu, a wealthy man could rise to political prominence without any need to demonstrate his piety. Economic competition and the pursuit of profit eclipsed older notions that the well-being of the community was more important than the gains of the individual. Still, some sense of obligation to the community remained in New Englanders' willingness to create and maintain public institutions such as schools and colleges. In 1701, Yale College opened its doors in New Haven, Connecticut, giving the



sons of elite New Englanders an alternative to Massachusetts's Harvard College. New Englanders supported newspapers and printing presses that kept their communities informed about local and international events.

Even in more traditional New England villages, changes were evident. By the eighteenth century, many fathers no longer had enough farmland to provide adequately for all their sons. Many younger sons left their families and friends behind and sought their fortunes elsewhere. Some chose to go west, pushing the frontier of settlement as they searched for fertile land. Others went north, to less-developed areas such as Maine. In the process, they created new towns and villages, causing the number of backcountry New England towns to grow steadily. Still other young men abandoned farming entirely and relocated to the commercial cities of the region. Whatever their expectations, urban life often disappointed them, for inequality of wealth and opportunity went hand in hand with the overall prosperity. In Boston, a growing number of poor widows and landless young men scrambled for employment and often wound up dependent on public charity. As news spread about the scarcity of farmland in the countryside and the poverty and competition for work in the cities, European immigrants tended to bypass New England and settle in the Middle Colonies or along the southern frontier.

### Planter Society and Slavery

Southern society was also changing dramatically. By the end of the seventeenth century, the steady supply of cheap labor from England had begun to disappear. The English economy was improving, and young men who might once have signed on as indentured servants in Virginia now chose to remain at home. Those who did immigrate preferred to indenture themselves to farmers and merchants of the Middle Colonies, where work conditions were bearable and economic opportunities were brighter. Although this supply of indentured servants was declining, however, a different labor supply was beginning to increase: enslaved Africans.

Yale College was founded in 1701, making it the third-oldest college in the United States. Its benefactor, Elihu Yale, was born in Boston but spent most of his life in England. By 1749, when this illustration appeared, there were five colleges in the colonies: Harvard, Yale, King's College, the College of New Jersey, and the College of William and Mary. Only the wealthiest young men were likely to attend these schools. The Granger Collection, New York.



Although a small number of Africans had been brought to Virginia as early as 1619, the legal differences between black workers and white workers remained vague until the 1660s. By that time, the slowly increasing numbers of African Americans elicited the different, and harsher, treatment that defined slavery in the Caribbean and South America. By midcentury, it became the custom in the Chesapeake to hold black servants for life terms, although their children were still considered free. By the 1660s, colonists turned these customs of **discrimination** into law. In 1662 Virginia took a major step toward making slavery an inherited condition by declaring that “all children born in this country shall be held bond or free according to the condition of the mother.”

**discrimination** Treatment based on class, gender, or racial category rather than on merit; prejudice.

Slaves did not become the dominant labor force in southern agriculture until the end of the century, although southern planters were probably well aware of the advantages of slave labor over indentured servitude. A slave, bound for life, would never compete with his former master the way freed white servants did, and most white colonists did not believe that the English customs regulating a master’s treatment of servants had to be applied to Africans. By the 1680s, moreover, the drawbacks to African slavery began to vanish. Mortality rates fell in the Chesapeake, and the English broke the Dutch monopoly on the slave trade. Fierce competition among English slavers drove prices down and at the same time ensured a steady supply of slaves. Under these conditions, the demand for slaves grew in the Chesapeake. Although only 5 percent of the roughly 9.5 million Africans brought to the Americas came to the English mainland colonies, their numbers in Virginia and Maryland rose dramatically in the eighteenth century. By 1700, 13 percent of the Chesapeake population was African or of African descent. At the end of the colonial period, blacks made up 40 percent of Virginia’s population.

If tobacco provided a comfortable life for an eighteenth-century planter, rice provided a luxurious one. The Lower South, too, was a plantation society, headed by the wealthiest mainland colonists—the rice growers of the coastal regions of Carolina and Georgia. Members of this planter elite concentrated their social life in elegant Charles Town, where they moved each summer to avoid the humidity and unhealthy environment of their lowland plantations. With its beautiful townhouses and parks, Charles Town was the single truly cosmopolitan city of the South and perhaps the most sophisticated of all mainland cities in North America. Yet, by 1708, one-half of the colonial population in Carolina was black, and by 1720, Africans and African Americans outnumbered their white masters. Farther south, in Georgia, the colonists openly defied the trustees’ ban on slavery until that ban was finally lifted.

### Slave Experience and Slave Culture

Most slaves brought to the mainland colonies did not come directly from Africa. Instead, these men and women were reexported to the Chesapeake or the Lower South after a short period of **seasoning** in the tropical climate of the West Indies. But all imported slaves, whether seasoned or new to the Americas, began their bondage when African slavers, often armed with European weapons, captured men, women, and children and delivered them in chains to European ships anchored along the coast of West Africa (see Map 4.1). Although many of those enslaved were considered war captives, others were simply kidnapping victims. Even before these captives reached the coast and the European slave ships waiting there, they were introduced to the horrors of slavery. Their captors treated them “severely and barbarously,” beating them and inflicting wounds on their bodies. The many who died on the long march from the interior to the coast were left unburied, their bodies devoured by “beasts of prey.” As the surviving captives were branded and then put into canoes to be rowed to the waiting ships, some

**seasoning** A period during which slaves from Africa were held in the West Indies so they could adjust to the climate and disease environment of the American tropics.

# Investigating America

## Eliza Lucas at Wappoo, 1740s

The eighteenth-century plantation world of South Carolina was a patriarchal society dedicated to the production of a single staple crop, rice. When Eliza Lucas began experimenting with indigo, figs, and hemp at Wappoo, her family plantation, it was the beginning of a new era of prosperity and diversification in the South Carolina plantation economy. As one of the few women to manage a large plantation at the time, Lucas was unique in her desire to experiment with new crops and stretch old gender roles. In a letter written before her 1744 marriage to Charles Pinckney, young Eliza Lucas provides insight into the experiences of a woman succeeding in a male-dominated society. In this letter to a niece, Lucas describes the demanding schedule she maintained in order to balance her roles as a society woman and a plantation master.

.....

**D**r. Miss B.


Why, my dear Miss B, will you so often repeat your desire to know how I trifle away my time in our retirement in my fathers absence. Could it afford you advantage or pleasure I should not have hesitated, but as you can expect neither from it I would have been excused; however, to show you my readiness in obeying your commands, here it is.

In general then I rise at five o'clock in the morning, read till seven, then take a walk in the garden or field, see that the Servants are at their respective business, then to breakfast. The first hour after breakfast is spent at my musick, the next is constantly employed in recollecting something I have learned[ lest] for want of practise it should be quite lost, such as French and short hand. After that I devote the rest of the

time till I dress for dinner to our little Polly and two black girls who I teach to read, and if I have my papa's approbation (my Mamas I have got) I intend [them] for school mistres's for the rest of the negro children—another scheme you see. But to proceed, the first hour after dinner as the first after breakfast at musick, the rest of the afternoon in Needle work till candle light, and from that time to bed time read or write. 'Tis the fashion here to carry our work abroad so that having company, without they are great strangers, is no interruption to that affair; but I have particular matters for particular days, which is an interruption of mine. Monday my musick Master is here. Tuesdays my friend Mrs. Chardon (about 3 mile distant) and I are constantly engaged to each other, she at our house one Tuesday—I at hers the next and this is one of the happiest days I spend at Woppoe. Thursday the whole day except what necessary affairs of the family take up is spent in writing, either on the business of the plantations, or letters to my friends. Every other Fryday, if no company, we go a vizeting so that I go abroad once a week and no oftener.

.....

- Eliza Lucas reveals some of the ways in which she juggles her feminine and masculine roles. Do you think the men of the period spent the same amount of time devoted to learning?
- Eliza also hoped that the two African American slave girls she was educating would educate other slaves on the plantation. What arguments could be raised against this program to educate slaves?
- What benefits might come from the education of slaves?

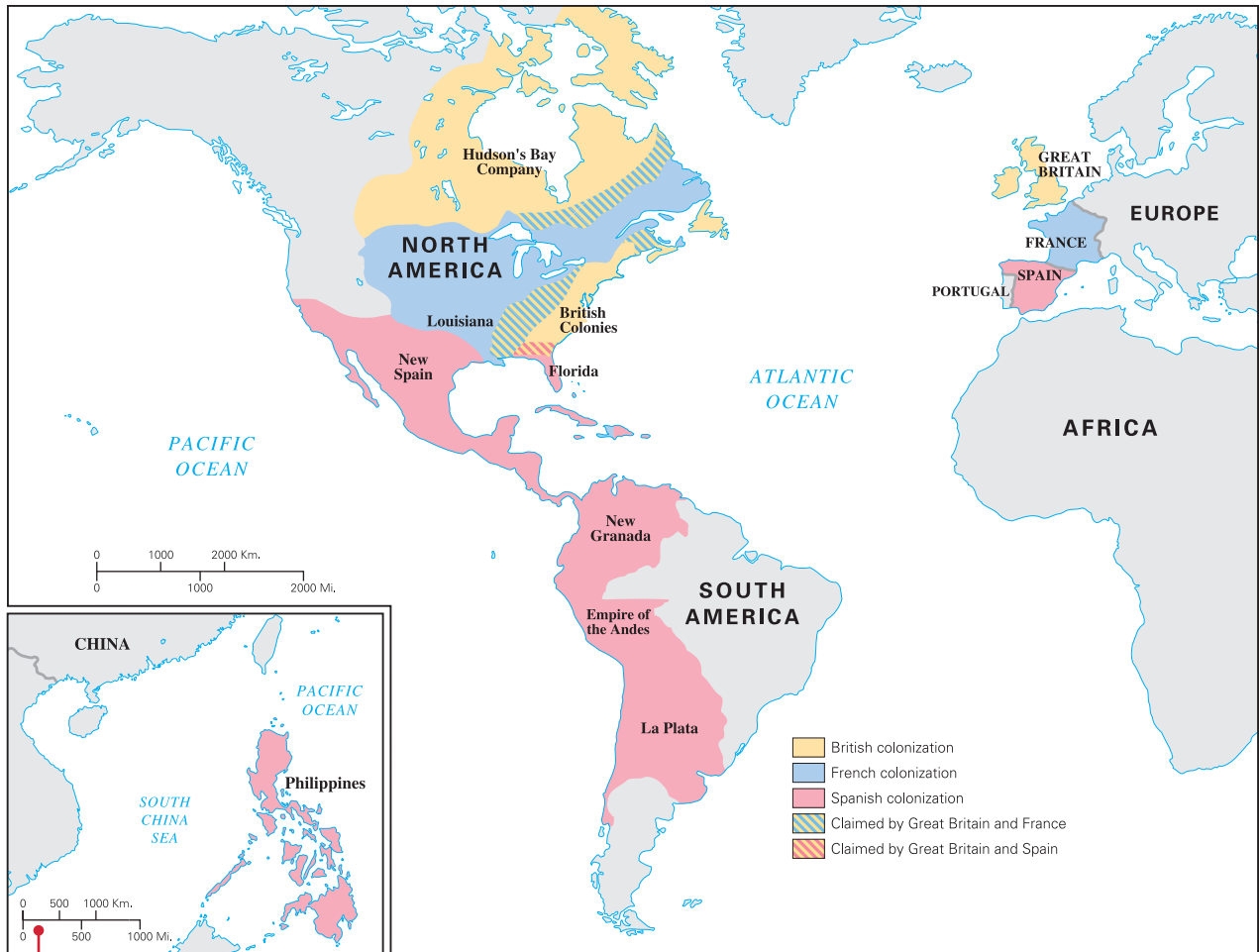
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**middle passage** The transatlantic voyage of indentured servants or African slaves to the Americas.

committed suicide, leaping overboard into the ocean. The slaves, European traders commented, dreaded life in America more than their captors dreaded hell.

The transatlantic voyage, or **middle passage**, was a nightmare of death, disease, suicide, and sometimes mutiny. The casualties included the white officers and crews of the slave ships, who died of diseases in such great numbers that the waters near Benin in West Africa were known as the “white man’s grave.” But the loss of black lives was far greater. Slave ships were breeding grounds for scurvy, yellow fever, malaria, dysentery, smallpox, measles, and typhus—each bringing painful death. When smallpox struck his slave ship, one European recorded that “we hauled up eight or ten slaves dead of a morning. The flesh and skin peeled off their wrists when taken hold of.” Perhaps 18 percent of all the Africans who began the middle passage died on the ocean.

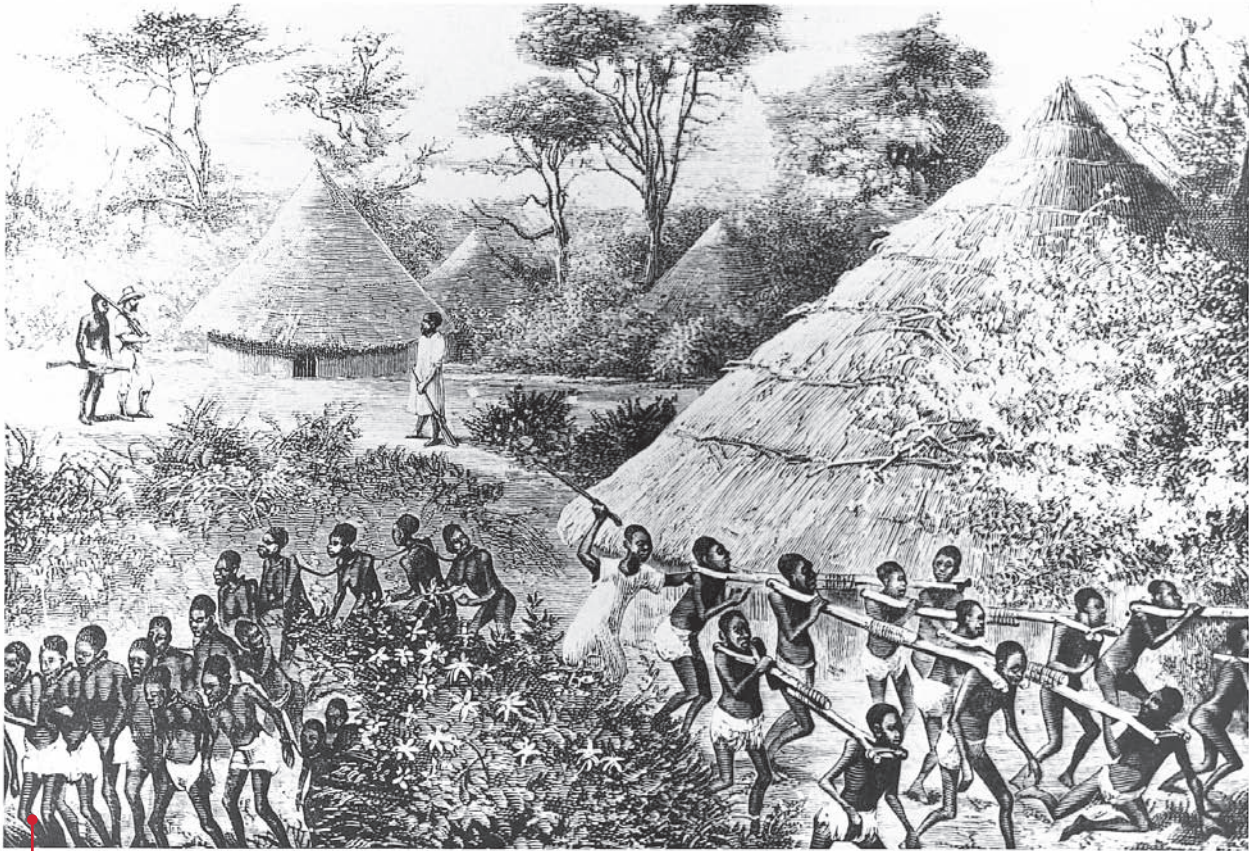




**MAP 4.1** The European Empires in Eighteenth-Century America

This map shows the colonization of the Americas and the Philippines by three rival powers. It is clear from the map why British colonists felt vulnerable to attack by England's archenemies—France and Spain—until English victory in the Great War for Empire in 1763.

Until the 1720s, most Chesapeake slaves worked alone on a tobacco farm with the owner and his family or in small groups of two or three, in a system known as “gang labor.” This isolation made both marriage and the emergence of a slave community almost impossible. Even on larger plantations, community formation was discouraged by the use of “gangs” made up entirely of women and children or of men only. The steady influx of newly imported slaves, or “outlanders,” during the first decades of the eighteenth century also made it difficult for African Americans to work together to create a culture in response to their disorienting circumstances. The new arrivals had to be taught to speak English and to adapt to the demands of slavery. Slowly, however, these involuntary immigrants from different African societies, speaking different languages, practicing different religions, and surviving under the oppressive conditions of slavery, did create a sense of community, weaving together African and European traditions. The result was an African American culture that gave meaning to, and a sense of identity within, the slave’s oppressive world.



Both Africans and Europeans played critical roles in the African slave trade. In this illustration, African slave drivers march their captives, wearing chains and neckclamps, from their village. Their likely destination: European ships waiting along the west coast of Africa. *Journey of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*, New York, 1869.

In the Lower South, where Pinckney ran her estate, slaves were concentrated on large plantations where they had limited or no contact with white society. This isolation from the dominant society allowed them an earlier opportunity to develop a creole, or native, culture. In contrast to gang labor, here a “task labor” system prevailed, in which slaves were assigned certain chores to be completed within a certain time. This alternative gave rice plantation slaves some control over their pace of work and some opportunities to manage their free time. Local languages evolved that mixed a basic English vocabulary with words from a variety of African tongues. One of these languages, Gullah, spoken on the Sea Islands off the coast of Georgia and South Carolina, remained the local dialect until the end of the nineteenth century.

### The Urban Culture of the Middle Colonies

The family farms of Pennsylvania, with their profitable wheat crops, earned the colony its reputation as the “best poor man’s country.” Tenant farmers, hired laborers, and even African slaves were not unknown in eastern Pennsylvania, but the colony boasted more middling-class farm families than did neighboring New York or New Jersey. In New York, great estates along the Hudson River controlled much of the colony’s good land, and in New Jersey, wealthy owners dominated the choicest acreage, a situation that often resulted in tensions between the landlords and their tenants.



What made the Middle Colonies distinctive was not the expansive Hudson River estates or the comfortable farmhouses in seas of wheat. The region's distinguishing feature was the dynamic urban life of its two major cities, New York and Philadelphia. Although only 3 percent of the colonial population lived in the eighteenth-century cities, they were a magnet for young men and women, free African Americans, and some of the immigrant population pouring into the colonies from Europe. By 1770, Philadelphia's 40,000 residents made it the second-largest city in the British Empire. In the same year, 25,000 people crowded onto the tip of New York's Manhattan Island.

Although colonial cities were usually thought to be cleaner than European cities, with better sewerage and drainage systems, garbage and excrement left to rot on the streets provided a feast for flies and scavenging animals, including free-roaming pigs. And city residents faced more serious problems than runaway carts and snarling dogs. Sailors on the ships docked at Philadelphia or New York often carried venereal diseases. Fires also raced through these cities of wooden houses, wharfs, and shops. And crime—especially robbery and assault—was no stranger in the urban environment, where taverns, brothels, and gambling houses were common.

These eighteenth-century cities offered a wide range of occupations and experiences that attracted many a farmer's daughter or son but sometimes overwhelmed a new arrival from the countryside. Young men who could endure the noise and confusion sought work as **apprentices** in scores of artisan trades ranging from the luxury crafts of silver- and goldsmithing or cabinet making to the profitable trades of shipbuilding, blacksmithing, or butchering, to the more modest occupations of ropemaking, baking, barbering, or shoemaking. The poorest might find work on the docks or as servants, or they might go to sea. Young women had fewer choices because few trades were open to them. Some might become dressmakers or hatmakers, but domestic service and prostitution were more likely choices. In the Middle Colony cities, as in Boston, widowed farm wives came seeking jobs as nurses, laundresses, teachers, or seamstresses. A widow or an unmarried woman who had a little money could open a shop or set up a tavern or a boarding house.

New York City had the highest concentration of African Americans in the northern colonies. The city attracted many free African American men and women. Only perhaps 5 percent of all mainland colony African Americans were free, and those **manumitted** by their plantation masters frequently chose to remain in the South, although they faced legal and social harassment, including special taxes and severe punishments. Others, though, made their way to the cities of New England and the Middle Colonies, making a living as laborers, servants, or sailors. In addition, although slave labor was not common in New England or on the family farms of the Middle Colonies, slaves were used on New York's docks and wharfs as manual laborers.

**apprentice** A person bound by legal agreement to work for an employer for a specific length of time in exchange for instruction in a trade, craft, or business.

**manumit** To free from slavery or bondage.

### Life in the Backcountry

Thomas Malthus, a well-known English economist and diligent student of **demographics**, believed the eighteenth-century population explosion in the English mainland colonies was “without parallel in history.” The colonial white population climbed from 225,000 in 1688 to over 2 million in 1775, and the number of African Americans reached 500,000 in the same year. Natural increase accounted for much of this growth, and over half of the colonists were under age 16 in 1775. But hundreds of thousands of white immigrants arrived during the eighteenth century, risking hunger, thirst, discomfort, fear, and death on the transatlantic voyage to start life over in America. The majority of these immigrants ended up in the backcountry of the colonies.

**demographics** Statistical data on population.

The migration west, whether by native-born or immigrant white colonists, gradually shifted the population center of mainland society. Newcomers from Europe and Britain, as well as descendants of original New England settlers and the younger sons of the tidewater Chesapeake, all saw their best opportunities in the sparsely settled regions of the frontier. The westward flow of settlers was part of the American landscape throughout the century, but it became a flood after 1760. A seemingly endless train of wagons moved along Indian paths to the west, and the rivers were crowded with rafts carrying families, farm tools, and livestock. Many of these new immigrants traveled south from Pennsylvania along a wagon road that ran 800 miles from Philadelphia to Virginia, North Carolina, and Augusta, Georgia. Others chose to remain in the Middle Colonies. New York's population rose 39 percent between 1760 and 1776, and in 1769, on the day the land office opened at Fort Pitt (Pittsburgh), over twenty-seven hundred applicants showed up to register for land.

**Scots-Irish** Protestant Scottish settlers in British-occupied northern Ireland, many of whom migrated to the colonies in the eighteenth century.

By 1760, perhaps 700,000 new colonists had made their homes in the mainland colonies. In the early part of the century, the largest immigrant group was the **Scots-Irish**. Later, German settlers dominated. But an occasional traveler on the wagon roads might be Italian, Swiss, Irish, Welsh, or a European Jew. Most striking, the number of British immigrants swelled after 1760, causing anger and alarm within the British government. The steady stream of young English men and women out of the country prompted government officials to consider passing laws curbing emigration. But unemployment, poverty, the oppression of landlords, and crop failures pushed men and women out of Europe or Britain, while the availability of cheap land, a greater likelihood of religious freedom, and the chance to pursue a craft successfully pulled others toward the colonies.

## Conflicts Among the Colonists

- ★ **What events illustrated the tensions between races in colonial society?**
- ★ **What conflicts arose between elites and poorer colonists?**

The strains of economic inequality being felt in every region of mainland British America frequently erupted into violent confrontations. At the same time, tensions between Indians and colonists continued, and tensions between black and white colonists increased as both slave and free black populations grew during the eighteenth century. In almost every decade, blood was shed as colonist battled colonist over economic opportunity, personal freedom, western lands, or political representation.

### Slave Revolts, North and South

White slave masters in both the Chesapeake and the Lower South knew that a slave revolt was always a possibility, for enslaved Africans and African Americans shared with other colonists what one observer called a “fondness for freedom.”

Planters thus took elaborate precautions to prevent rebellions, assembling armed patrols that policed the roads and woods near their plantations. These patrols were usually efficient, and the punishment they inflicted was deadly. Even if rebels escaped immediate capture, few safe havens were available to them. Individual runaways had a hard time sustaining their freedom, but dozens of rebels from one plantation were usually doomed once whites on neighboring plantations were alerted. Despite these odds, slaves continued to seek their liberty, often timing their revolts to coincide with epidemics or imperial wars that distracted the white community.

The most famous slave revolt of the eighteenth century, the **Stono Rebellion**, took place in the midst of a yellow fever epidemic in Charles Town just as news of war between England and Spain reached the colony. Early on a Sunday morning in September 1739, about twenty slaves gathered at the Stono River, south of Charles Town. Their leader, Jemmy, had been born in Africa, possibly in the Congo but more likely Angola, for twenty or more of those who eventually joined the revolt were Angolan. The rebels seized guns and gunpowder, killed several planter families and storekeepers, and then headed south. Rather than traveling quietly through the woods, the rebels marched boldly in open view, beating drums to invite slaves on nearby plantations to join them in their flight to Spanish Florida. Other slaves answered the call, and the Stono rebels' ranks grew to almost one hundred. But in Charles Town, planters were gathering to put an end to the uprising. By late Sunday afternoon, white militias had overtaken and surrounded the escaping slaves. The Stono rebels stood and fought, but the militiamen killed almost thirty of them. Those who were captured were executed. Those who escaped into the countryside were hunted down.

The Stono Rebellion terrified white South Carolinians, who hurried to make the colony's already harsh slave codes even more brutal. The government increased the slave patrols in both size and frequency. It also raised the bounties, or rewards offered for the capture of runaways, to make sure that fleeing slaves taken alive and unharmed, or brought in dead and scalped, were worth hunting down.

Hostilities between black colonists and white colonists were not confined to the South. In the crowded environment of New York City, white residents showed the same fear of slave rebellions as seen in Carolina or Virginia planters. Their fears became reality at midnight on April 6, 1712, when two dozen blacks, armed with guns and swords, set fire to a downtown building. Startled New Yorkers who rushed to keep the flames from spreading were attacked by the rebels, leaving nine people shot, stabbed, or beaten to death. Militia units from as far away as Westchester were called out to quell the riot and to cut off any hope of escape for the slaves. Realizing the hopelessness of their situation, six committed suicide. Those who were taken alive suffered horrible punishment. According to the colonial governor, "some were burnt, others were hanged, one broke on the wheel, and one hung alive in chains in the town." Twenty-nine years later in 1741, eleven fires allegedly set by African Americans moved white residents to violent reprisals. More than one hundred of the city's black residents were arrested—18 of them were hanged and 18 burned alive.

**Stono Rebellion** Slave revolt in South Carolina in 1739; it prompted the colony to pass harsher laws governing the movement of slaves and the capture of runaways.

### Clashes Between the Rich and the Poor

Most often, class tensions erupted into violence as tenant farmers battled landlords or their agents and backcountry farmers took up arms against the elite planters who dominated their colonial governments. New York tenant farmers had long resented the economic power that manor lords wielded over their lives, and protests—labeled "land riots" by the wealthy landlords—were common throughout the century. Likewise, New Jersey landlords who tried to squeeze higher rents out of their tenants provoked bitterness—and frequent bloodshed. In January 1745, tenants in Essex County, New Jersey, rioted after three of their number were arrested by local authorities. When the sheriff tried to bring one of the alleged troublemakers to the county courthouse, he was "assaulted by a great number of persons, with clubbs and other weapons," who rescued the prisoner. Such tenant uprisings in both colonies continued during the 1750s and 1760s, as landless men expressed their resentment and frustration at their inability to acquire land of their own.

# Investigating America

## The Stono Rebellion, 1739

In South Carolina, the only British mainland colony to have a black majority population, an armed revolt by Africans was cause for concern in both Charles Town and London. In the first document, Lieutenant Governor William Bull reports on the uprising to the Board of Trade. In the second, a legislative committee makes recommendations to the governor's council on how to best avoid revolts in the future.

*William Bull to Board of Trade:* It was the Opinion of His Majesty's Council with several other Gentlemen that one of the most effectual means that could be used at present to prevent such desertion of our Negroes is to encourage some Indians by a suitable reward to pursue and if possible to bring back the Deserters, and while the Indians are thus employed they would be in the way ready to intercept others that might attempt to follow and I have sent for the Chiefs of the Chickasaws living at New Windsor and the Catawbaw Indians for that purpose.

*Legislative Committee:* That upon Inquiry your Committee find that a negro man named July belonging to Mr. Thomas Elliott was very early and chiefly instrumental in saving his Master and his Family from being

destroyed by the Rebellious Negroes and that the Negro man July had at several times bravely fought against the Rebels and killed one of them. Your Committee therefore recommends that the [said] Negro July (as a reward for his faithful Services and for an Encouragement to other Slaves to follow his Example in case of the like Nature) shall have his Freedom and a Present of a Suit of Cloaths, Shirt, Hat, a pair of stockings and a pair of Shoes.

- Why did William Bull regard the Chickasaws as useful allies in dealing with African rebels or runaways?
- How did the white minority in South Carolina employ classic divide-and-conquer techniques in dealing with Indians and slaves?
- Why might the slave named July have sided with his master about Jemmy and the Stono rebels?
- What do July's actions say about the limited range of options for captured Africans in the Americas?

Source: Reprinted from Mark M. Smith, ed., *Stono: Documenting and Interpreting a Southern Slave Revolt* (Columbia, 2005).



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In the backcountry, settlers were likely to face two enemies: Indians and the established political powers of their own colonies. Often the clashes with the colonial government were about Indian policy. Eighteenth-century colonial legislatures and governors preferred diplomacy to military action, but western settlers wanted a more aggressive program to push Indians out of the way. Even when frontier hostilities led to bloodshed, the colonists of the coastal communities were reluctant to spend tax money to provide protection along the settlement line. In the end, bitter western settlers frequently took matters into their own hands. Bacon's Rebellion was the best example of this kind of vigilante action in the seventeenth century.

The revolt by Pennsylvania's Paxton Boys was the most dramatic eighteenth-century episode. More than most colonies, Pennsylvania's Quaker-dominated government encouraged settlers to find peaceful ways to coexist with local tribes. But the eighteenth-century Scots-Irish settlers did not share the Quaker commitment to pacifism. They demanded protection against Indian raids on isolated homesteads and small frontier towns. In 1763 frustrated settlers from Paxton, Pennsylvania, attacked a village of peaceful Conestogans. Although the murder of these Indians solved nothing and could not



be justified, hundreds of western colonists supported this vigilante group known as the Paxton Boys. The group marched on Philadelphia, the capital city of Pennsylvania, to press their demands for an aggressive Indian policy. With Philadelphia residents fearing their city would be attacked and looted, the popular printer Benjamin Franklin met the **Paxton Boys** on the outskirts of the city and negotiated a truce. The outcome was a dramatic shift in Pennsylvania Indian policy, illustrated by an official bounty for Indian scalps.

**Paxton Boys** Settlers in Paxton, Pennsylvania, who massacred Conestogans in 1763 and then marched on Philadelphia to demand that the colonial government provide better defense against the Indians.

## Reason and Religion in Colonial Society

- ★ What political and personal expectations arose from Enlightenment philosophy?
- ★ What was the impact of the Great Awakening on colonial attitudes toward authority?

Trade routes tied the eighteenth-century colonial world to parent societies across the Atlantic. The bonds of language and custom tied the immigrant communities in America to their homelands too. In addition to these economic and cultural ties, the flow of ideas and religious beliefs helped sustain a transatlantic community.

### The Impact of the Enlightenment

At the end of the seventeenth century, a new intellectual movement arose in Europe: the **Enlightenment**. Enlightenment thinkers argued that reason, or rational thinking, rather than divine revelation was the true path to reliable knowledge and to human progress. A group of brilliant French thinkers called **philosophes**, including Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, and Montesquieu, were among the central figures of the Enlightenment, along with English philosophers such as John Locke and Isaac Newton and Scotland's David Hume. These philosophers, political theorists, and scientists disagreed about many issues, but all embraced the belief that human nature was basically good rather than flawed by original sin. Humans, they insisted, were rational and capable of making progress toward a perfect society if they studied nature, unlocked its secrets, and carefully nurtured the best human qualities in themselves and their children. This belief in progress and perfectibility became a central Enlightenment theme.

The Enlightenment was the handiwork of a small, intensely intellectual elite in Europe, and only the colonial elite had access to the books and essays that these philosophers produced. Elite colonists were drawn to two aspects of Enlightenment thought: its new religious philosophy of **deism** and the political theory of the “social contract.” Deism appealed to colonists such as the Philadelphia scientist Benjamin Franklin and Virginia planters George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, men who were intensely interested in science and the scientific method. Deists believed that the universe operated according to logical, natural laws, without divine intervention. They denied the existence of any miracles after the Creation and rejected the value of prayer in this rational universe.

The most widely accepted Enlightenment ideas in the colonies were those of the English political theorist John Locke, who published his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* in 1690 and *Two Treatises of Government* in 1691. In his political essays Locke argued that human beings have certain natural rights that they cannot give away—or alienate—and that no one can take from them. Those rights include the right to own themselves and their own labor and the right to own that part of nature on which they

**Enlightenment** An eighteenth-century intellectual movement that stressed the pursuit of knowledge through reason and challenged the value of religious belief, emotion, and tradition.

**philosophe** Any of the popular French intellectuals or social philosophers of the Enlightenment, such as Voltaire, Diderot, or Rousseau.

**deism** The belief that God created the universe in such a way that it could operate without any further divine intervention such as miracles.

**social contract** A theoretical agreement between the governed and the government that defines and limits the rights and obligations of each.

**Trinity** In Christian doctrine, the belief that God has three divine aspects—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**established church** The official church of a nation or colony, usually supported by taxes collected from all citizens, no matter what their religious beliefs or place of worship.

**Congregationalism** A form of Protestant church government in which the local congregation is independent and self-governing; in the colonies, the Puritans were Congregationalists.

**charismatic** Having a spiritual power or personal quality that stirs enthusiasm and devotion in large numbers of people.

**itinerant** Traveling from place to place.

have labored productively—that is, their property. In exchange for the government’s protection of their natural rights to life, liberty, and property, people make a social contract to give up absolute freedom and to live under a rule of law. According to Locke, the government created by the **social contract** receives its political power from the consent of those it governs. In Locke’s scheme, the people express their will, or their demands and interests, through a representative assembly, and the government is obligated to protect and respect the natural rights of its citizens. If the government fails to do this, Locke said, the people have a right, even a duty, to rebel. Locke’s theory was especially convincing because it meshed with political developments in England from the civil war to the Glorious Revolution that were familiar to the colonists.

### Religion and Religious Institutions

Deism attracted little attention among ordinary colonists, but many eighteenth-century Americans were impressed by the growing religious diversity of their society. The waves of immigration had greatly increased the number of Protestant sects in the colonies, and colonists began to see religious toleration as a practical matter. The commitment to religious toleration did not come at an even pace, of course, nor did it extend to everyone. No colony allowed Catholics to vote after Rhode Island disfranchised Catholics in 1729, and even Maryland did not permit Catholics to celebrate Mass openly until Catholics in the city of Baltimore broke the law and founded a church in 1763. Connecticut granted freedom of worship to “sober dissenters” such as Anglicans, Quakers, and Baptists as early as 1708, but in 1750 its legislature declared it a felony to deny the **Trinity**. When colonists spoke of religious toleration, they did not mean the separation of church and state. On the contrary, the tradition of an **established church**, supported by taxes from all members of a community regardless of where they worshiped, went unchallenged in the southern colonies, where Anglicanism was established, and in Massachusetts and Connecticut, where **Congregationalism** was established.

As the diversity in churches was growing, the number of colonists who did not regularly attend any church at all was growing too. Some colonists were more preoccupied with secular concerns, such as their place in the economic community, than with spiritual ones. Others were losing their devotion to churches where the sermons were more intellectual than impassioned and the worship service was more formal than inspiring.

Into this moment stepped that group of **charismatic** preachers who, like Jonathan Edwards, denounced the obsession with profit and wealth they saw around them, condemned the sinfulness and depravity of all people, warned of the terrible punishments of eternal hellfires, and praised the saving grace of Jesus Christ. In a society divided by regional disputes, racial conflicts, and economic competition, these preachers held out a promise of social harmony based on the surrender of individual pride and a renewed love and fear of God. In voices filled with “Thunder and Lightning,” they called for a revival of basic Protestant belief.

### The Great Awakening

The religious revival of the eighteenth century was based as much on a new approach to preaching as on the message itself. This new-style preaching first appeared in New Jersey and Pennsylvania in the 1720s, when two **itinerant** preachers—Theodore Frelinghuysen and William Tennent Jr.—began calling the local churches to task for lack of devotion to God and for “cold” preaching. Tennent established what he called a “log college” to train fiery preachers who could spread a Christian revival throughout



The English evangelical minister, George Whitefield, inspired awe and prompted renewed commitment to Christianity everywhere he preached. Crowds overflowed into the fields outside of colonial country churches, and men and women in his audiences often fainted or cried out in ecstasy. Bridgeman Art Library Ltd.

the colonies. Soon afterward, Jonathan Edwards spread the revival to Massachusetts. Like Frelinghuysen and Tennent, Edwards berated the lukewarm preaching of local ministers and then turned to the task of saving lost souls. The revival, or **Great Awakening**, sparked by men like Edwards and Tennent, spread rapidly throughout the colonies, carried from town to town by the wandering ministers called “Awakeners.” These preachers stirred entire communities to renewed religious devotion.

The Great Awakening’s success was ensured in 1740, when **George Whitefield** toured the colonies from Charles Town to Maine. Everywhere this young preacher went, crowds gathered to hear him. Often the audiences grew so large that church sanctuaries could not hold them and Whitefield would finish his service in a nearby field. His impact was electric. “Hearing him preach gave me a heart wound,” wrote one colonist, and even America’s most committed deist, Benjamin Franklin, confessed that Whitefield’s sermons moved him. Whitefield himself recorded his effect on a crowd: “A wonderful power was in the room and with one accord they began to cry out and weep most bitterly for the space of half an hour.”

The Great Awakening did not go unchallenged. Some ministers, angered by the criticisms of their preaching and suggestions that they themselves were unsaved, launched a counterattack against the revivalists and their “beastly brayings.” “Old Light” Congregationalists upheld the established service but “New Lights” chose revivalism, and “Old Side” Presbyterians battled “New Sides” over preaching styles and the content of the worship service. Congregations split, and the minority groups hurriedly formed new churches. Many awakened believers left their own **denominations** entirely, joining the Baptists or the Methodists. These religious conflicts frequently became intertwined with secular disputes. Colonists who had long-standing disagreements over Indian policy or economic issues lined up on opposite sides of the Awakening. Class tensions influenced

**Great Awakening** A series of religious revivals based on fiery preaching and emotionalism that swept across the colonies during the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

**George Whitefield** English evangelical preacher of the Great Awakening whose charismatic style attracted huge crowds during his preaching tours of the colonies.

**denomination** A group of religious congregations that accept the same doctrines and are united under a single name.

# Investigating America

## George Whitefield, Sermon, 1740

George Whitefield arrived in the colonies at the dawn of King George's War (discussed later in this chapter). Preaching to societies torn by war, slave revolts, economic dislocation, and rising class inequality, the young minister initially desired nothing more than to save American souls. Just exactly what Americans heard in his sermons, however, depended on their class, their gender, their race, and their region. In this sermon, delivered in Philadelphia, Whitefield urged city dwellers to put aside their dreams of worldly goods in favor of Christian brotherhood.

.....  
**I**would speak a few words to you before I part from you this evening, by way of application. Let me beseech you to come to Jesus Christ; I invite you all to come to him and receive him as your Lord and Savior; he is ready to receive you; if you are afraid to go because you are in a lost condition, he came to save such; and to such as were weary and heavy laden, such as feel the weight and burden of their sins, he has promised he will give rest.

O come and drink of the water of life; you may buy without money and without price; he is laboring to bring you back from sin, and from Satan unto himself: open the door of your hearts, and the King of glory shall enter in. But if you are strangers to this doctrine, and account it foolishness; or, if you think you have enough of your own to recommend you to the favor of God, however you may go to church, or receive

the sacrament, you have no true love to the Lord Jesus Christ; you are strangers to the truth of grace in your hearts, and are unacquainted with the new-birth; you do not know what it is to have your natures changed; and 'till you do experience these things, you never can enter into the kingdom of God.

What shall I say, my brethren, unto you? My heart is full, it is quite full, and I must speak, or I shall burst. What, do you think your souls of no value? Are your pleasures worth more than your souls? Had you rather regard the diversions of this life, than the salvation of your souls? If so, you will never be partakers with him in glory; but if you come unto him, he will give you a new nature, supply you with his grace here, bring you to glory hereafter; and there you may sing praises and hallelujahs o the Lamb forever.

- .....
- What comfort might urban artisans or the working poor have derived from Whitefield's words?
  - How might this sermon encourage the political demands of those at the bottom of the social hierarchy who resented the influence of Philadelphia's merchant elite?
  - The city was also home to a small number of slaves. What might they hear in this sermon?

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From SELECT SERMONS OF GEORGE WHITEFIELD, edited by J.C. Ryle. © 1958 by Banner of Truth.



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religious loyalties, as poor colonists pronounced judgment on their rich neighbors using religious vocabulary that equated luxury, dancing, and gambling with sin.

Thus, rather than fulfilling its promise of social harmony, the Great Awakening increased strife and tension among colonists. Yet it had positive effects as well. For example, the Awakening spurred the growth of higher education. During the complicated theological arguments between Old Lights and Awakeners, the revivalists came to see the value of theological training. They founded new colleges, including Rutgers, Brown, Princeton, and Dartmouth, to prepare their clergy just as the Old Lights relied on Harvard and Yale to train theirs. One of the most important effects of the Great Awakening was also one of the least expected. The resistance to authority, the activism involved in creating new institutions, the participation in debate and argument—these experiences reinforced a sense that protest and resistance were acceptable, not just in religious matters but in the realm of politics as well.



## Government and Politics in the Mainland Colonies

★ **What circumstances limited a colonial governor's exercise of royal power?**

★ **What was the result of the struggle for power between the colonial assemblies and the colonial governors?**

The English mainland colonies were part of a large and complex empire, and the English government had created many agencies to set and enforce imperial policy. Parliament passed laws regulating colonial affairs, the royal navy determined colonial defense, and English diplomats decided which foreign nations were friends and which were foes. But from the beginning, most **proprietors**, joint-stock companies, and kings had also found it convenient to create local governments within their colonies to handle day-to-day affairs. Virginia's House of Burgesses was the first locally elected legislative body in the colonies, but by 1700 every mainland colony boasted a representative assembly generally made up of its wealthiest men.

In the first half of the eighteenth century, the British government decided to restructure its colonial administration, hoping to make it more efficient. Despite this reorganization, the government was notably lax in enforcing colonial regulations. Even so, colonists often objected to the constraints of imperial law and challenged the role of the king or the proprietors in shaping local political decisions. This **insubordination** led to a long and steady struggle for power between colonial governors and colonial assemblies. Over the first half of the century, the colonists did wrest important powers from the governors. But the British government remained adamant that ultimate power, or **sovereignty**, rested in the hands of king and Parliament.

### Imperial Institutions and Policies

By the eighteenth century, the British government had divided responsibility for colonial regulation and management among several departments, commissions, and agencies. Even though the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations had been created in 1696 to coordinate the Empire's rules and regulations for the colonies, authority remained fragmented. The treasury board, for example, continued to supervise all colonial financial affairs, and its customs office collected all trade revenues. The admiralty board, however, had the authority to enforce trade regulations. The potential for conflict among all these departments, commissions, and agencies was great. But British indifference to colonial affairs helped to preserve harmony.

Parliament set the tone for colonial administration in the eighteenth century with a **policy** that came to be known unofficially as **salutary neglect**. Salutary, or healthy, neglect meant the government was satisfied with relaxed enforcement of most regulations so long as the colonies remained loyal in military and economic matters. As long as specific, or **enumerated**, colonial raw materials continued to flow into British hands and the colonists purchased British manufactured goods, salutary neglect suited the expectations of the king and Parliament.

Yet, even in purely domestic matters, the colonial governments could not operate as freely as many of them desired. The most intense political conflicts before the 1760s centered on the colonial assemblies' power to govern local affairs as they chose.

### Local Colonial Government

The eighteenth-century mainland colonies remained a mixture of royal, proprietary, and corporate colonies, although most of them were held directly by the king. Whatever the form of ownership, however, the colonies were strikingly

**proprietor** In colonial America, a proprietor was a wealthy Englishman who received a large grant of land from the monarch in order to create a new colony.

**insubordination** Resistance to authority; disobedience.

**sovereignty** The ultimate power in a nation or a state.

**policy** A course of action taken by a government or a ruler.

**salutary neglect** The British policy of relaxed enforcement of most colonial trade regulations as long as the mainland colonies remained loyal to the government and profitable within the British economy.

**enumerated** Added to the list of regulated goods or crops.

**corporate colony** A self-governing colony, not directly under the control of proprietors or the Crown.

**bureaucrat** A government official, usually appointed, who is deeply devoted to the details of administrative procedures.

**power of the purse** The political power that is enjoyed by the branch of government that controls taxation and the use of tax monies.

**deference** Yielding to the judgment or wishes of a social or intellectual superior.

similar in the structure and operation of their governments. Each colony had a governor appointed by the king or the proprietor or, in Connecticut and Rhode Island (the two **corporate colonies**), elected to executive office. Each had a council, usually appointed by the governor, though sometimes elected by the assembly, which served as an advisory body to the governor. And each had an elected representative assembly with lawmaking and taxing powers.

The governor was the linchpin of local government because he represented royal authority and imperial interests in the local setting. In theory, his powers were impressive. Yet, a closer look reveals that the governor was not so powerful after all. First, in many cases he was not free to exercise his own judgment because he was bound by a set of instructions written by the board of trade. Though highly detailed, these instructions often bore little relation to the realities the governor encountered in his colony. Second, the governor's own skills and experience were often limited. Few men in the prime of their careers sought provincial posts 3,000 miles from England. Thus governorships went to **bureaucrats** nearing the end of sometimes unimpressive careers or to younger men who were new to the rough-and-tumble games of politics. Many colonial governors were honorable and competent, but enough of them were fools to give the office a poor reputation.

The most significant restraint on the governor's authority was not his rigid instructions, his inexperience, or his lack of patronage, but the fact that the assembly paid his salary. England expected the colonists to foot the bill for local government, including compensation for the governor. Governors who challenged the assembly too strongly or too often usually found a sudden, unaccountable budget crisis delaying or diminishing their allowances. Those who bent to assembly wishes could expect bonuses in the form of cash or grants of land.

Although the governors learned that their great powers were not so great after all, the assemblies in every colony were making an opposite discovery: they learned they could broaden their powers far beyond the king's intent. They fought for and won more freedom from the governor's supervision and influence, gaining the right to elect their own speaker of the assembly, make their own procedural rules, and settle contested elections. They also increased their power over taxation and the use of revenues, or, in eighteenth-century parlance, their **power of the purse**.

In their pursuit of power, these local political leaders had several advantages besides the governor's weakness. They came from a small social and economic elite who were regularly elected to office for both practical and social reasons. First, they could satisfy the high property qualifications set for most officeholding. Second, they could afford to accept an office that cost more to win and to hold than its modest salary could cover. Third, a habit of **deference**—respect for the opinions and decisions of the more educated and wealthy families in a community—won them office. Although as many as 50 to 80 percent of adult free white males in a colony could vote, few were considered suitable to hold office. Generations of fathers and sons from elite families thus dominated political offices. These men knew one another well, and although they fought among themselves for positions and power, they could effectively unite against outsiders such as an arrogant governor.

### Conflicting Views of the Assemblies

The king and Parliament gave local assemblies the authority to raise taxes, pay government salaries, direct the care of the poor, and maintain bridges and roads. To the colonists, this division of authority indicated an acceptance of a two-tiered

system of government: (1) a central government that created and executed imperial policy and (2) a set of local governments that managed colonial domestic affairs. If these levels of government were not equal in their power and scope, at least—in the minds of the colonists—they were equally legitimate. On both points, however, the British disagreed. They did not acknowledge a multilevel system. They saw a single, vast empire ruled by one government consisting of King and Parliament. The colonial governments may have acquired the power to establish temporary operating procedures and to pass minor laws, but British leaders did not believe they had acquired a share of the British government's sovereign power. As the governor of Pennsylvania put it in 1726, the assembly's decisions should not interfere "with the Legal Prerogative of the Crown or the true Legislative Power of the Mother State."

## North America and the Struggle for Empire

★ **What were the diplomatic and military goals of Europeans and American Indians in North America?**

★ **How did the English victory in 1763 affect people in North America?**

During the seventeenth century, most of the violence and warfare in colonial America arose from struggles either between Indians and colonists over land or among colonists over political power and the use of revenues and resources. These struggles continued to be important during the eighteenth century. By 1690, however, the most persistent dangers to colonial peace and safety came from the fierce rivalries between the French, Spanish, and the English (see Map 4.1). Between 1688 and 1763, these European powers waged five bloody and costly wars. Most of these conflicts were motivated by politics at home, although colonial ambitions spurred the last and most decisive of them. No matter where these worldwide wars began, or what their immediate cause, colonists were usually drawn into them.

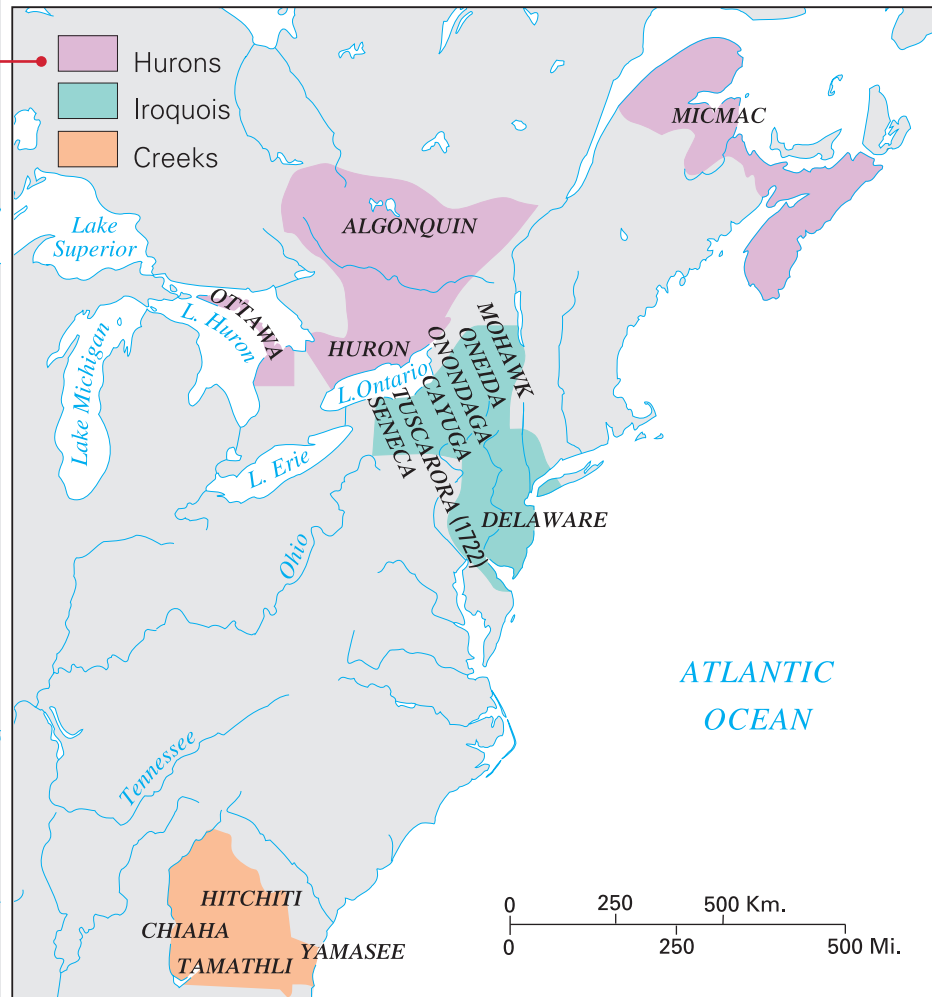
When imperial wars included fighting in America, English colonists were expected to fight without the assistance of British troops. Often the enemy the colonists faced was neither French nor Spanish but Indian, a result of the alliances Indians had formed with Europeans to advance their own interests. For example, until the mid-seventeenth century, the Huron dominated confederacy to the north supported the French (see Map 4.2). These two allies had a strong economic bond: the French profited from the fur trade while the Hurons enjoyed the benefits of European manufactured goods. The English colonists were not without their Indian allies, however. Ties with the Iroquois League were carefully nurtured by the English, who appreciated the advantages of friendship with Indians living south of the Great Lakes, along crucial fur trading routes. For their part, the Iroquois were willing to cooperate with a European power who was the enemy of their perpetual rival, the Hurons. The southern English colonists turned to the **Creek Confederacy** when wars with Spain erupted. Yet the colonists' own land hunger always worked to undermine these Indian alliances. The southern tribes' support was unreliable, and the Iroquois, wary of the English westward expansion, often chose to pursue an independent strategy of neutrality.

The wars that raged from 1689 until 1763 were part of a grand effort by rival European nations to control the balance of power at home and abroad. The colonists often felt like pawns in the hands of the more powerful players, and resentment sometimes overshadowed their patriotic pride when England was victorious. Whatever their views on imperial diplomacy, few colonists escaped the impact of this nearly century-long struggle for

**Creek Confederacy** Alliance of the Creeks and smaller Indian tribes living in the Southeast.

**MAP 4.2 The Indian Confederacies**

This map shows the three major Indian military and political coalitions—the Huron, Iroquois, and Creek Confederacies. Unlike the squabbling English mainland colonies, these Indian tribes understood the value of military unity in the face of threats to their land and their safety and the importance of diplomatic unity in negotiating with their European allies.



power between England, France, and Spain. Periods of peace were short and the long shadow of war hung over them until Britain's major triumph in 1763.

### An Age of Imperial Warfare

William and Mary's ascent to the throne in 1689 ushered in an era of political stability and religious tolerance in Britain. But it also ushered in an age of imperial warfare. Almost immediately, France took up arms against England, Holland, Sweden, and Spain in what the Europeans called the War of the League of Augsburg; colonists called it simply King William's War. With France as the enemy, New England and New York bore the brunt of the fighting. Because the English sent no troops to defend the border communities, colonial armies, composed largely of untrained militia companies, and their Iroquois allies defended British interests in this long and vicious war. When the war finally ended with the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697, 659 New Englanders had perished. The death toll for the Iroquois nations was higher—between 600 and 1,300. The lessons of the war were equally apparent. First, colonists paid a high price for their disunity and lack of cooperation. Second, no New Englander could ever feel secure until the French had been driven out of Canada. Third, the colonists needed the aid of the English army and navy to effectively drive the French away.



The colonists had little time to enjoy peace. Five years later, in 1702, the conflict that colonists called Queen Anne's War began, once again pitting France and its now dependent ally, Spain, against England, Holland, and Austria. In this eleven-year struggle, colonists faced enemies on both their southern and northern borders. Once again, those enemies included Indians. Between 1711 and 1713, southern colonists were caught up in fierce warfare with the Tuscaroras, who were angered by North Carolina land seizures. The casualties were staggering. Some 150 settlers were killed in the opening hours of the war, and in the following months both sides outdid one another in cruelty. Stakes were run through the bodies of women, children were murdered, and Indian captives were roasted alive. South Carolina and Virginia sent arms and supplies to aid the North Carolina colonists, and the Creek and Yamasee Indians fought beside the white settlers against the Tuscaroras. When this war-within-a-war ended in 1713, more than a thousand Tuscaroras were dead and nearly four hundred had been sold into slavery. The survivors took refuge in the land of the Iroquois.

The war, which ended in 1713, cost New Englanders dearly. The high death toll of King William's War and Queen Anne's War was staggering: nearly 1 of every 4 soldiers in uniform had died. The financial cost was equally devastating. Four-fifths of Massachusetts revenues in 1704–1705 went for military expenses. Homeowners in Boston saw their taxes rise 42 percent between 1700 and 1713. The city's streets were filled with beggars and its homes with widows. In Connecticut and Massachusetts, colonists spoke bitterly of the Mother Country's failure to protect them; yet this time New Englanders could see tangible gains from the imperial struggle. The English flag now flew over Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Hudson Bay, which meant that Maine settlers no longer had to fear enemy raids. New England fleets could fish the cod-rich waters of Newfoundland more safely. And colonial fur traders could profit from Hudson Bay's resources.

At the end of the 1730s, a period of calm in Europe was fractured. By 1740, France, Spain, and Prussia were at war with England and its ally, Austria. This war, known in the colonies as King George's War, again meant enemy attacks on both the northern and southern colonies. New Englanders, swept up in the Great Awakening, viewed the war as a Protestant crusade against Catholicism, a holy war designed to rid the continent of religious enemies. Yet when the war ended in 1748, France still retained its Canadian territories.

### **The Great War for Empire**

Despite three major wars and countless border conflicts, the map of North America had changed very little. Colonial efforts to capture Canada or to rid the Southwest of Indian enemies had not succeeded. But in 1756, Europe was dragged into a colonial war. Westward expansion deeper into North America triggered a great war for empire, referred to in Europe as the Seven Years' War and in the colonies as the French and Indian War.

The problem began in the 1740s, as the neutral zone between the French colonial empire and the British mainland settlements began to shrink. As thousands of new immigrants poured into the English colonies, the colonists pressed farther westward, toward the Ohio Valley. This migration alarmed the French, who had plans to unite their mainland empire, connecting Canada and Louisiana with a chain of forts and trading posts across the Ohio Valley. In response, the British decided to send an expedition to assess French strength and warn the French to abandon a new fort. Virginia's governor, Robert Dinwiddie, chose an inexperienced young planter and colonial militia officer, Major George Washington, to lead the expedition. When Washington conveyed the warning in 1754, the French commander responded with insulting sarcasm. Tensions escalated

rapidly. Dinwiddie ordered Washington to challenge the French at Fort Duquesne, near present-day Pittsburgh, but the French forced him to surrender.

Fearing another war, colonial political leaders knew it was time to act decisively—and to attempt cooperation. In June 1754, seven colonies sent representatives to Albany, New York, to organize a united defense. Unfortunately this effort at cooperation failed. When the Albany Plan of Union was presented to the colonial assemblies, none was willing to approve it. Instead, American colonists looked to Britain to act. This time, Britain did. Parliament sent Major General Edward Braddock, a battle-hardened veteran, to drive the French out of Fort Duquesne. Braddock's humiliating failure was only the first of many for the English in America.

English and French forces engaged each other in battle four times before war was officially declared in 1756. Soon, every major European power was involved, and the fighting spread rapidly across Europe, the Philippines, Africa, India, the Caribbean, and North America. In America, France's Indian allies joined the war more readily than did England's. Iroquois tribes opted for neutrality, waiting until 1759 to throw in their lot with the English. Although Mohawks fought as mercenaries in New York and Iroquois in western Pennsylvania suppressed Delaware attacks on English colonists there, Iroquois support was erratic. In fact, some members of the League, including the Senecas, fought with the French in 1757 and 1758. Given these circumstances, a British defeat seemed likely.

In 1756 the worried British government turned over the direction of the war to the ardent imperialist William Pitt, who was more than willing to take drastic steps. Pitt committed the British treasury to the largest war expenditures the nation had ever known and then put together the largest military force that North America had ever seen, combining 25,000 colonial troops with 24,000 British regulars. The fortunes of war soon reversed. By the end of 1759, the upper Ohio Valley had been taken from the French. And in August of that year, General James Wolfe took the war to the heart of French Canada: the fortress city of Quebec. Captured after the September battle on the Plains of Abraham, Quebec's fall led the surrender of the city of Montreal in 1760. The **Treaty of Paris**, ratified in 1763, established the supremacy of the British Empire.

**Treaty of Paris** The treaty ending the French and Indian War in 1763; it gave all of French Canada and Spanish Florida to Britain.

### The Outcomes of the Great War for Empire

The war had redrawn the map of the world. The French Empire had shriveled, with nothing remaining of New France but two tiny islands between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

Ten thousand Acadians—French colonists of Nova Scotia—were refugees of the war, deported from their homes by the English because their loyalty was suspect. Many Acadians made the exhausting trek to French-speaking Louisiana, where over time they became known as Cajuns. The only other remnants of the French Empire in the Western Hemisphere were the sugar islands of Guadeloupe, Martinique, and St. Domingue, left to France because England's so-called Sugar Interest wanted no further competition in the British market. Across the ocean, France lost trading posts in Africa, and on the other side of the world, the French presence in India vanished.

The 1763 peace treaty dismantled the French Empire but did not destroy France itself. Although the nation's treasury was empty, its borders were intact. France's alliance with Spain held firm, cemented by the experience of defeat. Britain was victorious, but victory did not mean Britain had escaped unharmed. The British government was deeply in debt and faced new problems associated with managing and protecting its greatly enlarged empire.

In the mainland colonies, people lit bonfires and staged parades to celebrate Britain's victory and the safety of their own borders. But the tension of being both members of a

colonial society and citizens of a great empire could not be easily dismissed. The war left scars, including memories of the British military's arrogance toward provincial soldiers and lingering resentment over the quartering of British soldiers at colonial expense. Suspicion, a growing sense of difference, a tug of loyalties between the local community and the larger empire—these were the unexpected outcomes of a glorious victory.

## Summary

Important changes emerged in the British mainland colonies during the eighteenth century. In New England, increased commercial activity and a royal government produced a shift from a “Puritan” culture to a more secular “Yankee” culture. In the South, the planter elite shifted from a labor force of indentured servants to one of African slaves. By midcentury, these enslaved workers had begun to develop their own community life and their own African American culture. The Middle Colonies developed a lively urban culture that contrasted with the backcountry or culture of newly arrived immigrants.

Intellectual life in the eighteenth century also changed. The colonial elite embraced the Enlightenment notion that progress would come through the application of reason rather than from faith. They developed a skepticism about religious dogmas and accepted John

Locke's theory of natural right. At the same time, the Great Awakening unleashed a second, and opposing, intellectual current. Revivalists such as Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield spurred a renewed pursuit of religious salvation among ordinary colonists. Their message had radical implications, for these “Awakeners” challenged all authority except the individual spirit. A similar challenge to authority emerged in politics and imperial relations. England, France, and Spain fought five major wars between 1688 and 1763. Colonists were expected to defend their own borders in most of the wars. In the French and Indian War, however, the British played an active role in driving the French out of mainland America. Their victory in 1763 altered the colonial map of North America and changed power relations throughout the European world.

### Key Terms

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femme sole, *p. 74*

unprecedented, *p. 75*

subsistence society, *p. 76*

absentee planter, *p. 76*

tidewater, *p. 76*

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## CHAPTER 5

# Deciding Where Loyalties Lie 1763–1776

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### **Victory's New Problems**

- Dealing with Indian and French Canadian Resistance
- Demanding More from the Colonists
- The Colonial Response
- The Stamp Act
- The Popular Response
- Political Debate
- Repeal of the Stamp Act

#### **Asserting American Rights**

- The Townshend Acts and Colonial Protest
- The British Humiliated

#### **The Crisis Renewed**

- Disturbing the Peace of the Early 1770s
- The Tea Act and the Tea Party
- The Intolerable Acts
- Creating a National Forum: The First Continental Congress

#### **The Decision for Independence**

- Taking Charge and Enforcing Policies
- The Shot Heard 'Round the World
- The Second Continental Congress
- Declaring Independence

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**

- Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, 1776
- Declaring Loyalties

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**

- Charles Inglis's *The True Interest of America*, 1776

#### **Summary**

### **INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Charles Inglis**

Charles Inglis was born in Ireland in 1734. He became an Anglican minister and served six years as a missionary among the Mohawks. In 1765 he became the assistant rector of New York City's prestigious Trinity Church. His delight at the appointment soon turned to dismay, however. The Stamp Act was passed that same year, and many of the colony's leading political figures and ordinary citizens linked the Church of England with the king's plans to oppress the colonists. Despite the open hostility Inglis soon faced, he chose to speak out in defense of both his church and his king.

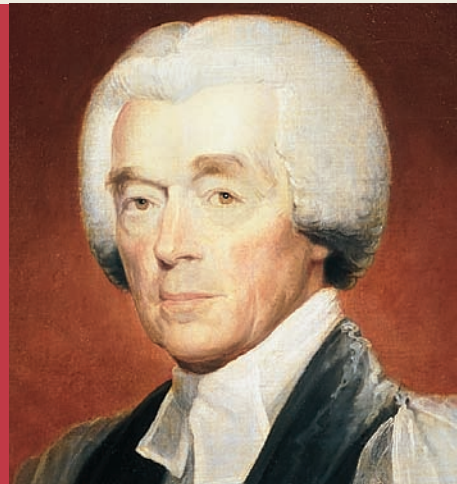
By the 1770s, Inglis was dangerously at odds with his neighbors. He wrote pamphlets and published letters in the local newspapers in support of Parliament's right to tax the colonies and the colonists' duty to submit. When Thomas Paine published his radical *Common Sense* in 1776, Inglis was one of the few conservatives who dared to challenge this open call for revolution. He condemned Paine and warned of the "evils which inevitably must attend our separating" from the Mother Country. Inglis painted a portrait of "the greatest confusion, and most violent convulsions" that would be the inevitable outcome of American protest and resistance to the king's sovereignty. Pointing out the hopelessness of waging a war against the most powerful navy in the world, he reminded Americans that they remained British subjects with "the manners, habits, and ideas of Britons." Those ideas, he added, did not include a republican form of government.

In 1777 Charles Inglis was named rector of Trinity Church. From his pulpit, he continued boldly to pray for the king's well-being, despite the Declaration of Independence. He remained an outspoken loyalist even when his church was burned and the new state government confiscated his personal property. But when the British evacuated New York in 1783, Inglis joined thousand of other loyalists in exile in Nova Scotia. Despite all that he had suffered at the hands of the revolutionaries, he refused to speak bitterly of his American enemies. Instead he wrote: "I do not leave behind me an individual against whom I have the smallest degree of resentment or ill-will."

#### **CHARLES INGLIS**

This portrait of the Anglican bishop Charles Inglis reveals a proud, intelligent, self-confident gentleman. Yet Inglis, like many loyalists, was spurned by his fellow colonists after he wrote a pamphlet urging all Americans to remain loyal to the king. He risked his neighbors' ridicule, he said, because he was a true patriot and a friend to America's best interests.

National Portrait Gallery, London.





# Chronology

<b>1763</b>	Treaty of Paris ends French and Indian War Pontiac's Rebellion Proclamation Line	<b>1772</b>	Burning of the Gaspée
<b>1764</b>	Sugar Act	<b>1773</b>	Tea Act Boston Tea Party
<b>1765</b>	Stamp Act Sons of Liability organized Stamp Act Congress Nonimportation of British goods	<b>1774</b>	Intolerable Acts First Continental Congress Continental Association Declaration of Rights and Grievances Suffolk Resolves
<b>1766</b>	Stamp Act replaced Declaratory Act	<b>1775</b>	Battles of Lexington and Concord Second Continental Congress Olive Branch Petition Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms
<b>1767</b>	Townshend Acts John Dickson's Letters from <i>Farmer in Pennsylvania</i>	<b>1776</b>	<i>Tom Paine's Common Sense</i> Declaration of Independence Adam Smith publishes <i>Wealth of Nations</i>
<b>1768</b>	Nonimportation of British goods Massachusetts Circular Letter		
<b>1770</b>	Boston Massacre Townshend Acts replaced		

Many colonists believed that Britain's victory in 1763 would usher in a new era of economic growth, westward expansion, and improved cooperation between the Mother Country and colonies. But the colonists' hopes for harmony and goodwill were quickly dashed. Less than two years after the Treaty of Paris ended the war, colonists were protesting Britain's Indian policy and its new trade regulations. In the next thirteen strife-filled years, the colonists and the British government discovered the fundamental political differences that existed between them. They did not agree over the meaning of representative government or the proper division of power between Parliament and the local elected assemblies. And they found themselves in conflict over major imperial policies. English officials thought it made good sense to curtail westward settlement in order to prevent costly Indian wars. But American colonists believed loyal citizens deserved the economic opportunity that westward settlement would provide. The British government and the colonists also disagreed on the obligations the colonists owed to the Empire. The British insisted that the Americans ought to help pay the costs of maintaining that Empire, but the colonists believed that this was the duty of those who remained in the Mother Country. By the 1770s, Americans who had once toasted the king now drank instead to liberty and resistance to tyrants. By 1775, a new choice faced the colonists: loyalty or rebellion. Men such as Charles Inglis were caught in the midst of a struggle they had never anticipated and could not avoid.

The colonists who chose to protest taxation by the British government in 1765 and 1767, or to oppose the creation of juryless courts, or to complain of the presence of troops



# It Matters Today

## THE RIGHT TO DISSENT

Charles Inglis was a man of integrity who considered himself an American patriot. Throughout American history, men and women have opposed political and social choices made by the nation, including the entrance of the United States into World War I, women's suffrage, and the wars in Vietnam and Iraq. The right to dissent, guaranteed by the Constitution, has been a critical part of the American political tradition since the nation began.

- Consider your position on dissent in times of national crisis. Do you believe the government has the right to suppress dissent during times of war or major disasters? Why or why not?
- Examine the key provisions of the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1789 and the Patriot Act of 2001. Discuss the impact of modern technology on the government's ability to enforce such laws and on the ability of citizens to oppose or resist them.

in their towns did not know they were laying the groundwork for a revolution. Most of them would have been shocked at the suggestion that they were no longer loyal British patriots. Yet, events between 1763 and 1776 forced these colonists to choose between two versions of patriotism—loyalty to the king or loyalty to colonial independence—and between two visions of the future—as members of a great and powerful Empire or as citizens of a struggling new nation. These events also forced Indians and African Americans to choose an alliance with the king or with the rebels, just as it forced churchmen and royal officials such as Inglis to decide if the solemn oath of allegiance they had taken to the king remained binding.

## Victory's New Problems

- ★ **Why did Prime Minister Grenville expect the colonists to accept part of the burden of financing the British Empire in 1764?**
- ★ **Why were the colonists alarmed by Grenville's 1765 stamp tax?**

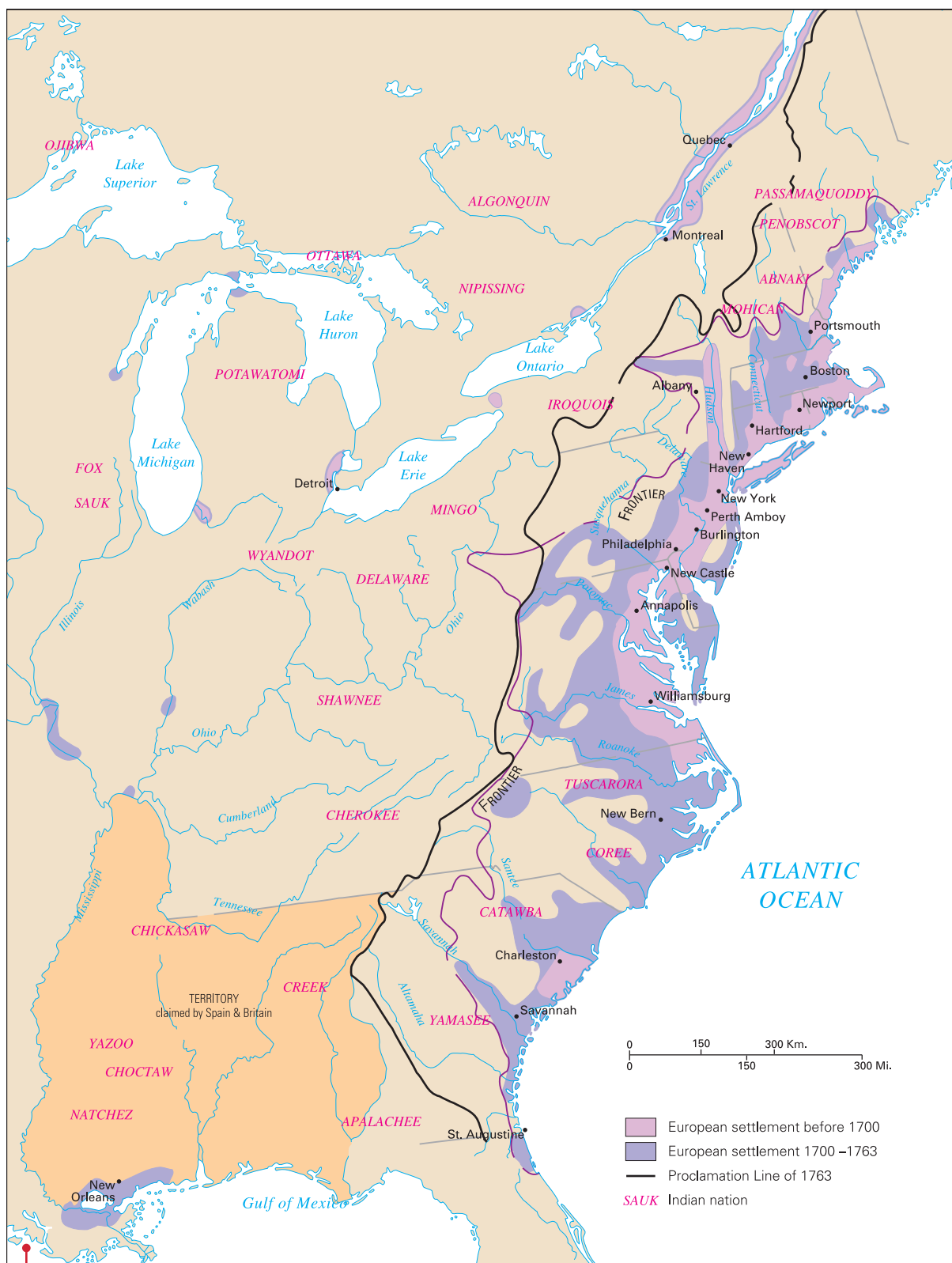
**George III** King of England (r. 1760–1820); his government's policies produced colonial discontent that led to the American Revolution in 1776.

**delusions** A false belief strongly held in spite of evidence to the contrary.

**George Grenville** British prime minister who sought to tighten controls over the colonies and to impose taxes to raise revenues.

In the midst of the French and Indian War, King George II died and, in 1760, his young grandson, **George III**, ascended the throne. At 22, the new monarch was hardworking but highly self-critical, and he was already showing the symptoms of an illness that produced **delusions** and depression. Although he was inexperienced in matters of state, George III meant to rule—even if he had to deal with politicians, whom he distrusted, and engage in politics, which he disliked. He chose **George Grenville**, a practical man, to assist him. It fell to Grenville to handle the two most pressing postwar tasks: negotiating England's victory treaty with France and its allies, and designing Britain's peacetime policies.

Grenville's diplomats met with little resistance at the negotiating table. France was defeated, and it was up to the British government to determine the spoils of war. England could take possession of a French Caribbean sugar island or the vast French mainland territory of Canada (see Map 4.1). English sugar planters raised loud objections to the first option, which would mean new competitors in the profitable English sugar markets. The decision was to add Canada, and support was strong. Doing so ensured the safety of the mainland colonies, whose people were increasingly important as consumers



**MAP 5.I The Proclamation Line of 1763**

This map shows European settlement east of the Appalachian Mountains and the numerous Indian tribes with territorial claims to the lands between the Appalachians and the Mississippi River. The Proclamation Line, which roughly follows the mountain range, was the British government's effort to temporarily halt colonial westward expansion and, thus, to prevent bloodshed between settlers and Indians. This British policy was deeply resented by land-hungry colonists.

of English-made goods. With Canada, too, came the rich fishing grounds off the Newfoundland coast and the fertile lands of the Ohio Valley. By the end of 1763, George III could look with pride on an empire that had grown in physical size, on a nation that dominated the markets of Europe, and on a navy that ruled the seas.

Unfortunately, victory also brought new problems. First, the new English glory did not come cheaply. To win the war, William Pitt had spent vast sums of money, leaving the new king with an enormous war debt. English taxpayers, who had groaned under the wartime burden, now demanded tax relief, not tax increases. Second, the new Canadian territory posed serious governance problems because the Indians were unwilling to pledge their allegiance to the English king and, despite the change in flag, the French Canadians were unwilling to abandon their traditions, laws, or the Catholic Church.

### Dealing with Indian and French Canadian Resistance

Both the Canadian tribes and Spain's former Indian allies along the southeastern borders of the English colonies felt threatened by Britain's victory. For decades, Indian diplomats had protected their lands by playing European rivals against one another, but with the elimination of France and the weakening of Spain in mainland America, this strategy was impossible. This situation united the Indians, who acted quickly to create an intertribal alliance known as the **Covenant Chain**. The Covenant Chain brought together Senecas, Ojibwas, Potowatomis, Hurons, Ottawas, Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingoes, all of whom stood ready to resist colonial settlers, British trading policy, and the terms of military occupation of frontier forts. Led by the Ottawa chief **Pontiac**, the Indians mounted their attack on British forts and colonial settlements in the spring of 1763. By fall, their resistance had evaporated, and the Covenant Chain tribes were forced to acknowledge British control of the Ohio Valley.

The British realized, however, that as long as the “middle ground” between Indian and colonial populations continued to shrink, Indians would mount such resistance. And as long as Indians resisted what Creeks bluntly called “people greedily grasping after the lands of red people,” settlers would demand expensive military protection as they pushed westward. Grenville's solution was a proclamation, issued in 1763, temporarily banning all colonial settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains.

Grenville's **Proclamation Line of 1763** outraged colonists who were hoping to move west, and wealthy land speculators hoping to reap a profit from their western investments. With the Indian enemy reeling from defeat, settlers insisted that this was the perfect moment to cross the mountains and stake claims to the land. Most colonists simply ignored Grenville's Proclamation Line. Over the next decade, areas such as Kentucky began to fill with eager homesteaders, creating a wedge that divided northern Indian tribes from southern tribes and increasing Indian anxiety (see Map 5.1).

Because of their long tradition of anti-Catholic sentiment, American colonists also objected to Grenville's policy toward French-speaking Catholic Canadians. George III's advisers preferred to win over these new subjects rather than strong-arm them. To balance the French Canadians' loss of their fishing and fur-trading industries, Grenville promised them the right to preserve their religious and cultural ways of life. Britain's colonists were scandalized by this concession to the losers in the war.

### Demanding More from the Colonists

Colonists were not the only ones growing discontent. In London, the king, his ministers, and many members of Parliament were impatient with colonial behavior and attitudes. Had not the colonists benefited more than anyone from the French defeat? asked George Grenville. Such questions revealed the subtle but important

**Covenant Chain** An alliance of Indian tribes established to resist colonial settlement in the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes region and to oppose British trading policies.

**Pontiac** Ottawa chief who led the unsuccessful resistance against British policy in 1763.

### Proclamation Line of 1763

Boundary that Britain established in the Appalachian Mountains, west of which white settlement was banned; it was intended to reduce conflict between Indians and colonists.



rewriting of the motives and goals of the French and Indian War. Although Britain had waged the war to win dominance in European affairs, not to benefit the colonies, Grenville now declared that the war had been fought to protect the colonists and to expand their opportunities for settlement.

This new interpretation fit well with the government's increasing doubts about colonial commitments to the Empire's trade interests. It seemed clear to Grenville that something had gone wrong in the economic relationship between England and the colonies. Colonial cities such as Boston, Philadelphia, and New York had grown considerably, yet their growth did not make England as rich as **mercantile theory** said it should. One reason was that in every colony, locally produced goods competed with English-made goods. A more important reason, however, was illegal trade. Colonists seized economic opportunity wherever they found it—even in trade with England's wartime rivals. In peacetime, colonists avoided paying **import duties** on foreign goods by bribing customs officials or landing cargoes where no customs officers were stationed.

George Grenville was often mocked for having a bookkeeper's mentality, but few laughed at what the prime minister discovered when he examined the imperial trade books. By the 1760s, the Crown had collected less than £2,000 in revenue from colonial trade with other nations while the cost of collecting these duties was over £7,000 a year. Such discoveries fueled British suspicions that the colonies were underregulated and undergoverned, as well as ungrateful and uncooperative. Amid the strong doubts about colonial loyalty and the reality of the British government debts and soaring expenses, Parliament approved reforms of colonial policy proposed by Grenville in 1764. Colonists greeted those reforms with shock and alarm.

Separately, each of Grenville's measures addressed a loophole in the proper relationship between the Mother Country and colonies. For example, a **Currency Act** outlawed the use of paper money as legal tender in the colonies. In part, this was done to ensure the colonial market for English manufacturers. Although the colonists had to pay for imported English products with hard currency (gold and silver), they could use paper money to pay for locally produced goods. With paper money now banned, local manufacturers would be driven out of business.

Grenville believed the major problem was smuggling. Lawbreakers were so common, and customs officers so easily bribed, that smuggling had become an acceptable, even respectable, form of commerce. To halt this illicit traffic, Grenville set about to reform the **customs service**. In his 1764 American Revenue Act, he increased the powers of the customs officers, allowing them to use blanket warrants, called writs of assistance, to search ships and warehouses for smuggled goods. He also changed the regulations regarding key foreign imports, including sugar, wine, and coffee. This startling shift in policy, known popularly as the **Sugar Act**, revealed Grenville's practical bent. He decided to make a profit for the Crown from this trade. He would lower the tax on imported sugar—but he would make sure it was collected. Until 1764, a colonist accused of smuggling was tried before a jury of his neighbors in a **civil court**. Grenville now declared that anyone caught smuggling would be tried in a juryless **vice-admiralty court**, where a conviction was likely. Once smuggling became too costly and too risky, Grenville reasoned, American shippers would declare their cargoes of French sugar and pay the Crown for the privilege of importing them.

**mercantile theory** The economic notion that a nation should amass wealth by exporting more than it imports; colonies are valuable in a mercantile system as a source of raw materials and as a market for manufactured goods.

**import duties** Taxes on imported goods.

**Currency Act** British law of 1764 banning the printing of paper money in the American colonies.

**customs service** A government agency authorized to collect taxes on foreign goods entering a country.

**Sugar Act** British law of 1764 that taxed sugar and other colonial imports to pay for some of Britain's expenses in protecting the colonies.

**civil court** Any court that hears cases regarding the rights of private citizens.

**vice-admiralty court** Nonjury British court in which a judge heard cases involving shipping.

## The Colonial Response

Grenville's reforms were spectacularly ill timed as far as Americans were concerned. The colonial economy was suffering from a postwar **depression**, brought on in part by the loss of the British army as a steady market for American supplies and of British soldiers as steady customers who paid in hard currency. In 1764, unemployment

**depression** A period of drastic economic decline, marked by decreased business activity, falling prices, and high unemployment.

was high among urban artisans, dockworkers, and sailors. Colonial merchants were caught in a credit squeeze, unable to pay their debts to British merchants because their colonial customers had no cash to pay for their purchases. These colonists were not likely to cheer a currency act that shut off a source of money or a Sugar Act that established a new get-tough policy on foreign trade. In the eyes of many colonists, the English government was turning into a greater menace than the French army had ever been.

Proposals for action soon filled the pages of colonial newspapers. This concern suggested that Grenville's reforms had raised profound issues of liberty and the rights of citizens and of the relationship between Parliament and the colonial governments—issues that needed to be resolved. The degree to which Parliament had, or ought to have, power over colonial economic and political life required serious, public pondering. Years later, Massachusetts lawyer and revolutionary John Adams stressed the importance of the Sugar Act in starting America down the road to independence. “I know not why we should blush to confess,” wrote Adams, “that molasses [liquid sugar] was an essential ingredient in American independence. Many great events have proceeded from much smaller causes.” But in 1764 colonists were far from agreement over the issue of parliamentary and local political powers. They were not even certain how to respond to the Sugar Act.

### The Stamp Act

Grenville was hardly a stranger to protest and anger—he had often heard British citizens grumble about taxes and assert their rights against the government. As he saw it, his duty was to fill the treasury, reduce the nation's staggering debt, arm

its troops, and keep the royal navy afloat. The duty of loyal British citizens was to obey the laws of their sovereign government. Grenville had no doubt that the measures he and Parliament were taking to regulate the colonies and their revenue-producing trade were constitutional. Some colonists, however, had doubts. Thus the next piece of colonial legislation Grenville proposed was designed not only to raise revenue but to settle the principle of parliamentary sovereignty.

The **Stamp Act** of 1765 was to be the first **direct tax** ever laid on the colonies by Parliament, and its purpose was to raise revenue by taxing certain goods and services. There was nothing startling or novel about the revenue-collecting method Grenville proposed. A stamp tax raised money by requiring the use of government “stamped paper” on certain goods or as part of the cost for certain services. It was simple and efficient, and several colonial legislatures had already adopted this method. What was startling, however, was that Parliament would consider imposing a tax on the colonists that was not aimed at regulation of foreign trade. Up until 1765, Parliament had passed many acts regulating colonial trade. These regulations on imports generated revenue for the Crown, and the colonists accepted them as a form of **external taxation**. But colonists expected direct taxation only from their local assemblies. If Grenville's Stamp Act became law, it would mark a radical change in the distribution of political power between assemblies and Parliament. It would be the powerful assertion of Parliament's sovereignty that Grenville intended.

Most members of Parliament saw the Stamp Act as an efficient and modest redistribution of the burdens of the empire—and a constitutional one. Colonists were certainly not being asked to shoulder the entire burden, since the estimated £160,000 in revenue from the stamped paper would cover only one-fifth of the cost of maintaining a British army in North America. Under these circumstances, Parliament saw no reason to deny Grenville's proposed tax. The Stamp Act passed in February 1765 and was set to go into effect in November. News of the tax crossed the ocean rapidly and was greeted with

**Stamp Act** British law of 1765 that directly taxed a variety of items, including newspapers, playing cards, and legal documents.

**direct tax** A tax imposed to raise revenue rather than to regulate trade.

**external taxation** Revenue raised in the course of regulating trade with other nations.

outrage and anger. Opposition was widespread among the colonists because virtually every free man and woman was affected by a tax that required stamps on all legal documents, newspapers, and pamphlets.

### The Popular Response

Many colonists were ready to resist the new legislation. Massachusetts, whose smugglers were already choking on the new customs regulations, and whose assembly had a long history of struggle with local Crown officers, led the way.

During the summer of 1765, a group of Bostonians formed a secret resistance organization called the **Sons of Liberty**. Spearheading the Sons was the irrepressible **Samuel Adams**, a Harvard-educated member of a prominent Massachusetts family who preferred the company of local working men and women to the conversation of the elite. More at home in the dockside taverns than in the comfortable parlors of his relatives, Adams was a quick-witted, dynamic champion of working-class causes. He had a genius for writing propaganda and for mobilizing popular sentiment on political and community issues. Most members of the Sons of Liberty were artisans and shopkeepers, and the group's main support came from men of the city's laboring classes who had been hard hit by the postwar depression and would suffer from the stamp tax. These colonists had little influence in the legislature or with Crown officials, but they compensated by staging public demonstrations and protests to make their opinions known.

Demonstrations and protests escalated, and once again Boston led the way. On August 14, shoemaker Ebenezer McIntosh led a crowd to protest the appointment of the colony's stamp agent, wealthy merchant Andrew Oliver. Until recently, McIntosh had headed one of two major workers' organizations in town—a group of artisans, apprentices, and day laborers known to the city's disapproving elite as the South End “gang.” But on this August day, city gentlemen disguised themselves as workingmen and joined McIntosh's gang members as they paraded through the city streets, carrying an effigy of Oliver. The crowd destroyed the stamp agent's dockside warehouse and later broke all the windows in his home. The message was clear—and Oliver understood it well. The following day Andrew Oliver resigned as stamp agent. Boston Sons of Liberty celebrated by declaring the tree on which they hanged Oliver's effigy the “liberty tree.”

Oliver's resignation did not end the protest. Customs officers and other Crown officials living in Boston were threatened with words and worse. The chief target of abuse, however, was the haughty merchant **Thomas Hutchinson**, hated by many of the ambitious younger political leaders because he monopolized appointive offices in the colony's government, and by the workingmen because of his obvious disdain for ordinary people. Late one August evening, a large crowd surrounded Hutchinson's elegant brick mansion. Warned of the impending attack, Hutchinson and his family had wisely fled, escaping just before rocks began to shatter the parlor windows. By dawn, the house was in ruins, and Hutchinson's furniture, clothing, and personal library had been trashed.

The campaign against the stamp agents spread like a brushfire across the colonies. Agents in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maryland, and New York were mercilessly harassed. Most stamp agents resigned. Colonial governors retaliated by refusing to allow any colonial ships to leave port. They hoped this disruption of trade would persuade local merchants to help end the resistance. Their strategy backfired. Violence increased as hundreds of unemployed sailors took to the streets, terrorizing customs officers and any colonists suspected of supporting the king's taxation policy.

**Sons of Liberty** A secret organization first formed in Boston to oppose the Stamp Act.

**Samuel Adams** Massachusetts revolutionary leader and propagandist who organized opposition to British policies after 1764.

**Thomas Hutchinson** Boston merchant and judge who served as lieutenant governor and later governor of Massachusetts; Stamp Act protesters destroyed his home in 1765.

**Patrick Henry** Member of the Virginia House of Burgesses and American revolutionary leader noted for his oratorical skills.

### Political Debate

While the Sons of Liberty and their supporters demonstrated in the streets, most colonial political leaders were proceeding with caution. Virginia lawyer and planter **Patrick Henry** briefly stirred the passions of his colleagues in the House of Burgesses when he suggested that the Stamp Act was evidence of the king's tyranny. Not everyone agreed with him that the measure was so serious. Many did agree, however, that the heart of the matter was not stamped paper but parliamentary sovereignty versus the rights of colonial citizens. "No taxation without representation"—the principle that citizens cannot be taxed by a government unless they are represented in it—was a fundamental assumption of free white Englishmen on both sides of the Atlantic. The crucial question was, Did the House of Commons represent the colonists even though no colonist sat in the House and none voted for its members? If the answer was no, then the Stamp Act violated the colonists' most basic "rights of Englishmen."

Stating the issue in this way led to other concerns. Could colonial political leaders oppose a single law such as the Stamp Act without completely denying the authority of the government that was responsible for its passage? Massachusetts lawyer James Otis pondered this question when he sat down to write his *Rights of the British Colonists Asserted and Proved*. Any opposition to the Stamp Act, he decided, was ultimately a challenge to parliamentary authority over the colonies, and it would surely lead to colonial rebellion and a declaration of colonial independence. He, for one, was not prepared to become a rebel.

The logic of his own argument disturbed Otis and prompted him to propose a compromise: the colonists should be given representation in the House of Commons. Few political leaders took this suggestion seriously. Even if Parliament agreed, a small

When Parliament enacted the Stamp Tax of 1765, the government designed this special embossed tax stamp to be used on the items that came under the new law. These items included newspapers, most legal documents, playing cards, and dice. The Stamp Tax provoked the first major protest and boycott by colonists against the Mother Country. The Granger Collection, New York.





contingent of colonists could be easily ignored in its decision making. Most colonial leaders thought it best to declare that American rights and liberties were under attack and to issue warnings that the assemblies would oppose any further threats to colonial rights. They carefully avoided, however, any treasonous statements or threats of rebellion. In the most popular pamphlet of 1765, Pennsylvania lawyer Daniel Dulaney captured this combination of criticism and caution. His *Considerations on the Propriety of Imposing Taxes on the British Colonies* reaffirmed the dependence of the colonies on Great Britain. But it also reminded Parliament that Americans knew the difference between dependence and slavery.

Grenville's policies appeared to be bringing about what had once seemed impossible: united political action by the colonies. Until the Stamp Act, competition among the colonial governments was far more common than cooperation. Yet, in the fall of 1765 delegates from nine colonies met in New York "to consider a general and unified, dutiful, loyal and humble Representation [petition]" to the king and Parliament. The petitions this historic Stamp Act Congress ultimately produced were far bolder than the delegates first intended. They were powerful, tightly argued statements that conceded parliamentary authority over the colonies but denied Parliament's right to impose any direct taxes on them. "No taxes," the Congress said, "ever have been, or can be Constitutionally imposed" on the colonies "but by their respective Legislatures." Clearly Americans expected this tradition to be honored.

### Repeal of the Stamp Act

Neither the protest in the streets nor the arguments of the Stamp Act Congress moved the king or Parliament to repeal the stamp tax. But economic pressure did. English manufacturers relied heavily on their colonial markets and were certain to be hurt by any interruption in the flow and sale of goods to America. The most powerful weapon in the colonial arsenal was a refusal to purchase English goods. On Halloween night, just one day before the stamp tax went into effect, two hundred New York merchants announced that they would not import any new British goods. Local artisans rallied to support this **boycott**. A mixture of patriotism and self-interest motivated both groups. The merchants saw the possibility of emptying warehouses bulging with unsold goods because of the postwar depression. Underemployed artisans saw the chance to sell their own products if the supply of cheaper English-made goods dried up. The same combination of interests existed in other colonial cities, and thus the nonimportation movement spread quickly. By the end of November, several colonial assemblies had publicly endorsed the nonimportation agreements signed by local merchants.

English exporters complained bitterly of the damage done to their businesses and pressured Parliament to take colonial protest seriously. Talk of repeal grew bolder and louder in the halls of Parliament. The Grenville government reluctantly conceded that enforcement of the Stamp Act had failed miserably. Even in colonies where royal officials dared to distribute the stamped paper, Americans refused to purchase it. Colonists simply ignored the hated law and continued to sue their neighbors, sell their land, publish their newspapers, and buy their playing cards as if the stamped paper and the Stamp Act did not exist.

By winter's end, Grenville was no longer prime minister. For the king's new head of state, Lord Rockingham, the critical issue was not whether to repeal the Stamp Act but how to do so without appearing to cave in to colonial pressure. After much debate and political maneuvering, Great Britain repealed the Stamp Act in 1766 but at the same time passed a Declaratory Act, which asserted that the colonies "have been, are, and of

**boycott** An organized political protest in which people refuse to buy goods from a nation or group of people whose actions they oppose.

right ought to be subordinate unto, and dependent upon the imperial Crown and parliament of Great Britain.” Parliament’s right to pass legislation for and raise taxes from the North American colonies was reaffirmed as absolute.

## Asserting American Rights

★ **Why did Charles Townshend expect his revenue-raising measures to be successful?**

★ **What were the results of colonial resistance?**

The Declaratory Act firmly asserted that Parliament had “the sole and exclusive right” to tax the colonists. This was a clear rejection of the colonial assemblies’ claim to power, yet the colonists responded with indifference. Those who commented on it at all dismissed it as a face-saving device. To a degree, they were correct. But the Declaratory Act expressed the views of powerful men in Parliament, and within a year they put it to the test.

By the summer of 1766, William Pitt had returned to power within George III’s government. But Pitt was old and preoccupied with his failing health. He lacked the energy to exercise the control over the government he had demonstrated during the French and Indian War. The young Charles Townshend, serving as chancellor of the exchequer, rushed in to fill the leadership void. This brash politician wasted little time foisting a new package of taxes on the colonies.

### The Townshend Acts and Colonial Protest

During the Stamp Act crisis, Benjamin Franklin had assured Parliament that American colonists accepted indirect taxation even if they violently protested a direct tax such as the Stamp Act. In other words, Americans conceded the British government’s right to any revenue arising from the regulation of colonial trade. In 1767 Townshend decided to test this distinction by proposing new regulations on a variety of imported necessities. But the Townshend Acts were import taxes unlike any other the colonies had ever seen: they were tariffs on products made in Britain.

The Townshend Acts taxed glass, paper, paint, and lead products made in England, all part of the luxury trade. The acts also placed a three-penny tax on tea, the most popular drink among colonists everywhere. Townshend wanted to be certain these taxes were collected, so he ordered new customs boards established in the colonies and created new vice-admiralty courts in the major port cities of Boston, Charleston, and Philadelphia to try any cases of smuggling or tax evasion that might occur. In case Americans tried to harass customs officials, as they had so effectively done during the stamp tax protests, Townshend ordered British troops transferred from the western regions to the major colonial port cities. He knew this troop relocation would anger the colonists, but he was relying on the presence of uniformed soldiers—known as “redcoats” because of their scarlet jackets—to keep the peace. To help finance this military occupation of key cities, Townshend invoked the 1766 Quartering Act, a law requiring colonists to provide room and board to troops stationed in their midst.

Clearly, Townshend was taking every precaution to avoid the embarrassment Grenville had suffered in the Stamp Act disaster. But he made a serious error in believing that colonists would meekly agree to pay import duties on British-made goods. When news of the new regulations reached the colonies, the response was immediate, determined, and well-organized resistance.

The colonists were united in their opposition to the Townshend Acts and to Britain’s repressive enforcement policies. Some were incensed that the government was once again

trampling on the principle of “no taxation without representation.” In Boston, many worried more about the economic burden of the new taxes and the quartering of the troops than about political rights. But John Dickinson, a well-respected Pennsylvania landowner and lawyer, laid out the basic American position on imperial relations in his pamphlet *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* (1767). Direct taxation without representation violated the colonists’ rights as English citizens, Dickinson declared. But by imposing any tax that did not regulate foreign trade, Parliament also violated those rights. Dickinson also considered, and rejected, the British claim that Americans were represented in the House of Commons. According to the British argument, colonists enjoyed “virtual representation” because the House of Commons represented the interests of all citizens in the Empire who were not members of the nobility, whether those citizens participated directly in elections to the House or not. Like most Americans, Dickinson discounted virtual representation. What Englishmen were entitled to, he wrote, was *actual* representation by men they had elected to government to protect their interests. For qualified voters in the colonies, who enjoyed actual representation in their local assemblies, virtual representation was nothing more than a weak excuse for exclusion and exploitation.

While political theorists set out the American position in newspaper essays and pamphlets, protest leaders organized popular resistance against acts that were clearly designed to raise revenue as well as make daily life more expensive in the colonies. Samuel Adams set in motion a massive boycott of British goods to begin on January 1, 1768. Just as before, some welcomed the chance a boycott provided to “mow down luxury and high living.” But simple economics also contributed to the boycott. Boston artisans remained enthusiastic about any action that stopped the flow of inexpensive English-made goods to America. Small-scale merchants were also eager to see nonimportation enforced. They had little access to British credit or goods under normal circumstances, and the boycott would eliminate the advantages enjoyed by the merchant elite who did. Shippers who made their living smuggling goods from the West Indies supported the boycott because it cut out the competing English-made products. The large-scale merchants who had led the 1765 boycott were not enthusiastic, however. By 1767, their warehouses were no longer overflowing with unsold English stock, and the boycott might cut off their livelihoods. Many of these elite merchants delayed signing the agreements.

Just as the Sons of Liberty and the Stamp Act demonstrations brought common men into the political arena, the 1768 boycott brought politics into the lives of women. When in 1765 the inexpensive, factory-made cloth produced in England had been placed on the list of boycotted goods, a neglected domestic skill became a symbolic element in the American protest strategy. Taking a bold political stance, many women, including wealthy mothers and daughters, formed groups called the Daughters of Liberty and staged large public spinning bees to show support for the boycott. Wearing clothing made of “homespun” became a mark of honor and a political statement. As one male observer noted, “The ladies . . . while they vie with each other in skill and industry in their profitable employment, may vie with the men in contributing to the preservation and prosperity of their country and equally share in the honor of it.” Through the boycott, politics had entered the domestic circle.

### The British Humiliated

Townshend and his new taxation policy faced sustained defiance in almost every colony, but Massachusetts provided the greatest embarrassment for Parliament. Massachusetts governor Francis Bernard had lost his control over local politics

ever since he tried to punish the assembly for issuing a call in 1768 for collective protest, called a Circular Letter, against the Townshend Acts to other colonies. Although Bernard forced the assembly to rescind the letter, the men chosen for the legislature in the next

election simply reissued it. The helpless governor could do nothing to save face except dismiss the assembly, leaving the colony without any representative government. Bernard's ability to ensure law and order eroded rapidly after this. Enforcers of the boycott roamed the streets of Boston, intimidating pro-British merchants and harassing anyone wearing British-made clothing. Boston mobs openly threatened customs officials, and the Sons of Liberty protected thriving smuggling operations. Despite the increased number of customs officers policing the docks and wharves, the colony did a thriving business in smuggling foreign goods and the items listed in the hated Townshend Acts. One of the town's most notorious smugglers, the flamboyant John Hancock, grew more popular with his neighbors each time he broke the customs laws and unloaded his illegal cargoes of Spanish wines or French West Indian sugar. When customs officers seized Hancock's vessel, aptly named the *Liberty*, in June 1768, protesters beat customs men, and mobs visited the homes of other royal officials. The now-desperate Governor Bernard sent an urgent plea for help to the British government.

In October 1768, four thousand troops arrived in Boston. The Crown clearly believed that the presence of one soldier for every four citizens would be enough to restore order quickly. John Adams marveled at what he considered British thick-headedness. The presence of so many young soldiers, far from home and surrounded by a hostile community, was certain to worsen the situation. Military occupation of Boston made more violence inevitable. The soldiers angered local dockworkers by moonlighting in the shipyards when off duty and taking jobs away from colonists by accepting lower pay. For their part, civilians taunted the sentries, insulted the soldiers, and refused the military any sign of hospitality. News of street-corner fights and tavern brawls inflamed feelings on both sides. Samuel Adams and his friends did their best to fan the flames of hatred, publishing daily accounts of both real and imaginary confrontations in which soldiers threatened the honor of innocent townspeople.

The military occupation dragged on through 1769 and early 1770. On March 5, the major confrontation most people expected occurred. An angry crowd began throwing snowballs and ice at British sentries guarding the customs house. The redcoats, under strict orders not to fire on civilians, issued a frantic call for help in withdrawing to safety. When Captain Thomas Preston and his men arrived to rescue the sentries, the growing crowd immediately enveloped them. How, and under whose orders, Preston's soldiers began to fire is unknown, but they killed five men and wounded eight others. Four of the five victims were white laborers. The fifth, Crispus Attucks, was a runaway slave.

Even before the bloodshed of March 5, Edmund Burke, a member of Parliament known for his sympathy to the colonial cause, had warned the House of Commons that the relationship between Mother Country and colonies was desperate. "The Americans," Burke said, "have made a discovery, or think they have made one, that we mean to oppress them; we have made a discovery, or think we have made one, that they intend to rise in rebellion. We do not know how to advance; they do not know how to retreat." Burke captured well the growing American conviction of a conspiracy or plot by Parliament to deprive the colonists of their rights and liberties. He also captured the British government's growing sense that a rebellion was being hatched. But Parliament was ready to act to ease the crisis and make a truce possible. A new minister, Frederick Lord North, was given the reins of government, and on the very day Preston's men fired on the crowd at Boston, North repealed the Townshend Acts and allowed the hated Quartering Act to expire. Yet North gave no ground on the question of parliamentary control of the colonies. For this reason, North kept the tax on tea—to preserve a principle rather than fill the king's treasury.





Paul Revere's engraving of the Boston Massacre appeared in newspapers the day after the confrontation between redcoats and Boston citizens. Even though Preston and most of his soldiers were acquitted of wrongdoing, Revere's striking image of innocent civilians and murderous soldiers remained fixed in the popular mind. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. [LC-USZC2-4913].

Repeal of the Townshend Acts allowed the colonists to return to the ordinary routine of their lives. But it was not true that all tensions had vanished. The economic boycott begun in 1768 exposed and deepened the growing divisions between the merchant elite and the coalition of smaller merchants, artisans, and laborers in the urban centers of the North. During the years of nonimportation, many of the wealthy merchants had secretly imported and sold British goods whenever possible. When repeal came in 1770, the demand for locally manufactured goods was still low, and artisans and laborers continued to face poor economic prospects. These groups were reluctant to abandon the boycott even after repeal. But few merchants, large or small, would agree to continue it.

## The Crisis Renewed

- ★ **What British policies led Americans to imagine a plot against their rights and liberties?**
- ★ **How did the Continental Congress respond to the Intolerable Acts?**

Lord North's government took care not to disturb the calm created by the repeal of the Townshend Acts. Between 1770 and 1773, North proposed no new taxes on the colonists and made no major changes in colonial policy. American political leaders took equal care not to make any open challenges to British authority. Both sides recognized that their political truce had its limits. It did not extend to smugglers and customs men, who continued to lock horns; nor did it end the bitterness of southern colonists who wished to settle beyond the Proclamation Line.

### Disturbing the Peace of the Early 1770s

Despite the repeal of the Townshend duties, the British effort to crack down on American smuggling continued. New England merchants whose fortunes were built on trade with the Caribbean resented the sight of customs officers at the

docks and customs ships patrolling the coastline. Rhode Island merchants were especially angry and frustrated by the determined customs operation in their colony. They took their revenge one June day in 1772 when the customs patrol boat, the *Gaspée*, ran aground as it chased an American vessel. That evening a band of colonists boarded the *Gaspée* and set it afire.

Rhode Islanders called the burning of the *Gaspée* an act of political resistance. The English called it an act of vandalism and appointed a royal commission to investigate. To their amazement, no witnesses came forward, and no evidence could be gathered to support any arrests. The British found the conspiracy of silence among the Rhode Islanders appalling.

Many American political leaders found the royal commission equally appalling. They were convinced that the British government had intended to bring its suspects to England for trial and deprive them of a jury of their peers. They read this as further evidence of the plot to destroy American liberty, and they decided to keep in close contact to monitor British moves. Following the Virginia assembly's lead, five colonies organized a communications network called the committees of correspondence, instructing each committee to circulate detailed accounts of any questionable royal activities in its colony. These committees of correspondence were also a good mechanism for coordinating protest or resistance should the need arise. Thus the colonists put in place their first permanent machinery of protest.

### **The Tea Act and the Tea Party**

During the early 1770s, colonial activists worked to keep the political consciousness of the 1760s alive. But without major British provocation, a revival of mass action was unlikely. Then in 1773 Parliament provided that provocation.

This time the government was not setting new colonial policy. It was trying to save a major commercial enterprise, the East India Tea Company. Mismanagement, coupled with the American boycott and the tendency of colonists to buy smuggled Dutch tea, had left the company in serious financial trouble. With its warehouses bursting with unsold tea, the company appealed to Parliament to rescue them.

The company directors had a plan: If Parliament allowed them to ship their tea directly to the colonial market, eliminating the English merchants who served as middlemen, they could lower their prices and compete against the smuggled Dutch tea. Even with the three-penny tax on tea that remained from the Townshend era, smart consumers would see this as a bargain. Lord North liked the plan and saw in it the opportunity for vindication: Americans who purchased the cheaper English tea would be confirming Parliament's right to tax the colonies. With little debate, Parliament made the company's arrangement legal through passage of the Tea Act.

Once again, British politicians had seriously misjudged the impact of their decisions. Colonists read the Tea Act as an insult, another chilling sign of a conspiracy against their well-being and their liberty. They distrusted the arrangement, believing that the East India Tea Company would raise its prices dramatically once all foreign teas were driven from the market. They were concerned that if other British companies marketing products in the colonies followed the East India Tea Company's example, prices for scores of products would soar. These objections, however, paled beside the colonists' immediate grasp of Lord North's strategy: purchasing cheaper English tea would confirm Parliament's right to tax the colonies.

Colonists mobilized their resistance in 1773 with the skill acquired from a decade of experience. In several cities, crowds met the ships carrying the East India tea and used

the threat of violence to persuade ship captains to return to England with the tea still on board. As long as both the captains and the local royal officials gave in to these pressures, no serious confrontation occurred. But in Massachusetts, the most famous victim of mob violence, now Governor Thomas Hutchinson, was not willing to give in. There colonists refused to allow crews to unload the tea, but Hutchinson refused to allow the tea ships to depart without unloading. Boston activists broke the stalemate on December 16, 1773, when some sixty men, disguised as Mohawk Indians, boarded the tea ships. Working calmly, they dumped 342 chests of tea, worth almost £10,000, into the waters of Boston Harbor.

### The Intolerable Acts

The tea chests had barely settled into the harbor mud before Parliament retaliated. The king and his minister meant to make an example of everyone in Boston, the source of so much trouble and embarrassment over the past decade. The

four acts that Parliament passed in 1774 to discipline Massachusetts were harsh and uncompromising. The colonists called them the Intolerable Acts. The Port Act declared the port of Boston closed to all trade until the citizens compensated the East India Tea Company fully for its losses. This was a devastating blow to the colony's economy. The Massachusetts Government Act transferred much of the power of the colony's assembly to the royal governor, including the right to appoint judges, sheriffs, and members of the colonial legislature's upper house. The colony's town meetings, which had served as forums for anti-British sentiment and protests, also came under the governor's direct control. A third measure, the Justice Act, allowed royal officials charged with capital crimes to stand trial in London rather than before local juries. And a new Quartering Act gave military commanders the authority to house troops in private homes. To see that these laws were enforced, the king named General Thomas Gage, commander of the British troops in North America, as the acting governor of Massachusetts.

The king expected the severe punishment of Massachusetts to isolate that colony from its neighbors. But the Americans resisted this divide-and-conquer strategy. In every colony, newspaper essays and editorials urged readers to see Boston's plight as their own. "This horrid attack upon the town of Boston," said the *South Carolina Gazette*, "we consider not as an attempt upon that town singly, but upon the whole Continent." In pamphlets and political essays, colonists placed these acts into the larger context of systematic oppression by the Mother Country. Political writers referred to the British government as the "enemy," conspiring to deprive Americans of their liberty, and urged colonists to defend themselves against the "power and cunning of our adversaries." This unity of sentiments, however, was more fragile than it appeared. In the cities, bitter divisions developed, and artisans struggled with merchants to control the mass meetings that would make strategy choices. Samuel Adams and the radical artisans of Boston formed a "solemn league and covenant" to lead a third intercolonial boycott of British goods, a move that they knew could lead to armed rebellion. Yet even in crisis-torn Boston, not everyone wanted matters to go that far.

### Creating a National Forum: The First Continental Congress

On September 5, 1774, delegates from every colony but distant Georgia gathered in Philadelphia for a continental congress. Few of the delegates or the people they represented thought of themselves as revolutionaries. "We want no revolution," a North Carolina delegate bluntly stated. Yet in the eyes of their British rulers,

he and other colonists were treading dangerously close to treason. After all, neither the

king nor Parliament had authorized the congress to which colonial assemblies and self-appointed committees had sent representatives. And that congress was intent on resisting acts of Parliament and defying the king. English men and women had been hanged as traitors for far less serious betrayals of the English government.

The mounting crisis in Massachusetts diminished the chances of any moderate solution. Rumors spread that the royal navy was planning to bombard Boston and that General Gage was preparing to invade the countryside. Thousands of Massachusetts militiamen had begun mustering in Cambridge. The growing conflict drove many delegates into the radical camp. In this atmosphere of dread and anxiety, the Continental Congress approved the Continental Association, a boycott of all English goods to begin on December 1, 1774. The Congress also passed strong resolutions demanding the repeal of the Intolerable Acts.

If no compromise could be reached, the delegates—and Americans everywhere—would have to choose where their strongest loyalties lay. Joseph Galloway of Pennsylvania believed that he had worked out the necessary compromise. In his Plan of Union, Galloway proposed a drastic restructuring of imperial relations. The plan called for a Grand Council, elected by each colonial legislature, that would share with Parliament the right to originate laws for the colonies. The Grand Council and Parliament would have the power to veto each other's decisions if necessary. A governor-general, appointed by the Crown, would oversee council operations and preserve imperial interests.

After much discussion and debate, Congress rejected Galloway's compromise by the narrowest of margins. Then it was John Adams's turn to propose a solution. Under his skillful urging and direction, the Congress adopted the Declaration of Rights and Grievances. The declaration politely but firmly established the colonial standard for acceptable legislation by Parliament. Colonists, said the declaration, would consent to acts meant to regulate "our external commerce." But they absolutely denied the legitimacy, or lawfulness, of an "idea of taxation, internal or external, for raising a revenue on the subjects of America, without their consent."

The delegates knew that the force behind the declaration came neither from the logic of its argument nor from the genius of its political reasoning. Whatever force it carried came from the unspoken, but nevertheless real, threat that rebellion would occur if the colonists' demands were not met. To make this threat clearer, Congress endorsed a set of resolutions rushed to Philadelphia from Suffolk County, Massachusetts. These Suffolk Resolves called on the residents of that county to arm themselves and prepare to resist British military action. Congressional support for these resolves sent an unmistakable message that American leaders were willing to choose rebellion if politics failed.

The delegates adjourned and headed home, bringing news of the Congress's decisions with them to their families and their communities. There was nothing to do now but wait for the Crown's response. When it came, it was electric. "Blows must decide," declared King George III, "whether they are to be subject to this country or independent."

## The Decision for Independence

- ★ **Could the Revolutionary War have been avoided?**
- ★ **What motivated some colonists to become loyalists and others to become patriots?**

Americans were anxious while they waited for the king and Parliament to respond to the Declaration of Rights and Grievances, but they were not idle. In most colonies, a transfer of political power was occurring as the majority of Americans withdrew their support for

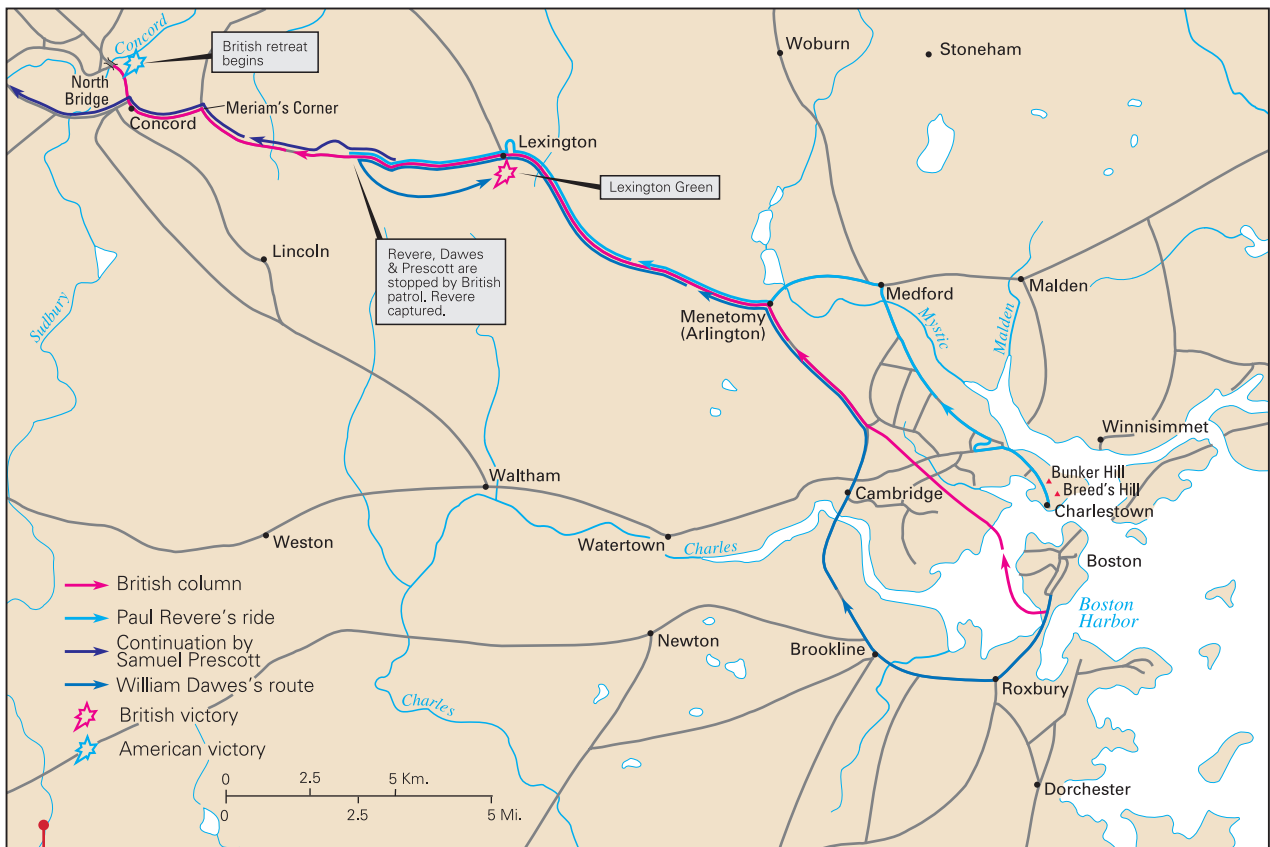


and obedience to royal governments and recognized the authority of anti-British, patriot governments. The king might expect blows to decide the issue of colonial autonomy, but independent local governments were becoming a reality before any shots were fired.

### Taking Charge and Enforcing Policies

Imperial control broke down as communities in each colony refused to obey royal laws or acknowledge the authority of royal officers. For example, when General Gage, the acting governor of Massachusetts, refused to convene the Massachusetts assembly, its members met anyway. Their first order of business was to prepare for military resistance to Gage and his army. While the redcoats occupied Boston, the rebellious assembly openly ordered the colonists to stockpile military supplies near the town of Concord (see Map 5.2).

The transition from royal to patriot political control was peaceful in communities where anti-British sentiment was strong. Where it was weak, or where the community was divided, radicals used persuasion, pressure, and open intimidation to advance the patriot cause. These radicals became increasingly impatient with dissent, disagreement, or even indecision among their neighbors. They insisted that people choose sides and declare loyalties.



**MAP 5.2** The First Battles in the War for Independence, 1775

This map shows the British march to Concord and the routes taken by the three Americans who alerted the countryside of the enemy's approach. Although Paul Revere was captured by the British and did not complete his ride, he is the best remembered and most celebrated of the nightriders who spread the alarm.

**loyalist** An American colonist who remained loyal to the king during the Revolution.

In most colonial cities and towns, patriot committees arose to enforce compliance with the boycott of British goods. These committees publicly exposed those who did not obey the Continental Association, publishing violators' names in local newspapers and calling on the community to shun them. When public shaming did not work, most committees were ready to use threats of physical violence and to make good on them. In New England, many pro-British citizens, or **loyalists**, came to fear for their lives. In the wake of the Intolerable Acts, hundreds of them fled to the city of Boston, hoping General Gage could protect them from their neighbors.

### The Shot Heard 'Round the World

The American situation was frustrating, but King George continued to believe that resistance in most colonies would fade if the Massachusetts radicals were crushed. In January 1775, he ordered General Gage to arrest the most notorious leaders of rebellion in that colony, Samuel Adams and John Hancock. Although storms on the Atlantic prevented the king's orders from reaching Gage until April, the general had independently decided it was time to take action. Gage planned to dispatch a force of redcoats to Concord with orders to seize the rapidly growing stockpile of weapons and arrest the two radical leaders along the way.

The patriots, of course, had their spies in Boston. The only question was when and where Gage would attack. The Americans devised a warning system: as soon as Gage's troops began to move out of Boston, spies would signal the route with lanterns hung in the bell tower of the North Church. On April 18, 1775, riders waiting outside Boston saw one lantern, then another, flash from the bell tower. Within moments, silversmith Paul Revere and his fellow messengers rode off to give news of the British army's approach to the militia and the people living in the countryside. By sunrise, an advance guard of a few hundred redcoats reached the town of Lexington, where they expected to apprehend Adams and Hancock. In the pale light, they saw about seventy colonial militiamen waiting on the village green. No order came to fire, but in the confusion shots rang out. Eight Americans were killed, most of them shot in the back as they ran for safety. Nine more were wounded. Later Americans would insist that the first musket fired at Lexington sounded a "shot heard 'round the world."

The British troops marched from Lexington to Concord. Surprised to find the town nearly deserted, they began a methodical search for weapons. All they uncovered were five hundred musket balls, which they dumped into a nearby pond. They then burned the town's liberty tree. Ignoring this act of provocation, the Concord **Minutemen**, in hiding nearby, waited patiently. When the moment seemed right, they swooped down on the unsuspecting British troops guarding the town's North Bridge.

The sudden attack by the Americans shocked the redcoats, who fled in a panic back toward Boston. The Minutemen followed, gathering more men along the path of pursuit. Together, these American farmers, artisans, and shopkeepers terrorized the British soldiers, firing on them at will from behind barns, stone walls, and trees. When the shaken troops reached the British encampment across the Charles River from Boston, 73 of their comrades were dead, 174 were wounded, and 26 were missing. The day after the **Battles of Lexington and Concord**, thousands of New England militiamen poured in from the surrounding countryside, dug trenches, and laid siege to Boston. As far as they and thousands of other Americans were concerned—including the loyalist refugees crowded into the city—war had begun.

**Minutemen** Nickname first given to the Concord militia because of their speed in assembling; the term later applied generally to colonial militia during the Revolution.

### Battles of Lexington and Concord

Two confrontations in April 1775 between British soldiers and patriot Minutemen; the first recognized battles of the Revolution.

## The Second Continental Congress

When the Continental Congress reconvened in May 1775, it began at once to ready the colonies for war. This Second Continental Congress authorized the printing of American paper money for the purchase of supplies and appointed a committee to oversee foreign relations. It approved the creation of a Continental Army and chose George Washington, the Virginia veteran of the French and Indian War, to serve as its commander.

Across the Atlantic, British leaders struggled to find some negotiating points despite the king's refusal to bend. The king, loathe to compromise, persuaded Parliament to pass an **American Prohibitory Act** instructing the royal navy to seize American ships engaged in any form of trade, "as if the same were the ships . . . of open enemies." For all intents and purposes, King George III declared war on his colonies before the colonies declared war on their king.

War was a fact, yet few American voices were calling for a complete political and emotional break with Britain. Even the most ardent patriots continued to justify their actions as upholding the British constitution. They were rebelling, they said, to preserve the rights guaranteed to English citizens, not to establish an independent nation. Their drastic actions were necessary because a corrupt Parliament and corrupt ministers were trampling on those rights.

Few colonists had yet traced the source of their oppression to George III himself. If any American political leaders believed the king was as corrupt as his advisers and his Parliament, they did not make this view public. Then, in January 1776, Thomas Paine, an Englishman who had emigrated to America a few years earlier, published a pamphlet he called **Common Sense**. Paine's pamphlet broke the silence about King George III.

Paine was a corset maker by trade but a political radical by temperament. As soon as he settled in Philadelphia, he became a wholehearted and vocal supporter of the colonial protest to defend colonial rights, but he preferred American political independence. In *Common Sense*, Paine spoke directly to ordinary citizens, not to their political leaders. Like the preachers of the Great Awakening, he rejected the formal language of the elite, adopting instead a plain, urgent, and emotional vocabulary and writing style designed to reach a mass audience.

*Common Sense* sold 120,000 copies in its first three months in print. Paine attacked the monarchy head-on, challenging the idea of a hereditary ruler and questioning the value of monarchy as an institution. Paine's defiance of traditional authority and open criticism of the men who wielded it helped many of his readers, both male and female, discard the last shreds of loyalty to the king and to the Empire. The impact of Paine's words resounded in the taverns and coffeehouses, where ordinary farmers, artisans, shopkeepers, and laborers took up his call for independence and the creation of a republic. Political leaders acknowledged Paine's importance, although some begrudged the popular admiration lavished on this poorly educated artisan. The Harvard-trained John Adams reluctantly admitted that *Common Sense* was a "tolerable summary of the arguments I have been repeating again and again in Congress for nine months." But Adams's social snobbery led him to criticize Paine's language and his flamboyant writing style, suitable, Adams insisted, only "for an emigrant from new Gate [an English prison] or one chiefly associated with such company."

**American Prohibitory Act** British law of 1775 that authorized the royal navy to seize all American ships engaged in trade; it amounted to a declaration of war.

**Common Sense** Revolutionary pamphlet written by Thomas Paine in 1776; it attacked George III, argued against monarchy, and advanced the patriot cause.

## Declaring Independence

The Second Continental Congress, lagging far behind popular sentiment, inched its way toward a formal declaration of independence. But even John Adams took heart when the Congress opened American trade to all nations except Great Britain in early April 1776 and instructed the colonies to create official state governments. Then, on

# Investigating America

## Thomas Paine's Common Sense, 1776

Unique in content as well as style, Paine's pamphlet abandoned conventional praise for the British political system. Whereas earlier writers had criticized the king or his ministers for their actions, the radical Paine attacked the very existence of a hereditary monarchy itself. Common Americans, he insisted, had the ability to be their own king and were far more deserving of leadership posts than most of those who had worn English crowns.

.....

England, since the conquest, hath known some few good monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones, yet no man in his senses can say that their claim under William the Conqueror is a very honorable one. A French bastard landing with an armed banditti, and establishing himself king of England against the consent of the natives, is in plain terms a very paltry rascally original. It certainly hath no divinity in it. However, it is needless to spend much time in exposing the folly of hereditary right, if there are any so weak as to believe it, let them promiscuously worship the ass and lion, and welcome. I shall neither copy their humility, nor disturb their devotion. . . .

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America hath flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, that the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert, that because a child has thrived upon milk, that it is never to have meat; or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true, for I answer roundly, that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power had any thing to do with her. The commerce by which she hath enriched herself are the necessities of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe . . .

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young; nor savages make war upon their families; wherefore the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase parent or mother country hath been jesuitically adopted by the king and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from every Part of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home pursues their descendants still. . . .

.....

- How did Paine's essay lead Americans to think not merely about independence but also about republicanism?
- Read Charles Inglis's response later in this chapter, as well as Jefferson's Declaration of Independence (in the Documents section at the end of this book). Why did Paine disagree with loyalists such as Inglis about the wisdom of remaining within the British Empire?
- How did Paine make the very idea of a monarchy ridiculous?
- Of the three documents, which is the easiest to read and understand?

Source: Eric Foner, ed., *Thomas Paine: Collected Writings* (New York, 1995).



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

June 7, Adams's close ally in the struggle to announce independence, Virginia lawyer Richard Henry Lee, rose on the floor of the Congress and offered this straightforward motion: "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."

Lee's resolution was no more than a statement of reality, yet the Congress chose to postpone its final vote until July. The delay would give members time to win over the few



fainthearted delegates from the Middle Colonies. It also would allow the committee appointed to draft a formal declaration of independence time to complete its work.

Congress had chosen an all-star group to draft the declaration, including John Adams, Connecticut's Roger Sherman, Benjamin Franklin, and New York landowner Robert Livingston. But these men delegated the task of writing the document to the fifth and youngest member of the committee, Thomas Jefferson. They chose well. The 33-year-old Virginian was not a social radical like Samuel Adams and Tom Paine. He was not an experienced politician like John Adams or Franklin. But Jefferson could draw on a deep and broad knowledge of political theory and philosophy. He had read the works of Enlightenment philosophers, classical theorists, and seventeenth-century English revolutionaries. And though shy, Thomas Jefferson was a master of written prose. Jefferson began the **Declaration of Independence** with a defense of revolution based on "self-evident" truths about humanity's "unalienable rights" of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Jefferson argued that these natural rights came from the "Creator" rather than developing out of human law, government, or tradition. They were broader and more sacred than the specific "rights of Englishmen." With this philosophical groundwork in place, Jefferson moved on to list the grievances demanding that America end its relationship with Britain. He focused on the king's abuse of power rather than on the oppressive legislation passed by Parliament. All government rested on the consent of the governed, Jefferson asserted, and the people had the right to overthrow any government that tyrannized rather than protected them, that threatened rather than respected their unalienable rights. (The Declaration is in the Documents section at the end of this book.)

**Declaration of Independence** A formal statement, adopted by the Second Continental Congress in 1776, that listed justifications for rebellion and declared the American mainland colonies to be independent of Britain.

### Declaring Loyalties

Delegates to the Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence on July 2, 1776, and made their approval public on July 4. As John Adams was fond of saying, "The die had been cast," and Americans of every region, religion, social class, and race had to choose between loyalty to king or to a new nation. In the face of such a critical choice, many wavered. Throughout the war that followed, a surprising number of colonists clung to neutrality, hoping that the breach could be resolved without their having to participate or choose sides.

Not all colonists who chose loyalism revered the Crown or the principles on which the British political system was based. For many, the deciding issues were economic. Holders of royal offices and merchants who depended on trade with British manufacturers found loyalty the compelling option. The loyalist ranks were also filled with colonists from the "multitude." Many small farmers and tenant farmers gave their support to the Crown when their political and economic foes—the great planters of the South or the New York manor lords—became patriots. The choice of which side to back often hinged, therefore, on local struggles and economic conflicts rather than on imperial issues.

For African Americans, the rallying call of liberty was familiar long before the Revolution began. Decades of slave resistance and rebellion demonstrated that black colonists did not need the impassioned language of a Patrick Henry or a Samuel Adams to remind them of the value of freedom. Instead, many slaves viewed the Revolution as they viewed epidemics and imperial warfare: as a potential opportunity to gain their own liberty. In the same way, free blacks saw the Revolution as a possible opportunity to win civil rights they had been denied before 1776.

Some patriots worried that slaves would seek their freedom by supporting the British in the war. In 1775 Lord Dunmore, the deposed royal governor of Virginia, expressed his intention to "arm all my own Negroes and receive all others that will come to me

# Investigating America

## Charles Inglis's The True Interest of America, 1776

Charles Inglis, Anglican minister and rector of New York City's Trinity Church, was one of the few loyalists who dared take issue with Paine's *Common Sense*. His response came in a 1776 pamphlet called *The True Interest of America Impartially Stated*. In the portion of his pamphlet reprinted here, Inglis expressed horror at the prospect of breaking a sacred oath of allegiance to the Church of England and the Crown. Most loyalists who held appointed office and most Anglican ministers shared his feelings on this issue. His vision of the chaos, devastation, and humiliation the rebellious colonists would suffer was echoed in the private letters of loyalists everywhere.

.....

**T**he blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries— it is time to be reconciled, it is time to lay aside those animosities which have pushed on Britons to shed the blood of Britons; it is high time that those who are connected by the endearing ties of religion, kindred and country, should resume their former friendship, and be united in the bond of mutual affection, as their interests are inseparably united . . . By a Reconciliation with Great-Britain, Peace—that fairest offspring and gift of Heaven—will be restored . . . What uneasiness and anxiety, what evils, has this short interruption of peace with the parent-state, brought on the whole British empire!

Suppose we were to revolt from Great-Britain, declare ourselves Independent, and set up a Republic of our own—what would be the consequence? I stand aghast at the prospect—my blood runs chill when I think of the calamities,

the complicated evils that must ensue . . . All our property throughout the continent would be unhinged; the greatest confusion, and most violent convulsions would take place . . . What a horrid situation would thousands be reduced to who have taken the oath of allegiance to the King; yet contrary to their oath, as well as inclination, must be compelled to renounce that allegiance, or abandon all their property in America! How many thousands more would be reduced to a similar situation; who, although they took not that oath, yet would think it inconsistent with their duty and a good conscience to renounce their Sovereign . . .

The importance of these colonies to Britain need not be enlarged on, it is a thing so universally known. The greater their importance is to her, so much the more obstinate will her struggle be not to lose them . . . Great-Britain therefore must, for her own preservation, risk everything, and exert her whole strength, to prevent such an event from taking place. This being the case—Devastation and ruin must mark the progress of this war along the sea coast of America. Hitherto, Britain has not exerted her power . . . But as soon as we declare for independency . . . ruthless war, with all its aggravated horrors, will ravage our once happy land. . . . Torrents of blood will be spilt, and thousands reduced to beggary and wretchedness . . .

.....

- If you were writing a patriot response to Inglis's dire scenario, how would you refute his predictions of American defeat? What American advantages would you cite? What British disadvantages?



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**insurrection** An uprising against a legitimate authority or government.

whom I shall declare free.” Rumors of this plan horrified neighboring Maryland planters, who demanded that their governor issue arms and ammunition to protect against slave **insurrection**. Throughout the South, white communities braced themselves for a black struggle for freedom that would emerge in the midst of the colonial struggle for independence.

Dunmore's offer to free “all indentured Servants, negroes or others . . . able and willing to bear Arms who escaped their masters” was aimed at disrupting the slave-based plantation economy of his American enemies, not at securing African American rights. Yet slaves responded, crossing into British lines in great enough numbers to create an “Ethiopian Regiment” of soldiers. These black loyalists wore a banner across their



Peter Salem (1750–1816) was an African American soldier who fought in the battle of Concord on April 19, 1775, and later in the Battle of Bunker Hill. After the war, he returned to his home state of Massachusetts where he died in a poor house at the age of 66. Schomburg Center/Art Resource, NY.

uniforms that read “Liberty to Slaves.” Only six hundred to two thousand slaves managed to escape their masters in 1775–1776, but in the southern campaigns of the long war that followed, thousands of black men, women, and children made their way to the British lines. Once in uniform, black soldiers were usually assigned to work in road construction and other manual labor tasks rather than participate in combat. Perhaps as many as fifty thousand slaves gained their freedom during the war, as a result of either British policy or the disruptions that made escape possible.

Indians’ responses to news of the war were far from uniform. At first, many considered the Revolution a family quarrel that should be avoided. But as the British continued to press for Indian participation in the war, many Indian tribes and confederations eventually decided that the Crown would better serve their interests and respect their rights than would the colonists. First, the British were much more likely than the colonists to be able to provide a steady supply of the manufactured goods and weapons the Indians relied on in the eighteenth century. Second, colonial territorial ambitions threatened the Indians along the southern and northwestern frontiers. Third, an alliance with the British offered some possibility of recouping land and trading benefits lost in the past. No uniformity emerged, however. Among the Iroquois, for example, conflicting choices of loyalties led pro-British Senecas to burn the crops and houses of Oneidas who had joined forces with the patriots. Among the Potowatomis, similar divisions occurred. Intertribal rivalries and Indians’ concerns about the safety of their own villages often determined alignments. In the southern backcountry, fierce fighting between Indians and revolutionaries seemed a continuation of the century’s many border wars. But even there, alignments could shift. Although the Cherokees began the war as British allies, a split developed, producing an internal civil war similar to the one among the Iroquois tribes.

Fewer than half of the colonists threw in their lot with the revolutionaries. As Americans—English, European, Indian, and African American—armed themselves or fled from the violence and bloodshed they saw coming, they realized that the conflict wore two faces: this was a war for independence, but it was also a civil war. In the South, it pitted slave against master, Cherokee against Cherokee, and frontier farmer against tidewater planter. In New England, it set neighbor against neighbor, forcing scores of loyalist families to flee. In some instances, children were set against parents, and wives refused to support the cause their husbands had chosen. Whatever the outcome of the struggle ahead, Americans knew that it would come at great cost.

# Summary

The British victory in the Great War for Empire produced many new problems. The British had to govern the French population in Canada and maintain security against Indians on a greatly expanded colonial frontier. They had to pay an enormous war debt but continue to finance strong and well-equipped armed forces to keep the empire they had won. To deal with these new circumstances, the English government chose to impose revenue-raising measures on the colonies.

The Sugar Act of 1764 tightened customs collections, the Stamp Act of 1765 placed a direct tax on legal documents, and the Townshend Acts of 1767 set import taxes on English products such as paint and tea. Colonists protested this sharp shift in policy for they saw Parliament's revenue-raising actions as an abuse of power. Political debate in the colonies began to focus on endangered rights and on the possibility that the British government meant to curtail American liberties.

Crowds directed by the Sons of Liberty attacked royal officials, and in Boston five civilians died in a clash with British troops known as the Boston Massacre. Colony-wide boycotts of British goods were the most effective form of protest. They led to the repeal of all three taxes.

Political activists prepared for a quick and united response to any new crises by creating organizations such as the committees of correspondence. In 1773 the British passed the Tea Act. They expected little American

opposition, but they were wrong. In Boston a group of activists dumped thousands of pounds' worth of tea into the harbor.

The "Boston Tea Party" enraged British officials. As a punishment, the English closed the port of Boston to all trade. This and other Intolerable Acts infuriated colonists, who took united action in support of Massachusetts. A new colonial forum, the First Continental Congress, met in 1774 to debate the colonies' relationship to England and to issue a united protest. The king rejected any attempts at compromise, declaring that "blows must decide."

After British troops and militiamen fought at Lexington and Concord, the Second Continental Congress prepared for war. Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense* pushed many reluctant colonists into the revolutionary camp. Not even a reasoned rebuttal of this call to revolution, such as the one written by Inglis, could halt the progress toward independence after this. In July 1776, Congress issued the Declaration of Independence. In it, Jefferson defended the colonists' right to resist a tyrannical king. Yet Americans faced the difficult task of choosing sides: loyalty to the Crown or revolution. African Americans and Indians had to decide whether to offer support to one side or the other or try to remain neutral in the midst of revolution. The outcome was both a war for colonial independence and a civil war that divided families and communities across America.

## Key Terms

George III, *p. 100*  
 delusions, *p. 100*  
 George Grenville, *p. 100*  
 Covenant Chain, *p. 102*  
 Pontiac, *p. 102*  
 Proclamation Line of 1763, *p. 102*  
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# Re-creating America: Independence and a New Nation 1775–1783

## CHAPTER 6

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Deborah Sampson

Deborah Sampson was born into a poor Massachusetts family in 1760 and was hired out as a servant when she was a young girl. By the time the Revolutionary War began, her future held few choices. With no dowry, she was unlikely to marry; with no special training, she was likely to remain a servant. But Sampson discovered another option—and she took it. Disguising herself as a man, she enlisted as a soldier in the Continental Army. Just as the colonies changed themselves into an independent nation, Deborah Sampson changed herself into Private Robert Shurtleff.

As a woman, Sampson might have played a role in the war by serving as a spy. Or she might have joined thousands of other women in the army camps, performing valuable services such as cooking, laundering, and nursing. She might have remained safely at home, knitting socks or making uniforms for the poorly clad soldiers serving under General Washington. But none of these alternatives would have given her what military service offered: the chance to see new places, an enlistment bonus, a pension if she survived, and a promise of land when the war ended. Thousands of poor young men risked the dangers of the battlefield for these rewards. Why not Deborah Sampson?

Perhaps patriotism also prompted her to abandon her petticoats for a uniform. But whatever her motives, Deborah Sampson proved herself a clever soldier, for she managed to hide her identity for several years, even when she was wounded in the leg by a musket ball. The truth of her gender was finally discovered when she was hospitalized for a fever.

On October 25, 1783, Deborah Sampson was granted an honorable discharge. The next spring, she married Benjamin Gannett and began a family. As a wife and mother, she was expected to give up any role in the public sphere. But once again she proved herself a rebel: in 1802 she traveled throughout New England giving

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### ***The First Two Years of War***

The Battle for Boston  
Congress Creates an Army  
The British Strategy in 1776  
Escape from New York  
Winter Quarters and Winter Victories  
Burgoyne's New York Campaign  
Winter Quarters in 1777

#### ***Diplomacy Abroad and Profiteering at Home***

The Long Road to Formal Recognition  
War and the American Public

#### ***From Stalemate to Victory***

The War Stalls in the North  
The Second Carolinas Campaign  
Treason and Triumph  
Winning Diplomatic Independence

#### ***Republican Expectations in a New Nation***

The Protection of Fundamental Rights  
Legal Reforms  
Women in the New Republic  
**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Esther DeBerdts Reed on the Usefulness of Women, 1780  
The War's Impact on Slaves and Slavery

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** Tracking Changes in Gender Roles

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** George Washington on Black Loyalists, 1783

#### ***Summary***



#### **DEBORAH SAMPSON**

*Whether attracted by adventure or the bounty soldiers received upon enlistment, Sampson decided to disguise herself as a man and enlist in the Continental Army in 1781. She served for over two years before officers discovered she was a woman and discharged her. This portrait, drawn by Joseph Stone Framingham, depicts Sampson in female dress but surrounds her with the military emblems befitting a veteran of the Revolutionary War.*

Joseph Stone, Portrait of Deborah Sampson (Gannett). Rhode Island. 1797. Oil on paper. Courtesy, the Rhode Island Historical Society [RH1 X5 32].

public lectures on her military career. The tales she told the crowds who flocked to see her were undoubtedly full of exaggerated claims of battlefield heroics. Yet, dressed in her uniform once again, performing a precision drill on stage, Sampson demonstrated the unexpected impact of the Revolution on an ordinary American's life.

**T**he war that changed Deborah Sampson's life, and the lives of most colonists, began in April 1775 as a skirmish at Concord's North Bridge. Great Britain expected an easy victory over the colonial rebels, and, on paper the odds against an American victory were staggering. To crush the colonial rebellion, Great Britain could commit vast human and material resources. The well-trained and harshly disciplined British ground troops were assisted and supplied by the most powerful navy in the world, and they carried the flag of Europe's richest imperial power. Many Indian tribes, including most of the Iroquois, allied with the British, and the Crown could expect thousands of white and black loyalists to fight beside them as well.

The American resources were far less impressive. The Continental Congress had a nearly empty treasury, and the country had none of the foundries needed to produce arms, ammunition, or other military supplies. The army administration was inefficient, the population was wary of professional soldiers, and the new state governments were unwilling to raise tax monies to contribute to Congress's war chest. Through most of the war, American officers and enlisted men could expect to be underpaid or not paid at all. They were likely to go into battle poorly equipped, often half-starved, and frequently dressed in rags. Unlike the British redcoats, these Americans had little military skill or formal military training. Most were as new to military life as Deborah Sampson.

Britain's advantage was not absolute, however. The British had to transport arms, provisions, and men across thousands of miles of ocean. They risked delays, disasters, and destruction of supplies on the open seas. The Americans, on the other hand, were fighting on familiar terrain, and geography gave them an additional advantage: their vast, rural society could not be easily conquered even if major colonial cities were taken. Longstanding European rivalries gave the Americans valuable allies. Holland, France, and Spain all stood to gain from England's distress, and they willingly lent money and provided much-needed supplies to the rebellion. In 1778, when France and Spain decided to formally recognize American independence, the war suddenly expanded into a global struggle. The support of the French navy transformed Washington's military strategy and led eventually to the defeat of the British army at Yorktown.

## The First Two Years of War

- ★ **What were the British and American strategies in the early years of the war?**
- ★ **What decisions and constraints kept the British from achieving the quick victory many expected?**

**Thomas Gage** British general who was military governor of Massachusetts and commander of the army occupying Boston in 1775.

In 1775 **Thomas Gage**, the British general serving as military governor of Massachusetts and commander of the British army of occupation there, wished he were anywhere but Boston. The town was unsophisticated by British standards, many of its inhabitants were unfriendly, and its taverns and lodging houses bulged at the seams with complaining loyalist refugees from the countryside. Gage's army was restless, and his officers were bored.

# Chronology

<b>1775</b>	Battle for Boston George Washington assumes command of Continental Army	<b>1780</b>	Fall of Charleston Treason of Benedict Arnold Pennsylvania enacts manumission statute
<b>1776</b>	Declaration of Independence British campaigns in South and mid-Atlantic region George Mason's Declaration of Rights	<b>1781</b>	Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown Loyalists evacuate United States Articles of Confederation government established
<b>1777</b>	Burgoyne's New York campaign Battle of Saratoga Winter at Valley Forge	<b>1782</b>	British Parliament votes to end war
<b>1778</b>	American-French alliance British begin second southern campaign	<b>1783</b>	Treaty of Paris signed

The American encampments outside the city were growing daily, filling with local farmers and artisans after the bloodshed of Lexington and Concord. These thousands of colonial **militiamen** gathering on the hills surrounding Boston were clearly the military enemy. Yet, in 1775 they were still citizens of the British Empire, not foreign invaders or foes. Gage, like his American opponents, was caught up in the dilemmas of an undeclared war.

**militiamen** Soldiers who were not members of a regular army but ordinary citizens called out in case of an emergency.

## The Battle for Boston

With proper artillery, well placed on the hills surrounding the city, the Americans could have done serious damage to Gage's army of occupation. The problem was that the rebels had no cannon. A New Haven druggist named **Benedict Arnold** joined forces with Vermont farmer Ethan Allen to solve the problem. In May 1775, their troops captured Fort Ticonderoga in New York and began the difficult task of transporting the fort's cannon across hundreds of miles of forests to Boston. By the time the artillery reached the city, however, a bloody battle between Gage and the American militia had already taken place.

In early June, Gage issued a proclamation declaring all armed colonists traitors, but he offered **amnesty** to any rebel who surrendered to British authorities. When the militiamen ignored the general's offer, Gage decided a show of force was necessary. On June 17, 1775, under cover of cannon fire from a British warship in Boston harbor, Gage's fellow officer, **William Howe**, led a force of twenty-four hundred soldiers against rebel-held Breed's Hill. Despite the oppressive heat and humidity of the day, General Howe ordered his men to advance in full dress uniform, weighed down with wool jackets and heavy knapsacks. Howe also insisted on making a "proper" frontal attack on the Americans. From the top of the hill, Captain William Prescott's militiamen immediately opened fire on the unprotected redcoats. The result was a near massacre. The tables turned, however, when the Americans ran out of ammunition. Most of Prescott's men fled in confusion, and the British soldiers bayoneted the few who remained to defend their position.

Even battle-worn veterans were shocked at the carnage of the day. The British suffered more casualties that June afternoon than they would in any other battle of the war.

**Benedict Arnold** Pharmacist-turned-military-leader whose bravery made him an American hero and a favorite of Washington until he committed treason in 1780.

**amnesty** A general pardon granted by a government, especially for political offenses.

**William Howe** British general in command at the Battle of Bunker Hill; three years later he became commander in chief of British forces in America.

**Battle of Bunker Hill** British assault on American troops on Breed's Hill near Boston in June 1775; the British won the battle but suffered heavy losses.

**George Washington** Commander in chief of the Continental Army; he led Americans to victory in the Revolution and later became the first president of the United States.

**Richard Howe** British admiral who commanded British naval forces in America; he was General William Howe's brother.

**Hessian troops** German soldiers from the state of Hesse who were hired by Britain to fight in the American Revolution.

The Americans, who retreated to the safety of Cambridge, learned a costly lesson on the importance of an effective supply line of arms and ammunition to their fighting men. Little was gained by either side. That the battle was misnamed the **Battle of Bunker Hill** captured perfectly the confusion and the absurdity of the encounter.

### Congress Creates an Army

While militiamen and redcoats turned the Boston area into a war zone, the Continental Congress took its first steps toward recruiting and supplying an army. The “regular” army that took shape was not really a national force. It was a collection of small state armies whose recruits preserved their local or regional identities. While this army was expected to follow the war wherever it led, the Continental Congress still relied on each state's militia to join in any battles that took place within its borders.

Congress chose French and Indian War veteran **George Washington** to command the Continental forces. Washington wrote gloomily of the enormity of the task before him. Nothing he saw when he reached Massachusetts on July 3, 1775, made him more optimistic. A carnival atmosphere seemed to prevail inside the militiamen's camps. Farm boys fired their muskets at random, often using their weapons to start fires or to shoot at geese flying overhead. In the confusion, they sometimes accidentally wounded or killed themselves. “Seldom a day passes but some persons are shot by their friends,” Washington noted in amazement.

The British, meanwhile, laid plans for the evacuation of Boston, spurred in part by the knowledge that Arnold's wagon train of cannon was nearing Massachusetts. In March 1776 a fleet arrived to carry Gage, his officers, the British army, and almost a thousand loyalist refugees north to the safety of Halifax, Nova Scotia. By this time, command of His Majesty's war was in the hands of the Howe brothers—General William Howe, commander of the Breed's Hill attack, and **Richard Howe**, an admiral in the royal navy. With the help of military strategists and the vast resources of the Crown, the Howes were expected to bring the rebellion to a speedy end and restore order to the colonies.

### The British Strategy in 1776

General Howe was less concerned with suppressing the radicalism of New England than the king had been. He thought the most effective strategy would be to locate areas with high concentrations of loyalists and mobilize them to secure the allegiance of their undecided and even rebellious neighbors. Howe and his advisers targeted two reputed centers of loyalist strength. The first—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania—had a legacy of social and economic conflicts that had caused many of the region's elite families to fear that independence threatened their prosperity. But loyalism was not confined to the conservative and wealthy. Its second stronghold was among the poor settlers of the Carolina backcountry. There, decades of bitter struggle between the coastal planters and the backcountry farmers had led to intense loyalist sentiment among many of the embattled westerners.

General Howe's strategy had its flaws, however. First, although many people in these two regions were loyal, their numbers were never as great as the British assumed. Second, everywhere they went, British and **Hessian troops** left behind a trail of destruction and memories of abuse that alienated many Americans who might have considered remaining loyal. Howe was not likely to win over families who saw their “cattle killed and lying about the fields and pastures, with “furniture hacked and broken into pieces” and “tools destroyed.”

Nevertheless, in 1776 Howe launched his first major military assaults in the South and the mid-Atlantic region. The campaign in the South, directed by General Henry



Clinton, went badly. In North Carolina, loyalists did turn out to fight for the Crown, but the British failed to provide them the military support they needed. Poorly armed and badly outnumbered, Carolina loyalists were decisively defeated by the rebel militia on February 27 in the Battle of Moore's Creek. Rather than rush to their defense, the British abandoned their loyalist allies in favor of taking revenge on South Carolina. Clinton and an impressive fleet of fifty ships and three thousand men sailed into Charleston harbor. But the British had unexpected bad luck. As the troops started to wade ashore, they found themselves stranded on small islands surrounded by a sudden rush of tidal waters. The Americans, on the other hand, had unexpected good luck. Working frantically to defend the harbor, they constructed a flimsy fort out of local palmetto wood. To the surprise of both sides, the cannon balls fired by British ships sank harmlessly into the absorbent, pulpy palmetto stockade. The fort—and the city of Charleston—remained standing.

Embarrassed and frustrated, the British command abruptly ended its southern campaign. General Clinton, a gloomy man under the best of circumstances, sailed north, eager to escape the scene of his humiliation. The South Carolina loyalists, however, could not escape British failures. They had been denounced, mobbed, imprisoned, and sometimes tortured since 1775. Their situation grew even worse after the British withdrew.

### Escape from New York

While Clinton was failing in the Carolinas, the Howe brothers were preparing a massive invasion of the mid-Atlantic region. In July 1776, Admiral Howe and General Howe sailed into New York harbor with the largest expeditionary force of the eighteenth century. With thirty thousand men, one-third of them Hessian mercenaries, this British army was larger than the peacetime population of New York City.

The Howes were not eager to demolish New York, however. Unlike most British officers, the brothers were genuinely fond of Americans, and they preferred to be agents of compromise and negotiation rather than of destruction. They hoped that a spectacular show of force and a thorough humiliation of rebel commander George Washington would be enough to bring the Americans to their senses and end the rebellion. When that failed to happen, the Howes finally began to advance on the city in the early morning of August 22, 1776. The British landed unopposed and moved toward the Brooklyn neck of Long Island. Just as Washington had feared, his raw and inexperienced troops quickly broke when fighting began five days later. Cut off from one another, confused by the attack, almost all the American troops surrendered or ran. A single Maryland regiment made a heroic stand against the landing forces but was destroyed by the oncoming British. Washington, at the scene himself, might have been captured had the Howes pressed their advantage. But they withdrew, content that they had made the American commander look foolish.

Washington took advantage of the Howes' delay to bring his troops to the safety of Manhattan Island. In a skirmish at Harlem Heights, the American commander was relieved to see his men stand their ground and win their first combat victory. He was even more relieved by the strange failure of the British to press their advantage. The British had only to follow his army into Westchester County and deliver a crushing blow, but they did not. When the redcoats finally engaged the Continentals again at White Plains, the Americans managed to retreat safely. Soon afterward, Washington took his army across the Hudson River to New Jersey and marched them farther west, across the Delaware River into Pennsylvania.

### Winter Quarters and Winter Victories

Following European customs, General Howe established winter quarters for his troops before the cold set in. Redcoats and Hessians made their camps in the New York area that December, expecting Washington to make camp somewhere as well. But Washington, safe for the moment in Pennsylvania, was too restless to settle in just yet. Enlistment terms in his army would soon be up, and without some encouraging military success, he feared few of his soldiers would reenlist. Washington looked eagerly for a good target to attack—and found one. Across the Delaware, on the Jersey side, two or three thousand Hessian troops held a garrison near the town of Trenton.

On Christmas night, amid a howling storm, Washington led twenty-four hundred of his men back across the river. Marching through a raging blizzard, the Americans arrived to find the Hessians asleep. The surprised enemy surrendered immediately. Without losing a single man in the **Battle of Trenton**, Washington had captured nine hundred prisoners and many badly needed military supplies. Taking full advantage of the moment, Washington made a rousing appeal to his men to reenlist. About half of the soldiers agreed to remain.

The Trenton victory raised the morale of the Continental Army as it settled at last into its winter quarters near Morristown, New Jersey. They stirred popular support also. Of course, Howe's army was still poised to march on Philadelphia when warm weather revived the war again. And Congress still had few resources to spare for Washington and his men. When Washington pleaded for supplies, Congress urged him to commandeer what he needed from civilians nearby. The general wisely refused. English high-handedness and cruelty had turned many people of the area into staunch supporters of the Revolution, and Washington had no intention of alienating them by seizing their livestock, food, or weapons.

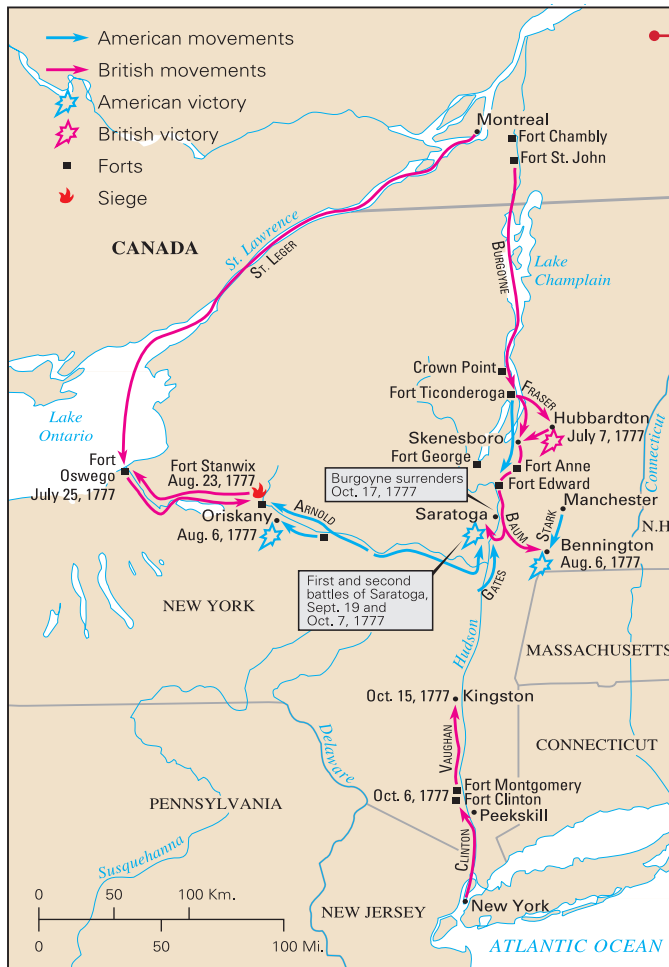
### Burgoyne's New York Campaign

In July 1777, General William Howe sailed with fifteen thousand men up the Chesapeake Bay toward Philadelphia. The Continental Congress had already fled the city, knowing that Washington could not prevent the enemy occupation. The Americans made two efforts to block Howe, first at Brandywine Creek and then at Germantown, but the British had little difficulty capturing Philadelphia. The problems they did face in 1777 came not from Washington but from the poor judgment of one of their own, a flamboyant young general named **John Burgoyne**.

Burgoyne had won approval for an elaborate plan to sever New England from the rest of the American colonies. He would move his army south from Montreal, while a second army of redcoats and Iroquois, commanded by Colonel Barry St. Leger, would veer east across the Mohawk Valley from Fort Oswego. At the same time, William Howe would send a third force north from New York City. The three armies would rendezvous at Albany, effectively isolating New England and, it was assumed, giving the British a perfect opportunity to crush the rebellion. The plan was daring and appeared to have every chance of success. In reality, however, it had serious flaws. First, neither Burgoyne nor the British officials in England had any knowledge of the American terrain that had to be covered. Second, they badly misjudged the Indian support St. Leger would receive. Third, General Howe, no longer in New York City, knew absolutely nothing of his own critical role in the plan. Blissfully unaware of these problems, Burgoyne led his army from Montreal in high spirits in June 1777 (see Map 6.1). The troops floated down Lake Champlain in canoes and flatbottom boats and easily retook Fort Ticonderoga. From Ticonderoga, the invading army continued to march toward Albany. From this point on, however, things began to go badly for Burgoyne.

**Battle of Trenton** Battle on December 26, 1776, when Washington led his troops by night across the Delaware River and captured a Hessian garrison wintering in New Jersey.

**John Burgoyne** British general forced to surrender his entire army at Saratoga, New York, in October 1777.

**MAP 6.1** The Burgoyne Campaign, 1777

The defeat of General John Burgoyne and his army at Saratoga was a major turning point in the war. It led to the recognition of American independence by France and later by Spain and to a military alliance with both of these European powers. This map shows American and British troop movement and the locations and dates of the Saratoga battles leading to the British surrender.

In true eighteenth-century British style, “Gentleman Johnny” Burgoyne chose to travel well rather than lightly. The thirty wagons bumping along behind the general contained over fifty pieces of artillery. They also contained Burgoyne’s mistress, her personal wardrobe, and a generous supply of champagne. When the caravan encountered New York’s swamps and gullies, movement slowed to a snail’s pace. The Americans took full advantage of Burgoyne’s folly. Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys harassed the British as they entered Allen’s home region of Vermont. A bloody, head-on battle near Bennington further slowed Burgoyne’s progress. When the general’s army finally reached Albany in mid-September, neither St. Leger nor Howe was in sight.

The full support St. Leger had counted on from the Iroquois had not materialized, and he met fierce resistance as he made his way to the rendezvous point. When news reached him that Benedict Arnold and an army of a thousand Americans were approaching, St. Leger simply turned around and took his exhausted men to safety at Fort Niagara. Howe, of course, had no idea that he was expected in Albany. This left John Burgoyne stranded in the heart of New York. By mid-September 1777, his supplies dwindling, he realized his only option was to break northward through the American lines and take refuge in Canada. On September 19, Burgoyne attacked, hoping to clear a path of retreat for his army. The elderly American general, **Horatio Gates**, was neither bold nor particularly

**Horatio Gates** Elderly Virginia general who led the American troops to victory in the Battle of Saratoga.

clever, but it took little daring to defeat Burgoyne's weary, dispirited British soldiers. When Burgoyne tried once again to break through on October 7, Gates and his men held their ground. On October 17, 1777, General John Burgoyne surrendered.

News that a major British army had been defeated spread quickly on both sides of the Atlantic. It was a powerful boost to American confidence and an equally powerful blow to British self-esteem. The report also reversed the fortunes of American diplomatic efforts. Until Saratoga, American appeals to the governments of Spain, France, and Holland for supplies, loans, and military support had met with only moderate success. Now, hopes ran high that France would recognize independence and join the war effort.

### Winter Quarters in 1777

John Adams, who never wore a uniform, had once toasted a “short and Violent war.” After Burgoyne's defeat, many Americans believed that Adams's wish was coming true.

General Washington, however, did not share their optimism.

French help might be coming, he pointed out, but who knew when? In the meantime, he reminded Congress the Continental Army still needed funds and supplies. Congress ignored all his urgent requests. The result was the long and dreadful winter at Valley Forge. **Valley Forge** was 20 miles from Philadelphia, where General Howe and his army were comfortably housed for the winter. Throughout December 1777, Washington's men labored to build the huts and cabins they needed. Whereas two officers were assigned to share quarters, a dozen enlisted men were expected to crowd into a 14-by-16-foot hut. Rations were a problem from the start. Technically, each man was entitled to raw or cured meat, yet most soldiers at Valley Forge lived entirely on a diet of fire cakes, made of flour and water baked in the coals or over the fire on a stick. Blankets were scarce, coats were rare, and firewood was precious.

The enlisted men who survived the winter at Valley Forge were strangers to luxury even in peacetime. Like Deborah Sampson, most were from the humblest social classes: farm laborers, servants, apprentices, even former slaves. They were exactly the sort of person most Americans believed ought to fight the war. But if poverty had driven them into the army, a commitment to see the war through kept them there. The contrast between their own patriotism and the apparent indifference of the civilian population made many of these soldiers bitter. Private Joseph Plumb Martin expressed the feelings of most when he said “a kind and holy Providence” had done more to help the army while it was at Valley Forge “than did the country in whose service we were wearing away our lives by piecemeal.”

What these soldiers desperately needed, in addition to new clothes, good food, and hot baths, was professional military training. And that is the one thing they did get, beginning in the spring of 1778, when an unlikely Prussian volunteer arrived at Valley Forge. **Baron Friedrich von Steuben** was almost 50 years old, dignified, elegantly dressed, with a dazzling gold and diamond medal always displayed on his chest. Like most foreign volunteers, many of whom plagued Washington more than they helped him, the baron claimed to be an aristocrat, to have vast military experience, and to have held high rank in a European army. In truth, he had purchased his title only a short time before fleeing his homeland in bankruptcy and he had only been a captain in the Prussian army. A penniless refugee, von Steuben hoped to receive a military pension for his service in the American army. He had not, however, exaggerated his talent as a military drillmaster. All spring, the baron could be seen drilling Washington's troops, alternately shouting in rage and applauding with delight. Washington had little patience with most of the foreign volunteers who joined the American cause, but he considered von Steuben a most unexpected and invaluable surprise.

**Valley Forge** Winter encampment of Washington's army in Pennsylvania in 1777–1778; because the soldiers suffered greatly from cold and hunger, the term *Valley Forge* has become synonymous with “dire conditions.”

**Baron Friedrich von Steuben** Prussian military officer who served as Washington's drillmaster at Valley Forge.



## Diplomacy Abroad and Profiteering at Home

- ★ **Why did the French assist the Americans secretly in the early years of the war?**
- ★ **Why did France enter the war after Saratoga?**
- ★ **How did the French alliance affect the war effort and wartime spending?**

Like most wars, the Revolutionary War was not confined to the battlefields. Diplomacy was essential, and popular morale and support had to be sustained for this war, and for any war, to be won. American diplomats hoped to secure supplies, safe harbors for American ships, and if at all possible, formal recognition of independence and the open military assistance that would allow. British diplomats, on the other hand, worked to prevent any formal alliances between European powers and the American rebels. Both sides issued propaganda to ensure continued popular support for the war. General Burgoyne's defeat, and the widening of the war into an international struggle, affected popular morale in both America and Britain.

### The Long Road to Formal Recognition

In 1776 England had many enemies and rivals in Europe who were only too happy to see George III expend his resources and military personnel in an effort to quell a colonial rebellion. Although these nations expected the American Revolution to fail, they were more than eager to keep the conflict going as long as possible. Before Saratoga, they preferred to keep their support for the Revolution unofficial. Thus, with the help of King Louis XVI's chief minister, the comte de Vergennes, an American entrepreneur named Arthur Lee set up a private commercial firm, supposedly for trading with France. In reality, the firm siphoned weapons and funds from France to the revolutionaries.

The Americans hoped for more, however. In December 1776, Congress sent the printer-politician-scientist **Benjamin Franklin** to Paris in hopes of winning formal recognition of American independence. The charming and witty Franklin was the toast of Paris, adored by aristocrats and common people alike, but even he could not persuade the king to support the Revolution openly. Burgoyne's surrender changed everything. After Saratoga, the British government began scrambling to end a war that had turned embarrassing, and the French government began scrambling to reassess its diplomatic position. Vergennes suspected that the English would quickly send a peace commission to America after Burgoyne's defeat. If the American Congress agreed to a compromise ending the rebellion, France could gain nothing more. But if the French kept the war alive by giving Americans reason to hope for total victory, perhaps they could recoup some of the territory and prestige lost to England in the Seven Years' War. This meant, of course, recognizing the United States and entering a war with Britain. Vergennes knew a choice had to be made—but he was not yet certain what to do.

Meanwhile, the English government was preparing a new peace offer for Congress. At the heart of the British offer were two promises that George III considered to be great concessions. First, Parliament would renounce all intentions of ever taxing the colonies again. Second, the Intolerable Acts, the Tea Act, and any other objectionable legislation passed since 1763 would be repealed. Many members of Parliament thought these overtures were long overdue. They had been vocal critics of their government's policies in the 1760s and 1770s and had refused to support the war. After Burgoyne's defeat, popular support for compromise also increased in England. The Americans, however, were unimpressed by the offers. For Congress, a return to colonial status was now unthinkable.

**Benjamin Franklin** American writer, inventor, scientist, and diplomat instrumental in bringing about a French alliance with the United States in 1778 and who later helped negotiate the treaty ending the war.

Benjamin Franklin knew that Congress would reject the king's offer. But he was too shrewd to relieve the comte de Vergennes's fear that a compromise was in the works. Franklin warned that France must act quickly and decisively or accept the consequences. His gamble worked, and in 1778 France and the United States signed a treaty. The pact linked French and American fates tightly together, for under its provisions neither country could make a separate peace with Great Britain. By 1779, Spain had also formally acknowledged the United States, and in 1780 the Netherlands did so too. George III had little choice but to declare war against these European nations.

The Revolution had grown into an international struggle that taxed British resources further and made it impossible for Britain to concentrate all its military might and naval power in America. With ships diverted to the Caribbean and to the European coast, Britain could no longer blockade American ports as effectively as before or transport troops to the American mainland as quickly. Above all, the entry of the French into the war opened new strategic possibilities for Washington and his army. If the Americans could count on the cooperation of the French fleet, a British army could be trapped on American soil, cut off by French ships from supplies, reinforcements, and any chance of escape.

### War and the American Public

News of the alliance with France helped release an orgy of spending and purchasing by American civilians. The conditions were ripe for such a spree in 1778. With the value of government-issued paper money dropping steadily, spending made more sense than saving. And with profits soaring from the sale of supplies to the army, many Americans had more money to spend than ever before. Also, not all of the credit that diplomats had negotiated with European allies went toward military supplies. Some of it was available for the purchase of manufactured goods. This combination of optimism, **cheap money**, and plentiful foreign goods led to a wartime spending bonanza.

Many of the goods that were imported into America in the next few years were actually British-made. American consumers apparently saw no contradiction between their strong patriotism and the purchase of enemy products. A **black market**—a network for the sale of illegally imported English goods—grew rapidly, and profits from it skyrocketed. Abandoning the commitment to “virtuous simplicity” that had led them to dress in homespun, Americans stampeded to purchase tea and other imported luxuries.

Popular optimism and the spending frenzy unleashed by the French treaty contrasted sharply with the financial realities facing Congress. Bluntly put, the government was broke. By 1778, both Congress and the states had exhausted their meager sources of hard currency. The government met the crisis by printing more paper money. The result was rampant inflation. The value of the “continental,” as the congressional paper money was called, dropped steadily with each passing day. The government's inability to pay soldiers became widely known—and enlistments plummeted as mutiny and desertion increased. Officers did not know whether to sympathize with their unpaid and involuntary soldiers or to enforce stricter discipline upon them. Some officers executed deserters or mutineers; some ordered the men whipped. And some pardoned their men, despite the severity of their crimes. Congress acknowledged the justice of the soldiers' complaints by giving them pay raises in the form of certificates that they could redeem—after the war.

**cheap money** Paper money that is readily available but has declined in value.

**black market** The illegal business of buying and selling goods that are banned or restricted.

## From Stalemate to Victory

- ★ **What did France hope to achieve by coming to the aid of the struggling American army?**
- ★ **What led to General Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown?**
- ★ **What were the most important results of the peace treaty negotiations?**

The French presence in the war did not immediately alter the strategies of British or American military leaders. English generals in the North displayed caution after Burgoyne's surrender, and Washington waited impatiently for signs that the French fleet would come to his aid. The result was a stalemate. The active war shifted to the South once again in late 1778 as the British mounted a second major campaign in the Carolinas.

### The War Stalls in the North

**Sir Henry Clinton**, now the commander of the British army in North America, knew that the French fleet could easily blockade the Delaware River and cut off supplies to occupied Philadelphia. So, by the time warm weather had set in, his army was on the march, heading east through New Jersey en route to New York. Clinton's slow-moving caravan, burdened by a long train of bulky supply wagons, made an irresistible target—and Washington decided to strike.

Unfortunately, Washington entrusted the unreliable **General Charles Lee** with the initial attack. Lee marched his men to Monmouth, New Jersey, and as the British approached, the Americans opened fire. Yet, as soon as the British army began to return fire, Lee ordered his men to retreat. When Washington arrived on the scene, the Americans were fleeing and the British troops were closing in.

Washington rallied the retreating Americans, calling on them to re-form their lines and stand their ground. Trained by von Steuben, the men responded well. They moved forward with precision and speed, driving the redcoats back. The **Battle of Monmouth** was not the decisive victory Washington had dreamed of, but it was a fine recovery from what first appeared to be certain defeat. As for Lee, Washington saw to it that he was discharged from the army.

Throughout the fall and winter of 1778, Washington waited in vain for French naval support for a major campaign. Early news coming from the western front did little to improve Washington's bleak mood. In Kentucky and western Virginia, deadly Indian attacks had decimated many American settlements. The driving force behind these attacks was a remarkable British official named Harry Hamilton, who had won the nickname "Hair Buyer" because of the bounties he paid for American scalps. In October, Hamilton led Indian troops from the Great Lakes tribes into the Illinois-Indiana region and captured the fort at Vincennes. The American counterattack was organized by a stocky young frontiersman, **George Rogers Clark**, whose own enthusiasm for scalping earned him the nickname "Long-Knife." To Washington's relief, Clark and his volunteer forces managed to drive the British from Vincennes.

Border conflict with Britain's Indian allies remained a major problem, and when loyalist troops joined these Indians, the danger increased. So did the atrocities. When patriot General John Sullivan's regular army was badly defeated by Mohawk chief **Thayendanegea**, known to the Americans as Joseph Brant, and local loyalists, Sullivan took revenge by burning forty Indian villages. It was an act of violence and cruelty that deeply shocked and shamed General Washington.

**Sir Henry Clinton** General who replaced William Howe as commander of the British forces in America in 1778 after the British surrender at Saratoga.

**General Charles Lee** Revolutionary general who tried to undermine Washington's authority on several occasions; he was eventually dismissed from the military.

**Battle of Monmouth** New Jersey battle in June 1778 in which Charles Lee wasted a decisive American advantage.

**George Rogers Clark** Virginian who led his troops to successes against the British and Indians in the Ohio Territory in 1778.

**Thayendanegea** Mohawk chief known to the Americans as Joseph Brant; his combined forces of loyalists and Indians defeated John Sullivan's expedition to upstate New York in 1779.

Mohawk chief Thayendanegea (Joseph Brant) believed that Iroquois lands would be lost if the Americans were victorious. He urged an Iroquois alliance with the British, fought for the British, and directed a series of deadly raids against settlements in New York. After the war his people were forced to relocate to Canada. American School/Private Collection/Peter Newark American Pictures/The Bridgeman Art Library.



Spring and summer of 1779 passed and still Washington waited for the French navy's cooperation. Fall brought the general the worst possible news: Admiral D'Estaing and his fleet had sailed for the West Indies under orders to protect valuable French possessions in the Caribbean and, if possible, to seize English possessions there. News of D'Estaing's departure spurred a new wave of discipline problems among Washington's idle troops. Mutinies and desertions increased. From his winter headquarters in Morristown Heights, New Jersey, Washington wrote to von Steuben: "The prospect, my dear Baron, is gloomy, and the storm thickens." The real storm, however, was raging not in New Jersey but in the Carolinas.

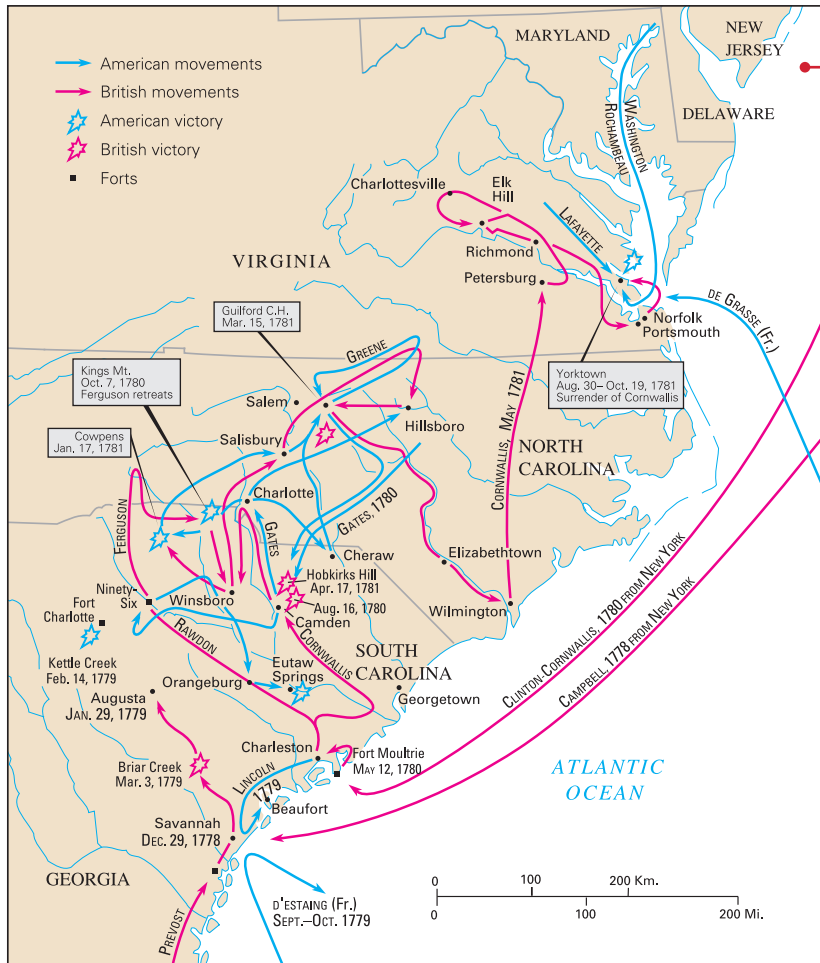
### The Second Carolinas Campaign

Since the fall of 1778, the British had been siphoning off New York-based troops for a new invasion of the South. The campaign began in earnest with the capture of Savannah, Georgia (see Map 6.2). Then, in the winter of 1779, General Henry Clinton sailed for Charleston, South Carolina, eager to avenge his embarrassing retreat in the 1776 campaign. Five thousand Continental soldiers hurried to join the South Carolina militia in defense of the city. From the Citadel, a fortification spanning the northern neck of the city's peninsula, these American forces bombarded the British with all they could find, firing projectiles made of glass, broken shovels, hatchets, and pickaxes. From aboard their ships, the British answered with a steady stream of mortar shells. On May 12, 1780, after months of deadly bombardment and high casualties on both sides, the Citadel fell. The American commander, General Benjamin Lincoln, surrendered his entire army to the British, and a satisfied General Clinton returned to New York.

Clinton left the southern campaign in the hands of **Charles Cornwallis**, an able general who set out with more than eight thousand men to conquer the rest of South Carolina. Cornwallis and his regular army were joined by loyalist troops who were as

**Charles Cornwallis** British general who was second in command to Henry Clinton; his surrender at Yorktown in 1781 brought the Revolution to a close.





### MAP 6.2 The Second Southern Campaign, 1778–1781

This map of the second attempt by Britain to crush the rebellion in the South shows the many battles waged in the Lower South before Cornwallis's encampment at Yorktown and his surrender there. This decisive southern campaign involved all the military resources of the combatants, including British, loyalist, French, and American ground forces and British and French naval fleets.

eager to take their revenge on their enemies as Clinton had been. Since the British had abandoned the South in 1776, small, roving bands of loyalist guerrillas had kept resistance to the Revolution alive. The guerrillas increased their attacks after the British victory at Charleston, and a bloody civil war of ambush, arson, and brutality on both sides resulted. By the summer of 1780, fortunes had reversed: the revolutionaries were now the resistance, and the loyalists were in control.

The revolutionary resistance produced legendary guerrilla leaders, including **Francis Marion**, known as the “Swamp Fox.” Marion organized recruits into raiding bands that steadily harassed Cornwallis’s army and effectively cut British lines of communication between Charleston and the interior. Although Marion did his best to trouble the British, Thomas Sumter’s guerrillas and other resistance forces focused their energies on the loyalists. When these guerrillas and loyalists met head-on in battle, they honored few of the rules of war. In October 1780, for example, in the **Battle of King’s Mountain**, revolutionaries surrounded loyalist troops and picked them off one by one. As this bitter civil war continued, marauding bands terrorized civilians and plundered their farms. The worst damage was often done by outlaws posing as soldiers.

The regular American army, under the command of the Saratoga hero, Gates, had little success against Cornwallis. In August 1780, Gates and his men suffered a crushing

**Francis Marion** South Carolina leader of guerrilla forces during the war; known as the “Swamp Fox,” he harassed British forces during the second southern campaign.

**Battle of King's Mountain** Battle fought in October 1780 on the border between the Carolinas in which revolutionary troops defeated loyalists.

**Nathanael Greene** American general who took command of the Carolinas campaign in 1780.

defeat at Camden, South Carolina. That fall, Washington wisely replaced Gates with a younger, more energetic officer from Rhode Island, **Nathanael Greene**. The fourteen hundred Continental soldiers Greene found when he arrived in South Carolina were tired, hungry, and clothed in rags. Greene's first steps were to ease the strains caused by civil war, raids, and plundering by offering pardons to loyalists and proposing alliances with local Indian tribes. In the end, Greene managed to win over all but the Creeks from the British.

Greene's military strategy was attrition: wear the British out by making them chase his small army across the South. He sent Virginian Daniel Morgan and six hundred riflemen to western South Carolina to tempt troops under the command of Banastre Tarleton into pursuit. Tarleton finally caught up with Morgan on an open meadow called the Cowpens in January 1781. When the outnumbered Americans stood their ground, ready to fight, the tired and frustrated British soldiers panicked and fled. Annoyed by this turn of events, Cornwallis decided to take the offensive. Now it was Greene's turn to lead the British on a long, exhausting chase. In March 1781, the two armies finally met at Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina. Although the Americans lost the battle and withdrew, British losses were so great that Cornwallis had to rethink the southern campaign. He decided that the price of conquering the Lower South was more than he was willing to pay. Disgusted, Cornwallis ordered his army northward to Virginia. Perhaps, he mused, he would have better luck there.

### Treason and Triumph

In the fall of 1780, the popular general Benedict Arnold, one of Washington's protégés, defected to the British. Although Arnold's bold plot to turn over control of the Hudson River by surrendering the fort at **West Point**, New York, to the British was foiled, Arnold's treason saddened Washington and damaged American morale. Washington's unhappiness over Arnold's betrayal was eased the following spring, however, when news came that French help was at last on its way. The general sat down at a strategy session with his French counterpart, General Rochambeau, in May 1781. The results were not exactly what Washington had hoped for: he had pressed for an attack on British-occupied New York, whereas Rochambeau insisted on a move against Cornwallis in Virginia. The French general had already ordered Admiral de Grasse and his fleet to the Chesapeake, so Washington had little choice but to concur.

On July 6, 1781, a French army joined Washington's Continental forces just north of Manhattan for the long march to Virginia. As yet, the British commander was unaware that a combined army was marching toward him. His first clue that trouble lay ahead came when a force of regular soldiers, led by von Steuben and the marquis de Lafayette, appeared in Virginia. Soon afterward, Cornwallis moved his army to the peninsula port of Yorktown to prepare for more serious battles ahead. The choice of **Yorktown** was one he would heartily regret.

By September 1781, the French and American troops coming from New York had joined forces with von Steuben and Lafayette's men. Admiral de Grasse's fleet of twenty-seven ships and an additional three thousand French soldiers were in place in Chesapeake Bay. Clinton, still in New York, had been devastatingly slow to realize what the enemy intended. In desperation, he now sent a naval squadron from New York to rescue the trapped Cornwallis. He could do little more, since most of the British fleet was in the Caribbean.

Admiral de Grasse had no trouble fending off Clinton's rescue squadron. Then he turned his naval guns on the redcoats at Yorktown. From his siege positions on land,

**West Point** Site of a fort overlooking the Hudson River, north of New York City.

**Yorktown** Site of the last major battle of the Revolution; American and French troops trapped Cornwallis's army here, on a peninsula on the York River near the Chesapeake Bay, and forced him to surrender.



John Trumbull celebrates the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in this painting. However, neither Cornwallis nor Washington actually participated in the surrender ceremonies. The British commander claimed illness and sent his general of the guards as his deputy. Washington, always sensitive to status as well as to protocol, promptly appointed an officer of equal rank to serve as his deputy. "Surrender of Lord Cornwallis" by John Trumbull. Yale University Art Gallery/Art Resource, NY.

Washington also directed a steady barrage of artillery fire against the British, producing a deafening roar both day and night. The noise dazed the redcoats and prevented them from sleeping. On October 19, 1781, Cornwallis admitted the hopelessness of his situation and surrendered. Despite the stunning turn of events at Yorktown, fighting continued in some areas. Bloody warfare against the Indians also meant more deaths along the frontier. The British occupation of Charleston, Savannah, and New York continued. But after Yorktown the British gave up all hope of military victory against their former colonies. On March 4, 1782, Parliament voted to cease "the further prosecution of offensive war on the Continent of North America." The war for independence had been won.

### Winning Diplomatic Independence

What Washington and his French allies had won, American diplomats had to preserve. Three men represented the United States at the peace talks in Paris: Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and John Jay. At first glance, this was an odd trio. The elderly Franklin, witty and sophisticated, had spent most of the war years in Paris, where he earned a deserved reputation as an admirer of women and wines. Adams—competitive, self-absorbed, and socially inept—did not hide his distaste for Franklin's flamboyance. Neither man found much comfort in the presence of the prudish, aristocratic John Jay of New York. Yet they proved to be a highly effective combination. Franklin brought a crafty skill and a love of strategy to the team as well as a useful knowledge of French politics.

Adams provided the backbone, for in the face of any odds he was a stubborn watchdog of American interests. Jay was calm, deliberate, and though not as aggressive as his New England colleague, he matched Adams in patriotism and integrity.

European political leaders expected the Americans to fare badly against the more experienced British and French diplomats. But Franklin, Jay, and Adams were far from naive. They were all veterans of wartime negotiations with European governments, having pursued loans, supplies, and military support. And they understood what was at stake at the peace table. They knew that their chief ally, France, had its own agenda and that Britain still wavered on the degree of independence America had actually won at Yorktown. Thus, despite firm orders from Congress to rely on France at every phase of the negotiations, the American diplomats quickly put their own agenda on the table. They demanded that Britain formally recognize American independence as a precondition to any negotiations. The British commissioner reluctantly agreed. Even so, negotiations continued for more than a year.

**Treaty of Paris of 1783** Treaty that ended the Revolutionary War in 1783 and secured American independence.

In the **Treaty of Paris of 1783**, the Americans emerged with two clear victories. First, although the British did not give up Canada as the Americans had hoped, the boundaries of the new nation were extensive. Second, the treaty granted the United States unlimited access to the fisheries off Newfoundland, a particular concern of New Englander Adams. It was difficult to measure the degree of success on other issues, however, because the terms for carrying out the agreements were often vague. For example, Britain ceded the Northwest to the United States. But the treaty said nothing about approval of this transfer of power by the Indians of the region and failed to set a timetable for British evacuation of the forts in the territory. In some cases, however, the treaty's vague language worked to American advantage. The treaty contained only the most general promise that the American government would not interfere with collection of the large prewar debts southern planters owed to British merchants. The promise to urge the states to return confiscated property to loyalists was equally inexact.

## Republican Expectations in a New Nation

- ★ **How did the Revolution affect Americans' expectations regarding individual rights, social equality, and the role of women in American society?**
- ★ **What opportunities were open to African Americans during and after the Revolution?**
- ★ **What was the fate of the loyalists?**

As an old man, John Adams reminisced about the American Revolution with his family and friends. Although he spoke of the war as a remarkable military event, Adams insisted that the Revolution was more than battlefield victories and defeats. The Revolution took place, Adams said, “in the hearts and the minds of the people.” What he meant was that changes in American social values and political ideas were as critical as battlefield strategies in creating the new nation. “The people” were, of course, far more diverse than Adams was ever willing to admit. Race, region, social class, gender, religion, even the national origin of immigrants—all played a part in creating diverse interests and diverse interpretations of the Revolution. Adams was correct, however, that significant changes took place in American thought during the war and the years immediately after. Many of these changes reflected a growing identification of the new American nation as a **republic** that ensured not only representative government but also the protection of individual rights, an educated citizenry, and an expanded suffrage.

**republic** A nation in which supreme power resides in the citizens, who elect representatives to govern them.



### The Protection of Fundamental Rights

The Declaration of Independence expressed the commonly held American view that government must protect the fundamental rights of life, liberty, property, and, as Jefferson put it, “the pursuit of happiness.” The belief that Britain was usurping these rights was a major justification for the Revolution. Thus, whatever form Americans chose for their new, independent government, they were certain to demand the protection of these fundamental rights. This emphasis had many social consequences.

The protection of many individual rights—freedom of speech, assembly, and the press, and the right to a trial by jury—were written into the new constitutions of several states. But some rights were more difficult to define than others. Although many Americans supported “freedom of conscience,” not all of them supported separation of church and state. In the seventeenth century, individual dissenters such as Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson had fought for the separation of church and state. After the Great Awakening, the same demands were made by organized dissenter communities such as the Baptists, who protested the privileges that established churches enjoyed in most colonies. When Virginia took up the question in 1776, political leaders were not in agreement. The House of Burgesses approved George Mason’s Declaration of Rights, which guaranteed its citizens “the free exercise of religion,” yet Virginia continued to use tax monies to support the Anglican Church. Even with the strong support of Thomas Jefferson, dissenters’ demands were not fully met until 1786, when the Statute of Religious Freedom ended tax-supported churches and guaranteed complete freedom of conscience, even for atheists. Other southern states followed Virginia’s lead, ending tax support for their Anglican churches.

The battle was more heated in New England. Many descendants of the Puritans wished to continue government support of the Congregational Church. Others simply wished to keep alive the principle of an established church. As a compromise, communities were sometimes allowed to decide which local church received their tax money, although each town was required to make one church the established church. New England did not separate church and state entirely until the nineteenth century.

Members of the revolutionary generation who had a political voice were especially vocal about the importance of private property and protection of a citizen’s right to own property. The property rights of some citizens infringed on the freedoms of others, however. Claims made on western lands by white Americans often meant the denial of Indian rights to that land. In the white community, a man’s property rights usually included the restriction of his wife’s right to own or sell land, slaves, and even her own personal possessions. Even Deborah Sampson lost her right to own property when she became Mrs. Gannett. And the institution of slavery transformed human beings into the private property of others.

### Legal Reforms

Although economic inequality actually grew in the decades after the Revolution, several legal reforms were spurred by a commitment to the republican belief in social equality. Chief targets of this legal reform included the laws of **primogeniture** and **entail**.

In Britain, these inheritance laws had led to the creation of a landed aristocracy. The actual threat they posed in America was small, for few planters ever adopted them. But the principle they represented remained important to republican spokesmen such as Thomas Jefferson, who pressed successfully for their abolition in Virginia and North Carolina.

In some states, the principle of social equality had concrete political consequences. Pennsylvania and Georgia eliminated all property qualifications for voting among free white males. Other states lowered their property requirements for voters but refused to

**primogeniture** The legal right of the eldest son to inherit the entire estate of his father.

**entail** A legal limitation that prevents property from being divided, sold, or given away.

In this portrait of Mary Harvey Champneys and her stepdaughter, Sarah Champneys, the two women pose in the respectable attire of a matron and an unmarried girl. The artist, Edward Savage, began his career making copies of paintings by more notable artists such as John Singleton Copley, but later managed to earn his living as a portraitist. In an era without photography, family portraits served as memorials as well as a display of wealth. Mary Harvey Champneys (ca. 1752–1800) and her Stepdaughter, Sarah Champneys, by Edward Savage (American, 1761–1817) Oil on canvas, Gibbes Museum of Art/Carolina Art Association, 1937.02.02.



go as far as universal white manhood suffrage. They feared that the outcome of such a sweeping reform was unpredictable—even women might demand a political voice.

### Women in the New Republic

The war did not erase differences of class, race, region, or age for either men or women. Its impact was not uniform for all American women. Yet some experiences, and the memories of them, were probably shared by the majority of white, and even many black, women. They would remember the war years as a time of constant shortages, anxiety, and unfamiliar and difficult responsibilities. Men going off to war left women to manage farms and shops in addition to caring for large families and household duties. Women had to cope with the critical shortages of food and supplies and to survive on meager budgets in inflationary times. Many, like the woman who pleaded with her soldier husband to “pray come home,” may have feared they would fail in these new circumstances. After the war, however, many remembered with satisfaction how well they had adapted to new roles. They expressed their sense of accomplishment in letters to husbands that no longer spoke of “your farm” and “your crop” but of “our farm” and even “my crop.”

For women, just as for men, the war meant adapting traditional behavior and skills to new circumstances. Women who followed the eighteenth-century custom of joining husbands or fathers in army camps took up the familiar domestic chores of cooking, cleaning, laundering, and providing nursing care. Outside the army camps, loyalist and patriot women served as spies or saboteurs and risked their lives by sheltering soldiers or hiding weapons in their cellars. Sometimes they opted to burn their crops or destroy their homes to prevent the enemy from using them. These were conscious acts of patriotism rather than wifely duties. On some occasions, women crossed gender boundaries dramatically. Although few behaved like Deborah Sampson and disguised themselves as men, women such as **Mary Ludwig** and Margaret Corbin did engage in military combat. These “Molly Pitchers” carried water to cool down the cannon in American forts across the country; but if men fell wounded, nearby women frequently took their place in line. After the war, female veterans of combat, including Corbin, applied to the government for pensions, citing as evidence the wounds they had received in battle.

**Mary Ludwig** Wife of a soldier at Fort Monmouth; one of many women known popularly as “Molly Pitchers” because they carried water to cool down the cannon their husbands fired in battle.

In the postwar years, members of America’s political and social elite engaged in a public discussion of women’s role in the family and in a republican society. Spurred by Enlightenment assertions that all humans were capable of rational thought and action and by the empirical evidence of women’s patriotic commitments and behavior, these Americans set aside older colonial notions that women lacked the ability to reason and to make moral choices. They urged a new role for women within the family: the moral training of their children. This training would include the inculcating of patriotism and republican principles. Thus the republic would rely on wives and mothers to sustain its values and to raise a new generation of concerned citizens.

This new ideal, “**republican womanhood**,” reflected Enlightenment ideals, but it also had roots in economic and social changes that began before the Revolution, including the growth of a prosperous urban class able to purchase many household necessities. No longer needing to make cloth or candles or butter, prosperous urban wives and mothers had time to devote to raising children. Republican womanhood probably had little immediate impact in the lives of ordinary free women, who remained unable to purchase essential goods or to pay others to do household chores, or in the lives of African American or Indian women.

**republican womanhood** A role for mothers that became popularized following the Revolution; it stressed women’s importance in instructing children in republican virtues such as patriotism and honor.

Although American republicanism expected mothers to instill patriotism in their children, it also expected communities to provide formal education for future citizens. Arguing that a citizen could not be both “ignorant and free,” several states allotted tax money for public elementary schools. Some went even further. By 1789, for example, Massachusetts required every town to provide free public education to its children. After the Revolution, *children* meant girls as well as boys.

This new emphasis on female education was a radical departure for women. Before the Revolution, the education of daughters was haphazard at best. Colleges and the preparatory schools that trained young men for college were closed to female students. A woman got what formal knowledge she could by reading her father’s books. Some women, most notably the Massachusetts revolutionary propagandist Mercy Otis Warren, were lucky enough to receive fine educations from the men in their family. But most women had to be content to learn domestic skills rather than geography, philosophy, or history. After the Revolution, however, educational reformers reasoned that mothers must be well versed in history and even political theory if they were to teach their children the essential principles of citizenship. By the 1780s, private academies had opened to educate the daughters of wealthy American families. These privileged young women enjoyed the rare opportunity to study mathematics and history. Although their curriculum was

# Investigating America

## Esther DeBerdt Reed on the Usefulness of Women, 1780

During the Revolution, many women expanded the boundaries of their traditional sphere by organizing to assist in the war effort. Wealthy Philadelphia matron Esther DeBerdt Reed helped organize voluntary associations to raise funds and supplies for the American army. The community did not always greet openly political activities by women favorably, however. Women who expressed their patriotism through public actions were accused of overstepping the boundaries of their gender—that is, of unfeminine behavior. Reed defended her activism in “The Sentiments of an American Woman,” printed in 1780. In the following passage from this unusual document, she connected the patriotic women of the Revolution with heroic women of history.

.....

On the commencement of actual war, the Women of America manifested a firm resolution to contribute as much as could depend on them, to the deliverance of this country. Animated by the purest patriotism they are sensible of sorrow at this day, in not offering more than barren wishes for the success of so glorious a Revolution. They aspire to render themselves more really useful; and this sentiment is universal from the north to the south of the Thirteen United States. Our ambition is kindled by the fame of those heroines of antiquity, who have rendered their sex illustrious, and have proved to the universe, that, if the weakness of our Constitution, if opinion and manners did not forbid us to march to glory by the same paths as the Men, we should at least equal and sometimes surpass them in our love for the public good. I glory in all that which my sex has done great and commendable. I call to mind with enthusiasm and with admiration, all those acts of courage, of constancy and patriotism, which history has

transmitted to us: The people favoured by Heaven, preserved from destruction by the virtues, the zeal and the resolution of Deborah, of Judith, of Esther! . . . Rome saved from the fury of a victorious enemy by the efforts of Volunia, and other Roman ladies: So many famous sieges where the Women have been seen forgetting the weakness of their sex, building new walls, digging trenches with their feeble hands; furnishing arms to their defenders, they themselves darting the missile weapons on the enemy, resigning the adornments of their apparel, and their fortunes to fill the public treasury, and to hasten the deliverance of their country. . . . [We are] Born for liberty, disdaining to bear the irons of a tyrannic Government. . . . Who knows if persons disposed to censure, and sometimes too severely with regard to us, may not disapprove our appearing acquainted even with the actions of which our sex boasts? We are at least certain, that he cannot be a good citizen who will not applaud our efforts for the relief of the armies which defend our lives, our possessions, our liberty.

.....

- Do you think Reed was challenging the notion that women are constitutionally, or naturally, weak and incapable of making decisions and acting on them? Or was she saying that women are decisive and competent only in times of great crisis?
- Male revolutionaries often drew analogies between their choices and actions and those of biblical heroes and leaders of the Roman republic. Why do you think Reed referred to the women of the Bible and Ancient Rome?
- If you were opposed to the activities Reed was engaged in, what arguments would you make against this type of female activism?



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often as rigorous as that in a boys' preparatory school, the addition of courses in fancy needlework reminded the girls that their futures lay in marriage and motherhood.

### The War's Impact on Slaves and Slavery

The protection of liberty and the fear of enslavement were major themes of the Revolution. Yet the denial of liberty was a central reality in the lives of most African Americans. As the movement for independence developed, slaves' political and military loyalties reflected their best guess as to which side offered them the greatest





# It Matters Today

## TRACKING CHANGES IN GENDER ROLES

Eighteenth-century women like Deborah Sampson and Esther DeBerdts Reed tested the limits of traditional gender roles, demonstrating bravery on the battlefield and political organizing skills during the American Revolution. But it would be over 140 years before their descendants could vote in a national election and decades more before they could serve in the military. The impact of this social change can be seen today in the accomplishments of women such as Lt. General Claudia J. Kennedy, the United States Army's first female

three-star general; Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman to become a Supreme Court justice; and Madeleine Albright, the first woman secretary of state. Tracking major changes in gender roles and examining why those changes occurred is a critical part of the historian's task.

- Do you think a woman president is likely to be elected in your lifetime? Explain the factors on which you base your opinion.

chance of freedom. Ironically, the desire for freedom set many of them against the Revolution. Of the fifty thousand or so slaves who won their freedom in the war, half did so by escaping to the British army. Only about five thousand African American men joined the Continental Army once Congress opened enlistment to them in 1776, and most of those came from northern states with small black populations. Black soldiers were generally better treated by the British than by the revolutionaries.

With American victory in 1781, African American loyalist soldiers faced a difficult decision: to remain in America and risk re-enslavement or to evacuate along with the British army. Many stayed, prompting a group of angry owners to complain that there was "reason to believe that a great number of slaves which were taken by the British army are now passing in this country as free men." The British transported those who chose to leave to Canada, to England, to British Florida, to the Caribbean, or to Africa. Three thousand former slaves settled initially in Nova Scotia, but the racism of their white loyalist neighbors led more than a thousand of these veterans to emigrate a second time. Led by an African-born former slave named Thomas Peters, they sailed to Sierra Leone, in West Africa, where they established a free black colony. The long war affected the lives of those who remained in slavery. Control and discipline broke down when the southern campaigns dragged on, distracting slave owners and disrupting work routines. Slave masters complained loudly and bitterly that their slaves "all do now what they please every where" and "pay no attention to the orders of the overseer." These exaggerated complaints point to real but temporary opportunities for slaves to alter the conditions under which they worked and lived.

In the northern states, the revolutionaries' demand for liberty undermined black slavery. Loyalists taunted patriots, asking, "How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?" The question made the contradiction between revolutionary ideals and American reality painfully clear. Not all slave owners, however, needed to be shamed by others into grappling with the hypocrisy of their position. In the 1760s and 1770s, influential political leaders such as James Otis, Thomas Paine, and Benjamin Rush campaigned against the continuation of slavery. In Boston, Phillis Wheatley, a young African-born slave whose master recognized and encouraged her literary talents, called on the revolutionaries to acknowledge the universality of the wish for freedom. "In every human breast," Wheatley wrote, "God had implanted a Principle, which we call love of freedom; it is impatient of Oppression, and pants for Deliverance."

# Investigating America

## George Washington on Black Loyalists, 1783

During the war, General Washington lost a number of slaves to the British when Lord Dunmore sailed up the Potomac River. One of them, an African whom the general had renamed Harry Washington, fought with the loyalists and rose to the rank of corporal in the British army. The end of fighting found him in British-occupied New York City, and his fate rested with Sir Guy Carleton, who was responsible for negotiating the evacuation of the city. In this letter of May 6, 1783, George Washington made it clear to Carleton that the Americans wanted their property returned to them, including runaway slaves.

.....

Sir: In my Letter of the 21st of April, I enclosed to your Excellency a Copy of a Resolution of Congress of the 15th, instructing me in three points, which appeared necessary for carrying into Effect the Terms of the Treaty between G B. and the United States of America; and informed you that such part as rested upon my Decision and which regarded the Release of prisoners, had been determined and was then ordered to be carried into Execution. Upon the other two points, as they respected the Receive possession of the Posts in Occupation of the British Troops and the carrying away any Negroes or other Property of the American Inhabitants, and both being within your Controul, I had the Honor to propose a personal Interview with your Excellency; that the subject might be freely discussed, and that measures might be agreed upon for carrying into Execution those Points of the 7th Article of Treaty, agreeable to their true Intent and Spirit. . . .

Respecting the other point of Discussion, in addition to what I mentioned in my Communication of the 21st ulto. I took occasion, in our Conference to inform Your Excellency,

that in Consequence of your Letter of the 14th. of April to R R Livingston Esqr, Congress had been pleased to make a further Reference to me, of that Letter, and had directed me to take such Measures as should be found necessary for carrying into Effect the several Matters mentioned by you therein. In the Course of our Conversation on this point, I was surprized to hear you mention, that an Embarkation had already taken place, in which a large Number of Negroes had been carried away. Whether this Conduct is consonant to, or how far it may be deemed an Infraction of the Treaty, is not for me to decide. I cannot however conceal from your Excellency that my private opinion is, that the measure is totally different from the Letter and Spirit of the Treaty. But waving the Discussing of the point, and leaving its decision to our respective Sovereigns, I find it my Duty to signify my Readiness, in Conjunction with your Excellency, to enter into any Agreements, or take any Measures which may be deemed expedient to prevent the future Carrying away any Negroes or other property of the American can Inhabitants.

.....

- What does Washington's demand—to which Carleton refused to agree—suggest about the limits to American claims of liberty and democracy?
- Roughly three-quarters of the Africans and African Americans who bore arms during the war fought with the British. How does that complicate Washington's claim, made elsewhere, that the British were "the enemy" of freedom?
- How did Harry's actions help to weaken slavery in the country he was about to leave behind?



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**manumission** Freedom from slavery or bondage.

Free black Americans joined with white reformers to mobilize antislavery campaigns in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. In Boston and Philadelphia, slaves petitioned on their own behalf to be "liberated from a state of Bondage, and made Freemen of this Community." Of course, these states were home to few slaves, and the regional economy did not depend on unfree labor. Thus it was easier there to acknowledge the truth in the slave's cry: "We have no property! We have no country!"

**Manumission** increased during the 1770s, especially in the North. In 1780, Pennsylvania became the first state to pass an emancipation statute, making manumission a public policy rather than a private matter of conscience. Pennsylvania lawmakers,

however, compromised on a gradual rather than an immediate end to slavery. Only slaves born after the law was enacted were eligible, and they could not expect to receive their freedom until they had served a twenty-eight-year term of indenture. By 1804, all northern states had committed themselves to a slow end to slavery.

Slavery was far more deeply embedded in the South, as a labor system and as a system that regulated race relations. In the Lower South, white Americans ignored the debate over slavery and took immediate steps to replace missing slaves and to restore tight control over work and life on their plantations. But individual manumissions did occur in the Upper South. Free black communities grew in both Maryland and Virginia after the Revolutionary War, and planters openly debated the morality of slavery in a republic and the practical benefits of slave labor. They did not all reach the same conclusions. George Washington freed all his slaves on the death of his wife, but Patrick Henry, who had often stirred his fellow Virginia legislators with his spirited defense of American liberty, justified his decision to continue slavery with blunt honesty. Freeing his slaves, he said, would be inconvenient.

## Summary

When the colonies declared their independence, many people on both sides doubted they could win the war. The British outnumbered and outgunned the Americans, and their troops were better trained and better equipped. The Americans' major advantage was logistic: they were fighting a war on familiar terrain. And Washington's hit-and-run tactics made it impossible for the British to deliver a crushing blow.

The turning point in the war came in 1777 when British general John Burgoyne's plan to isolate New England from the other rebel colonies failed. Burgoyne was forced to surrender at Saratoga, New York. The surprising American victory led to an alliance between France and the United States and the expansion of the war into an international conflict. The British invaded the South again in 1778, but despite early victories, their campaign ended in disaster. American victory was assured when French and American forces defeated Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia, in October 1781. Fighting continued for a time, but in March 1782, the British Parliament ended

the conflict. The Treaty of Paris was negotiated in 1783, and to the surprise of many European diplomats, the Americans gained important concessions.

Victory led to significant transformations in American society. Individual rights were strengthened for free white men. A republican spirit changed the outlook, if not the condition, of many Americans, as customs that fit a hierarchical society gave way to more egalitarian behavior. The wartime experiences of women such as Deborah Sampson led American intellectuals to reconsider women's "nature" and their abilities. Although full citizenship was not granted, white women's capacity for rational thought was acknowledged, and their new role as the educators of their children led to expanded formal education for women. Black Americans also made some gains. Fifty thousand slaves won their freedom during the war, thousands by serving in the Continental Army. Northern states moved to outlaw slavery, but southern slaveholders decided to preserve the institution despite intense debate.

## Key Terms

Thomas Gage, *p. 124*  
militiamen, *p. 125*  
Benedict Arnold, *p. 125*  
amnesty, *p. 125*  
William Howe, *p. 125*  
Battle of Bunker Hill, *p. 126*  
George Washington, *p. 126*  
Richard Howe, *p. 126*  
Hessian troops, *p. 126*  
Battle of Trenton, *p. 128*  
John Burgoyne, *p. 128*  
Horatio Gates, *p. 129*

Valley Forge, *p. 130*  
Baron Friedrich von Steuben, *p. 130*  
Benjamin Franklin, *p. 131*  
cheap money, *p. 132*  
black market, *p. 132*  
Sir Henry Clinton, *p. 133*  
General Charles Lee, *p. 133*  
Battle of Monmouth, *p. 133*  
George Rogers Clark, *p. 133*  
Thayendanegea, *p. 133*  
Charles Cornwallis, *p. 134*  
Francis Marion, *p. 135*

Battle of King's Mountain, *p. 135*  
Nathanael Greene, *p. 136*  
West Point, *p. 136*  
Yorktown, *p. 136*  
Treaty of Paris of 1783, *p. 138*  
republic, *p. 138*  
primogeniture, *p. 139*  
entail, *p. 139*  
Mary Ludwig, *p. 141*  
republican womanhood, *p. 141*  
manumission, *p. 141*



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# Competing Visions of the Virtuous Republic 1770–1796

## CHAPTER 7

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Mercy Otis Warren

Mercy Otis Warren was the sister of one Massachusetts revolutionary and the wife of another. But she was a revolutionary in her own right. She never held elective office or donned a uniform to fight for independence, for these were male roles in the eighteenth century. Instead, she waged her revolution with pen and paper. During the 1770s, she wrote biting satirical plays that mocked royal officials and their supporters. In *The Adulateur* and *The Group*, she drew the imperial struggle in stark moral terms as a battle between tyranny and representative government, and between ambitions and virtue. Patriots like John Adams praised her as an effective propagandist for the revolutionary cause.

After the Revolution, however, Warren and Adams became political enemies. He believed the country needed a powerful federal government, but Warren continued to believe in local self-rule. When the Constitution was proposed, Warren, like the document's other opponents, argued that a central government with taxing powers was the first step toward re-creating the tyranny of the British king.

Warren never changed her mind. In 1805 she published the first history of the Revolution. In it, she argued that “no taxation without representation” applied to any central government, not simply to the government of King George III. Adams never changed his mind either. He believed the Constitution saved the American experiment in representative government. Their disagreement would live on long after these two were gone.

On other issues, however, Warren found an ally in John's wife, Abigail Adams. Both women urged the nation's leaders to “remember the ladies” when they spoke of equality and liberty. Warren stressed the need for formal educational opportunities for women. She lived to see young ladies' academies established in many states, but the first women's college, Mt. Holyoke, was not founded until 1837, 23 years after her death.

### MERCY OTIS WARREN

Massachusetts playwright, poet, and historian Mercy Otis Warren penned some of the most popular and effective propaganda for the American cause. In her plays, she portrayed pro-British officeholders as greedy, power-hungry traitors, while she praised Boston radicals as noble heroes.

Mrs. James Warren (Mercy Otis) about 1763 John Singleton Copley, American, 1738–1815 126.05 x 100.33 cm (49 5/8 x 39 1/2 in.) Oil on canvas. Bequest of Winslow Warren. © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### **America's First Constitutions**

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** Having a Vision for the Future  
The Articles of Confederation

#### **Challenges to the Confederation**

Depression and Financial Crisis  
The Northwest Ordinance  
Diplomatic Problems  
A Farmer's Revolt

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Mercy Otis Warren Criticizes Boston Citizens, 1780s  
The Revolt of the “Better Sort”

#### **Creating a New Constitution**

Revise or Replace?  
Drafting an Acceptable Document

#### **Resolving the Conflict of Vision**

The Ratification Controversy  
The Federalist Victory  
President George Washington

#### **Competing Visions Re-emerge**

Unity's Achievements  
Hamilton and Jefferson's Differences

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Hamilton and Madison Debate Funding and Assumption, 1790  
Foreign Affairs and Deepening Divisions  
More Domestic Disturbances  
Jay's Treaty  
Washington's Farewell

#### **Summary**



# Chronology

<b>1770</b>	State constitutions developed		George Washington inaugurated as first president
<b>1776</b>	Oversight in New Jersey constitution gives property-holding women right to vote		Judiciary Act of 1789
<b>1777</b>	Congress adopts Articles of Confederation	<b>1791</b>	First Bank of the United States chartered
<b>1781</b>	States ratify Articles of Confederation		Bill of Rights added to Constitution
	Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown		Alexander Hamilton's <i>Report on Manufactures</i>
<b>1783</b>	Treaty of Paris	<b>1792</b>	Washington reelected
<b>1785</b>	Land Act	<b>1793</b>	Genet affair
<b>1786</b>	Annapolis Convention		Jefferson resigns as secretary of state
	Shays's Rebellion	<b>1794</b>	Whiskey Rebellion in Pennsylvania
<b>1787</b>	Constitutional Convention		Battle of Fallen Timbers
	Northwest Ordinance	<b>1795</b>	Congress approves Jay's Treaty
<b>1787–1788</b>	States ratify U.S. Constitution		Treaty of San Lorenzo
<b>1789</b>	First congressional elections	<b>1796</b>	Washington's Farewell Address
	French Revolution begins		

Between 1776 and 1783, Americans fought to create an independent nation. But what kind of nation would that be? Most free white Americans rejected the notion of an American monarchy and embraced the idea of a republic. Yet, a republic could take many forms, and Americans who enjoyed a political voice disagreed on what form was best for the new nation. As a consequence, the transition from independence to nationhood generated heated debate.

The Articles of Confederation, which joined the states in a “league of friendship,” was the nation’s first effort at republican government. It guided Americans through the last years of the war and the peace negotiations. It also organized the northwest territories and established the steps toward statehood for a territory. But many political leaders believed this government was too weak to solve America’s economic and social problems or set its course for the future.

In 1787 delegates to a Constitutional Convention produced a new plan of government: the Constitution. It was the result of compromises between the interests of small states and large ones, between southern and northern regional interests, and between those who sought to preserve the sovereignty of the states and those who wished to increase the power of the national government. The Constitution created a stronger national government with the right to regulate interstate and foreign trade, and the power to tax.

Antifederalists, who opposed the new government, argued that it threatened the basic ideals of the Revolution, especially the commitment to local representative government. Mercy Otis Warren and Patrick Henry insisted that state governments were the

best guarantee that republican values would survive. Others feared the new government would be dominated by the wealthiest citizens. Federalists, who supported the constitution, argued that the new government would save America from economic disaster and domestic unrest. The Federalists carried the day.

## America's First Constitutions

★ **What were the major elements of the Articles of Confederation?**

★ **What problems arose in ratifying the Articles?**

The writers of state constitutions were the first to grapple with troubling but fundamental issues—in particular, the definition of citizenship and the extent of political participation. Should women be allowed to vote? Could landless men, servants, free blacks, and apprentices enjoy a political voice? These were exactly the kinds of questions John Adams feared might arise in any discussion of voting rights, or suffrage. They raised the specter of democracy, which he considered a dangerous system.

The state constitutions reflected the variety of opinion on this matter of democracy within a republic. At one end of the spectrum was Pennsylvania, whose constitution abolished all property qualifications and granted the vote to all white males in the state. At the other end were states such as Maryland, whose constitution continued to link the ownership of property to voting. To hold office, a Marylander had to meet even higher standards of wealth than the voters.

Although constitution writers in every state believed that the legislature was the primary branch of government, they were divided over other issues. Should there be a separate executive branch? Should the legislature have one house or two? What qualifications should be set for officeholders? Again, Pennsylvania produced the most democratic answer to these questions. Pennsylvania's constitution concentrated all power to make and to administer law in a one-house, or **unicameral**, elected assembly. The farmers and artisans who helped draft this state constitution eliminated both the executive office and the upper house of the legislature, remembering that these had been strongholds for the wealthy in colonial times. Pennsylvania also required annual elections of all legislators to ensure that the assembly remained responsive to the people's will. In contrast, Maryland and the other states divided powers among a governor, or executive branch, and a **bicameral** legislature, although the legislature enjoyed the broader powers. Members of the upper house in Maryland's legislature had to meet higher property qualifications than those in the lower house, or assembly. In this manner, political leaders in this state ensured their elite citizens a secure voice in lawmaking.

A state's particular history often determined the type of constitution it produced. For example, coastal elites and lowland gentry had dominated the colonial governments of New Hampshire, South Carolina, Virginia, and North Carolina. These states sought to correct this injustice by ensuring representation to small farming districts in interior and frontier regions. The memory of high-handed colonial governors and elitist upper houses in the legislature led Massachusetts lawmakers to severely limit the powers of their first state government. The constitutions in all of these states reflected the strong political voice that ordinary citizens had acquired during the Revolution.

Beginning in the 1780s, however, many states revised their constitutions, increasing the power of the government. At the same time, they added safeguards they believed would prevent abuse. The 1780 Massachusetts constitution was the model for many of these revisions. Massachusetts political leaders built in a system of so-called checks and

**unicameral** Having a single legislative house.

**bicameral** Having a legislature with two houses.



# It Matters Today

## HAVING A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

In 1791, Alexander Hamilton outlined his vision for the economic future of the United States. When Hamilton predicted that manufacturing would, and should, overtake agriculture as the basis for the American economy, he knew he would be setting himself against some of the most important people in the nation. Hamilton's *Report on Manufactures* was not adopted by Congress, but Hamilton's belief in a strong central government with broad economic powers would eventually become central to the economy of the United States.

- Presidential candidates often outline their vision for the nation's future in their inaugural addresses. Select one such inaugural address and analyze the vision it offers.
- In the nineteenth century, reformers established utopian communities. In modern times, minorities and women have put forward their plans for a more egalitarian society. Select one example of these social visions and analyze its contents and the historical circumstances in which it developed.

**bill of rights** A formal statement of essential rights and liberties under law.

balances among the legislative, judicial, and executive branches to ensure that no branch of the government could grow too powerful or overstep its assigned duties. Over the opposition of many farmers and townspeople, these newer state constitutions also curbed the democratic extension of voting and officeholding privileges. Thus wealth returned as a qualification to govern, although the revised constitutions did not allow the wealthy to tamper with the basic individual rights of citizens. In seven states, these individual rights were safeguarded by a **bill of rights** guaranteeing freedom of speech, religion, and the press as well as the right to assemble and to petition the government.

### The Articles of Confederation

**John Dickinson** Philadelphia lawyer and revolutionary pamphleteer who drafted the Articles of Confederation.

**Articles of Confederation** The first constitution of the United States; it created a central government with limited powers and was replaced by the Constitution.

There was little popular support for a powerful central government in the early years of the Revolution. Instead, as Adams later recalled, Americans wanted “a Confederacy of States, each of which must have a separate government.”

When Pennsylvania's **John Dickinson** submitted a blueprint for a strong national government to the Continental Congress in July 1776, he watched in wonder and dismay as his colleagues transformed his plan, called **Articles of Confederation**, into a government that preserved the rights and privileges of the states.

Members of the one-house Continental Congress agreed that the new government should also be a unicameral legislature, without an executive branch or a separate judiciary. Democrats like Tom Paine and Samuel Adams praised the Articles' concentration of lawmaking, administrative, and judicial powers in the hands of an elected assembly, whereas conservatives like John Adams condemned the new government as “too democratic,” lacking “any equilibrium” among the social classes.

Dickinson's colleagues agreed that the state legislatures, not the voters themselves, should choose the members of the Confederation Congress. But they did not agree on how many members each state should be allotted. The question boiled down to this: Should the states have equal representation or **proportional representation** based on population? Dickinson argued for a one-state, one-vote rule, but fellow Pennsylvanian Benjamin Franklin insisted that large states such as his own deserved more influence in the new government. This time, Dickinson's argument carried the day, and the Articles established

**proportional representation** Representation in the legislature based on the population of each state.



that each state, large or small, was entitled to a single vote when the Confederation roll was called. Any amendment required the unanimous consent of the states.

Arguments over financial issues were as fierce as those over representation and sovereignty. How was each state's share of the federal operating budget to be determined? Dickinson reasoned that a state's contribution should be based on its population, including inhabitants of every age, sex, and legal condition (free or unfree). This proposal brought southern political leaders to their feet in protest. Because their states had large slave populations, the burden of tax assessment would fall heavily on masters and other free white men. In the end, state assessments for the support of the new federal government were based on the value of land, buildings, and improvements rather than on population. The Continental Congress thus shrewdly avoided any final decision on the larger question of whether slaves were property or people.

When Congress finally submitted the Articles to the states for their approval in November of 1777, the fate of the western territories proved to be the major stumbling block to **ratification**. In his draft of the Articles, Dickinson had designated the Northwest Territory as a national domain. The states with colonial charters granting them land from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans protested, each claiming the exclusive right to portions of this vast region bounded by the Ohio River, the Great Lakes, and the Mississippi River (see Map 7.1). New Jersey, Maryland, and other states whose colonial charters gave them

**ratification** The act of approving or confirming a proposal.



**MAP 7.1** Western Land Claims After American Independence

This map indicates the claims made by several of the thirteen original states to land west of the Appalachian Mountains and in the New England region. The states based their claims on the colonial charters that governed them before independence.

no claim to western territory disagreed. Maryland delegates dug in their heels, insisting that citizens of any state ought to have the right to pioneer the northwestern territories. Maryland's ultimatum—no national domain, no ratification—produced a stalemate until Virginia, which claimed the lion's share of the Northwest, agreed to cede all claims to Congress. The other states with claims followed suit, and in 1781 Maryland became the thirteenth and final state to ratify the Confederation government. Establishing this first national government had taken three and a half years. (The text of the Articles of Confederation is reprinted in the Documents appendix at the back of this book.)

## Challenges to the Confederation

- ★ **What problems undermined the Confederation, and what changes did they produce?**
- ★ **What was the impact of Shays's Rebellion on national politics?**
- ★ **How did the Confederation establish relations with other nations of the world?**

The members of the first Confederation Congress had barely taken their seats in 1781 when Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown and peace negotiations began in Paris. The fighting ended, but the physical and economic damage caused by the brutal home-front war was extensive. In New Jersey and Pennsylvania, communities bore the scars of rape and looting by the British occupying armies. In the South, where civil war had raged, a steady stream of refugees filled the cities. In many communities, livestock had vanished, and crops had been seized or ruined. In New England, a natural disaster magnified problems created by the war: wheat crops wiped out by insects, worsening food shortages, and local economic depression.

### Depression and Financial Crisis

Financial problems plagued wealthy Americans as well as poor farmers and unpaid Revolutionary War veterans. Many merchants had overextended their credit importing foreign goods after the war. Land **speculators** had also borrowed too

heavily in order to grab up confiscated loyalist lands or portions of the Northwest Territory. Merchants whose fortunes depended on English markets paid a high price for an American victory that cut ties with England. Planters were hard hit when the demand for staple crops such as rice dropped dramatically after the war, and by 1786, New England fisheries were operating at only about 80 percent of their prewar level. Britain banned the sale of American farm products in the West Indies and limited the rights of American vessels to carry goods to and from Caribbean ports.

The Confederation government did not create these economic problems, but it had little success in dealing with them. In fact, it was helpless to solve its own most pressing problem—debt. To finance the war, the Continental Congress had printed more than \$240 million in paper money backed by “good faith” rather than by the hard currency of gold and silver. As doubts grew that the government could ever **redeem** these continentals, their value fell rapidly. The phrase “not worth a continental” indicated attitudes about the government as well as its finances. Congress was also embarrassed by the substantial debts to foreign nations it was unable to repay.

In 1781 the government turned to Philadelphia shipper and merchant **Robert Morris** for advice on how to raise funds. Morris, known as a financial wizard, came up with a solution: ask the states to approve federal **tariffs**, or import taxes, on certain foreign goods. A duty of 5 percent on imported goods, payable in hard currency, would provide desperately

**speculators** A person who buys and sells land or some other commodity in the hope of making a profit.

**redeem** To pay a specified sum in return for something; in this case, to make good on paper money issued by the government by exchanging it for hard currency.

**Robert Morris** Pennsylvania merchant and financial expert who advised the Continental Congress during the Revolution and served as a fundraiser for the Confederation government.

**tariff** A tax on imported or exported goods.

needed income for the Confederation and relieve the states from having to contribute funding many could scarcely afford. But the plan failed because both Virginia and Rhode Island said no. The failure of the tariff strategy prompted one critic of the Confederation government to comment: “Thirteen wheels require a steady and powerful regulation to keep them in good order.” Until Congress could act without the unanimous consent of all states, nothing could “prevent the machine from becoming useless.”

### The Northwest Ordinance

Still in financial crisis, the Confederation pinned its hopes for solvency on the sale of western lands in the Northwest Territory. Here, at least Congress had the authority to act, for it could set policy for the settlement and governance of all national territories. A national land policy took shape in two critical laws that raised money for the government and also guaranteed that the men and women who moved west would not be colonial dependents of the original states.

The **Land Act of 1785** spelled out the terms for sale of frontier lands. Mapmakers divided the region into five districts and subdivided each district into townships. Each township, covering 36 square miles, was broken down in a gridlike pattern of thirty-six 640-acre plots. Congress intended to auction these plots off to individual settlers rather than to land speculators, but when the original selling price of \$1 per acre in hard currency proved too high for the average farm family, Congress lowered the price and lifted the ban on sales to speculators.

The **Northwest Ordinance** of 1787 established that sixty thousand white males were needed for a territory to apply for admission as a state. Thomas Jefferson, who drafted part of this ordinance, took care to protect the liberties of the settlers with a bill of rights and to ban slavery north of the Ohio River (which quietly allowed for the spread of slavery into the southern territories). Jefferson’s provisions also trampled on the rights of American Indians, for their claims to the land were ignored in favor of white settlement.

### Diplomatic Problems

The Confederation’s diplomatic record was as discouraging as its financial plight. Problems with the British and the Indians arose in the West as settlers began to pour into the Northwest Territory. Although the British had agreed in the Treaty of Paris (1783) to evacuate their western forts, they refused to take any steps until the Americans honored their treaty obligations to repay their war debts and return loyalists’ confiscated property. From their strongholds in the territories, the British encouraged Indian resistance by selling arms and supplies to the Shawnees, Miamis, and Delawares. These tribes, and others, denied the legitimacy of the two treaties that turned over the northwest territories to the Americans.

American claims to western lands rested on the 1784 **Treaty of Fort Stanwix** and the 1785 **Hopewell Treaties**. The former, negotiated with the remnants of the Iroquois confederacy, opened all Iroquois lands to white settlement; the second, signed by Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Cherokee chiefs, granted Americans settlement rights in what was then the Southwest. The Shawnees and their allies challenged both treaties. By what right, they asked, did those tribes speak for them? Throughout the 1780s, the Confederation and the Indians resorted to warfare rather than negotiation.

The Confederation preferred diplomacy to armed conflict when dealing with European powers. Congress sent John Adams to Great Britain, but not even this persistent and dedicated New Englander could wring any concessions from the British. The Confederation had problems with allies as well as with enemies. Spain, for example, was

**Land Act of 1785** Act that dealt with the public sale of lands in the Northwest Territory.

**Northwest Ordinance** (1787) Law that established a plan for the admission of new states to the Union.

**Treaty of Fort Stanwix** Treaty signed in 1784 that opened all Iroquois lands to white settlement.

**Hopewell Treaties** Treaties signed in 1785 in which the Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Cherokees granted American settlement rights in the Southwest.

alarmed by American settlers pouring into the land east of the Mississippi. The Spanish responded by banning all American traffic on the Mississippi River. The Confederation appointed John Jay, fresh from his success as a Paris peace commissioner, to negotiate with Spain on this and other issues, but Jay could make no headway.

### A Farmer's Revolt

From Pennsylvania to Maine, eighteenth-century backcountry settlers organized to resist speculators' claims on the land and to demand that political power remain with local communities rather than state governments. After the Revolution, these rebels used the language of republicanism to defend their protests and to justify the occasional violence that erupted in their areas. "We fought for land & liberty, & it is hard if we can't enjoy either," wrote one **squatter** in response to a land speculator's claim to his farm. Farmers suffering from the postwar economic depression had a long list of complaints, including high rents and land prices, heavy taxes, debts, burdensome legal fees, and the failure of central governments to provide protection from Indian attacks and frontier bandits. These backcountry settlers often made members of the political and economic elite uneasy just as their colonial counterparts had done. When farmers in western Massachusetts began an organized protest in 1786, this uneasiness reached crisis proportions.

The farmers of western Massachusetts were among the hardest hit by the postwar depression and the rising inflation that accompanied it. Many were deeply in debt to creditors who held mortgages on their farms and lands. In the 1780s, these farmers begged the state government for temporary relief, hoping that it would pass **stay laws** that would temporarily suspend creditors' rights to foreclose on, or seize, lands and farm equipment. The Massachusetts assembly responded sympathetically, but the upper house of the state legislature, with its more elite members, sided with the creditors and blocked the passage of stay laws. The Massachusetts government then shocked the farmers by raising taxes.

In 1786 hundreds of farmers revolted. They believed they were protecting their rights and their communities as true republicans must do, but to their creditors the farmers appeared to be dangerous rebels threatening the state with "anarchy, confusion, and total ruin." They accused **Daniel Shays**, a 39-year-old veteran of Bunker Hill, of leading the revolt.

In 1786, farmers known as "Shays's rebels" closed several courts and freed a number of their fellow farmers from debtors' prison. Their actions struck a chord among desperate farmers in other New England states, and the rebellion began to spread. Fear of a widespread uprising spurred the Massachusetts government to action. It sent a military force of six hundred to Springfield, where more than a thousand farmers, most armed with pitchforks rather than guns, had gathered to close the local courthouse. When the farmers were within range, the troops let loose a cannon barrage that killed four and set the remaining men to flight. Although Daniel Shays managed to escape, by February 4, 1787 the farmers' revolt was over.

The revolt stirred up fears of slave rebellions and pitched battles between debtors and creditors, haves and have-nots. Above all, it raised doubts among influential political figures about the ability of either state governments or the Confederation to preserve the rule of law. To men such as George Washington, now a planter and private citizen, Shays's Rebellion was a national tragedy, not for its participants but for the reputation of the United States. When the farmers' protest began, Washington wrote to authorities in

**squatter** A person who settles on unoccupied land to which he or she has no legal claim.

**stay laws** Laws suspending the right of creditors to foreclose on debtors; they were designed to protect indebted farmers from losing their land.

**Daniel Shays** Revolutionary War veteran considered the leader of the farmers' uprising in western Massachusetts called Shays's Rebellion.



# Investigating America

## Mercy Otis Warren Criticizes Boston Citizens

For many Americans, the promise of the Revolution appeared to be failing during the troubled 1780s. Mercy Otis Warren was hardly alone in believing that a republic would survive only as long as its citizens remained patriots. For her, a patriot was a citizen who worked hard, lived simply, and was willing to sacrifice life and fortune for the sake of his or her country. She began to worry that such virtuous men and women were no longer in the majority. Her own Massachusetts society, she feared, had turned its back on virtue in the pursuit of luxury and frivolous enjoyments. She satirized these selfish characteristics in her play, *The Motley Assembly, a Farce*, published for the entertainment of the curious. The play ends with this condemnation of her neighbors and former friends:

.....  
Blush Boston! Blush! Thy honest sons bewail, That dance  
and song over patriol zeal prevail, That Whigs and Tories  
(joined by wayward chance) Should hand in hand lead on the  
sprightly dance, Or sword to sword as harmlessly oppose  
As all such heroes would their country's foes, Here lured  
by fashion, opposite interests join, And lull their cares and

rage, in cards and wine. Here friends to freedom, vile apostate  
meet, And here unblushing can each other greet. In mixed  
assembly, see they crowd the place. Stain to their country,  
to their sires disgrace. Hell in some hearts, but pleasure in  
each face, All, all are qualified to join this tribe, Who have a  
hundred dollars to subscribe.

.....

- The terms *whigs and tories* come from seventeenth-century English politics. Whigs opposed the religious policies of, and abuse of power by, King Charles II. Tories supported both the king's power and his church. Why do you think American loyalists would resent being labeled as Tories?
- An apostate is a person who betrays a trust or an allegiance. What events in 1779 might have led the people of Boston to believe that the worst of the war was over and that they did not need to make as many sacrifices to the cause of independence as they had in 1775 or 1776?
- Why did Warren point out the cost of joining this social assembly?

Massachusetts urging them to act fairly but decisively. "If they have real grievances," he said, the government should acknowledge them. But if not, authorities should "employ the force of government against them at once."

### The Revolt of the "Better Sort"

In important ways, the Articles of Confederation embodied the desires of the revolutionary generation for a limited central government that directed diplomacy and coordinated military defense but left the major tasks of governing to local representative governments. Yet, such a government was proving to have troubling costs and trying consequences. By 1786, members of the nation's elite, or the "better sort," believed the survival of the nation was in question. Washington predicted "the worst consequences from a half-starved, limping government, always moving upon crutches and tottering at every step." For him, for Hamilton, and for others like them who thought of themselves as **nationalists**, the solution was clear. "I do not conceive we can long exist as a nation," Washington remarked, "without having lodged somewhere a power which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner as the authority of the State government extends over the several states." Here was a different form of republican government to consider.



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

**nationalists** Americans who preferred a strong central government rather than the limited government prescribed in the Articles of Confederation.



In 1876, Thomas Pritchard Rossiter painted his *Signing of the Constitution of the United States* honoring a group of statesmen that included Madison, Hamilton, and Washington, who presided over the Constitutional Convention. Jefferson, absent because of his duties as minister to France, referred to the fifty-five delegates who crafted the Constitution as a gathering of "demigods." Bettmann/Corbis.

Support for a stronger national government grew in the key states of Virginia, Massachusetts, and New York. Men of wealth and political experience urged a reform agenda that included giving the central government taxing powers, as well as the strength to establish stable diplomatic and trade relations with foreign countries. To that end, in 1786 a group of influential Virginians called for a meeting on interstate trade restrictions that placed import taxes on goods carried from state to state. But the meeting organizers had a second agenda: to test the waters on revising the nation's constitution. Convinced that their position had substantial support, these nationalists asked Congress to call a convention in Philadelphia so that political leaders could continue to discuss interstate commerce problems—and other aspects of government reform. Some members of Congress were reluctant, but news of Shays's Rebellion tipped the balance in favor of the convention.

## Creating a New Constitution

- ★ **What major compromises did the framers make in writing the new constitution?**
- ★ **What safeguards did James Madison see in his "checks and balances" system?**

Late in May 1787, George Washington called the convention to order in Philadelphia. Before him sat delegates from eleven of the thirteen states (New Hampshire's delegates did not arrive until late July), closeted behind curtained windows and locked doors in the heat and humidity of a Philadelphia summer. These secrecy precautions stemmed, they said, from their wish to speak frankly about the nation's political and economic problems. They were also looking out for their own reputations in their home states for they quickly realized they might have to make compromises that would be unpopular with their state governments. Only Rhode Island refused to participate, accusing the convention of masquerading as a discussion of interstate trade in order to drastically

revise the national government. The accusation by “Rogue’s Island,” as critics called the smallest state, was correct. The fifty-five prominent and prosperous men did expect to make significant changes in the structure of the government.

Most of the men gathered in that room were lawyers, merchants, or planters—Americans of social standing though not necessarily intellectual achievement. When the absent Jefferson later referred to the convention members as “demigods,” he was probably thinking of the likes of 81-year-old Benjamin Franklin, whose crafty political style set him apart from his colleagues despite his advanced age; or of the brilliant Hamilton of New York, whose reputation as a financial mastermind equal to the Confederation’s adviser Robert Morris was well established; or of Pennsylvania’s Gouverneur Morris, who was widely admired for his intelligence as well as for his literary skills; and finally of **James Madison**, the prim Virginia planter who turned out to be the chief architect of a new constitution.

**James Madison** Virginia planter and political theorist known as the “father of the Constitution”; he became the fourth president of the United States.

### Revise or Replace?

Most of the delegates were nationalists, but they did not necessarily agree on how best to proceed. Should they revise the Articles or abandon them? Eventually, several delegates, including Hamilton himself, would present blueprints for the new government. But it was the Virginia planter and lawyer Edmund Randolph who first captured the convention’s attention with his delegation’s proposal, which effectively amended the Articles of Confederation out of existence.

Although Randolph introduced the **Virginia Plan** on the convention floor, James Madison was its guiding spirit. The 36-year-old Madison was no dashing figure. He was a small, frail, charmless hypochondriac. But he was highly respected as a scholar of philosophy and history and as an astute political theorist whose long service in the Virginia legislature and in the Confederation Congress gave him a practical understanding of politics and government. At the convention, Madison brought all his knowledge to bear on this question: What was the best form of government for a strong republic? He concluded, as John Adams had done early in the 1780s, that the fear of tyranny should not rule out a powerful national government. Any dangerous abuse of power could be avoided if internal checks and balances were built into the republican structure.

**Virginia Plan** Fourteen proposals by the Virginia delegation to the Constitutional Convention for creating a more powerful central government and giving states proportional representation in a bicameral legislature.

Madison’s Virginia Plan embodied this conviction. It called for a government with three distinct branches—legislative, executive, and judicial—to replace the Confederation’s Congress, which was performing all three functions. By dividing power in this way, Madison intended to ensure that no individual or group of men could wield too much authority, especially for self-interested reasons. Madison’s plan also gave Congress the power to **veto** laws passed by the state legislatures and the right to intervene directly if a state acted to interrupt “the harmony of the United States.”

**veto** The power or right of one branch of government to reject the decisions of another branch.

The notion of a strong government able, as Madison put it, “to control the governed” but also “obliged to control itself” was endorsed by the delegates. But they were in sharp disagreement over many specific issues in the Virginia Plan. The greatest controversy again swirled around representation in the legislative branch—Congress. Madison proposed a bicameral legislature with membership in both houses based on proportional representation. Large states supported the plan, for representation based on population worked to their advantage. Small states objected heatedly, calling for equal representation for each state. Small-state delegates threw their support behind a second proposal, the **New Jersey Plan**, which also called for three branches of government and gave Congress the power to tax and to control national commerce. This plan, however, preserved an equal voice and vote for every state within a unicameral legislature.

**New Jersey Plan** A proposal submitted by the New Jersey delegation at the Constitutional Convention for creating a government in which the states would have equal representation in a unicameral legislature.

**Great Compromise** A proposal calling for a bicameral legislature with equal representation for the states in the Senate and proportional representation in the House.

**Three-Fifths Compromise** An agreement to count three-fifths of a state's slave population for purposes of determining a state's representation in the House of Representatives.

**executive powers** Powers given to the president by the Constitution.

**Electoral College** A body of electors chosen by the states to elect the president and vice president; each state may select a number of electors equal to the number of its senators and representatives in Congress.

Debate over the two plans dragged on through the steamy days of a June heat wave. Tempers flared, and threats to walk out of the convention came from both sides. Then a compromise, hammered out by a special committee, was presented by Roger Sherman of Connecticut. The **Great Compromise** used the idea of a two-house legislature to satisfy both sides. It proposed proportional representation in the lower house (the House of Representatives) and equal representation in the upper chamber (the Senate).

The delegates faced one last stumbling block over representation: Which Americans were to be counted to determine a state's population? This issue remained as divisive as when the Articles were drafted. Southern delegates argued that slaves, who composed as much as one-third and sometimes more of each plantation state's residents, should not be included in the population count on which a state's tax assessments were based. On the other hand, they insisted that these slaves should be included in the population count that determined a state's seats in the House of Representatives. Northern delegates protested, declaring that slaves should be considered property in both instances. These delegates were motivated by self-interest rather than a desire for consistency, for if slaves were considered property, not people, the North would dominate the lower house.

A compromise that defied reason but made brilliant political sense settled this question. The **Three-Fifths Compromise** established that three out of five slaves would be included in any state's critical headcount. A clause was then added guaranteeing that the Atlantic slave trade would continue for a twenty-year period.

### Drafting an Acceptable Document

The Three-Fifths Compromise ended weeks of debate over representation. No other issue arose to provoke such controversy, and the delegates proceeded calmly to implement the principle of checks and balances. For example, the president, or executive, was named commander in chief of the armed forces and given primary responsibility for foreign affairs. To balance these **executive powers**, Congress was given the right to declare war and to raise an army. Congress received the critical "power of the purse," but this power to tax and to spend the revenues raised by taxation was checked in part by the president's power to veto congressional legislation. As yet another balance, Congress could override a presidential veto by the vote of a two-thirds majority. Following the same logic of distributing power, the delegates gave authority to the president to name federal court judges, but the Senate had to approve all such appointments.

Occasionally, as in the system for electing the president, the convention chose awkward or cumbersome procedures. Many delegates doubted that the citizens of one state would be familiar enough with a candidate from a distant state to make a valid judgment. In an age of slow communication, few men besides George Washington had a truly national reputation. Should the president be chosen by state legislators who had perhaps worked in government with political leaders from outside their states? Delegates rose to object that this solution threatened too great a concentration of power in the legislators' hands. As a somewhat clumsy compromise, the delegates created the **Electoral College**, a group of special electors to be chosen by the states to vote for presidential candidates. Each state would be entitled to a number of electors equal to the number of its senators and representatives sitting in Congress. If two presidential candidates received the same number of Electoral College votes, or if no candidate received a majority of the Electoral College votes, then the House of Representatives would choose the new president.

The long summer of conflict and compromise ended with a new plan for a national government. Would the delegates be willing to put their names to the document they had created in secrecy and by overreaching their authority? Franklin fervently hoped



so. Though sick and bedridden, Franklin was carried by friends to the convention floor, where he pleaded for unanimous support for the new government. When a weary Washington at last declared the meetings adjourned on September 17, 1787, only a handful of delegates left without signing what the convention hoped would be the new American constitution.

## Resolving the Conflict of Vision

★ **What were the Antifederalists' arguments against the Constitution?**

★ **What were the Federalists' arguments in its favor?**

The framers of the Constitution called for special state **ratifying conventions** to discuss and then vote on the proposed change of government. They believed that these conventions would give citizens a more direct role in this important political decision. But the ratifying procedure also gave the framers two advantages. First, it allowed them to bypass the state legislatures, which stood to lose power under the new government. Second, it allowed them to nominate their supporters and campaign for their election to the ratifying conventions. The framers added to their advantage by declaring that the approval of only nine states was necessary to establish the Constitution.

**ratifying convention** A meeting of delegates in each state to determine whether that state would ratify the Constitution.

### The Ratification Controversy

As Hamilton boasted, “The new Constitution has in favor of its success . . . [the] very great weight of influence of the persons who framed it.” Hamilton was correct. Men of wealth, political experience, and frequently great persuasive powers put their skills to the task of achieving ratification. But what Hamilton did not mention was that many revolutionary heroes and political leaders opposed the Constitution with equal intensity—most notably Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams, and George Clinton, the popular governor of New York. Boston’s most effective revolutionary propagandist, Mercy Otis Warren, immediately took up her pen to attack the Constitution and even encouraged her neighbors to stand firm against what she called an assault on republican values. Thus the leadership on both sides of the issue was drawn from the political elite of the revolutionary generation.

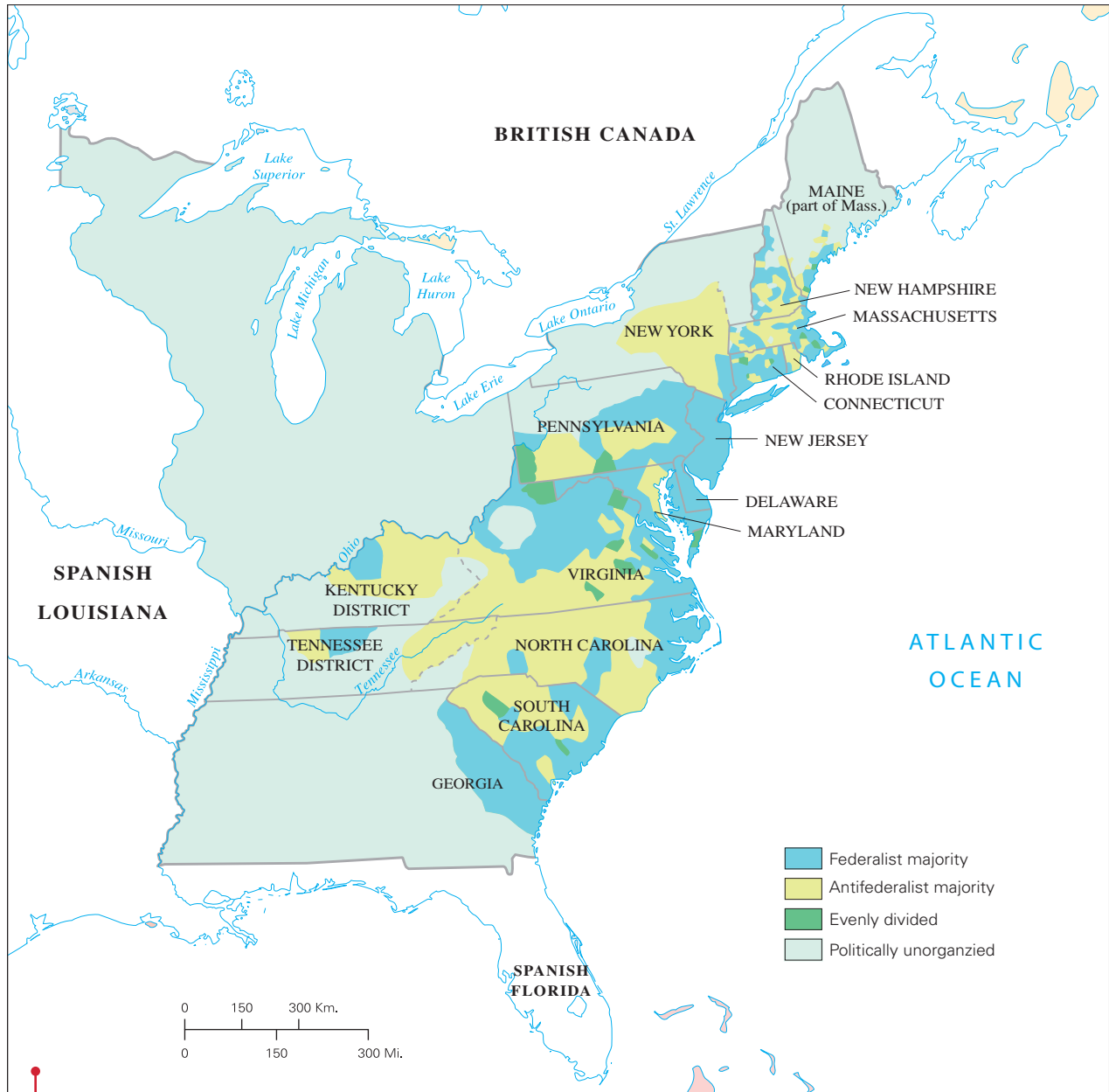
The pro-Constitution forces won an early and important victory by clouding the language of the debate. They abandoned the label “nationalists,” which drew attention to their belief in a strong central government, and chose to call themselves **Federalists**, a name originally associated with a system of strong state governments and limited national government. This shrewd tactic cheated opponents of the Constitution out of their rightful name. The pro-Constitution forces then dubbed their opponents **Antifederalists**. This label implied that their adversaries were negative thinkers, pessimists, and a group lacking a program of its own.

Although the philosophical debate over the best form of government for a republic was an important one, voters considered other, practical factors in choosing a Federalist or Antifederalist position. Voters in states with a stable or recovering economy were likely to oppose the Constitution because the Confederation system gave their states greater independent powers. Those in small, geographically or economically disadvantaged states were likely to favor a strong central government that could protect them from their competitive neighbors. The small states of Delaware and Connecticut ratified the Constitution quickly, but ratification was hotly contested in New York and Virginia.

**Federalists** Supporters of the Constitution; they desired a strong central government.

**Antifederalists** Opponents of the Constitution; they believed a strong central government was a threat to American liberties and rights.

To some degree, Federalist and Antifederalist camps matched the divisions between the relatively urban, market-oriented communities of the Atlantic coast and the frontier or rural communities of the inland areas (see Map 7.2). The backcountry areas of North and South Carolina and the less economically developed areas of Virginia saw little benefit in a stronger central government, especially one that might tax them. But coastal centers of trade and overseas commerce such as Boston, New York City, and Charleston were eager to see an aggressive and effective national policy regarding foreign



**MAP 7.2** The Federalist and Antifederalist Struggle over the Constitution

The battle over ratification of the Constitution was fiercely fought throughout 1787 and 1788. This map shows the areas of strong antifederalism, the areas of Federalist strength, and the scattered pockets where opinion was evenly divided.

and interstate trade. In these urban centers, artisans and shopkeepers joined forces with wealthy merchants to support the Constitution as they had once joined them to make the Revolution. As a result, the Federalists were better organized, had more resources at their disposal, and campaigned more effectively than the Antifederalists.

The Antifederalists struck hard against the dangerous elitism they believed they saw in the Constitution. They portrayed the Federalists as a privileged, sophisticated minority, ready and able to tyrannize the people if their powerful national government was ratified. Be careful, one Massachusetts man warned, because “these lawyers, and men of learning, and moneyed men, that talk so finely and gloss over matters so smoothly, to make us poor illiterate people swallow down the pill, expect to get into Congress themselves.” And New York Antifederalist Melancton Smith predicted that the proposed new government would lead inevitably to rule by a wealthy, unrepresentative minority. The Virginia revolutionary leader Richard Henry Lee was flabbergasted that his generation would even consider ratifying the Constitution. “Tis really astonishing,” he wrote to a New York opponent, “that the same people, who have just emerged from a long and cruel war in defense of liberty, should agree to fix an elective **despotism** upon themselves and posterity.”

**despotism** Rule by a tyrant.

The Federalist strategy was to portray America in crisis. They pointed to the stagnation of the American economy, to the potential for revolt and social anarchy, and to the contempt that other nations showed toward the young republic. They insisted that the Constitution could preserve the republican ideals of the Revolution far better than would the Articles of Confederation. Their cause was put forward most convincingly by Hamilton, Madison, and John Jay, who entered the newspaper wars over ratification in the key state of New York. Together, they produced a series of eighty-five essays known today as the *Federalist Papers*. Their common theme was the link between American prosperity and a strong central government.

**Federalist Papers** Essays written by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison in support of the Constitution.

### The Federalist Victory

Practical politics rather than political theory seemed to influence the outcome of many of the ratifying conventions. Delaware, New Jersey, Georgia, and Connecticut—all small states—quickly approved the Constitution. Antifederalists in Pennsylvania’s rural western regions lost control of the convention to the Federalists and thus that state also endorsed the Constitution. In the remaining states, including Massachusetts, Virginia, and New York, the two sides were more evenly matched.

With Antifederalists in the majority in the Massachusetts convention, the Federalists’ strategy was to make political deals with key delegates, winning over Antifederalists such as Samuel Adams and John Hancock, for example, with promises to demand the addition of a bill of rights to the Constitution. Similar guarantees in Virginia, together with the understanding that Washington was certain to be the first president of the United States if the Constitution went into effect, carried the day in the crucial southern state. Massachusetts ratified by a narrow, nineteen-vote margin, and Virginia became the tenth state to ratify the new government on June 25, 1788.

New York’s battle was equally intense, but once ten states had ratified the Constitution, the new government was a **fait accompli**. Realizing this, on July 26, 1788, a majority of New York delegates voted yes on ratification.

**fait accompli** An accomplished deed or fact that cannot be reversed or undone.

### President George Washington

The election of senators and Congress members was almost complete by February 4, 1789, when presidential electors met in each state to choose the nation’s first president. Although Washington did not seek the position, he knew the nation

expected him to serve. The general was among the very few in the revolutionary generation to have a national reputation. And the hero of the Revolution looked and acted the part of the dignified, virtuous patriot. Washington became president by a unanimous vote of the Electoral College. For regional balance, New Englander John Adams was chosen vice president.

In April 1789, as Washington made his way from Virginia to his inauguration in New York City, the temporary national capital, Americans thronged to greet him with parades, sharply dressed military escorts, and choruses of church bells and cannon fire. Thousands of supporters gathered to see him take the oath of office. Yet amid the celebration, Washington and his closest advisers knew the future was uncharted and uncertain. “We are in a wilderness,” Madison observed, “without a single footstep to guide us.”

Washington agreed, and he proceeded with caution and deliberation. He labored carefully over each of his selections to the almost one thousand federal offices waiting to be filled. He took particular care in choosing the men to head four executive departments created with approval from Congress. Naming his **protégé** Alexander Hamilton to the Treasury Department was probably Washington’s easiest decision. He asked the Massachusetts military strategist Henry Knox to head the War Department and fellow Virginian Edmund Randolph to serve as attorney general. Washington chose another Virginian, Thomas Jefferson, to be secretary of state. Over time, the president established a pattern of meeting with this **cabinet** of advisers on a regular basis to discuss policy matters. Together, they made major decisions and, as Washington expected, expressed serious disagreements that exposed him to differing viewpoints on policy.

**protégé** An individual whose welfare or career is promoted by an influential person.

**cabinet** A body of officials appointed by the president to run the executive departments of the government and to act as the president’s advisers.

## Competing Visions Re-emerge

★ **How did Hamilton’s expectations for the new nation differ from those of Jefferson?**

★ **How did the French Revolution affect Washington’s diplomatic policy?**

A remarkable—but, as it turned out, short-lived—spirit of unity marked the early days of Washington’s administration. Federalists had won the overwhelming majority of seats in the new Congress, and this success enabled them to work quickly and efficiently on matters they believed had priority. But the unity was fragile. By 1792, sectional divisions were deepening, and as the government debated foreign policy and domestic affairs, two distinct groups, voicing serious differences of opinion, began to form. Alexander Hamilton’s vision for America guided one group. At the heart of the other was the vision of Thomas Jefferson.

**Judiciary Act of 1789** Law establishing the Supreme Court and the lower federal courts; it gave the Supreme Court the right to review state laws and state court decisions to determine their constitutionality.

**Bill of Rights** The first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution, added in 1791 to protect certain basic rights of American citizens.

### Unity’s Achievements

In addition to creating the four executive departments that became the cabinet, the First Congress passed the **Judiciary Act of 1789**. This act established a Supreme Court, thirteen district courts, and three circuit courts. It also empowered the Supreme Court to review the decisions of state courts and to nullify any state laws that violated either the Constitution or any treaty made by the federal government. President Washington chose John Jay to serve as first chief justice of the Supreme Court.

At the same time, Madison prodded Congress to draft the promised **Bill of Rights**. On December 15, 1791, ten amendments were added to the Constitution as the Bill of Rights, and soon after, both Rhode Island and North Carolina ratified the Constitution and joined the union. Eight of these original constitutional amendments spelled out the



government's commitment to protect individual **civil liberties**. They guaranteed that the new national government could not limit free speech, interfere with religious worship, deny citizens the right to keep or bear arms, force the quartering of troops in private homes, or allow homes to be searched without proper search warrants. The amendments prohibited the government from requiring persons accused of crimes to testify against themselves, nor could it deny citizens the right to a trial by jury. The government also could not deprive a citizen of life, liberty, or property without "due process of law," or impose excessive bail, or administer "cruel and unusual punishments." The Ninth Amendment made clear that the inclusion of these protections and rights did not mean that others were excluded. The Tenth Amendment stated that any powers not given to the federal government or denied to the states belonged solely to the states or the people.

### Hamilton and Jefferson's Differences

Hamilton was consumed by a bold dream: to transform agricultural America into a manufacturing society that rivaled Great Britain. His blueprint for achieving this goal called for tariffs designed to protect developing American industry rather than to simply raise revenue. It also called for **subsidies**, or government financial support, for new enterprises and incentives to support new industries. And it relied on strong economic and diplomatic ties with the mercantile interests of England. Hamilton's vision had great appeal in the Northeast but few advocates in the southern states. Indeed, his ambitious development program seemed to confirm Patrick Henry's worst fears: that the new government would produce "a system which I have ever dreaded—subserviency of Southern to Northern Interests."

Virginia planters Thomas Jefferson and James Madison offered a different vision of the new nation: a prosperous, agrarian society. Instead of government tariffs designed to encourage American manufacturing, they advocated a national policy of **free trade** to keep consumer prices low. The agrarian view did not entirely rule out commerce and industry in the United States. As long as commercial society remained "a handmaiden to agriculture," Jefferson saw no danger that citizens would be exploited or lured into the love of luxury that destroyed republics. In the same fashion, Hamilton was content to see agriculture thrive as long as it did not drain away the scarce resources of the national government or stand in the way of commercial and industrial growth. Hamilton and men of similar vision around him spoke of themselves as true **Federalists**. Those who agreed with Jefferson and Madison identified themselves as **Republicans**.

As secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton was expected to seek solutions to the nation's **fiscal** problems, particularly the foreign and domestic debts hanging over America's head. In January 1790, Hamilton submitted a *Report on Public Credit* to the Congress. In it, he argued that the public debt fell into three categories, each requiring attention: (1) foreign debt, owed primarily to France; (2) state debts, incurred by the individual states to finance their war efforts; and (3) a national debt in the form of government securities (the notorious paper continentals) that had been issued to help finance the war. To establish credit, and thus to be able to borrow money and attract investors in American enterprises, Hamilton declared that the nation had to make good on all it owed.

Hamilton proposed that the federal government assume responsibility for the repayment of all three categories of debt. He insisted the continentals be redeemed for the amount shown on the certificate, regardless of what their current value might be. And he proposed that *current* holders of continentals should receive that payment regardless of how or when they had acquired them. These recommendations, and the political agenda for economic growth they revealed, raised furious debate within Congress.

**civil liberties** Fundamental individual rights such as freedom of speech and religion, protected by law against interference from the government.

**subsidies** Financial assistance that a government grants to an enterprise considered to be in the public interest.

**free trade** Trade between nations without any protective tariffs.

**Federalists** Political group formed during Washington's first administration; led by Alexander Hamilton, they favored an active role for government in encouraging commercial and manufacturing growth.

**Republicans** Political group formed during Washington's first administration; led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, they favored limited government involvement in encouraging manufacturing and the continued dominance of agriculture in the national economy.

**fiscal** Relating to finances.

James Madison, until now the voice of unity in Congress, leapt to his feet to protest the treasury secretary's plan. The government's debt, both financial and moral, Madison argued, was not to the current creditors holding the continentals but to the *original* holders. Many of the original holders were ordinary citizens and Continental soldiers who had sold these certificates to speculators at a tremendous loss during the postwar depression. The state treasuries of New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland were three of the largest speculators, buying up great quantities of these bonds when they were disgracefully cheap. If Hamilton's plan were adopted, Madison protested, these speculators, rather than the nation's true patriots, would reap enormous unfair profits.

Madison next led the opposition to Hamilton's proposal that the federal government assume, or take over, the states' debts. Here, Hamilton's motives were quite transparent: as a fierce nationalist, he wished to concentrate both political and economic power in the federal government at the expense of the states. He knew that creditors, who included America's wealthiest citizens, would take a particular interest in the welfare and success of any government that owed them money. By concentrating the debt in the federal government, Hamilton intended to give America's elite a clear stake in America's success. Hamilton also knew that a sizable debt provided a compelling reason for raising revenue. By assuming the state debts, the federal government could undercut state governments' need for new taxes—and justify its own.

**inequities** Unfair circumstances or proceedings.

Congress saw the obvious **inequities** of the plan. Politicians from the Chesapeake quickly reminded Congress that their governments had paid all their war debts during the 1780s. If the national government assumed state debts and raised taxes to repay them, responsible citizens of Maryland and Virginia would be taxed for the failure of Massachusetts or New York to honor their obligations. Although the Senate approved the assumption of state debts, members of the House strongly objected. Hamilton, realizing he faced defeat, maneuvered a behind-the-scenes compromise with Madison and his ally Jefferson, using the location of the national capital as a bargaining chip.

In 1789 the new government had made New York its temporary home until Congress could settle on a permanent site. The choice turned out to be politically delicate because of regional jealousy and competition, and also because in an age of slow travel and communication, it was difficult to keep watch over, and influence, government activities from a distance. Hamilton's proposal to locate the capital southward in exchange for the Virginians' support on assumption of state debts appealed to southern regional pride and to Madison and Jefferson's desire to monitor the deliberations of a powerful government. Northerners also knew the value of proximity, but by trading away the capital location, Hamilton ensured the success of his assumption plan.

Early 1791 brought another controversial proposal from the treasury secretary: a plan to charter a national bank that would serve as fiscal agent for the federal government. Modeled on the Bank of England, the bank would be funded by both the government and private sources in a partnership that fit nicely with Hamilton's plan to tie national prosperity to the interests of private wealth.

**implied power** Power that is not specifically granted to the government by the Constitution but can be viewed as necessary to carry out the governing duties listed in the Constitution.

Once again, Madison led the opposition. He argued that the Constitution gave the government neither the express right nor the **implied power** to create a national institution such as the bank. The majority of Congress did not agree, but Madison's argument did cause President Washington to hesitate over signing the congressional bill into law. As usual, Washington decided to consult advisers and asked both Secretary of State Jefferson and the treasury head Hamilton to set down their views.

**strict constructionist** A person who believes the government has only the powers specifically named in the Constitution.

Like Madison, Jefferson was at that time a **strict constructionist** in his interpretation of the Constitution. On February 15, 1791, he wrote of the dangers of interpreting

# Investigating America

## Hamilton and Madison Debate Funding and Assumption, 1790

The debates over Hamilton's fiscal programs divided old allies and hastened the development of a two-party system. The discussions in Congress also revealed two very different visions of the republic. For Hamilton, the script represented the nation's economic potential, for the securities, when concentrated in the hands of a small number of investors, meant capital. Pay the farmer veterans, he argued, and they would buy a new plow, another cow. Men of means would invest the funds in new businesses that would employ hundreds. The first portion of this document is taken from Hamilton's *Report on Public Credit*. Madison responded in Congress on February 11, 1790.

.....  
[H]amilton addressed the question of] whether a discrimination ought not to be made between original holders of the public securities and present possessors by purchase. Those who advocate a discrimination are for making a full provision for the securities of the former, at their nominal value, but contend that the latter ought to receive no more than the cost to them and the interest. . . .

But though many of the original holders sold from necessity, it does not follow that this was the case with all of them. It may well be supposed that some of them did it either through want of confidence in an eventual provision or from the allurements of some profitable speculation. How shall these different classes be discriminated from each other? How shall it be ascertained, in any case, that the money which the original holder obtained for his security was not more beneficial to him than if he had held it to the present time, to avail himself of the provision which shall be made? How shall it be . . . determined whether a discrimination, independent of the breach of contract, would not do a real injury to purchasers; and if it included a compensation to the

primitive proprietors, would not give them an advantage to which they had no equitable pretension.

[Madison replied that many original script holders were forced to sell at low prices during the depression of the 1780s.] A composition, then, is the only expedient that remains. Let it be a liberal one in favor of the present holders; let them have the highest price which has prevailed in the market; and let the residue belong to the original sufferers. This will not do perfect justice; but it will do more real justice and perform more of the public faith than any other expedient proposed. The present holders, where they have purchased at the lowest price of the securities, will have a profit that cannot reasonably be complained of; where they have purchased at a higher price, the profit will be considerable; and even the few who have purchased at the highest price cannot well be losers, with a well funded interest of 6 per cent. The original sufferers will not be fully indemnified; but they will receive from their country a tribute due to their merits, which, if it does not entirely heal their wounds, will assuage the pain of them.

.....

- Madison faced the problem that poor recordkeeping made it difficult to prove who the original holders were, as well as the fact that a majority of those in Congress were script investors. Who do you believe was right in this debate?
- How should a government balance humanitarian concerns with its legal responsibilities? Many investors lived in Europe. What would the defeat of Hamilton's position do to the American image abroad? And did that matter to hard-pressed farmer veterans of the Revolution?

Excerpted from *LIBERTY AND ORDER: THE FIRST AMERICAN PARTY STRUGGLE*, edited by Lance Banning. © 2004 Liberty Fund.

the government's powers broadly. "To take a single step beyond the boundaries . . . specifically drawn around the powers of Congress," he warned, "is to take possession of a boundless field of power." Hamilton, a **broad constructionist**, saw no such danger in the bank. He based his argument on Article 1, Section 8, of the Constitution, which granted Congress the right to "make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper" to exercise its legitimate powers. As he put it on February 23: "The powers contained in a constitution" should be "construed liberally in advancement of the public good." Because it seemed



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**broad constructionist** A person who believes the government can exercise any implied powers that are in keeping with the spirit of the Constitution.

obvious that “a bank has a natural relation to the power of collecting taxes,” Hamilton believed there could be no reasonable constitutional argument against it. Hamilton’s argument persuaded the president. The bank was chartered, and by July 4, 1791, stock in the newly established Bank of the United States was offered for sale.

Hamilton’s assumption strategy and the creation of a bank were just preliminaries to the ambitious economic development program that he put forward in 1792 in his *Report on Manufactures*. But this time his package of policies for aggressively industrializing the nation—including protective tariffs and government incentives and subsidies—was too extreme to win support in Congress. Still, the Bank of the United States, which provided much-needed working **capital** for new commercial and manufacturing enterprises, and the establishment of sound national credit, which attracted foreign capital to the new nation, had gone far toward moving the economy in the direction of Hamilton’s vision.

**capital** Money needed to start or sustain a commercial enterprise.

**French Revolution** Political rebellion against the French monarchy and aristocratic privileges; it began in 1789 and ended in 1799.

**Louis XVI** The king of France (r. 1774–1792) when the French Revolution began; he and his wife, Marie Antoinette, were executed in 1793 by the revolutionary government.

**Reign of Terror** The period from 1793 to 1794 in the French Revolution when thousands of people were executed as enemies of the state.

**Prussia** A northern European state that became the basis for the German Empire in the late nineteenth century.

### Foreign Affairs and Deepening Divisions

In 1789, just as George Washington became the first president of the United States, the **French Revolution** began. And in the years in which Hamilton was advancing his economic programs, that revolution stirred new controversy

within American politics.

The first signs of serious resistance to the French monarchy came when **Louis XVI**, king of France, asked for new taxes. Reformers within the French parliament, or Estates General, refused, choosing instead to reduce the king’s power and create a constitutional monarchy. Outside the halls of government, crowds took to the streets in the name of broad social reform. On July 14, 1789, Parisian radicals stormed the Bastille prison, a symbol of royal oppression, tearing down its walls and liberating its political prisoners. The crowds filling the Paris streets owed some of their political rhetoric and ideals to the American Revolution, a debt the marquis de Lafayette acknowledged by sending his old friend President Washington the key to the Bastille. Like most Americans in these early days of the French Revolution, Washington was pleased to be identified with this new struggle for the “rights of man.” Briefly, enthusiasm for the French Revolution united Hamilton’s Federalists and Jefferson’s Republicans.

By 1793, however, American public opinion began to divide sharply on the French Revolution. Popular support faded when the revolution’s most radical party, the Jacobins, imprisoned and then executed the king and his wife. Many shocked Americans denounced the revolution completely when the Jacobins, in their **Reign of Terror** against any who opposed their policies, began marching moderate French reformers as well as members of the nobility to the guillotine to be beheaded.

Soon after eliminating their revolutionary opponents, the Jacobin government vowed to bring “liberty, equality, and brotherhood” to the peoples of Europe, by force if necessary. This campaign to spread the revolution led France into war with England, Spain, Austria, and **Prussia**. At the very least, France expected the Americans to honor the terms of the treaty of 1778, which bound the United States to protect French possessions in the West Indies from enemy attack. The enemy most likely to strike was Britain, a fact that suddenly made a second war between England and the United States a possibility. American opinion was contradictory and complex. Even those who continued to support the French Revolution, including Jefferson, did not want the United States to become embroiled in a European war. Yet many who condemned the revolution relished any excuse to attack the British, who still occupied forts in the Northwest and restricted American trade in the West Indies. Political leaders such as Hamilton who were working





On July 14, 1789, Parisian citizens stormed the Bastille prison, a symbol of the brutality of France's absolute monarchy. Americans celebrated this event, which marked the beginning of a Revolution that promised to establish "liberty, equality, and fraternity" in France. Yet as the revolution continued, and spread into a war between England and France, Americans would become deeply divided over whom to support. Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY.

toward better relations with England were appalled by the French assault on other nations and by any prospect of American involvement in it. While Americans struggled with these contradictory views, the French plotted to mobilize American support directly.

In 1793 the new French republic sent a diplomatic minister to the United States. When Citizen **Edmond Genet** arrived in Charleston, he immediately launched a campaign to recruit Americans to the war effort. By all accounts, Genet was charming, affable, and in the words of one observer, so humorous that he could "laugh us into the war." President Washington, however, was not amused. Genet's total disregard for diplomatic procedures infuriated Washington. The Frenchman's bold attempts to provoke incidents between the United States and Spain stunned Hamilton. Even Jefferson grew uncomfortable when Genet used the port of Philadelphia to transform a captured British ship into a French privateer!

On April 22, 1793, Washington decided to act. Publicly, the president issued a proclamation that declared American **neutrality** without actually using the term. While allowing Washington to avoid a formal **repudiation** of America's treaty with France, the proclamation made clear that the United States would give no military support to the French. Privately, Washington asked the French government to recall Genet.

The Genet affair had domestic as well as diplomatic repercussions. For the first time, George Washington came under public attack. Republicans questioned his integrity in refusing to honor the Franco-American treaty. Washington was furious with this assault on his character. Federalists struck back, insisting that Jefferson and his followers had actively encouraged Genet's outrageous behavior. By the end of 1793, Jefferson had resigned from Washington's government, more convinced than ever that Hamilton and his supporters posed a serious threat to the survival of the American republic.

**Edmond Genet** Diplomat sent by the French government to bring the United States into France's war with Britain and Spain.

**neutrality** The policy of treating both sides in a conflict the same way and thus favoring neither.

**repudiation** The act of rejecting the validity or the authority of something.

### Democratic-Republican societies

Political organizations formed in 1793 and 1794 to demand greater responsiveness by the state and federal governments to the needs of the citizens.

**excise** A tax on the production, sale, or consumption of a commodity or on the use of a service within a country.

**Whiskey Rebellion** A protest by grain farmers against the 1794 federal tax on whiskey; militia forces led by President Washington put down this Pennsylvania uprising.

**Treaty of San Lorenzo** Treaty between the United States and Spain, negotiated in 1795 by Thomas Pinckney; Spain granted the United States the right to navigate the Mississippi River and use the port of New Orleans as an outlet to the sea.

### More Domestic Disturbances

Hamilton's Federalists agreed that the republic was in danger—from Jefferson's Republicans. By Washington's second term (he was reelected in 1792), both political groups were trying to rouse popular sentiment for their programs and policies and against those of their opponents. Just as in the prerevolutionary years, these appeals to popular opinion broadened participation in the debate over the nation's future. Ordinary citizens did not always wait until their political leaders solicited their views, however. In the wake of the French Revolution and British interference in the West and on the seas, organizations rose up to make demands on the government. The most troubling of these to President Washington were the **Democratic-Republican societies**. Between 1793 and 1794, thirty-five Democratic-Republican societies were created. These pro-French political groups, were made up primarily of craftsmen and men of the "lower orders," but included some professional men, merchants, and planters. The groups, shared a common agenda: they insisted that political officeholders were "the agents of the people," not their leaders, and thus should act as the people wished.

In 1794 many western farmers were dismayed over what they considered the government's indifference toward the people. Kentucky settlers fretted about the navigation of the Mississippi, while Pennsylvania and Carolina farmers resented a new federal **excise** tax on whiskey. Although the Democratic-Republican societies denied an active role in spurring a new farmers' revolt, a belief that the government ought to respond to its citizens' demands did seem to motivate Pennsylvania, Carolina, and Kentucky farmers to tar and feather excise men, burn the barns of tax supporters, and intimidate county officials. The most determined and organized resistance came from Pennsylvania, where in July 1794, protesters were threatening to march on Pittsburgh if the tax on whiskey was not repealed.

President Washington, haunted by the memory of Shays's Rebellion and worried that the radical spirit of the French Revolution was spreading throughout America, determined to crush this **Whiskey Rebellion** firmly. Calling up thirteen thousand militiamen, the president marched into the countryside to do battle with a few hundred citizens armed with rifles and pitchforks. In the face of such an overwhelming military force, the whiskey rebels abruptly dispersed.

Washington publicly laid the blame for the western insurrection on the Democratic-Republican societies, and Federalists in Congress rushed to propose a resolution condemning those groups. The Jeffersonians, generally believed to be sympathetic to the societies, knew it would be politically damaging to defend them in the aftermath of the Whiskey Rebellion.

By 1796, the Democratic-Republican organizations had vanished from the American political scene. The president's public condemnation and Congress's censure undoubtedly damaged them. But improvements on the western borders also diminished the farmers' interest in protest organizations. In October 1795, Carolina planter Thomas Pinckney won the concession from Spain that Jay had been unable to obtain in earlier negotiations: free navigation of the Mississippi River. Pinckney's **Treaty of San Lorenzo** not only gave western farmers an outlet to ocean trade through the port of New Orleans but also ensured that Indian attacks would not be launched from Spanish-held territories.

### Jay's Treaty

During Washington's second administration, the diplomatic crisis continued to worsen. England resented America's claim to neutrality, believing it helped France. The British, therefore, ignored American claims that "free ships made free

goods” and began to seize American vessels trading with the French Caribbean islands. These seizures prompted new calls for war with Great Britain.

Jefferson’s departure left little anti-British sentiment in the cabinet. But it remained strong in the Congress, where the House of Representatives considered restricting trade with England. Outside the government, war hysteria showed itself as mobs attacked English seamen and tarred and feathered Americans expressing pro-British views.

Early in 1794, the president sent Chief Justice John Jay to England as his special **envoy**. Jay’s mission was to produce a compromise that would prevent war between the two nations. Jay, however, was pessimistic. Britain wanted to avoid war with the United States, but what would British diplomats concede to his weak nation?

Jay’s negotiations did resolve some old nagging issues. In the treaty that emerged, Britain agreed to finally evacuate the western forts it had promised to vacate in 1783. Britain also granted some small trade favors to America in the West Indies. For its part, the United States agreed to see that all prewar debts owed to British merchants were at last paid. In the end, Jay knew he had given up more than he gained: he had abandoned America’s demand for freedom of the seas and acknowledged the British navy’s right to remove French property from any neutral ship.

**Jay’s Treaty** did little to enhance John Jay’s reputation or popularity. After reading it, fellow New Yorker Robert R. Livingston said bluntly: “Mr. Jay has sacrificed the essential interests of this country.” In Congress, judgments on the treaty were openly **partisan**. Federalists credited Jay’s Treaty with preserving the peace, but Republicans condemned it as an embarrassment and a betrayal of France. The treaty finally squeaked through the Senate in the spring of 1795. The House debate on appropriations for the treaty was equally bitter and prolonged. In the end, however, Congress endorsed Jay’s handiwork. Despite the criticism, Jay knew he had accomplished his mission, for American neutrality in the European war continued.

**envoy** A government representative charged with a special diplomatic mission.

**Jay’s Treaty** Controversial 1794 treaty negotiated between the United States and Great Britain by John Jay to ensure American neutrality in the French and English war.

**partisan** Taking a strong position on an issue out of loyalty to a political group or leader.

### Washington’s Farewell

The bitter political fight over Jay’s Treaty, combined with the nagging criticism of his policies in the press and the hardening of party lines between Federalists and Republicans, helped George Washington make an important decision: he would not seek a third term as president. Instead, in 1796 he would return to his beloved Virginia home, Mount Vernon, and resume the life of a gentleman planter.

When Washington retired, he left behind a nation very different from the one whose independence he had helped win and whose survival he had helped secure. The postwar economic depression was over, and the war raging in Europe had produced a steadily rising demand for American foodstuffs. More fundamentally, in the fifteen years since the Revolution, the U.S. economy had moved decisively in the direction that Hamilton had envisioned: toward the values and expectations of a **market economy**—with its stress on maximizing profit and the pursuit of individual economic interests. Hamilton’s policies as secretary of the treasury had both reflected and advanced a growing interest in the expansion of trade, the growth of markets, and the development of American manufacturing and industry. In its political life, the republic had been reorganized and the relationships between the states and the central government redefined. The new Constitution granted greater diplomatic and commercial powers to the federal government but protected individual citizens through the Bill of Rights. America’s political leaders, though convinced that **factions** were dangerous to the survival of the republic, had nevertheless created and begun to work within an evolving party system.

**market economy** An economy in which production of goods is geared to sale or profit.

**faction** A political group with shared opinions or interests.

In his Farewell Address to the public, Washington spoke with feeling against parties in a republic, urging the nation to return to nonpartisan cooperation. Washington also warned America not to “entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition.” Americans must not let any alliance develop that would draw the nation into a foreign war.

## Summary

After independence was declared, Americans met the challenge of creating a new nation out of thirteen distinct states. Faced with enormous debt and still surrounded by real and potential enemies, the new nation’s ability to survive seemed doubtful to many. As colonies became states, they drafted their own constitutions. Some put in place democratic forms of government whereas others built in more restrictive features such as high property qualifications for officeholding. The first national government, created by the Articles of Confederation, reflected the states’ desire to preserve their individual sovereignty. It also embodied the revolutionary generation’s opposition to a strong centralized government. The Confederation government thus lacked basic powers: it could not raise taxes or regulate commerce.

The Confederation could point to several achievements, however; it negotiated the peace treaty of 1783, and it established, through the Northwest Ordinance, the process by which territories became states on an equal footing with the original states. But with limited powers, the Confederation could not resolve the nation’s financial problems, deal effectively with foreign nations, or ensure social order within its borders. Efforts to raise funds through the sale of western land led to new conflict with both the British and the Indians. Settlement on the southern frontier provoked retaliation by the Spanish.

Domestic violence erupted when Massachusetts farmers, hard hit by the postwar depression, rose up in revolt in Shays’s Rebellion in 1786. By that time, many of the nation’s elite political figures were calling for a stronger national government.

These elites achieved that in the summer of 1787, with the creation of a new constitution. But soon after George Washington took office as the first president, serious differences in political opinion again emerged. Hamilton’s vision of a vigorous commercial and industrial nation conflicted with Jefferson’s desire for an agrarian nation. Their two factions disagreed over economic and foreign policy. The French Revolution intensified the divisions: Whereas Hamilton argued against American support for the French in their war with England, Jefferson pressed the administration to support their fellow revolutionaries. Washington managed to steer a neutral course in this European conflict. By the end of Washington’s second term, the United States had expanded its borders; negotiated with Spain for access to the Mississippi River; and under Hamilton’s guidance, it had established a national bank at the center of an economic system that promoted market-oriented growth. The country had survived domestic unrest and the development of political parties. The departing Washington cautioned Americans not to allow competing visions of America’s future to harm the new nation.

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# CHAPTER 8

# The Early Republic 1796–1804

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

### **Conflict in the Adams Administration**

The Split Election of 1796  
XYZ: The Power of Patriotism  
The Home Front in the Quasi-War  
Settlement with France

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Jefferson's  
Kentucky Resolution, 1798

### **The "Revolution of 1800"**

The Lesser of Republican Evils  
Federalist Defenses and a Loyal  
Opposition

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** Classical Versus  
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Jefferson's Vision for America

### **Republicanism in Action**

Assault on Federalist Defenses  
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Threats to Jefferson's Vision  
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### **Challenge and Uncertainty in Jefferson's America**

The Religious Response to Social  
Change  
The Problem of Race in Jefferson's  
Republic

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Jefferson's  
Notes and Slavery, 1785

### **Summary**

## **INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Jedidiah Peck**

Jedidiah Peck, a veteran of the American Revolution, was a member of the New York Assembly at the time of his arrest in 1799. The United States was caught up in a wave of patriotism after the French had slighted President Adams's ambassadors in the XYZ affair. Federalists, pushing for a war against France, had passed a Sedition Act designed to silence all internal dissent. The act divided the country and enraged the Republicans. Perhaps more than any other warrant issued under the federal Sedition Law of 1798, Peck's time in jail indicated just how determined many members of the Adams administration were to silence opposition voices. His arrest also reveals that no national consensus had yet emerged on what, if any, limits should exist on free speech during wartime—a debate over political dissent that continues to this day.

Following his years in the state militia, Peck settled along the frontier, in Otsego, New York. Like many ambitious young men, Peck pursued a number of occupations, from millwright to surveyor to preacher, and the last two jobs brought him into contact with other new voters. Despite his common background and lack of formal education, Peck identified with the Federalist Party and its centralized approach to economic development. In 1798 he was appointed judge of the County Court of Common Pleas, and the following year saw his election to the state assembly.

### **SEDITION ACT BROADSIDE**

Luther Baldwin was in a Newark, New Jersey tavern, when he drunkenly wished that a celebratory artillery salute hit President Adams in the posterior. Tried for sedition, Baldwin was fined \$150 and briefly jailed.

American Antiquarian Society

NEWARK, November 6.

Sedition law, &c

Mr. Luther Baldwin, of this town, was on Saturday last arrested by the marshal of this State under the late sedition act, for dropping an expression, in an unguarded moment, amounting as it is said, to a wish that the president of the United States was dead. That it is highly improper and unbecoming for any person to wish the death of another all will allow—but that it ought to be made the subject of a prosecution all will disallow; and neither ought it to be if made respecting one of the officers of government, for that would be placing them, who are the servants or agents of the people, above the people themselves. Here's liberty for you! But more on this subject hereafter.

Little credit is due to the English ministerial details of the subjugation of Ireland. Americans can judge of ministerial accounts of the suppression of rebellion: how often did the royal

Gazettes announce that the rebellion in America, was quelled. How was Burgoyne described as marching with an all conquering army down to New York—and yet we know he went to Boston, under the safe conduct of the brave general Gates—and Cornwallis may yet go to Paris. May Ireland prove a second America, to countenance the efforts of the patriots.

Once in Albany, however, Peck defied his party. He not only welcomed a discussion over endorsing the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, which asserted that states could reject federal laws, he also favored a resolution declaring the Sedition Act unconstitutional under the First Amendment. Furious with Peck's votes, local Federalists called for his removal from the party. But Peck ran for reelection and won—this time as a Republican. Angry at what he regarded as an assault on his political independence, Peck publicly signed and circulated a petition that called on Congress to repeal the hated Sedition Act.

Now it was the Federalists who would not back down. Judge William Cooper, the Federalist squire who dominated central New York politics (and the father of novelist James Fenimore Cooper), handed down an indictment that accused Peck of circulating a malicious petition in “violation of the Peace and dignity of the United States.” Marshals dragged Peck from his home “at midnight, manacled,” and carried him to New York City for trial. After posting bail, Peck returned to the assembly and even ran for reelection while awaiting his April 1800 trial.

The Federalists had gone too far. The “right to petition the government for a redress of grievances” was clearly protected by the First Amendment, and as gleeful Republicans pointed out, even George III had accepted petitions from his American subjects. Embarrassed, President Adams instructed the district attorney to use his discretion in the case, and at that point the charges against Peck were quietly dropped. For many, Peck became the symbol of peaceful protest within the system. Yet the question of whether citizens can, or should, criticize the government during time of war would continue to haunt the country throughout its history.

When Washington stepped down as president, the stability that his leadership lent to a new and uncertain government retired with him. Washington's replacement, John Adams, proved incapable of calming national anxieties. Under his watch, America became involved in an undeclared war with France and saw its international reputation consistently decline. Domestic unrest prevailed as well. Led by Alexander Hamilton, hardcore Federalists had tried to undermine the electoral process in 1796 and then used the crisis with France to wage an internal war against their political enemies. Far from succeeding in the destruction of their critics, these Federalist efforts helped crystallize opposition, giving Hamilton's key rival, Thomas Jefferson, a forum from which to assault the party in power. In 1800, despite trying to rig the national election again, Federalists were soundly defeated and turned out of office.

Assuming the presidency in 1801, Jefferson ushered in a new era in American politics, instituting a series of reforms that launched the country on a course of continental expansion and global trade. His secretary of the treasury, Albert Gallatin, implemented drastic tax cuts and even deeper slashes in government spending. Despite reductions in naval expenditures, Jefferson waged an aggressive foreign policy designed to restore American international trading and win new territory from along the nation's borders. His successes could be measured by a mounting federal treasury surplus, increased national income, and expanding borders. But for many, the promise of Jefferson's America remained unfulfilled. For women, Native Americans, and African Americans, life improved little, if at all, and underlying prejudices and rigid codes of public behavior prevented true democratization.

# Chronology

<b>1791</b>	Slave revolt in Saint Domingue		John Marshall becomes chief justice
<b>1796</b>	George Washington's Farewell Address		War begins between American navy ships and Barbary pirates
	First contested presidential election: John Adams elected president, Thomas Jefferson vice president		Outdoor revival meeting at Cane Ridge, Kentucky
<b>1797</b>	XYZ affair	<b>1802</b>	Congress repeals all internal taxes
<b>1798</b>	Quasi-War with France begins		Congress repeals Judiciary Act of 1801
	Alien and Sedition Acts		French invade Saint Domingue
	Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions	<b>1803</b>	<i>Marbury v. Madison</i>
	George Logan's mission to France		Impeachment of Justices John Pickering and Samuel Chase
<b>1799</b>	Fries's Rebellion		Louisiana Purchase
	Napoleon seizes control in France	<b>1804</b>	Twelfth Amendment ratified
<b>1800</b>	Convention of Mortefontaine ends Quasi-War		Jefferson reelected
	Jefferson and Aaron Burr tie in Electoral College	<b>1804–1806</b>	Lewis and Clark expedition
	Spain gives Louisiana back to France	<b>1806–1807</b>	Zebulon Pike's expedition
<b>1801</b>	Jefferson elected president in House of Representatives; Burr vice president	<b>1816</b>	African Methodist Episcopal Church formed in Philadelphia
	Judiciary Act of 1801		

## Conflict in the Adams Administration

- ★ **How did diplomatic affairs in Europe affect Americans?**
- ★ **How did Federalists manipulate the crisis with France in 1798 for their own political advantage?**
- ★ **What steps did Republicans take to counter Federalist manipulations?**

Retiring President George Washington spoke for many in 1796 when he warned in his Farewell Address of “the baneful effects of the spirit of party.” Both Hamilton and Jefferson, and their followers, were thoroughgoing republicans, but their conceptions of republicanism were essentially different. Hamiltonians tended to be “classical republicans,” and espoused the belief that nations are fragile and must be led by men of substance and property; in short, by an aristocracy that could protect the people from themselves. Jeffersonians, on the other hand, tended to be “liberal republicans,” asserting that the state existed solely to guarantee equal participation for citizens pursuing private interests in the political and economic realm. For Federalists, aristocratic Britain provided the appropriate model; for Republicans, popularly led republicanism in revolutionary France came closer to the ideal. These views were fundamentally incompatible and led each side to conviction that the other sought to destroy “real” republicanism. The outcome was serious political conflict during the years following Washington’s retirement.



### The Split Election of 1796

As the broadly accepted leader of the opposition to Hamilton's policies, Jefferson was the Republicans' logical choice to represent them in the presidential election in 1796. Most people at the time were not surprised that Republicans chose

**Aaron Burr**, a brilliant young New York attorney and member of the Senate, to balance the ticket. Though years apart in age and from vastly different backgrounds, both Jefferson and Burr were veterans of the revolutionary struggles in 1776 and outspoken champions of liberal republicanism.

The dapper New Yorker styled himself a spokesman for the common man, but Burr was no more an artisan than Jefferson was a farmer. Burr's grandfather was the famous evangelical minister Jonathan Edwards, and his family continued to have enormous influence. During the Revolutionary War, Burr accepted a commission in the Continental Army, where he found common cause with the radical democrats who had formed the Sons of Liberty. By 1784, he had used his political connections and backing from the Sons of Liberty to win a place in the New York state assembly. In 1791 the New York Sons of Liberty, now calling themselves the Society of St. Tammany, maneuvered Burr's election to the U.S. Senate.

In 1789, Jefferson had returned from Paris to join Washington's cabinet as secretary of state. He was deeply disturbed to find that the once-unified revolutionary forces he knew from 1776 had divided into what he called a "republican side" and a "kingly one."

The unified Republican ticket contrasted sharply with divisions in the Federalist faction. Most Federalists assumed that Vice President Adams would succeed Washington as president, but Hamilton and some other hardcore party members doubted the New Englander's loyalty to the party. They favored **Thomas Pinckney** of South Carolina. The younger son of a prestigious South Carolina planter, Pinckney emerged as a major political force when he negotiated the treaty of San Lorenzo with Spain, opening the Mississippi River to American commerce and winning Pinckney the unreserved admiration of both southerners and westerners. Hamilton supported Pinckney, both because Pinckney was less associated with radical causes than was Adams and because Hamilton felt he could exercise more influence over the mild-mannered South Carolinian than he could over the stiff-necked Yankee.

Most Federalists, however, aligned behind the old warhorse from Massachusetts. Adams, a descendant of New England Calvinists, was a man of strong principles, fighting for what he believed was right despite anyone's contrary opinion. Although Adams was a thorough Federalist, he remained Jefferson's close friend: both he and his wife, Abigail, maintained a spirited correspondence with the Virginian during his stay in Paris. Like Washington, Adams was seen by many old revolutionaries as being above politics—as a **statesman** whose conscience and integrity would help the new nation avoid the pitfalls of **factionalism**.

Hamilton sought to use a loophole in the Constitution to rig the election against Adams. According to the Constitution, each member of the Electoral College could cast votes for any two candidates; the highest vote getter became president, and the runner-up became vice president. Hamilton urged Pinckney supporters to cast only one vote—for Pinckney—so that Adams could not get enough votes to win the presidency. But Hamilton did not expect Adams supporters to learn of the plot; when they did, they withheld votes from Pinckney to make up for the votes being withheld from Adams. Because of the squabbling within the Federalist faction, Jefferson received the votes of disgruntled Federalist electors as well as electors within Republican ranks. He thus ended up with more

**Aaron Burr** New York lawyer and vice-presidential candidate in 1796; he became Jefferson's vice president in 1801 after the House of Representatives broke a deadlock in the Electoral College.

**Thomas Pinckney** South Carolina politician and diplomat who was an unsuccessful Federalist candidate for president in 1796.

**statesman** A political leader who acts out of concern for the public good and not out of self-interest.

**factionalism** In politics, the emergence of various self-interested parties (factions) that compete to impose their own views onto either a larger political party or the nation.

votes than Pinckney. So the nation emerged from the first truly contested presidential election with a split administration: the president and vice president belonged to different factions and held opposing political philosophies.

Although brilliant, Adams was ill-suited to lead a deeply divided nation. The new president's aloofness did little to put liberal Republicans' fears to rest. In fact, Adams retained Oliver Wolcott, James McHenry, and Timothy Pickering from Washington's cabinet, all of whom were Hamilton loyalists. This move thoroughly angered Republicans, who had hoped Hamilton's influence would wane now that he had retired from government service to practice law. Clearly, the divisions between classical and liberal republicans were still alive and the two views remained locked in conflict. This disunity enticed interested parties both at home and abroad to try to undermine Adams's authority and influence.

**James Monroe** Republican politician from Virginia who served in diplomatic posts under George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson; he later became the fifth president of the United States.

### XYZ: The Power of Patriotism

One group seeking to take advantage of the divisions in the United States was the revolutionary government in France. America's minister in Paris, **James Monroe**, sympathized with the French cause, but the pro-British impact of Jay's Treaty and the antirevolutionary rhetoric adopted by Federalists led the French to suspect American sincerity. During the election of 1796, France sought to influence American voting by actively favoring the Republican candidates, threatening to terminate diplomatic relations if the vocally pro-British Federalists won. True to its word, the revolutionary government of France broke off relations with the United States as soon as Adams was elected.

**Charles Cotesworth Pinckney** Federalist politician and brother of Thomas Pinckney; he was sent on a diplomatic mission to Paris in 1796.

Angry at the French, Adams retaliated in 1796 by calling home the sympathetic Monroe and replacing him with devout Federalist **Charles Cotesworth Pinckney**, the older brother of Thomas. The French refused to acknowledge Pinckney as ambassador and began seizing American ships. Faced with what was fast becoming a diplomatic crisis, and possibly a military one as well, Adams wisely chose to pursue two courses simultaneously. Asserting that the United States would not be "humiliated" by "a sense of inferiority," he pressed Congress in 1797 to build up America's military defenses. At the same

One of the fathers of the American Revolution, Adams seemed the perfect choice to step into the presidency when Washington chose to step down at the end of his second term. Though many were comforted by Adams's conservative statesmanship, the rigid New Englander was poorly qualified to deal with the partisan politics that haunted his administration. Library of Congress.



time, he dispatched John Marshall and Elbridge Gerry to join Pinckney in Paris, where they were to arrange a peaceful settlement of the two nations' differences.

Playing a complicated diplomatic game, French foreign minister **Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord** declined to receive Pinckney and the peace delegation. As weeks passed, three French businessmen residing in Paris, whose international trading profits stood at risk, offered themselves as go-betweens in solving the stalemate. These men suggested that if the Americans were willing to pay a bribe to key French officials and guarantee an American loan of several million dollars to France, the three Frenchmen would be able to get them a hearing. Offended at such treatment, Pinckney broke off diplomatic relations. Reporting the affair to President Adams, Pinckney refused to name the would-be go-betweens, calling them only "X," "Y," and "Z."

Americans' response to the **XYZ affair** was overwhelming. France's diplomatic slight seemed a slap in the face to a new nation seeking international respect. In Philadelphia, people paraded in the streets to protest French arrogance, chanting Pinckney's reported response: "No, no, not a sixpence!" This wave of patriotism overcame the spirit of division that had plagued the Adams administration, giving the president a virtually unified Congress and country. In the heat of the moment, Adams pressed for increased military forces, and in short order Congress created the Department of the Navy and appropriated money to start building a fleet of warships. Then, on July 7, 1798, Congress rescinded all treaties with France and authorized privateering against French ships. Congress also created a standing army of twenty thousand troops and ordered that the militia be expanded to thirty thousand men. Washington added his prestige to the effort by coming out of retirement to lead the new army, with Hamilton as his second-in-command. Although running sea battles between French and American ships resulted in the sinking or capture of many vessels on both sides, Congress shied away from actually declaring war, which led to the conflict being labeled the **Quasi-War**.

### The Home Front in the Quasi-War

Still disappointed over their failure to steal the presidential election, Federalists immediately seized upon the war as a means to crush their political enemies. In Congress, they began referring to Jefferson and his supporters as the "French

Party" and accused the vice president and his faction of treason whenever they advised a moderate course. Arguing that the presence of this "French Party" constituted a danger to national security, congressional Federalists proposed a series of new laws to destroy all opposition to their conception of true republicanism.

One source of opposition was **naturalized** American citizens. The revolutionary promises of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" had drawn many immigrants to the United States. Disappointed by Hamilton's approach to government and economics, they were drawn to Jefferson's rhetoric regarding equal opportunity and his attacks on aristocracy. In 1798 Federalists in Congress passed three acts designed to counter political activities by immigrants. The Naturalization Act extended the residency requirement for citizenship from five to fourteen years. The Alien Act authorized the president to deport any foreigner he judged "dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States." The Alien Enemies Act permitted the president to banish any foreigner he considered dangerous during a national emergency. The Naturalization Act was designed to prevent recent immigrants from supporting the Republican cause by barring them from the political process. The other two acts served as a constant reminder that the president or his agents could arbitrarily deport any resident alien who stepped out of line.

**Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord** French foreign minister appointed by the revolutionary government in 1797; he later aided Napoleon Bonaparte's overthrow of that government and served as his foreign minister.

**XYZ affair** A diplomatic incident in which American envoys to France were told that the United States would have to loan France money and bribe government officials as a precondition for negotiation.

**Quasi-War** Diplomatic crisis triggered by the XYZ affair; fighting occurred between the United States and France between the early summer of 1798 and the official end of the conflict in September 1800, but neither side issued a formal declaration of war.

**naturalized** Granted full citizenship (after having been born in a foreign country).

**sedition** Conduct or language inciting rebellion against the authority of a state.

**Alien and Sedition Acts** Collectively, the four acts—Alien Act, Alien Enemies Act, Naturalization Act, and Sedition Act—passed by Congress in 1798 designed to prevent immigrants from participating in politics and to silence the anti-Federalist press.

**Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions** Statements that the Virginia and Kentucky legislatures issued in 1798 in response to the Alien and Sedition Acts; they asserted the right of states to overrule the federal government.

**interpose** To place a barrier between two objects or forces; to Jefferson, the principle of interposition meant that states had the right to use their sovereign power as a barrier between the federal government and the states' citizens when the natural rights of those citizens were at risk.

**states' rights** The political position in favor of limiting federal power to allow the greatest possible self-government by the individual states.

**Napoleon Bonaparte** General who took control of the French government in November 1799, at the end of France's revolutionary period; he eventually proclaimed himself emperor of France and conquered much of the continent of Europe.

The other source of support for Jefferson was a partisan Republican press, which attempted to balance the biased news and criticism spewing forth from Federalist news sources with biased accounts of its own. To counter this, congressional Federalists passed the Sedition Act. In addition to outlawing conspiracies to block the enforcement of federal laws, the Sedition Act prohibited the publication or utterance of any criticism that would bring the government or its officials “into contempt or disrepute.” In the words of one Federalist newspaper, “It is patriotism to write in favour of our government, it is **sedition** to write against it.” Not surprisingly, all of the defendants in the fifteen cases brought by federal authorities under the Sedition Act were prominent Republican newspaper editors or politicians like Jedidiah Peck.

Republicans complained that the **Alien and Sedition Acts** violated the Bill of Rights, but Congress and the federal judiciary, controlled as they were by Washington appointees, paid no attention. Dissidents had little choice but to take their political case to the state governments, which they did in the fall of 1798. One statement, drafted by Madison, came before the Virginia legislature, and another, by Jefferson, was considered in Kentucky.

Madison and Jefferson based their **Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions** on the Tenth Amendment, contending that powers not specifically granted to the federal government by the Constitution fell to the states. By passing laws such as the Alien and Sedition Acts that were not explicitly permitted in the Constitution, Congress had violated the “general principles of free government.” The two authors differed, however, in the responses they prescribed for states to take. For his part, Madison asserted that when the majority of states agreed that a federal law had violated their constitutional rights, they could collectively overrule national authority. But Jefferson went further, arguing that each individual state had the “natural right” to **interpose** its own authority to protect its own rights and the rights of its citizens.

The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions passed in their respective state legislatures, but no other states followed suit. Even within Kentucky and Virginia, great disagreement arose over how far state authority should extend. Nevertheless, this response to the Federalists' use of federal power brought the disputed relationship between federal law and **states' rights** into national prominence.

### Settlement with France

The Federalists' seeming overreaction to French provocation and domestic protest alienated increasing numbers of Americans. Adams himself was eager to end the conflict, and when news from France hinted that Foreign Minister Talleyrand was asking for a new American delegation to be sent, Adams seized the opportunity. Telling the Federalist-dominated Congress that he would give them the details later, Adams instructed the American minister to the Netherlands, William Vans Murray, to go immediately to Paris. As rumors of negotiations began to circulate, Hamilton and his supporters became furious, all but accusing Adams of treason. This gave the president the ammunition he needed: he fired Pickering; Wolcott; and McHenry, Hamilton's primary supporters in his cabinet.

Adams's diplomatic appeal to France was well timed. When Murray and his delegation arrived in Paris in November 1799, they found that whatever ill feeling might have existed toward the United States had been swept away. On November 9, 1799, **Napoleon Bonaparte** had overthrown the government that was responsible for the XYZ affair. Napoleon was more interested in establishing a transatlantic empire than in continuing an indecisive conflict with the United States. After some negotiation, Murray and Napoleon drew up and signed the Convention of Mortefontaine, ending the Quasi-War on September 30, 1800.



# Investigating America

## Jefferson's Kentucky Resolution, 1798

Jefferson regarded the Alien and Sedition Acts not merely as blatant attempts to outlaw his Republican Party, but as a violation of the “experiment on the American mind”—that is, an attack on the Enlightenment ideal of a free exchange of opinions among rational people. Because Jefferson himself feared prosecution under the Sedition law, this resolution was composed in secret and carried to Kentucky by John Breckinridge, a former Virginian then serving in the Kentucky assembly. While visiting Monticello in October, James Madison readied a similar but more temperate resolution for the Virginia assembly, which was introduced by John Taylor. The Kentucky Resolution consisted of but five paragraphs, and the most critical is reproduced here.

.....

**R**ESOLVED, That this commonwealth considers the federal Union, upon the terms and for the purposes specified in the late compact, as conducive to the liberty and happiness of the several states: That it does now unequivocally declare its attachment to the Union, and to that compact, agreeable to its obvious and real intention, and will be among the last to seek its dissolution: That if those who administer the general government be permitted to transgress the limits fixed by that compact, by a total disregard to the special delegations of power therein contained, annihilation of the state governments, and the erection upon their ruins, of a general consolidated government, will be the inevitable consequence: That the principle and construction contended for by sundry of the state legislatures, that the general government is the exclusive judge of the extent of the powers delegated to it, stop nothing short of despotism; since the discretion of those who

administer the government, and not the constitution, would be the measure of their powers: That the several states who formed that instrument, being sovereign and independent, have the unquestionable right to judge of its infraction; and that a nullification, by those sovereignties, of all unauthorized acts done under colour of that instrument, is the rightful remedy: That this commonwealth does upon the most deliberate reconsideration declare, that the said alien and sedition laws, are in their opinion, palpable violations of the said constitution; and however cheerfully it may be disposed to surrender its opinion to a majority of its sister states in matters of ordinary or doubtful policy; yet, in momentous regulations like the present, which so vitally wound the best rights of the citizen, it would consider a silent acquiescence as highly criminal: That although this commonwealth as a party to the federal compact; will bow to the laws of the Union, yet it does at the same time declare, that it will not now, nor ever hereafter, cease to oppose in a constitutional manner, every attempt from what quarter soever offered, to violate that compact. . .

.....

- To what extent was Jefferson's states' rights manifesto consistent with the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? Or did it violate the *spirit* of the Constitution?
- What were the implications for a national union if individual states practiced this idea on a regular basis?
- Is it possible for Jefferson's resolution to be both constitutionally sound and politically dangerous? How might this idea, devised as a protection of free speech, be misused by others in the future?

### The “Revolution of 1800”

- ★ What did Thomas Jefferson mean by the statement “Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principles”?
- ★ How did Jefferson's vision for America differ from those of Hamilton, Adams, and other Federalists?

The partisan press in 1800 portrayed the political situation as a simple contrast between the major presidential candidates. The Republican press characterized Adams as an aristocrat and a **spendthrift** whose efforts to expand the powers of the federal government were attempts to rob citizens of freedom and turn the United States back into a colony



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

**spendthrift** A person who spends money recklessly or wastefully.

of England. Jefferson, in contrast, was portrayed as a man of the people, sensitive to the appeals of southern and western agricultural groups who felt perpetually ignored or abused by northeastern Federalists and their constituents. According to Federalist newspapers, however, Vice President Jefferson was a dangerous radical and an atheist; Adams was a man whose policies and steady-handed administration would bring stability and prosperity—qualities that appealed to manufacturers and merchants in New England, as well as to Calvinists and other supporters of classical republicanism. The rhetoric became so hateful that even Adams and Jefferson got caught up in it—the old friends stopped speaking to each other; nearly twenty years passed before they renewed their friendship.

### The Lesser of Republican Evils

As the election of 1800 approached, the split between Adams and Hamilton widened. Both agreed on the necessity of dumping Jefferson as vice president, and on putting forward Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, hero of the XYZ affair, to replace him. But, having gotten Pinckney into the Electoral College balloting, Hamilton again tried to steal the election. As in 1796, he advised delegates to withhold votes, but this time he engaged in direct lobbying, even writing a pamphlet in which, in violation of the Sedition Act, he questioned Adams's suitability for the presidency.

Hamilton's methods backfired again: Federalists cast one more vote for Adams than for Pinckney. But more important, Hamilton's scheming and his faction's consistent promanufacturing stance had so alienated southern Federalists that many chose to support Jefferson. With Jefferson pulling in the southern vote and his running mate—Burr again—pulling in the craftsmen and small-farm vote in New York and Pennsylvania, the Republicans outscored the Federalists by sixteen votes in the Electoral College. But that still did not settle the election. Burr and Jefferson won the same number of electoral votes (see Map 8.1). The tie threw the election into the House of Representatives.

Ironically, it fell to the **lame duck** Federalists in the House to choose between two men most of them viewed as dangerous radicals bent on destroying the Federalists' hard work. Indecision was plain: in ballot after ballot over six grueling days, neither Jefferson nor Burr could win the necessary majority. But Hamilton convinced several Federalists that even though Jefferson's rhetoric was dangerous, the Virginian was a gentleman of property and integrity, whereas Burr was "the most dangerous man of the community." Meanwhile, Virginia and Pennsylvania mobilized their militias, intent on preventing a "legislative usurpation" of the popular will. As Delaware senator James Bayard described the situation, "we must risk the Constitution and a Civil War or take Mr. Jefferson." Finally, on the thirty-sixth ballot, on February 17, 1801, Jefferson emerged as the winner.

Not long after Jefferson's election, both parties aligned briefly to pass the **Twelfth Amendment** to the Constitution (ratified in 1804), which requires separate balloting in the Electoral College for president and vice president, thereby preventing deadlocks like the one that nearly wrecked the nation in 1800.

### Federalist Defenses and a Loyal Opposition

The Federalists were not about to leave office without erecting some defenses for the political and economic machinery they had constructed. The Federalist-controlled judiciary, which had proved its clout during the controversy over the Alien and Sedition Acts, appeared to offer the strongest bulwark to prevent Republicans from tampering with the Constitution. Thus, during their last days in office, the outgoing Federalists in Congress passed the **Judiciary Act of 1801**, which created sixteen

**lame duck** An officeholder who has failed to win, or is ineligible for, reelection but whose term in office has not yet ended.

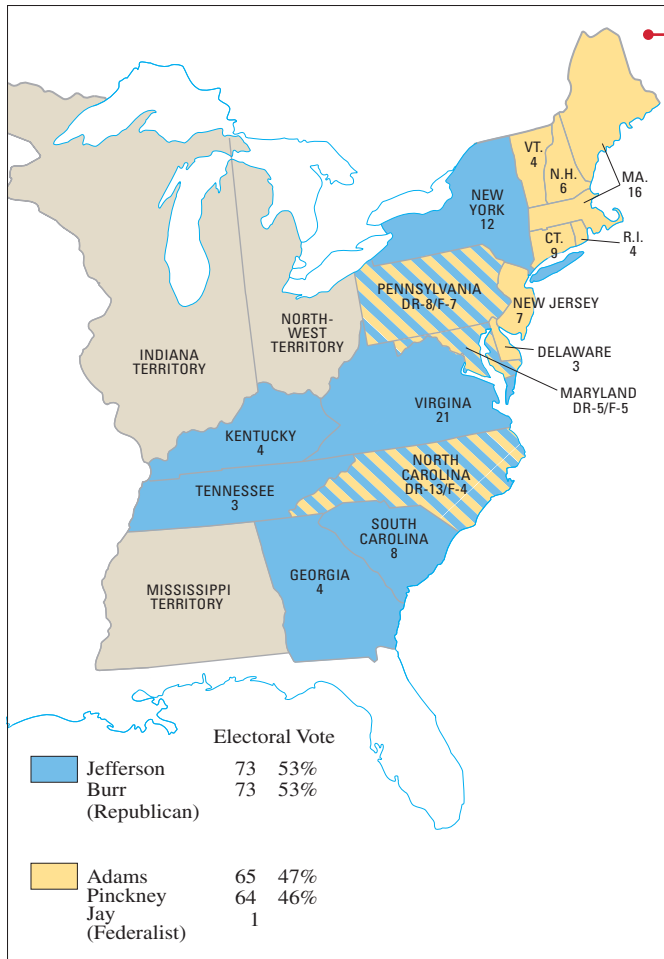
#### Twelfth Amendment

Constitutional amendment, ratified in 1804, that provides for separate balloting in the Electoral College for president and vice president.

**Judiciary Act of 1801** Law that the Federalist Congress passed to increase the number of federal courts and judicial positions; President Adams rushed to fill these positions with Federalists before his term ended.

**MAP 8.1 Election of 1800**

The political partnership between Jefferson and Burr allowed the Republicans to unseat Federalist John Adams in the election of 1800. As this map shows, only New England voted as a bloc for the Federalist, whereas Burr’s political home, New York, went entirely to Jefferson.



new federal judgeships, six additional **circuit courts**, and a massive structure of **federal marshals** and clerks. President Adams then rushed to fill all of these positions with loyal Federalists, signing appointments until midnight on his last day in office. The appointments came in such large numbers and so late in the day that **John Marshall**, Adams’s secretary of state, was unable to deliver all the appointment letters before his own term ran out. But Marshall did deliver one letter promptly: the one addressed to himself, making him chief justice of the Supreme Court.

Because of the ill will evident in the Alien and Sedition Acts and the presidential electioneering, Jefferson’s inaugural address was consciously **conciliatory**. “We are all Republicans; we are all Federalists,” Jefferson said, seeming to abandon partisan politics and align himself with those who had recently labeled him a “brandy-soaked defamer of churches” and a “contemptible hypocrite.” In his mind, all Americans shared the same fundamental principles—the principles of 1776. But even Jefferson considered the election of 1800 a revolution—“as real a revolution in the principles of our government as that of 1776 was in its form.”

As a result of Jefferson’s reassuring address, the nation began to share the president’s view that “every difference of opinion is not a difference of principles.” Even extreme Federalists such as Fisher Ames came to understand that a “party is an association of honest

**circuit court** A court of appeals that has the power to review and either uphold or overturn decisions made by lower courts; in terms of authority, these stand between federal district courts and the Supreme Court.

**federal marshal** A law enforcement officer who works directly for the federal district court; each district court has one marshal, who in turn employs a staff of deputies to carry out orders from the court.

**John Marshall** Virginia lawyer and politician whom President Adams made chief justice of the Supreme Court; his legal decisions helped shape the role of the Supreme Court in American government.

**conciliatory** Striving to overcome distrust or to regain goodwill.



# It Matters Today

## CLASSICAL VERSUS LIBERAL REPUBLICANISM

Political disputes that took place in this country over almost two centuries ago remain at the core of national discussion today. One of these has to do with the proper role of a republican government. “Classical” republicans like Hamilton saw the power of the state as the sole defense against dangerous forces from abroad and lawlessness at home. “Liberal” republicans like Jefferson claimed that the state itself was the most serious threat to freedom. Classical republicans accused their liberal counterparts of promoting anarchy: John Rutledge, for example, asserted in the House of Representatives in 1798 that liberals “believe it to be their duty to do all in their power to overturn the whole system . . . , they may think a French army and a French invasion necessary.” John Nicholas countered, saying “More evil is to be apprehended in this country from the

**votaries** of despotism, than from the votaries of France.”

These charges and counter charges will sound familiar to generations of Americans who have continued to debate which form of republicanism, classical or liberal, is the true basis of our American political tradition.

- Reflect upon Jefferson’s inaugural assertion that “every difference of opinion is not a difference of principles” by applying it to the debate between classical and liberal republicans in the years directly following the “Revolution of 1800.”
- Identify a moment in U.S. history since 1800 when this debate again became a serious issue in national politics. How were the conflicts resolved in that later situation?

**votaries** Strict loyalists to a particular ideology.

**opposition party** Political party opposed to the party or government in power.

men for honest purposes, and when the State falls into bad hands, is the only efficient defense; a champion who never flinches, a watchman who never sleeps.” Ames went on to describe how a loyal **opposition party** should behave. “We must act as good citizens, using only truth, and argument, and zeal to impress them.” With parties such as these, a system of loyal opposition could become a permanent part of a republican government without risk to security or freedom. And in keeping with the two-party spirit and Jefferson’s philosophical commitment to free speech, Congress let the Sedition Act and the Alien Acts expire in 1801 and 1802. It also repealed the Naturalization Act, replacing its fourteen-year probationary interval with a five-year naturalization period.

Confident in Americans’ ability to reason, Jefferson outlined a plan for a “wise and frugal government” that would seek “equal and exact justice to all men of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political.” He would, he said, support state governments “in all their rights” but would not tear down the federal structure or fail to pay its debts.

### Jefferson’s Vision for America

Jefferson had a strong, positive vision for the nation, and the party made every effort to put his policies into effect. The greatest dangers to a republic, he believed, were (1) high population density and the social evils it generated and (2) the concentration of money and power in the hands of a few. Accordingly, Jefferson wanted to steer America away from the large-scale, publicly supported industry so dear to Hamilton and toward an economy founded on yeoman farmers—men who owned their own land, produced their own food, and were beholden to no one. Such men, Jefferson believed, could make political decisions based solely on pure reason and good sense.

But Jefferson was not naive. He knew Americans would continue to demand the comforts and luxuries found in industrial societies. His solution was simple. In America’s



vast lands, he said, a nation of farmers could produce so much food that “its surplus [could] go to nourish the now perishing births of Europe, who in return would manufacture and send us in exchange our clothes and other comforts.” Overpopulation and **urbanization**—the twin causes of corruption in Europe—would not occur in America, for here, Jefferson said, “the immense extent of uncultivated and fertile lands enables every one who will labor, to marry young, and to raise a family of any size.”

Making such a system work, however, required a radical change in economic policy. The government would have to let businesses make their own decisions and succeed or fail in a marketplace free of government interference. In an economy with absolutely free trade and an open marketplace, the iron law of **supply and demand** would determine the cost of goods and services. This view of the economy was a direct assault on mercantilist notions of governments controlling prices and restricting trade to benefit the nation-state.

**urbanization** The growth of cities in a nation or region and the shifting of the population from rural to urban areas.

**supply and demand** The two factors that determine price in an economy based on private property: (1) how much of a commodity is available (supply) and (2) how many people want it (demand).

## Republicanism in Action

- ★ **How did Republicans deal with the defenses that Federalists put in place in 1801?**
- ★ **What policies did Jefferson pursue to carry out his vision for the country? What obstacles did he encounter?**

When Jefferson assumed office, he ushered a new spirit into national politics and the presidency. A combination of circumstances moved him to lead a much simpler life than had his predecessors. For one thing, he was the first president to be inaugurated in the new national capital, the still largely uncompleted Washington City, which afforded quite different and much more limited **amenities**. Washington lacked the taverns, **salons**, and entertaining social circles that both previous capitals, New York and Philadelphia, had offered. Personal preferences also moved him in a simpler direction. He refused to ride in a carriage, choosing to go by horseback through Washington’s muddy streets. He continued to give parties as he had done in Paris, but he sat his guests at a round table so that no one might be seen as more important than the others. He abandoned the fashion of wearing a wig, letting his red hair stand out, and he sometimes entertained with startling informality, wearing frayed slippers and work clothes.

But this show of simplicity and his conciliatory inaugural address were somewhat misleading. Jefferson was a hardworking partisan politician and administrator whose main objective was to turn the nation around to his vision of republican virtue with all possible speed. He quickly launched a program to revamp the American economy and give the United States a place in the international community. Along the way, he captured many Americans’ affection and their political loyalty but also alienated those who lacked his zeal.

**amenities** Conveniences, comforts, and services.

**salon** A gathering place, generally in a private home, where people came together to discuss their common interests; in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, these were often the places where politicians gathered to discuss philosophy and policy issues.

### Assault on Federalist Defenses

Aware of the partisan purpose behind the Judiciary Act of 1801 and Adams’s midnight appointments, Republicans chose to wage an equally aggressive partisan war to reverse Federalist control of the justice system. In January 1802, Republicans in Congress proposed the repeal of the 1801 Judiciary Act, arguing that the new circuit courts were outrageously expensive and unnecessary. Federalists countered that if Congress repealed the act, it would in effect be terminating judges for reasons other than the “high crimes and misdemeanors” mentioned in the Constitution, thereby

Suffering a lifelong sensitivity to cold as well as a dislike for formality, Jefferson usually chose to dress practically, in fairly plain clothes that kept him warm. This 1822 portrait by Thomas Sully captures the former president in his customary greatcoat, unadorned suit, and well-worn boots. “Thomas Jefferson” by Thomas Sully, West Point Museum, United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.



violating the separation of powers. Congress proceeded anyway, replacing the Judiciary Act of 1801 with the Judiciary Act of 1802, and awaited the response of the Federalist courts.

**constitutionality** Accordance with the principles or provisions of the Constitution.

**justice of the peace** The lowest level of judge in some state court systems, usually responsible for hearing small claims and minor criminal cases; because Washington, the District of Columbia, is a federal territory rather than a state, the justice of the peace for that district is a federal appointee.

**Marbury v. Madison** Supreme Court decision (1803) declaring part of the Judiciary Act of 1789 unconstitutional, thereby establishing an important precedent in favor of judicial review.

The **constitutionality** of the new Judiciary Act was never tested, but the power of the judicial branch to interpret and enforce federal law did become a major issue the following year. On taking office, Jefferson’s secretary of state, James Madison, held back the appointment letters that John Marshall had been unable to deliver before the expiration of his term. One jilted appointee was William Marbury, who was to have been **justice of the peace** for the newly created District of Columbia. Marbury, with the support of his party, filed suit in the Supreme Court. According to Marbury, the Judiciary Act of 1789 gave the federal courts the power to order the executive branch to deliver his appointment.

**Marbury v. Madison** was Chief Justice Marshall’s first major case, and in it he proved his political as well as his judicial ingenuity. Marshall was keenly aware that in a direct confrontation between the executive and judicial branches, the judiciary was sure to lose. Rather than risking a serious blow to the dignity of the Supreme Court, Marshall ruled in 1803 that the Constitution contained no provision for the Supreme Court to issue such orders as the Judiciary Act of 1789 required and that therefore the law was unconstitutional.

This decision put Jefferson and Madison in a difficult political position. On one hand, the authors of the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions were on record for arguing that the states and not the courts should determine the constitutionality of federal laws. But political realities forced them to accept Marshall’s decision in this case if

they wanted to block Adams's handpicked men from assuming lifetime appointments in powerful judicial positions. Although this **precedent** for **judicial review** did not immediately invalidate the principles set forth in Jefferson's and Madison's earlier **manifestos**, it established the standard that federal courts, rather than states, could decide the constitutionality of acts of Congress.

Marshall's decision in *Marbury v. Madison* gave the Republicans the power to withhold undelivered letters of appointment from the Adams administration, but it gave them no power to control the behavior of judges whose appointments were already official. Thus, in the aftermath of the Marbury decision, Republican radicals in Congress decided to take aim at particularly partisan Federalist judges.

John Pickering of New Hampshire was an easy first target. A mentally ill alcoholic, he was known to rave incoherently both on and off the bench, usually about the evils of Jefferson and liberal republicanism. No one, not even staunch Federalists, doubted that the besotted man was incompetent, but it was far from certain that he had committed the "high crimes and misdemeanors" for which he was **impeached** in 1803. Whether he had or not, the Senate found him guilty and removed him from office.

Emboldened by that easy victory and armed with a powerful precedent, radical Republicans took on Supreme Court Justice Samuel Chase. Chase was notorious for making partisan decisions and for using the federal bench as an anti-Republican soapbox. Unlike Pickering, Chase defended himself very competently, making the political motivations behind the impeachment effort obvious to all observers. In the end, both Federalists and many Republicans voted to dismiss the charges, returning Chase to his position on the Supreme Court. The failure to impeach Chase demonstrated that the political structure was not going to tip decisively to either side and made Jefferson's inaugural statement of principle a guideline for political reality: both sides would have to compromise in charting the course for the nation.

### Implementing a New Economy

Still, Republicans were determined on one partisan agenda item: tearing down Hamilton's economic structure and replacing it with a new one more consistent with Jefferson's vision. Responsibility for planning and implementing this economic policy fell to Treasury Secretary **Albert Gallatin**. Gallatin's first effort as secretary of the treasury was to try to settle the nation's debts. With Jefferson's approval, Gallatin implemented a radical course of budget cutting, going so far as to close several American embassies overseas to save money. The administration also cut the military by half, reducing the army from four thousand to twenty-five hundred men and the navy from twenty-five ships to a mere seven, a dangerous gamble for an administration dedicated to free trade.

But Gallatin's cost cutting did much more than just reduce the national budget. First, Gallatin was able to mask the firing of loyal Federalists still employed in civil service in a seemingly nonpartisan appeal to fiscal responsibility. He accomplished another ideological goal by reducing the overall federal presence, putting more responsibilities onto the states, where his and Jefferson's philosophy said they belonged. In addition, Gallatin's plan called for a significant change in how the government raised money. In 1802 the Republican Congress repealed all **internal taxes**, leaving customs duties and the sale of western lands as the sole sources of federal revenue. With this one sweeping gesture, Gallatin struck a major blow for Jefferson's economic vision by tying the nation's financial future to westward expansion and foreign trade. But this vision would soon face serious challenges.

**precedent** An event or decision that may be used as an example in similar cases later on.

**judicial review** The power of the Supreme Court to review the constitutionality of laws passed by Congress and by the states.

**manifesto** A written statement publicly declaring the views of its author.

**impeach** To formally charge a public official with criminal conduct in office; once the House of Representatives has impeached a federal official, the official is then tried in the Senate on the stated charges.

**Albert Gallatin** Treasury secretary in Jefferson's administration; he favored limited government and reduced the federal debt by cutting spending.

**internal taxes** Taxes collected directly from citizens, like Alexander Hamilton's various excise taxes, as opposed to tariffs or other taxes collected in connection with foreign trade.

### Threats to Jefferson's Vision

One threat to Jefferson's commitment to foreign trade came from pirates who patrolled the northern coast of Africa from Tangier to Tripoli, controlling access to the Mediterranean Sea. By 1800, fully one-fifth of the U.S. federal budget was

being spent on bribing these Barbary pirates not to attack American ships. To Jefferson, principle was as important as financial considerations. Asserting presidential privilege as commander in chief, he dispatched navy ships to the Mediterranean in 1801. The war that followed was a fiasco from anyone's point of view. Jefferson's navy suffered a major defeat with the capture of a prize warship, the *Philadelphia*, and its entire crew. In 1805, the United States finally negotiated peace terms, agreeing to pay \$60,000 for the release of the hostages and accepting the pirates' promise to stop raiding American shipping. In the meantime, France and Spain posed a serious threat to Jefferson's dream of rapid westward expansion. As settlers continued to pour into the region between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River, the commercial importance of that inland waterway increased. Whoever controlled the mouth of the Mississippi—the place where it flows past New Orleans and into the Gulf of Mexico and the open seas—would have the power to make or break the interior economy.

In accordance with the Treaty of San Lorenzo (1795), Spain had granted American farmers the right to ship cargoes down the Mississippi without paying tolls, and permitted American merchants to **transship** goods from New Orleans to Atlantic ports without paying export duties. In 1800, however, Napoleon had traded some of France's holdings in southern Europe to Spain in exchange for Spain's land in North America. The United States had no agreement with France concerning navigation on the Mississippi, so the deal between Spain and France threatened to scuttle American commerce on the river. Anxiety over this issue turned to outright panic when, preparatory to the transfer of the land to France, Spanish officials suspended free trade in New Orleans.

Jefferson responded on two fronts. Backing away from his usual anti-British position, he announced, "The day France takes possession of New Orleans we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation," and he dispatched James Monroe to talk with the British about a military alliance. He also had Monroe instruct the American minister to France, Robert Livingston, that he could spend as much as \$2 million to try to purchase New Orleans and as much adjacent real estate as possible.

Napoleon was considering the creation of a Caribbean empire when he acquired Louisiana from Spain. Rich with sugar, the Caribbean colony of **Saint Domingue** was the centerpiece of Bonaparte's scheme. The colony had been the most lucrative European holding in the Americas before 1791, when a rebel army under the leadership of a former slave named **François Dominique Toussaint Louverture** rose in revolt and liberated the colony's enslaved majority. In hopes of maintaining control of the colony, revolutionary France named Louverture governor, but in 1802 Napoleon betrayed him by sending an invasion force to reclaim Saint Domingue. Planning to force the colony's slaves back into sugar production, Bonaparte would require the Louisiana region as a granary.

The French army was able to defeat and capture Louverture, but no more. The rebels' military skills and yellow fever, malaria, and other tropical diseases destroyed the French force. Stymied in the Caribbean, Napoleon had no need of the Louisiana breadbasket. Thus, by the time Monroe and Livingston entered into negotiations with the French in 1803, Napoleon had instructed Foreign Minister Talleyrand to offer the whole of Louisiana to the Americans for \$15 million.

**transship** The practice of shipping cargo to a secondary port and then transferring it to other ships for transport to a final destination; cargos from up the Mississippi River were shipped by barge to New Orleans and then loaded onto ocean-going vessels to be carried to American ports along the Atlantic coast.

**Saint Domingue** French colony in the western half of the Caribbean island named Hispaniola by Christopher Columbus; it is today the modern nation of Haiti.

**François Dominique Toussaint Louverture** Black revolutionary who liberated the French colony of Saint Domingue, only to see it reinvaded by the French in 1802.



## Pushing Westward

Although Livingston and Monroe had been authorized to spend only \$2 million for the purchase of Louisiana, they jumped at the deal offered by Talleyrand, hoping that the president would approve. The president in fact was overjoyed.

The deal contained three important benefits for Jefferson and the nation. It removed one European power—France—from the continent and saved Jefferson from having to ally the United States with Britain. It secured the Mississippi River for shipments of American agricultural products to industrial Europe. And it doubled the size of the United States, opening uncharted new expanses for settlement by farmers.

The **Louisiana Purchase** was immensely popular among most Americans, but it raised significant ideological and constitutional questions. Some Federalists *and* Republicans questioned whether the United States could acquire this territory and its many residents without becoming an empire; something entirely at war with the rhetoric of our Revolution against the British. To this Jefferson responded by spinning the term *empire* into the phrase “empire of liberty,” emphasizing that the new territory would aid yeomen by securing and extending the benefits of the revolutionary tradition. Members of both parties also pointed out that the Constitution made no provision for the acquisition of new territories by the United States, and that the nation could not extend westward beyond its then-current boundaries without constitutional authorization. Jefferson responded by submitting a constitutional amendment to Congress authorizing such acquisitions, which the Senate finally decided to ignore. Congress voted overwhelmingly for ratification of the treaty in November 1803.

Even before the Louisiana Purchase, when rumors of the land transfer between France and Spain began circulating, Jefferson had started preparations to send a covert spy mission into the area. Jefferson confidentially instructed his private secretary, **Meriwether Lewis**, to form a party that would pretend to be on a scientific mission. The group’s primary purpose, however, would be to note the numbers of French, Spanish, and other agents in the area and to chart major waterways and other important strategic sites (see Map 8.2). They were also to promote direct dealings between the Indians and the United States, undermining the Indians’ relations with the Spanish and French whenever possible.

Lewis, his co-commander **William Clark**, and the rest of the Corps of Discovery set out by boat in the spring of 1804. Pushing up the Missouri River, the party arrived among the Mandan Indians in present-day North Dakota in the late fall. Their decision to winter among the Mandans may have ensured the expedition’s success. The Mandans were a settled agricultural group who had been farming along the upper Missouri for over a thousand years and, unlike many of their neighbors, had not abandoned their villages for mounted buffalo hunting. Their villages, which offered food and shelter for the wandering hunting tribes, soon became hubs in the evolving Plains trading and raiding system. By wintering with the Mandans, the expedition came into contact with many of the Indian and European groups that participated in the complex economy of the West. Lewis and Clark acted on Jefferson’s instructions by learning all they could from the Mandans and their visitors about the fur trade, the nature of military alliances, and the tribes that lived farther west.

Importantly, during the Mandan winter Lewis and Clark made contact with a French trapper named Charbonneau and his Shoshone wife, **Sacajawea**. Between the two of them, Sacajawea and Charbonneau spoke several of the languages understood by the Indians in the Far West and possessed knowledge about the geography of the area. With

**Louisiana Purchase** The U.S. purchase of Louisiana from France for \$15 million in 1803; the Territory extended from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains.

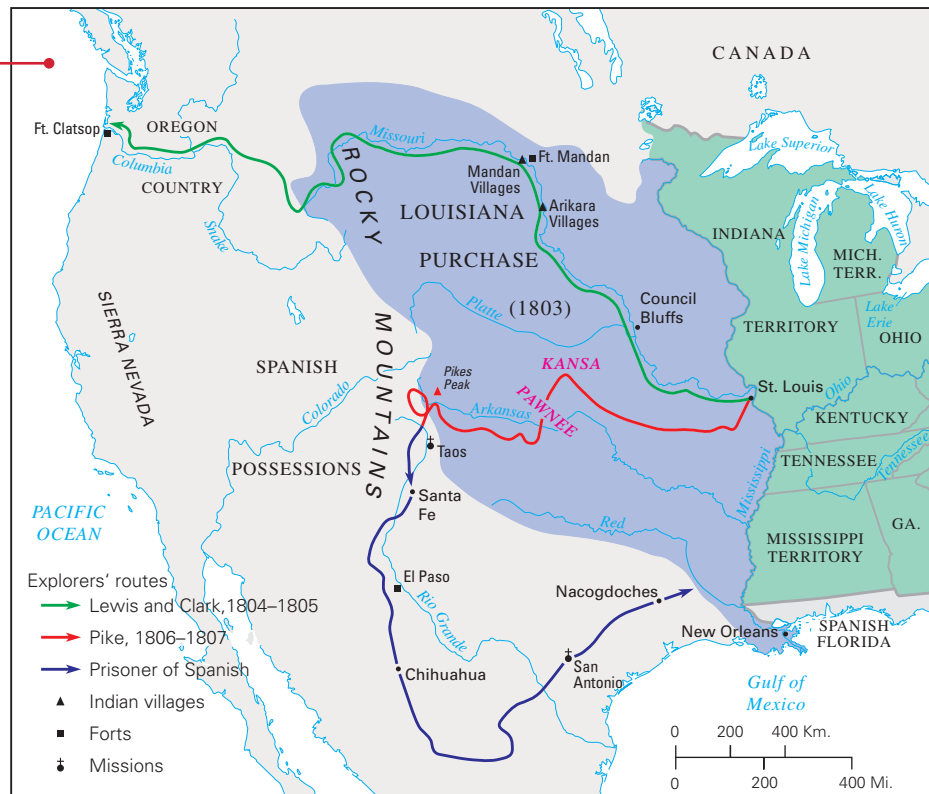
**Meriwether Lewis** Jefferson aide who was sent to explore the Louisiana Territory in 1803; he later served as its governor.

**William Clark** Soldier and explorer who joined Meriwether Lewis as co-leader on the expedition to explore the Louisiana Territory; he was responsible for mapmaking.

**Sacajawea** Shoshone woman who served as guide and interpreter on the Lewis and Clark expedition.

**MAP 8.2 Louisiana Purchase and American Exploration**

As this map shows, Jefferson added an enormous tract of land to the United States when he purchased Louisiana from France in 1803. The president sent two exploration teams into the West. In addition to collecting information, Lewis and Clark's and Pike's expeditions sought to ally Indians with the United States at the expense of the French, Spanish, and British, even in those areas that were not officially part of the United States.



their help, Lewis and Clark were able to obtain aid from the Shoshones in crossing the Rocky Mountains. From there, the expedition passed from Indian group to Indian group along a chain of friendship. Historians have traditionally emphasized how Sacajawea aided Lewis and Clark but have failed to note the irony that in doing so, she was inadvertently helping to open the West to settlement and eastern economic development. By following her chain of Indian hospitality, the expedition finally reached the Pacific Ocean in November 1805, thus staking a claim to the Pacific Northwest and providing a future American window into trade with Asia.

In a second “scientific” exploration, in 1806 Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike set out to explore the territory between the Missouri and Red Rivers south of Lewis and Clark’s route. His party boldly journeyed into Spanish New Mexico, where they were captured by a Spanish army detachment and held for three months before being escorted back to the United States.

## Challenge and Uncertainty in Jefferson’s America

- ★ **How did the life of the average American change during Jefferson’s presidency?**
- ★ **What place did Native Americans and African Americans have in the America Jefferson envisioned? How did each of these groups respond to these roles?**

Jefferson’s policies brought a new spirit into the land. The Virginian’s commitment to opportunity and progress, to openness and frugality, offered a stark contrast in approach and style to the policies of his predecessors. The congressional elections of 1802 and the

presidential election in 1804 proved Jefferson's popularity and the Republican Party's strong appeal. Nevertheless, some disturbing social and intellectual undercurrents began to surface during his second term. National expansion strained conventional social institutions as white farmers, entrepreneurs, and adventurers seized the opportunities that Republican policies offered. Adding to the strain was the fact that the Jeffersonian spirit was more of a promise than a commitment and that Jefferson's vision for the republic excluded many.

### The Religious Response to Social Change

As new territories opened in the West, young people streamed into the region at a rate that alarmed many. This had an unsettling effect on communities they left behind in the East. In the West, the odd mixture of ethnic, religious, and national groups; and fragile transportation and communications, brought social instability and economic uncertainty.

The changes taking place in the young republic stirred conflicting religious currents. One was liberalism in religious thought. The other was a new **evangelicalism**.

Liberal religious thought was born of the Enlightenment in France, Scotland, and England, and emphasized the connection between **rationalism** and faith. To rationalists like both Jefferson and Adams, the possibility that a being as perfect as God might behave irrationally was unthinkable. In fact, for such men, the more plain, reasonable, and verifiable religious claims were, the more likely it was that they emanated from God. Less perfect than God, it was man who had cluttered the plain, revealed truth with irrational claims and insolvable mysteries. For his part, Jefferson was so convinced of this logic that he edited his own version of the Bible, keeping only the moral principles and the solid historical facts and discarding anything supernatural.

This liberal creed led many, including Jefferson, to abandon organized religion altogether. Not all liberals were so quick to bolt organized worship, however. John Adams, for example, continued to adhere to New England Congregationalism, but he and others used their influence to promote a young and more liberal clergy who sought to insert a heavy dose of rationalism into the old Puritan structure. Rejecting such traditional mysteries as the **Trinity** and the literal divinity of Christ, a so-called **Unitarian** movement emerged and expanded inside Congregational churches. Indeed, Unitarians in New England were able to engineer the election of their own **Henry Ware** as the senior professor of theology at Harvard College, formerly the educational heart of orthodox Calvinist America. Though outraged, more traditional Congregationalists did little immediately to oust liberals from their churches. In the decades to come, however, doctrinal disagreements between the parties led to virtual religious warfare.

While rationalism and Unitarianism were gaining strong footholds in eastern cities, missionary activities helped to foster a very different kind of religious response in the West. Although Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and evangelical Congregationalists disagreed on many specific principles, they all emphasized the spirited preaching that could bring about the emotional moment of conversion—the moment of realization that without the saving grace of God, every soul is lost. Each of these denominations concentrated on training a new, young ministry and sending it to preach in every corner of the nation. In this way, another religious awakening swept across America, beginning in Cane Ridge, Kentucky, in 1801 and spreading throughout the South and West.

In hopes of bringing social stability to the frontier, these new evangelists emphasized the importance of Christian community. Dressed in frontier garb, these stump preachers spread their democratized religion across the West through a series of camp meetings.

**evangelicalism** A Protestant religious persuasion that emphasizes the literal truth of the Gospels and salvation through faith alone; in the early nineteenth century, it became infused with increasing amounts of romantic emotionalism and an emphasis on converting others.

**rationalism** The theory that the exercise of reason, rather than the acceptance of authority or spiritual revelation, is the only valid basis for belief and the best source of spiritual truth.

**Trinity** The Christian belief that God consists of three divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Unitarian** A religion that denies the Trinity, teaching that God exists only in one person; it also stresses individual freedom of belief and the free use of reason in religion.

**Henry Ware** Liberal Congregationalist who was elected senior theologian at Harvard College in 1805, making Unitarianism the dominant religious view at the previously Calvinist stronghold.

Evangelical denominations gained ever wider followings during the early nineteenth century as the uncertainties accompanying rapid expansion took their toll on national self-confidence. Mass baptisms like this one painted by Russian tourist Pavel Svinin celebrated the emotional moment of conversion and the individual's rebirth as a Christian. The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, NY



Abandoning the staid religiosity of their fathers, dozens of dynamic young evangelicals tramped the frontier, and worked to counterbalance the forces of extreme individualism and social disorder by providing ideological underpinnings for the expansive behavior of westerners. They also provided an institutional framework that brought some stability to communities in which traditional controls were lacking. These attractive features helped evangelicalism to sweep across the frontier.

### The Problem of Race in Jefferson's Republic

The “born again” frontiersmen counted themselves good Republicans, but Jefferson’s policies did not appeal to everyone. Because Republican legislation favored southern and western agrarians, neither Native Americans nor African Americans fared as well under Jefferson’s administration as they had under his Federalist predecessors. A slaveholder himself, Jefferson expressed strong views about African Americans. In his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785), Jefferson asserted that blacks were “inferior to whites in the endowments both of body and mind.” Even when presented with direct evidence of superior black intellectual accomplishments, Jefferson remained unmoved. When the well-respected African American mathematician, astronomer, and engineer Benjamin Banneker sent a copy of an almanac he had prepared to Jefferson, the Virginian privately told a friend, “I have a long letter from Banneker, which shows him to have had a mind of very common stature indeed.” He went on to suggest that the almanac had actually been written by a white engineer who was intent on “puffing” Banneker’s reputation.

Jefferson was convinced, and stated publicly on many occasions, that the white and black races could not live together without inevitably polluting both. This was the key reason for what little opposition he voiced to slavery and for his continued involvement in various projects to remove African Americans by colonizing them in Africa. Despite this attitude, he kept a slave mistress, Sally Hemings, by whom he fathered six children. Like other men of his century and his social class, Jefferson was convinced that women,



like slaves, existed to serve and entertain men. His relationship with Hemings, who was the half-sister of Jefferson's deceased wife, appeared no more unequal or unnatural than his marriage. But while the liaison may have seemed perfectly natural behind closed doors, the racial code to which Jefferson gave voice in his various publications and official utterances defined it as entirely unacceptable in public. This rigid separation between public and private behavior led Jefferson to keep the relationship secret, and his friends and family joined together in a conspiracy of silence. This, too, reflected broader social ambiguities, contradictions that defined the sex lives of masters and slaves in Jefferson's South.

Throughout the Jeffersonian era, the great majority of African Americans lived in that South, and most of them were slaves. But from the 1790s onward, the number of free blacks increased steadily. Emancipation did not bring equality, however, even in northern states. Most states did not permit free blacks to testify in court, vote, or exercise other fundamental freedoms accorded to whites. Public schools often refused admission to black children. Even churches were often closed to blacks who wished to worship.

Some African Americans responded to this systematic exclusion by expressing their cultural and social identity in forming their own institutions. In Philadelphia, tension between white and free black Methodists led former slave Richard Allen to form the Bethel Church for Negro Methodists in 1793. Two years later, Allen became the first black deacon ordained in America. Ongoing tension with the white Methodist hierarchy, however, eventually led Allen to secede from the church and form his own **African Methodist Episcopal Church** (Bethel) in 1816. Similar controversies in New York led black divine James Varick to found an African Methodist Episcopal Church (Zion) in that city in 1821. Despite such efforts, the overall racial atmosphere in Jefferson's America significantly limited the number of African American leaders who attained positions of wealth or influence.

Jefferson thought differently of Native Americans than he did of African Americans. He considered Indians to be "savages" but was not convinced that they were biologically inferior to Europeans: "They are formed in mind as well as in body, on the same module with the 'Homo Sapiens Europaeus,'" he said. Jefferson attributed the differences between Indians and Europeans to what he termed the *Indians' cultural retardation*. He was confident that if whites lifted Indians out of their uncivilized state and put them on an equal footing with Europeans, Indian populations would grow, their physical condition would improve, and they would be able to participate in the yeoman republic on an equal footing with whites. Critics noted, however, that Jefferson was careful not to apply similar environmental tests to blacks, since successful efforts at cultural elevation would erase any rationale for their enslavement.

To implement his policy, Jefferson created a series of government-owned trading posts at which Indians were offered goods at cheap prices. He believed that Indians who were exposed to white manufactures would come to agree that white culture was superior and would make the rational decision to adopt that culture wholesale. At the same time, both the government and right-minded philanthropists should engage in instructing Native Americans in European methods of farming, ensuring that these former "savages" would emerge as good, Republican-voting frontier farmers. Until this process of **acculturation** was complete, however, Jefferson believed the Indians, like children, should be protected from those who might take advantage of them or lead them astray. Also like children, the Indians were not to be trusted to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Indian rights were left to the whims of the Senate—which drafted and ratified Indian treaties—and of the army—which enforced those treaties.

#### **African Methodist Episcopal**

**Church** African American branch of Methodism established in Philadelphia in 1816 and in New York in 1821.

**acculturation** Changes in the culture of a group or an individual as a result of contact with a different culture.

# Investigating America

## Jefferson's Notes and Slavery, 1785

In his only book, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785), Jefferson wrestled with the question of how a country built on liberty and freedom could hold roughly one-fifth of its population in bondage. His answer was that Africans and their offspring were biologically and intellectually different from Europeans, and that "black blood" was inferior to that carried by whites. In Query XIV, he explained why once liberated, slaves could not remain in the United States.

.....

**I**t will probably be asked, Why not retain and incorporate the blacks into the state, and thus save the expence of supplying, by importation of white settlers, the vacancies they will leave? Deep rooted prejudices entertained by the whites; ten thousand recollections, by the blacks, of the injuries they have sustained; new provocations; the real distinctions which nature has made; and many other circumstances, will divide us into parties, and produce convulsions which will probably never end but in the extermination of the one or the other race.—To these objections, which are political, may be added others, which are physical and moral. The first difference which strikes us is that of colour . . . . Is it not the foundation of a greater or less share of beauty in the two races? Are not the fine mixtures of red and white, the expressions of every passion by greater or less suffusions of colour in the one, preferable to that eternal monotony, which reigns in the countenances, that immoveable veil of black which covers all the emotions of the other race? Add to these, flowing hair, a more elegant symmetry of form, their own judgment in favour of the whites, declared by their preference of them, as uniformly as is the preference of the Oranootan for the black women over those of his own species. . . .

They seem to require less sleep. A black, after hard labour through the day, will be induced by the slightest amusements to sit up till midnight, or later, though knowing he must be out with the first dawn of the morning. They are at least as brave, and more adventuresome. But this may perhaps proceed from

a want of forethought, which prevents their seeing a danger till it be present. When present, they do not go through it with more coolness or steadiness than the whites. They are more ardent after their female: but love seems with them to be more an eager desire, than a tender delicate mixture of sentiment and sensation. Their griefs are transient. Those numberless afflictions, which render it doubtful whether heaven has given life to us in mercy or in wrath, are less felt, and sooner forgotten with them. In general, their existence appears to participate more of sensation than reflection. Comparing them by their faculties of memory, reason, and imagination, it appears to me, that in memory they are equal to the whites; in reason much inferior, as think one could scarcely be found capable of tracing and comprehending the investigations of Euclid; and that in imagination they are dull, tasteless, and anomalous . . . . But never yet could I find that a black had uttered a thought above the level of plain narration; never see even an elementary trait, of painting or sculpture . . . . I advance it therefore as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind . . . . The slave, when made free, might mix with, without staining the blood of his master. But with us a second is necessary, unknown to history. When freed, he is to be removed beyond the reach of mixture.

.....

- To what extent was Jefferson trying to convince himself that African Americans were genetically inferior to whites?
- Jefferson was both brilliant and highly educated, yet what inconsistencies and problems of logic do you find in this passage?
- His relationship with Sally Hemings lay in the future, but did it matter that Sally was a light-skinned slave, three-quarters white?



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Unlike many of his contemporaries, Jefferson was convinced that the American Indians could eventually become full participants in the American republic. Members of the "Five Civilized Tribes" (Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole) often owned large plantations and practiced lifestyles not unlike those of their white neighbors. Unfortunately, Jefferson's hopes fell before the racism and greed of white settlers. Even sophisticated leaders like Cherokee chief Tah Chee, pictured here, were driven from their land; he and his band eventually took up residence in Texas to escape persecution in their native Arkansas. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. [LC-USZC4-12427].

The chief problem for Jeffersonian Indian policy was not the Indians' supposed cultural retardation but their rapid modernization. Among groups such as the Cherokees and Creeks, members of a rising new elite led their people toward greater prosperity and diplomatic independence. Although Jefferson should have greeted such acculturation with enthusiasm, the Indians' white neighbors generally did not. Fearing all-out war between the states and the Indians, Jefferson advanced an alternative. Having acquired Louisiana, Jefferson suggested the creation of large reserves to which Indians currently residing in the East could relocate, taking themselves out of state jurisdictions and removing themselves from the corrupting influence of the "baser elements" of white society. Although he did not advocate the use of force to move Indians west of the Mississippi, he made every effort to convince them to migrate. This idea of segregating Native Americans from other Americans formed the basis for Indian policy for the rest of the century.

# Summary

Americans faced a difficult choice in 1796: to continue in a Federalist direction with Adams or to move into new and uncharted regions of republicanism with Jefferson. Factionalism and voter indecision led to Adams's election as president and Jefferson's as vice president. The split outcome frightened Federalists, and they used every excuse to make war on their political opponents. Diplomatically, they entered into an undeclared war with France. At home, they used repressive measures such as the Alien and Sedition Acts to try to silence opponents. Reminded of what they had rebelled against in the Revolution, in 1800 the American people decided to give Jefferson and the Republicans a chance.

Whereas Jefferson called the election “the revolution of 1800,” Federalists stacked the federal courts in an effort to prevent Republicans from changing government too much. At the same time, they organized themselves into a true political party, an ever-present watchdog on the activities of their rivals.

Jefferson's inaugural address in 1801 announced an end to partisan warfare, but both Madison and hard-line Republicans in Congress attempted to restrict Federalist power in the court system. The Republican program,

however, was not entirely negative. Jefferson looked toward a future in which most Americans could own enough land to produce life's necessities for themselves and were beholden to no one and thus free to vote as their consciences and rationality dictated. To attain this end, Jefferson ordered massive reductions in the size of government, the elimination of internal federal taxes, and rapid westward expansion, including the purchase of the vast territory called Louisiana. For some, the outcome was a spirit of excitement and optimism, but not everyone was so hopeful. Jefferson clearly wanted most Americans to share in the bounty of an expanded nation, but not all were free to share equally. For American Indians, the very success of Jefferson's expansion policy meant a contraction of their freedom. African Americans also found that the equality Jefferson promised to others was not intended for them, though men like Benjamin Banneker grasped for it anyway. As for women, Jefferson himself observed, “The appointment of a woman to office is an innovation for which the public is not prepared, nor am I.” Women were encouraged to play an active role in the new nation but were expected to do so only through their traditional roles as wives and mothers.

## Key Terms

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# Increasing Conflict and War 1805–1815

## CHAPTER 9

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Tecumseh

In the opening days of the nineteenth century, most Americans believed the Native Americans were doomed to extinction. History mandated that the Indians would vanish and that European Americans would inherit their land. The Indians disagreed, and one of their most prominent leaders, Tecumseh, did as much as possible to stop the loss of Indian land that whites deemed inevitable.

Tecumseh stood in stark contrast to dominant white theories about Indian life. Whites thought of Indians living in isolated and constantly warring tribes, yet Tecumseh's parents came from different tribes: his father was a Shawnee from Ohio and his mother was a Creek from Alabama. In the sophisticated Indian world of the American interior, peaceful visitations between tribes were common, as were intergroup marriages.

A combination of his family connections and a distinguished military career led to Tecumseh's emergence as war chief in the late 1780s, and he played a key role in the continuing defense against American incursions. But defeat at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794 temporarily broke the Indian defenses. Taking advantage of Indian vulnerability, American agents used a combination of bribery, coercion, and outright violence to convince **civil chiefs** (see next page) to cede more land. Seeking to stop these new invasions, Tecumseh approached war chiefs from a variety of tribes suggesting a vast alliance system in which the warriors would stop civil chiefs from selling land and form a military force to turn back the Americans.

Bent on continuing expansion, white leaders like Indiana territorial governor William Henry Harrison found Tecumseh's actions frightening. Finally, in November 1811, Harrison resorted to direct action, leading an army to invade Tecumseh's headquarters at Prophetstown on Tippecanoe Creek. Tecumseh was absent, seeking new allies, and Harrison's forces were able to overcome a spirited defense and burn the town, destroying its winter food supply. By the time Tecumseh reached



#### TECUMSEH

Tecumseh followed in his father's footsteps by becoming an influential war leader among the Shawnee. And following the influence of his mother, a Creek who had married across tribal lines, he emphasized the unity between all Native American people. Both influences would lead him to undertake heroic efforts to preserve what remained of the Indians' territory in the years following the American Revolution. According to many experts, this particular portrait, a composite of several sketches, comes closest to capturing what this Indian leader looked like at the peak of his career.

Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field Book of the War of 1812*.

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### *Troubling Currents in Jefferson's America*

- Emerging Factions in American Politics
- The Problem of American Neutrality
- Economic Warfare

#### *Crises in the Nation*

- Economic Depression
- Political Upheaval
- Prophecy and Politics in the West

#### INVESTIGATING AMERICA: Tecumseh

- Denounces American Indian Policy, 1810

- Choosing War

#### INVESTIGATING AMERICA:

- James Madison's War Message to Congress, 1812

#### IT MATTERS TODAY: The Battle of Tippecanoe

#### *The Nation at War*

- The Fighting Begins
- The War Continues
- The Politics of War
- New British Offensives
- The War's Strange Conclusion

#### *Peace and the Rise of New Expectations*

- Economic Change in the Post-War Republic
- A Revolution in the Southern Economy
- Reviving and Reinventing Slavery

#### *Summary*

**civil chiefs** In many Native American societies, leadership was shared among different classes of chiefs, each of which was responsible for specific political tasks; civil chiefs generally were responsible for overseeing domestic affairs, while war chiefs were responsible for diplomacy.

Tipppecanoe in January, few of his followers remained. Thinking first of the survivors' welfare, Tecumseh traveled to Canada seeking emergency supplies.

While he was in Canada, war again broke out, this time between the United States and Great Britain. He decided that the only hope for the Shawnees' future lay in a British victory, and he committed what was left of his alliance to the British. But at the Battle of the Thames, on October 5, 1813, Tecumseh's forces were overrun, and Tecumseh was shot. Hopes for a unified Indian resistance died with Tecumseh, and his death foreshadowed a grim future for Indian land rights. Stinging from military defeats, the once-cosmopolitan world of the Indian interior became what whites imagined it to be: isolated tribes constantly warring among themselves. Expansionists like Harrison used this desperation to play one group off against another, carving piece after piece out of the Indian domain until, by 1850, virtually no Indians remained in the territory Tecumseh had tried to preserve.

**T**ecumseh's situation in Indiana reflected many of the more troubling problems that beset the nation during the opening decades of the nineteenth century. Sitting at the juncture of three worlds—the dynamic republican world of Jeffersonian America, the European imperial world in Canada, and his own Native American world—Tecumseh perceived that unless something happened soon, all three worlds were heading for a crisis.

Jefferson had set an ambitious agenda for the country that was extremely popular with many Americans, but it created serious stresses within the nation and across the world. Along the Atlantic frontier, imperial powers such as Great Britain and France challenged Jefferson's commitment to open trade and freedom of the seas. A war of words, blustering threats, and some open confrontations pushed America increasingly toward crisis and triggered economic disaster. Along the western frontier, Indian groups opposed Jefferson's vision of rapid westward expansion. Here too, verbal and some armed conflicts engendered an air of crisis. And to many, including Harrison, these seemed not to be isolated phenomena. Convinced that a conspiracy was afoot between Indian dissidents like Tecumseh and imperial agents from Great Britain and France, an increasing number of Jeffersonians demanded aggressive action.

Try as they might to ease the growing tensions, neither Jefferson nor his successor, James Madison, could stem the tide of crisis. Harrison finally took matters over the edge: his attack on Prophetstown precipitated a general call for a war that set the nation on a new course altogether.

## Troubling Currents in Jefferson's America

- ★ **How did varying interests between regions of the country complicate Jefferson's political situation during his second term as president?**
- ★ **What impact did European politics have on the American economy between 1804 and 1808?**

Jefferson's successes, culminating in his victory in the 1804 election, seemed to prove that Republicans had absolute control over the nation's political reins. But factions challenging Jefferson's control were forming. A small but vocal coalition of disgruntled

# Chronology

<b>1794</b>	Eli Whitney patents cotton gin		
<b>1803</b>	Britain steps up impressments		
<b>1804</b>	Duel between Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr	<b>1812</b>	United States declares war against England
	Jefferson reelected		United States invades Canada
	Napoleon crowned emperor in France		James Madison reelected
<b>1805</b>	Beginning of Shawnee religious revival	<b>1813</b>	Fort Mims massacre
<b>1807</b>	Burr conspiracy trial		Battle of Put-in-Bay
	Founding of Prophetstown		Embargo of 1813
	<i>Chesapeake</i> affair		First mechanized textile factory, Waltham, Massachusetts
<b>1808</b>	Embargo of 1808 goes into effect		Battle of the Thames
	Economic depression begins	<b>1814</b>	Battle of Horseshoe Bend
	James Madison elected president		British capture and burn Washington, D.C.
<b>1809</b>	Non-Intercourse Act		Battle of Plattsburgh
	Fort Wayne Treaty		Treaty of Ghent
	Chouteau brothers form Missouri Fur Company		Defeat of Napoleon
<b>1810</b>	Macon's Bill No. 2	<b>1814-15</b>	Congress of Vienna
	Vincennes Conference between Harrison and Tecumseh	<b>1815</b>	Battle of New Orleans
	Formation of War Hawk faction		Treaty of Fort Jackson
<b>1811</b>	United States breaks trade relations with Britain		Portage des Sioux treaties
	Second Vincennes Conference between Harrison and Tecumseh	<b>1819</b>	Treaty of Edwardsville
		<b>1825</b>	Prairie du Chien treaties

Federalists threatened to **secede** from the Union. Even within his own party, Jefferson's supremacy eroded, and dissidents emerged. Diplomatic problems also joined domestic ones to trouble Jefferson's second administration.

## Emerging Factions in American Politics

The Federalists' failure in the election of 1804 nearly spelled the troubled party's demise. With the West and the South firmly in Jefferson's camp, disgruntled New England Federalists found their once-dominant voice being drowned out by those who shared Jefferson's agrarian vision for America's future. Proclaiming that "the people of the East cannot reconcile their habits, views, and interests with those of the South and West," Federalist leader Timothy Pickering advocated drastic changes in the Constitution to restore balance. Among other things, northeasterners demanded much stricter standards for admitting new states in the West and the elimination of the Three-Fifths Compromise. Pickering brought together a tight political coalition called the **Essex Junto** to press for these changes.

**secede** To withdraw formally from membership in a political union; threats of secession were used frequently during the early nineteenth century to bring attention to political issues.

**Essex Junto** A group of politicians who sought power outside of the regular political process—composed of radical Federalists in Essex County, Massachusetts, who at first advocated constitutional changes that would favor New England politically and later called for New England and New York to secede from the United States.

**John Randolph** Virginia Republican politician who was a cousin of Thomas Jefferson; he believed in limited government and objected to several of Jefferson's policies.

**Tertium Quid** Republican faction formed by John Randolph in protest against Jefferson's plan for acquiring Florida from Spain; the name is Latin and means a "third thing," indicating Randolph's rejection of both the Federalist and Republican Parties.

Regional fissures began to open inside Jefferson's party as well. Throughout Jefferson's first administration, some within his party, especially those from the South, criticized the president for turning his back on republican principles by expanding federal power and interfering with states' rights. One of Jefferson's most vocal critics was his cousin, **John Randolph**.

The two Virginia Republicans clashed in 1806 when Jefferson irritated Randolph by approaching Congress for a \$2 million appropriation to be used to win French influence in convincing Spain to sell Florida to the United States. Citing these and other perceived violations of Republican principles, Randolph announced, "I found I might co-operate or be an honest man." Randolph chose honesty, splitting with Jefferson to form a third party, the **Tertium Quid**, fracturing the Republican united political front.

A second fissure in the party opened over controversial vice president Aaron Burr's political scheming. Upset that Burr had not conceded the presidency immediately after the tied Electoral College vote in 1800, Jefferson snubbed him throughout his first four years in office and then dropped him as his vice-presidential nominee in 1804. But Burr's political failures constituted an opportunity for the Essex Junto: Pickering offered to help Burr become governor of New York if Burr delivered the state to the northern confederacy. Burr agreed, but mainstream New York Federalists were furious, especially Alexander Hamilton. During the New York state election in the spring of 1804, Hamilton allegedly called Burr "a dangerous man, and one who ought not to be trusted with the reins of government." Burr lost the election in a landslide, wrecking the junto's scheme and pushing himself into an even greater personal and political crisis. Never willing to accept defeat gracefully, Burr demanded that Hamilton retract his statements. When Hamilton refused, Burr challenged him to a duel. Although Hamilton was personally opposed to dueling, in the honor-driven culture that permeated early-nineteenth-century politics, he could not refuse. The vice president, an excellent shot, put a bullet directly through Hamilton's liver and into his spine, killing him.

Killing Hamilton did not solve Burr's problems. Although an indictment for murder was eventually dropped, Burr was forced into hiding and in the process fell in with a former Revolutionary War commander, James Wilkinson, who was employed simultaneously by Spain and the United States. Wilkinson's real loyalties and intentions remain mysterious, but one point seems clear: with Burr's help he intended to carve out a personal domain in the borderland between American and Spanish territories in the Mississippi region. When Congress reconvened in the fall of 1804 and Burr resumed his seat as president of the Senate, he used his political connections to gain an appointment for Wilkinson to be governor of the Louisiana Territory, providing an institutional foundation for whatever plot they had hatched. Then, when his vice-presidential term expired in 1805, Burr ventured west, sailing down the Mississippi to recruit associates. Rumors of intrigue soon surfaced, and investigations began when federal authorities received a letter from Wilkinson late in 1806 implicating Burr in a "deep, dark, wicked, and widespread conspiracy" against the United States. Learning that Wilkinson had turned him in, Burr tried to reach Spanish Florida but was captured early in 1807 and put on trial for treason.

Burr's trial provided an open arena for Jefferson and his critics to air their views on such touchy subjects as presidential power, westward expansion, and national loyalty. Presiding over the case, Chief Justice John Marshall made it clear that he believed Burr was a victim, not the perpetrator, of a conspiracy. Jefferson, however, was determined to have Burr prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Using the powers of his office, Jefferson offered pardons to conspirators who would testify against Burr, and he leaked



information that made his former vice president look guilty. He also refused to honor a subpoena issued by Marshall requiring Jefferson to appear in court and to produce official documents that might have a bearing on the case. In this instance, Jefferson embarrassed the chief justice by recalling that Marshall had supported George Washington's assertion of presidential privilege during investigations into Jay's Treaty. Marshall backed down, and neither Jefferson nor his executive papers appeared in court.

But Marshall struck back in his own way: he turned Jefferson's insistence upon strict constitutional constructionism against the president. In his instructions to the jury, Marshall noted that the Constitution defined treason as "levying war against the United States or adhering to their enemies" and that a guilty verdict required direct evidence from two witnesses. Because Burr had not waged war, and because neither Spain nor Britain was at the moment an enemy of the United States, the jury acquitted the former vice president, to the glee of Jefferson's critics.

### The Problem of American Neutrality

Internal tensions in American politics were matched by growing stress in the nation's diplomatic and economic relations. Jefferson's economic successes had been the product of continuing warfare in Europe. With their fleets engaged in naval battles, their people locked in combat, and their lands crisscrossed by opposing armies, Europeans needed American ships and the fruits of American labor, especially food. American neutrality ensured continued prosperity as long as the contending parties in Europe agreed to the diplomatic principle of neutrality.

Americans immediately grasped at this opportunity. An upsurge in European campaigning in 1803 helped raise the total value of American exports by over 65 percent. A significant proportion of the increase came from the shipment of foreign goods to foreign markets by way of neutral American ports: sugar from the Caribbean, for example, frequently passed through the United States on its way to Europe. These so-called re-exports rose in value from \$14 million in 1803 to \$60 million in 1807, prompting a rapid growth in earnings for American shipping. In 1790, net income from shipping amounted to a mere \$5.9 million; by 1807 the volume had surged to \$42.1 million.

This increased traffic on the high seas, however, placed American mariners in harms' way, given a British law that empowered the king's warships to engage in **impressment**. For decades, British sailors had protested the exceedingly cruel conditions and low pay in His Majesty's navy by jumping ship in American ports and enlisting as merchant sailors on American vessels. Strapped for mariners by renewed warfare, England pursued a vigorous policy of reclaiming British sailors after 1803, even if they were on neutral American ships and, more provocatively, even if they had become citizens of the United States. It is estimated that the British abducted as many as eight thousand sailors from American ships between 1803 and 1812. The loss of so many seamen hurt American shippers economically, but it wounded American pride even more. Like the XYZ affair, impressment seemed to be a direct denial of the United States' status as a legitimate nation.

**impressment** Procedure permitted under British maritime law that authorized commanders of warships to force English civilian sailors into military service.

### Economic Warfare

Pressure on American neutrality increased after 1805, when a military deadlock emerged in the European war: Britain was supreme at sea, whereas France was in control on the continent of Europe. Stuck in a stalemate, both sides used whatever nonmilitary advantages were available in an effort to tip the balance in their favor. Thus the war changed from one of military campaigning to one of diplomatic and economic maneuvering. Seeking to close off foreign supplies to England, in November 1806

The impressment of sailors into the British navy from American ships was one of the more prominent causes of the War of 1812. This 1790 engraving shows an American sailor being seized at gunpoint while those who might try to assist him are elbowed aside. Library of Congress.



**Berlin Decree** Napoleon's order declaring the British Isles under blockade and authorizing the confiscation of British goods from any ship found carrying them.

**frigate** A very fast warship, rigged with square sails and carrying from thirty to fifty cannons on two gun decks.

**broadside** The simultaneous discharge of all the guns on one side of a warship.

**Milan Decree** Napoleon's order authorizing the capture of any neutral vessels sailing from British ports or submitting to British searches.

Napoleon issued the **Berlin Decree**, barring ships that had anchored at British harbors from entering ports controlled by France. The British Parliament responded by issuing a series of directives that permitted neutral ships to sail to European ports only if they first called at a British port to pay a transit tax. It was thus impossible for a neutral ship to follow the laws of either nation without violating the laws of the other.

The British also stepped up enforcement of their European blockade and aggressively pursued impressment to strengthen the Royal Navy. The escalation in both France's and Britain's economic war efforts quickly led to confrontation with Americans and a diplomatic crisis. A pivotal event occurred in June 1807. The British **frigate** *Leopard*, patrolling the American shoreline, confronted the American warship *Chesapeake*. Even though both ships were inside American territorial waters, the *Leopard* ordered the American ship to halt and hand over any British sailors on board. When the *Chesapeake's* captain refused, the *Leopard* fired several **broadsides**, crippling the American vessel, killing three sailors, and injuring eighteen. The British then boarded the *Chesapeake* and dragged off four men, three of whom were naturalized citizens of the United States. Americans were outraged.

Americans were not the only ones galvanized by British aggression. Shortly after the *Chesapeake* affair, word arrived in the United States that Napoleon had responded to Britain's belligerence by declaring a virtual economic war against neutrals. In the **Milan Decree**, he vowed to seize any neutral ship that so much as carried licenses to trade with England. What was worse, the Milan Decree stated that ships that had been boarded by British authorities—even against their crew's will—were subject to immediate French capture.

Many Americans viewed the escalating French and English sanctions as insulting treachery that cried out for an American response. The *Washington Federalist* newspaper observed, "We have never" witnessed such a "thirst for revenge." If Congress had been in session, the legislature surely would have called for war, but Jefferson stayed calm.

War with England or France or, worse still, with both would bring Jefferson's whole political program to a crashing halt. He had insisted on inexpensive government, lobbied for American neutrality, and hoped for renewed prosperity through continuing trade with Europe. War would destroy his entire agenda. But clearly Jefferson had to do something.

Believing that Europeans were far more dependent on American goods and ships than Americans were on European money and manufactures, Jefferson chose to violate one of his cardinal principles: the U.S. government would interfere in the economy to force Europeans to recognize American neutral rights. In December 1807, the president announced the **Embargo Act**, which prohibited American vessels from sailing to foreign ports unless the Europeans agreed to recognize America's neutral rights to trade with anyone it pleased.

**Embargo Act** Embargo (a government-ordered trade ban) signed by Jefferson in 1807 to pressure Britain and France to accept neutral trading rights.

## Crises in the Nation

- ★ **How did Jefferson's economic and Indian policies influence national developments after 1808?**
- ★ **What did the actions of frontier politicians such as William Henry Harrison do to bring the nation into war in 1812?**

Jefferson's reaction to European aggression immediately began strangling American trade and with it, America's domestic economic development. In addition, European countries still had legitimate claims on much of North America, and the Indians who continued to occupy most of the continent had enough military power to pose a serious threat to the United States if properly motivated. While impressment, blockade, and embargo paralyzed America's Atlantic frontier, a combination of European and Indian hostilities along the western frontier added to the air of national emergency. The resulting series of domestic crises played havoc with Jefferson's vision of a peaceful, prosperous nation.

### Economic Depression

Although Jefferson felt justified in suspending free trade to protect neutral rights, the result was the worst economic depression since the founding of the British colonies in North America. Critics observed that if Jefferson wished to keep "the workshops in Europe," there had to be a way to import manufactured goods into the country. While Jefferson's "damn-bargo," as critics called it, was only halfheartedly enforced, the economy slumped disastrously. Taken together, all American exports fell from \$109 million to \$22 million, and net earnings from shipping plummeted by almost 50 percent. During 1808, earnings from business enterprise in America declined to less than a quarter of their value in 1807. The depression shattered economic and social life in many eastern towns.

New Englanders screamed loudest about the impact of the embargo, but southerners and westerners were just as seriously affected by it. The economy of the South had depended on the export of staple crops like tobacco since colonial times and was rapidly turning to cotton. There, embargo meant near-death to trade. In response to the loss of foreign markets, tobacco prices fell from \$6.75 per hundredweight to \$3.25, and cotton from 21 to 13 cents per pound. In the West, wholesale prices for agricultural products spiraled downward also. Overall, the prices of farm products were 16 percent lower between 1807 and 1811 than they had been between 1791 and 1801. At the same time, the price of

virtually every consumer item went up. The price of building materials—hardware, glass, and milled lumber—rose 11 percent during the same period, and the price of textiles climbed 20 percent. In fact, the only consumer item that did not go up in price was the one item farmers did not need to buy: food. Faced with dropping incomes and soaring costs, farmers probably felt the trade restrictions more profoundly than did others.

Rather than blaming their problems on the Republican administration, however, disaffected farmers directed their anger at the British. Frontiersmen believed, rightly or wrongly, that eliminating British interference with American trade would restore the boom economy that had drawn so many of them to the edge of American settlement. Thus westerners banded together to raise their voices in favor of American patriotism and war against Britain.

### Political Upheaval

Despite the escalating crisis in the country, Jefferson remained popular, but like Washington, he chose to step down from the presidency after serving two terms, making it clear to party officials that he favored Secretary of State James Madison to replace him in the upcoming presidential election of 1808. Although Madison and Jefferson had much in common and were longtime friends, they seemed very different from each other. Few could say they knew Madison well, but those who did found him captivating: a man of few words but of piercing intellect and unflinching conviction. Those less well acquainted with him thought the quiet Virginian indecisive: where Jefferson tended to act on impulse, Madison approached matters of state as he approached matters of political philosophy—with caution, patience, and reason.

Madison, chosen by the Republican **party caucus** over both the moderate James Monroe of Virginia and George Clinton of New York (the sitting vice president), easily defeated his Federalist opponent, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. But the one-sided results disguised deep political divisions in the nation at large. Federalist criticism of Jefferson's policies, especially of the embargo, was finding a growing audience as the depression deepened, and in the congressional election in 1808 the Republicans lost twenty-four seats to the Federalists.

During Madison's first two years in office, lack of any progress toward resolving the nation's woes seemed to confirm critics' perception of his indecisiveness. Despite that, Republicans actually made gains in the congressional elections in 1810: they regained fourteen of the seats they had lost in the House in 1808 and picked up two additional Senate seats. But this was no vote of confidence in Madison. Although the new congressmen were Republicans, sixty-three of them did not support Madison or his commitment to a conciliatory policy toward the British. These new members of Congress were mostly very young, extremely patriotic, and represented frontier constituents who were being ravaged by the agricultural depression. In the months to come, their increasingly strident demands for aggressive action against England earned them the nickname **War Hawks**.

### Prophecy and Politics in the West

A key reason for War Hawk militancy was the unsettled conditions along the western frontier. Relations with Indians in the West had been peaceful since the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. The Shawnees and other groups had been thrown off their traditional homelands in Ohio by the Treaty of Greenville and forced to move to new lands in Indiana. There, food shortages, disease, and continuing encroachment by settlers caused many young Indians to lose faith in their traditional beliefs and in themselves as human beings.

**party caucus** A meeting of members of a political party to decide on questions of policy or leadership or to register preferences for candidates running for office.

**War Hawks** Members of Congress elected in 1810 from the West and South who campaigned for war with Britain in the hopes of stimulating the economy and annexing new territory.



In the midst of the crisis, one disheartened, diseased alcoholic rose above his afflictions to lead the Indians into a brief new era of hope. Tecumseh's younger brother, Lalawethika, had bragged that he would play an influential role in his people's affairs (his name meant "Noisemaker"). But his prospects had declined along with those of his people. Lacking his brother's training as a warrior, Lalawethika felt increasingly hopeless, turned to alcohol, and finally in 1805 became critically ill. He claimed that he remembered dying and meeting the Master of Life, who showed him the way to lead his people out of degradation and commanded him to return to the world of the living so he could tell the Indians what they must do to recover their dignity. He then awoke, cured of his illness. Launching a full-fledged religious and cultural revival designed to teach the ways revealed to him by the Master of Life, he adopted the name Tenskwatawa ("the Way"). Whites called him "**The Prophet.**"

Blaming the decline of his people on their adoption of white ways, the Prophet taught them to return to their traditional culture—to discard whites' clothing, religion, and especially alcohol—and live as their ancestors had lived. He also urged his followers to unify against the temptations and threats of white exploiters and to hold on to what remained of their lands. If they followed his teachings, the Prophet insisted, the Indians would regain control of their lives and their lands, and the whites would vanish from their world. In 1807 the Prophet established a model religious settlement, Prophetstown, on the banks of Tippecanoe Creek in Indiana Territory. Although he did not urge his followers to attack the whites, he made it clear that the Master of Life would defend him and his followers if war were pressed on them.

While Tenskwatawa continued to stress spiritual means for stopping white aggression, his brother Tecumseh pushed for a more political course of action. Tecumseh, seven years older than the Prophet, had always inclined more toward politics and warfare. Known as a brave fighter and a persuasive political orator, Tecumseh traveled throughout the western frontier, working out political and military alliances designed to put a stop to white expansion once and for all. Although he did not want to start a war against white settlers, Tecumseh exhorted Indians to defend every inch of land that remained to them. In 1807 he warned Ohio governor Thomas Kirker that they would do so with their lives.

Tecumseh's plan might have brought about his brother's goals. Faced by a unified defensive line of Indians stretching along the American frontier from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, the United States probably would have found it virtually impossible to expand any farther, and the Indian confederacy would have become a significant force in America's future. The very brilliance of Tecumseh's reasoning and his success at organizing Indian groups caused a great deal of confusion among whites. Various white officials were convinced that the Shawnee leader was a spy either for the French or for the British and that his activities were an extension of some hidden plot by one European power or another. Though wrong, such theories helped to escalate the air of crisis in the West and in the nation at large.

Indiana governor William Henry Harrison had good reason to advance the impression of a conspiracy between Tecumseh and the British. Harrison and men like him believed the United States had the right to control all of North America and, accordingly, to brush aside anything standing in the way by any means available. Britain and the Indians were thus linked in their thinking. Both were seen as obstacles to national destiny—and many War Hawks prayed for the outbreak of war between the United States and the British with the Indians in between. Such a war would provide an excuse for attacking the Indians along the frontier to break up their emerging confederation and dispossess them

#### **The Prophet (Tenskwatawa)**

Shawnee religious visionary who called for a return to Indian traditions and founded the community of Prophetstown on Tippecanoe Creek.

# Investigating America

## Tecumseh Denounces American Indian Policy, 1810

Between 1808 and 1811, Shawnee political spokesman Tecumseh and Indiana Territory governor William Henry Harrison engaged in a running war of words. In the course of these discussions, Tecumseh became increasingly frustrated at Harrison's apparent ignorance of political and social organization among the various groups of Indians in the American interior. He repeatedly explained that although relations among the various Indians were complex, they nevertheless constituted a single people and not a patchwork of separate nations. Finally, at a conference in Vincennes on August 20, 1810, Tecumseh lost his temper and accused Harrison of intentionally misunderstanding the nature of Native American intergroup relations as part of a larger effort to defraud the Indians of their land. The original handwritten transcript of this speech contains many abbreviations as well as some unusual spelling and punctuation. The excerpt that follows has been modernized for easier reading.

.....

**Y**ou try to force the red people to do some injury. It is you that is pushing them on to do mischief. You endeavor to make distinctions. You wish to prevent the Indians to do as we wish them to: unite and let them consider their land as the common property of the whole. You take tribes aside and advise them not to come into this measure. . . .

The reason I tell you this is [that] you want by your distinctions of Indian tribes in allotting to each a particular tract of land to make them to war with each other. You never see an Indian come and endeavor to make the white people do so. You are continually driving the red people when at last you will drive them into the great Lake where they can't either stand or work. . . .



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**Old Northwest** The area of the United States referred to at the time as the Northwest Territory; it would eventually be broken into the states of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

of their land. In addition, a war would justify invading and seizing Canada, which would open rich timber, fur, and agricultural lands for American settlement. More important, it would secure American control of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River—potentially a very valuable shipping route for agricultural produce from upper New York, northern Ohio, and the newly opening areas of the **Old Northwest**.

You ought to know what you are doing with the Indians. Perhaps it is by direction of the President to make those distinctions. It is a very bad thing and we do not like it. Since my residence at Tippecanoe, we have endeavored to level all distinctions to destroy village chiefs by whom all mischief is done; it is they who sell our land to the Americans [so] our object is to let all our affairs be transacted by Warriors. This land that was sold and the goods that were given for it was only done by a few. . . . But in future we are prepared to punish those chiefs who may come forward to propose to sell their land. If you continue to purchase [land from] them, it will produce war among the different tribes, and at last I do not know what will be the consequences to the white people. . . .

I now wish you to listen to me. If you do not it will appear as if you wished me to kill all the chiefs that sold you the land. I tell you so because I am authorized by all the tribes to do so. I am at the head of them all. I am a Warrior and all the Warriors will meet together in two or three moons from this. Then I will call for those chiefs that sold you the land and shall know what to do with them. If you do not restore the land, you will have a hand in killing them.

.....

- What exactly is Tecumseh charging Harrison and his agents of doing? What does this suggest about Tecumseh's understanding of the nature of Indian organization and Harrison's misunderstandings about it?
- Why would Tecumseh insist that warriors rather than village chiefs decide policy toward the United States?
- What did Tecumseh propose to do if Harrison persisted in conducting Indian policy and land acquisition as he had done at Fort Wayne? Why do you think Tecumseh chose this particular approach?

## Choosing War

With the nation reeling from the economic squeeze of the embargo, Congress replaced it with the **Non-Intercourse Act** early in 1809. The new law forbade trade only with England and France and gave the president the power to reopen trade if either of the combatants lifted its restrictions against American shipping. Even though this act was much less restrictive than the embargo, American merchants were relieved when it expired in the spring of 1810. At that point, Congress passed an even more permissive boycott, **Macon's Bill No. 2**. According to this new law, merchants could trade with the combatants if they wanted to take the risk, but if either France or England lifted its blockade, the United States would stop trading with the other.

Hoping to cut England off from needed outside supplies, Napoleon responded to Macon's Bill in August by sending a letter to the American government promising to suspend French restrictions on American shipping. In secret, however, the French emperor issued an order to continue seizing American ships. Despite Napoleon's devious intentions, a desperate Madison instructed the American mission in London to tell the British that he would close down trade with them unless they joined France in dropping trade restrictions. Sure that Napoleon was lying, the British refused, backing the president into a diplomatic corner. In February 1811, the provisions of Macon's Bill forced Madison to close trading with Britain for its failure to remove economic sanctions, stepping up tensions all around.

Later in the year, events in the West finally triggered a crisis. The underlying origin of the problem was an agreement, the Fort Wayne Treaty, signed in the fall of 1809 between the United States and representatives of the Miami, Potawatomi, and Delaware Indians. In return for an outright bribe of \$5,200 and individual **annuities** ranging from \$250 to \$500, civil chiefs among these three tribes sold over 3 million acres of Indian land in Indiana and Illinois—land already occupied by many other Indian groups.

In August 1810, Tecumseh met with Governor Harrison in Vincennes, Indiana, to denounce the Fort Wayne Treaty. Harrison insisted that the agreement was legitimate. Speaking for those whose lands had been sold out from under them, Tecumseh said, "They want to save that piece of land, we do not wish you to take it . . . I want the present boundary line to continue. Should you cross it, I assure you it will be productive of bad consequences." But Harrison refused to budge.

The Vincennes meeting convinced the Indians that they must prepare for an attack. The Prophet increasingly preached the Master of Life's commitment to support the faithful in a battle against the whites. Tecumseh traveled up and down the American frontier, enlisting additional allies into his growing Indian confederacy. Meanwhile, Harrison grew more and more eager to attack the Indians before they could unite fully. He got his chance when a second peace conference, also held at Vincennes in the summer of 1811, also failed. Citing the failed peace effort and sporadic skirmishes between frontier settlers and renegade bands of Indians, none of whom were directly connected to Tecumseh, Harrison ordered an attack. On November 7, in the so-called **Battle of Tippecanoe**, an army of enraged frontiersmen burned Prophetstown. Then, having succeeded in setting the Indian frontier ablaze, Harrison called for a declaration of war against the Indians and the British.

Coming as it did while Congress was already embroiled in debate over economic sanctions and British impressment, the outbreak of violence on the frontier was finally enough to push Madison into action. The president was still hoping for some sort of peaceful resolution, and chose his words carefully when he informed Congress, "We behold . . . on the side of Great Britain, a state of war against the United States; and on the side of the United States, a state of peace toward Britain." As chairman of the House

**Non-Intercourse Act** Law passed by Congress in 1809 reopening trade with all nations except France and Britain and authorizing the president to reopen trade with both countries if they lifted restrictions on American shipping.

**Macon's Bill No. 2** Law passed by Congress in 1810 that offered exclusive trading rights to France or Britain, whichever recognized American neutral rights first.

**annuity** An allowance or income paid annually.

**Battle of Tippecanoe** Battle near Prophetstown in 1811, where American forces led by William Henry Harrison defeated the followers of the Shawnee Prophet and destroyed the town.

# Investigating America

## James Madison's War Message to Congress, 1812

As one of the chief architects of the Constitution, President Madison was well aware that the power to "declare war" rested with Congress. (In the *Federalist Papers*, Hamilton had argued that the president's role as "commander in chief of the army and navy" existed only after Congress declared war.) Accordingly, on June 1, 1812, Madison sent a message to Congress (rather than appear in person) on the state of relations between the United States and Britain. In the following excerpt, he did not call for a declaration of war, but listed four major grievances that might justify action: impressment, illegal blockades, the seizure of American ships and cargoes, and British responsibility for renewing Indian warfare in the northwest. It would then be up to Congress to act.

.....  
**T**o the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States: I communicate to Congress certain documents, being a continuation of those heretofore laid before them on the subject of our affairs with Great Britain. . . .

British cruisers have been in the continued practice of violating the American flag on the great highway of nations, and of seizing and carrying off persons sailing under it, not in the exercise of a belligerent right founded on the law of nations against an enemy, but of a municipal prerogative over British subjects. British jurisdiction is thus extended to neutral vessels in a situation where no laws can operate but the law of nations and the laws of the country to which the vessels belong, and a self-redress is assumed which, if British subjects were wrongfully detained and alone concerned, is that substitution of force for a resort to the responsible sovereign which falls within the definition of war. Could the seizure of British subjects in such cases be regarded as within the exercise of a belligerent right, the acknowledged laws of war, which forbid an article of captured property to be adjudged without a regular investigation before a competent tribunal, would imperiously demand the fairest trial where the sacred rights of persons were at issue. In place of such a trial these rights are subjected to the will of every petty commander. . . .

Under pretended blockades, without the presence of an adequate force and sometimes without the practicability of

applying one, our commerce has been plundered in every sea, the great staples of our country have been cut off from their legitimate markets, and a destructive blow aimed at our agricultural and maritime interests. In aggravation of these predatory measures they have been considered as in force from the dates of their notification, a retrospective effect being thus added, as has been done in other important cases, to the unlawfulness of the course pursued. And to render the outrage the more signal these mock blockades have been reiterated and enforced in the face of official communications from the British Government declaring as the true definition of a legal blockade "that particular ports must be actually invested and previous warning given to vessels bound to them not to enter."

In reviewing the conduct of Great Britain toward the United States our attention is necessarily drawn to the warfare just renewed by the savages on one of our extensive frontiers, a warfare which is known to spare neither age nor sex and to be distinguished by features peculiarly shocking to humanity. It is difficult to account for the activity and combinations which have for some time been developing themselves among tribes in constant intercourse with British traders and garrisons without connecting their hostility with that influence and without recollecting the authenticated examples of such interpositions heretofore furnished by the officers and agents of that Government. . . .

- .....
- Why did Madison choose to list the grievances in the order he did?
  - Given his claim that Britain's blockades had damaged American commerce, why did the most commercial sections of the nation oppose war?
  - What does Madison's language regarding Native Americans suggest as to the government's goals on the frontier?
  - Even as he urged the Congress to declare war, the president doubted the young republic's ability to defeat the mightiest navy on the globe. Was the *willingness* of the Republican Party to fight for American rights, even at the cost of invasion and defeat, principled or foolish? Or both?



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# It Matters Today

## THE BATTLE OF TIPPECANOE

Americans today generally think that Indians never really mattered in the nation's history. This modern dismissal of Indian significance is entirely incorrect. For years before the Battle of Tippecanoe, William Henry Harrison warned officials in Washington that if Tecumseh was successful, he really could stop American westward expansion. This was not baseless exaggeration. As Harrison himself said of Tecumseh, "He is one of those uncommon geniuses, which spring up occasionally to produce revolutions and overturn the established order of things." Historians disagree about whether Tecumseh could have succeeded in stopping American expansion, but there is no question that the unified force he was raising along the American frontier would have compelled politicians like Jefferson to reconsider their policies. In either case, America today would

be a profoundly different place had Harrison not destroyed Prophetstown and undermined the growing Indian confederacy.

- How might the Jefferson administration have dealt differently with the demands made by Tecumseh and his allies? In what ways would the United States be different today had this alternative course been followed?
- Since the early nineteenth century, the United States has encountered resistance to national expansion on a number of fronts. Choose another situation from later in the nation's history in which such resistance was dealt with. What similarities and/or differences do you see between this event and the handling of Tecumseh's resistance movement?

Foreign Relations Committee, however, **John C. Calhoun** was less circumspect: "The mad ambition, the lust of power, and the commercial avarice of Great Britain have left to neutral nations an alternative only between the base surrender of their rights, and a manly vindication of them." He then introduced a war bill in Congress.

When the vote was finally cast in 1812, the war bill passed by a vote of 79 to 49 in the House and 19 to 13 in the Senate. Although they had the most to lose from continued indecisive policies, representatives from the heavily Federalist regions that depended the most on overseas trade—Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York—voted against war, whereas strongly Republican western and southern representatives voted in favor.

**John C. Calhoun** Congressman from South Carolina who was a leader of the War Hawks and the author of the official declaration of war in 1812.

## The Nation at War

- ★ **What geographic and economic factors impeded American war efforts against Great Britain and Britain's Indian allies?**
- ★ **How did events in Europe influence the war in America?**

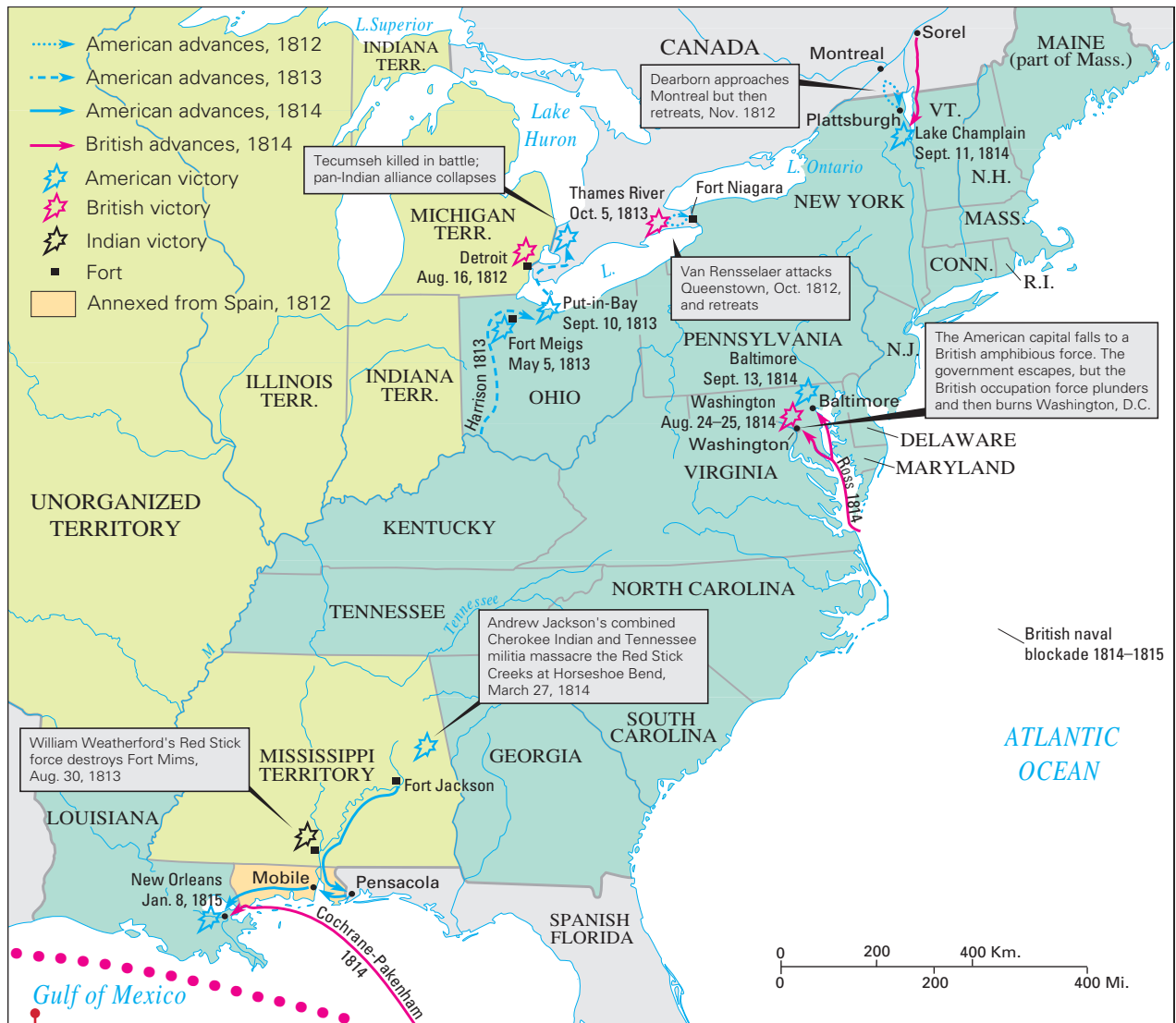
The nation was dreadfully unprepared when the breach with England finally came. With virtually no army or navy, the United States was taking a terrible risk in engaging what was fast becoming the most awesome military power in the world. Not surprisingly, defeat and humiliation were the main fruits of American efforts as the two nations faced off.

### The Fighting Begins

Despite years of agitation, the war's arrival in 1812 caught the United States terribly unprepared. Republican cost cutting had virtually disbanded the military during Jefferson's first term in office. The navy had fewer than twenty vessels,

and the army could field fewer than seven thousand men. And for all its war fever, a coalition of Federalists and Quids in Congress balked at appropriating new funds even after war had been declared. Thus the first ventures in the war went forward with only grudging financial support.

In line with what the War Hawks wanted, the first military campaign was a three-pronged drive toward Canada and against the Indians (see Map 9.1). One force, commanded by Harrison, was successful in raiding undefended Indian villages but was unable to make any gains against British troops. Farther east, a force led by Major General Stephen Van Rensselaer was defeated by a small British and Indian army. Meanwhile, the third force, commanded by Henry Dearborn, lunged at Montreal but nervously withdrew back into U.S. territory after an inconclusive battle against the British.



**MAP 9.1** The War of 1812

The heaviest action during the first two years of the War of 1812 lay along the U.S./Canadian border. In 1814 the British sought to knock the United States out of the war by staging three offensives: one along the northern frontier at Plattsburgh, New York; one into the Chesapeake; and a third directed at the Mississippi River at New Orleans. All three offensives failed.

American sailors fared much better during the war's opening days. Leading the war effort at sea were three frigates: the *Constitution* (popularly known as **Old Ironsides**), the *President*, and the *United States*. In mid-August, the *Constitution* outmaneuvered and eventually sank what the British described as "one of our stoutest frigates," the H.M.S. *Guerrière*. The *United States*, under the command of Stephen Decatur, enjoyed a victory against the British frigate the H.M.S. *Macedonian*. Enduring thirty broadsides fired by the *Macedonian*, Decatur's gunners splintered the British ship with seventy broadsides of their own. Though no stranger to the horrors of war, Decatur was shocked by what he found when he boarded the crippled vessel: "fragments of the dead scattered in every direction, the decks slippery with blood, and one continuous agonizing yell of the unhappy wounded." American privateers also enjoyed success, capturing 450 British merchant ships valued in the millions during the first six months of the war.

Despite these early naval victories, when Madison stood for reelection in 1812, the nation's military fate appeared uncertain and his leadership seemed shaky. Although the majority of his party's congressional caucus supported him for reelection, nearly a third of the Republican congressmen—mostly those from New York and New England—rallied around New Yorker DeWitt Clinton, nephew and political ally of Madison's former challenger George Clinton. Like his uncle, DeWitt Clinton was a Republican who favored Federalist economic policies and agreed with New England Federalists that the war was unnecessary. Most Federalists supported Clinton, and the party did not field a candidate of its own.

When the campaign was over, the outcome was nearly the same as the congressional vote on the war bill earlier in the year. New York and New England rallied behind Clinton. The South and West continued to support Madison, the Republicans, and war. Madison won but was in no position to gloat. His share of electoral votes in the dangerously sectional contest had fallen from 72 percent in 1808 to 58.9 percent. At the same time, Republican Party strength in the House dropped by over 13 percent, and in the Senate by about 8 percent.

### The War Continues

When military campaigning resumed in the spring of 1813, it appeared that the U.S. Army would fare as badly as it had the previous fall. Fighting resumed when British colonel Henry Proctor and Tecumseh, with a joint force of nine hundred British soldiers and twelve hundred Indians, laid siege to Harrison's command camped at Fort Meigs on the Maumee Rapids in Ohio. An army of twelve hundred Kentucky militiamen finally arrived and drove the enemy off, but they were so disorganized that they lost nearly half their number in pursuing the British and Indian force. Having escaped virtually unscathed, Proctor and Tecumseh continued to harass American forces through the summer. Then, with winter approaching, the British and Indians withdrew to Canada. Harrison, who had been busy raising additional troops, decided to pursue.

No doubt Harrison's new effort would have proved as fruitless as his earlier ones, but an unexpected event turned the odds in his favor. One key problem plaguing Harrison and other commanders in the field was that the British controlled the Great Lakes and thus could depend on an uninterrupted supply line. In contrast, American forces and their supplies moved along undeveloped roads and were easy targets for Indian and British attackers. **Oliver Hazard Perry**, a young naval tactician, had been given command of a small fleet assigned to clear the lakes of British ships. After months of playing hide-and-seek among the shore islands, British and American ships met in battle at Put-in-Bay in September 1813. Two hours of cannon fire left Perry's **flagship**, the *Lawrence*, nearly destroyed, and 80 percent of the crew lay dead or wounded. Perry refused to surrender. He slipped off his damaged vessel and took command of another ship standing nearby.

**Old Ironsides** Nickname of the U.S.S. *Constitution*, the forty-four-gun American frigate whose victory over the *Guerrière* bolstered sagging national morale during the War of 1812.

**Oliver Hazard Perry** American naval officer who led the fleet that defeated the British in the Battle of Put-in-Bay during the War of 1812.

**flagship** The ship that carries the fleet commander and bears the commander's flag.

What remained of his command then sailed back into the heart of the British force and, after three hours of close combat, subdued and captured six British ships. Perry immediately sent a note to Harrison stating, “We have met the enemy and they are ours.”

Buoyed by this news, Harrison’s army closed in on Proctor and Tecumseh at the Thames River, about 50 miles northeast of Detroit, on October 5. The British force faced a piercing cavalry charge and, lacking naval support, was soon forced to surrender. The Indians held out longer, but when word spread that Tecumseh had been killed, they melted into the woods, leaving the body of their fallen leader to be torn apart by the victorious Americans.

Another war front had also opened farther south during 1813. Although the Creek Confederacy as a whole wished to remain neutral, one faction calling itself the Red Sticks had allied with Tecumseh in 1812. In the summer of 1813, Red Stick leader William Weatherford led a force against Fort Mims, killing all but about thirty of the more than three hundred occupants. The so-called Fort Mims massacre enraged whites in the Southeast. In Tennessee, twenty-five hundred militiamen rallied around **Andrew Jackson**, a young planter and Indian fighter. Already called “Old Hickory” because of his toughness, Jackson and his frontier ruffians fought multiple engagements against the Red Stick Creeks, driving them into hiding.

**Andrew Jackson** General who defeated the Creeks at Horseshoe Bend in 1814 and the British at New Orleans in 1815; he later became the seventh president of the United States.

### The Politics of War

The war had wound down for the winter by the time Congress reconvened in December 1813, but the outlook was not good. Disappointed that American forces had not knocked the British out of the war, Republican representative William

Murfree spoke for many when he said, “The result of the last campaign disappointed the expectations of every one.” President Madison tried to be optimistic. Recalling the victories during the year, he said, “The war, with its **vicissitudes**, is illustrating the capacity and destiny of the United States to be a great, a flourishing, and a powerful nation.”

**vicissitudes** Sudden or unexpected changes encountered during the course of life.

Madison’s optimism seemed justified later in December when the British offered to open direct peace negotiations with the Americans. The president quickly formed a peace commission, but until its work was done, Madison and Congress still had to worry about the practical issues of troops and money, both of which were in critically short supply.

Despite increases in army pay and bonuses for new recruits, enlistments were falling off in 1813. Congressional Republicans responded by adding further enticements for new recruits, including grants of 160 acres of land in the western territories. Congress also authorized the president to extend the term of enlistment for men already in service. By 1814, Congress had increased the size of the army to more than sixty-two thousand men, but congressional Republicans, as traditional enemies of internal taxes, decided to borrow to pay for the buildup, authorizing a \$35 million deficit.

Adding to the money problem was the fact that, to this point in the war, the United States had permitted neutral nations to trade freely in American ports, carrying American exports to England and Canada and English goods into eastern ports. As a result, the president proposed an absolute embargo on all American ships and goods—neither were to leave port—and a complete ban on imports that were customarily produced in Great Britain. Federalists, especially those from New England, called the proposal “an engine of tyranny, an engine of oppression,” no different, they said, from the Intolerable Acts imposed on American colonies by Britain in 1774. But congressional Republicans passed the embargo a mere eight days after Madison submitted it.

**Embargo of 1813** An absolute embargo on all American trade and British imports.

The **Embargo of 1813** was the most far-reaching trade restriction bill ever passed by Congress. It confined all trading ships to port, and even fishing vessels could put to sea



only if their masters posted sizable **bonds**. Government officials charged with enforcing the new law had unprecedented **discretionary powers**. The impact was devastating: The embargo virtually shut down the New England and New York economies, and it severely crippled the economy of nearly every other state.

**bond** A sum of money paid as bail or security.

**discretionary powers** In government, powers given to an administrative official to be used without outside consultation or oversight.

### New British Offensives

While Congress debated matters of finance and trade restrictions, events in Europe were changing the entire character of the war. On March 31, 1814, the British and their allies took Paris, forcing Napoleon to abdicate his throne. Few in America mourned the French emperor's fall. Napoleon's defeat, however, left the United States as Great Britain's sole military target. Republican Joseph Nicholson expressed a common lament when he observed, "We should have to fight hereafter not for 'free Trade and sailors rights,' not for the Conquest of the Canadas, but for our national Existence."

As Nicholson feared, a flood of combat-hardened British veterans began arriving in North America, and the survival of the United States as an independent nation was indeed at issue. By the late summer of 1814, British troop strength in Canada had risen to thirty thousand men. From this position of power, the British prepared a series of offensives to bring the war to a quick end.

In August 1814, twenty British warships and several troop transports sailed up Chesapeake Bay toward Washington, D.C. The British arrived outside Washington at midday on August 24. The troops defending the city could not withstand the force of hardened British veterans, but they delayed the invasion long enough for the government to escape.



Although the British were successful in capturing the U.S. capital in August 1814, defenders stalled the invasion long enough for the government to escape. In frustration, the British pillaged the city and then burned the public buildings. This painting captures the disordered scene as city dwellers try to quench the flames while the capitol building blazes in the background. © Bettmann/CORBIS.

**mortar** A portable, muzzle-loading cannon that fires large projectiles at high trajectories over a short range; traditionally used by mobile troops against fixed fortifications.

**Francis Scott Key** Author of “The Star-Spangled Banner,” which chronicles the British bombardment of Fort McHenry in 1814; Key’s poem, set to music, became the official U.S. national anthem in 1931.

**Battle of Horseshoe Bend** Battle in 1814 in which Tennessee militia massacred Creek Indians in Alabama, ending Red Stick resistance to white westward expansion.

**Jean Lafitte** Leader of a band of pirates in southeast Louisiana; he offered to fight for the Americans at New Orleans in return for the pardon of his men.

**Battle of New Orleans** Battle in the War of 1812 in which American troops commanded by Andrew Jackson destroyed the British force attempting to seize New Orleans.

Angered at being foiled, the British sacked the city, torching most of the buildings. They then moved on toward the key port city of Baltimore.

At Baltimore, the British navy had to knock out Fort McHenry and take the harbor before the army could take the city. On September 13, British ships armed with heavy **mortars** and rockets attacked the fort. Despite the pounding, when the sun rose on September 14, the American flag continued to wave over Fort McHenry. The sight moved a young Georgetown volunteer named **Francis Scott Key**, who had watched the shelling as a prisoner aboard one of the British ships, to record the event in a poem that was later set to music and became the national anthem of the United States. Having failed to reduce the fort, the British were forced to withdraw, leaving Baltimore undisturbed.

On yet another front, the British pressed an offensive against the Gulf Coast designed to take pressure off Canada and close transportation on the Mississippi River. The defense of the Gulf Coast fell to Andrew Jackson and his Tennesseans. Having spent the winter raising troops and collecting supplies, in March 1814 Jackson and his army of four thousand militiamen and Cherokee volunteers resumed their mission to punish the Red Stick Creeks. Learning that the Red Sticks had established a camp on the peninsula formed by a bend in the Tallapoosa River, Jackson led his men on a forced march to attack. On March 27, in what was misleadingly called the **Battle of Horseshoe Bend**, Jackson’s force trapped the Creeks and slaughtered nearly eight hundred people, destroying Red Stick opposition and severely crippling Indian resistance in the South.

After the massacre at Horseshoe Bend, Jackson moved his army toward the Gulf of Mexico, where a British offensive was in the making. Arriving in New Orleans on December 1, he found the city ill prepared to defend itself. The local militia, consisting mostly of French and Spanish residents, would not obey American officers. “Those who are not for us are against us, and will be dealt with accordingly,” Jackson proclaimed. He turned increasingly to unconventional sources of support. Free blacks in the city formed a regular army corps, and Jackson created a special unit of black refugees from Saint Domingue under the command of Colonel Jean Baptiste Savary. White citizens protested Jackson’s arming of runaway slaves, but he ignored their objections. “Legitimate citizens” protested too when Jackson accepted a company of river pirates under the command of **Jean Lafitte**, awarding them a blanket pardon for all past crimes. “Hellish Banditti,” Jackson himself called them, but the pirate commander and the general hit it off so well that Lafitte became Jackson’s constant companion during the campaign.

Having pulled his ragtag force together, Jackson settled in to wait for the British attack. On the morning of January 8, 1815, it came. The British force, commanded by General Edward Pakenham, emerged from the fog at dawn, directly in front of Jackson’s defenses. Waiting patiently behind a dry canal, Jackson’s men began firing cannon, rifles, and muskets as the British moved within range. According to one British veteran, it was “the most murderous fire I have ever beheld before or since.”

When it was all over, more than two thousand British troops had been killed or wounded in the **Battle of New Orleans**, whereas a mere seventy-one Americans fell. This was by far the most successful battle fought by American forces during the War of 1812. Although it was fought after the preliminary peace treaty was signed, the agreement had yet to be ratified by Parliament, and so Jackson’s victory saved the peace.

### The War’s Strange Conclusion

While the British were closing in on Washington in the summer of 1814, treaty negotiations designed to end the war were beginning in Ghent, Belgium. Confident that their campaigns would soon knock the Americans out of the war, the

British delegates were in no hurry to end it by diplomacy. They refused to discuss substantive issues, insisting that all of the matters raised by Madison's peace commission were nonnegotiable.

At that point, however, domestic politics in Britain began to play a deciding role. After nearly a generation of armed conflict, the English people were war-weary, especially the taxpayers. As one British official put it, "Economy & relief from taxation are not merely the War Cry of Opposition, but they are the real objects to which public attention is turned." The failure at Baltimore made it appear that, at best, the war would drag on at least another year, at an estimated cost to Britain of an additional \$44 million. Moreover, continuation of the American war was interfering with Britain's European diplomacy. Trying to arrive at a peace settlement for Europe at the **Congress of Vienna**, a British official commented, "We do not think the Continental Powers will continue in good humour with our Blockade of the whole Coast of America." Speaking for the military, the **Duke of Wellington** reviewed British military successes and failures in the American war and advised his countrymen, "You have no right . . . to demand any **concession** . . . from America."

In the end, the **Treaty of Ghent**, completed on December 24, 1814, simply restored diplomatic relations between England and the United States to what they had been prior to the outbreak of war. The treaty said nothing about impressment, blockades, or neutral trading rights. Neither military action nor diplomatic finagling netted Canada for the War Hawks. And the treaty did nothing about the alleged conspiracies between Indians and British agents. Although Americans called the War of 1812 a victory, they actually won none of the prizes that Madison's war statement had declared the nation was fighting for.

**Congress of Vienna** Conference among ambassadors from the major powers in Europe to redraw the continent's political map after the defeat of Napoleon; it also sought to uproot revolutionary movements and restore traditional monarchies.

**Duke of Wellington** The most respected military leader in Great Britain at this time; Wellington was responsible for the defeat of Napoleon.

**concession** In diplomacy, something given up during negotiations.

**Treaty of Ghent** Treaty ending the War of 1812, signed in Belgium in 1814; it restored peace but was silent on the issues over which the United States and Britain had gone to war.

## Peace and the Rise of New Expectations

- ★ **How did events during the War of 1812 help to move the American economy in new directions after peace was restored?**
- ★ **What impact did changes in the economy have on the institution of slavery and on the lives of slaves?**

Despite repeated military disasters, loss of life, and diplomatic failure, the war had a number of positive effects on the United States. Just to have survived a war against the British was enough to build national confidence, but to have scored major victories such as those at Plattsburgh, Baltimore, and especially New Orleans was truly worth boasting about. Americans emerged from the conflict with a new sense of national pride and purpose. And many side effects from the fighting itself gave Americans new hopes and plans.

### Economic Change in the Post-War Republic

Although trading interests in the Northeast suffered following Jefferson's embargo and were nearly ruined by the war and Madison's embargo, a new avenue of economic expansion opened in New England. Cut off from European manufactured goods, Americans started to make more textiles and other items for themselves.

Samuel Slater, an English immigrant who had been trained in manufacturing in Britain, introduced the use of machines for spinning cotton yarn to the United States in 1790. His mill was financially successful, but few others tried to copy his enterprise. Even with shipping expenses, tariffs, and other added costs, buying machine-made British cloth was still more practical than investing large sums at high risk to build competing



factories in the United States. And after 1800, Jefferson's economic policies discouraged such investment. But his embargo changed all that. After it went into effect in 1808, British fabrics became increasingly unavailable, and prices soared. Slater and his partners moved quickly to expand their spinning operations to fill the void. And now his inventiveness was widely copied.

Another entrepreneur, Francis Cabot Lowell, went even further than Slater. Left in the lurch economically by the embargo, Lowell ventured to England in 1810. While there, he engaged in wholesale industrial espionage, observing British textile-manufacturing practices and machinery and making detailed notes and sketches of what he saw. Returning to the United States just before war broke out in 1812, Lowell formed the Boston Manufacturing Company. In 1813 the company used the plans Lowell had smuggled back to the United States to build a factory in Waltham, Massachusetts. The new facility included spinning machines, power looms, and all the equipment necessary to **mechanize** every stage in the production of finished cloth, bringing the entire process under one roof. Like Slater's innovations, Lowell's too were soon duplicated by economically desperate New Englanders.

**mechanize** To substitute machinery for human labor.

The spread of textile manufacturing was astonishing. Prior to 1808, only fifteen cotton mills of the sort Slater had introduced had been built in the entire country. But between the passage of the embargo and the end of 1809, eighty-seven additional mills had sprung up, mostly in New England. And when war came, the pace increased, especially when Lowell's idea of a mechanized textile factory proved to be highly efficient and profitable. The number of people employed in manufacturing increased from four thousand in 1809 to perhaps as many as a hundred thousand in 1816. In the years to come, factories in New England and elsewhere supplied more and more of the country's consumer goods.

Nor was business growth confined to the Northeast. Following the war, pioneers poured into the West in astounding numbers. The population of Ohio had already soared from 45,000 in 1800 to 231,000 in 1810, but it more than doubled again by 1820, reaching 581,000. Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Michigan experienced similar growth. Most of those who flooded into the newly opened West were small farmers, but subsistence agriculture was not the only economic opportunity that drew expectant Americans into the region. Big business, too, had great expectations for finding new wealth in the West. Entrepreneurs like German-born John Jacob Astor and Frenchman Auguste Chouteau made their initial fortunes in the fur trade that expanded enormously following the war, but they soon found themselves invested in banking, mining, and transportation development in the rapidly growing West. When Astor died in 1848, he was the wealthiest man in America, the result of his aggressive pursuit of Far Western business ventures.

But American westward expansion posed a terrible threat to Native Americans. When Harrison's soldiers burned Prophetstown and later killed Tecumseh, they wiped out all hopes for a pan-Indian confederacy. In addition, the civil war among the Creeks, followed by Jackson's victories against the Red Stick faction, removed all meaningful resistance to westward expansion in the South. Many Indian groups continued to wield great power, but accommodationist leaders such as those who formed the Cherokee government suggested that cooperation with federal authorities was the best course.

Collaboration between the United States and Native Americans helped to prevent renewed warfare, but at enormous cost to the Indians. Within a year of the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, Jackson forced the Creeks to sign the Treaty of Fort Jackson, which confiscated over 20 million acres of land from the Creek Confederacy. A similar but more gradual assault on Indian landholding began in the Northwest in 1815. In a council meeting at Portage des Sioux in Illinois Territory, the United States signed peace accords



with the various tribes that had joined the British during the war. Both sides pledged that their earlier hostilities would be “forgiven and forgotten” and that all the agreeing parties would live in “perpetual peace and friendship.” The northwestern Indians, however, possessed some 2 million acres of prime real estate between the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers—land that the U.S. government had already given away as enlistment bonuses to white war volunteers. Moving the Indians off that land as quickly as possible thus became a matter of national priority, and over the next several years, **federal Indian agents** used bribery, threat, and manipulation of local tensions to pursue their goal, eventually winning an enormous cession of land through the Treaty of Edwardsville (1819) and the Prairie du Chien treaties (1825).

**federal Indian agents** Government officials who were responsible for negotiating treaties with Native American groups; at this time they were employed by the War Department.

### A Revolution in the Southern Economy

Indian dispossession and westward expansion also promised great economic growth for the South. In the years before the War of 1812, the southern economy had been sluggish, and the future of the region’s single-crop agricultural system was doubtful. Tobacco, the mainstay of the South’s economy, was no longer the glorious profit maker it had been during the colonial period. Sea Island cotton, rice, sugar, and other products continued to find markets, but they grew only in limited areas. However, the technological and economic changes that came in the war’s wake pumped new energy into the South. In only a few decades, an entirely new South emerged.

The mechanization of the British textile industry in the late eighteenth century created an enormous new demand for cotton. Southern planters had been growing the fibrous plant since colonial times, but soil and climatic conditions limited the growing area for the sort of **long-staple cotton** that could be harvested and sold economically. Large areas of the South and Southwest had proved suitable for growing **short-staple cotton**, but the time and labor required to pick the sticky seeds from the compact **cotton bolls** made the crop unprofitable. In 1793, a young Yale College graduate, **Eli Whitney**, was a guest at a plantation in Georgia, where he learned about the difficulty of removing the seeds from short-staple cotton. In a matter of weeks, Whitney helped to perfect a machine that allowed a small and unskilled work force to quickly comb out the seeds without damaging the fibers. Whitney’s cotton gin, though revolutionary in its impact, was a relatively simple mechanism, and despite his **patent**, other manufacturers and individual planters stole the design and built their own cotton gins.

With the arrival of peace and the departure of the British naval blockade, short-staple cotton growing began to spread at an astounding rate. White southerners rushed into frontier areas, spreading cotton agriculture into Alabama and Mississippi and then into Arkansas and northern Louisiana. Even the Mississippi River seemed to present no serious barrier to this runaway expansion. In 1821 Spanish authorities gave long-time western land speculator Moses Austin permission to settle three hundred American families within a 200,000-acre tract in Texas between the Brazos and Colorado Rivers. When the elder Austin died, his son, **Stephen F. Austin**, took over the enterprise and in the aftermath of the Panic of 1819 was able to offer families large plots of land for a filing fee of only 12½ cents an acre. “I am convinced,” he exclaimed, “that I could take on fifteen hundred families as easily as three hundred if permitted to do so.” Throughout the 1820s and 1830s, Austin and other **empresarios** helped thousands of hopeful cotton capitalists to expand into Mexican territory. As a result of this expansion, the South’s annual cotton crop grew by leaps and bounds. By 1840, annual exports reached nearly a million and a half bales, and increasing volumes were consumed within the United States by the mushrooming textile factories in the Northeast.

**long-staple cotton** A variety of cotton with long and loosely packed pods of fiber that is easy to comb out and process.

**short-staple cotton** A variety of cotton with short and tightly packed pods of fiber in which the plant’s seeds are tangled.

**cotton boll** The pod of the cotton plant; it contains the plant’s seeds surrounded by the fluffy fiber that is spun into yarn.

**Eli Whitney** American inventor and manufacturer; his perfecting of the cotton gin revolutionized the cotton industry.

**patent** A government grant that gives the creator of an invention the sole right to produce, use, or sell that invention for a set period of time.

**Stephen F. Austin** American colonizer in Texas and leading voice in the Texas Revolution.

**empresario** In the Spanish colonies, a person who organized and led a group of settlers in exchange for land grants and the right to assess fees.

### Reviving and Reinventing Slavery

Before the emergence of cotton, when the South's agricultural system was foundering, many southerners began to question the use of slaves. In 1782 Virginia made it legal for individual masters to free their slaves, and many did so. In 1784 Thomas Jefferson proposed (but saw defeated) a land ordinance that would have prohibited slavery in all of the nation's territories after 1800. Some southern leaders, such as Francis Scott Key, advocated abolishing slavery and transporting freed blacks to Africa. But the booming southern economy after the War of 1812 required more labor than ever. As a result, African American slavery expanded as never before.

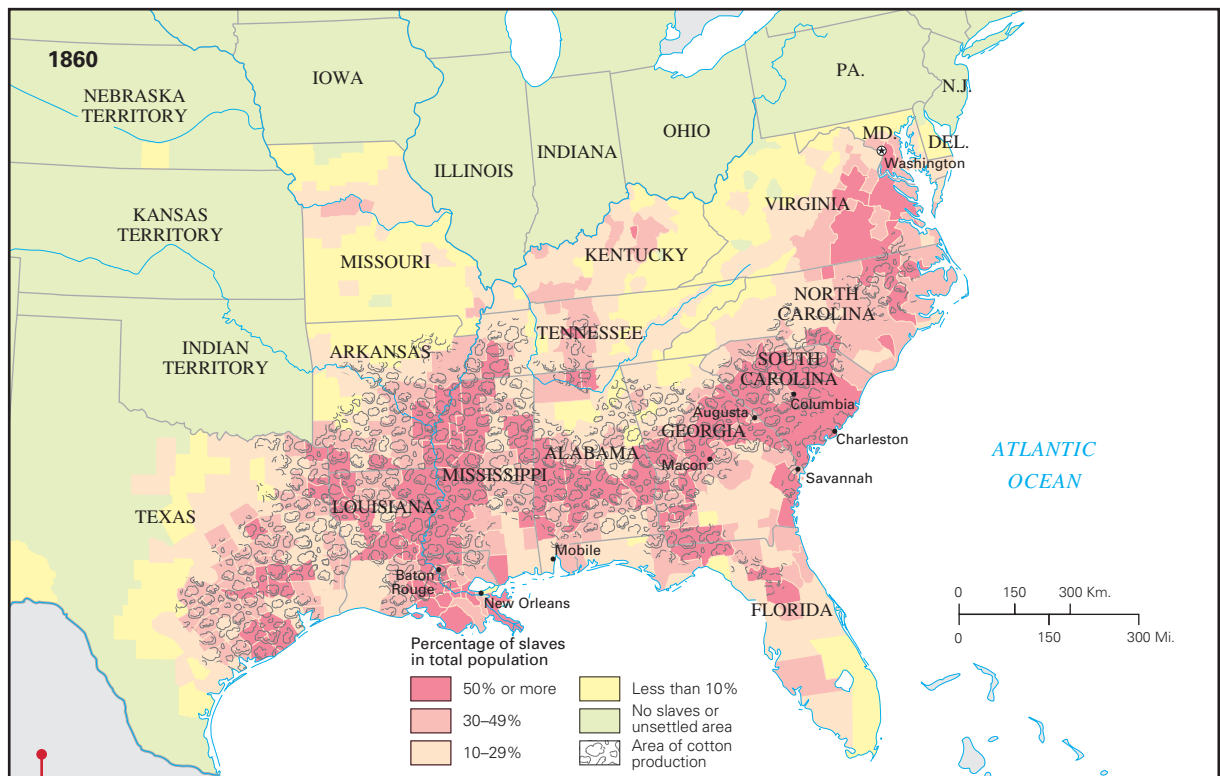
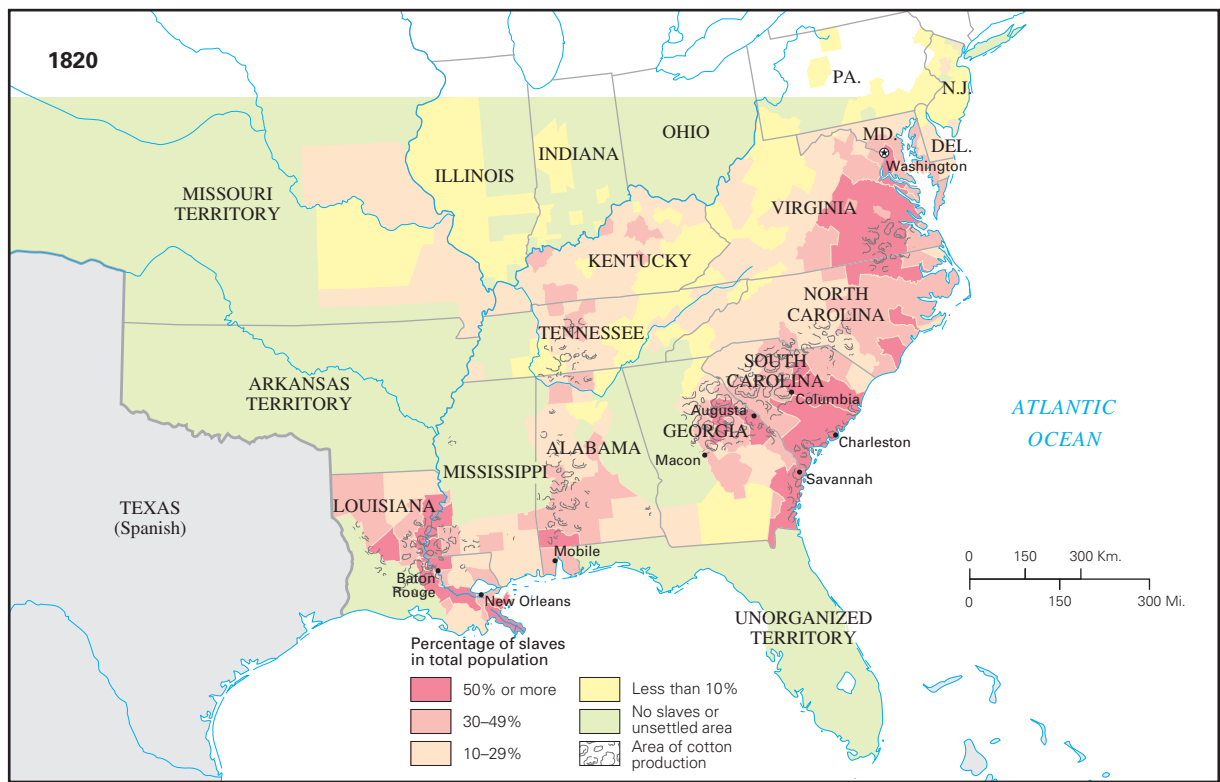
Viewed side by side, a map showing cotton agriculture and one showing slave population appear nearly identical (see Map 9.2). In the 1820s, when cotton production was most heavily concentrated in South Carolina and Georgia, the greatest density of slaves occurred in the same area. During the 1840s, as cotton growing spread to the West, slavery followed. By 1860, both cotton growing and slavery appear on the map as a continuous belt stretching from the Carolinas through Georgia and Alabama and on to the Mississippi River.

The virtually universal shift to cotton growing throughout the South brought about not only the expansion and extension of slavery but also substantial modifications to the institution itself. The wide variety of economic pursuits in which slave labor had been employed from the colonial period onward led to varied patterns in slave employment. In many parts of the South, slaves traditionally exercised a great deal of control over their work schedules as they completed assigned tasks. But the cotton business called for large gangs of predominantly unskilled workers, and increasingly slaves found themselves regimented like machines in tempo with the demands of cotton production.

At the same time, as northeastern factories were able to provide clothing, shoes, and other manufactured goods at ever more attractive prices and western farmers shipped

The invention of the cotton gin and the spread of cotton agriculture throughout the American South created an enormous new demand for slave workers and changed the nature of their work. A handful of slaves (only two in this illustration of the process) could comb through large amounts of fiber, but it took armies of field workers to produce the raw cotton that kept the machinery (and the plantation system) working. The Granger Collection, New York.





**MAP 9.2 Cotton Agriculture and Slave Population**

Between 1820 and 1860, the expansion of cotton agriculture and the extension of slavery went hand in hand. As these maps show, cotton production was an isolated activity in 1820, and slavery remained isolated as well. By 1860, both had extended westward.



cheap pork and grain into southern markets, plantation managers found it more practical to purchase such goods rather than to produce them. Thus slaves who formerly had performed various skilled tasks such as milling and weaving found themselves pressed into much less rewarding service as brute labor in the cotton fields. To a large extent, then, specialized manufacturing in the North and large-scale commercial food production in the West permitted an intensified cotton industry in the South and helped foster the increasing dehumanization of the peculiar labor system that drove it.

## Summary

After Jefferson's triumphal first four years in office, factional disputes at home and diplomatic deadlocks with European powers began to plague the Republicans. Although the Federalists were in full retreat, many within Jefferson's own party rebelled against some of his policies. When Jefferson decided not to run for office in 1808, tapping Madison as his successor, Republicans in both the Northeast and the South bucked the president, supporting George Clinton and James Monroe, respectively.

To a large extent, the Republicans' problems were the outcome of external stresses. On the Atlantic frontier, America tried to remain neutral in the wars that engulfed Europe. On the western frontier, the Prophet and Tecumseh were successfully unifying dispossessed Indians into an alliance devoted to stopping U.S. expansion. Things went from bad to worse when Jefferson's use of economic sanctions gave rise to the worst economic depression since the beginnings of English colonization. The embargo strangled the economy in port cities, and the downward spiral in agricultural prices threatened to bankrupt many in the West and South.

The combination of economic and diplomatic constraints brought aggressive politicians to power in 1808 and 1810. Men such as William Henry Harrison expected that war with England would permit the United States finally to realize independence—forcing freedom of the seas, eliminating Indian resistance, and justifying the

conquest of the rest of North America. Despite Madison's continuing peace efforts, southern and western interests finally pushed the nation into war with England in 1812.

Although some glimmering moments of glory heartened the Americans, the war was mostly disastrous. But after generations of fighting one enemy or another, the English people demanded peace. When their final offensive in America failed to bring immediate victory in 1814, the British chose to negotiate. Finally, on Christmas Eve, the two nations signed the Treaty of Ghent, ending the war. From a diplomatic point of view, it was as though the war had never happened: everything was simply restored to pre-1812 status.

Nevertheless, in the United States the war created strong feelings of national pride and confidence, and Americans looked forward to even better things to come. In the Northeast, the constraints of war provoked entrepreneurs to explore new industries, creating the first stage of an industrial revolution in the country. In the West, the defeat of Indian resistance combined with bright economic opportunities to trigger a wave of westward migration. In the South, the economy was revolutionized by the cotton gin and the growing demand for fiber among English and then American manufacturers. Throughout the country, economic progress promised to improve life for most Americans, but as before, both African Americans and Native Americans bore much of the cost.

### Key Terms

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secede, *p.* 197

Essex Junto, *p.* 197

John Randolph, *p.* 198

Tertium Quid, *p.* 198

impressment, *p.* 199

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# CHAPTER 10

# The Rise of a New Nation 1815–1836

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

### An “Era of Good Feelings”

The “American System”  
and New Economic Direction  
The Transportation Problem  
Legal Anchors for New Business  
Enterprise

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** The Federal Role  
in Interstate Commerce  
James Monroe and the Nationalist  
Agenda

### Dynamic Growth and Political Consequences

The Panic of 1819  
Economic Woes and Political  
Sectionalism  
The Missouri Compromise  
New Politics and the End of Good  
Feelings

### The “New Man” in Politics

Democratic Styles and Political  
Structure  
The Rise of “King Andrew”  
Launching Jacksonian Politics

### The Reign of “King Andrew”

Jackson and the Bank  
Jackson and the Indians

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**  
Jackson’s Bank Veto, 1832  
The Nullification Crisis

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Calhoun’s  
Defense of Nullification, 1833

### Summary

## INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: John C. Calhoun

Little in John C. Calhoun’s background would have suggested that he would emerge as a controversial and divisive figure. A political prodigy, he had been elected to the U.S. House of Representatives at age 29, where he joined forces with other up-and-coming legislators as part of the hyper-patriotic War Hawk faction. After the War of 1812 he continued to act as a dedicated nationalist, working closely with Henry Clay to build the American System—Clay’s plan for a national **market economy**. Calhoun drafted specific bills necessary to the program; won House support for chartering a new national bank, spending federal funds for transportation development, and creating the nation’s first protective tariff package; and convinced President Madison of the program’s constitutionality. Calhoun quickly established a reputation as a solid nationalist; his admiring colleague John Quincy Adams found him to be “above all sectional and factious prejudices more than any other statesman of this Union with whom I have ever acted.”

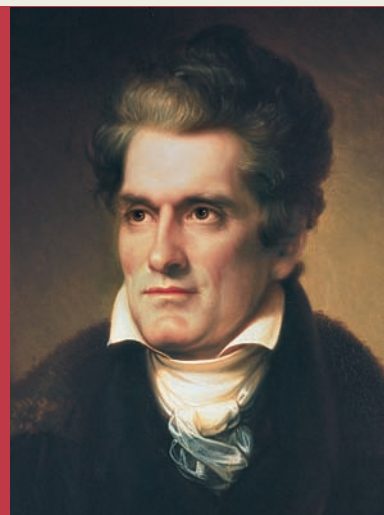
But in the wake of the economic Panic of 1819 and the angry debates over the question of slavery in Missouri, Calhoun began entertaining serious “sectional and factious prejudices.” To an extent this was because of proposals on the part of his northeastern colleagues to use higher tariffs as a way of fighting off the effects of the depression. Although these solutions made sense to manufacturers, they threatened to strangle the growing cotton industry that was fast becoming the centerpiece in the economy of the South. But population growth in the Northeast and increasing economic specialization in parts of the West gave protariff forces all the votes they needed to promote their political agenda in Congress. Soon, Calhoun came to believe, the Northeast would emerge as a tyrannical mother country, and the rest of the nation would become its oppressed and dependent colonies.

Fearful that incoming president Andrew Jackson was even more nationalistic than his predecessors, in 1828 Calhoun drafted a pamphlet called *The South Carolina*

### JOHN C. CALHOUN

As a young congressman in the years bracketing the War of 1812, John C. Calhoun was celebrated as a leading American nationalist. But in the years following the economic panic of 1819 and the sectional crisis in Missouri, Calhoun chose to abandon nationalism in favor of states’ rights and southern sectionalism. As vehement in his new sentiments as he had been in his earlier ones, Calhoun became an icon among proslavery advocates for generations to come.

Peale, Rembrandt, “John C. Calhoun,” 1838, Oil on Canvas. 30 7/8 x 25 3/4 inches. Gibbs Museum of Art, Bequest of Martha Calhoun Frost. © Image Gibbs Museum of Art/Carolina Art Association.



*Exposition and Protest.* Drawing on ideas enunciated years before by Madison and Jefferson in their Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, Calhoun argued that the federal union was nothing more than a convenient mechanism for carrying out the collective will of the states. As such, its sovereignty was not superior to that of the states. More importantly, if a state determined that a federal law violated the basic rights of its citizens, a local assembly could declare that law null—having no legal force—within its borders. This doctrine became known as nullification.

By the time of his death in 1850, Calhoun’s role as a leading nationalist had been all but forgotten, replaced by his new legacy as the virtual patron saint for planters’ rights and southern independence. The transformations that unsettled the nation turned Calhoun completely around, and his new legacy would affect the nation every bit as profoundly as had his earlier one.

**market economy** An economic system based on the buying and selling of goods and services, in which prices are determined by the forces of supply and demand.

**T**hough certainly more talented than many Americans and more powerful than most, Calhoun nonetheless was typical of his generation in many ways. Like his contemporaries he was angered by British assaults on American sovereignty and lobbied for war in 1812. Following the war he embraced the spirit of national unity and good feelings to promote economic consolidation, leading Congress to revolutionize public finance laws in order to encourage expansive growth. And these policies succeeded: the United States experienced an exciting growth spurt after 1815. But when the speculative bubble burst in 1819, the optimism and unity that had characterized the country faltered.

Calhoun was also typical of a growing number of Americans in his views on politics. Like his fellow prodigy Henry Clay, Calhoun had made politics a career from very early in life. Of course, Calhoun and Clay were property owners, and their families had always exercised political rights, but during the 1820s more and more Americans gained those same rights and took politics every bit as seriously as Calhoun and his privileged colleagues. In this highly charged atmosphere, matters of state became—for the first time in the nation’s history—a topic for debate among people from all regions and from a broad cross-section of occupations and communities. As for Calhoun, politics for these newly enfranchised voters was not some gentleman’s game but a form of personal combat designed to make their own lives better and to test their wills and their loyalties. To such highly motivated men, even the risk of civil war was an acceptable price for claiming their personal and sectional rights.

## An “Era of Good Feelings”

- ★ **What were the sources for Americans’ optimism as they emerged from the War of 1812?**
- ★ **What steps did the American government take to capitalize on this optimism?**
- ★ **How did new developments in the nation influence foreign affairs?**

James Madison had been the butt of jokes and the cause of dissension within his own party during the War of 1812, but he emerged from the war a national hero with considerable political clout. Although his fellow Republicans may have considered his wartime policies indecisive, after the war Madison immediately seized the political initiative to

# Chronology

<b>1807</b>	Robert Fulton tests steam-powered Clermont	<b>1824–1828</b>	Suffrage reform triples voter population
<b>1810</b>	<i>Fletcher v. Peck</i>	<b>1824</b>	<i>Gibbons v. Ogden</i>
<b>1814</b>	Treaty of Ghent ends War of 1812 Defeat of Napoleon		Western congressmen join northeastern congressmen to pass increased protective tariffs
<b>1814–1815</b>	Hartford Convention		Jackson wins electoral plurality and popular majority in presidential election
<b>1815</b>	Government funds Cumberland Road Stephen Decatur defeats Barbary pirates	<b>1825</b>	House of Representatives elects John Quincy Adams president
<b>1816</b>	Tariff of 1816 First successful steamboat run, Pittsburgh to New Orleans James Monroe elected president		Prairie du Chien treaties Completion of Erie Canal
<b>1817</b>	Second Bank of the United States opens for business Rush-Bagot Agreement Construction of Erie Canal begins Congress suspends installment payments on public land purchases	<b>1826</b>	Disappearance of William Morgan and beginning of Antimasons
<b>1818</b>	Convention of 1818 Andrew Jackson invades Spanish Florida	<b>1827</b>	Ratification of Cherokee constitution Federal removal of Winnebagos
<b>1819</b>	<i>Dartmouth College v. Woodward</i> <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> Adams-Onís Treaty Missouri Territory applies for statehood Panic of 1819	<b>1828</b>	Tariff of Abominations Jackson elected president Publication of <i>The South Carolina Exposition and Protest</i> First issue of the <i>Cherokee Phoenix</i>
<b>1820</b>	Monroe reelected Missouri Compromise Northeastern congressmen propose protective tariffs and reduction of public land prices	<b>1830</b>	Webster-Hayne debate Indian Removal Act
<b>1821</b>	Mexico gains independence from Spain	<b>1831</b>	Federal removal of Sauks and Choctaws <i>Cherokee Nation v. Georgia</i>
<b>1823</b>	Monroe Doctrine	<b>1832</b>	<i>Worcester v. Georgia</i> Bank War Nullification crisis Black Hawk War Seminole War begins
		<b>1834</b>	Abolition of slavery in British Empire
		<b>1836–1838</b>	Federal removal of Creeks, Chickasaws, and Cherokees

**Era of Good Feelings** The period from 1816 to 1823, when the decline of the Federalist Party and the end of the War of 1812 gave rise to a time of political cooperation.

inaugurate vigorous new diplomatic and domestic programs. His successor, James Monroe, then picked up the beat, pressing on with a new nationalistic Republican agenda. The nationalism that arose after the war seemed to bring political dissension to a close. Commenting on the decline of partisan politics, a Federalist newspaper in Boston proclaimed the dawn of an “Era of Good Feelings.”



### The "American System" and New Economic Direction

The nation was much more unified politically in 1815 than it had been for years. The war's outcome and the growth that began to take place immediately following the peace settlement had largely silenced Madison's critics within the Republican Party. And during the waning days of the war, extreme Federalists had so embarrassed their party that they were at a severe political disadvantage.

The Essex Junto was primarily responsible for the Federalists' embarrassment. The junto had capitalized on the many military blunders and growing national debt to cast Republicans in a bad light and was drawing increasing support in the Northeast. In mid-December 1814, the Essex Junto staged the Hartford Convention, threatening to secede from the union unless Congress repealed the Embargo of 1813 and passed the seven constitutional amendments the junto had been demanding since its formation. However, news of the Treaty of Ghent, which ended the War of 1812, and of the American victory in the Battle of New Orleans, caused many to view the Federalists' efforts as treasonous, and party popularity underwent a steep decline.

Facing no meaningful opposition, Madison chose in December 1815 to launch an aggressive new domestic policy. He challenged Congress to correct the economic ills that had caused the depression and helped to propel the nation into war. He also encouraged the states to invest in the nation's future by financing transportation systems and other internal improvements. Former critics such as Clay, Calhoun, and DeWitt Clinton quickly rallied behind the president and his nationalistic economic and political agenda.

Clay took the lead. He had come to Congress as one of the War Hawks in 1810 and had quickly become the dominant voice among the younger representatives. Born in Virginia in 1777, Clay had moved at the age of 20 to the wilds of Kentucky to practice law and carve out a career in politics. He was fantastically successful, becoming Speaker of the Kentucky state assembly when he was only 30 years old and winning a seat in the House of Representatives four years later. He became Speaker of the House during the prewar crisis. Now aligning himself firmly with the new economic agenda, Clay became its champion, calling it the **American System**.

What congressional Republicans had in mind was to create a national market economy. In the colonial period and increasingly thereafter, local market economies grew up around the trading and manufacturing centers of the Northeast. Individuals in these areas produced single items for cash sale and used the cash they earned to purchase goods produced by others. Specialization was the natural outcome. Farmers, for example, chose to grow only one or two crops and to sell the whole harvest for cash, which they used to buy various items they had once raised or made for themselves. Calhoun and others wanted to see such interdependence on a much larger scale. They envisioned a time when whole regions would specialize in producing commodities for which geography, climate, and the temperament of the people made each locale most suitable. Agricultural regions in the West, for example, would produce food for the industrializing Northeast and the fiber-producing South. The North would depend on the South for efficiently produced cotton, and both South and West would depend on the Northeast for manufactured goods. Improved transportation systems would make this flow of goods possible, and a strong national currency would ensure orderly trade between states. Advocates of the American System were confident that the balance eventually established among regions would free the nation as a whole from economic dependence on manufacturing centers in Europe.

Clay and his cohorts recognized that one of the first steps in bringing all this about would have to be a national banking authority. True, Republicans had persistently

**American System** An economic plan sponsored by nationalists in Congress; it was intended to capitalize on regional differences to spur U.S. economic growth and the domestic production of goods previously bought from foreign manufacturers.

opposed Alexander Hamilton's Bank of the United States and had killed it in 1811. During the war, however, bankers, merchants, and foreign shippers had chosen not to accept the paper currency issued by local and state banks. The postwar call for a unified national economy prompted Republicans to press again for a national currency and for a national bank to regulate its circulation. In 1816 Calhoun introduced legislation chartering a Second Bank of the United States, which Congress approved overwhelmingly. The Second Bank had many of the same powers and responsibilities as Hamilton's bank. Congress provided \$7 million of its \$35 million in opening capital and appointed one-fifth of its board of directors. The Second Bank opened for business in Philadelphia on January 1, 1817.

**protective tariff** Tax on imported goods intended to make them more expensive than similar domestic goods, thus protecting the market for goods produced at home.

**Tariff of 1816** First protective tariff in U.S. history; its purpose was to protect America's fledgling textile industry.

Calhoun took the lead in advocating **protective tariffs** to help the fledgling industries that had hatched during the war. Helped by the embargoes, American cotton-spinning plants had increased in number rapidly between 1808 and 1815. But with the return of open trade at war's end, British merchants dumped accumulated inventories of cotton and woolen cloth onto the U.S. market below cost in an effort to hamper further American development. Although some New England voices protested tariffs as unfair government interference, most northeasterners supported protection. Most southerners and westerners, however, remained leery of its impact on consumer prices. Still, shouting with nationalistic fervor about American economic independence, westerners such as Clay and southerners such as Calhoun were able to raise enough support to pass Madison's proposed **Tariff of 1816**, opening the way for continued tariff legislation in the years to come.

The popularity of these measures was apparent in the outcome of the 1816 elections. Madison's handpicked successor, fellow Virginian James Monroe, won by a decisive electoral majority: 184 votes to Federalist Rufus King's 34. Congressional Republicans enjoyed a similar sweep, winning more than three-fourths of the seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate. Republicans, presenting a powerful mandate and the political clout necessary to carry it out, immediately set about expanding on the new nationalistic agenda.

### The Transportation Problem

In the years before the War of 1812, travel on the nation's roads was a wearying experience. People who could afford transportation by stagecoach were crammed into an open wagon bouncing behind four horses on muddy, rutted, winding roads. Stagecoaches crept along at 4 miles per hour—when weather permitted them to move at all. And the enjoyment of such dubious luxury did not come cheaply: tolls for each mile of travel equaled the cost of a pint of good whiskey.

Recognizing the need for more and better roads, entrepreneurs sought to profit by building private **turnpikes** between heavily traveled points. Since the early 1790s, states had allowed private companies to make a profit from the tolls they collected at gates set up along privately financed roads. But despite such private efforts, it was clear to many after the war that only the large-scale resources available to state and federal governments could make a practical difference in the transportation picture. Immediately after the war, Calhoun introduced legislation in Congress to finance a national transportation program. Congress approved, but Madison vetoed the bill, stating that the Constitution did not authorize federal spending on projects designed to benefit single states. But Calhoun finally won Madison's support by convincing the president that a government-funded national road between Cumberland, Maryland, and Wheeling, Virginia, was a military and postal necessity and therefore the initial federal expenditure of \$30,000

**turnpike** A road on which tolls are collected at gates set up along the way; private companies hoping to make a profit from the tolls built the first turnpikes.

for the **Cumberland Road** was permissible under the Constitution. That constitutional hurdle cleared, actual construction began in 1815.

Though helpful, roads still could not make hauling bulky commercial items financially feasible. Water transportation was the most practical, but that would require a network of canals. New York State was most successful at canal development. In 1817 the state started work on a canal that would run more than 350 miles from Lake Erie at Buffalo to the Hudson River at Albany. Aided by Governor DeWitt Clinton’s unswerving support and the gentle terrain in western New York, engineers planned the **Erie Canal**. Three thousand workers dug the huge ditch and built the **locks**, dams, and **aqueducts** that would transport barges carrying freight and passengers across the state. The last section of the canal was completed and the first barge made its way from Buffalo to Albany and then on to New York City in 1825.

Canals were really little more than extensions of natural river courses, and fighting the currents of the great rivers that they connected remained a problem. But in 1807 Robert Fulton wedded steam technology borrowed from England with his own boat design to prove that steam-powered shipping was possible. Unfortunately, his design required deep water and large amounts of fuel to carry a limited **payload**, demands that rendered what many called “Fulton’s Folly” impractical for most of America’s rivers. After the war, however, Henry M. Shreve, a career boat pilot and captain, began experimenting with new designs and technologies. Borrowing the hull design of the shallow-draft, broad-beamed keelboats that had been sailing up and down inland streams for generations, Shreve added two lightweight, high-compression steam engines, each one driving an independent side wheel. He also added an upper deck for passengers, creating the now-familiar multistoried steamboats of southern lore. Funded by merchants in Wheeling, Virginia—soon to be the western terminus for the Cumberland Road—Shreve successfully piloted one of his newly designed boats upriver, from Wheeling to Pittsburgh. Then, in 1816, he made the first successful run south, all the way to New Orleans.

### Legal Anchors for New Business Enterprise

President Madison had raised serious constitutional concerns when Henry Clay and his congressional clique proposed spending federal money on road development. Though Calhoun was able to ease the president’s mind on this specific

matter, many constitutional issues needed clarification if the government was going to play the economic role that nationalists envisioned.

In 1819 the Supreme Court took an important step in clarifying the federal government’s role in national economic life. The case arose over an effort by the state of Maryland to raise money by placing **revenue stamps** on federal currency. When James McCulloch, a clerk at the Baltimore branch of the Bank of the United States, refused to apply the stamps, he was indicted by the state. In the resulting Supreme Court case, **McCulloch v. Maryland** (1819), the majority ruled that the states could not impose taxes on federal institutions and that McCulloch was right in refusing to comply with Maryland’s revenue law. But more important, in rejecting Maryland’s argument that the federal government was simply a creation of the states and was therefore subject to state taxation, Chief Justice John Marshall wrote, “The Constitution and the laws made in pursuance thereof are supreme: that they control the constitution and laws of the respective states, and cannot be controlled by them.” With this, Marshall declared his binding opinion that federal law was superior to state law in all matters.

Marshall demonstrated this principle again and reinforced it five years later in the landmark case of **Gibbons v. Ogden** (1824). In 1808, the state of New York had recognized

**Cumberland Road** The initial section of what would be called the “National Road,” a highway built with federal funds that was later extended to Vandalia, Illinois, and beyond.

**Erie Canal** A 350-mile canal stretching from Buffalo to Albany; it revolutionized shipping in New York State.

**lock** A section of canal with gates at each end, used to raise or lower boats from one level to another by admitting or releasing water; locks allow canals to compensate for changes in terrain.

**aqueduct** An elevated structure raising a canal to bridge rivers, canyons, or other obstructions.

**payload** The part of a cargo that generates revenue, as opposed to the part needed to fire the boiler or supply the crew.

**revenue stamps** Stickers affixed to taxed items by government officials indicating that the tax has been paid.

**McCulloch v. Maryland** Supreme Court case (1819) in which the majority ruled that federal authority is superior to that of individual states and that states cannot control or tax federal operations within their borders.

**Gibbons v. Ogden** Supreme Court case (1824) in which the majority ruled that the authority of Congress is absolute in matters of interstate commerce.



# It Matters Today

## THE FEDERAL ROLE IN INTERSTATE COMMERCE

*Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824) established a strong precedent that had far-reaching consequences. At the time of the ruling, interstate commerce was fairly inconsequential; most people in the United States depended on themselves and their immediate neighbors for their needs. But with this ruling in place, as interstate commerce expanded, the power of the federal government expanded, too. It is now virtually impossible to engage in any sort of activity that does not involve interstate commerce. Even in the most private and intimate moments of our lives, objects we use often were manufactured, in whole or in part, in another state; if not, they likely were carried to our local community on interstate highways; and in all cases they were paid for using federal reserve notes. Marshall's decision granting absolute federal authority over interstate commerce thus justified central government jurisdiction over a wide variety of our everyday activities. For example, many civil rights cases during the

1960s and after landed in federal court because interstate commerce was involved. This is a reality that forms one of the most fundamental aspects of our lives in the United States today.

- Reflecting upon the development of canal and road systems during the early nineteenth century, how did the Supreme Court's decisions concerning interstate commerce and federal supremacy influence the way the nation developed?
- Choose an activity in which you engage on a regular basis—an athletic event, cultural activity, religious act, or something entirely personal and private; virtually anything—and examine what role interstate commerce plays in it. In what ways might the involvement of interstate commerce give the federal government the right to influence or even control that activity? Do you think that degree of influence is justified?

Fulton's accomplishments in steamboating by granting him an exclusive contract to run steamboats on rivers in that state. Fulton then used this monopoly power to sell licenses to various operators, including Aaron Ogden, who ran a ferry service between New York and New Jersey. Another individual, Thomas Gibbons, was also running a steamboat service in the same area, but he was operating under license from the federal government. When Ogden accused Gibbons of violating his contractual monopoly in a New York court, Gibbons took refuge in federal court. It finally fell to Marshall's Supreme Court to resolve the conflict. Consistent with its earlier decision, the Court ruled in favor of Gibbons, arguing that the New York monopoly conflicted with federal authority and was therefore invalid. In cases of interstate commerce, it ruled, Congress's authority "is complete in itself" and the states could not challenge it.

But it was going to take more than federal authority and investment to revolutionize the economy. Private money would be needed as well, and that too required some constitutional clarification. At issue were contracts, the basis for all business transactions, and their security from interference by either private or public challengers.

One landmark case, *Fletcher v. Peck*, came before Marshall's Court in 1810. In this case, the Court ruled that even if a contract was obtained fraudulently, it still was binding and the state legislature had no right to overturn it. Nor, it ruled in a later case, could a state modify a standing contract. That case, *Dartmouth College v. Woodward* (1819), involved Dartmouth College's founding charter, which specified that new members of the board of trustees were to be appointed by the current board. In 1816 the New Hampshire state legislature tried to take over the college by passing a bill that would allow the state's governor to appoint board members. The college brought suit, claiming that its

**Fletcher v. Peck** Supreme Court case (1810) in which the majority ruled that the original land sale contract rescinded by the Georgia legislature was binding, establishing the superiority of contracts over legislation.

**Dartmouth College v. Woodward** Supreme Court case (1819) in which the majority ruled that private contracts are sacred and cannot be modified by state legislatures.



charter was a legal contract and that the legislature had no right to abridge it. Announcing the Court's decision, Marshall noted that the Constitution protected the sanctity of contracts and that state legislatures could not interfere with them.

### James Monroe and the Nationalist Agenda

While Congress and the courts were firmly in the hands of forward-looking leaders, the presidency passed in 1816 to former Secretary of State James Monroe. Personally conservative, Monroe nonetheless was a strong nationalist as well as a graceful statesman. He had served primarily as a diplomat during the contentious period that preceded the War of 1812, and as president he turned his diplomatic skills to the task of calming political disputes. He was the first president since Washington to take a national goodwill tour, during which he persistently urged various political factions to merge their interests for the benefit of the nation at large.

Monroe's cabinet was well chosen to carry out the task of smoothing political rivalries while flexing nationalistic muscles. He selected John Quincy Adams, son and heir of Yankee Federalist John Adams, as secretary of state because of his diplomatic skill and to win political support in New England. Monroe tapped southern nationalist Calhoun for secretary of war and balanced his appointment with that of southern states' rights advocate William C. Crawford as secretary of the treasury. With his team assembled, Monroe launched a program to increase the nation's control over the North American continent and improve its position in world affairs.

Madison had already taken steps toward initiating a more aggressive diplomatic policy. Taking advantage of U.S. involvement in the War of 1812, Barbary pirates had resumed raids on American shipping. In response, Madison ordered a military force back to the Mediterranean in June 1815. With ten U.S. warships threatening to level the port of Algiers, the Algerians and the rest of the Barbary pirates signed treaties ending the practice of exacting **tribute**. They also released all American hostages and agreed to pay compensation for past seizures of American ships.

Now, the first matter Adams addressed was the Treaty of Ghent (1814), which had ended the 1812 war. The treaty left hanging the issue of the **demilitarization** of the Great Lakes boundary between the United States and British Canada. In the 1817 Rush-Bagot Agreement, both nations agreed to cut back their Great Lakes fleets to only a few vessels, and in the Convention of 1818, the British agreed to honor American fishing rights in the Atlantic, to recognize a boundary between the Louisiana Territory and Canada at the 49th parallel, and to occupy the Oregon Territory jointly with the United States.

With these northern border issues settled, Adams set his sights on defining the nation's southern and southwestern frontiers. Conditions in Spanish Florida were extremely unsettled. Pirates used Florida as a base for launching raids against American settlements and shipping, and runaway slaves found it a safe haven in their flight from southern plantations. In December 1817, General Andrew Jackson wrote the president advocating the invasion of Spanish Florida. "Let it be signified to me through any channel . . . that the possession of the Floridas would be desirable to the United States, and in sixty days it will be accomplished."

A short time later, Secretary of War Calhoun ordered Jackson to lead a military expedition into southern Georgia to patrol its border with Florida and keep raiders and runaway slaves from crossing it. Jackson, however, crossed the border (he later claimed that Monroe secretly authorized him to invade Florida). He forced the Spanish government to flee to Cuba, and Spain vigorously protested. Secretary of War Calhoun and others recommended that the general be severely disciplined. But Adams saw an opportunity

**tribute** A payment of money or other valuables that one group makes to another as the price of security.

**demilitarization** The removal of military forces from a region and the restoration of civilian control.

**Adams-Onís Treaty** Treaty between the United States and Spain in 1819 that ceded Florida to the United States, ended any Spanish claims in Oregon, and recognized Spanish rights in the American Southwest.

**unilateral** Undertaken or issued by only one side and thus not involving an agreement made with others.

**Monroe Doctrine** President Monroe's 1823 statement declaring the Americas closed to further European colonization and discouraging European interference in the affairs of the Western Hemisphere.

to settle the Florida border issue. He announced that Jackson's raid was an act of self-defense that would be repeated unless Spain could police the area adequately. Adams knew that Spain could not guarantee American security and would either have to give up Florida or stand by and watch the United States take it by force. Bowing to reality, Spanish minister Don Luis de Onís ceded Florida in the **Adams-Onís Treaty** of 1819. The United States got all of Florida in exchange for releasing Spain from \$5 million in damage claims resulting from border raids. Spain also recognized the legality of the Louisiana Purchase and relinquished all claims to the Oregon Country in exchange for acknowledgment of its claims in the American Southwest.

Spain's inability to police its New World territories also led to a more general diplomatic problem. As the result of Spain's weakness, many of its colonies in Latin America had rebelled and established themselves as independent republics. Fearful of the anticolonial example being set in the Western Hemisphere, most members of the Congress of Vienna seemed poised to help Spain reclaim its overseas empire. Neither Britain, which had developed a thriving trade with the new Latin American republics, nor the United States believed that Europe should be allowed to intervene in the affairs of the Western Hemisphere. In 1823 British foreign minister George Canning proposed that the United States and Britain form an alliance to end European meddling in Latin America. Most members of Monroe's cabinet supported allied action, but Adams instead suggested a **unilateral** statement to the effect that "the American continents by the free and independent condition which they have assumed, and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subject for future colonization by any European power."

Monroe's indecision regarding Adams's advice finally vanished in November 1823 when he learned that the European alliance designed to restore Spain's colonies was faltering. With the immediate threat removed, Monroe rejected Canning's offer. In Monroe's annual December message, he wrote that the United States would regard any effort by European countries "to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." He went on to define any further attempt at European intervention in the affairs of the Western Hemisphere as a virtual act of war against the United States and at the same time promised that the United States would steer clear of affairs in Europe.

The **Monroe Doctrine**, as this statement was later called, was exactly the proud assertion of principle "in favor of liberty" that Monroe had hoped for. It immediately won the support of the American people. The Monroe Doctrine appeared to announce the arrival of the United States on the international scene. Both Europeans and Latin Americans, however, thought it was a meaningless statement. Rhetoric aside, the policy depended on the British navy and on Britain's informal commitment to New World autonomy.

## Dynamic Growth and Political Consequences

- ★ **How did the global economic situation contribute to American economics between 1815 and 1820?**
- ★ **How did economic growth and panic contribute to sectional conflict and political contention?**

During the Napoleonic wars, massive armies had drained Europe's manpower, laid waste to crops, and tied up ships, making European nations dependent on America. After those wars ended in 1815, Europeans continued to need American food and manufactures

as they rebuilt a peacetime economy. Encouraged by European markets and expanding credit offered by the Second Bank of the United States, budding southern planters, northern manufacturers, and western and southwestern farmers embarked on a frenzy of speculation. They rushed to borrow against what they were sure was a golden future to buy equipment, land, and slaves. As long as economic conditions remained good, there was little reason for conflict, but when the speculative boom collapsed, sectional tensions increased dramatically.

### The Panic of 1819

Earlier changes in federal land policy had contributed to the rise of speculation. In 1800 and again in 1804, Congress passed bills lowering the minimum number of acres of federal land an individual could purchase and the minimum price per acre. After 1804, the minimum purchase became 160 acres and the minimum price, \$1.64 per acre. The bill also permitted farmers to pay the government in **installments**. For most Americans, the minimum investment of \$262.40 was still out of reach, but the installment option encouraged many to take the risk and buy farms they could barely afford.

Land speculators complicated matters considerably. Taking advantage of the new land prices, they too jumped into the game, buying land on credit. Unlike farmers, however, speculators never intended to put the land into production. They hoped to subdivide and sell it to people who could not afford to buy 160-acre lots directly from the government. Speculators also offered installment loans, pyramiding the already huge tower of debt.

Banks—both relatively unsupervised state banks and the Second Bank of the United States—then added to the problem. Farmers who bought land on credit seldom had enough cash to purchase farm equipment, seed, materials for housing, and the other supplies necessary to put the land to productive use. So the banks extended liberal credit on top of the credit already extended by the government and by land developers. Farmers had acreage and tools, but they also had an enormous debt.

Congress noted the beginning of the crisis late in 1817 and tried to head off disaster by tightening credit. The government stopped installment payments on new land purchases and demanded that they be transacted in hard currency. The Second Bank of the United States followed suit in 1818, demanding immediate repayment of loans in either gold or silver. State banks then followed and were joined by land speculators. Instead of curing the problem, however, tightening credit and recalling loans drove the economy over the edge. The speculative balloon burst, leaving nothing but a mass of debt behind. This economic catastrophe became known as the **Panic of 1819**. Six years of economic depression were to follow.

### Economic Woes and Political Sectionalism

Despite Monroe's efforts to merge southern, northern, and nationalist interests during the Era of Good Feelings, the Panic of 1819 drove a wedge between the nation's geographical sections. The depression touched each of the major regions differently, calling for conflicting solutions. For the next several years, the halls of Congress rang with debates rooted in each section's particular economic needs.

Tariffs were one method for handling economic emergencies, and as the Panic of 1819 spread economic devastation throughout the country, legislators from Pennsylvania and the Middle Atlantic states, southern New England, and then Ohio and Kentucky began clamoring for protection. Others disagreed, turning tariffs into the issue that would pit region against region more violently than any other during these years.

**installments** Partial payments of a debt to be made at regular intervals until the entire debt is repaid.

**Panic of 1819** A financial panic that began when the Second Bank of the United States tightened credit and recalled government loans.

Before the adoption of modern bankruptcy laws, it was common for people to be put in prison when they could not pay their debts. One impact of the Panic of 1819 was a huge upturn in such imprisonments. Newspapers like *The Remembrancer*, or *Debtors Prison Recorder*, which began publication with this issue on April 8, 1820, called for reform in debtor laws and also reported gruesome stories about the sufferings of previously respectable people who found themselves in debtors' prison through no fault of their own. *Debtors Prison Recorder*, Vol. 1., No. 1, New York, Saturday, April 8, 1820.

## THE REMEMBRANCER, OR DEBTORS PRISON RECORDER.

"HE WHO'S ENTOMB'D WITHIN A PRISON'S WALLS  
ENDURES THE ANGUISH OF A LIVING DEATH"

VOL. I.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY APRIL 8, 1820.

NO. 1.

THE  
DEBTORS PRISON RECORDER  
IS ISSUED FROM THE PRESS OF  
CHARLES N. BALDWIN,

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paper regularly forwarded to them by  
mail, provided they forward the requisite  
advance, *post paid*.

### TO THE PUBLIC.

THE chief object of this publication will be to spread before an enlightened public the deplorable effects resulting from the barbarous practice of imprisonment for debt—to exhibit the misery of its wretched victims, and the unfeeling conduct of un pitying creditors. By these means, "with truth as its guide, and justice for its object," it will, it is hoped, gradually prepare the minds of the community for the entire abolition of a law which exists a dishonor to the precepts of Christianity, and as a blot on the statute book.

It will be published weekly, in an octavo form, each number to consist of eight pages, comprising a succinct and correct history of the interesting incidents which daily occur in the debtors prison—a correct Journal of prisoners received and discharged from

time to time, with such remarks as may grow out of peculiar persecution or other causes; nor will it neglect to announce the number of those who are supplied with food from that inestimable body, the Humane Society, to whom the profits of this publication will be faithfully applied, as a small testimonial of the gratitude felt by the unfortunate inmates of the prison, for their distinguished beneficence. It will contain interesting extracts from the latest European and American publications. In its columns will be found a variety of communications on various interesting subjects, from gentlemen without the prison walls, who have kindly volunteered their services to furnish us with essays on the ARTS and SCIENCES, criticisms on the DRAMA, POETRY, &c.

This work will be edited, and its matter carefully revised by several prisoners, who, if they cannot themselves enjoy the benefits of their labor, may at least feel a pleasure in the reflection that after ages will bestow a pitying tear on their sufferings, and bless them for the exertions made to rescue their country from the only vestige of feudal tyranny remaining in a land that boasts of freedom.

The small pittance paid for its perusal, will, it is believed, procure for it the patronage of a generous public, who will be amply remunerated in performing a duty subserving the great and benign ends of Charity, while in return they are furnished with a species of reading not to be met with in any other publication.

Farmers were split on the tariff issue. Irrespective of where they lived, so-called yeoman farmers favored a free market that would keep the price of the manufactures they had to buy as low as possible. In contrast, the increasing number of commercial farmers—those who had chosen to follow Clay's ideas and were specializing to produce cash crops of raw wool, hemp, and wheat—joined mill owners, factory managers, and industrial workers in supporting protection against the foreign dumping of such products. So did those westerners who were producing raw minerals such as iron that were in high demand in the industrializing economy.

Southern commercial planters, however, did not join with their western counterparts in favoring protection. After supporting the protective Tariff of 1816, Calhoun and other southerners became firm opponents of tariffs. Their dislike of protection reflected a complex economic reality. Britain, not the United States, was the South's primary



market for raw cotton and its main supplier of manufactured goods. Protective tariffs raised the price of such goods as well as the possibility that Britain might enact a **retaliatory tariff** on cotton imports from the South. If that happened, southerners would pay more for manufactures but receive less profit from cotton.

When, in 1820, northern congressmen proposed a major increase in tariff rates, small farmers in the West and cotton growers in the South combined to defeat the measure. Northerners then wooed congressmen from the West, where small farmers were begging for a relief from high land prices and debt. The northerners supported one bill that lowered the minimum price of public land to \$1.25 per acre and another that allowed farmers who had bought land before 1820 to pay off their debts at the reduced price. The bill also extended the time over which those who were on the installment plan could make payments. Then, in 1822, northerners backed a bill authorizing increased federal spending on the Cumberland Road, an interest vital to westerners. Such inducements had the desired outcome. In 1824 western congressmen joined with northern manufacturing interests to pass a greatly increased tariff.

**retaliatory tariff** A tariff on imported goods imposed neither to raise revenue nor control commerce but to retaliate against tariffs charged by another nation.

### The Missouri Compromise

As each of the nation's regions fought to implement specific solutions to the economic crisis, the regional balance of power in Congress became a matter of crucial importance. This delicate balance began to wobble immediately in 1819 when

the Missouri Territory applied for statehood. New York congressman James Tallmadge Jr. realized that if Missouri was admitted as a free state, its economy would resemble the economies of states in the Old Northwest, and its congressmen would be susceptible to northern political deal making. Tallmadge then proposed that no new slaves be taken into Missouri and that those already in the territory be emancipated gradually. Southerners likewise understood that if Missouri was admitted as a slave state, its congressional **bloc** would undoubtedly support the southern position on tariffs and other key issues. They unified to oppose the **Tallmadge Amendment**.

Both sides in the debate were deeply entrenched, but in 1820 Henry Clay suggested a compromise. Late in 1819, Maine had separated from Massachusetts and applied for admission to the United States as a separate state. The compromise proposed by Clay was to admit Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state. Clay also proposed that after the admission of Missouri, slavery be banned forever in the rest of the Louisiana Territory above 36° 30' north latitude—the line that formed Missouri's southern border (see Map 10.1). With this provision, Congress approved the **Missouri Compromise**, and the issue of slavery in the territories faded for a time.

The Missouri crisis was more than a simple debate over economic interests and congressional balances. Although economic issues had caused the conflict, slavery—its expansion and, for a few, its very existence—had become part of a struggle between sections over national power. For aged Federalists such as Rufus King, the crisis offered an opportunity to use the slavery issue to woo northerners and westerners away from the traditionally southern-centered Republican coalition. DeWitt Clinton and other northeastern dissidents joined with former Federalists to criticize their party's southern leadership and challenge Monroe's dominance.

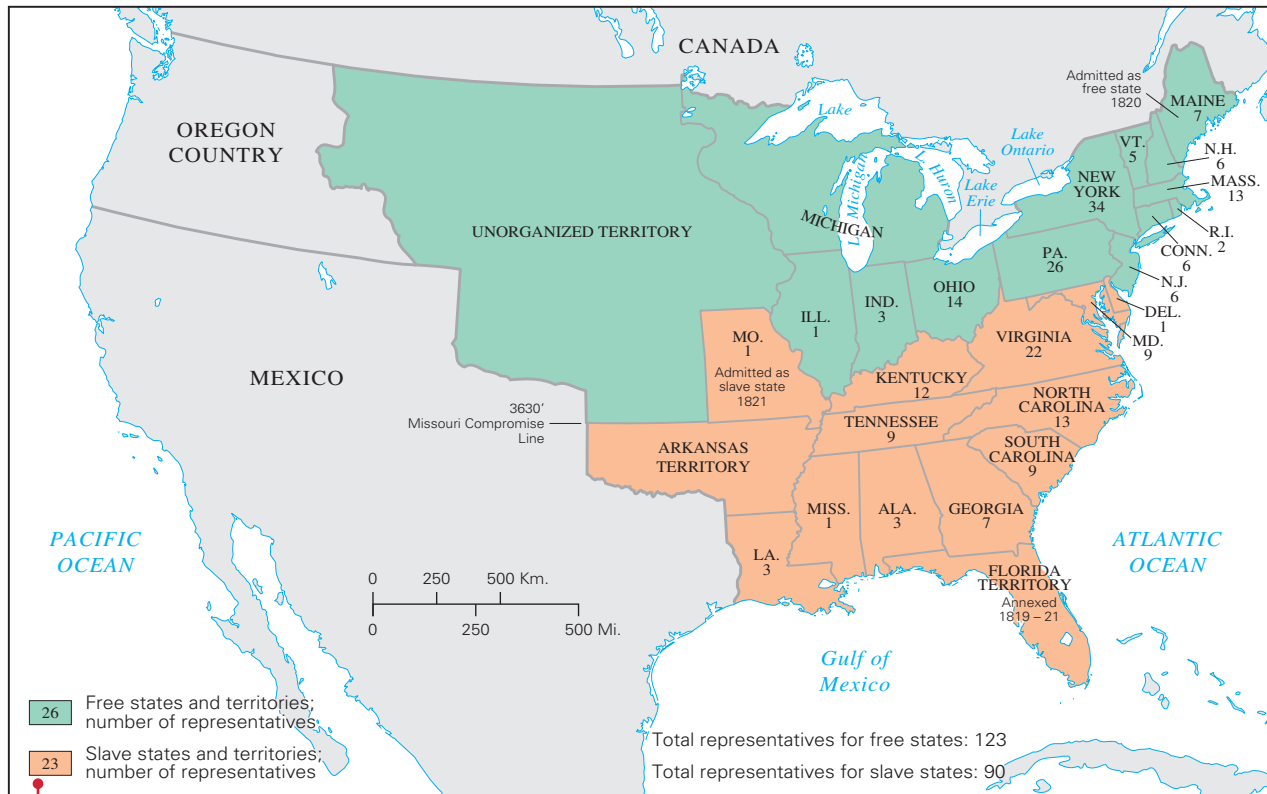
**bloc** A group of people united for common action.

**Tallmadge Amendment** An amendment to a statehood bill for Missouri proposed by New York congressman James Tallmadge Jr. that would have banned slavery from the new state; it created a deadlock in Congress that necessitated the Missouri Compromise.

**Missouri Compromise** Law proposed by Henry Clay in 1820 admitting Missouri to the Union as a slave state and Maine as a free state and banning slavery in the Louisiana Territory north of latitude 36° 30'.

### New Politics and the End of Good Feelings

Conducted in the midst of the Missouri crisis, the presidential election of 1820 went as smoothly as could be: Monroe was reelected with the greatest majority ever enjoyed by any president except George Washington. Despite economic



**MAP 10.1** Missouri Compromise and Representative Strength

The Missouri Compromise fixed the boundary between free and slave territories at 36°30' north latitude. This map shows the result in both geographical and political terms. Although each section emerged from the compromise with the same number of senators (twenty-four), the balance in the House of Representatives and Electoral College tilted toward the North.

**standard-bearer** The recognized leader of a movement, organization, or political party.

depression and sectional strife, the people's faith in Jefferson's party and his handpicked successors remained firm. As the election of 1824 approached, however, it became clear that the nation's continuing problems had broken Republican unity and destroyed the public's confidence in the party's ability to solve domestic problems.

Approaching the end of his second term, Monroe could identify no more gentleman Republicans from Virginia to carry the presidential torch. Although he probably favored John Quincy Adams as his successor, the president carefully avoided naming him as the party's **standard-bearer**, leaving that task to the Republican congressional caucus. If Monroe was hoping that the party would nominate Adams, he was disappointed when the southern-dominated party caucus tapped Georgia states' rights advocate William Crawford as its candidate. Certainly Clay and Adams were disappointed: each immediately defied party discipline by deciding to run against Crawford without the approval of the caucus. Encouraged by the apparent death of the caucus system for nominating presidential candidates, the Tennessee state legislature chose to put forward its own candidate, Andrew Jackson.

The election that followed was a painful demonstration of how deeply divided the nation had become. Northern regional political leaders rallied behind Adams, southern sectionalists supported Crawford, and northwestern commercial farmers and other backers of the American System lined up behind Clay. But a good portion of the

American people—many of them independent yeoman farmers, traditional craftsmen, and immigrants—defied their political leaders by supporting Andrew Jackson, the hero of New Orleans. Though a political **dark horse**, Jackson won the popular election, but the Electoral College vote was another matter. Jackson had 99 electoral votes to Adams’s 84, Crawford’s 41, and Clay’s 37, but that was not enough to win the election. Jackson’s opponents had a combined total of 162 of the 261 electoral votes cast. Thus Jackson won a **plurality** of electors but did not have the “majority of the whole number of electors” required by the Constitution. The Constitution specifies that in such cases, a list of the top three vote getters be passed to the House of Representatives for a final decision.

By the time the House had convened to settle the election, Crawford, the third-highest vote getter, had suffered a disabling stroke, so the list of candidates had only two viable names: John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson. Because Clay had finished fourth, he was not in contention. As Speaker of the House, however, he was in a particularly strategic position to influence the outcome, and friends of both hopefuls sought his support. Adams’s and Clay’s views on tariffs, manufacturing, foreign affairs, and other key issues were quite compatible. Clay therefore endorsed Adams, who won the House election and in 1825 became the nation’s sixth president.

Jackson and his supporters were outraged. They considered Clay a betrayer of western and southern interests, calling him the “Judas of the West.” Then when Adams named Clay as his secretary of state—the position that had been the springboard to the presidency for every past Republican who held it—Jacksonians exploded. Proclaiming Adams’s election a “corrupt bargain,” Jackson supporters withdrew from the party of Jefferson, bringing an end to the one-party system that had emerged under the so-called **Virginia Dynasty** and dealing the knockout blow to the Era of Good Feelings.

**dark horse** A political candidate who has little organized support and is not expected to win.

**plurality** The number of votes received by the leading candidate in an election with three or more candidates; the number thus amounts to less than half of the total number of votes cast.

**Virginia Dynasty** Term applied to the U.S. presidents from Virginia in the period between 1801 and 1825: Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe.

## The “New Man” in Politics

- ★ **What factors helped change Americans’ political options during the mid-1820s?**
- ★ **How did the election of Andrew Jackson in 1828 reflect those new options?**

Since Washington’s day the presidency had been considered an office for gentlemen and statesmen. The first several presidents had tried to maintain an air of polite dignity while in office, and voters were generally pleased with that orderly approach. But with the massive social changes taking place after the War of 1812, the conduct of national politics changed drastically. New voters from new occupations with radically varying political and economic views began making demands. Many felt isolated from a political system that permitted the presidency to pass from one propertied gentleman to another. Clearly, changing times called for political change, and the American people began to press for it in no uncertain terms.

John Quincy Adams may have been the best-prepared man ever to assume the office of president. The son of revolutionary giant and former president John Adams, John Quincy had been born and raised in the midst of America’s most powerful political circles. By the time of his controversial election in 1825, Adams had been a foreign diplomat, a U.S. senator, a Harvard professor, and an exceptionally effective secretary of state. Adams conducted himself in office as his father had, holding himself above partisan politics and refusing to use political favors to curry support. As a result, Adams had no effective means of rallying those who might have supported him or of pressuring his opponents. Thus, despite his impressive résumé, Adams’s administration was a deeply troubled one.

Adams's policy commitments did nothing to boost his popularity. The new president promised to increase tariffs to protect American manufacturing and to raise funds necessary to pay for "the improvement of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures." He also wanted the Second Bank of the United States to stabilize the economy while providing ample loans to finance new manufacturing ventures. He advocated federal spending to improve "the elegant arts" and advance "literature and the progress of the sciences, ornamental and profound." High sounding though Adams's objectives were, Jefferson spoke for many when he observed that such policies would establish "a single and splendid government of an aristocracy." Jefferson's criticism seemed particularly apt in the economic turmoil that followed the Panic of 1819. Moreover, the increase in federal power required by Adams's policies frightened southerners, and this fear, combined with their traditional distaste for tariffs, virtually unified opposition to Adams in the South.

Under Calhoun's lead, Adams's opponents tried to manipulate tariff legislation to undercut the president's support, proposing an unprecedented increase in tariff rates. The resulting **Tariff of Abominations** certainly undermined Adams's popularity, but it set tariff rates that were unpopular with almost every segment of the population and generated critical sectional tensions.

**Tariff of Abominations** Tariff package designed to win support for anti-Adams forces in Congress; its passage in 1828 discredited Adams but set off sectional tensions.

### Democratic Styles and Political Structure

Adams's demeanor and outlook compounded his problems. He seemed more a man of his father's generation than of his own. The enormous economic and demographic changes that occurred during the first decades of the nineteenth century created a new political climate, one in which Adams's archrival Andrew Jackson felt much more at ease than did the stiff Yankee who occupied the White House.

One of the most profound changes in the American political scene was an explosion in the number of voters. Throughout the early years of the republic's history, voting rights were limited to white men who held real estate. In a nation primarily of farmers, most men owned land, so the fact of limited suffrage raised little controversy. But as economic conditions changed, a smaller proportion of the population owned farms, and although bankers, lawyers, manufacturers, and other such men often were highly educated, economically stable, and politically concerned, their lack of real estate barred them from political participation. Not surprisingly, such elite and middle-class men urged suffrage reform. In 1800 only three of the sixteen states—Kentucky, Vermont, and New Hampshire—had no property qualifications for voting, and Georgia, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania permitted white, male taxpayers to vote even if they did not own real property. By 1830, only five of the twenty-four states retained property qualifications, nine required tax payment only, and ten made no property demands at all. In the 1824 election, 356,038 men cast ballots for the presidency. Four years later, more than three times that number of men voted.

Political opportunists were not slow to take advantage of the new situation. Men such as New Yorker **Martin Van Buren** quickly came to the fore, organizing political factions into tightly disciplined local and statewide units. A longtime opponent of Governor DeWitt Clinton's faction in New York, Van Buren molded disaffected Republicans into the so-called Bucktail faction. In 1820 the Bucktails used a combination of political patronage—the ability of the party in power to distribute government jobs—and fiery speeches to draw newly qualified voters into the political process and swept Clinton out of office.

What was happening in New York was typical of party and antiparty developments throughout the country. As the party of Jefferson dissolved, a tangle of political factions

**Martin Van Buren** New York politician known for his skillful handling of party politics; he helped found the Democratic Party and later became the eighth president of the United States.





As suffrage requirements loosened, politics went from being a sedate parlor game among gentlemen to a rough-and-tumble contest that often spilled out into streets of the nation's cities and villages. This painting by George Caleb Bingham captures the colorful spirit of the new politics in depicting a county election in early nineteenth-century Missouri. Francis G. Mayer/CORBIS.

broke out across the nation. This was precisely the sort of petty politics that Adams disdained, but the chaos suited a man like Jackson perfectly. So, while the Adams administration championed policies that few voters favored, Van Buren was busy forging with the hero of New Orleans an alliance that would fundamentally alter American politics.

### The Rise of “King Andrew”

Within two years of Adams's election, Van Buren had brought together northern outsiders like himself, dissident southern Republicans like John C. Calhoun, and western spokesmen like **Thomas Hart Benton** of Missouri and John H. Eaton of Tennessee into a new political party. Calling themselves Democratic-Republicans—**Democrats** for short—this party railed against the neofederalism of Clay's and Adams's National Republican platform. The Democrats called for a return to Jeffersonian simplicity, states' rights, and democratic principles. Behind the scenes, however, they employed the tight organizational discipline and manipulative techniques that Van Buren had used to such good effect against the Clintonians in New York. Lining up behind the recently defeated Andrew Jackson, the new party appealed to both opportunistic political outsiders and democratically inclined new voters. In the congressional elections of 1826, Van Buren's coalition drew the unqualified support of both groups, unseating enough National Republicans to gain a twenty-five-seat majority in the House of Representatives and an eight-seat advantage in the Senate.

Having Andrew Jackson as a candidate was probably as important to the Democrats' success as their ideological appeal and tight political organization. In many ways, Jackson was a perfect reflection of the new voters. Like many of them, he was born in a log cabin under rustic circumstances. His family had faced more than its share of hardships: his father had died two weeks before Andrew's birth, and he had lost his two brothers and his mother during the Revolutionary War. In the waning days of the Revolution, at the age of 13, Jackson joined a mounted militia company and was captured by the British. His captors beat their young prisoner and then let him go, a humiliation he would never forgive.

**Thomas Hart Benton** U.S. senator from Missouri and legislative leader of the Democrats; he was a champion of President Jackson and a supporter of westward expansion.

**Democrats** Political party that brought Andrew Jackson into office; it recalled Jeffersonian principles of limited government and drew its support from farmers, craftsmen, and small businessmen.

**public prosecutor** A lawyer appointed by the government to prosecute criminal actions on behalf of the state.

At the end of the war, Jackson set out to make his own way in the world. Like many of his contemporaries, he chose the legal profession as the route to rapid social and economic advancement. In 1788 he was appointed **public prosecutor** for the North Carolina district that later split off to become Tennessee. Driven by an indomitable will and a wealth of native talent, Jackson became the first U.S. congressman from the state of Tennessee and eventually was elected to the Senate. He also was a judge on the Tennessee Supreme Court. Along the way, Jackson's exploits established his solid reputation as a heroic and natural leader. Even before the War of 1812, his toughness had earned him the moniker "Old Hickory"; because of his humble origins, Jackson was the first president to enjoy a nickname.

Jackson's popular image as a rough-hewn man of the people was somehow untarnished by his political alliance with business interests, his activities as a land speculator, and his large and growing personal fortune and stock of slaves. In the eyes of frontiersmen, small farmers, and to some extent urban workingmen, he remained a common man like them. Having started with nothing, Jackson seemed to have drawn from a combination of will, natural ability, and divine favor to become a man of substance without becoming a snob.

The presidential campaign was dramatic, characterized by all manner of charges and countercharges, but when all was said and done, the Tennessean polled over a hundred thousand more popular votes than did the New Englander and won the vast majority of states, taking every one in the South and West.

As if in response to his supporters' desires and his opponents' fears, Jackson swept into the White House on a groundswell of unruly popular enthusiasm. Ten thousand visitors crammed into the capital to witness Jackson's inauguration on March 4, 1829. Showing his usual disdain for tradition, Jackson took the oath of office and then pushed through the crowd and mounted his horse, galloping off toward the White House followed by a throng of excited onlookers. When they arrived, the mob flowed behind him into the presidential mansion, where they climbed over furniture, broke glassware, and generally frolicked. The new president was finally forced to flee the near-riot by climbing out a back window. Clearly a boisterous new spirit was alive in the nation's politics.

### Launching Jacksonian Politics

That he was a political outsider was a major factor in Jackson's popularity. Many rural voters feared the changes inherent in the market revolution, and Jackson curried their support by promising **retrenchment** and reform in the federal system.

In the process he initiated a personal style in government unlike that of any of his predecessors in office and alienated some voters, both inside and outside Washington.

Retrenchment was first on the new president's agenda. Jackson challenged the notion that government work could be carried out best by an elite core of professional civil servants. Rotation in office gave the president the excuse to fire people whom he associated with the "corrupt bargain" and felt he could not fully trust. It also opened up an unprecedented opportunity for Jackson to reward his loyal supporters by placing them in the newly vacated civil service jobs. The Jacksonian adage became "To the victor belong the **spoils**," and the Democrats made every effort to advance their party's hold on power by distributing government jobs to loyal party members.

Patronage appointments extended to the highest levels in government. Jackson selected cabinet members not for their experience or ability but for their political loyalty and value in satisfying the various factions that formed his coalition. The potential negative impact of these appointments was minimized by Jackson's decision to abandon his

**retrenchment** In government, the elimination of unnecessary jobs or functions for reform or cost-cutting purposes.

**spoils** Jobs and other rewards for political support.

predecessors’ practice of regularly seeking his cabinet members’ advice on major issues: The president called virtually no cabinet meetings and seldom asked for his cabinet’s opinion. Instead, he surrounded himself with an informal network of friends and advisers. This so-called **Kitchen Cabinet** worked closely with the president on matters of both national policy and party management.

Jackson’s relationship with everyone in government was equally unconventional. He was known to rage, pout, and storm at suspected disloyalty. Earlier presidents had at least pretended to believe in the equal distribution of power among the three branches of government, but Jackson avowed that the executive should be supreme because the president was the only member of the government elected by all the people. He made it clear that he would stand in opposition to both private and congressional opponents and was not above threatening military action to get his way. Reflecting his generally testy relationship with the legislative branch, he vetoed twelve bills in the course of his administration, three more than all his predecessors combined. Nor did he feel any qualms about standing up to the judiciary. Such arrogant assertions of executive power led Jackson’s opponents to call the new president “King Andrew.”

**Kitchen Cabinet** President Jackson’s informal advisers, who helped him shape both national and Democratic Party policy.

## The Reign of “King Andrew”

- ★ **What was President Jackson’s role in shaping U.S. Indian policy? How does his background account for his policy choices?**
- ★ **How did conditions in each region of the country influence the national divisions reflected in the nullification crisis and the Bank War?**

Jackson had promised the voters “retrenchment and reform.” He delivered retrenchment, but reform was more difficult to arrange. Jackson tried to implement reform in three broad areas: the nation’s banking and financial system, Indian affairs, and the collection of revenue and enforcement of federal law. The steps that Jackson took appealed to some of his supporters but strongly alienated others. Thus, as Jackson tried to follow through on his promise to reform the nation, he nearly tore the nation apart.

### Jackson and the Bank

The Second Bank of the United States, chartered in 1816, was an essential part of Clay’s American System. In addition to serving as the depository for federal funds, the Second Bank issued national currency, which could be exchanged directly for gold, and it served as a national clearinghouse for notes issued by state and local banks. In that capacity, the Second Bank could regulate currency values and credit rates and help to control the activities of state banks by refusing to honor their notes if the banks lacked sufficient gold to back them. The Second Bank could also police state and local banks by calling in loans and refusing credit—actions that had helped bring on the Panic of 1819 and had made the Second Bank very unpopular.

In 1823 **Nicholas Biddle** became president of the Second Bank. Biddle, an able administrator and talented economist, enforced firm and consistent policies that restored some confidence in the bank and its functions. But many Americans still were not ready to accept the notion of an all-powerful central banking authority. The vast majority of opponents were Americans who did not understand the function of the Second Bank, viewing it as just another instrument for helping the rich get richer. These critics tended instinctively to support the use of hard currency, called **specie**. Other critics, including

**Nicholas Biddle** President of the Second Bank of the United States; he struggled to keep the bank functioning when President Jackson tried to destroy it.

**specie** Coins minted from precious metals.

many state bankers, opposed the Second Bank because they believed that Biddle's controls were too strict and that they were not receiving their fair share of federal revenues.

Hoping to fan political turmoil in the upcoming presidential election, Jackson's opponents in Congress proposed to renew the bank's twenty-year charter four years early, in 1832. They hoped that Biddle's leadership had established the bank as a necessary part of the nation's economy, even in critics' minds, and that Democratic Party discipline would break down if the president tried to prevent the early renewal of the charter. They were partially right—Congress passed the renewal bill, and Jackson vetoed it—but the anticipated rift between Jackson and congressional Democrats did not open. The president stole the day by delivering a powerful veto message geared to appeal to the mass of Americans on whose support his party's congressmen depended. Jackson denounced the Second Bank as an example of vested privilege and monopoly power that served the interests of urban capitalists while injuring working-class Americans. Although the charter was not renewed, the Second Bank could operate for four more years on the basis of its unexpired charter. Jackson, however, wanted to kill the Second Bank immediately, to “deprive the conspirators of the aid which they expect from its money and power.” The strategy Jackson chose was to withdraw federal funds and redeposit the money in state banks. When his cabinet failed to support the move, Jackson fired several members and appointed Kitchen Cabinet member (and future Supreme Court Chief Justice) Roger B. Taney to head the Treasury Department. Stepping around the law rather than breaking it, Taney chose not to transfer federal funds directly from the Second Bank to state banks, but instead simply kept paying the government's bills from existing accounts in the Second Bank while placing all new deposits in so-called **pet banks**. The full effect of the **Bank War** would not be felt until after the reign of “King Andrew” had ended.

**pet banks** State banks into which Andrew Jackson ordered federal deposits be placed to help deplete the funds of the Second Bank of the United States.

**Bank War** The political conflict that occurred when Andrew Jackson tried to destroy the Second Bank of the United States, which he thought represented special interests at the expense of the common man.

**Five Civilized Tribes** Term used by whites to describe the Cherokee, Choctaw, Seminole, Creek, and Chickasaw Indians, some of whom were planters and merchants.

### Jackson and the Indians

At the end of the War of 1812, the powerful Cherokees, Choctaws, Seminoles, Creeks, and Chickasaws—the so-called **Five Civilized Tribes**—numbered nearly seventy-five thousand people and occupied large holdings within the states of Georgia, North and South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Some of these Indians had embraced Jefferson's vision of acculturation but were seen as an obstruction to westward migration, especially by grasping planters on the make who coveted Indian land for cotton fields. A similar situation prevailed in the Northwest. Though neither as numerous nor as Europeanized as the Civilized Tribes, groups such as the Peorias, Kaskaskias, Kickapoos, Sauks, Foxes, and Winnebagoes were living settled and stable lives along the northern frontier.

Throughout the 1820s, the federal government tried to convince tribes along the frontier to move farther west. Promised money, new land, and relief from white harassment, many Indian leaders agreed. Others, however, resisted, insisting that they stay where they were. The outcome was terrible factionalism within Indian societies as some lobbied to sell out and move west while others fought to keep their lands. Playing on this factionalism, federal Indian agents were able to extract land cessions that consolidated the eastern tribes onto smaller and smaller holdings. One such transaction, the 1825 Treaty of Indian Springs, involved fraud and manipulation so obnoxious that President Adams overturned the ratified treaty and insisted on a new one.

Adams at least paid lip service to honest dealings with the Indians and the sanctity of treaties. Jackson scoffed at both. In 1817 he had told President Monroe, “I have long viewed treaties with the Indians an absurdity not to be reconciled to the principles of our government.” As president, Jackson advocated removing all the eastern Indians to



# Investigating America

## Jackson's Bank Veto, July 10, 1832

For a politician who professed to believe in small government and states' rights, Jackson was an activist by temperament. When Henry Clay and the elegant Nicholas Biddle—a Monroe appointee whose genteel Philadelphia background was the opposite of Jackson's rough, frontier origins—attempted to turn the Bank into a campaign issue in 1832, Jackson responded as would any provoked southern duelist. "The Bank," he informed Van Buren, "is trying to kill me, but I will kill it." The passage here is from a lengthy veto message of more than eight thousand words, in which Jackson explained his reasons for vetoing recharter.

.....

The present corporate body, denominated the president, directors, and company of the Bank of the United States, will have existed at the time this act is intended to take effect twenty years. It enjoys an exclusive privilege of banking under the authority of the General Government, a monopoly of its favor and support, and, as a necessary consequence, almost a monopoly of the foreign and domestic exchange. The powers, privileges, and favors bestowed upon it in the original charter, by increasing the value of the stock far above its par value, operated as a gratuity of many millions to the stockholders. . . .

If the opinion of the Supreme Court covered the whole ground of this act, it ought not to control the coordinate authorities of this Government. The Congress, the Executive, and the Court must each for itself be guided by its own opinion of the Constitution. Each public officer who takes an oath to support the Constitution swears that he will support it as he understands it, and not as it is understood by others. It is as much the duty of the House of Representatives, of the Senate, and of the President to decide upon the constitutionality of any bill or resolution which may be presented to them for passage or approval as it is of the supreme judges when it may be brought before them for judicial decision. The opinion of the judges has no more authority over Congress than the opinion of Congress has over the judges, and on that point

the President is independent of both. The authority of the Supreme Court must not, therefore, be permitted to control the Congress or the Executive when acting in their legislative capacities, but to have only such influence as the force of their reasoning may deserve. . . .

It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes. Distinctions in society will always exist under every just government. Equality of talents, of education, or of wealth can not be produced by human institutions. In the full enjoyment of the gifts of Heaven and the fruits of superior industry, economy, and virtue, every man is equally entitled to protection by law; but when the laws undertake to add to these natural and just advantages artificial distinctions, to grant titles, gratuities, and exclusive privileges, to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society—the farmers, mechanics, and laborers—who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves, have a right to complain of the injustice of their Government. There are no necessary evils in government. Its evils exist only in its abuses. If it would confine itself to equal protection, and, as Heaven does its rains, shower its favors alike on the high and the low, the rich and the poor, it would be an unqualified blessing. In the act before me there seems to be a wide and unnecessary departure from these just principles. . . .

.....

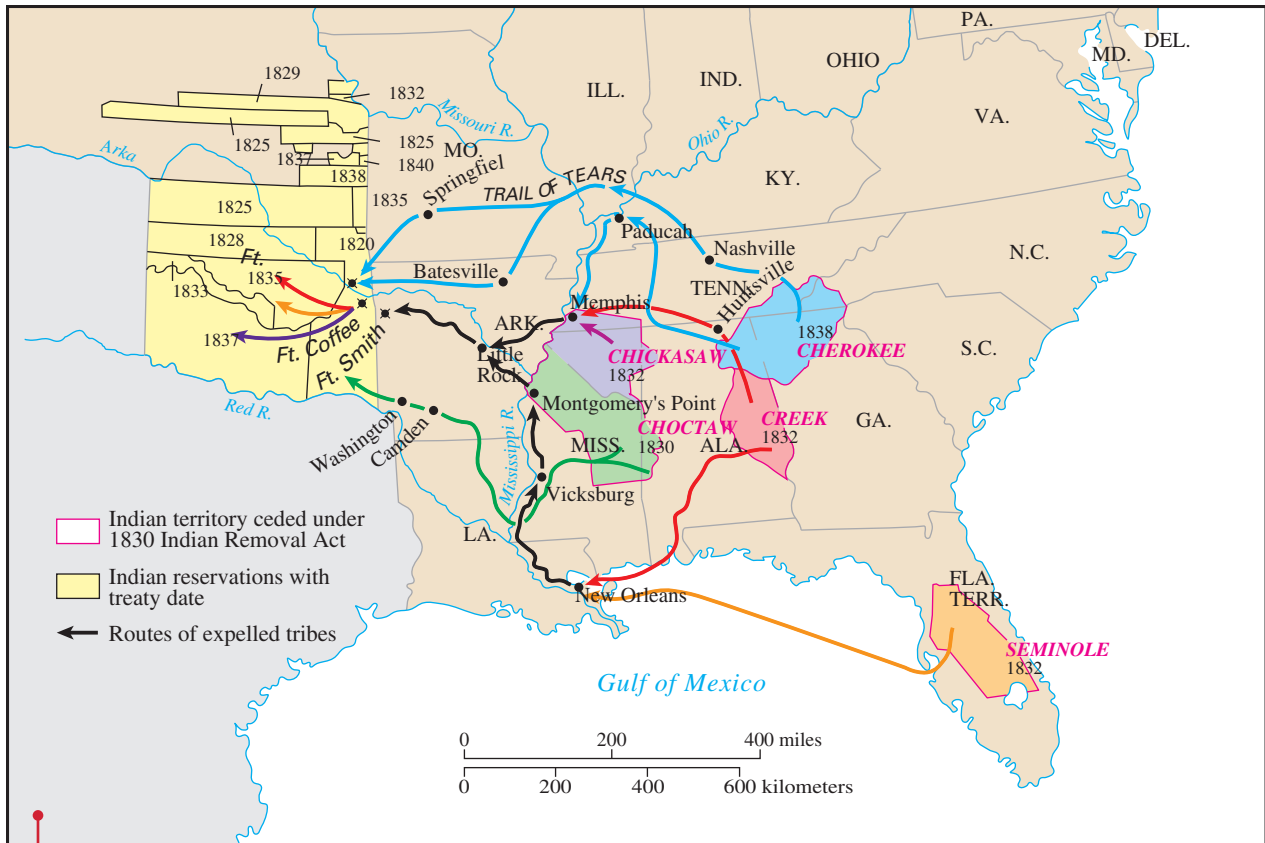
- The Supreme Court had previously upheld the constitutionality of the Bank, but as a strict constructionist in the Jeffersonian mold, did Jackson have a point in arguing that each branch of government had a co-equal right to decide such questions?
- Jackson was also the first president to veto legislation on grounds of policy as well as constitutionality. But how might his final statement be read as a political statement, as the 1832 election was only four months away?

the west side of the Mississippi, by force if necessary (see Map 10.2). Following Jackson's direction, Congress passed the **Indian Removal Act** in 1830, appropriating the funds necessary to purchase all of the lands held by Indian tribes east of the Mississippi River and to pay for their resettlement in the West.



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

**Indian Removal Act** Law passed by Congress in 1830 providing for the removal of all Indian tribes east of the Mississippi and the purchase of western lands for their resettlement.



**MAP 10.2** Indian Removal

The outcome of Andrew Jackson's Indian policy appears clearly on this map. Between 1830 and 1835, all of the Civilized Tribes except Osceola's faction of Seminoles were forced to relocate west of the Mississippi River. Thousands died in the process. © Martin Gilbert, *The Routledge Atlas of American History, Fourth Edition*, ISBN: 0415281512 HB & 0415281520 PB.

**Black Hawk** Sauk leader who brought his people back to their homeland in Illinois; he was captured in 1832 when U.S. troops massacred his followers.

It did not take Jackson long to begin implementing his new authority. When white farmers penetrated Sauk Indian territory during the summer of 1831, the Jackson administration authorized federal troops to forcibly move the entire band of more than a thousand Indian men, women, and children across the Mississippi. During the following spring, however, one Sauk leader, **Black Hawk**, led a party back "home." Harassed by Illinois militia units, Black Hawk's resistance force clung to its territory until federal troops marched in from Illinois and Missouri, killing more than three hundred Indians and capturing Black Hawk.

At the same time, whites were exerting similar pressure on the southern tribes. The case of the Cherokees provides an excellent illustration of the new, more aggressive attitude toward Indian policy. Having allied with Jackson against the Creeks in 1813, the Cherokees emerged from the War of 1812 with their lands pretty well intact, and a rising generation of progressive leaders pushed strongly for the tribe to embrace white culture. In the early 1820s the Cherokees created a formal government with a bicameral legislature, a court system, and a professional, salaried civil service. In 1827 the tribe drafted and ratified a written constitution modeled on the Constitution of the United States. In the following year, the tribe began publication of its own newspaper, the *Cherokee*

*Phoenix*, printed in both English and Cherokee, using the alphabet devised earlier in the decade by tribal member **George Guess (Sequoyah)**.

Those innovations, rather than winning the acceptance of the Cherokees' white neighbors, led to even greater friction. From the frontiersmen's point of view, Indians were supposed to be dying out, disappearing into history, not founding new governments that implied foreign sovereignty and independence. Thus in 1828, the Georgia legislature **annulled** the Cherokee constitution. In the following year, gold was found on Cherokee land. As more than three thousand greedy prospectors violated tribal territory, the state of Georgia extended its authority over the Cherokees and ordered all communal tribal lands seized.

That was the first in a series of laws that the Georgia legislature passed to make life as difficult as possible for the Cherokees in hopes of driving them out of the state. When Christian missionaries living with the tribe protested the state's actions and encouraged the Cherokees to seek federal assistance, Georgia passed a law that required teachers among the Indians to obtain licenses from the state—a law expressly designed to eliminate the missionaries' influence. When two missionaries, Samuel Austin Worcester and Elizur Butler, refused to comply, a company of Georgia militia invaded their mission in the heart of Cherokee country, arrested the teachers, and marched them off to jail.

Two notable lawsuits came out of the combined efforts of the missionaries and Cherokees to get justice. In the first case, *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831), the Cherokees claimed that Georgia's action in extending authority over them and enforcing state law within Cherokee territory was illegal because they were a sovereign nation in a treaty relationship with the United States. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear this case. Speaking for the Court, Chief Justice John Marshall stated that the Cherokee Nation was neither a foreign nor a domestic state but was a “domestic dependent nation” and as such had no standing in federal court.

As American citizens, however, Worcester and Butler did have legitimate standing under federal law, and in 1832 Marshall was able to render a decision in the case of *Worcester v. Georgia*. In this case, the Court ruled that the Cherokee Nation was a distinct political community recognized by federal authority and that Georgia did not have legitimate power to pass laws regulating Indian behavior or to invade Indian land. He thus declared all the laws Georgia had passed to harass the Cherokees null and void and ordered the state to release Worcester and Butler from jail.

Although the Cherokees had grounds for celebration, their joy was short-lived. As a nationalist, Marshall said nothing about the federal Removal Act of 1830, which meant that the Cherokees won their case but lost the struggle to maintain their lands. When they pressed Jackson on the matter, he claimed that he was powerless to help and that the only way the Indians could get protection from the Georgians was to relocate west of the Mississippi.

Under this sort of pressure, tribal unity broke down. The majority of Cherokees stood fast with their stalwart leader John Ross, fighting Georgia through the court system. But another faction emerged, advocating relocation. Preying on the division, federal Indian agents named the dissenters as the true representatives of the tribe and convinced them to sign the **Treaty of New Echota** (1835), in which the minority faction sold the last 8 million acres of Cherokee land in the East to the U.S. government for \$5 million. In 1838 federal troops rounded up the entire Cherokee tribe and force-marched them to Indian Territory. Like all of the Indians who were forcibly removed from their native lands, the Cherokees suffered terribly. In the course of the long trek, which is known as the **Trail of Tears** (see Map 10.2), nearly a fifth of the twenty thousand Cherokees who started the march died of disease, exhaustion, or heartbreak.

**George Guess (Sequoyah)** Cherokee silversmith and trader who created an alphabet that made it possible to transcribe the Cherokee language according to the sounds of its syllables.

**annul** To declare a law or contract invalid.

**Cherokee Nation v. Georgia** Supreme Court case (1831) concerning Georgia's annulment of all Cherokee laws; the Supreme Court ruled that Indian tribes did not have the right to appeal to the federal court system.

**Worcester v. Georgia** Supreme Court case (1832) concerning the arrest of two missionaries to the Cherokees in Georgia; the Court found that Georgia had no right to rule in Cherokee territory.

**Treaty of New Echota** Treaty in 1835 by which a minority faction gave all Cherokee lands east of the Mississippi to the U.S. government in return for \$5 million and land in Indian Territory.

**Trail of Tears** Forced march of the Cherokee people from Georgia to Indian Territory in the winter of 1838, during which roughly four thousand Cherokees died.

When white farmers began moving into territory that legally belonged to the Sauk and Fox Indians during the summer of 1831, Jackson's Department of War removed the Indians by force. Black Hawk resisted by moving his band back to their homeland to plant crops in the spring of 1832. Harassed by Illinois militia, the Sauk band attempted to flee back across the Mississippi River but were headed off by federal troops and massacred at the Battle of Bad Axe: The official report noted that at least one hundred fifty Indians were killed and forty, including Black Hawk, were captured. Chicago History Museum.



**Osceola** Seminole leader in Florida who opposed removal to the West and led resistance to U.S. troops; he was captured by treachery while bearing a flag of truce.

The only one of the Civilized Tribes to abandon legal defenses and adopt a policy of military resistance was the Seminoles. Like the other tribes, the Seminoles were deeply divided. Some chose peaceful relocation; others advocated rebellion. After the conciliatory faction signed the Treaty of Payne's Landing in 1832, a group led by **Osceola** broke with the tribe, declaring war on the protreaty group and on the United States. After years of guerrilla swamp fighting, Osceola was finally captured in 1837, but the antitreaty warriors fought on. The struggle continued until 1842, when the United States withdrew its troops, having lost fifteen hundred men during the ten-year conflict. Eventually, even the majority of Osceola's followers agreed to move west, though a small faction of the Seminoles remained in Florida's swamps; their descendants sued for peace in 1962.

### The Nullification Crisis

Southern concerns about rising tariffs and growing antislavery activity in the North revealed the South's growing concern about its declining political power during the Jackson administration. For years, southerners had complained that tariffs discriminated against them. From their point of view, they were paying at least as much in tariffs as the North and West but were not getting nearly the same economic benefits.

This matter had come to a head in 1829 when the impact of the ill-considered Tariff of Abominations (1828) began to be felt throughout the nation. The new tariffs roused loud protest from states such as South Carolina, where soil exhaustion and declining prices for agricultural produce were putting strong economic pressure on men who were



# Investigating America

## Calhoun's Defense of Nullification, 1833

After resigning from the vice presidency in 1832 over the nullification crisis, John C. Calhoun was appointed by the South Carolina legislature to fill a vacancy in its U.S. Senate delegation. One year later, in February 1833, Calhoun stood before the Senate defending South Carolina's actions and the principle of nullification. In a brief statement, Calhoun summarized his views and attempted to justify his home state's act of disobedience in refusing to comply with federal laws it regarded as unconstitutional.

.....

The people of Carolina believe that the Union is a union of States, and not of individuals; that it was formed by the States, and that the citizens of the several States were bound to it through the acts of their several States; that each State ratified the Constitution for itself, and that it was only by such ratification of a State that any obligation was imposed upon its citizens. Thus believing, it is the opinion of the people of Carolina that it belongs to the State which has imposed the obligation to declare, in the last resort, the extent of this obligation, as far as her citizens are concerned; and this upon the plain principles which exist in all analogous cases of compact between sovereign bodies. On this principle the people of the State, acting in their sovereign capacity in convention, precisely as they did in the adoption of their own and the Federal Constitution, have declared, by the ordinance, that the acts of Congress which imposed duties under the authority to lay imposts, were acts not for revenue, as intended by the Constitution, but for protection, and therefore null and void. . . . It ought to be borne in mind that, according to the opinion which prevails in Carolina, the right of resistance to the unconstitutional acts of Congress belongs to the State, and not to her individual citizens; and

that, though the latter may, in a mere question of meum and tuum, resist through the courts an unconstitutional encroachment upon their rights, yet the final stand against usurpation rests not with them, but with the State of which they are members; and such act of resistance by a State binds the conscience and allegiance of the citizen. . . .

The Constitution has admitted the jurisdiction of the United States within the limits of the several States only so far as the delegated powers authorize; beyond that they are intruders, and may rightfully be expelled; and that they have been efficiently expelled by the legislation of the State through her civil process, as has been acknowledged on all sides in the debate, is only a confirmation of the truth of the doctrine for which the majority in Carolina have contended.

.....

- What was the significance of Calhoun's assertion that the federal union is a "union of States" and "not of individuals"?
- How did Calhoun's description of the process by which the Constitution was ratified justify his claims concerning the rights of a statewide convention to declare federal laws null and void?
- The expression "meum and tuum" is Latin for "mine and thine." Here Calhoun argued that a citizen's claim that the government has wrongly taken his or her property—a conflict between "mine and thine"—would be an appropriate matter to take to court. In cases, however, where *all* citizens believe themselves deprived by the government, it falls to the state and not to the courts to act on their behalf. On what basis did Calhoun justify the expulsion of federal authorities from a state? What assumptions was he making about federal rights versus states' rights?

deeply invested in land and slaves. Calhoun, who took office as Jackson's vice president in 1829, spearheaded the protest.

Though it guarded the author's identity, the South Carolina legislature published Calhoun's *South Carolina Exposition and Protest* in 1828, fanning the flames of sectionalism. Calhoun's **nullification** sentiments reflected notions being expressed throughout the nation. And as Calhoun's pamphlet circulated to wider and wider audiences, nationalists such as Clay and Senator **Daniel Webster** of Massachusetts grew more and more anxious about the potential threat to federal power.



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**nullification** Refusal by a state to recognize or enforce a federal law within its boundaries.

**Daniel Webster** Massachusetts senator and lawyer who was known for his forceful speeches and considered nullification a threat to the Union.

In 1832 nullification advocates in South Carolina called for a special session of the state legislature to consider the matter of state versus federal power. The convention met in November and voted overwhelmingly to nullify the despised tariff. The legislature also elected nullification's most prominent spokesman, Robert Y. Hayne, as governor and named Calhoun as his replacement in the Senate. The vice president, who realized that he would not be Jackson's running mate in the coming election, finally admitted writing the *Exposition and Protest* and resigned from the vice presidency to lead the pro-nullification forces from the Senate floor. The issue was ostensibly about the tariff, but Jackson correctly suspected that "the Negro question" and a desire to nullify any law that hindered the planters' right to own slaves lurked behind nullification.

Although Jackson was a states' rights supporter, he was also a soldier who had risked his life for the nation, and he believed that nullification violated the Constitution and was "destructive of the great object for which it was formed." The president immediately reinforced federal forts in South Carolina and sent warships to guarantee the tariff's collection. He also asked Congress to pass a "force bill" to reaffirm his power to invade the rebellious state if doing so proved necessary to carry out federal law. In hopes of placating southerners and winning popular support in the upcoming election, Congress passed a lowered tariff, but it also voted to give Jackson the power he requested.

South Carolina nullifiers immediately called a new convention, which withdrew its nullification of the previous tariff but passed a resolution nullifying the force bill. Because Jackson no longer needed the force bill to apply federal law and collect the new tariff, he chose to ignore this pointless act of bravado. Thus there was no real resolution to the problem, and the gash over federal versus states' rights remained unhealed. The wound continued to fester until it was finally cauterized thirty years later by civil war.

## Summary

With the end of the War of 1812, President Madison and the Republicans promoted a strong agenda for the nation. Joining with former critics such as Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun, Madison pushed for a national market economy by sponsoring federal legislation for a national bank, controlled currency, and tariff protection for American industry. In addition, Madison gave free rein to nationalists such as John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, who succeeded in enhancing the nation's military reputation and expanding its sphere of influence.

While the nation moved forward in accomplishing its diplomatic goals, the Republicans' economic agenda suffered from a lack of viable transportation and communication systems. Expecting quick and enormous profits, New York built the Erie Canal, the first successful link between the increasingly urban and manufacturing East and the rural, agricultural West. Convinced finally that transportation improvements were necessary for national

defense and for carrying out the work of the government, Madison and his successors joined with state officials to begin the process of building a truly national system of roads and canals.

But what had begun as an age of optimism closed in a tangle of conflict and ill will. A much-hoped-for prosperity dissolved in the face of shrinking markets, resulting in economic panic in 1819 and a collapse in the speculative economy. Economic hard times, in turn, triggered increased competition between the nation's geographical sections, as leaders wrestled for control over federal power in an effort to rid particular areas of economic despair. Supporters of the American System tried to craft a solution, but their compromise did not entirely satisfy anyone. And in the sea of contention that swelled around the Missouri Compromise, the Era of Good Feelings collapsed.

Distressed by what seemed an elite conspiracy to run American affairs, newly politicized voters rejected the big

government policies of John Quincy Adams in favor of military hero Andrew Jackson, who promised a return to Jeffersonian principles. Backed by a political machine composed of northern, western, and southern interests, Jackson had to juggle each region's financial, tariff, and

Indian policy demands while trying to hold his political alliance and the nation together. The outcome was a series of regional crises—the Bank War, nullification, and Indian removal—that alienated each region and together constituted a crisis of national proportions.

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# CHAPTER 11

## The Great Transformation: Growth and Expansion 1828–1848

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### *The New Cotton Empire in the South*

A New Birth for the Plantation  
System

Life Among Common  
Southern Whites

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**

Jacob Stroyer Remembers  
the Slave Trade, 1850s

Free Blacks in the South

Living Conditions for  
Southern Slaves

#### *The Manufacturing Empire in the Northeast*

The “American System  
of Manufacturing”

New Workplaces  
and New Workers

#### **IT MATTERS TODAY:** Manufacturing and the Revolution in Time

Living Conditions in Blue-Collar  
America

Life and Culture Among a New  
Middle Class

Social Life for a Genteel Class

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** The Press and Helen Jewett, 1836

#### *A New Empire of the West*

Moving Westward

Pioneer Life in the New Country

The Hispanic Southwest

The Mormon Community

Tying the West to the Nation

#### *Summary*

### **INDIVIDUAL CHOICES:** *Helen Jewett*

The story of Helen Jewett’s fateful choice begins with a little girl named Dorcas Doyen, the daughter of a poor Maine shoemaker. Her mother died when she was 10 years old, and her father hired her out as a domestic servant. Dorcas eventually became a maid in the household of a prominent judge. She was encouraged to better herself and succeeded so well that visitors often mistook her for one of the judge’s own daughters.

But she was not one of the judge’s daughters. Rapidly approaching womanhood, Dorcas faced the unpleasant reality that as long as she remained in the relatively closed, face-to-face village world of rural Maine, she could never be anything more than a serving girl. At age 17 she chose to assume a new name and moved to Portland, where her beauty and wit soon made her a much-sought-after companion by upwardly mobile young men. Though no one in polite society at the time used such an expression, she became a high-class call girl; so successful that she decided to break into the big time by moving to New York City.

Adopting the name Helen Jewett, she took up residence in one of the most fashionable brothels. There she entertained a following of educated, economically comfortable young clerks who were putting off marriage while launching their careers. “Soiled” and yet still genteel, she slipped through the cracks of social convention, living out a polite existence despite her fallen condition. She probably would have continued this successful life if horror had not intervened. On the night of April 10, 1836, Jewett was hacked to death with an ax and then set on fire. The sparkling quality of her life and the gruesome nature of her death made her murder an overnight media sensation—newspapers scrambled for the latest tidbits about the death, and life, of this conventionally contradictory young woman. Her story revealed not only the risks but also the expanding range of choices that were coming into being. Free to invent new identities for themselves, a new generation of Americans slipped loose from the traditional constraints of village life to choose where and how they wanted to live in a new and urbanizing America.

### **HELEN JEWETT**

*With natural beauty and a quick mind, Helen Jewett became a very successful prostitute in New York City. Although she had no valid claim to genteel status, she passed herself off as the dishonored daughter of an elite family. Helen Jewett’s grisly murder was used as a moral lesson illustrating the costs that might accompany sneaking through social barriers.*

Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.





# Chronology

<b>1821</b>	William Becknell opens Santa Fe Trail to American traders	<b>1836</b>	Samuel F. B. Morse invents electric telegraph Bronson Alcott's <i>Conversations with Children on the Gospels</i> Murder of Helen Jewett
<b>1822</b>	John H. Hall perfects interchangeable parts for gun manufacturing	<b>1838</b>	National Road completed to Vandalia, Illinois First mass-produced brass clock First transatlantic steamship race
<b>1828</b>	Baltimore and Ohio Railroad commissioned	<b>1839</b>	John Sutter founds New Helvetia Mormons build Nauvoo, Illinois
<b>1830</b>	Steam locomotive <i>Tom Thumb</i> beaten in race by stagecoach horse Church of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) founded in New York	<b>1841</b>	Congress passes preemption bill
<b>1830–1840</b>	Ten-year immigration figure for United States exceeds 500,000	<b>1844</b>	Murder of Joseph Smith
<b>1833</b>	Ohio Canal completed	<b>1847</b>	Mormons arrive in Utah
<b>1834</b>	Mexican government begins seizing California missions Abolition of slavery in British Empire	<b>1848</b>	Gold discovered in California Revolutions rock Europe; <i>Communist Manifesto</i> published
<b>1835</b>	Number of U.S. periodicals exceeds 1,250, with combined circulation of 90 million		

Helen Jewett might be considered an exceptional woman in any era, but all the more so in the early nineteenth century. At a time when expectations for women increasingly constrained their public roles—confining them, at least ideally, to positions as mothers, teachers, and churchgoers at the high end of the social spectrum or factory workers or domestic servants at the lower end—her decision to become a prostitute certainly stands out. But in a way, her experience typifies much broader patterns in American life during this period. Like many in her generation, Helen fled the countryside to follow the economic opportunities that were concentrating in the newly arising cities. And like so many of her contemporaries, her success in her career was itself a product of changing times: the anonymity that came with the rise of cities permitted prostitution to thrive. At the same time, the worsening conditions for working people certainly provided an incentive for young Dorcas Doyen to create a false identity for herself that would allow her to transcend her lowly origins. She came to the city to make something new and better of herself—transforming herself in line with the great transformation happening around her.

But the urbanization that was taking place in the northeastern section of the country was only one manifestation of the upheaval that was affecting the nation. As cotton production continued to offer staggering profits for southern planters, that industry and its various features—especially slavery—underwent significant growth and change. That in turn affected the everyday lives of everyone, of every race, in the ever-expanding Cotton Belt. Another alternative was to move west. This era saw an explosion in westward expansion as hopeful cotton capitalists and independent farmers sought new opportunities in both the Northwest and Southwest.

## The New Cotton Empire in the South

★ **Why did living conditions for southerners—black and white—change after 1820?**

★ **How did elite white southerners respond to the change? What were the impacts of their response on slaves, free blacks, and poor whites?**

The South exploded outward, seeking new lands on which to grow the glamour crop of the century: cotton. In 1820 cotton was being grown heavily in parts of Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia. Within a matter of decades, the cotton empire had expanded to include most of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, and extensive portions of eastern Texas, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, and southern Missouri. The new dependence on a single crop changed the outlook and experiences not just of large planters but also of the slaves, free blacks, and poor whites whose labor made cotton king.

### A New Birth for the Plantation System

Few images have persisted in American history longer than that of the “typical” courtly southern planters in the years before the Civil War. Often characterized as the conservators of an older, stately way of life, the cotton barons of the **antebellum**

South were really a new sort of men who carved out a new sort of existence. These new aristocrats were generally not related to the old colonial plantation gentry, but had begun their careers as land speculators, financiers, and rough-and-tumble yeoman farmers who had capitalized on both ruthlessness and lucky speculations in the burgeoning cotton market to amass large landholdings and armies of slaves.

And they were far from typical. First, the total number of slaveholders constituted less than one-third of all white southerners. Of the minority who actually owned slaves, nearly three-quarters owned only 80 to 160 acres of land and fewer than ten slaves; another 15 percent owned up to 800 acres and between ten and twenty slaves, leaving only about 12 percent who possessed more than 800 acres and twenty or more slaves. The planter class, though few in number, controlled the biggest share of productive land and labor. As a result, their economic, political, and social importance was far out of proportion to their numbers.

Although they often complained of debt and poor markets, it appears that large-scale planters could expect an annual return on capital equivalent to what the most successful northern industrialists were making. Agricultural profits in non-cotton-producing areas were significantly lower, but even there slavery netted white landowners major profits. The enormous demand for workers in the heart of the **Cotton Belt** created a profitable interstate trade in slaves, especially after Congress outlawed the importation of slaves from abroad in 1808. As cotton cultivation exploded westward, tobacco and wheat planters from the Chesapeake region sold their surplus workers to the fresh lands of the frontier South. Perhaps as many as one million enslaved Americans were resold in the decades before the Civil War, breaking up families and deeply rooted social connections. This fragmentation of slave society helped to further dehumanize an already dehumanizing institution and drove a deeper wedge between the races.

The enormous profits earned from cotton in the 1840s and 1850s permitted some planter families to build elegant mansions and to affect the lifestyle that they associated with a noble past. Voracious readers of romantic literature, planters assumed “courtly” manners and adopted the nobleman’s **paternalistic** obligation to look out for the welfare of social inferiors, both black and white. Women decked out in the latest gowns flocked to balls and picnics. Young men went to academies to learn the twin aristocratic virtues of militarism and honor. Young women attended private “seminaries” where they

**antebellum** The decades before the Civil War, the period from 1815 to 1860; Latin for “before the war.”

**Cotton Belt** The region in the southeastern United States in which cotton is grown.

**paternalistic** Treating social dependents as a father treats his children, providing for their needs but denying them rights or responsibilities.

were taught, in the words of one southern seminary mistress, “principles calculated to render them useful and rational companions.” Courtship became highly ritualized, an imitation of imagined medieval court manners.

Often, though, planters who purchased slaves and fields on credit genuinely feared that their carefully constructed empires and lifestyles might collapse in an instant. Aristocratic parents sought to use marriage to add to family and economic security. “As to my having any sweethearts that is not thought of,” one young southern woman complained. “Money is too much preferred, for us poor Girls to be much caressed.”

Even those girls whose fortunes earned caresses faced a strange and often difficult life. Far from being frail, helpless creatures, southern plantation mistresses carried a heavy burden of responsibility. A planter’s wife was responsible for all domestic matters. She supervised large staffs of slaves, looked out for the health of everyone, and managed all plantation operations in her husband’s absence. All those duties were complicated by a gender code that relegated southern women to a peculiar position in the plantation hierarchy—between white men and black slaves. On the one hand, southern white women were expected to exercise absolute authority over their slaves. On the other, they were to be absolutely obedient to white men. “He is master of the house,” said plantation mistress Mary Boykin Chesnut about her husband. “To hear [him] is to obey.” This contradiction added severe anxiety to southern women’s other burdens. And like Thomas Jefferson before them, antebellum planters found that their power over slave women afforded them sexual as well as financial benefits, a fact that produced even more stress for plantation mistresses who, constrained as they were by the region’s strict rules of conduct, generally were powerless to intercede. Though some may not have minded release from sexual pressures, they had to be mindful of slave concubines and their children, both of whom occupied an odd place in the domestic power structure. It is little wonder, then, that Chesnut concluded her observations about southern womanhood with the statement, “There is no slave . . . like a wife.”

### Life Among Common Southern Whites

As noted, fully two-thirds of free southern families owned no slaves. A small number of these families owned stores, craft shops, and other urban businesses in Charleston, New Orleans, Atlanta, and other southern cities. Some were attorneys, teachers, doctors, and other professionals. The great majority, however, were proud small farmers who owned, leased, or simply squatted on the land they farmed.

Commonly tarred with the label “poor white trash” by their planter neighbors, these people were often productive stock raisers and farmers. They concentrated on growing and manufacturing by hand what they needed to live, but all aspired to end up with small surpluses of grains, meat products, and other commodities that they could sell either to neighboring plantations or to merchants for export. Many of these small farmers tried to grow cotton in an effort to raise cash, though they generally could not do so on a large scale. Whatever cash they raised they usually spent on necessary manufactures, as well as on land and slaves.

These small farmers had a shaky relationship with white planters. On the one hand, many hoped to join the ranks of the great planters by transforming their small holdings into cotton empires. On the other hand, they resented the planters’ exalted status and power. They also feared the expansion of large plantations, which often forced small holders to abandon their hard-won farms and slaves.

Large-scale planters used racial tensions as a device for controlling their contentious neighbors. They might take slave concubines or trust African Americans with positions

# Investigating America

## Jacob Stroyer Remembers the Slave Trade, 1850s

One of the ironies of American independence is that the end of British rule helped lead to the closing of the U.S. international slave trade in 1808, but that led to the emergence of an extensive domestic trade between the older slave states of the Chesapeake and the new territories of Mississippi and Alabama. As cotton cultivation pushed west, growers on the frontier required labor to clear the fresh land and plant the crops. Over the next decades, African Americans sold *within* the country numbered approximately twice as many as Africans who had been sold into what became the United States.

Jacob Stroyer was a slave on a rice plantation in South Carolina until he was liberated during the Civil War. After freedom, he became the minister of an African Methodist Episcopal congregation, and in 1879 he published his memoirs, *My Life in the South*. In this passage, he described the sale of Carolina slaves into the western frontier.

.....

When the day came for them to leave, some, who seemed to have been willing to go at first, refused, and were handcuffed together and guarded on their way to the cars by white men. The women and children were driven to the depot in crowds, like so many cattle, and the sight of them caused great excitement among master's negroes. Imagine a mass of uneducated people shedding tears and yelling at the tops of their voices in anguish and grief.

The victims were to take the cars from a station called Clarkson turnout, which was about four miles from master's place. The excitement was so great that the overseer and driver could not control the relatives and friends of those that were going away, as a large crowd of both old and young went down to the depot to see them off. Louisiana was considered by the slaves as a place of slaughter, so those who were going did not expect to see their friends again. While passing along,

many of the negroes left their masters' fields and joined us as we marched to the cars; some were yelling and wringing their hands, while others were singing little hymns that they were accustomed to for the consolation of those that were going away....

While the cars were at the depot, a large crowd of white people gathered, and were laughing and talking about the prospect of negro traffic; but when the cars began to start and the conductor cried out, "all who are going on this train must get on board without delay," the colored people cried out with one voice as though the heavens and earth were coming together, and it was so pitiful, that those hard hearted white men who had been accustomed to driving slaves all their lives, shed tears like children. As the cars moved away we heard the weeping and wailing from the slaves as far as human voice could be heard; and from that time to the present I have neither seen nor heard from my two sisters, nor any of those who left Clarkson depot on that memorable day.

.....

- Slaveholders defended their system on the grounds that their paternalistic obligation benefited their plantation family—black as well as white. To what extent did the sale of their black "wards" suggest that their talk was a romantic pose meant to quiet northern criticism?
- Professional slave buyers were a specialized group, and they paid hard cash for the young men and women they purchased for resale in New Orleans. Since most planters existed from season to season on credit, why would the lure of specie prove a terrible temptation?
- Given that most southern whites did not own slaves, what does Stroyer's description of white people at the depot suggest about the complicity of nonslaveholding whites in the system?



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of authority on plantations, but the white elite steadfastly emphasized white supremacy when conversing with their poorer neighbors. They acknowledged that poor farmers felt underprivileged when compared with planters, but stressed that slavery spared them from the most demeaning work. Poor whites enjoyed the freedoms and privileges they had, planters asserted, only because of slavery; should slavery ever end, planters avowed, it would be the farmers who would have the most to lose.



### Free Blacks in the South

Caught in the middle between southern planters, slaves, and poor white farmers, African Americans in the South who were not slaves often faced extreme discrimination. Some communities of free blacks could trace their origins back to earliest colonial times, when Africans, like Europeans, served limited terms of indenture. The majority, however, had been freed recently because of diminishing plantation profits during the late 1700s. Most of these people lived not much differently from slaves, working for white employers as day laborers.

Mounting restrictions on free blacks during the first half of the nineteenth century limited their freedom of movement, economic options, and the protection they could expect to receive by law. In the town of Petersburg, Virginia, for example, when a free black woman named Esther Fells irritated her white male neighbor, he took it upon himself to whip her for disturbing his peace. The sheriff did not arrest the assailant but instead took Mrs. Fells into custody, and the court ordered that she be given fifteen more lashes for “being insolent to a white person.” Skin color left free African Americans open to abuses and forced them to be extremely careful in their dealings with their white neighbors.

Still, some opportunities were available for a handful of free blacks who had desirable skills. In the Upper South—Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia—master craftsmen hired young African American boys as apprentices, and those who could stick out their apprenticeship might eventually make an independent living. The situation was different for African American girls. They had few opportunities as skilled laborers. Some became seamstresses and washers, others became cooks, and a few grew up to run small groceries, taverns, and restaurants. Folk healing, **midwifery**, and prostitution also led to economic independence for some black women.

**midwifery** The practice of assisting women in childbirth.

### Living Conditions for Southern Slaves

A delicate balance between power and profit shaped planters’ policies toward slaves and set the tone for slave life. Maintaining profitability prompted slaveowners to enforce severe discipline and exercise careful supervision over slaves, leading southern states to write increasingly harsh **slave codes** during the early nineteenth century, giving slave owners virtual life-and-death control over their human chattels. But slaves were expensive: damaging or, worse, killing a healthy slave meant taking a significant financial loss. Still, given the need to keep up productivity, slaveowners were not shy about using measured force. “I always punish according to the crime,” one plantation owner declared. “If it is a Large one I give him a genteel flogging with a strop, about 75 Lashes I think is a good whipping.” Noting the practical limitations even to this “genteel” form of discipline, he continued, “When picking cotton I never put on more than 20 stripes and very frequently not more than 10 or 15.” But not all plantation owners were gentle or even practical when it came to discipline. The historical record is filled with accounts of slaveowners who were willing to take a financial loss by beating slaves until they became useless or even died.

In keeping with demands for profitability, housing for slaves was seldom more than adequate. Generally, slaves lived in one-room log cabins with dirt floors and a fireplace or stove. Mindful of the need to maintain control and keep slaves productive, slaveowners tried to avoid crowding people into slave quarters. As one slaveowner explained, “The crowding [of] a number into one house is unhealthy. It breeds contention; is destructive of delicacy of feeling, and it promotes immorality between the sexes.” Though not all planters shared this view, census figures suggest that the average slave cabin housed

**slave codes** Laws that established the status of slaves, denying them basic rights and classifying them as the property of slave owners.

This early photograph, taken on a South Carolina plantation before the Civil War, freezes slave life in time, giving us a view of what slave cabins looked like, how they were arranged, how the largest majority of slaves dressed, and how they spent what little leisure time they had. Collection of William Gladstone.



**cholera** An infectious disease of the small intestines whose bacteria is often found in untreated water.

five or six people. Because of the lack of proper sanitation, however, slaves often suffered from dysentery and **cholera**.

As in the cabin homes of common southern whites, furnishings in slave houses were usually fairly crude and often were crafted by the residents themselves. Bedding generally consisted of straw pallets stacked on the floor or occasionally mounted on rough bedsteads. Other furnishings were equally simple—rough-hewn wooden chairs or benches and plank tables.

Clothing was very basic. One Georgia planter outlined the usual yearly clothing allowance for slaves: “The proper and usual quantity of clothes for plantation hands is two suits of cotton for spring and summer, and two suits of woolen for winter; four pair of shoes and three hats.” Women generally wore simple dresses or skirts and blouses, while children often went naked in the summer and were fitted with long, loose hanging shirts during the colder months.

It appears that the slave diet, like slave clothing and housing, was sufficient to maintain life but not particularly pleasing. One slave noted that there was “plenty to eat sich as it was,” but in summer flies swarmed all over the food. Her master, she said, would laugh about that, saying the added nutrition provided by the flies “made us fat.” Despite justified complaints, the fact is that the average slave diet was rich by comparison with the diet of many other Americans. Slaves in the American South ate significantly more meat than did workers in the urban North. In addition to meat, slaves consumed milk

and corn, potatoes, peas and beans, molasses, and fish. Generally, the planter provided this variety of food, but owners also occasionally permitted slaves to hunt and fish and to collect wild roots, berries, and vegetables.

The slave diet, however, was responsible for a significant health issue. Recent research reveals that slave children were generally undernourished because slaveowners would not allocate ample resources to feed people who did not work. Once children were old enough to work, however, they had access to a very high-calorie diet. Such early malnutrition followed by an instant transition to a high-calorie and often high-fat diet may well have led to the high incidence of heart attacks, strokes, and similar ailments among slaves found in the historical record. And given the balance-sheet mentality among plantation owners, this phenomenon may not have been unwelcome. Old people who could not work hard were, like children, a liability; thus having slaves die from circulatory disease in middle age saved planters from unnecessary expenditures later on.

As to the work itself, cotton planting led to increasing concentration in the tasks performed by slaves. A survey of large and medium-size plantations during the height of the cotton boom shows that the majority of slaves (58 percent of the men and 69 percent of the women) were employed primarily as **field hands**. Of the rest, only 2 percent of slave men and 17 percent of slave women were employed as **house slaves**. The remaining 14 percent of slave women were employed in nonfield occupations such as sewing, weaving, and food processing. Seventeen percent of slave men were employed in nonfield activities such as driving wagons, piloting riverboats, and herding cattle. Another 23 percent were managers and craftsmen.

The percentage of slave craftsmen was much higher in cities, where slave **artisans** were often allowed to hire themselves out on the open job market in return for handing part of their earnings over to their owners. In Charleston, Norfolk, Richmond, and Savannah, slave artisans formed guilds. Feeling threatened by their solidarity, white craftsmen appealed to state legislatures and city councils for restrictions on slave employment in skilled crafts. Such appeals, and the need for more and more field hands, led to a decline in the number of slave artisans during the 1840s and 1850s.

**field hands** People who do agricultural work such as planting, weeding, and harvesting.

**house slaves** People who did domestic work such as cleaning and cooking.

**artisans** People whose primary employment is the specialized production of hand-manufactured items; craftspeople.

## The Manufacturing Empire in the Northeast

★ **How did the process of manufacturing change in the United States after 1820? How did this change affect the nature of work?**

★ **How did the developing factory system affect the lives of artisans, factory owners, and middle-class Americans?**

Although the South changed radically during the opening years of the nineteenth century, one thing persisted: the economy remained rooted in people's homes. Before the 1820s, households in the North also produced most of the things they used. For example, more than 60 percent of the clothing that Americans wore was spun from raw fibers and sewn by women in their own homes. Some householders even crafted sophisticated items—furniture, clocks, and tools—but skilled artisans usually made such products. These craftsmen, too, usually worked in their homes, assisted by family members and an extended family of artisan employees: **apprentices** and **journeymen**.

Beginning with the cotton-spinning plants that sprang up during the War of 1812, textile manufacturing led the way in pushing production in a radical new direction. From 1820 onward, manufacturing increasingly moved out of the home and into factories, and

**apprentices** People bound by contract to a craftsman, providing labor in exchange for learning the skills associated with the craft.

**journeymen** People who have finished an apprenticeship in a trade or craft and are qualified workers in the employ of another.

cities began to grow up around the factories. The intimate ties between manufacturers and workers were severed, and both found themselves surrounded by strangers in the new urban environments. “In most large cities there may be said to be two nations, understanding as little of one another, having as little intercourse, as if they lived in different lands,” sighed Unitarian minister William Ellery Channing in 1841.

**putting-out system** Manufacturing system through which machine-made components were distributed to individual families who used them to craft finished goods.

### The “American System of Manufacturing”

The transition from home manufacturing to factory production did not take place overnight, and the two processes often overlapped. Pioneer manufacturers such as Samuel Slater relied on home workers to carry out major steps in the production of textiles. Using what was called the **putting-out system**, cotton spinners supplied machine-produced yarn to individual households, where families then wove fabric on their own looms during their spare time. Such activities provided much-needed cash to farm families, enabled less-productive family members (like the elderly or children) to contribute, and gave entire families worthwhile pastimes during lulls in the farming calendar.

But innovations in manufacturing soon began displacing such home crafting. The factory designs pioneered by Francis Cabot Lowell and his various partners were widely copied during the 1820s and 1830s. Spinning and weaving on machines located in one building significantly cut both the time and the cost of manufacturing. Quality control became easier because the tools of the trade, owned by the manufacturer rather than by the worker, were standardized and employees were under constant supervision. As a result, the putting-out system for turning yarn into cloth went into serious decline, falling off by as much as 90 percent in some areas of New England. Even home production of clothes for family use slid into decline. Women discovered that spending their time producing cheese or eggs or other marketable items could bring in enough cash to purchase clothing and still have money left over. Throughout the 1830s and 1840s, ready-made clothing—often cut, machine-sewn, and finished by semiskilled workers in factory settings—became standard wearing apparel.

**interchangeable parts** Parts that are identical and can be substituted for one another.

A major technological revolution helped to push factory production into other areas of manufacturing as well during these years. In traditional manufacturing, individual artisans crafted each item one at a time, from the smallest part to the final product. A clock maker, for example, either cast or carved individually by hand all of the clock’s internal parts. As a result, the mechanisms of a clock worked together only in the clock for which they had been made. If that clock ever needed repair, new parts had to be custom-made for it. The lack of **interchangeable parts** made manufacturing extremely slow and repairs difficult, and it limited employment in the manufacturing trades to highly skilled professionals.

After many failed experiments, in 1822 American gun-maker John H. Hall brought together the necessary skill, financing, and tools to prove that manufacturing guns from interchangeable parts was practical. Within twenty years this “American system of manufacturing,” as it was called, was being used to produce a wide range of products—farm implements, padlocks, sewing machines, and clocks. Formerly, clocks had been a status symbol setting apart people of means from common folks; however, using standardized parts, pioneer manufacturers like Seth Thomas and Chauncey Jerome revolutionized clock making to the point where virtually all Americans could afford a clock.

**company town** A town built and owned by a single company; its residents depend on the company for jobs, stores, schools, and housing.

### New Workplaces and New Workers

At first, owners found they had to use creative means to attract workers into the new factories. Some entrepreneurs developed **company towns**. In New England these towns resembled traditional New England villages. Families recruited





# It Matters Today

## MANUFACTURING AND THE REVOLUTION IN TIME

In 1838, Chauncey Jerome introduced the first mass-produced brass clock at a price that virtually any American could afford. The distribution of clocks and the means by which Jerome produced them reinforced each other. Factory production required that workers, clerks, managers, shippers, and others essential to industry be coordinated if factories were to function effectively. All of these employees, from the highest to the lowest in status, needed to have a reliable way of telling time. Jerome's clocks provided that reliability, contributing to a revolution in the way Americans began thinking about time itself. Time management, a concept that would have been foreign to a previous generation of Americans, had now become a reality. We now are almost

entirely dependent on day planners or electronic personal information managers to keep track of time, a heritage of the revolution in timekeeping that was born in 1838 with the introduction of cheap brass clocks.

- How were the lives of Americans in the early nineteenth century changed by the increased regimentation that accompanied the manufacturing revolution? In what ways does your life reflect these changes that took place so long ago?
- Try to imagine experiencing one day without referring to any sort of mechanical or electronic time management device. Describe what your day would be like.

from the economically depressed countryside were installed in neat row houses, each with its own small vegetable garden. The company employed each family member. Women worked on the production line. Men ran heavy machinery and worked as **millwrights**, carpenters, haulers, or as day laborers dredging out the **millraces**. Children did light work in the factories and tended gardens at home.

Lowell's company developed another system at its factories. Hard-pressed to find enough families to leave traditional employment and come to work in the factories, Lowell recruited unmarried farm girls. The company built dormitories to house these young working women, offering cash wages and reasonable prices for room and board, as well as cultural events and educational opportunities. Because most of the girls saw factory work as a transitional stage between girlhood and marriage, Lowell assured them and their families that the company would strictly control the moral atmosphere so that the girls' reputations would remain spotless.

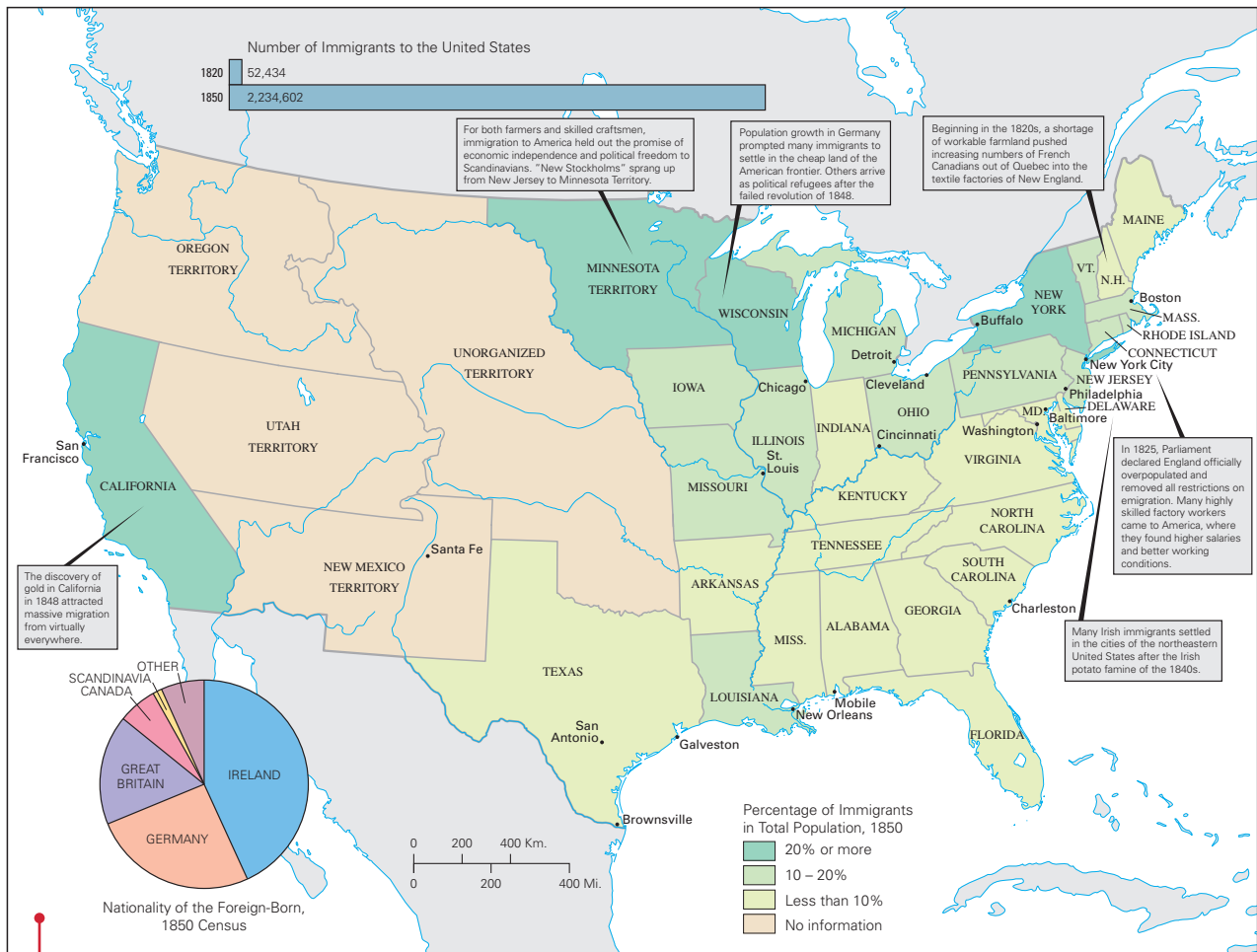
More broadly, however, a growing pool of labor combined with machine production to produce economic devastation for workers. No longer was the employer a master craftsman who felt some responsibility to look out for his workers' domestic needs. Factory owners were obligated to investors and bankers and had to squeeze the greatest possible profit out of the manufacturing process. As the swelling supply of labor allowed employers to offer lower and lower wages, increasing numbers of working people faced poverty and squalor.

Immigration supplied much of this labor. Between 1820 and 1830 slightly more than 151,000 people immigrated to the United States. In the decade that followed, that number increased to nearly 600,000; between 1840 and 1850, well over a million and a half people moved to the United States from abroad (see Map 11.1). This enormous increase in immigration changed not only the **demographic** but also the cultural and economic face of the nation. The flood of immigrants collected in the port and manufacturing cities of the Northeast, where they joined Americans leaving the countryside. Adding to the resulting brew were former master craftsmen, journeymen, and apprentices who no

**millwright** A person who designs, builds, or repairs mills or mill machinery.

**millrace** The channel for the fast-moving stream of water that drives a mill wheel.

**demographic** The statistical distribution of subpopulations (ethnic groups, for example) among the larger population of a community or nation.



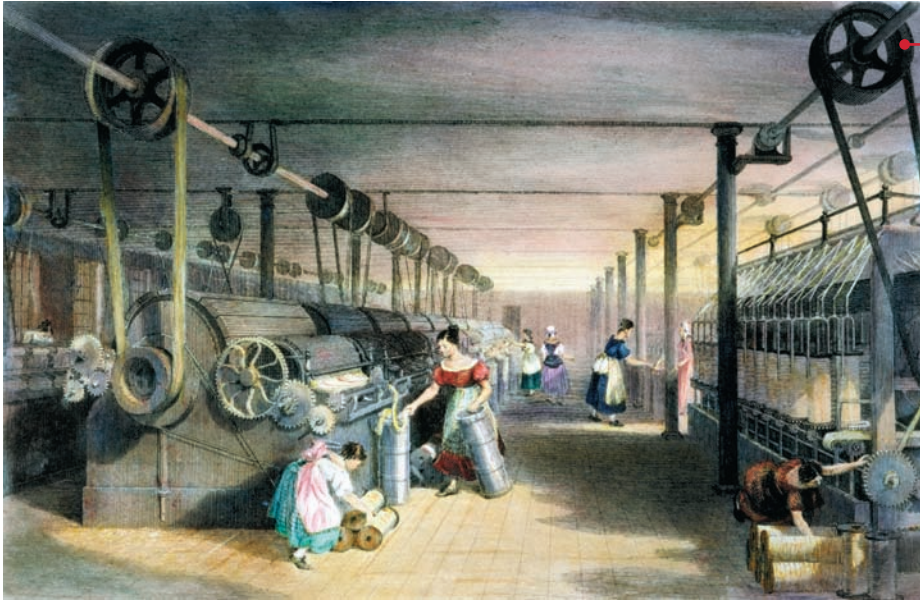
**MAP II.1** Origin and Settlement of Immigrants, 1820–1850

Immigration was one of the most important economic, political, and social factors in American life during the antebellum period. As this map shows, with the exception of Louisiana, immigration was confined almost exclusively to areas where slavery was not permitted. This gave the North, Northwest, and California a different cultural flavor from the rest of the country and also affected the political balance between those areas and the South.

longer had a secure place in the changing economy. Together, but seldom cooperatively, these groups helped to form a new social class in America.

Nearly half of all the immigrants who flooded into the United States between 1820 and 1860 came from Ireland—a nation beset with poverty, political strife, and starvation. Because of land tenancy laws imposed by the British government in Ireland, by the early 1840s poverty was so widespread that one-third of all Irish farmers could not support their families. Then, in the mid-1840s, a new crisis in the form of a blight that killed the one staple food source for Irish peasants—the potato—led millions to flee the island. Most Irish immigrants had few marketable skills and they arrived penniless with little or no chance of finding employment. As the flow of immigrants increased, the traditional labor shortage in America was replaced by a **labor glut**, and the social and economic status of all workers declined accordingly.

**labor glut** Oversupply of labor in relation to the number of jobs available.



Water-powered textile factories were complex, noisy, and dangerous places to work. As shown here, many machines were powered by a common drive shaft and so remained in motion all the time. Working around the constantly whirring equipment often led to injury or death for what one nineteenth-century magazine described as “the human portion of the machine.” The Granger Collection, New York.

Not only were the new immigrants poor and often unskilled; most were also culturally different from native-born Americans. Religion was their primary cultural distinction: most were Roman Catholic, whereas the majority of Americans claimed to be Protestant whether they worshiped actively or not. Many also held anti-Catholic sentiments handed down from earlier generations of Protestant immigrants who had fled Catholic persecution. In religion, then, as well as in language, dress, and eating and drinking habits, the new immigrants were very different from the sorts of people whose culture had come to dominate American society.

Poverty, cultural distinctiveness, and a desire to live among people who understood their ways and spoke their language brought new immigrants together in neighborhoods. In New York, Philadelphia, and other cities, people with the same culture and religion built churches, stores, pubs or beer halls, and other familiar institutions that helped them cope with the shock of transplantation from Europe and gave them a chance to adapt gradually to life in the United States. They also started fraternal organizations and clubs to overcome the loneliness, isolation, and powerlessness they were experiencing.

### Living Conditions in Blue-Collar America

Working conditions for **blue-collar workers** in factories reflected the labor supply, the amount of capital available to the manufacturing company, and the personal philosophy of the factory owner. Girls at Lowell’s factories described an environment of familiar paternalism. Factory managers and boarding-house keepers supervised every aspect of their lives in much the same manner that authoritarian fathers saw to the details of life on traditional New England farms. As for the work itself, one mill girl commented that it was “not half so hard as . . . attending the dairy, washing, cleaning house, and cooking.” What bothered factory workers most was the repetitive nature of the work and the resulting boredom. One of Lowell’s employees described the tedium. “The time is often apt to drag heavily till the dinner hour arrives,” she reported. “Perhaps some part of the work becomes deranged and stops; the constant friction causes a belt of

**blue-collar workers** Workers who wear work clothes, such as coveralls and jeans, on the job; their work is likely to involve manual labor.

leather to burst into a flame; a stranger visits the room, and scans the features and dress of its inmates inquiringly; and there is little else to break the monotony.”

Gradually, Slater’s and Lowell’s well-meaning paternalism became rare as factory owners withdrew from overseeing day-to-day operations. The labor glut wiped out both decent wages and the sorts of incentives the early manufacturing pioneers had employed. Not only did wages fall but laborers were also expected to find their own housing, food, and entertainment. Hulking **tenements** soon sprang up, replacing the open fields and clusters of small homes that once had dominated the urban landscape. Large houses formerly occupied by domestic manufacturers and their apprentices were broken up into tiny apartments by profit-hungry speculators who rented them to desperate laborers. In cities like New York, laborers lived fifty to a house in some working-class areas. As population densities reached 150 people an acre in such neighborhoods, sewage disposal, drinking water, and trash removal became difficult to provide. Life in such conditions was grossly unpleasant and extremely unhealthy: epidemics of typhus, cholera, and other crowd diseases swept through the slums periodically.

**tenements** Urban apartment houses, usually with minimal facilities for sanitation, safety, and comfort.

### Life and Culture Among a New Middle Class

Large-scale manufacturing not only changed industrial work but also introduced demands for a new class of skilled managerial and clerical employees. Under the old system of manufacturing, the master craftsman or his wife had managed the company’s accounts, hired journeymen and apprentices, purchased raw materials, and seen to the delivery of finished products. The size of the new factories made such direct contact between owners, workers, and products impossible. To fill the void, a new class of professionals came into being. In these days before the invention of the typewriter, firms such as Lowell’s Boston Manufacturing Company employed teams of young men as clerks. These clerks kept accounts, wrote orders, and drafted correspondence, all in longhand. As elite owners such as Lowell and his partners became wrapped up in building new factories, pursuing investors, and entering new markets, both clerical and manufacturing employees were increasingly supervised by professional managers.

**white-collar workers** Workers able to wear white shirts on the job because they do no grubby manual labor.

**provincialism** The limited and narrow perspective thought to be characteristic of people in rural areas.

One distinguishing characteristic of the new **white-collar workers** was their relative youth. These young people, many of them the sons and daughters of rural farmers, had flocked to newly emerging cities in pursuit of formal education. They stayed to seek employment away from the economic instability and **provincialism** of the farm. Young men attended school when and where they could get financial assistance and then settled down where they could find employment and the company of others like themselves. And while middle-class men found employment as clerks, bookkeepers, and managers, middle-class women parlayed their formal education and their gender’s perceived gift for nurturing children into work as teachers. It became acceptable for women to work as teachers for several years before marriage, and many avoided marriage altogether to pursue their hard-won careers.

Middle-class men and women tended to put off marriage as long as possible while they established themselves socially and economically. They also tended to have fewer children than their parents had. In the new urban middle-class setting, parents felt compelled to send their children to school so that they could take their place on the career ladder chosen by their parents. Adding nothing to family income, children thus became economic liabilities rather than assets, and middle-class adults used a combination of late marriage and various forms of birth control to keep families small.

A lack of traditional ties affected the lives of both married and unmarried middle-class people. Many unmarried men and women seeking their fortunes in town boarded



in private homes or rooming houses. After marriage, middle-class men and women often moved into private town homes, isolating themselves and their children from perceived dangers in the faceless city but also cutting them off from the comforting sociability of traditional country life. Accordingly, these young people crafted new urban structures that might provide the missing companionship and guidance.

Obviously some sought the company of women like Helen Jewett. Most, however, found companionship in **voluntary associations**. Students in colleges and universities formed a variety of discussion groups, preprofessional clubs, and benevolent societies. After graduation, groups such as the Odd Fellows and the Masons brought people together for companionship. Such organizations helped enforce traditional values through rigid membership standards stressing moral character, upright behavior, and, above all, order.

Members of the new middle class also used their organizing skills to press for reforms. Although the elite class of factory owners and financiers generally formed the leadership for such organizations as the American Tract Society, the American Bible Society, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions—each a multimillion-dollar reforming enterprise—young middle-class men and women provided the rank and file of charity workers.

In addition to their youth, another characteristic that prevailed among this newly forming class was deep anxiety. Although their education and skills earned them jobs with greater prestige than those of the average worker, these clerks and supervisors could be laid off or demoted to working-class status at any time. Also, the danger of imposters who might use the trappings of gentility to take advantage of the new urban scene led to a very strict set of rules for making social connections. Helen Jewett's death illustrated the dangers posed by and to pretenders to middle-class gentility.

### Social Life for a Genteel Class

The changes in lifestyle that affected working-class and middle-class Americans were in large part an outcome of changes in the daily lives of those who owned and operated manufacturing businesses. In earlier years, when journeymen and apprentices had lived with master craftsmen, they were in effect members of a craftsman's extended family. The master craftsman/owner exercised great authority over his workers but felt obligated to care for them almost as a parent would have done. Crammed together in the same household, owner and workers shared the same general lifestyle, kept the same hours, ate the same food, and enjoyed the same leisure activities. The factory system ended this relationship. The movement of workers out of the owners' homes permitted members of the emerging elite class to develop a **genteel** lifestyle aimed at the complete separation of their private and public lives. Instead of drinking, eating, and playing with their employees, business owners began to socialize with one another in private clubs and in church and civic organizations. Instead of attending the popular theater, elite patrons began endowing opera companies and other highbrow forms of entertainment.

The lives of the factory owners' wives also changed. The mistress of a traditional manufacturing household had been responsible for important tasks in the operation of the business. Genteel women, in contrast, were expected to leave business dealings to men. Instead, one activity that consumed genteel women was motherhood. Magazines and advice manuals, which began appearing during the 1820s and 1830s, rejected the traditional adage of "spare the rod, spoil the child," replacing it with an insistence on gentle nurturing. One leader in this movement was author and teacher Bronson Alcott. Alcott denied the

### voluntary associations

Organizations or clubs through which individuals engage in voluntary service, usually associated with charity or reform.

**genteel** The manner and style associated with elite classes, usually characterized by elegance, grace, and politeness.

# Investigating America

## The Press and Helen Jewett, 1836

The United States of the 1830s was rapidly becoming more modern. One measure of its emerging modernity, a feature with which we are all too familiar today, was the rise of a sensationalist press. The murder of Helen Jewett (really Dorcas Doyen) presented an irresistible opportunity for this new medium. Although a few responsible newspapers printed factually based stories about the victim's early life, sensationalist newspapers seeking larger sales and plumped-up reputations for being investigative published ever more exaggerated accounts of Jewett's life and death. The *New York Herald*, for example, continued to print romanticized stories about Jewett even after it became generally known that her early life was rather unremarkable and that the charming Miss Jewett was a fictional creation by an intelligent and inventive woman who was intent on shaping her life on her own terms. The following is taken from a story printed in the *Herald* on April 12, 1836.

.....

Her private history is most remarkable—her character equally so... In Augusta, Maine, lived a highly respectable gentleman, Judge Western [sic], by name. Some of the female members of his family pitying the bereaved condition of young Dorcas invited her to live at the Judge's house. At that time Dorcas was young, beautiful, innocent, modest, and ingenuous. Her good qualities and sprightly temper won the good feelings of the Judge's family. She became a chere-amie of his daughters—a companion and a playmate....

After having continued at the Academy for some time, Dorcas, during the summer of 1829, went to spend the vacation at a distant relative's at Norridgewock, a town on the Kennebeck river, about 28 miles above Augusta. Dorcas was then sixteen years of age—and one of the most lovely, interesting, black eyed girls, that ever appeared in that place.

In this town, in the course of visiting, she became acquainted with a young man, by the name of H—Sp—y, a fine youth, elegant and educated, since said to be a Cashier in one of the banks of Augusta. After a short acquaintance with him, all was gone that constitutes the honor and ornament of the female character....

She returned after a short season to Augusta. Her situation soon became known in the Judge's family. A quarrel ensued. She left her protector, after having in a moment of passion lost all the rules of virtue and morality.

After having recovered from her first lapse from the path of virtue, she retreated to Portland, took the name of Maria B. Benson, and became a regular Aspasia among the young men, lawyers, and merchants.

.....

- Although it was generally known that young Dorcas was actually hired as a serving girl in Judge Weston's household, this story suggests that she was a guest or companion in the justice's home. Why would a news writer choose to "revise" the facts?
- How does the account of the seduction of the teenage Dorcas add to the story? Why might this version have had more appeal than the truth for popular audiences?
- Aspasia was the mistress of Pericles, the foremost Athenian statesman of classical Greece. Despite a disreputable background, Aspasia used her intelligence and wit to charm the political elite of Athens in the fifth-century BCE. Though charming, she frequently was the target of public attacks that painted her as a common harlot. Whom does the writer want the audience to blame for Dorcas Doyen's descent into prostitution? Why?



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

**infant depravity** The idea that children are naturally sinful because they share in the original sin of the human race but have not learned the discipline to control their evil instincts.

concept of **infant depravity** that had led Puritan parents during the colonial era to break their children's will, often through harsh measures. Instead, he stated emphatically that "the child must be treated as a free, self-guiding, self-controlling being."

Books like Alcott's *Conversations with Children on the Gospels* (1836–1837) flooded forth during these years and appealed greatly to isolated and underemployed women. Many

adopted the advertised **cult of domesticity** completely. Turning inward, these women centered their lives on their homes and children. In doing so, they believed they were performing an important duty for God and country and fulfilling their most important, perhaps their only, natural calling.

Other genteel women agreed with the general tone of the domestic message but widened the woman's supposedly natural sphere outward, beyond the nursery, to encompass the whole world. They banded together with like-minded women to get out into the world in order to reform it. "I want to be where every arrangement will have unreserved and constant reference to eternity," Sarah Huntington Smith explained. Smith herself chose to become a missionary. Other women during the 1830s and 1840s involved themselves in a variety of reform movements, such as founding Sunday schools or opposing alcohol abuse. These causes let them use their nurturing and purifying talents to improve what appeared to be an increasingly chaotic and immoral society, the world represented by Helen Jewett.

**cult of domesticity** The belief that women's proper role lies in domestic pursuits.

## A New Empire in the West

★ **How did most Americans imagine "the West"? To what extent were their imaginings accurate?**

★ **Who generally were the first pioneers to move into the West? How did they and those who followed actually move westward and establish communities there?**

While life in the cotton South and manufacturing Northeast underwent radical change in their own way, the American West, too, was experiencing wholesale transformation. Enterprising capitalists often led the way in systematic exploration, looking for furs, gold, and other sources of quick profit. But it did not take long before a wide variety of others followed. Whether they expected a wasteland, a paradise, or something in between, what all of these newcomers to the West did find was a natural and cultural world that was much more complex than anything they had imagined.

### Moving Westward

The image of the solitary trapper braving a hostile environment and even more hostile Indians is the stuff of American adventure novels and movies. Although characters such as Christopher "Kit" Carson and Jeremiah "Crow Killer" Johnson really did exist, these men were merely advance agents for an **extractive industry**

geared to the efficient removal of animal pelts.

What drew men like Carson and Johnson into the Far West in the 1830s and 1840s was an innovation in the fur business instigated by long-time entrepreneur William Henry Ashley. Taking advantage of the presence of large numbers of underemployed young men seeking fortune and adventure in the West, Ashley broke the long tradition of depending exclusively on Indian labor for collecting furs. In 1825 he set up the highly successful rendezvous system. Under this arrangement, individual trappers—white adventurers like Carson and Johnson, African Americans such as James Beckwourth, and a large number of Indians—combed the upper Missouri, trapping, curing, and packing furs. Once each year Ashley conducted a fur rendezvous in the mountains, where the trappers brought their furs and exchanged them for goods. Pioneer missionary Pierre Jean de Smet called these gatherings "one of the most picturesque features of early frontier life in the Far West."

The fur trade made its owners very rich and important. But the success of their complex business inadvertently led to its decline. The expansion in international commerce flowing out of the fur trade helped open the way for importing vast amounts of silk

**extractive industry** An industry, such as fur trapping, logging, or mining, that removes natural resources from the environment.

Image not available due to copyright restrictions

from Asia. Soon silk hats became a fashion rage among luxury-loving consumers in both America and Europe, displacing the beaver hats that had consumed most American furs. In addition, the efficiency with which these gigantic organizations extracted fur from the western wilderness virtually wiped out beaver populations in the Rocky Mountains. Through the 1830s and 1840s, the beaver business slowed to a near standstill.

Often the first people to join the former fur trappers in settling the West were not rugged yeoman farmers but highly organized and well-financed land speculators and developers. From the earliest days of the republic, federal public land policy favored those who could afford large purchases and pay in cash. Liberalization of the land laws during the first half of the nineteenth century put smaller tracts—for less money and on credit terms—within reach of more citizens, but speculators continued to play a role in land distribution by offering often even smaller tracts and more liberal credit. This was particularly true as states granted rights-of-way, first to canal companies and then, increasingly, to railroad developers as a way of financing internal improvements. Land along transportation routes was especially valuable, and developers could often turn an outright grant into enormous profits.

A third group of expectant fortune hunters was lured into the Far West by the same magnet that had drawn the Spanish to the American Southwest: gold. Since colonial times, Americans had persistently hunted precious metals, usually without much success. The promise of gold continued to draw people westward, however, onto Winnebago lands in 1827 and into Cherokee territory in 1829. But the most impressive case of gold fever would not strike until 1848, when a group of laborers digging a millrace in northern California found flakes and then chunks of gold. Despite efforts to suppress the news, word leaked out, and by mid-May 1848, men were rushing from all over California and Oregon into the Sierra foothills northeast of Sacramento to prospect for gold. By September, news reached the East that the light work of panning for gold in California could yield \$50 a day, two months' wages for an average northern workingman. In 1849 more than a hundred thousand **forty-niners** took up residence in California.

Distinct waves of Americans pushed westward into the areas opened by gold seekers, fur trappers, and land speculators. All of these migrants were responding to promises of abundant land in America's interior. But different groups were reacting to very different

**forty-niners** Prospectors who streamed into California in 1849, after the discovery of gold northeast of New Helvetia in 1848.



conditions in the East, and those differences gave shape to their migrations and to the settlements they eventually created. Some saw the unsettled nature of the West as a refuge for establishing or expanding particular religious or social practices. Many Protestant sects sent battalions of settlers and missionaries to carve out new “Plymouth Colonies” in the West. The most notable of these religious pioneer groups was the Mormons, who came to dominate the Great Basin Region.

This movement was founded in upstate New York in 1830 by **Joseph Smith Jr.** Announcing that he had experienced a revelation that called for him to establish a community in the wilderness, Smith led his congregation as a unit out of New York in 1831. Driven by persecution from settlements in Ohio and Missouri, Smith eventually relocated his congregation to the Illinois frontier, founding the city of Nauvoo in 1839. Continuing conversions to the new faith, which stressed notions of community, faith, and hard work, brought a flood of Mormons to Smith’s Zion in Illinois. In 1844 Nauvoo, with a population of fifteen thousand Mormons, dwarfed every other Illinois city.

Despite their growth in numbers and prosperity, Smith’s followers in Nauvoo continued to be victims of religious and economic persecution. On June 27, 1844, Smith was murdered by a mob in neighboring Carthage, Illinois. The remaining church leaders concluded that the Mormons would never be safe until they moved far from mainstream American civilization. **Brigham Young**, Smith’s successor, decided to search for a safe refuge beyond the Rocky Mountains and led sixteen hundred Mormons to the valley of the **Great Salt Lake**.

Whether they were hopeful cotton planters from the South, Yankee farmers from New England, or religious refugees in the **Great Basin**, most people went west not as stalwart individualists but as part of a larger community. Beginning with early parties going to Ohio or Texas in the 1820s, most traveled in small to medium-sized groups. Even those few who arrived alone seldom stayed that way. And during the 1830s and 1840s, migrating parties became larger and more organized. Describing an Oregon-bound wagon train in the 1840s, one young woman reported that “We were not allowed to travel across the plains in any haphazard manner,” she continued. “No family or individual was permitted to go off alone from the company.” Among such groups on the **Oregon Trail**, life remained much as it had been at home. “Everybody was supposed to rise at daylight, and while the women were preparing breakfast, the men rounded up the cattle, took down the tents, yoked the oxen to the wagons and made everything ready for an immediate start after the morning meal was finished.” Even social customs remained the same. “Life on the plains was a primitive edition of life in town or village,” the same pioneer woman remarked. “We were expected to visit our neighbors when we paused for rest.” And so life went on during the six months it took to cross the more than 2,000 miles separating the settled part of the nation from the **Oregon Country**.

Many pioneers had no legal claim to the lands they settled. People bankrupted by unscrupulous speculators or by their own misfortune or mismanagement often settled wherever they could find a spread that seemed unoccupied. Thousands of squatters living on unsold federal lands were a problem for the national government when the time came to sell off the public domain. Always with an eye to winning votes, western politicians frequently advocated “squatter rights.” Western congressmen finally maneuvered the passage of a **preemption bill** in 1841, allowing squatters to settle on unsurveyed federal land. Of course, this right did not guarantee that they would have the money to buy the land once it came on the market, or that they would make profitable use of it in the meantime. Thus shoestring farming, perpetual debt, and an uncertain future continued to challenge frontier farmers.

**Joseph Smith Jr.** Founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also known as the Mormon Church, who transcribed the Book of Mormon and led his congregation westward to Illinois; he was later murdered by an anti-Mormon mob.

**Brigham Young** Mormon leader who took over in 1844 after Joseph Smith’s death and guided the Mormons from Illinois to Utah, where they established a permanent home for the church.

**Great Salt Lake** A shallow, salty lake in the Great Basin near which the Mormons established a permanent settlement in 1847.

**Great Basin** A desert region of the western United States including most of Nevada and parts of Utah, California, Idaho, Wyoming, and Oregon.

**Oregon Trail** The overland route followed by thousands of settlers in the 1840s from St. Louis to the Pacific Northwest.

**Oregon Country** The region to the north of Spanish California extending from the crest of the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast.

**preemption bill** A temporary law that gave squatters the right to buy land they had settled on before it was offered for sale at public auction.

**frontier line** The outer limit of agricultural settlement bordering on areas still under Indian control or unoccupied.

### Pioneer Life in the New Country

Migrants to cotton country in the Mississippi Valley and beyond brought a particular lifestyle with them. Often starting out as landless herders, migrating families carved out claims beyond the **frontier line** and survived on a mixture of raised and gathered food until they could put the land into agricultural production. The Indians who preceded them in the Mississippi Valley had already cleared large expanses of land for agriculture. Removal of the Indians to the Far West and the continuing devastation of Indian populations by disease meant that southern frontiersmen could plant corn and cotton quickly and reap early profits with minimal labor.

During the pioneer phase of southern frontier life, all the members of migrating families devoted most of their time to keeping the family alive. Even their social and recreational lives tended to center on practical tasks. House building, planting, and harvesting were often done in cooperation with neighbors. Such occasions saw plenty of food and homemade whiskey consumed, and at day's end, music and dancing often lasted long into the night. Women gathered together separately for projects such as group quilting. Another community event for southwestern settlers was the periodic religious revival, which brought people from miles around to revival meetings that might last for days. Here they could make new acquaintances, court sweethearts, and discuss the common failings in their souls and on their farms.

For migrants to areas such as Michigan and Oregon, the overall frontier experience differed in many respects from that in the Mississippi Valley. In the Old Northwest, Indians had also cleared the land for planting; pioneers snatched up the Indians' deserted farms. Here, however, professional surveyors had already carved the land into neat, rectangular lots. These surveys generally included provision for a township, where settlers quickly established villages similar to those left behind in New England, in which they re-created the social institutions they already knew and respected—first and foremost, law courts, churches, and schools.

Conditions in the Oregon Country resembled those farther east in most respects, but some significant differences did exist. Most important, the Indians in the Oregon Country had never practiced agriculture—their environment was so rich in fish, meat, and wild vegetables that farming was unnecessary—and they still occupied their traditional homelands and outnumbered whites significantly. Although both of these facts might have had a profound impact on life in Oregon, early pioneers were bothered by neither. Large, open prairies flanking the Columbia, Willamette, and other rivers provided abundant fertile farmland. And the Indians helped rather than hindered the pioneers.

### The Hispanic Southwest

The physical and cultural environments in the Southwest differed greatly from those in the Pacific Northwest. One major reason for the difference was that Spain and then Mexico had controlled the region and had left a lasting cultural imprint. Systematic Spanish exploration into most of the American Southwest did not begin until the eighteenth century. In California, garrisons were established at San Diego and Monterey in 1769 and 1770, and **Junípero Serra**, a Franciscan friar, established a mission, San Diego de Alcalá, near the present city of San Diego. Eventually Serra and his successors established twenty-one missions extending from San Diego to the town of Sonoma, north of San Francisco.

The mission system provided a framework for Spanish settlement in California. California Indians provided the labor to surround the missions with groves, vineyards, and lush farms, but not willingly: The missionaries often forced them into the

**Junípero Serra** Spanish missionary who went to California in 1769; he and his successors established near the California coast a chain of missions that depended on Indian labor.

missions, where they became virtual slaves, suffering a terrible death rate from disease and harsh treatment. By the 1830s, an elite class of Spanish-speaking **Californios** began to snatch up the rich lands once owned by Catholic missions. At first, these Californios welcomed outsiders as neighbors and trading partners. Ships from the United States called at California ports regularly, picking up cargoes of beef **tallow**, cow hides, and other commodities to be shipped around the world, and settlers who promised to open new lands and business opportunities were given generous grants and assistance. **John Sutter**, for example, received an outright grant of land extending from the Sierra foothills southwest to the Sacramento Valley, where in 1839 he established a colony called New Helvetia. A tribute to the cosmopolitanism in Northern California, people of many races and classes could be found strolling the lanes in New Helvetia and other settlements.

A similar pattern of interracial cooperation existed in other Spanish North American provinces. In 1821, trader William Becknell began selling and trading goods along the Santa Fe Trail from St. Louis to New Mexico. By 1824, the business had become so profitable that people from all over the frontier moved in to create a permanent Santa Fe trade. An elite class emerged in Santa Fe from the intermingled fortunes and intermarriages among Indian, European, and American populations, and a strong kinship system developed. Thus, based on kinship, the Hispanic leaders of New Mexico consistently worked across cultural lines, whether to fight off Texan aggression or eventually to lobby for **annexation** to the United States.

In Texas, economic desperation combined with cultural insensitivity and misunderstanding to create the sort of tensions that were rare in New Mexico. As a result of the relative lack of harmony and the enormous stretches of land that separated ethnic groups in Texas, both **Texians** and **Tejanos** tended to cling to their own ways.

### The Mormon Community

Physical and cultural conditions in the Great Basin led to a completely different social and cultural order. Utah is a high-desert plateau where water is scarce and survival depends on careful management. The tightly knit community of Mormons was perfectly suited to such an inhospitable place.

Mormons followed a simple principle: "Land belongs to the Lord, and his Saints are to use so much as they can work profitably." Thus the church might assign 40 acres to a man with several wives, a large number of children, and enough wealth to hire help, but a man with one wife, few children, and little capital might receive only 10 acres. However, the larger landholder had to provide four times as much labor as provided by the man with the small acreage when the church ordered the construction of irrigation systems or other public works. Cooperation among the Mormons was more rigidly controlled and formal than among settlers elsewhere. As on other frontiers, when the system worked it was because it was well suited to natural conditions.

Mormons had their own unique religious and social culture, and because of their bad experiences in Missouri and Illinois, they were unaccepting of strangers. The General Authorities of the church welcomed all who would embrace the new religion but made it difficult for non-Mormons to stay in the region. The one exception was the American Indian population. Because Indians occupied a central place in Mormon sacred literature, the Mormons practiced an accepting and gentle Indian policy. Like other missionaries, Mormons insisted that Indians convert to their religion and lifestyle, but the Mormon hierarchy used its enormous power in Utah to prevent private violence against Indians whenever possible.

**Californios** Spanish colonists in California in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

**tallow** Hard fat obtained from the bodies of cattle and other animals and used to make candles and soap.

**John Sutter** Swiss immigrant who founded a colony in California; the discovery of gold on his property in the Coloma Valley, northeast of New Helvetia (Sacramento) in 1848 attracted hordes of miners who seized his land, leaving him financially ruined.

**annexation** The incorporation of a territory into an existing political unit such as a neighboring country.

**Texians** Non-Hispanic settlers in Texas in the nineteenth century.

**Tejanos** Mexican settlers in Texas in the nineteenth century.

### Tying the West to the Nation

Rapid expansion created an increased demand for reliable transportation and communications between the new regions in the West and the rest of the nation. An early first step in meeting this demand was building the so-called National Road, which between 1815 and 1820 was completed across the Cumberland Gap to the Ohio River at Wheeling, Virginia. By 1838 this state-of-the-art highway—with its evenly graded surface, gravel pavement, and stone bridges—had been pushed all the way to Vandalia, Illinois. Within a few more years, it reached St. Louis, the great jumping-off point for the Far West.

At the same time, a series of other roads were beginning to merge into a transportation network. Eventually towns from Portland, Maine, to Saint Augustine, Florida, and from Natchez, Mississippi, to New Haven, Connecticut, were linked by intersecting highways (Map 11.2). Increasing numbers of people used these new roads to head west looking for new opportunities. Farmers, craftsmen, fur hunters, and others already settled in the West used them too, moving small loads of goods to the nearby towns and small cities that always sprang up along the unfolding transportation routes.

The new roads also linked rural America to an ever-expanding network of waterways that made possible relatively inexpensive long-distance hauling of heavy and bulky products. Completed in 1825, the Erie Canal revolutionized shipping: the cost of transporting a ton of oats from Buffalo to Albany fell from \$100 to \$15, and the transit time dropped from twenty days to just eight. The spectacular success of the Erie Canal prompted businessmen, farmers, and politicians throughout the country to promote canal building. State governments offered exclusive charters to canal-building companies, giving them direct financial grants, guaranteeing their credit, and easing their way in every possible manner. The result was an explosion in canal building that lasted through the 1830s (see Map 11.2). Hoping for large profits, entrepreneurs such as John Jacob Astor invested heavily in canal building, which cost as much as \$20,000 to \$30,000 per mile. Before 1836, careful investors could make a 15 to 20 percent **return on capital** in canal building, but after that, most canal companies faced bankruptcy, as did the states that had helped finance them.

**return on capital** The yield on money that has been invested in an enterprise or product.

Steam power took canal building's impact on inland transportation a revolutionary step further. Steam technology, especially, had applications in areas without navigable rivers. Towns lacking water routes to the interior began losing revenue from inland trade to canal towns such as Albany and Philadelphia. Predictably, entrepreneurs in places like Baltimore looked for other ways to move cargo. In fact, demands from Baltimore merchants spurred Maryland to take the lead in developing a new transportation technology: the steam railroad. In 1828 the state chartered the **Baltimore and Ohio Railroad** (B&O). The B&O soon demonstrated its potential when inventor Peter Cooper's steam locomotive *Tom Thumb* sped 13 miles along B&O track.

**Baltimore and Ohio Railroad** First steam railroad commissioned in the United States; it resorted to using horse-drawn cars after a stagecoach horse beat its pioneer locomotive in a race.

Although rail transport enjoyed some success during this early period, it could not rival water-based transportation systems. By 1850 individual companies had laid approximately 9,000 miles of track, but not in any coherent network. Both track size and the distance between tracks varied from company to company. As a result, loaded railcars could not be transferred from one company's line to another's. Other problems also plagued the fledgling industry—boiler explosions, fires, and derailments were common. And in state capitals, investors who hoped to profit from canals, roads, and steam shipping lobbied to prevent legislatures from supporting rail expansion.

As the nation expanded, and as economics and social life became more complicated, Americans felt growing pressure to keep up with news at home and in the nation's new





**MAP II.2** Roads, Canals, Railways, and Telegraph Lines in 1850

A transportation and communications revolution took place between 1820 and 1850 as roads, canals, rails, and telegraph lines reached out to bind together the nation. The connections made by the lines of communications shown here ensured economic growth, but brought to light the vast differences between regional cultures.

territories. The revolution in transportation helped them do so by making the transport of printed matter faster and cheaper. At the same time, revolutions in printing technology and paper production significantly lowered the cost of printing and speeded up production. Organizations such as the American Bible Society and the American Tract Society joined newspaper and magazine publishers in producing a flood of printed

**circulation** The number of copies of a publication sold or distributed.

**electric telegraph** Device invented by Samuel F. B. Morse in 1836 that transmits coded messages along a wire over long distances; the first electronic communications device.

material. In 1790 the ninety-two newspapers being published in America had a total **circulation** of around 4 million. By 1835 the number of periodicals had risen to 1,258, and circulation had surpassed 90 million.

At the same time, a true revolution in information technology was in its starting phases. In the mid-1830s, Samuel F. B. Morse began experimenting with the world's first form of electronic communication: the **electric telegraph**. Morse's transmitter was simple in design, consisting of a key that closed an electrical circuit, thereby sending a pulse along a connected wire. Morse developed a code consisting of dots (short pulses) and dashes (longer pulses) that represented letters of the alphabet. With this device a skilled operator could quickly key out long messages and send them at nearly the speed of light. In 1843, Congress agreed to finance an experimental telegraph line from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore. Morse sent his first message on the experimental line on May 24, 1844. His message, "What hath God wrought!" was a fitting opening line for the telecommunications revolution.

## Summary

After the War of 1812, as an industrial revolution overturned the economies in Great Britain and the American Northeast, economic options for southerners also changed radically. Although they clothed their new lifestyle in romanticized medieval garb, they were creating an altogether new kind of economy and society. The efficient production of cotton by the newly reorganized South was an essential aspect of the emerging national market economy and a powerful force in the Great Transformation.

Change in the North was more obvious. As factories replaced craft shops and cities replaced towns, the entire fabric of northern society seemed to come unraveled. A revamped social structure replaced the traditional order as unskilled and semiskilled workers, a new class of clerks, and the genteel elite carved out new lives. The new cities also developed a dark underside where the tawdry glamour that characterized Helen Jewett's life often led to grotesque death. As in the South, the outcome was a remarkable transformation in the lives of everyone in the region.

Meanwhile, the westward movement of Americans steadily gained momentum. Some successful entrepre-

neurs such as William Henry Ashley made enormous profits from their fur-trading empires. Land speculators and gold seekers, too, helped open areas to settlement. Such pioneers were usually followed by distinct waves of migrants who went west in search of land and opportunity. In Texas, Oregon, California, Utah, and elsewhere in the West, communities sprang up like weeds. Here they interacted—and often clashed—with one another, with those who had prior claims to the land, and with the land itself. As a result, a variety of cultures and economies developed in the expansive section of the country.

Tying the regions together was a new network of roads, waterways, and communications systems that accelerated the process of change. After 1840, it was possible to ship goods and information from any one section of the country to any other, and more and more people in all sections became aware of the enormity of the transformation taking place and the glaring differences between the nation's various regions. The twin outcomes would be greater integration in the national economy and increasing tension between mutually dependent participants in the new marketplace.

## Key Terms

- antebellum, *p. 248*
- Cotton Belt, *p. 248*
- paternalistic, *p. 248*
- midwifery, *p. 251*
- slave codes, *p. 251*
- cholera, *p. 252*
- field hands, *p. 253*
- house slaves, *p. 253*
- artisans, *p. 253*
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- putting-out system, *p. 254*
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- millwrights, *p. 255*
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- demographic, *p. 255*
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- genteel, *p. 259*
- infant depravity, *p. 260*
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- Junípero Serra, *p. 264*
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- annexation, *p. 265*
- Texians, *p. 265*
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- return on capital, *p. 266*
- Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, *p. 266*
- circulation, *p. 268*
- electric telegraph, *p. 268*



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## CHAPTER 12

# Responses to the Great Transformation 1828–1848

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### **Reactions to Changing Conditions**

Romanticism and Genteel Culture

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** The Spread of  
Mass Literacy

Culture Among Workers and  
Slaves

Radical Attempts to Regain  
Community

A Second Great Awakening

The Middle Class and Moral  
Reform

Free and Slave Labor Protests

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** The  
Declaration of Sentiments, 1848

#### **The Whig Alternative to Jacksonian Democracy**

The End of the Old Party Structure

The New Political Coalition

Van Buren in the White House

The Log-Cabin and Hard-Cider  
Campaign of 1840

#### **The Triumph of Manifest Destiny**

The Rise of Manifest Destiny

Expansion to the North and West

Revolution in Texas

The Politics of Manifest Destiny

Expansion and the Election  
of 1844

The War with Mexico and  
Sectional Crisis

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** James K.  
Polk's War Message to Congress,  
1846

#### **Summary**

### **INDIVIDUAL CHOICES:** Lydia Sigourney

Nothing in her upbringing would have marked Lydia Howard Huntley's potential as a leading literary light. Her father, a revolutionary war veteran, was just a gardener on the estate of a Connecticut matron. But his employer recognized a budding talent in the young girl and encouraged her. Under the older woman's patronage, Lydia began writing poetry at a young age, and when the time came, her sponsor's patrician family saw to it that the girl received the education thought fitting for young ladies in New England. Like many young women of modest means, Lydia followed up her education by becoming a teacher and then, with the help of her benefactors, started an academy for young women in Hartford. Her career culminated with the publication in 1815 of teaching materials under the title *Moral Pieces, in Prose and Verse*.

Shortly after reaching this pinnacle, she met and married a Hartford widower, Charles Sigourney. Lydia gave up her career in teaching to devote herself to service as a wife. However, her desire to write continued. For years she published poems and short prose pieces anonymously, much to the chagrin of her conservative husband. However, his declining fortunes and the failing health of her parents led Lydia to rebel against conventions and begin selling her work and trading on her name. Between 1833 and 1835, she sold nine books and a number of articles and other pieces to well-known periodicals. In the process, she became the first American woman to earn an entirely independent living as a commercial writer.

Although many critics then and later have dismissed Sigourney's writing—Edgar Allan Poe called her work “shallow and sentimental”—and certainly would not classify her with Longfellow and other of her male contemporaries, her work may have had a greater influence in her own time than did theirs. Focusing on themes that were popular among women of the elite and emerging middling classes, her writing helped to form a literary basis for female culture during the

### **LYDIA SIGOURNEY**

*Giving voice to the Romantic sentimentalism that was setting the tone for middle-class culture in early-nineteenth-century America, women writers like Lydia Sigourney became virtual overnight celebrities, selling thousands of books to newly emerging urban consumers.*

Watkinson Library, Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut.





middle decades of the nineteenth century. And, in part because of writers like Sigourney who promoted awareness of a literature designed especially for them, women's literacy grew at a revolutionary pace, from about 50 percent of that of white males in 1780 to over 90 percent by 1850. As Lydia Sigourney chose to write, so a generation of American women chose to read, forever changing American society and culture.

Lydia Sigourney reflected many of the forces that were shaping America in the years before midcentury. These were years when anxiety was rising over the industrialization and urbanization that was sweeping across the American North and over the expansion of cotton capitalism in the American South. Sigourney shared with born-again Christians, transcendentalists, socialists, and other communitarians a belief in human perfectibility that drove them all into a frenzy of work and experimentation. In northern cities, on southern plantations, and at western revival meetings, members of all social classes were crafting cultural expressions designed to give meaning to their lives and lend shape to a society that seemed to be losing all direction. At the same time, ambitious politicians were re-creating the art of politics in line with new economic and cultural imperatives. A new, modern, and much more complicated America clearly was in the making.

## Reactions to Changing Conditions

- ★ *How did developments in American arts and letters reflect the spirit of change during the Jacksonian era?*
- ★ *What were the cultural consequences of these developments?*

Diversity in American life expanded as industrialization and urbanization mushroomed in the Northeast, as cotton cultivation and its peculiar cultural and labor systems expanded across the South, and as hundreds of communities grew up in the West. At the same time, however, increasing economic interdependence between regions and revolutionary transportation and communications systems pulled the geographically expansive nation closer together. These opposing forces of diversity and integration helped to define the social, political, and cultural trends that would shape the American nation.

### Romanticism and Genteel Culture

Underlying the new mood in American culture was an artistic and philosophical attitude that swept across the Atlantic and found a fertile new home in North America. **Romanticism**, the European rebellion against Enlightenment reason, stressed the heart over the mind, the mystical over the rational. The United States, with its millions of acres of wilderness, teeming populations of wild animals, and colorful frontier myths, was the perfect setting for romanticism to flower. Many of the era's leading intellectuals emphasized the positive aspects of life in the United States, celebrating it in forms of religious, literary, and artistic expression. In the process, they launched new forms of thought and presentation that won broad recognition among the genteel and middle classes.

**Romanticism** Artistic and intellectual movement characterized by interest in nature, emphasis on emotion over rationality, and rebellion against social conventions.

# Chronology

<b>1806</b>	Journeyman shoemakers' strike in New York City	<b>1837</b>	Horace Mann heads first public board of education Panic of 1837 Ralph Waldo Emerson's "American Scholar" speech Senate rejects annexation of Texas Armed confrontation between Maine and New Brunswick
<b>1821</b>	Charles Grandison Finney experiences a religious conversion		
<b>1823</b>	James Fenimore Cooper's <i>The Pioneers</i>		
<b>1825</b>	Thomas Cole begins Hudson River school of painting Robert Owen establishes community at New Harmony, Indiana	<b>1838</b>	Emerson articulates transcendentalism Sarah Grimké publishes <i>Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Women</i>
<b>1826</b>	Shakers have eighteen communities in the United States	<b>1840</b>	Log-cabin campaign William Henry Harrison elected president
<b>1828</b>	Weavers protest and riot in New York City		
<b>1829</b>	Grand jury in Rochester, New York, declares alcohol most prominent cause of crime	<b>1841</b>	Brook Farm established Death of President Harrison; John Tyler becomes president
<b>1831</b>	Nat Turner's Rebellion William Lloyd Garrison begins publishing <i>The Liberator</i>	<b>1842</b>	<i>Commonwealth v. Hunt</i> Elijah White named federal Indian Agent for Oregon
<b>1832</b>	Jackson reelected	<b>1843</b>	Dorothea Dix advocates state-funded insane asylums First wagon train into Oregon Oregon adopts First Organic Laws
<b>1833</b>	Lydia Sigourney publishes bestsellers <i>Letters to Young Ladies and How to Be Happy</i>	<b>1844</b>	James K. Polk elected president
<b>1834</b>	Riot in Charlestown, Massachusetts, leads to destruction of Catholic convent George Bancroft publishes volume 1 of his American history Formation of National Trades' Union Formation of Whig Party	<b>1845</b>	United States annexes Texas Term "manifest destiny" coined
<b>1835</b>	Five Points riot in New York City Texas Revolution begins	<b>1846</b>	War with Mexico begins Oregon boundary established California declares itself a republic
<b>1836</b>	Congress passes the gag rule Martin Van Buren elected president	<b>1848</b>	Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

**Ralph Waldo Emerson** Philosopher, writer, and poet whose essays and poems made him a central figure in the transcendentalist movement and an important figure in the development of literary expression in the United States.

This new influence had its earliest impact in the religious realm. Reeling under the shock of social change that was affecting every aspect of life, many young people sought a religious anchor to bring themselves some stability. Many, especially in the rising cities in the Northeast, found a voice in New Englander **Ralph Waldo Emerson**.

Emerson was pastor of the prestigious Second Unitarian Church in Boston when tragedy struck: his young wife, Ellen Louisa, died in 1831. Emerson experienced a religious crisis and, looking for new inspiration, traveled to Europe. There he met the famous Romantic writers William Wordsworth and Thomas Carlyle, who influenced him

to seek truth in nature and spirit rather than in rationality and order. Emerson combined this Romantic influence with his already strong Unitarian leaning, creating a new philosophical creed called **transcendentalism**. Recovered from his grief, he returned to the United States to begin a new career as an essayist and lecturer, spreading the transcendentalist message.

“Historical Christianity has fallen into the error that corrupts all attempts to communicate religion,” Emerson told the students at the Harvard Divinity School. “Men have come to speak of revelation as somewhat long ago given and done, as if God were dead.” But for Emerson, God was “everywhere active, in each ray of the star, in each wavelet of the pool.” Only through direct contact with the **transcendent** power in the universe could men and women know the truth.

Emerson emphasized **nonconformity** and dissent in his writings, and in celebrating the individual, he validated the surging individualism of Jacksonian America. Because each person had to find his or her own path to knowledge, Emerson could extol many of the disturbing aspects of modernizing America as potentially liberating forces. Rather than condemning the grasping for wealth that many said characterized Jacksonian America, Emerson stated that money represented the “prose of life” and was, “in its effects and laws, as beautiful as roses.”

Emerson also suggested a bold new direction for American literature. In 1837 he issued a declaration of literary independence from European models in an address entitled “The American Scholar.” Young American writers responded enthusiastically. During the twenty years following this speech, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and other writers and poets elaborated the transcendentalist gospel, emphasizing the uniqueness of the individual and the role of literature as a vehicle for self-discovery. “I celebrate myself, and sing myself,” Whitman wrote. These writers also carried the Romantic message, celebrating the primitive and the common. Longfellow mythologized Hiawatha and sang the praise of the village blacksmith. In “I Hear America Singing,” Whitman conveyed the poetry present in the everyday speech of mechanics, carpenters, and other common folk. The highly influential magazine *The Dial*, edited by Margaret Fuller, helped articulate the transcendentalist message.

Perhaps the most radical of the transcendentalists was Emerson’s good friend **Henry David Thoreau**. Emerson and his other followers made the case for self-reliance, but Thoreau embodied it, camping on the shore of Walden Pond near Concord, Massachusetts, where he did his best to live independent of the rapidly modernizing market economy. “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately,” Thoreau wrote, “and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.”

Like Thoreau, a number of women were also seeking meaning through their writing. The most popular women writers of the day were those who, like Lydia Sigourney, were most successful at communicating the sentimentalized role for the new genteel woman. Catharine Beecher was another woman writer who enjoyed enormous success for her practical advice guides aimed at making women more effective homemakers. The novels of women writers E. D. E. N. Southworth and Susan Warner were among the most popular books published in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Other authors joined Sigourney, Southworth, and Warner in pushing American literature in Romantic directions. James Fenimore Cooper and Nathaniel Hawthorne helped to popularize American themes and scenes in their writing. Even before Emerson’s “American Scholar,” Cooper had launched a new sort of American novel and American hero. In *The Pioneers* (1823), Cooper introduced Natty Bumppo, also called Hawkeye, a frontiersman whose honesty, independent-mindedness, and skill as a marksman

**transcendentalism** A philosophical and literary movement asserting the existence of God within human beings and in nature, and the belief that intuition is the highest source of knowledge.

**transcendent** Lying beyond the normal range of experience.

**nonconformity** Refusal to accept or conform to the beliefs and practices of the majority.

**Henry David Thoreau** Writer and naturalist and friend of Ralph Waldo Emerson; his best-known work is *Walden* (1854).



# It Matters Today

## THE SPREAD OF MASS LITERACY

During the colonial and early national eras, literacy beyond basics like signing your name was reserved to a small number of elite people in American society. Books were expensive, and newspapers were few in number; there was little opportunity for most people to read and little incentive for them to do so. During the early nineteenth century, however, the spread of public education, the creation of literary and self-improvement societies, and mass publication of books and magazines caused an upsurge in both the availability and the demand for literacy. Leaders like Horace Mann saw in universal literacy a device that would ensure continuation of the American democratic republic, and writers like Lydia Sigourney saw in it a burgeoning marketplace for

making personal fortunes. For their part, young men and women saw in literacy an opportunity to break away from traditional political and economic roles to forge new lives in a new society. From this era onward, Americans took widespread literacy among all classes for granted as part of our national life.

- What developments arose during the early nineteenth century that helped to encourage mass literacy in the United States?
- How would American society today be different if only a wealthy elite minority could read? How would your life be different in such a society?

**allegory** A story in which characters and events stand for abstract ideas and suggest a deep, symbolic meaning.

represented the rough-hewn virtues so beloved by Romantics and popularly associated with the American frontier.

Nathaniel Hawthorne pushed American literary themes in a more gothic direction. In *Twice-Told Tales* (1837), Hawthorne presented readers with a collection of moral **allegories** stressing the evils of pride, selfishness, and secret guilt among puritanical New Englanders. He brought these themes to fruition in his novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), in which adulteress Hester Prynne overcomes shame to gain redemption while her secret lover, Puritan minister Arthur Dimmesdale, is destroyed by his hidden sins.

### Culture Among Workers and Slaves

Most genteel people in the antebellum era would have denied that working people, whether the wage-earning immigrants in northern cities or slaves in the South, had a “culture.” But each of these groups crafted viable cultures that suited their living and working conditions and were distinct from the genteel culture of their owners or supervisors.

Wretched living conditions and dispiriting poverty encouraged working-class people in northern cities to choose social and cultural outlets that were very different from those of upper- and middle-class Americans. Drinking alcohol offered temporary relief from unpleasant conditions and was the social distraction of choice among working people. Whiskey and gin were cheap and readily available as western farmers used the new roads and canals to ship distilled spirits to urban markets. In the 1830s, consumers could purchase a gallon of whiskey for 25 cents.

Even activities that did not center on drinking tended to involve it. While genteel and middle-class people remained in their private homes reading Sigourney or Hawthorne, working people attended popular theaters cheering entertainments designed to appeal to their less-polished tastes. **Minstrel shows** featured fast-paced music and raucous comedy. Plays, such as Benjamin Baker’s *A Glance at New York in 1848*, presented caricatures

**minstrel show** A variety show in which white actors made up as blacks presented jokes, songs, dances, and comic skits.



of working-class “Bowery B’hoys” and “G’hals” and of the well-off Broadway “pumpkins” they poked fun at. To put the audience in the proper mood, theater owners sold cheap drinks in the lobby or in basement pubs. Alcohol was also sold at sporting events that drew large, working-class audiences—bare-knuckle boxing contests, for instance, where the fighting was seldom confined to the boxing ring.

Stinging from their low status in the urbanizing and industrializing society, angry about living in hovels, and freed from inhibitions by hours of drinking, otherwise rational workingmen often resorted to riots that pitted Protestants against Catholics, immigrants against the native-born, and whites against blacks. Notable ethnic riots shook New York, Philadelphia, and Boston during the late 1820s and 1830s. In 1834, for example, rumors began circulating in Boston that innocent girls were being held captive and tortured in a Catholic convent in nearby Charlestown. A Protestant mob stormed the building, leaving it a heap of smoldering ashes. The ethnic tension evident in these and other riots was the direct result of declining economic power and terrible living conditions—and worker desperation. Native-born journeymen blamed immigrants for lowered wages and loss of status. Immigrants simmered with hatred at being treated like dirt by their native-born coworkers.

Working-class women experienced the same dull but dangerous working conditions and dismal living circumstances as working-class men, but their lives were even harder. Single women were particularly bad off. They were paid significantly less than men but had to pay as much, and sometimes more, for living quarters, food, and clothing. Marriage could reduce a woman’s personal expenses—but at a cost. While men congregated in the barbershop or candy store drinking and socializing during their leisure hours, married women were stuck in tiny apartments caring for children and doing household chores.

Like their northern counterparts, slaves fashioned for themselves a culture that helped them to survive and to maintain their humanity under dehumanizing conditions. The degree to which African practices endured in America is remarkable, yet what evolved was a truly unique African American culture.

Traces of African heritage were visible in slaves’ clothing, entertainment, and folkways. Often the plain garments that masters provided were upgraded with colorful headscarves and other decorations similar to ornaments worn in Africa. Hairstyles often resembled those characteristic of African tribes. Music, dancing, and other forms of public entertainment and celebration also showed strong African roots. Musical instruments were copies of traditional ones, modified only by the use of New World materials. Stories told around the stoves at night were a New World adaptation of African **trickster tales**. Other links to Africa abounded. Healers among the slaves used African ceremonies, Christian rituals, and both imported and native herbs to effect cures. Taken together, these survivals and adaptations of African traditions provided a strong base underlying a solid African American culture.

Abiding family ties helped to make this cultural continuity possible. Slave families endured despite kinship ties made fragile by their highly precarious life. Children could be taken away from their parents, and husbands separated from their wives at the whim of masters. And anyone might be sold at any time. Families that remained intact, however, remained stable. When families did suffer separation, the **extended family** of grandparents and other relatives offered emotional support and helped maintain some sense of continuity. Another African legacy, the concept of fictive kinship, turned the whole community of slaves into a vast network of aunts and uncles, thereby also contributing to family stability.

**trickster tales** Stories that feature as a central character a clever figure who uses his wits and instincts to adapt to changing times; a survivor, the trickster is used by traditional societies, including African cultures, to teach important cultural lessons.

**extended family** A family group consisting of various close relatives as well as the parents and children.

Within families, the separation of work along age and gender lines followed traditional patterns. Slave women, when not laboring at the assigned tasks of plantation work, generally performed domestic duties and tended children, while the men hunted, fished, did carpentry, and performed other “manly” tasks. Children were likely to help out by tending family gardens and doing other light work until they were old enough to join their parents in the fields or learn skilled trades.

Slaves’ religion, like family structure, was another means for preserving unique African American traits. White churches virtually ignored the religious needs of slaves before the mid-eighteenth century. During the Great Awakening, however, many white evangelicals turned their attention to the spiritual life of slaves. In the face of slaveowners’ negligence, evangelical Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists took it upon themselves to carry the Christian message to the enslaved.

Although the designation “Baptist” or “Methodist” would suggest that the Christianity practiced by slaves resembled the religion practiced by southern whites, it differed in significant ways. Slave preachers untrained in white theology often equated Christian and African religious figures, creating unique African American religious symbols. Ceremonies combined African practices such as group dancing with Christian prayer. The merging of African musical forms with Christian lyrics gave rise to a new form of Christian music: the **spiritual**. Masters often encouraged such worship, thinking that the Christian emphasis on obedience and meekness would make slaves more productive and more peaceful servants. Some, however, discouraged religion among their slaves, fearing that large congregations of slaves might be moved to rebellion. Thus some religious slaves had to meet in secret to practice their own particular form of Christianity.

**spiritual** A religious folk song originated by African Americans, often expressing a longing for deliverance from the constraints and hardships of their lives.

**utopian** Idealistic reform sentiment based on the belief that a perfect society can be created on Earth and that a particular group or leader has the knowledge to actually create such a society.

**New Harmony** Utopian community that Robert Owen established in Indiana in 1825; economic problems and discord among members led to its failure two years later.

**Frances (Fanny) Wright** Infamous nineteenth-century woman who advocated what at the time were considered radical causes, including racial equality, equality for women, birth control, and open sexuality.

**Brook Farm** An experimental farm based on cooperative living; established in 1841, it first attracted transcendentalists and then serious farmers before fire destroyed it in 1845.

**socialist** Practicing socialism, the public ownership of manufacturing, farming, and other forms of production so that they benefit society rather than produce individual or corporate profits.

### Radical Attempts to Regain Community

To many people of all classes, society seemed to be spinning out of control as modernization rearranged basic lifestyles during the antebellum period. Some religious groups and social thinkers tried to ward off the excesses of Jacksonian individualism by forming **utopian** communities that experimented with various living arrangements and ideological commitments. They hoped to strike a new balance between self-sufficiency and community support.

A wealthy Welsh industrialist, Robert Owen, began one of the earliest experiments along these lines. In 1825 he purchased a tract of land on the Wabash River in Indiana called **New Harmony**. Believing that the solution to poverty in modern society was to collect the unemployed into self-contained and self-supporting villages, Owen opened a textile factory in which ownership was held communally by the workers and decisions were made by group consensus. Even though the community instituted innovations like an eight-hour workday, cultural activities for workers, and the nation’s first school offering equal education to boys and girls, New Harmony did not succeed. Owen was an outspoken critic of organized religion and joined his close associate **Frances (Fanny) Wright** in advocating radical causes. These leanings made the Owenites unpopular with more traditional Americans, and when their mill experienced economic hardship in 1827, New Harmony collapsed.

A more famous experiment, **Brook Farm**, had its origin in the transcendentalist movement but later flirted with **socialistic** ideas like those practiced at New Harmony. The brainchild of George Ripley, Brook Farm was designed to “prepare a society of liberal, intelligent and cultivated persons, whose relations with each other would permit a more wholesome and simple life than can be led amidst the pressure of our competitive institutions.” Most of Brook Farm’s supporters were transcendentalist celebrities such

as Nathaniel Hawthorne and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Rather than living and working at the site as Ripley had hoped they would, most just dropped in from time to time. Disappointed, in 1844 Ripley adopted a new constitution based on the socialist ideas of Frenchman Charles Fourier. **Fourierism** emphasized community self-sufficiency, the equal sharing of earnings among members of the community, and the periodic redistribution of tasks and status to prevent boredom and elitism. With this new disciplined ideology in place, Brook Farm began to appeal to serious artisans and farmers, but a disastrous fire in 1845 cut the experiment short. Nearly a hundred other Fourierist communities across the country were also founded during this period, and although none achieved Brook Farm's notoriety, all shared the same unsuccessful fate.

Some communal experiments were grounded in various religious beliefs. The **Oneida Community**, established in central New York in 1848, for example, reflected the notions of its founder, John Humphrey Noyes. Although Noyes was educated in theology at Yale, he could find no church willing to ordain him because of his belief that his followers could escape sin through faith in God, communal living, and group marriage. Unlike Brook Farm and New Harmony, the Oneida Community was very successful financially, establishing thriving logging, farming, and manufacturing businesses. It was finally dissolved as the result of local pressures directed at the "free love" practiced by its members.

**Fourierism** Social system advanced by Frenchman Charles Fourier, who argued that people were capable of living in perfect harmony under the right conditions, which included communal life and republican government.

**Oneida Community** A religious community established in central New York in 1848; its members shared property, practiced group marriage, and reared children under communal care.

### A Second Great Awakening

Beginning in the 1790s, both theologians and popular preachers sought to create a new Protestant creed that would maintain the notion of Christian community in an atmosphere of increasing individualism and competition. Mirroring tendencies in the political and economic realms, Protestant thinking during the opening decades of the nineteenth century emphasized the role of the individual. Preachers such as Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield had moved in this direction during the Great Awakening of the 1740s, but many Protestant theologians continued to share the conviction that salvation was a gift from God that individuals could do nothing to earn. Timothy Dwight, Jonathan Edwards's grandson, took the first step toward liberalizing this position in the 1790s, but it fell to his students at Yale, especially Nathaniel Taylor, to create a new theology that was entirely consistent with the prevailing secular creed of individualism. According to this new doctrine, God offers salvation to all, but it is the individual's responsibility to seek it. The individual has "free will" to choose or not choose salvation. Taylor's ideas struck a responsive chord in a restless and expanding America. Hundreds of ordained ministers, licensed preachers, and **lay exhorters** carried the message of individual empowerment to an anxious populace.

Unlike Calvinist Puritanism, which characterized women as the weaker sex, the new evangelicalism stressed women's spiritual equality with—and even spiritual superiority to—men. Not surprisingly, young women generally were the first to respond to the new message: during the 1820s and 1830s, women often outnumbered men by two to one in new evangelical congregations. The most highly effective preachers of the day took advantage of this appeal, turning women into agents who then would spread the word to their husbands, brothers, and children.

Charles Grandison Finney was one of the most effective among the new generation of preachers. Finney, a former schoolteacher and lawyer, experienced a soul-shattering religious conversion in 1821. Declaring that "the Lord Jesus Christ" had retained him "to plead his cause," Finney performed on the pulpit as a spirited attorney might argue a case in court. Seating those most likely to be converted on a special "anxious bench,"

**lay exhorter** A church member who preaches but is not an ordained minister.





Revival meetings were remarkable affairs. Often lasting several days, they drew huge crowds who might listen to as many as forty preachers in around-the-clock sessions. The impact on the audience frequently was dramatic: one attendee at a New York revival commented that there were “loud ejaculations of prayer . . . some struck with terror . . . others, trembling weeping and crying out . . . fainting and swooning away.” *Camp Meeting* (colour litho), Rider, Alexander (19th century) (after) / ? Collection of the New-York Historical Society, USA/The Bridgeman Art Library.

**Second Great Awakening** An upsurge in religious fervor that began around 1800 and was characterized by revival meetings.

Finney focused on them as a lawyer might a jury. The result was likely to be dramatic. Many of the targeted people fainted, experienced bodily spasms, or cried out in hysteria. Such dramatic presentations and results brought Finney enormous publicity, which he and an army of imitators used to gain access to communities all over the West and Northeast. The result was a nearly continuous season of religious revival. The **Second Great Awakening** spread from rural community to rural community like a wildfire until, in the late 1830s, Finney carried the fire into Boston and New York City.

Even though religious conversion had become an individual matter and competition for tithes a genuine concern, revivalists did not ignore the notion of community. “I know this is all algebra to those who have never felt it,” Finney said. “But to those who have experienced the agony of wrestling, prevailing prayer, for the conversion of a soul, you may depend on it, that soul . . . appears as dear as a child is to the mother who brought it forth with pain.” This intimate connection forged bonds of mutual responsibility, giving a generation of isolated individuals something to rally around, a common starting point for joint action.



### The Middle Class and Moral Reform

The missionary activism that accompanied the Second Great Awakening dovetailed with a reforming inclination among genteel and middle-class Americans; witnessing the squalor and violence in working-class districts and the deteriorating condition for slaves led many to push for reforms. The **Christian benevolence** movement gave rise to hundreds of voluntary societies ranging from maternal associations designed to improve child rearing to political lobby groups aimed at outlawing alcohol, Sunday mail delivery, and other perceived evils. Such activism drew reformers together in common causes and led to deep friendships and a shared sense of commitment—antidotes to the alienation and loneliness common in the competitive world of the early nineteenth century.

The new theology reinforced the reforming impulse by emphasizing that even the most depraved might be saved if proper means were applied. This idea had immediate application in the realm of crime and punishment. Reformers characterized criminals not as evil but as lost and in need of divine guidance. In Auburn, New York, an experimental prison system put inmates to work during the day, condemned them to absolute silence during mealtimes, and locked them away in solitary confinement at night. Reformers believed that this combination of hard work, discipline, and solitude would put criminals on the path to productive lives and spiritual renewal.

Mental illness underwent a similar change in definition. Rather than viewing the mentally ill as hopeless cases doomed by an innate spiritual flaw, reformers now spoke of them as lost souls in need of help. **Dorothea Dix**, a young, compassionate, and reform-minded teacher, advocated publicly funded asylums for the insane. She told the Massachusetts state legislature in 1843: “I tell what I have seen. . . . Insane persons confined within the Commonwealth, in cages, closets, cellars, stalls, pens! Chained, naked, beaten with rods, and lashed into obedience!” For the balance of the century, Dix toured the country pleading the cause of the mentally ill, succeeding in winning both private and public support for mental health as well as general public health systems.

Many white-collar reformers acted in earnest and were genuinely interested in forging a new social welfare system. A number of their programs, however, seemed more like social control because they tried to force people to conform to a middle-class standard of behavior. For example, reformers believed that immigrants should willingly discard their traditional customs and beliefs and act like Americans. Immigrants who chose to cling to familiar ways were suspected of disloyalty. This aspect of benevolent reform was particularly prominent in two important movements: public education and **temperance**.

Before the War of 1812, most Americans believed that education was the family’s or the church’s responsibility and children were not required to attend school. But as the complexity of economic, political, and cultural life increased during the opening decades of the nineteenth century, **Horace Mann** and other champions of education pushed states to introduce formal public schooling. Like his contemporary Charles Grandison Finney, Mann was trained as a lawyer, but unlike Finney, he believed that ignorance, not sin, lay at the heart of the nation’s problems. When Massachusetts made Mann the superintendent of a state-wide board of education, he immediately extended the school year to a minimum of six months and gradually replaced classical learning with such practical courses as arithmetic, practical geography, and physical science.

But Mann and other reformers were interested in more than “knowledge”; they were equally concerned that new immigrants and the children of the urban poor be trained in Protestant values and middle-class habits. Thus the books used in public schools

**Christian benevolence** A tenet in some Christian theology teaching that the essence of God is self-sacrificing love and that the ultimate duty for Christians is to perform acts of kindness with no expectation of reward in return.

**Dorothea Dix** Philanthropist, reformer, and educator who was a pioneer in the movement for specialized treatment of the mentally ill.

**temperance** Moderation or abstinence in the consumption of alcoholic drinks.

**Horace Mann** Educator who called for publicly funded education for all children and was head of the first public board of education in the United States.

**parochial school** A school supported by a church parish; in the United States, the term usually refers to a Catholic school.

**American Colonization Society** Organization founded in 1816 to end slavery gradually by assisting individual slaveowners to liberate their slaves and then transporting them to Africa.

**William Lloyd Garrison** Abolitionist leader who founded and published *The Liberator*, an antislavery newspaper.

**Mason-Dixon Line** The boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland; it marked the northern division between free and slave states before the Civil War.

emphasized virtues such as promptness, perseverance, discipline, and obedience to authority. In Philadelphia and other cities where Roman Catholic immigrants concentrated, Catholic parents resisted the cultural pressure applied on their children by Protestant-dominated public school boards. They supported the establishment of **parochial schools**—a development that aggravated the strain between native-born Protestants and immigrant Catholics.

Another source of such tension was a Protestant crusade against alcohol. Drinking alcohol had always been common in America and before the early nineteenth century was not broadly perceived as a significant social problem. But during the 1820s and 1830s, three factors contributed to a new, more ominous perception: (1) the increasing visibility of drinking and its consequence, drunkenness, as populations became more concentrated in manufacturing and trading cities. In Rochester, New York, for example, a town that went through the throes of modernization in the late 1820s, anyone with a few cents could get a glass of whiskey at grocery stores, either of two candy stores, barbershops, or even private homes—all within a few steps of wherever a person might be. By 1829 this proliferation of public drinking led the county grand jury to conclude that strong drink was “the cause of almost all of the crime and almost all of the misery that flesh is heir to.”

(2) The second factor was alcohol’s economic impact in a new and more complex world of work. Factory owners and managers recognized that workers who drank often and heavily, on or off the job, threatened the quantity and quality of production. Owners and supervisors alike rallied around the temperance movement as a way of policing the undisciplined behavior of their employees, both in and out of the factory. By promoting temperance, these reformers believed they could clean up the worst aspects of city life and turn the raucous lower classes into clean-living, self-controlled, peaceful workers, increasing their productivity and business profits.

(3) The third factor that contributed to society’s changing view of alcohol was the institution of slavery, which also became a hot topic among the nation’s reborn Christians. In 1807, when Congress voted to outlaw permanently the importation of slaves in the following year, little had been said in defense of slavery as an institution. By the 1820s, public feeling about slavery was being reflected in the rise of the **American Colonization Society**, founded in 1816. Rooted in economic pragmatism, humanitarian concern for slaves’ well-being, and a belief that blacks were not equal to whites, this organization proposed that if slaveowners emancipated their slaves, or if funds could be raised to purchase their freedom, the freed slaves should immediately be shipped to Africa.

As the cotton kingdom exploded westward, however, and slavery grew and spread with it, Christians, including some white evangelicals, began to press for radical reforms. The most vocal leader among the antislavery forces was **William Lloyd Garrison**. In 1831 he founded the nation’s first prominent abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*, in which he advocated immediate emancipation for African Americans, with no compensation for slaveholders. The following year, Garrison founded the New England Anti-Slavery Society and then, in 1833, branched out to found the national American Anti-Slavery Society.

At first, Garrison stood alone. Some Christian reformers joined his cause, but the majority held back. In eastern cities, workers fearful for their jobs lived in dread of either enslaved or free blacks flooding in, lowering wages, and destroying job security. In western states such as Indiana and Illinois, farmers feared that competition could arise from a slaveholding aristocracy. In both regions, white supremacists argued that the extension of slavery beyond the Mississippi River and north of the **Mason-Dixon Line** would eventually lead to blacks mixing with the white population, a possibility they found extremely distasteful. Thus most whites detested the notion of immediate emancipation,

and radical **abolitionists** at this early date were almost universally ignored or, worse, attacked when they denounced slavery. Throughout the 1830s, riots often accompanied abolitionist rallies, and angry mobs stormed stages and pulpits to silence abolitionist speakers. Still, support for the movement gradually grew. In 1836 petitions flooded into Congress demanding an end to the slave trade in Washington, D.C. Congress was not ready to engage in an action quite so controversial, but it did pass a **gag rule** that automatically **tabled** any petition to Congress that addressed the abolition of slavery. The rule remained in effect for nearly a decade.

Despite this official denial by the national Congress, a neglect shared by many state assemblies, not all governments remained closed to the discussion of slavery. In these state battles, a new group often led the fight against slavery: women.

Having earlier assumed the burden of eliminating sin from the world, many evangelical women became active in the antislavery cause. Moved by their activism, in 1840 Garrison proposed that a woman be elected to the executive committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Later that year women were members of Garrison's delegation to the first World Anti-Slavery Convention in London, but British antislavery advocates considered the presence of women inappropriate and refused to seat them.

One prominent female abolitionist, Angelina Grimké, gave voice to her contemporaries' frustration at such treatment: "Are we aliens, because we are women? Are we bereft of citizenship because we are mothers, wives and daughters of a mighty people? Have women no country . . . no partnership in a nation's guilt and shame?" In that same year, her sister Sarah went further, writing a powerful indictment against the treatment of women in America and a call for equality. "The page of history teems with woman's wrongs," Sarah proclaimed, and it is "wet with woman's tears." Women must, she added, "arise in all the majesty of moral power" and take their seats "on the platform of human rights, with man, to whom they were designed to be companions, equals and helpers in every good word and work."

Like Sarah Grimké, many other women backed away from male-dominated causes and began advancing their own cause. In 1848, two women who had been excluded from the World Anti-Slavery Convention, **Lucretia Mott** and **Elizabeth Cady Stanton**, called concerned women to a convention at Seneca Falls, New York, to discuss their common problems. At Seneca Falls, they presented a Declaration of Sentiments, a document drawn from natural rights theory as well as religious ideals. The convention adopted eleven resolutions relating to equality under the law, rights to control property, and other prominent gender issues. A twelfth resolution, calling for the right to vote, failed to receive unanimous endorsement.

**abolitionist** An individual who supported the immediate end to slavery, usually without compensations to slaveowners.

**gag rule** A rule that limits or prevents debate on an issue.

**table** Action taken by a legislative body (Congress, for example) to postpone debate on an issue until a positive vote to remove the topic from the table is taken.

**Lucretia Mott** Quaker minister who founded the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society and co-organized the Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention.

**Elizabeth Cady Stanton** Pioneering woman suffrage leader, co-organizer of the first Women's Rights Convention, held in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848.

### Free and Slave Labor Protests

Like the predominantly white and middle-class women who were founding female protest movements in America, some northern workers and southern slaves began to perceive their miseries not as the product of sin but of their exploitation

by others. In view of their grim working and living conditions, it is not surprising that some manufacturing workers and slave laborers protested their situations and embraced increasingly active strategies for dealing with them.

The first organized labor strike in America took place in 1806, when a group of journeyman shoemakers stopped work to protest the hiring of unskilled workers to perform some tasks that higher-paid journeymen and apprentices had been doing. The strike failed when a New York court declared the shoemakers' actions illegal, but in the years to come many other journeymen's groups would try the same tactic. In large part they

# Investigating America

## The Declaration of Sentiments, 1848

Although Mott and Stanton had first discussed the idea of a convention to promote women's issues in 1840, the meeting was postponed until the summer of 1848 when Mott, a resident of Pennsylvania, visited Stanton at her home in Seneca Falls. Their original intent was to invite women only, but when a number of men, including the black abolitionist Frederick Douglass, arrived at the Wesleyan Chapel for the conference, the organizers decided to admit all who wished to hear. The convention lasted two days, and before it adjourned, sixty-eight women and thirty-two men signed the Declaration of Sentiments, largely drafted by Stanton. The preamble reads in part:

.....  
When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a resolution.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these

rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. . . .

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

- .....
- Why did Stanton adopt the language and structure of Jefferson's Declaration of Independence?
  - Stanton's preamble, like Jefferson's document, was followed by a list of grievances, including being denied access to universities, the professions of "medicine, or law," and the "inalienable right to the elective franchise." All of these rights, Stanton observed, were granted to "the most ignorant and degraded men—both natives and foreigners." To what extent did these demands reflect the race and class of the women who attended the conference?



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**trade unions** Labor organizations whose members work in a specific trade or craft.

**National Trades' Union** The first national association of trade unions in the United States; it was formed in 1834.

were reacting to the mechanization that threatened their jobs and their social position. Industrialization robbed them of their status as independent contractors, forcing many to become wage laborers, and they bemoaned their loss of power in having to accept set hours, conditions, and wages for the work they performed. Instead of attacking or even criticizing industrialization, however, journeymen simply asked for what they believed was their fair piece of the pie: decent wages and working conditions and some role in decision making. Throughout the industrializing cities of the Northeast and the smaller manufacturing centers of the West, journeymen banded together in **trade unions**: assemblies of skilled workers grouped by specific occupation. During the 1830s, trade unions from neighboring towns merged to form the beginnings of a national trade union movement. In this way, house carpenters, shoemakers, handloom weavers, printers, and comb makers established national unions through which they attempted to enforce uniform wage standards in their industries. In 1834, journeymen's organizations from a number of industries joined to form the **National Trades' Union**, the first labor organization in the nation's history to represent many different crafts.



Not surprisingly, factory owners, bankers, and others who had a vested interest in keeping labor cheap used every device available to prevent unions from gaining the upper hand. Employers countered the national trade unions by forming associations to resist union activity and used the courts to keep organized labor from disrupting business. Despite such efforts, a number of strikes affected American industries during the 1830s. In 1834 and again in 1836, women working in the textile mills in Lowell, Massachusetts closed down production in the face of wage reductions and rising boarding house rates. Such demonstrations of power by workers frightened manufacturers, and gradually over the next two decades, employers replaced native-born women in the factories with immigrants, who were less liable to organize successfully and, more important, less likely to win sympathy from judges or consumers.

Still, workers won some small victories in the battle to organize. A significant breakthrough finally came in 1842 when the Massachusetts Supreme Court decided in the case of *Commonwealth v. Hunt* that Boston's journeymen boot makers were within their rights to organize "in such manner as best to subserve their own interests" and to call strikes. By that time, however, economic changes had so undermined labor's ability to withstand the rigors of strikes and court cases that legal protection became somewhat meaningless. Not all labor protests were as peaceful as the shoemakers' strike. In 1828, for example, immigrant weavers protested the pitiful wages paid by Alexander Knox, New York City's leading textile employer. Storming Knox's home to demand higher pay, the weavers invaded and vandalized his house and beat Knox's son and a cordon of police guards. The rioters then marched to the garret and basement homes of weavers who had refused to join the protest and destroyed their looms.

Unlike workers in the North, who at least had some legal protections and civil rights, slaves had nothing but their own wits to protect them against a society that classed them as disposable personal property. Slaves were skilled at the use of **passive resistance**. The importance of passive resistance was evident in the folk tales and songs that circulated among slaves. Perhaps the best-known example is the stories of Br'er—that is, Brother—Rabbit, a classic trickster figure who uses deceit to get what he wants. Such stories taught slaves how to deal cleverly with powerful adversaries.

**passive resistance** Resistance by nonviolent methods.

Not all slave resistance was passive. Perhaps the most common form of active resistance was running away. The number of slaves who escaped may never be known, though some estimate that an average of about a thousand made their way to freedom each year. But running away was always a dangerous gamble. One former slave recalled, "No man who has never been placed in such a situation can comprehend the thousand obstacles thrown in the way of the flying slave. Every white man's hand is raised against him—the patrollers are watching for him—the hounds are ready to follow on his track."

The most frightening form of slave resistance was open and armed revolt. Despite slaveholders' best efforts, slaves planned an unknown number of rebellions during the antebellum period, and some of them were actually carried out. The most serious and violent of these uprisings was the work of a black preacher, Nat Turner. After years of planning and organization, in 1831 Turner led a force of about seventy slaves in a predawn raid against the slaveholding households in Southampton County, Virginia. It took four days for white forces to stop the assault. During that time, the slaves slaughtered and mutilated fifty-five white men, women, and children. Angry, terrified whites finally captured and executed Turner and sixteen of his followers.

In the wake of Nat Turner's Rebellion, fear of slave revolts reached paranoid levels in the South, especially in areas where slaves greatly outnumbered whites. After reading

No pictures of famed slave revolt leader Nat Turner are known to exist, but this nineteenth-century painting illustrates how one artist imagined the appearance of Turner and his fellow conspirators. White southerners lived in terror of scenes such as this and passed severe laws designed to prevent African Americans from ever having such meetings. The Granger Collection, New York.



about and seeing a play depicting a slave insurrection, Mary Boykin Chesnut gave expression to the fear that plagued whites in the slave South: “What a thrill of terror ran through me as those yellow and black brutes came jumping over the parapets! Their faces were like so many of the same sort at home. . . . How long would they resist the seductive and irresistible call: ‘Rise, kill, and be free!’ ”

Frightened and often outnumbered, whites felt justified in imposing stringent restrictions and using harsh methods to enforce them. Southern courts and legislatures clapped stricter controls on the freedoms granted to slaves and to free blacks. In most areas, free African Americans were denied the right to own guns, buy liquor, hold public assemblies, testify in court, and vote. Slaves were forbidden to own any private property, to attend unsupervised worship services, and to learn reading and writing. Also, codes that prevented slaves from being unsupervised in towns virtually eliminated slaves as independent urban craftsmen after 1840. In many areas of the South, white citizens formed local **vigilance committees**, bands of armed men who rode through the countryside to overawe slaves and dissuade them from attempting to escape or rebel. Local authorities pressed court clerks, ship captains, and other officials to limit the freedom of blacks. White critics of slavery—who had been numerous, vocal, and well respected before the birth of King Cotton—were harassed, prosecuted, and sometimes beaten into silence.

**vigilance committees** Groups of armed private citizens who use the threat of mob violence to enforce their own interpretation of the law.

## The Whig Alternative to Jacksonian Democracy

- ★ **What did Jackson’s opponents hope to accomplish when they built their coalition to oppose the Democrats?**
- ★ **Did the coalition accomplish its purposes? Why or why not?**

The same fundamental structural changes that led to social and cultural transformations had an enormous impact on politics as well. Although Andrew Jackson was quite possibly the most popular president since George Washington, not all Americans agreed

with his philosophy, policies, or political style. As the Bank War illustrates, men like Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, who inherited the crumbling structure of Jefferson's Republican Party, continually opposed Jackson in and out of Congress but seemed unable to overcome sectional differences and culture wars enough to challenge Jackson's enormous national power. Gradually, however, anger over Jackson's policies and anxiety about change forged cooperation among the disenchanted, who coalesced into a new national party.

### The End of the Old Party Structure

The last full year of Jackson's first term in office, 1832, was a landmark year in the nation's political history. In the course of that single year, the Seminoles declared war on the United States, Jackson declared war on the Second Bank, South Carolina declared war on the binding power of the Constitution, and the Cherokees waged a continuing war in the courts to hold on to their lands. The presidential election that year reflected the air of political crisis.

Henry Clay had started the Bank War for the purpose of creating a political cause to rally Jackson's opponents. The problem was that Jackson's enemies were deeply divided among themselves. Clay opposed Jackson because the president refused to support the American System and used every tool at his disposal to attack Clay's economic policies. Southern politicians like Calhoun, however, feared and hated Clay's nationalistic policies as much as they did Jackson's assertions of federal power. And political outsiders distrusted all political organizations. The 1832 election underscored these divisions.

When the National Republicans met in their convention, they nominated Clay as their standard-bearer. The Republicans then issued the country's first formal **party platform**, a ringing document supporting Clay's economic ideas and attacking Jackson's use of the **spoils system**. Even though the Virginia-born Clay was a Kentucky planter, many southerners were put off by his nationalist philosophy and refused to support any of the candidates. They finally backed nullification advocate John Floyd of Virginia.

Lack of unity spelled disaster for Jackson's opponents, since Floyd received votes that might have gone to Clay. But even if Clay had gotten those votes, Jackson's popularity and the political machinery that he and Van Buren controlled would have given the victory to Jackson. The president was reelected with a total of 219 electoral votes to Clay's 49 and Floyd's 11. Jackson's party lost five seats in the Senate but gained six in the House of Representatives. Despite unsettling changes in the land and continuing political chaos, the people still wanted the hero of New Orleans as their leader.

### The New Political Coalition

If one lesson emerged clearly from the election of 1832, it was that Jackson's opponents needed to pull together if they expected to challenge the growing power of "King Andrew."

Imitating political organizations in Great Britain, Clay and his associates began calling Jackson supporters Tories—supporters of the king—and calling themselves Whigs. The antimonarchical label stuck, and the new party formed in 1834 was called the **Whig Party**.

The Whigs eventually absorbed all the major factions that opposed Jackson. At the heart of the party were Clay supporters: advocates of strong government and the American System in economics. The nullifiers in the South, however, quickly came around when Clay and Calhoun found themselves on the same side in defeating Jackson's appointment of Van Buren as American minister to England. This successful campaign, combined with Calhoun's growing awareness that Jackson was perhaps more dangerous to his constituents' interests than was Clay, led the southerner and his associates back

**party platform** A formal statement of the principles, policies, and promises on which a political party bases its appeal to the public.

**spoils system** System associated with American politics in which a political party, after winning an election, gives government jobs to its voters as a reward for working toward victory.

**Whig Party** Political party that came into being in 1834 as an anti-Jackson coalition and that charged "King Andrew" with executive tyranny.

into Clay's camp. A final major group to rally to the Whigs was the collection of Christian reformers whose campaigns to eliminate alcohol, violations of the Sabbath, and dozens of other perceived evils had become increasingly political during the opening years of the 1830s. Evangelicals disapproved of Jackson's personal lifestyle, his views on slavery, his Indian policy, and his refusal to involve government in their moral causes. The orderly and sober society that whiskey-drinking Clay and the Whigs envisioned appealed to such people.

The congressional elections in 1834 provided the first test for the new coalition. The Whigs won nearly 40 percent of the seats in the House of Representatives and more than 48 percent in the Senate. Clearly cooperation was paying off.

### Van Buren in the White House

Nearly 70 years old and plagued by various ailments, Old Hickory decided to follow Washington's example and not run for a third term. Instead, Jackson used all the power and patronage at his command to ensure that Martin Van Buren would win the presidential nomination at the Democratic Party convention.

If Jackson personified the popular charisma behind Democratic Party success, Van Buren personified its political machinery. His ability to create unlikely political alliances had earned him the nickname "the Little Magician." Throughout Jackson's first term, Van Buren had headed up the Kitchen Cabinet and increasingly became Jackson's chief political henchman. In 1832 Jackson had repaid Van Buren's loyalty by making him vice president, with the intention of launching him into the presidency.

Because the Whig Party represented so many diverse interests and ideologies, Clay and the party leaders decided to encourage each region's party organization to nominate its own candidates rather than holding a convention and thrashing out a platform. Whig leaders, especially the experienced political manipulator Thurlow Weed, hoped a large number of candidates would confuse voters and throw the election into the House of Representatives, where skillful political management and Van Buren's unpopularity might unseat the Democrats. As a result, three **favorite sons** ran on the Whig ticket: Daniel Webster of Massachusetts represented the industrial Northeast; Hugh Lawson White, a Tennessean and former Jackson supporter, spoke for the nullifiers in the South; and William Henry Harrison, former governor of Indiana Territory and victor at the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811, was tapped to represent the Northwest.

Weed underestimated the Democrats' hold on the minds of the voters. Van Buren captured 765,483 popular votes—more than Jackson had won in the previous election—but in the Electoral College he squeaked by with a winning margin of less than 1 percent. House Democrats lost thirty-seven seats to Whigs. In the Senate, however, Democrats increased their majority to more than 62 percent. Even with that slight edge, Van Buren could expect trouble getting Democratic policies through Congress. This handicap was worsened by a total collapse in the economy just weeks after he took office.

The **Panic of 1837** was a direct outcome of the Bank War and Jackson's money policies, but it was Van Buren who would take the blame. The crisis had begun with Nicholas Biddle's manipulation of credit and interest rates in an effort to discredit Jackson and have the Second Bank rechartered in spite of the president's veto. Jackson had added to the problem by removing paper money and credit from the economy in an effort to win support from hard-money advocates. Arguing that he wanted to end "the monopoly of the public lands in the hands of speculators and capitalists," Jackson had issued the **Specie Circular** on August 15, 1836. From that day forward, payment for public land had to be made in specie.

**favorite son** A candidate nominated for office by delegates from his or her own region or state.

**Panic of 1837** An economic collapse that came as the result of Andrew Jackson's fiscal policies and led to an extended national economic depression.

**Specie Circular** Order issued by President Jackson in 1836 stating that the federal government would accept only specie—gold and silver—as payment for public land; one of the causes of the Panic of 1837.



The contraction in credit and currency had the same impact in 1836 as it had in 1819: the national economy collapsed. Unable to pay back or collect loans, buy raw materials, or conduct any other sort of commerce, hundreds of businesses, plantations, farms, factories, canals, and other enterprises spiraled into bankruptcy by the end of the year, throwing more than a third of the population out of work. Trying to address the problems, President Van Buren first extended Jackson's hard-money policy, which caused the economy to contract further. Next, in an effort to keep the government solvent, Van Buren cut federal spending to the bone, shrinking the money supply even more. Then, to replace the stabilizing influence lost when the Second Bank was destroyed, he created a national treasury system endowed with many of the powers formerly wielded by the bank. The new regional treasury offices accepted only specie in payment for federal lands and other obligations and used that specie to pay federal expenses and debts. As a result, specie was sucked out of local banks and local economies. Van Buren's decisions, although fiscally sound by the wisdom of the day, only made matters worse for the average person and drove the last nail into his political coffin.

### The Log-Cabin and Hard-Cider Campaign of 1840

The Whigs had learned in 1836 that only a unified party could possibly destroy the political machine built by Jackson and Van Buren. As the nation sank into depression, the Whigs lined up behind a single candidate for the 1840 election, determined to

use whatever means were necessary to break the Democrats' grip on the voters.

Once again, Henry Clay hoped to be the party's nominee, but Thurlow Weed convinced the party that Harrison would have a better chance in the election. Weed chose Harrison because of his distinguished military record and because the general, who had been a political lion thirty years earlier, had been out of the public eye for a long time and had few enemies left. For Harrison's running mate, the party chose **John Tyler**, a Virginia senator who had bolted from Jackson's Democratic Party during the nullification crisis. Weed clearly hoped that the Virginian would draw votes from the planter South while Harrison carried the West and North.

Although the economy was in bad shape, the Whig campaign avoided addressing any serious issues. Instead, the Whigs launched a smear campaign against Van Buren. Although he was the son of a tavern keeper, the Whig press portrayed him as an aristocrat whose expensive tastes in clothes, food, and furniture were signs of dangerous excess during an economic depression. Harrison really was a prosperous farmer and officer, but the Whigs characterized him as a simple frontiersman—a Natty Bumppo—who had risen to greatness through his own efforts. Whig claims were so extravagant that the Democratic press soon satirized Harrison in political cartoons showing a rustic hick swilling hard cider. The satire backfired. Whig newspapers and speechmakers seized on the image and sold Harrison, the longtime political insider, as a simple man of the people who truly lived in a log cabin.

**John Tyler** Virginia senator who left the Democratic Party after conflicts with Andrew Jackson; he was elected vice president in 1840 and became president when William Henry Harrison died in office.

## The Triumph of Manifest Destiny

- ★ **What forces in American life contributed to the concept of manifest destiny?**
- ★ **To what extent did the actions taken by American settlers in Oregon and Texas reflect the ideal of manifest destiny?**

The key to Harrison's success was the Whig Party's skillful manipulation of the former general's reputation as a frontiersman and popular advocate for westward expansion. The allure of the west—and the nationalistic appeals of seizing and occupying it—brought an

air of excitement to political discussion. It was this allure that helped to draw out the thousands of new voters in 1840 and would provide a new basis for political cooperation and contention in the years to come.

### The Rise of Manifest Destiny

The new spirit that came to life in American politics and rhetoric in the years after 1840 found expression in a single term: Manifest Destiny. To some extent, manifest destiny can be traced back to the sense of mission that had motivated colonial Puritans. Like John Winthrop and his Massachusetts Bay associates, many early-nineteenth-century Americans believed they had a duty to march into new lands. During the antebellum period, romantic nationalism, land hunger, and the evangelicism of the Second Great Awakening shaped this sense of divine mission into a new and powerful commitment to westward expansion. Many concluded that the westward movement was not just an economic process but was part of a divine plan for North America and the world.

Not surprisingly, the earliest and most aggressive proponents of expansion were Christian missionary organizations, whose many magazines, newsletters, and reports were the first to give it formal voice. Politicians, however, were not far behind. Democratic warhorse and expansion advocate Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri borrowed both the tone and content of missionary rhetoric in his speeches promoting generous land policies, territorial acquisition, and even overseas expansion. In 1825, Benton argued in favor of American colonization of the Pacific coast and of the world, bringing “great and wonderful benefits” to the western Indians and allowing “science, liberal principles in government, and true religion [to] cast their lights across the intervening sea.”

### Expansion to the North and West

One major complication standing in the way of the nation’s perceived manifest destiny was the fact that Spain, Britain, Russia, and other countries already owned large parts of the continent. This was particularly true in the case of the

**Oregon Question** The question of the national ownership of the Pacific Northwest; the United States and England renegotiated the boundary in 1846, establishing it at 49° north latitude.

**proviso** A clause making a qualification, condition, or restriction in a document.

**probate court** A court that establishes the validity of wills and administers the estates of people who have died.

**First Organic Laws** A constitution adopted by American settlers in the Oregon Country on July 5, 1843, establishing a government independent from Great Britain and requesting annexation by the United States.

**Oregon Question.** The vast Oregon tract had been claimed, at one time or another, by Spain, Russia, France, England, and the United States. By the 1820s, only England and the United States continued to contest for its ownership (see Map 12.1). At the close of the War of 1812, the two countries had been unable to settle their claims, and in 1818 had agreed to joint occupation of Oregon for ten years. They extended this arrangement indefinitely in 1827, with the **proviso** that either country could end it with one year’s notice.

Oregon’s status as neither British nor American presented its occupants with an unstable situation in which the Oregon Country had no laws. In 1841 settlers created a **probate court**, instructing it to follow the statutes of the state of New York, and appointed a committee to frame a constitution and draft a basic code of laws. Opposition from the British put an end to this early effort at self-rule, but the movement continued. Two years later, Americans in Oregon began agitating again, this time because of wolves preying on their livestock. They held a series of “Wolf Meetings” in 1843 to discuss joint protection and resolved to create a civil government. Although the British tried to prevent it, the assembly passed the **First Organic Laws** of Oregon on July 5, 1843, making Oregon an independent republic in all but name. Independence, however, was not the settlers’ long-term goal. The document’s preamble announced that the code of laws would continue in force “until such time as the United States of America extend their jurisdiction over us.”

**MAP 12.1 Oregon Territory**

This map shows the changing boundaries and shifting possession of the Oregon Country. As a result of Polk's aggressive stance and economic pressures, Britain ceded all land south of the 49th parallel to the United States in 1846.

### Revolution in Texas

Similar problems faced American settlers who had taken up residence in territories of Spain, and then of Mexico, in the Southwest. Although the Spanish and then the Mexican government had invited Anglo-Americans to settle in the region, these pioneers generally ignored Mexican customs, including their pledge to practice Roman Catholicism, and often disregarded Mexican law. This was particularly the case after 1829, when Mexico began attaching duties to trade items moving between the region and the neighboring United States. Mexico also abolished importing slaves. Bad feelings grew over the years, but the distant and politically unstable Mexican government could do little to enforce laws, customs, or faith. In addition, despite the friction between cultures in Texas, many Tejanos were disturbed by the corruption and political instability in Mexico City and were as eager as their Texian counterparts to participate in the United States' thriving cotton market.

Assuming responsibility for forging a peaceful settlement to the problems between settlers in Texas and the Mexican government, Stephen F. Austin went to Mexico City in 1833. While Austin was there, **Antonio López de Santa Anna** seized power after a series of revolutions and disputed elections. A former supporter of federalism and a key figure in the adoption of a republican constitution in 1824, Santa Anna had come to the conclusion that Mexico was not ready for democracy. Upon assuming power, he suspended the constitution and dismissed congress. When Santa Anna made it clear that he intended to exert his authority over Texas, Stephen Austin declared, "War is our only

### Antonio López de Santa Anna

Mexican general who was president of Mexico when he led an attack on the Alamo in 1836; he again led Mexico during its war with the United States in 1846–1848.

**Texas Revolution** A revolt by American colonists in Texas against Mexican rule; it began in 1835 and ended with the establishment of the Republic of Texas in 1836.

**Alamo** A fortified Franciscan mission at San Antonio; rebellious Texas colonists were besieged and annihilated there by Santa Anna's forces in 1836.

**Sam Houston** American general and politician who fought in the struggle for Texas's independence from Mexico and became president of the Republic of Texas.

**Treaty of Velasco** Treaty that Santa Anna signed in May 1836 after his capture at the San Jacinto River; it recognized the Republic of Texas but was later rejected by the Mexican congress.

**filibuster** To use obstructionist tactics, especially prolonged speechmaking, in order to delay legislative action.

**Webster-Ashburton Treaty** Treaty that in 1842 established the present border between Canada and northeastern Maine.

recourse.” He was immediately made chairman of a committee to call for a convention of delegates from all over Texas. Members of the group that convened referred to themselves as the “Consultation.”

Angered by the rebellion, Santa Anna personally led the Mexican army into Texas to quell the **Texas Revolution**, arriving in San Antonio on February 23, 1836. Knowing that Santa Anna was on his way, Texas commander William Travis moved his troops into the **Alamo**. On March 6, Santa Anna ordered an all-out assault, and despite sustaining staggering casualties, was able to capture the former mission. Most of the post's defenders were killed in the assault, and Santa Anna executed those who survived the battle, including former American congressman and frontier celebrity Davy Crockett.

Despite the loss at the Alamo, Texans continued to underestimate Santa Anna's strength and his resolve to put down the rebellion. After a series of defeats, however, the Texans, under the command of revolutionary **Sam Houston**, scored a stunning victory on April 21 at the San Jacinto River. Disguised in a private's uniform, Santa Anna attempted to escape but was captured and brought to Houston, who promised to release him in exchange for his officially recognizing Texas's independence and acknowledging the Rio Grande as the border between Texas and Mexico. Santa Anna agreed, signing the **Treaty of Velasco** on May 14, 1836.

As in Oregon, many leaders in Texas hoped their actions would lead to swift annexation by the United States. In 1838 Houston, by then president of the Republic of Texas, invited the United States to annex Texas. Because all of Texas lay below the Missouri Compromise line, John Quincy Adams, now a member of the House of Representatives, **filibustered** for three weeks against the acquisition of such a massive block of potential slave territory. Bedeviled with the Panic of 1837, Van Buren declined to push for annexation. For the next nine years, Texas remained an independent republic.

### The Politics of Manifest Destiny

Although Adams was typical of one wing of the Whig coalition, he certainly did not speak for the majority of Whigs on the topic of national expansion. The party of manufacturing, revivalism, and social reform inclined naturally toward the blending of political, economic, and religious evangelicalism that was manifest destiny. And when Harrison died soon after taking office in 1841, his vice president, John Tyler, picked up the torch of American expansionism.

Tyler was a less typical Whig than even Adams. A Virginian and a states' rights advocate, he had been a staunch Democrat until the nullification crisis, when he bolted the party to protest Jackson's strong assertion of federal power. As president, Tyler seemed still to be more Democrat than Whig. He vetoed high protective tariffs, internal improvement bills that he perceived as unnecessary, and attempts to revive the Second Bank of the United States. In fact, during Tyler's administration, Whigs accomplished only two moderate goals: they eliminated Van Buren's hated treasury system, and they passed a slightly higher tariff. Tyler's refusal to promote Whig economic policies led to a general crisis in government in 1843, when his entire cabinet resigned over his veto of a bank bill.

Tyler did share his party's desire for expansion, however. He assigned his secretary of state, Daniel Webster, to negotiate a treaty with Britain to settle a dispute over the border between Maine and Canada. The resulting **Webster-Ashburton Treaty** (1842) finally established the nation's northeastern border. Tyler also pushed a forceful policy toward Texas and the Southwest. With Sam Houston repeating his invitation for the United States to annex Texas, negotiations between Houston's representatives and



Tyler's secretary of state—now John C. Calhoun—led to a treaty of annexation on April 11, 1844. In line with the Treaty of Velasco, the annexation document named the Rio Grande as the southern boundary of Texas. Annexation remained a major arguing point between proslavery and antislavery forces, however, and the treaty failed ratification in the Senate. The issue of Texas annexation then joined the Oregon Question as a major campaign issue in the presidential election of 1844.

### Expansion and the Election of 1844

As the Whigs and the Democrats geared up for a national election, it became clear that expansion would be the key issue. This put the two leading political figures of the day, Democrat Martin Van Buren and Whig Henry Clay, in an uncomfortable position. Van Buren was on record as opposing the extension of slavery and was therefore against the annexation of Texas. Clay, the architect of the American System, was opposed to any form of uncontrolled expansion, especially if it meant fanning sectional tensions, and he too opposed immediate annexation of Texas. Approaching the election, both issued statements to the effect that they would back annexation only with Mexico's consent.

Despite Clay's ambiguous stance on expansion, President Tyler's constant refusal to support the larger Whig political agenda led the party to nominate Clay anyway. Van Buren was not so lucky. The strong southern wing of the Democratic Party was so put off by Van Buren's position on slavery that it blocked him, securing the nomination of Tennessee congressman **James K. Polk**.

The Democrats based their platform on the issues surrounding Oregon and Texas. They implied that the regions rightfully belonged to the United States, stating "that the *re-occupation* of Oregon and the *reannexation* of Texas at the earliest practicable period are great American measures," a position that implied Texas had wrongly been transferred to Spain in the Adams-Onís Treaty. The Democrats played up both regions to appeal to the manifest destiny sentiments of both northerners and southerners. For his part, Clay continued to waffle on expansionism, emphasizing economic policies instead.

The election demonstrated the people's commitment to manifest destiny. Clay was a national figure, well respected and regarded as one of the nation's leading statesmen, whereas Polk was barely known outside Tennessee. Still, Polk polled forty thousand more popular votes than Clay and garnered sixty-five more electoral votes. Seeing the election as a political barometer, outgoing president Tyler prepared a special message to Congress in December 1844 proposing a **joint resolution** annexing Texas. Many congressmen who had opposed annexation could not ignore the clear mandate given to manifest destiny in the presidential election, and the bill to annex Texas passed in February 1845, just as Tyler prepared to turn the White House over to his Democratic successor.

Holding to the position he had taken prior to the election, Polk asked Congress to end the joint occupation of Oregon in his annual message for 1845. Twisting the largely forgotten Monroe Doctrine, the president insisted that no nation other than the United States should be permitted to occupy any part of North America and urged Congress to assert exclusive control over the Oregon Country even if doing so meant war.

Neither the United States nor Britain intended to go to war over Oregon. The only issue—where the border would be—was a matter for the bargaining table, not the battlefield. Polk insisted on 54°40'. The British lobbied for the Columbia River as the boundary, but their position softened quickly. The fur trade along the Columbia was in rapid decline and had become unprofitable by the early 1840s. As a result, in the spring of

**James K. Polk** Tennessee congressman who was a leader of the Democratic Party and the dark-horse winner of the presidential campaign in 1844.

**joint resolution** A formal statement adopted by both houses of Congress and subject to approval by the president; if approved, it has the force of law.

1846, the British foreign secretary offered Polk a compromise boundary at the 49th parallel. The Senate recommended that Polk accept the offer, and a treaty settling the Oregon Question was ratified on June 15, 1846.

### The War with Mexico and Sectional Crisis

Although the nation's border issues were now settled from Congress's point of view, the joint resolution annexing Texas and establishing the Rio Grande as its southern border led Mexico's popular press to demand an end to diplomatic relations with the United States. The government did so immediately, threatening war. Polk added to the tension, and appeared to confirm Mexican fears, by declaring that the entire Southwest should be annexed.

Late in 1845, the president dispatched John Slidell to Mexico City to negotiate the boundary dispute. He also authorized Slidell to purchase New Mexico and California if possible. At the same time, Polk dispatched American troops to Louisiana, ready to strike if Mexico resisted Slidell's offers. He also notified Americans in California that if war broke out with Mexico, the Pacific fleet would seize California ports and support an insurrection against Mexican authority.

Nervous but bristling over what seemed to be preparations for war, the Mexican government refused to receive Slidell; in January 1846 he sent word to the president that his mission was a failure. Polk then ordered **Zachary Taylor** to lead troops from New Orleans toward the Rio Grande into a disputed zone that had never been part of Mexican Texas. Shortly thereafter, an American military party led by **John C. Frémont** entered California's Salinas Valley. Reaching an end to its patience, on April 22 Mexico proclaimed that its territory had been violated by the United States and declared war. Two days later, Mexican troops engaged a detachment of Taylor's army at Matamoros on the Rio Grande, killing eleven and capturing the rest. When news of the battle reached Washington, Polk immediately called for war. Although the nation was far from united on the issue, Congress agreed on May 13, 1846 (see Map 12.2).

The outbreak of war disturbed many Americans. In New England, for example, protest ran high. Transcendentalist Henry David Thoreau chose to be jailed rather than pay taxes that would support the war. It was not expansion as such that troubled Thoreau, but the connection between Texas annexation and slavery. To southerners, the broad stretch of land lying south of 36°30' (the Missouri Compromise line) represented both economic and political power: the adoption of proslavery constitutions in newly acquired territories would strengthen the South's economic and political interests in Congress. Northerners were perturbed by these implications but saw something even more alarming in the southern expansion movement. Since the Missouri Compromise (1820), some northerners had come to believe that a slaveholding **oligarchy** controlled life and politics in the South. Abolitionists warned that this "Slave Power" sought to expand its reach until it controlled every aspect of American life. Many viewed Congress's adoption of the gag rule in 1836 and the drive to annex Texas as evidence of the Slave Power's influence. Debates over Texas pitted two regions of the country against each other in what champions of both sides regarded as mortal combat.

Serious political combat began in August 1846 when David Wilmot, a Democratic representative from Pennsylvania, proposed an amendment to a military appropriations bill specifying that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist" in any territory gained in the War with Mexico. The **Wilmot Proviso** passed in the House of Representatives but failed in the Senate, where equal state representation gave the South a stronger position. At Polk's request, Wilmot refused to propose his proviso when the

**Zachary Taylor** American general whose defeat of Santa Anna at Buena Vista in 1847 made him a national hero and the Whig choice for president in 1848.

**John C. Frémont** Explorer, soldier, and politician who explored and mapped much of the American West and Northwest; he later ran unsuccessfully for president.

**oligarchy** A small group of people or families who hold power.

**Wilmot Proviso** Amendment to an appropriations bill in 1846 proposing that any territory acquired from Mexico be closed to slavery; it was defeated in the Senate.

# Investigating America

## James K. Polk's War Message to Congress, 1846

President Polk and his secretary of state, James Buchanan, had nearly finished drafting a war message to Congress when word arrived in Washington that fighting had begun near the Rio Grande. After spending Sunday morning at church, Polk revised the message, which, following nineteenth-century tradition, he submitted rather than read to Congress. It read in part:

.....  
**T**he strong desire to establish peace with Mexico on liberal and honorable terms, and the readiness of this Government to regulate and adjust our boundary and other causes of difference with that power on such fair and equitable principles as would lead to permanent relations of the most friendly nature, induced me in September last to seek the reopening of diplomatic relations between the two countries. . . . An envoy of the United States repaired to Mexico with full powers to adjust every existing difference. But though present on the Mexican soil by agreement between the two Governments, invested with full powers, and bearing evidence of the most friendly dispositions, his mission has been unavailing. The Mexican Government not only refused to receive him or listen to his propositions, but after a long-continued series of menaces have at last invaded our territory and shed the blood of our fellow-citizens on our own soil. . . .

Meantime Texas, by the final action of our Congress, had become an integral part of our Union. The Congress of Texas, by its act of December 19, 1836, had declared the Rio del Norte [the Rio Grande] to be the boundary of that Republic. Its jurisdiction had been extended and exercised beyond the Nueces [River]. The country between that river and the Del Norte had been represented in the Congress and in the convention of Texas, had thus taken part in the act of annexation itself, and is now included within one of our Congressional districts. Our own Congress had, moreover, with great unanimity, by the act approved December 31, 1845, recognized the country beyond the Nueces as a part of our territory. . . . Accordingly, on the 13th of January last

instructions were issued to the general [Taylor] in command of these troops to occupy the left bank of the Del Norte. This river, which is the southwestern boundary of the State of Texas, is an exposed frontier. From this quarter invasion was threatened. . . .

The Mexican forces at Matamoras assumed a belligerent attitude, and on the 12th of April General Ampudia, then in command, notified General Taylor to break up his camp within twenty-four hours and to retire beyond the Nueces River, and in the event of his failure to comply with these demands announced that arms, and arms alone, must decide the question. But no open act of hostility was committed until the 24th of April. On that day General Arista, who had succeeded to the command of the Mexican forces, communicated to General Taylor that "he considered hostilities commenced and should prosecute them." A party of dragoons of 63 men and officers were on the same day dispatched from the American camp up the Rio del Norte, on its left bank, to ascertain whether the Mexican troops had crossed or were preparing to cross the river, "became engaged with a large body of these troops, and after a short affair, in which some 16 were killed and wounded, appear to have been surrounded and compelled to surrender."

.....

- Examine Map 12.2, and find the two rivers in question. Was the issue as clear as the president argued here?
- Both Mexico and the United States claimed to have been invaded, yet even some Americans doubted this to be true. Whig Congressman Abraham Lincoln demanded that Polk bring a map to Congress to show the precise "spot" of American land where blood was shed. To what extent might the border dispute in southern Texas have masked Polk's larger objectives regarding the purchase of California?

Excerpted from President James Polk's War Message to Congress, 1846.



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

**MAP 12.2 The Southwest and the Mexican War**

When the United States acquired Texas, it inherited the Texans' boundary disputes with Mexico. This map shows the outcome: war with Mexico in 1846 and the acquisition of the disputed territories in Texas as well as most of Arizona, New Mexico, and California through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.



House reconsidered the war appropriations bill, but Van Buren Democrats defied Polk by attaching the amendment again, and the House approved it once more. Again the Senate rejected the amended bill. The House finally decided in April to appropriate money for the war without stipulating whether or not slavery would be permitted.

While all this political infighting was going on in Washington, D.C., a real war was going on in the Southwest. In California, American settlers rallied in open rebellion in the Sacramento Valley. Crafting a flag that depicted a grizzly bear, they announced the birth of the independent Bear Flag Republic. Frémont's force joined the Bear Flag rebels, and when the little army arrived in Monterey on July 19, they found that the Pacific fleet had already acted on Polk's orders and seized the city. The Mexican forces were in full flight southward. In Texas, Taylor marched across the Rio Grande and headed for the Mexican city of Monterrey, which he attacked in September 1846. From Monterrey, Taylor planned to turn southward toward Mexico City and lead the main attack against the Mexican capital, but politics intervened.

After Taylor's successful siege at Monterrey, Polk began to perceive the popular general as a political threat. In an attempt to undermine Taylor's political appeal, Polk turned the war effort over to Winfield Scott, ordering Scott to gather an army at the port of Tampico, on the Gulf of Mexico. Drawing men from Taylor's and other forces, Scott was then to sail down to Veracruz, from which the army was to move inland to take Mexico City (see Map 12.2). While Taylor stalled a Mexican force under Santa Anna at the





An American private, Samuel E. Chamberlain, made this drawing of the Battle of Buena Vista. Present at the battle, Chamberlain watched as Mexican forces overran an artillery emplacement. The Americans eventually turned the tide, and the battle came out a draw. Even so, troops under Santa Anna were forced to retreat into the Mexican interior, spoiling the general's hope for a quick and easy victory against the invading Americans. "Battle of Buena Vista" by Samuel Chamberlain, 1847. San Jacinto Museum of History Association.

Battle of Buena Vista, Scott's forces captured Veracruz on March 9. Marching relentlessly toward Mexico City, Scott and his force routed the Mexican defenders and captured the city on September 13, 1847.

Scott's enormous success immediately became a liability to a formal truce: Santa Anna's government collapsed, leaving no one to negotiate with American peace commissioner Nicholas Trist. The Mexican government finally elected a new president and on November 11 informed Trist that it was ready to begin negotiations. Finally, on February 2, 1848, Trist and the Mexican delegation signed the **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo**, granting the United States all the territory between the Nueces River and the Rio Grande and between there and the Pacific. In exchange, Trist agreed that the United States would pay Mexico \$15 million, and he committed the United States to honoring all claims made by Texans for damages resulting from the war. Although President Polk had begun to consider annexing all of Mexico, many antislavery voices loudly protested bringing so much land south of the Missouri Compromise line into the Union. Others opposed the annexation of Mexico because they feared that the largely Roman Catholic population might be a threat to Protestant institutions in the United States. Still others, many of whom had opposed the war to begin with, had moral objections to taking any territory by force. Perhaps more convincing than any of these arguments, however, was the fact that the war had cost a lot of money, and congressmen were unwilling to allocate more if peace was within reach. Polk submitted the treaty Trist had negotiated, and the Senate approved it by a vote of thirty-eight to fourteen.

**Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo** Treaty (1848) in which Mexico gave up Texas above the Rio Grande and ceded New Mexico and California to the United States in return for \$15 million.

# Summary

The acquisition of Texas and the Southwest, even at the cost of war, marked the end of an era of dynamic growth and change. The United States extended from Atlantic to Pacific, and although vast areas in between remained unexplored and unsettled, the nation's manifest destiny to occupy every inch of North America seemed well on its way to completion.

Americans responded in many different ways to the unsettling changes that had been taking place as part of this Great Transformation. Different economic classes responded by creating their own cultures and by adopting specific strategies for dealing with anxiety. Some chose violent protest, some passive resistance. Some looked to heaven for solutions and others to earthly utopias. And out of this complex swirl, something entirely new and unexpected emerged: a new America, on its way to being socially, politically, intellectually, and culturally modern.

A new generation emerged that grasped greedily at the new opportunities offered by new economic and

cultural arrangements. Literacy grew as never before in the nation's history and with it a thirst for new knowledge. Book publishers, magazine editors, and charitable societies competed to meet this new demand for information and entertainment. As expanding media made more people more aware of issues taking place nationwide, they were drawn into politics as never before, resulting in a historic turnout in the presidential election of 1840.

In that election, William Henry Harrison, a man who had become a national figure by fighting against Indian sovereignty and for westward expansion, swept a new sentiment into national politics. Increasingly Americans came to believe that the West would provide the solutions to the problems ushered in during the Great Transformation. In the short term, this notion led Americans to embark on an exciting race toward the Pacific. But different visions about how the West would solve the nation's problems soon added to the ever-growing air of crisis.

## Key Terms

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# Sectional Conflict and Shattered Union

## 1848–1860

## CHAPTER 13

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Frederick Douglass

In 1838, Frederick Douglass, a slave living in Baltimore, decided that he would try to escape. This was no sudden impulse; Douglass had been thinking about escape and freedom for most of his life. As a young boy he told his white friends, “You will be free as soon as you are twenty-one, *but I am a slave for life!*” He had tried once before to make his way to freedom, but was captured and returned to his owner. Though his master threatened to sell him to a cotton plantation in Alabama, Douglass’s intelligence and skills were worth more in Baltimore: he was made an apprentice at the local shipyard, eventually becoming a master ship caulker. His productivity earned him a good deal of freedom: he made his own contracts, set his own work schedule, and collected his own earnings. But his desire for freedom never abated. “I have observed this in my experience of slavery,” Douglass commented, “that whenever my condition was improved, instead of its increasing my contentment, it only increased my desire to be free.”

Like most successful runaways, Douglass had the advantage of living in a border region, near free territory, and had an unusual degree of personal freedom and economic independence. Using a wide network of personal connections, he raised money and secured forged documents that entitled him to pass unmolested through slave territory. On September 3, Douglass disguised himself as a merchant sailor and boarded a train heading north out of Baltimore. Switching from train to ferry boat, ferry boat to steamship, steamship back to train, and finally train back to ferry boat, Douglass made his way northward, arriving in New York City early on the morning of September 4. Although he had a couple of close calls, Douglass’s escape had succeeded.

Douglass now was free, but the promised land of the non-slave North proved disappointing. Moving to the town of New Bedford, Massachusetts, where he hoped to earn a living in the boatyards, Douglass found that “such was the strength of

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### ***New Political Options***

Politicizing Slavery: The Election of 1848

Disaffected Voices and Political Dissent

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Frederick Douglass’s Fourth of July Oration

The Politics of Compromise

A Changing Political Economy

Political Instability and the Election of 1852

Increasing Tension Under Pierce

#### ***Toward a House Divided***

Bleeding Kansas

Bringing Slavery Home to the North

#### **IT MATTERS TODAY:** The Dred Scott Case

The Dominance of Sectionalism

#### ***The Divided Nation***

The Election of 1860

The First Wave of Secession

Responses to Disunion

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**

Alexander Stephens’s Cornerstone Speech, 1861

#### ***The Nation Dissolved***

Lincoln, Sumter, and War

Choosing Sides in Virginia

Trouble Along the Border

#### ***Summary***



#### **FREDERICK DOUGLASS**

*Seeking economic self-sufficiency and personal freedom, Douglass chose to escape from slavery in 1838 to seek employment as a free man in Massachusetts. Facing severe racial discrimination, Douglass had difficulty making a living until abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison heard him speak at an antislavery rally. Garrison promoted Douglass as a lecturer and he soon became recognized as one of the most effective abolitionist activists in the country.*

*Samuel J. Miller, American, 1822–1888, Frederick Douglass, 1847–52, Cased half-plate daguerreotype, Major Acquisitions Centennial Endowment, 1996.433, The Art Institute of Chicago. Photography © The Art Institute of Chicago.*



prejudice against color, among the white caulkers, that they refused to work with me, and of course I could get no employment.” For three years he was forced to do odd jobs to keep himself and his wife alive. “There was no work too hard—none too dirty,” he recalled. Despite this decline in status and earnings, Douglass never regretted his choice of freedom, and when he attended an antislavery conference in Nantucket, Douglass stood to speak about his experiences. Famed abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison heard Douglass’s speech, declaring that “Patrick Henry, of revolutionary fame, never made a speech more eloquent in the cause of liberty.” Garrison was so moved that he offered to support Douglass as a lecturer in the antislavery cause, and Douglass accepted. Having experienced both slavery in the South and racial discrimination in the North, Douglass chose to speak out for the cause of racial equality for the next fifty years.

**A**lthough Frederick Douglass was not a politician, he was hardly immune to the political wrangling going on around him. Like many Americans, Douglass’s life was in a state of constant upheaval as politicians engaged in abstract power games that had all-too-real consequences.

Struggles over tariffs, coinage, internal improvements, public land policy, and dozens of other practical issues intersected in complicated ways with the over-inflated egos of power-hungry politicians to create an air of political contention and national crisis. The discovery of gold in California followed by a massive rush of Americans into the new territory added greed to the equation. Then strong-willed men such as Jefferson Davis and Stephen A. Douglas threw more fuel on the fire as they fought over the best—that is, most profitable and politically advantageous—route for a transcontinental railroad that would tie California’s wealth to the rest of the nation. The halls of Congress rang with debate, denunciation, and even physical violence.

Beneath it all lurked an institution that Frederick Douglass knew all too well: slavery. In a changing society rife with the problems of expansion, immigration, industrialization, and urbanization, political leaders tried either to seek compromise or to ignore the slavery question altogether. In reality, they could do neither. As the nation’s leaders wrestled with a host of new issues, the confrontation between northern and southern societies peaked. Although many people wanted peace and favored reconciliation, ultimately both sides rejected compromise, leading to the end of the Union and the beginning of America’s most destructive and deadly war.

## New Political Options

- ★ **How did the presidential election in 1848 help to foster political dissent?**
- ★ **How did events in Europe help to push the American economy forward during the 1850s? In what ways did this contribute to growing political tensions?**

The 1848 presidential election celebrated American expansion and nationalism, but at the same time it revealed a strong undercurrent of dissent. The political system held together during the election, and the existing parties managed to maintain the politics of avoidance, but the successes enjoyed by Free Soil challengers were evidence that significant problems churned under the surface. It was clear to many that the nation’s



# Chronology

<b>1848</b>	Zachary Taylor elected president Immigration to United States exceeds 100,000 Revolutions in France, Germany, and Hungary	<b>1856</b>	James Buchanan elected president Demise of Know-Nothing Party
<b>1850</b>	Compromise of 1850	<b>1857</b>	<i>Dred Scott</i> decision Proslavery Lecompton constitution adopted in Kansas
<b>1852</b>	First railroad line completed to Chicago Harriet Beecher Stowe's <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> Franklin Pierce elected president Whig Party collapses Know-Nothing Party emerges	<b>1858</b>	Lincoln-Douglas debates Minnesota admitted to Union
<b>1853</b>	Gadsden Purchase	<b>1859</b>	Oregon admitted to Union John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry Darwin's <i>Origin of Species</i> published
<b>1854</b>	Republican Party formed Kansas-Nebraska Act Ostend Manifesto	<b>1860</b>	Abraham Lincoln elected president Crittenden compromise fails
<b>1855</b>	Proslavery posse sacks Lawrence, Kansas Pottawatomie Massacre	<b>1861</b>	Confederate States of America formed Fort Sumter shelled Federal troops occupy Maryland and Missouri Confederate troops occupy east Tennessee

political system was not meeting their economic and ideological needs, and they began looking for new options. Efforts at compromise might save the nation from the immediate consequences of growth, modernization, and sectional tension, but crisis clearly was in the air.

## Politicizing Slavery: The Election of 1848

The American victory in the War with Mexico was an enormous shot in the arm for American nationalism and manifest destiny, but it also brought the divisive issue of slavery back into mainstream politics to a degree unknown since the Missouri Compromise. Opposed to slavery expansion for both political and ethical reasons, Congressman David Wilmot had broken a gentlemen's agreement among congressmen to skirt around slavery issues, firmly wedding American expansion and slavery in the minds of many. Even a largely apolitical nonconformist like Henry David Thoreau found the connection obvious, and protested the war for that reason.

Of course, being opposed to the expansion of slavery was not the same thing as opposing the institution of slavery itself, and antislavery sentiments were still not widespread among the American people during the 1840s. However, as the debates over the Mexican War indicate, abolitionist voices were getting louder and more politically insistent. Despite strong and sometimes violent opposition, the abolition movement had continued to grow, especially among the privileged and educated classes in the Northeast. Throughout the 1830s, evangelicals increasingly stressed the sinful nature of slavery, urging the immediate, uncompensated liberation of slaves.

Sojourner Truth was a remarkable woman for her time, or for any time. One anecdote claims that a white policeman in New York state demanded that she identify herself. Using her cane to thrust herself upright to her full six feet of height, she boomed out the same words that God used to identify himself to Moses: “I am that I am.” The policeman was unnerved and scurried away. Showing such bravery and pride in both her race and sex, it is little wonder that she commanded great respect in both antislavery and women’s rights circles throughout her lifetime. Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College.



William Lloyd Garrison, however, consistently alienated his followers. Calling the Constitution “a covenant with death and an agreement with hell,” Garrison burned a copy of it, telling his followers, “so perish all compromises with tyranny,” and he urged them to have no dealings with a government that permitted so great an evil as slavery. Citing the reluctance of most organized churches to condemn slavery outright, Garrison urged his followers to break with them as well. He also offended many of his white evangelical supporters by associating with and supporting free black advocates of abolition.

**Sojourner Truth** Abolitionist and feminist who was freed from slavery in 1827 and became a leading preacher against slavery and for the rights of women.

During the 1830s, even moderates within the abolition movement had celebrated Frederick Douglass, **Sojourner Truth**, and other African American abolitionists, welcoming them as members of the American Anti-Slavery Society. But more insistent black voices frightened white abolitionists. African American abolitionist David Walker cried, “The whites want slaves, and want us for their slaves, but some of them will curse the day they ever saw us.” Walker advocated that African Americans should “kill or be killed.” Another black spokesman, Henry Highland Garnet, proclaimed, “Strike for your lives and liberties. Now is the day and hour. Let every slave in the land do this and the days of slavery are numbered. Rather die freemen than live to be slaves.”

Garrison’s sentiments mobilized some, but most of his followers were more conservative. Efforts by moderate antislavery supporters to bring limited abolitionism into the political mainstream meshed with the political aspirations of both those who opposed

slavery's expansion primarily for political and economic reasons and those who were motivated by purely ethical concerns. Hoping to cash in on the popular attention created by debates over slavery during the War with Mexico, moderates in 1840 challenged both Whig and Democrat ambivalence by forming a third political party: the **Liberty Party**.

Specifically disavowing Garrison's radical aims, Liberty Party leaders argued that slavery would eventually die on its own if it could be confined geographically. In addition, the Liberty Party called for the abolition of slavery in Washington, D.C., and in all the territories where it already existed. This moderate message, though certainly more popular than Garrison's radical appeals, drew little open political support: In 1840, Liberty Party presidential candidate James G. Birney had garnered only about seven thousand out of the nearly 2.5 million votes cast. But in 1844, when he again ran on the Liberty Party ticket, he won sixty-two thousand popular votes. Clearly a moderate antislavery position was becoming more acceptable.

Even in the face of such evidence, both major parties continued to practice the politics of avoidance. Suffering ill health, Polk chose not to run for a second term in 1848, leaving the Democrats scrambling for a candidate. They chose as their presidential candidate Lewis Cass of Michigan—a longtime moderate on slavery issues who advocated **popular sovereignty** for the new territories. The Whigs hoped to ride a wave of nationalism following the War with Mexico by running military hero Zachary Taylor, a Louisianan and a slaveholder, for president and moderate New Yorker Millard Fillmore for vice president.

As in 1840 and 1844, it took a third party to cut to the heart of the issues. Promoting the candidacy of antislavery advocate Martin Van Buren, the Free Soil Party emerged in 1848 announcing as its slogan "Free soil, free speech, free labor, and free men." It continued to advance the moderate antislavery position proposed by the now defunct Liberty Party. Though overshadowed by the two traditional parties, Van Buren's new coalition won nearly 300,000 votes. In the end, however, Taylor and the mainstream Whigs were able to claim the presidency.

### Disaffected Voices and Political Dissent

It did not take long after the election of 1848 for cracks in the system to become more prominent. In an effort to compete with Democrats in northeastern cities, the Whigs had tried to win Catholic and immigrant voters away from the rival party. The strategy backfired. Not only did the Whigs fail to attract large numbers of immigrants, but they alienated two core groups among their existing supporters. One such group was artisans, who saw immigrants as the main source of their economic and social woes. The other was Protestant evangelicals, to whom Roman Catholic Irish and German immigrants symbolized all that was wrong in the world and threatening to the American republic. Whig leaders could do little to address these voters' immediate concerns, and increasing numbers left the Whig Party to form state and local coalitions more in tune with their hopes and fears.

One of the most prominent of these locally oriented groups was the anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant **Know-Nothings**. This loosely knit political organization traced its origins back to secret **nativist** societies that had come into existence during the ethnic tension and rioting in Philadelphia, Boston, and New York in the 1830s. These secret fraternal groups at first dabbled in politics by endorsing candidates who shared their **xenophobic** views. Remaining underground, they told their members to say "I know nothing" if they were questioned about the organization or its political intrigues, hence the name Know-Nothings.

**Liberty Party** The first antislavery political party; it was formed in Albany, New York, in 1840.

**popular sovereignty** Policy by which a territory's citizens would decide whether or not to legalize slavery at the time they applied for statehood.

**Know-Nothings** Members of anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant organizations who eventually formed themselves into a national political party.

**nativist** Favoring native-born inhabitants of a country over immigrants.

**xenophobic** Fearful of or hateful toward foreigners or those seen as being different.

# Investigating America

## Frederick Douglass's Fourth of July Oration, 1852

After escaping from slavery and then experiencing continuing denigration in the North, Frederick Douglass eventually became a very effective speaker for the abolition cause. Always very direct, Douglass often said things to white audiences that they *really* did not want to hear. In 1852 the Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society of Rochester invited Douglass to speak at its Fourth of July celebration. The audience was extremely shocked by what he said.

.....

Fellow-citizens, pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here to-day? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us? and am I, therefore, called upon to bring out humble offering to the national altar, and to confess the benefits and express devout gratitude for the blessings resulting from your independence to us? . . .

But such is not the state of the case. I say it with a sad sense of the disparity between us. I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The

blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common. The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought life and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth [of] July is yours, *not* mine. . . .

Fellow-citizens; above your national, tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions! whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are, to-day, rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them. If I do forget, if I do not faithfully remember those bleeding children of sorrow this day, "may my right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!" To forget them, to pass lightly over their wrongs, and to chime in with the popular theme, would be treason most scandalous and shocking, and would make me a reproach before God and the world.

.....

- To whom is Douglass referring here? Whom did he consider his constituency to be?
- What is Douglass's point in denying connection to the holiday about which he had been invited to speak?



**See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.**

Increasingly after 1848, these secretive groups became more public and more vocal. To the artisans and others who formed the core of the Know-Nothing movement, the issues of slavery and sectionalism that seemed to dominate the national political debate were nothing but devices being used by political insiders and the established parties to divert ordinary Americans from real issues of concern. The Know-Nothings pointed instead at immigration, loss of job security, urban crowding and violence, and political corruption as the true threats to American liberties. They built a platform charging that immigrants were part of a Catholic plot to overthrow democracy in the United States. Seeking to counter this perceived threat, they contended that "Americans must rule America" and urged a twenty-one-year naturalization period, a ban against naturalized citizens holding public office, and the use of the Protestant Bible in public schools.

Many Know-Nothings had deep ties with the evangelical Protestant movement and indeed represented one dimension of Christian dissent, but not all Protestant dissenters shared their single-mindedness. Many evangelical reformers believed the nation was beset by a host of evils that imperiled its existence. Progress without Christian principles and individual morality, they thought, posed a great danger for the United States, and they viewed slavery, alcohol, Catholicism, religious heresy, and corrupt government as



threats to the nation's moral fiber. In their efforts to create moral government and to direct national destiny, these reformers advocated social reform through both religious and political action. Temperance was one of the more prominent topics of their political concern. The war on alcohol had made great gains since the 1830s: thirteen states had enacted laws prohibiting the manufacture and sale of liquor. Overall, however, progress seemed slow, and like Know-Nothings and others, temperance advocates became increasingly impatient with the traditional political parties.

Although none of these movements alone was capable of overturning the ruling political order, they were all symptomatic of serious problems perceived by growing numbers of citizens. Although there were serious differences in the problems that each of these groups emphasized, they shared a number of perceptions in common. All that was missing was a catalyst that could bind them together into a unified dissenting force.

### The Politics of Compromise

While dissidents of various types attacked the political parties from outside, problems raised by national expansion were continuing to erode party unity from within. Immediately after Zachary Taylor's election in 1848, California's future became a new divisive issue.

California presented a peculiar political problem. Once word reached the rest of the nation that California was rich with gold, politicians immediately began grasping for control over the newly acquired territory. Although large parts of the area lay below the 36° 30' line set for slavery expansion by the Missouri Compromise, that legislation applied only to territory acquired in the Louisiana Purchase. In addition, the failure of Congress to pass Wilmot's Proviso left the question of slavery in the new territories wide open.

Having been primarily responsible for crafting the earlier compromise, Henry Clay took it upon himself to find a solution to the new situation. Clay was convinced that any successful agreement would have to address all sides of the issue. He thus proposed a complex **omnibus** bill to the Senate on January 20, 1850. California would enter the Union as a free state, but the slavery question would be left to popular sovereignty in all other territories acquired through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The bill also directed Texas to drop a continuing border dispute with New Mexico in exchange for federal assumption of Texas's public debt. Then, to appease abolitionists, Clay called for an end to the slave trade in Washington, D.C., and balanced that with a clause popular with southerners: a new, more effective **fugitive slave law**.

Although Clay was trying to please all sectional interests, the omnibus bill satisfied no one; Congress debated it without resolution for seven months. Despite appeals to reason by Clay and Daniel Webster, Congress remained hopelessly deadlocked. Finally, in July 1850, Clay's proposals were defeated. The 73-year-old political veteran left the capital tired and dispirited, but **Stephen A. Douglas** of Illinois set himself to the task of reviving the compromise. Using practical economic arguments and backroom political arm twisting, Douglas proposed each component of Clay's omnibus package as a separate bill, steering each forward toward a comprehensive compromise. Finally, in September, Congress passed the **Compromise of 1850** (see Map 13.1).

The Compromise of 1850 did little to relieve underlying regional differences and only aggravated political dissent. That slaveowners could pursue runaway slaves into northern states and return them into bondage brought slavery too close to home for many northerners. Among both white and African American antislavery activists during the 1850s, the fugitive slave law fueled support for the **Underground Railroad**. This

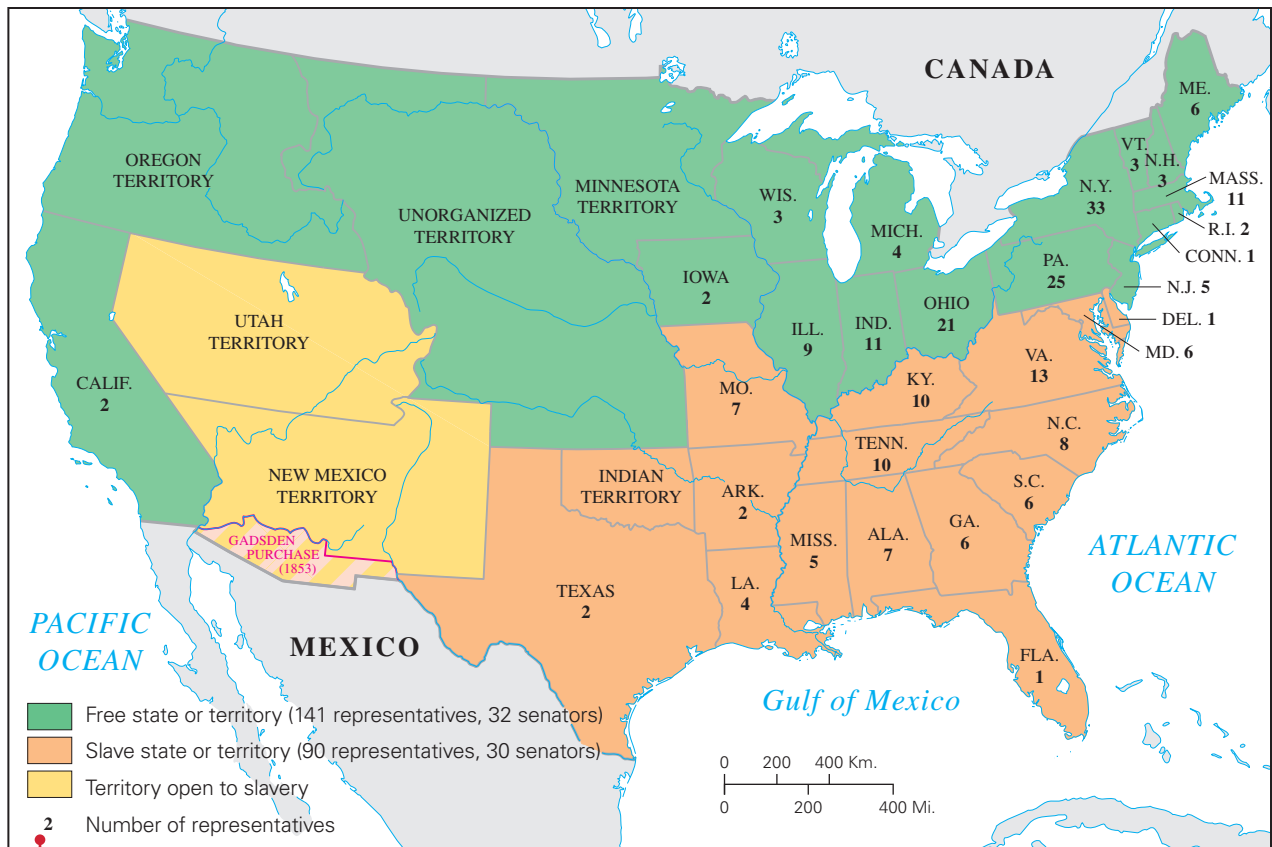
**omnibus** Including or covering many matters; an omnibus bill is a piece of legislation with many parts.

**fugitive slave law** Law providing for the return of escaped slaves to their owners.

**Stephen A. Douglas** Illinois senator who tried to reconcile northern and southern differences over slavery through the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

**Compromise of 1850** Plan intended to reconcile the North and the South on the issue of slavery; it recognized the principle of popular sovereignty and included a strong fugitive slave law.

**Underground Railroad** The loose network of northerners who helped fugitive slaves escape to Canada or to safe areas in free states.



**MAP 13.1** The Compromise of 1850

The acquisition of Texas and California brought a showdown between the North and the South over representation in the national government. As this map shows, the Compromise of 1850 permitted Texas and California to be admitted to the Union without seriously undermining the balance of power in the Senate. In the House of Representatives, however, the balance favored the North.

loose network provided accommodations and aid for runaway slaves bound for safety in Canada along escape routes through northern territory hostile to the fugitive slave law.

Nor did southerners find any reason to celebrate the compromise: Admission of another nonslave state further drained their power in Congress and slavery had gained no positive protection, either in the territories or at home. Still, the compromise created a brief respite from the slavery-extension question at a time when the nation's attention increasingly needed to focus on other major changes in national life.

### A Changing Political Economy

In the years following the Compromise of 1850, American economic and territorial growth continued to play a destabilizing role in both national and regional development. Most notably, during the 1850s industrial growth accelerated, further altering the nation's economic structure. By 1860 less than half of all northern workers made a living from agriculture as northern industry became more concentrated. Steam began to replace water as the primary power source, and factories were no longer limited to locations along rivers and streams. The use of interchangeable parts became more sophisticated and intricate. In 1851, for example, Isaac Singer devised an assembly

line using this technology and began mass-producing sewing machines, fostering a boom in ready-made clothing. As industry expanded, the North became more reliant on the West and South for raw materials and for the food consumed by those working in northeastern factories.

Railroad development stimulated economic and industrial growth. Between 1850 and 1860, the miles of railroad track in the United States increased from 9,000 to more than 30,000. The vast majority of these lines linked the Northeast with the Midwest, carrying produce to eastern markets and eastern manufactures to western consumers. In 1852 the Michigan Southern Railroad completed the first line into Chicago from the East, and by 1855 that city had become a key transportation hub linking regions farther west with the eastern seaboard.

Building a railroad required huge sums of money. In populous areas, where passenger and freight traffic was heavy, the promise of a quick and profitable return on investment allowed railroads to raise sufficient capital by selling company stock. In sparsely settled regions, however, where investment returns were much slower, state and local governments loaned money directly to rail companies, financed them indirectly by purchasing stock, or extended state tax exemptions. The most crucial aid to railroads, however, was federal land grants.

The federal government, which owned vast amounts of unsettled territory, gave land to developers who then leased or sold plots of ground along the proposed route to finance railroad construction. In 1850 Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas engineered a 2.6-million-acre land grant to Illinois, Mississippi, and Alabama for a railroad between Chicago and Mobile. Congress also invested heavily in plans for a transcontinental railroad and on March 4, 1853, appropriated \$150,000 to survey potential routes across the continent.

Feeding the demand for improved transportation was a rise in global grain prices during the 1850s. Several years of bad weather spurred crop failures throughout Europe, and beginning in 1848, revolutions and wars across much of the continent disrupted farm productivity. The combination of rail transport and technological advances in farming equipment enabled American farmers to cash in on the growing demand. Using the steel plow devised in 1837 by **John Deere**, farmers could cultivate more acres with greater ease. The mechanical reaper invented in 1831 by **Cyrus McCormick** allowed a single operator to harvest as much as fourteen field hands could by hand. Railroads distributed these new pieces of heavy equipment at a reasonable cost. The combination of greater production potential and speedy transportation prompted westerners to increase farm size and concentrate on cash crops. The outcome of these developments was a vast increase in the economic and political power of the West.

Western grain markets provided the foodstuffs for American industrialization, and Europe provided much of the labor. Factories employed unskilled workers for the most part, and immigrants made up the majority of that labor pool as food shortages, poverty, and political upheaval drove millions from Europe, especially from Ireland and Germany. Total immigration to the United States exceeded 100,000 for the first time in 1848, and in 1851, 221,000 people migrated to the United States from Ireland alone. In 1852 the number of German immigrants reached 145,000. Many of these newcomers, particularly the Irish, were not trained in skilled crafts and wound up settling in the industrial urban centers of the Northeast, where they could find work in the factories.

This combination of changes set the stage for political crisis. Liberalized suffrage rules transformed naturalized immigrants into voters, and both parties courted them, adding their interests to the political pot. Meanwhile, a mechanized textile industry,

**John Deere** American industrialist who pioneered the manufacture of steel plows especially suited for working hard-packed prairie soil.

**Cyrus McCormick** Virginia inventor and manufacturer who developed and mass-produced the McCormick reaper, a machine that harvested grain.

**agrarian capitalism** A system of agriculture based on the efficient, specialized production of crops intended to generate profits rather than subsistence.

**Harriet Beecher Stowe** American novelist and abolitionist whose novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* fanned antislavery sentiment in the North.

**conscience Whigs** Members of the Whig Party who supported moderate abolitionism, as opposed to cotton Whigs, who opposed abolitionism.

**James Buchanan** Pennsylvania senator who was elected president in 1856 after gaining the Democratic nomination as a compromise candidate.

**Franklin Pierce** New Hampshire lawyer and Democratic politician nominated as a compromise candidate and elected president in 1852.

hungry for southern fiber, lent vitality to the continued growth of the cotton kingdom and the slave labor system that gave it life. Northern political leaders visualized an industrial nation based on free labor, but that view ran counter to the southern elites' ideals of **agrarian capitalism** based on slavery. In the West, most continued to believe in the Jeffersonian ideal of an agricultural nation of small and medium-size farms and could not accept either industrial or cotton capitalism as positive developments.

### Political Instability and the Election of 1852

Dynamic economic progress improved material life throughout the nation, but it also raised serious questions about what course progress should take. As one clear-sighted northern minister pointed out in 1852, the debate was not about whether America should pursue progress but about "different kinds and methods of progress." Contradictory visions of national destiny were about to cause the breakdown of the existing party system.

Slavery seemed to loom behind every debate, as the question challenged notions of autonomy in both the North and the South. In their widely disseminated rhetoric, abolitionists expanded the specter of the Slave Power conspiracy, especially in the aftermath of the Compromise of 1850. Whether they were farmers in western states like Illinois or artisans in Pennsylvania, common people were jealous of their own local institutions and would resist a southern takeover. Similarly, common people in the South would not accept interference from outsiders, and the ever-more vigorous anti-southern crusade by northern radicals alarmed them as well.

The Compromise of 1850 momentarily eased regional fears, but sectional tensions still smoldered beneath the surface. These embers flamed anew in 1852 with the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by **Harriet Beecher Stowe**. Stowe portrayed the darkest inhumanities of southern slavery in the first American novel to include African Americans as central characters. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* sold three hundred thousand copies in its first year. Adapted for the stage, it became one of the most popular plays of the period. The book stirred public opinion and breathed new life into antislavery sentiments, leading Free-Soilers and so-called **conscience Whigs** to renew their efforts to limit or end slavery. When these activists saw that the Whig Party was incapable of addressing the slavery question in any effective way, they began to look for other political options.

Superficially, the Whigs seemed well organized and surprisingly unified as a new presidential election approached. They passed over Millard Fillmore, who had advanced into the presidency when Zachary Taylor died in office in July 1850, in favor of General Winfield Scott, Taylor's military rival in the War with Mexico. The Democrats remained divided through forty-nine ballots, unable to decide between Lewis Cass of Michigan, Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, and **James Buchanan** of Pennsylvania. They finally settled on the virtually unknown **Franklin Pierce** of New Hampshire, who pledged to live by and uphold the Compromise of 1850 and keep slavery out of politics. This promise was enough to bring Martin Van Buren back to the Democrats, and he brought many Free-Soilers back with him. Many others, though, abandoned Van Buren and joined forces with conscience Whigs.

Scott was a national figure and a distinguished military hero, but Pierce gathered 254 electoral votes to Scott's 42. This one-sided victory, however, revealed more about the disarray in the Whig Party than it did about Pierce's popularity or Democratic Party strength. Splits between "cotton" and "conscience" groups splintered Whig unity. Regional tension escalated as Free-Soil rhetoric clashed with calls for extending slavery. Confrontations between Catholics and Protestants and between native-born and



immigrant laborers caused bitter animosity. In the North, where immigration, industrialization, and antislavery sentiment were most prevalent and economic friction was most pronounced, massive numbers of voters, believing the Whigs incapable of addressing current problems, deserted the party.

### Increasing Tension Under Pierce

The Democratic Party and Franklin Pierce, its representative in the White House, were also not immune to the pressures of a changing electorate. Pierce was part of the **Young America Movement**, which, as a whole, tried to ignore the slavery issue, advocating romantic and aggressive nationalism, manifest destiny, and republican revolutions throughout the Americas. In line with the Young America agenda, Pierce emphasized expansion; choosing a route for a transcontinental railroad became the key-stone in his agenda for the nation.

Southerners knew that a railroad based in the South would channel the flow of gold from California through their region. It would also open new areas for settlement and allow cotton agriculture to spread beyond the waterways that had proved so necessary to its expansion so far. Eventually the new territories would become states, increasing the South's national political power.

That model of development was totally unacceptable to several groups: to northern evangelicals, who viewed slavery as a moral blight on the nation; to Free-Soil advocates, who believed the spread of slavery would degrade white workers; and to northern manufacturers, who wanted to maintain dominance in Congress to ensure continued economic protection. In May 1853, only two months after assuming office, Pierce inflamed all of these groups by sending James Gadsden, a southern railroad developer, to Mexico to purchase a strip of land lying below the southern border of the New Mexico Territory. Any rail line built westward from a southern city would have to cross that land as it proceeded from Texas to California, and Pierce and his southern supporters wanted to make sure that it was part of the United States. The **Gadsden Purchase**, signed on December 30, 1853, added 29,640 square miles of land to the United States for a cost of \$10 million. It also finalized the southwestern border of the United States.

Rather than enhancing Pierce's reputation as a nationalist, the Gadsden Purchase fed the perception that he was a southern sympathizer promoting the extension of slavery. It also led to a more serious sectional crisis. The Gadsden Purchase prompted proponents of a southern route for the transcontinental railroad, led by Secretary of War **Jefferson Davis**, to push for government sponsorship of the project. Rooted politically in Chicago and having invested his own money in rail development, Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas rose to the challenge. He used his position as chairman of the Senate's Committee on Territories to block Davis's effort to build a transcontinental railroad through the South and pushed for a route westward from Chicago. This route passed through territory that had been set aside for a permanent Native American homeland and thus had not been organized into a federal territory. To rectify this problem, Douglas introduced a bill on January 4, 1854, incorporating the entire northern half of Indian Territory into a new federal entity called Nebraska.

Douglas knew that he would need both northern and southern support to get his bill through Congress, so he tried to structure the legislation so as to alienate neither section. Fearful that the bill would spark yet another debate over slavery, Douglas sought to silence possible opposition by proposing that the matter be left to popular sovereignty within the territory itself—let the voters of Nebraska decide. Noting that the proposed territory was above the Missouri Compromise line, southerners pointed out that

### Young America Movement

A political movement popular among young voters during the 1840s and early 1850s that advocated free-market capitalism, national expansionism, and American patriotism.

**Gadsden Purchase** A strip of land in present-day Arizona and New Mexico that the United States bought from Mexico in 1853 to secure a southern route for a transcontinental railroad.

**Jefferson Davis** Secretary of war under Franklin Pierce; he later became president of the Confederacy.



published “The Appeal of the Independent Democrats in Congress.” They denounced the bill as an “atrocious plot” to make Nebraska a “dreary region of despotism, inhabited by masters and slaves.” On February 28, opponents of the Kansas-Nebraska bill met in Ripon, Wisconsin, and recommended the formation of a new political party. Similar meetings took place in several northern states as opposition to the bill grew. In the wake of these meetings, the existing party system would collapse and a new one would arise to replace it.

### Bleeding Kansas

Despite strong opposition, Douglas and Pierce rallied support for the Kansas-Nebraska Act in Congress. On May 26, 1854, after gaining approval in the House of Representatives, the bill passed the Senate, and Pierce signed it into law. Passage of the act crystallized northern antislavery sentiment. To protest, many northerners threatened **noncompliance** with the fugitive slave law of 1850. As Senator William Seward of New York vowed, “We will engage in competition for the virgin soil of Kansas, and God give the victory to the side which is stronger in numbers as it is in right.”

Such sentiments were about to ignite Kansas. In April 1854, abolitionist Eli Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts, organized the New England Emigrant Aid Society to encourage antislavery supporters to move to Kansas. They reasoned that flooding a region subject to popular sovereignty with right-minded residents could effectively “save” it from slavery. This group eventually sent two thousand armed settlers to Kansas, founding Lawrence and other communities. With similar designs, proslavery southerners, particularly those in Missouri, also encouraged settlement in the territory. Like their northern counterparts, these southerners came armed and ready to fight for their cause.

President Pierce appointed governors in both Kansas and Nebraska and instructed them to organize elections for territorial legislatures. As proslavery and antislavery settlers vied for control of Kansas, the region became a testing ground for popular sovereignty. When the vote came on March 30, 1855, a large contingent of armed slavery supporters from Missouri—so-called border ruffians—crossed into Kansas and cast ballots for proslavery candidates. According to later Senate investigations, 60 percent of the votes cast were illegal. These unlawful ballots gave proslavery supporters a large majority in the Kansas legislature. They promptly expelled all abolitionist legislators and enacted the Kansas Code—a group of laws meant to drive all antislavery forces out of the territory. Antislavery advocates refused to acknowledge the validity of the election or the laws. They organized their own free-state government and drew up an alternative constitution, which they submitted to the voters.

Bloodshed soon followed. Attempting to bring the conflict to conclusion, proslavery territorial judge Samuel LeCompte called a grand jury of slavery supporters that indicted members of the free-state government for treason and sent a **posse** of about eight hundred men armed with rifles and five cannons to Lawrence. There they “arrested” the antislavery forces and sacked the town, burning buildings and plundering shops and homes. But the violence did not end there. Hearing news of the “Sack of Lawrence,” **John Brown**, an antislavery zealot, vowed to “fight fire with fire.” Reasoning that at least five antislavery supporters had been killed since the conflict erupted, he and seven others abducted five proslavery men living along the Pottawatomie River south of Lawrence and murdered them. The “Pottawatomie Massacre” triggered a series of episodes in which more than two hundred men were killed. Much of the violence was the work of border ruffians and zealots like Brown, but to many people in both the North and the South, the events symbolized the “righteousness” of their cause.

**noncompliance** Failure or refusal to obey a law or request.

**posse** A group of citizens deputized by a court or peace officer to assist in law enforcement.

**John Brown** Abolitionist who fought proslavery settlers in Kansas in 1855; he was hanged for treason after seizing the U.S. arsenal at Harpers Ferry in 1859 as part of an effort to liberate southern slaves.

**censure** To issue an official rebuke, as by a legislature to one of its members.

**Republican Party** Political party formed in 1854 that opposed the extension of slavery into the western territories.

**plank** One of the articles of a political platform.

The Kansas issue also led to violence in Congress. During the debates over the admission of the territory, Charles Sumner, a senator from Massachusetts, delivered an abusive and threatening speech against proslavery advocates. In particular, he made insulting remarks about South Carolina and its aged senator Andrew Butler. Butler was out of town, but Butler's nephew, Representative Preston Brooks, accosted Sumner and nearly beat him to death with a cane. Though **censured** by the House of Representatives, Brooks was overwhelmingly reelected by his home district and openly praised for his actions—he received canes as gifts from admirers all over the South.

Meanwhile the presidential election of 1856 was approaching. The Pierce administration's actions, southern expansionism, and the Kansas-Nebraska controversy swelled the ranks of dissenters like those who had convened in Ripon. Now formally calling themselves the **Republican Party**, these northern and western groups began actively seeking support. Immigration also remained a major issue, but the Know-Nothings, despite their success at the local and state levels, split over slavery at their initial national convention in 1855. Disagreement over a **plank** dealing with the Kansas-Nebraska Act caused most northerners to bolt from the convention. Some formed an antislavery group called the Know-Somethings, but many joined Republican coalitions. In 1856 the remaining Know-Nothings reconvened and nominated former president Millard Fillmore as the party's standard-bearer. John C. Frémont, a moderate abolitionist who had achieved fame as the liberator of California, got the Republican nomination. The few remaining Whigs endorsed Fillmore at their convention, while some former Know-Nothings met separately and endorsed Frémont. The Democrats rejected both Pierce and Douglas and nominated James Buchanan from Pennsylvania, selecting John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky as Buchanan's running mate to balance the ticket between the North and the South.

The election became a contest for party survival rather than a national referendum on slavery. Buchanan received 45 percent of the popular vote and 163 electoral votes. Frémont finished second with 33 percent of the popular vote and 114 electoral votes. Fillmore received 21 percent of the popular vote but only 8 electoral votes. Frémont's surprisingly narrow margin of defeat demonstrated the appeal of the newly formed Republican coalition to northern voters. The Know-Nothings, fragmented over slavery, disappeared and never again attempted a national organization.

### Bringing Slavery Home to the North

On March 4, 1857, James Buchanan became president of the United States. The 65-year-old Pennsylvanian had begun his political career in Congress in 1821 and owed much of his success to southern support. His election came at a time when the nation needed strong leadership, but Buchanan seemed unable to provide it. During the campaign, he had emphasized national unity, but he proved incapable of achieving a unifying compromise. His attempt to preserve the politics of avoidance only strengthened radicalism in both the North and the South. Regional tensions colored all political issues, and every debate became a contest among competing social, political, and economic ideologies.

Although Buchanan's shortcomings contributed to the rising crisis, an event occurred within days of his inauguration that sent shock waves through the already troubled nation. **Dred Scott**, a slave once owned by John Emerson, resided in Missouri, a slave state. But between 1831 and 1833, Emerson, an army surgeon, had taken Scott with him during various postings, including stints in Illinois and Wisconsin, where the Missouri Compromise banned slavery. Scott's attorney argued that living in Illinois and Wisconsin had made Scott a free man. When, after nearly six years in the Missouri courts, the

**Dred Scott** Slave who sued for his liberty in the Missouri courts, arguing that four years on free soil had made him free; the Supreme Court's 1857 ruling against him negated the Missouri Compromise.





# It Matters Today

## THE DRED SCOTT CASE

Frederick Douglass was disappointed to discover that freedom for African Americans did not also mean equality. This personal revelation was soon reinforced by one of the most important cases ever to reach the Supreme Court. Denying once and for all that freedom and equality for people of African heritage were identical, the Court's decision in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* declared that because no state at the time the Constitution was ratified had included African Americans as citizens, then no one of African descent could become a citizen of the United States. Ever! It would take the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution to remove the legal justification behind the Court's opinion, but even these did not reverse the racism underlying the decision. The *Dred Scott* case and the amendments designed to correct

the constitutional defects that led to it still play a key role in dozens of cases in the nation's courts each year. Men and women of many backgrounds continue to seek to make real the tie between freedom and equality that Dred Scott and Frederick Douglass only dreamed of.

- To what extent do you think that the *Dred Scott* case made Civil War in the United States inevitable? Explain.
- Choose a post–Civil War court case dealing with racial equality issues (the American Civil Liberties Union and other organizations as well as the federal government maintain catalogues of important cases). In what ways does the case you have chosen reflect the *Dred Scott* case and the constitutional amendments passed in response? Assess the continuing legacy of this case in American life and justice.

state supreme court rejected this argument in 1852, Scott, with the help of abolitionist lawyers, appealed to the United States Supreme Court. In a seven-to-two decision, the Court ruled against Scott. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, formerly a member of Andrew Jackson's Cabinet and a stalwart Democrat, argued that in the eyes of the law, slaves were not citizens but property, and as such they had no right to petition a federal court. Taney then ignited a political powder keg by ruling that Congress had no constitutional authority to limit slavery in a federal territory, thereby declaring the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional.

Meanwhile, the Kansas issue still burned. That very few slaveholders actually moved into the territory did nothing to deter proslavery leaders, who met in Lecompton, Kansas, in June 1857 to draft a state constitution favoring slavery. When the **Lecompton constitution** was submitted for voters' approval, antislavery forces protested by refusing to vote, so it was easily ratified. But when it was revealed that more than two thousand nonresidents had voted illegally, both Republicans and northern Democrats in Congress roundly denounced it. The Buchanan administration joined southerners in support of admitting Kansas to the Union as a slave state and managed to push the statehood bill through the Senate, but the House of Representatives rejected it. Congress then returned the Lecompton constitution to Kansas for another vote. This time Free-Soilers participated in the election and defeated the proposed constitution. Kansas remained a territory.

The Kansas controversy proved a hard pill for Douglas to swallow. He believed in popular sovereignty but could not support the fraudulent election that brought the Lecompton constitution to Congress for approval. And the *Dred Scott* decision had virtually nullified his pet solution by ruling that even popular sovereignty could not exclude slavery from a territory. Still entertaining presidential ambitions, Douglas sought a

**Lecompton constitution** State constitution written for Kansas in 1857 at a convention dominated by proslavery forces; it would have allowed slavery, but Kansas voters rejected it.

**Abraham Lincoln** Illinois lawyer and politician who argued against popular sovereignty in debates with Stephen Douglas in 1858; he lost the senatorial election to Douglas but was elected president in 1860.

**Freeport Doctrine** Stephen Douglas's belief, stated at Freeport, Illinois, that a territory could exclude slavery by writing local laws or regulations that made slavery impossible to enforce.

**Harpers Ferry** Town in present-day West Virginia and site of the U.S. arsenal that John Brown briefly seized in 1859.

**Robert E. Lee** A Virginian with a distinguished career in the U.S. Army who resigned to assume command of the Confederate army in Virginia when the Civil War began.

**secession** Withdrawal from the United States.

solution that might win him both northern and southern support in a run for the office in 1860. His immediate goal, however, was reelection to the Senate.

Illinois Republicans selected **Abraham Lincoln** to run against Douglas for the Senate in 1858. Born on the Kentucky frontier in 1809, Lincoln had accompanied his family from one failed farm to another, picking up schooling in Indiana and Illinois as opportunities arose. As a young man he worked odd jobs—farm worker, ferryman, flatboatman, surveyor, and store clerk—and was a member of the Illinois militia during the Black Hawk War in 1832. Two years after the war, Lincoln was elected to the Illinois legislature and began a serious study of law. He was admitted to the Illinois state bar in 1836. A strong Whig, Lincoln followed Henry Clay's economic philosophy and steered a middle course between the "cotton" and "conscience" wings of the Whig Party. Lincoln acknowledged that slavery was evil but contended that it was the unavoidable consequence of black racial inferiority. The only way to get rid of the evil, he believed, was to prevent the expansion of slavery into the territories, forcing it to die out naturally, and then make arrangements to separate the two races forever, either by transporting blacks to Africa or creating a segregated space for them in the Americas.

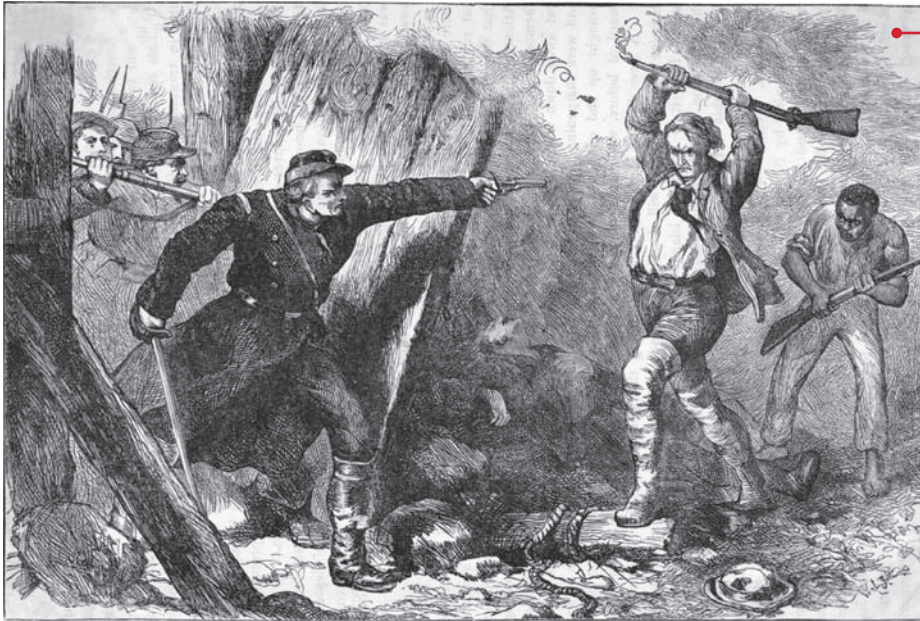
Lincoln was decidedly the underdog in the contest with Douglas and sought to improve his chances by challenging the senator to a series of debates about slavery and its expansion. Douglas agreed to seven debates in various parts of the state. During the debate at Freeport, Lincoln asked Douglas to explain how the people of a territory could exclude slavery in light of the *Dred Scott* ruling. Douglas's reply became known as the **Freeport Doctrine**. Slavery, he said, needed the protection of "local police regulations." In any territory, citizens opposed to slavery could elect representatives who would "by unfriendly legislation" prevent the introduction of slavery. Lincoln did not win Douglas's Senate seat, but the debate drew national attention to the Illinois race, and Lincoln won recognition as an up-and-coming Republican force.

If moderate Republicans like Lincoln denounced Chief Justice Taney's decision, more radical northerners increasingly called for the violent overthrow of slavery, and Kansas zealot John Brown moved to oblige them. In 1857 Brown came to the East, where he convinced several prominent antislavery leaders to finance a daring plan to raise an army of slaves in an all-out insurrection against their masters. Brown and a small party of followers attacked the federal arsenal at **Harpers Ferry**, Virginia, on October 16, 1859, attempting to seize weapons. The arsenal proved an easy target, but no slaves joined the uprising. Local citizens surrounded the arsenal, firing on Brown and his followers until federal troops commanded by Colonel **Robert E. Lee** arrived. On October 18, Lee's forces battered down the barricaded entrance and arrested Brown. He was tried, convicted of treason, and hanged on December 2, 1859.

Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry captured the imagination of radical abolitionists. Republican leaders denounced it, but other northerners proclaimed Brown a martyr. Church bells tolled in many northern cities on the day of his execution. In New England, Ralph Waldo Emerson proclaimed Brown "that new saint." Such reactions caused many appalled southerners—even extreme moderates—to seriously consider **secession**. In Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida, state legislatures resolved that a Republican victory in the upcoming presidential election would provide sufficient justification for such action.

### The Dominance of Sectionalism

During the Buchanan administration, Democrats found it increasingly difficult to achieve national party unity. Facing Republican pressure in their own states, northern Democrats realized that any concession to southern Democratic



Hoping to trigger a full-scale revolt against slavery, or perhaps even a civil war, Kansas radical John Brown seized the federal armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, on October 16, 1859. As shown here, a military force led by then Colonel Robert E. Lee finally overcame Brown and his volunteer army. Taken prisoner, Brown was eventually tried for treason and was hanged in the following December. Many proclaimed him martyr, and his name became a rallying cry for those who sought an immediate end to slavery.

© Bettmann/CORBIS.

demands for extending or protecting slavery would cost them votes at home. In April 1860, as the party convened in Charleston, South Carolina, each side was ready to do battle for its political life.

The fight began when northern supporters of Stephen A. Douglas championed a popular sovereignty position. Southern radicals demanded a plank calling for the legal protection of slavery in the territories. When the majority voted instead to endorse popular sovereignty, angry delegates from eight southern states walked out of the convention. Shocked, the remaining delegates adjourned; they would reconvene in Baltimore in June. Most southern delegates boycotted the Baltimore proceedings, and Douglas finally won the Democratic presidential nomination. The southern Democratic contingent met one week later, also in Baltimore, and nominated Vice President John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky as its presidential candidate and vowed support for the Union but called for federal protection of the right to own slaves in the territories and for the preservation of slavery where it already existed.

In May 1860, a group of former Whigs and Know-Nothings convened in Baltimore and formed the **Constitutional Union Party**. They nominated John Bell, a former southern Know-Nothing and wealthy slaveholder from Tennessee, for president and Edward Everett of Massachusetts, a former Whig leader, as his running mate. Hoping to resurrect the politics of compromise, the party resolved to take no stand on the sectional controversy and pledged to uphold the Constitution and the Union and to enforce the laws of the nation.

Having lost most of its moderates to the Constitutional Union coalition and having virtually no southerners in its ranks to start with, the Republican convention faced few ideological divisions, but personality conflicts were rife. The front-runner for the Republican nomination appeared to be William Seward of New York. A former Whig and long-time New York politician, Seward had actively opposed any extension of slavery during the early 1850s. Eventually, however, Illinois's favorite son Abraham Lincoln emerged as Seward's major competition. Many delegates considered Seward too radical. Moreover,

**Constitutional Union Party** Political party that organized on the eve of the Civil War with no platform other than preservation of the Constitution, the Union, and the law.



he and his campaign manager, Thurlow Weed, had earned the distrust of many prominent Republicans for their political wheeling and dealing. Lincoln, in contrast, had a reputation for integrity and had not seriously alienated any of the Republican factions. He won the nomination on the third ballot.

## The Divided Nation

★ **How did the realignment of the political party system during the 1850s contribute to the conduct and results of the presidential election in 1860?**

★ **Why did the election results have the political effects that they did?**

The Republicans were a new phenomenon on the American political scene: a purely regional political party. Rather than making any attempt to forge a national coalition, the party drew its strength and ideas almost entirely from the North. The Republican platform—“Free Soil, Free Labor, and Free Men”—stressed the defilement of white labor by slavery and contended that the Slave Power conspiracy was eroding the rights of free whites everywhere. By taking up a cry against “Rum, Romanism, and Slavery,” the Republicans drew former Know-Nothings and temperance advocates into their ranks. The Democrats hoped to maintain a national coalition, but as the nation approached a new presidential election, their hopes began to fade.

**Deep South** The region of the South farthest from the North, usually said to comprise the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina.

### The Election of 1860

The 1860 presidential campaign began as several separate contests. Lincoln and Douglas competed for northern votes; the Republicans were not even on the ballot in the **Deep South**. Douglas proclaimed himself the only national candidate but received most of his support from northerners who feared the consequences of a Republican victory. By the same token, Breckinridge and the southern Democrats expected no support in the North. Bell and the Constitutional Unionists attempted to campaign in both regions but attracted mostly southern voters anxious to stave off the crisis of disunion.

Slavery and sectionalism were the key issues. Even when a congressional investigation revealed evidence of graft, bribery, and shady dealings in the Buchanan administration, Republicans linked these charges to the supposed Slave Power conspiracy. The slaveholding elite, they contended, not only had attempted to subvert liberty but had used fraudulent means to keep the Democratic Party of Buchanan—and Douglas—in power. “Honest Abe Lincoln,” the man of the people, would lead the fight against the forces of slavery and corruption. This argument drew in many northern voters, including a lot of former Know-Nothings.

As election day drew near, the likelihood of a Republican victory deeply alarmed southerners. Even moderate southerners started to believe that the Republicans intended to crush their way of life and to enslave southern whites economically while freeing southern blacks. Northern qualms were aroused as well when the pro-Democrat *New York Herald* contended that the election of Lincoln would bring “hundreds of thousands” of slaves north to compete with whites for jobs, resulting in “African amalgamation with the fair daughters of the Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, and Teutonic races.” Seeking to counter such scare tactics, national Republican leaders forged a platform that advocated limits on slavery’s expansion but contained no planks seeking an end to slavery in areas where it already existed.



On November 6, 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States with 180 electoral votes—a clear majority—but only 40 percent of the popular vote. Lincoln carried all the northern states, California, and Oregon. Douglas finished second with 29 percent of the popular vote but just 12 electoral votes. He won only Missouri. Bell won the 39 electoral votes of Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Breckinridge, as expected, carried the Deep South but tallied only 72 electoral votes and 18 percent of the popular vote nationwide. For the first time in American history, a purely regional party held the presidency.

### The First Wave of Secession

After the Republican victory, southern sentiment for secession snowballed, especially in the Deep South. The Republicans were a “party founded on a single sentiment,” stated the *Richmond Examiner*: “hatred of African slavery.” The *New Orleans Delta* agreed, calling the Republicans “essentially a revolutionary party.” But this party now controlled the White House. To a growing number of southerners, the Republican victory was proof that secession was the only alternative to political domination.

In a last-ditch attempt at compromise, **John J. Crittenden** proposed a block of permanent constitutional amendments—amendments that could never be repealed—to the Senate on December 18, 1860. He suggested extending the Missouri Compromise line westward across the continent, forbidding slavery north of the line, and protecting slavery to the south. Crittenden’s plan also upheld the interstate trade in slaves and called for compensation to slaveowners who were unable to recover fugitive slaves from northern states. Although this plan favored the South, it had some appeal in the North, especially among businessmen who feared that secession would cause a major depression. Thurlow Weed, Seward’s political adviser, was ready to listen to such a compromise, but Lincoln was “inflexible on the territorial question.” The extension of the Missouri Compromise line, Lincoln warned, would “lose us everything we gained by the election.” He let senators and congressmen know that he wanted no “compromise in regard to the extension of slavery.” The Senate defeated Crittenden’s proposals by a vote of 25 to 23. The Kentuckian then proposed putting the measure to a vote of the people, but Congress rejected that idea as well.

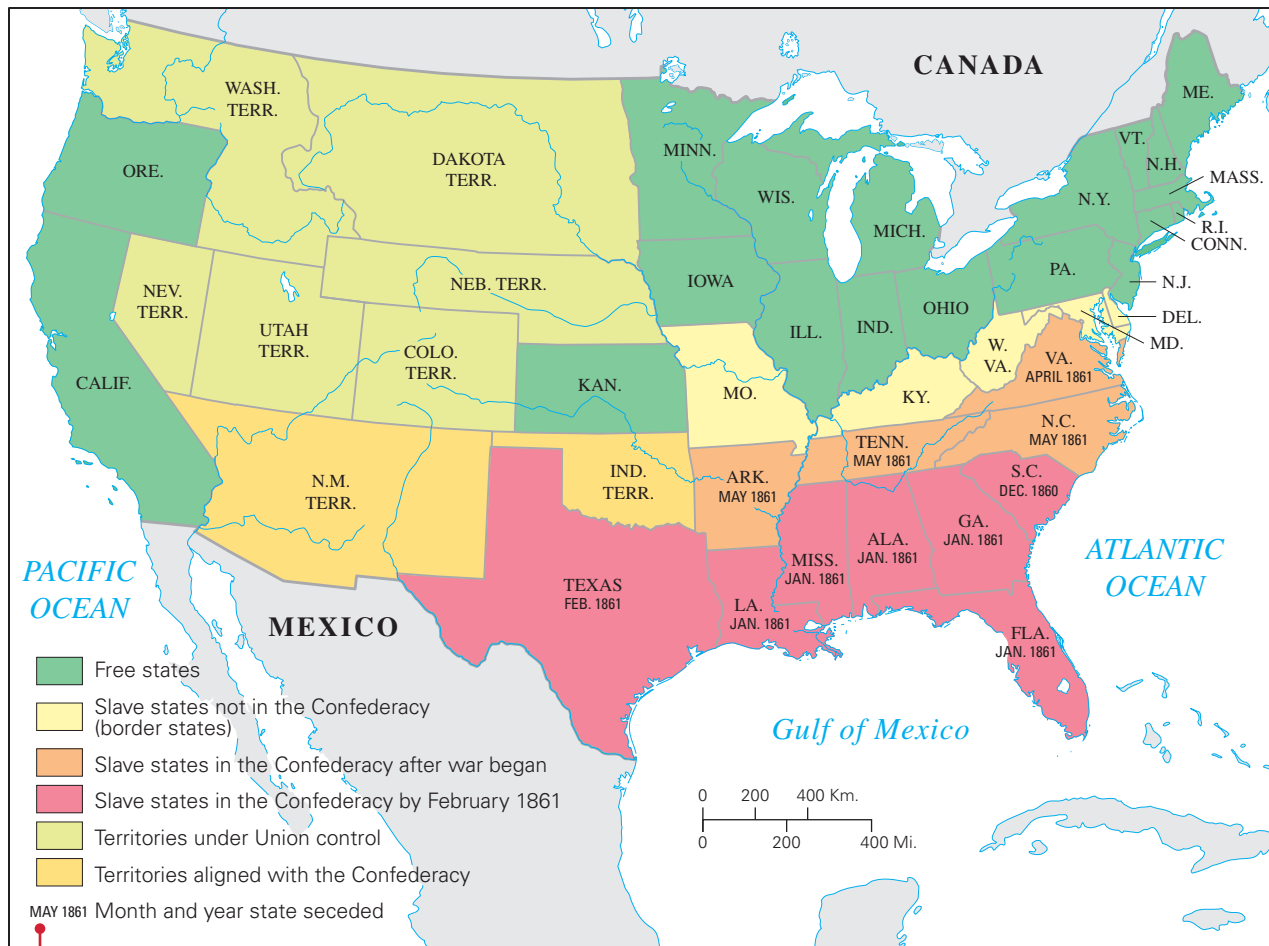
Meanwhile, on December 20, 1860, delegates in South Carolina met to consider seceding from the Union. South Carolina had long been a hotbed of resistance to federal authority, and state officials were determined to take action to protect slavery before the newly elected Republican administration came to power. Amid general jubilation, South Carolina delegates voted unanimously to dissolve their ties with the United States. Just as the radicals hoped, other southern states followed. During January 1861, delegates convened in Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, and Louisiana and voted to secede (see Map 13.3).

On February 4, 1861, delegates from the six seceding states met in Montgomery, Alabama, and formed the provisional government for the **Confederate States of America**. During the several weeks that followed, the provisional congress drafted a constitution, and the six Confederate states ratified it on March 11, 1861.

The Confederate constitution emphasized the “sovereign and independent character” of the states and guaranteed the protection of slavery in any new territories acquired. It allowed tariffs solely for the purpose of raising government revenue and prohibited government funding of internal improvements. It also limited the president and vice president to a single six-year term. A cabinet composed of six executive department heads

**John J. Crittenden** Kentucky senator who made an unsuccessful attempt to prevent the Civil War by proposing a series of constitutional amendments protecting slavery south of the Missouri Compromise line.

**Confederate States of America** Political entity formed by the seceding states of South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana in February 1861; Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina joined later.



**MAP 13.3** The United States and the Confederate States of America

This map shows the breakup of the Union begun by South Carolina's secession in December 1860. The Cotton Belt followed South Carolina's lead in January, and the rest of the confederate states joined them later in the spring of 1861.

rounded out the executive branch. In all other respects, the Confederate government was identical to that in the United States. In fact, the U.S. Constitution was acknowledged as the supreme law in the Confederacy except in those particulars where it conflicted with provisions in the Confederate Constitution.

### Responses to Disunion

Even as late as March 1861, not all southerners favored secession. John Bell and Stephen Douglas together had received more than 50 percent of southern votes in 1860, winning support from southerners who desired compromise and had only limited stakes in upholding slavery. These “plain folk” joined together with some large planters, who stood to suffer economic loss from disunion, in calls for moderation and compromise. And the border states, which were less invested in cotton and had numerous ties with the North, were not strongly inclined toward secession. In February, Virginia had called for a peace conference to meet in Washington in an effort to forestall hostilities, but this attempt, like Crittenden's effort, also failed to hold the Union together.

# Investigating America

## Alexander Stephens's Cornerstone Speech, 1861

Alexander Stephens had previously supported his old friend Stephen A. Douglas for the presidency and opposed secession after the election of Lincoln. But he had always been a strong supporter of slavery, and after the Montgomery convention chose him to serve as Davis's Vice President, Stephens delivered a lengthy, extemporaneous speech in Savannah, Georgia, on March 21, 1861. After explaining the virtues of the Confederate constitution regarding tariffs and internal improvements, he turned to the question of slavery, which gave the speech its name.

.....

The new constitution has put at rest, forever, all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institution—African slavery as it exists amongst us—the proper status of the negro in our form of civilization. This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution. Jefferson in his forecast, had anticipated this, as the “rock upon which the old Union would split.” He was right. What was conjecture with him, is now a realized fact. But whether he fully comprehended the great truth upon which that rock stood and stands, may be doubted. The prevailing ideas entertained by him and most of the leading statesmen at the time of the formation of the old constitution, were that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of nature; that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally, and politically. It was an evil they knew not well how to deal with, but the general opinion of the men of that day was that, somehow or other in the order of Providence, the institution would be evanescent and pass away. This idea, though not incorporated in the constitution, was the prevailing idea at that time. The constitution, it is true, secured every essential guarantee to the institution while it should last, and hence no argument can be justly urged against the constitutional guarantees thus secured, because of the common sentiment of the day. Those ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They rested upon the assumption of the equality of races. This was an error. It was a sandy foundation, and the

government built upon it fell when the “storm came and the wind blew.”

Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite idea; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery—subordination to the superior race—is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth. This truth has been slow in the process of its development, like all other truths in the various departments of science. It has been so even amongst us. Many who hear me, perhaps, can recollect well, that this truth was not generally admitted, even within their day. The errors of the past generation still clung to many as late as twenty years ago. Those at the North, who still cling to these errors, with a zeal above knowledge, we justly denominate fanatics. All fanaticism springs from an aberration of the mind—from a defect in reasoning. It is a species of insanity. One of the most striking characteristics of insanity, in many instances, is forming correct conclusions from fancied or erroneous premises; so with the anti-slavery fanatics. Their conclusions are right if their premises were. They assume that the negro is equal, and hence conclude that he is entitled to equal privileges and rights with the white man.

.....

- William Seward spoke of an “irrepressible conflict” between the free wage labor system of the northern states and the slave labor of the South. What do Stephens's speech and Frederick Douglass's Fourth of July Oration, excerpted earlier in this chapter, suggest regarding Seward's prophecy?
- How could both Stephens and Douglass be so certain in their views yet remain part of the same country? And if Lincoln's party included no platform statements calling for immediate emancipation in the southern states, why did planters like Stephens and Davis regard the Republicans as such a danger to their way of life?



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

The division in southern sentiments was a major stumbling block to the election of a Confederate president. Many moderate delegates to the constitutional convention refused to support radical secessionists, believing them to be equally responsible with the Republicans for initiating the crisis. The convention remained deadlocked until two pro-secession Virginia legislators nominated Mississippi moderate Jefferson Davis as a compromise candidate.

Davis, austere and dignified, appeared to be the ideal choice. He had not sought the job but seemed extremely capable of handling it. He was a West Point graduate; he served during the War with Mexico, was elected to the Senate soon afterward, then left the Senate in 1851 to run unsuccessfully for governor in Mississippi. After serving as secretary of war under Franklin Pierce, he returned to the Senate in 1857. Although Davis had long championed southern interests and owned many slaves, he was no romantic, fire-eating secessionist. Before 1860 he had been a strong **Unionist**, arguing only that the South be allowed to maintain its own economy, culture, and institutions, including slavery. Like many of his contemporaries, however, Davis had become increasingly alarmed by the prospect of declining southern political power. Immediately after Mississippi's declaration of secession, Davis resigned his Senate seat and threw in with the Confederacy.

Davis was elected provisional president of the Confederate States of America unanimously on February 9, 1861. He addressed the cheering crowds in Montgomery a week later and set forth the Confederate position: "The time for compromise has now passed," he said. "The South is determined to maintain her position, and make all who oppose her smell Southern powder and feel Southern steel." In his inaugural address several days later, he stressed a desire for peace but reiterated that the "courage and patriotism of the Confederate States" would be "found equal to any measure of defense which honor and security may require."

Northern Democrats and Republicans alike watched developments in the South with dismay. President Buchanan argued that secession had no constitutional validity and that any state leaving the Union did so unlawfully. He confused the issue, however, by stating his belief that the federal government had no constitutional power to "coerce a State" to remain in the Union. He blamed the crisis on "incessant and violent agitation on the slavery question," chiding northern states for disregarding fugitive slave laws and calling for a constitutional amendment protecting slavery.

Waiting to assume the office he had just won, Lincoln wrestled with the twin problems of what he would do about secession and slavery. But Lincoln first had to unite his party. In an attempt to appease all the Republican factions, he chose his cabinet with great care. His vice president, Hannibal Hamlin of Maine, had supported Lincoln but was also a friend of William Seward and had been chosen to balance the ticket fractionally. Lincoln continued this balancing act by appointing to his cabinet his four main rivals for party control. Seward received the job of secretary of state. Moderate Edward Bates of Missouri became attorney general. Although many Republicans considered Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania to be "destitute of honor and integrity," Lincoln reluctantly named him secretary of war in the interest of appeasing Cameron's supporters and maintaining party unity. Salmon P. Chase of Ohio, a longtime politician and sometime radical on the slavery question, became secretary of the Treasury. Despite Lincoln's evenhandedness, his political balancing act was not easy to maintain. Chase and Seward, for instance, had a long history of political infighting and hated each other. That Lincoln would appoint Chase to any position so angered Seward that he threatened to resign, and Lincoln had to persuade him to remain.

**Unionist** Loyal to the United States of America.



## The Nation Dissolved

- ★ **What problems confronted Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis in March 1861?**
- ★ **How did their actions contribute to the escalating national crisis?**

Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated on March 4, 1861. In his inaugural address he repeated themes that he had been stressing since the election: no interference with slavery in states where it existed, no extension of slavery into the territories, and no tolerance of secession. “The Union,” he contended, was “perpetual.” Lincoln believed that the nation remained unbroken, and he pledged to see “that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the States.” This policy, he continued, necessitated “no bloodshed or violence, and there shall be none, unless it is forced upon the national authority. The power confided in me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts.” If war came, he argued, it would be over secession, not slavery, for the federal government had a duty to maintain the Union by any means, including force.

### Lincoln, Sumter, and War

Lincoln’s first presidential address drew mixed reactions. Most Republicans found it firm and reasonable, applauding its tone. Union advocates in both the North and the South thought the speech held promise for the future. Even former rival Stephen Douglas stated, “I am with him.” Moderate southerners commended Lincoln’s “temperance and conservatism” and believed the speech was all “any reasonable Southern man” could have expected. Confederates and their sympathizers, however, branded the speech a “Declaration of War.” Lincoln had hoped the address would foster a climate of reconciliation, show his commitment to maintaining the Union, and demonstrate his determination to find a peaceful solution, for he desperately needed time to organize the new government and formulate a plan of action. But such luxuries were not forthcoming.

Even before Lincoln assumed office, South Carolina officials had ordered the state militia to seize two federal forts—Fort Moultrie and Castle Pinckney—and the federal arsenal at Charleston. In response, Major Robert Anderson had moved all federal troops from Charleston to **Fort Sumter**, an island stronghold in Charleston Harbor. Immediately after taking office in March, Lincoln received a report from Fort Sumter that supplies were running low. Under great pressure from northern public opinion to do something without starting a war, he informed South Carolina governor Francis Pickens of his peaceful intention to send unarmed boats carrying food and supplies to the besieged fort. Lincoln thus placed the Confederacy in a no-win position: If Pickens accepted the resupply of federal forts he would lose face, but firing on an unarmed ship would be sufficiently dishonorable to justify stronger federal action. Confederate officials were determined to beat Lincoln to the punch. President Davis ordered the Confederate commander at Charleston to demand the evacuation of Sumter and, if the federals refused, to “proceed, in such a manner as you may determine, to reduce it.” On April 11, while the supply ships were still on their way, Anderson was ordered to surrender. When Anderson rejected the ultimatum on the following day, shore **batteries** opened fire on the island fortress. After a thirty-four-hour artillery battle, Anderson surrendered. Neither side had inflicted casualties on the other, but civil war had officially begun.

**Fort Sumter** Fort at the mouth of the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina; it was the scene of the opening engagement of the Civil War in April 1861.

**battery** An army artillery unit, usually supplied with heavy guns.

In this vivid engraving, South Carolina shore batteries under the command of P. G. T. Beauregard shell Fort Sumter, the last federal stronghold in Charleston Harbor, on the night of April 12, 1861. Curious and excited civilians look on from their rooftops, never suspecting the horrors that would be the outcome of this rash action. North Wind Picture Archives.



Across the North, newspapers contrasted the president's resolute but restrained policy with the violent aggression of the Confederates, and the public rallied behind the Union cause. In New York City, where southern sympathizers had once vehemently criticized abolitionist actions, a million people attended a Union rally. Even northern Democrats rallied behind the Republican president, hearkening to Stephen Douglas's statement that "there can be no neutrals in this war, only patriots—or traitors." Spurred by the public outcry and confident of support, Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand militiamen to be mobilized "to maintain the honor, the integrity, and the existence of our National Union, and the perpetuity of popular government." Northern states responded immediately and enthusiastically. Across the Upper South and the border regions, however, the call to arms meant that a decision had to be made: whether to continue in the Union or join the Confederacy.

### Choosing Sides in Virginia

The need for southern unity in the face of what he saw as northern aggression pushed Jefferson Davis to employ a combination of political finesse and force to create a solid southern alignment. He selected his cabinet with this in mind, choosing one cabinet member from each state except his own Mississippi and appointing men of varying degrees of radicalism. But unity among the seven seceding states was only one of Davis's worries. A perhaps more pressing concern was alignment among the eight slave states that remained in the Union. These states were critical, for they contained more than half of the entire southern population (two-thirds of its white population), possessed most of the South's industrial capacity, produced most of its food, and raised more than half of its horses. In addition, many experienced and able military leaders lived in these states. If the Confederacy was to have any chance of survival, the human and physical resources of the whole South were essential.

It was not Davis's appeal for solidarity but Lincoln's call to mobilize the militia that won most of the other slave states for the Confederate cause. In Virginia, Governor John

Letcher refused to honor Lincoln's demand for troops, and on April 17 a special convention declared for secession. Voters in Virginia overwhelmingly ratified this decision in a popular referendum on May 23. By then Letcher had offered **Richmond** as a site for the new nation's capital. The Confederate congress accepted the offer in order to strengthen ties with Virginia and because facilities in Montgomery were less than adequate.

Not all Virginians were flattered at becoming the seat for the Confederacy. Residents of the western portion of the state had strong Union ties and longstanding political differences with their neighbors east of the Allegheny Mountains. Forty-six counties called mass Unionist meetings to protest the state's secession, and in a June convention at Wheeling, they elected their own governor, Francis H. Pierpoint, and drew up a constitution. The document was ratified in an election open only to voters willing to take an oath of allegiance to the Union. Eastern Virginians considered the entire process illegal, but the West Virginia legislature finally convened in May 1862 and requested admission to the United States.

For many individuals in the Upper South, the decision to support the Confederacy was not an easy one. Virginian Robert E. Lee, for example, was deeply devoted to the Union. A West Point graduate and career officer in the U.S. Army, he had a distinguished record in the war with Mexico and as superintendent of West Point. But his marriage to Mary Custis, the great-granddaughter of Martha Washington, gave him control of 196 slaves on Mary's Arlington plantation. When Lincoln offered Lee field command of the Union armies, the Virginian refused, deciding that he should serve his native state instead. He resigned his U.S. Army commission in April 1861. When he informed Winfield Scott, a personal friend and fellow Virginian, of his decision, Scott replied, "You have made the greatest mistake of your life, but I feared it would be so." Scott chose to remain loyal to the Union.

### Trouble Along the Border

Influenced by Virginia and by Lee's decision, three other states joined the Confederacy. Arkansas seceded on May 6, and North Carolina followed on May 20. Tennessee, the eleventh and final state to join the Confederacy, was the home of many moderates, including John Bell, the Constitutional Union candidate in 1860. Eastern residents favored the Union, and those in the west favored the Confederacy. The state's voters at first rejected disunion overwhelmingly, but after the fighting began, Governor Isham C. Harris and the state legislature initiated military ties with the Confederacy, forcing another vote on the issue. Western voters carried the election, approving the agreement and seceding from the Union on June 8. East Tennesseans, who remained loyal Unionists, tried to divide the state much as West Virginians had done, but Davis ordered Confederate troops to occupy the region, thwarting the effort.

Four slave states remained in the Union, and the start of hostilities brought political and military confrontation in three of the four. Delaware quietly stayed in the Union. Voters there had given Breckinridge a plurality in 1860, but the majority of voters disapproved of secession, and few of the state's citizens owned slaves. Maryland, Missouri, and Kentucky, however, each contained large, vocal secessionist minorities and appeared poised to bolt to the Confederacy.

Maryland was particularly vital to the Union, for it enclosed Washington, D.C., on the three sides not bordered by Virginia. If Maryland were to secede, the Union would be forced to move its capital. When a Baltimore mob attacked federal troops with bricks and bottles, Lincoln and General Scott ordered the military occupation of the city and declared **martial law**.

**Richmond** Port city on the James River in Virginia; already the state capital, it became the capital of the Confederacy.

**martial law** Temporary rule by military authorities, imposed on a civilian population in time of war or when civil authority has broken down.

The state legislature finally met and voted to remain neutral. Lincoln then instructed the army to arrest suspected southern sympathizers and hold them without formal hearings or charges. When the legislature met again and appeared to be planning secession, Lincoln ordered the army to surround Frederick, the legislative seat—just as Davis had dispatched Confederate troops to occupy eastern Tennessee. With southern sympathizers suppressed, new state elections were held. The new legislature, overwhelmingly Unionist, voted against secession.

Kentucky had important economic ties to the South but was strongly nationalistic. Like Kentuckians Henry Clay and John Crittenden, most in the state favored compromise. The governor refused to honor Lincoln's call for troops, but the state legislature voted to remain neutral. Both the North and the South honored that neutrality. Kentucky's own militia, however, split into two factions, and the state became a bloody battleground where even members of the same family fought against one another.

In Missouri, Governor Claiborne F. Jackson, a former proslavery border ruffian, pushed for secession arguing that Missourians were bound together "in one brotherhood with the States of the South." When Unionists frustrated the secession movement, Jackson's forces seized the federal arsenal at Liberty and wrote to Jefferson Davis requesting artillery to support an assault on the arsenal at St. Louis. Union sympathizers fielded their own forces and fought Jackson at every turn. Like Kentucky, however, Missouri contributed a significant number of men to the Confederate Army; both states had stars in the U.S. and Confederate flags.

## Summary

The presidential election in 1848 raised regional tension and debates, and then the Compromise of 1850 failed to alleviate them. Slavery dominated the political agenda. The Whig Party, strained by fragmentation among its factions, disintegrated, and two completely new groups—the Know-Nothings and the Republicans—competed to replace it. A series of events, including the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the *Dred Scott* decision, intensified regional polarization, and radicals on both sides fanned the flames of sectional rivalry.

The new regional political coalitions of the 1850s more accurately reflected the changed composition of the electorate, but their intense commitment to regional interests left them far less able than their more nationally oriented predecessors to achieve compromise. Even the Democratic Party could not hold together, splitting into northern and southern wings. By 1859, the young Republican Party, committed to restricting slavery's expansion, was poised to gain control of the federal government. Fearing that the loss of political power would doom their way of life, southern planters recoiled in terror. Neither side believed it could afford to back down.

With the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860, six southern states withdrew from the Union. Last-minute efforts at compromise, such as the Crittenden proposal, failed, and on April 12, 1861, five weeks after Lincoln's inauguration, Confederate forces fired on federal troops at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. Lincoln's constituency, certain that secession was illegal, expected action, but the president's options were limited by the varied ideologies of his supporters. Similarly, Jefferson Davis and the newly created Confederacy faced problems resulting from disagreement about secession. But Lincoln believed that he had to call the nation to arms, and this move forced wavering states to choose sides. Internal divisions in Virginia, Tennessee, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri brought further violence and military action. Before summer, a second wave of secession finally solidified the lineup, and the boundary lines, between the two competing societies. The stakes were set, the division was complete: The nation was poised for the bloodiest war in its history.



## Key Terms

Sojourner Truth, *p. 300*

Liberty Party, *p. 301*

popular sovereignty, *p. 301*

Know-Nothings, *p. 301*

nativist, *p. 301*

xenophobic, *p. 301*

omnibus, *p. 303*

fugitive slave law, *p. 303*

Stephen A. Douglas, *p. 303*

Compromise of 1850, *p. 303*

Underground Railroad, *p. 303*

John Deere, *p. 305*

Cyrus McCormick, *p. 305*

agrarian capitalism, *p. 306*

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *p. 306*

conscience Whigs, *p. 306*

James Buchanan, *p. 306*

Franklin Pierce, *p. 306*

Young America Movement, *p. 307*

Gadsden Purchase, *p. 307*

Jefferson Davis, *p. 307*

Kansas-Nebraska Act, *p. 308*

Charles Sumner, *p. 308*

noncompliance, *p. 309*

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Republican Party, *p. 310*

plank, *p. 310*

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Lecompton constitution, *p. 311*

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Freeport Doctrine, *p. 312*

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# CHAPTER 14

## A Violent Choice: Civil War 1861–1865

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### **The Politics of War**

- Union Policies and Objectives
- Confederate Policies and Objectives
- The Diplomatic Front
- The Union's First Attack

#### **From Bull Run to Antietam**

- Struggle for the Mississippi
- Lee's Aggressive Defense of Virginia
- Lee's Invasion of Maryland
- Diplomacy and the Politics of Emancipation

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, 1862

#### **The Human Dimensions of the War**

- Instituting the Draft
- Wartime Economy in the North and South
- Women in Two Nations at War

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Susie King Taylor, 1899

- Free Blacks, Slaves, and War
- Life and Death at the Front

#### **Waging Total War**

- Lincoln's Generals and Southern Successes
- Grant, Sherman, and the Invention of Total War

**IT MATTERS:** The Gettysburg Address

- The Election of 1864 and Sherman's March to the Sea
- The End of Lee and Lincoln

#### **Summary**

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Susie King Taylor

Born a slave in 1848, young Susie Baker attended an illegal school for slave children in Savannah, Georgia, where, by the age of 14, she had learned everything her teachers could offer. Then war came. Early in 1862 Union forces attacked the Georgia coast. Fearful of what the future might hold, many slaves left the city. Eventually a Union gunboat picked up Susie and a number of “**contrabands**” and ferried them to a Yankee encampment on St. Simon’s Island. Before long the community of displaced former slaves exceeded six hundred. Discovering that Susie could read and write, Union officials asked her to open a school, the first legally sanctioned school for African Americans in Georgia.

At St. Simon’s, Susie met and then married another contraband named Edward King. Like many in the camp, King wanted to fight for his freedom. Finally, Captain C. T. Trowbridge arrived on the island with a request for volunteers. Though they were offered no pay, no uniforms, and no official recognition, King and his friends eagerly joined up. Trowbridge drilled them during the day while Susie tutored them at night. Finally, in October, the brigade got uniforms and official recognition (though still no pay) and went off to war. Susie went with them.

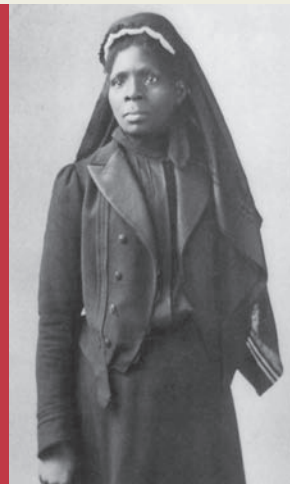
She spent the rest of the war traveling with the troops, tending to their wounds, their clothes, and their minds; in her words, she “did not fear shell or shot, cared for the sick and dying; camped and fared as the boys did.” Then the war ended, and her husband died. She taught school for a time, and though she eventually remarried and settled in the North, she never forgot her wartime experiences.

“These things should be kept in history before the people,” she declared, and she made it her business to tell the story. “There has never been a greater war in the United States than the one of 1861, where so many lives were lost—not men alone but noble women as well.” Her efforts and those of people like her, people who made hard choices and wrenching sacrifices, had wrought a new era. “What a wonderful revolution!” she concluded.

#### **SUSIE KING TAYLOR**

*Born a slave in rural Georgia, Susie King Taylor attended an illegal school for slaves in antebellum Savannah. After the outbreak of the Civil War, she fled to safety among the Union forces and founded a school for other “contrabands.” When her husband, Edward King, joined an all-black regiment fighting for their freedom, Susie accompanied him, serving as a nurse, aide, and continuing as a teacher. Following the war she became a leading voice in advocating racial equality and educational opportunity for all people.*

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. [LC-USZ61-1863].



# Chronology

<b>1861</b>	Lincoln takes office and runs Union by executive authority until July Fort Sumter falls Battle of Bull Run McClellan organizes the Union army Union naval blockade begins	Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg Draft riots in New York City World's first subway opens in London
<b>1862</b>	Grant's victories in Mississippi Valley Battle of Shiloh U.S. Navy captures New Orleans Peninsular Campaign Battle of Antietam African Americans permitted in Union army	<b>1864</b> Grant invades Virginia Sherman captures Atlanta Lincoln reelected Sherman's March to the Sea Congress passes the Thirteenth Amendment Red Cross founded in Geneva
<b>1863</b>	Emancipation Proclamation takes effect Union enacts conscription Battle of Chancellorsville and death of Stonewall Jackson	<b>1865</b> Sherman's march through the Carolinas Lee abandons Petersburg and Richmond Lee surrenders at Appomattox Courthouse Lincoln proposes a gentle reconstruction policy Lincoln is assassinated Salvation Army founded in London

To Taylor's mind, the mind of a former slave, it was the liberation of the slaves that marked the Civil War's "revolutionary" character. But at the outbreak of war, that revolution was only in the minds of a handful of radicals. When Jefferson Davis and southerner leaders spoke of a revolution, it was against a domineering North that they compared to the England of George III. Lincoln, meanwhile, spoke of a revolution being waged by a rebellious South that would destroy the Union and the Constitution with it.

Many shared the perception that this was a revolutionary moment, but disillusionment seemed to wait behind every event. The South would find it more and more difficult to withstand the superior manpower and resources controlled by the Union. And the North would suffer frustrations of its own as President Lincoln's generals let opportunity after opportunity slip by. In desperation, Lincoln would finally redefine the war by invoking Taylor's revolutionary cause, issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. From that point forward, hopes for a peaceful resolution evaporated: both sides would demand total victory or total destruction.

**contrabands** Term coined by Gen. Benjamin F. Butler to describe fugitive slaves who sought refuge among Union troops in the South.

## The Politics of War

- ★ **What problems did Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis face as they led their respective nations into war?**
- ★ **What role did European nations play during the opening years of the war?**

Running the war posed complex problems for both Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis. At the outset, neither side had the experience, soldiers, or supplies to wage an effective war; and foreign diplomacy and international trade were vital to both. But perhaps the biggest

challenge confronting both Davis and Lincoln was internal politics. Lincoln had to contend not only with northern Democrats and southern sympathizers but also with divisions in his own party. Not all Republicans agreed with the president's war aims. Davis also faced internal political problems. The Confederate constitution guaranteed a great deal of autonomy to the Confederate states, and each state had a different opinion about war strategy and national objectives.

### Union Policies and Objectives

Abraham Lincoln took the oath of office in March 1861, but Congress did not convene until July. This delay placed Lincoln in an awkward position. The Constitution gives Congress, not the president, the power “to declare war” and “to provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrection, and repel invasions.” The secession of the southern states and the imminent threat to federal authority at Fort Sumter, however, required an immediate response.

In effect, Lincoln ruled by executive proclamation for three months, vastly expanding the wartime powers of the presidency. Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand militiamen from the states to put down the rebellion. And ignoring specific constitutional provisions, he suspended the civil rights of citizens in Maryland when it appeared likely that the border state would join the Confederacy. At various times during the war, Lincoln would resort to similar invasions of civil liberties when he felt that dissent threatened either domestic security or the Union cause.

Having assumed nearly absolute authority, Lincoln faced the need to rebuild an army in disarray. When hostilities broke out, the Union had only sixteen thousand men in uniform, and nearly one-third of the officers resigned to support the Confederacy. What military leadership remained was aged: seven of the eight heads of army bureaus had been in the service since the War of 1812, including General in Chief Winfield Scott, who was 74 years old. Only two Union officers had ever commanded a **brigade**, and both were in their seventies. Weapons were old, and supplies were low. On May 3, Lincoln again exceeded his constitutional authority by calling for regular army recruits to meet the crisis. “Whether strictly legal or not,” he asserted, such actions were based on “a popular demand, and a public necessity,” and he expected “that Congress would readily ratify them.”

Lincoln had also ordered the U.S. Navy to stop all incoming supplies to the states in rebellion. The naval blockade became an integral part of Union strategy. Although the Union navy had as few resources as did the army, leadership in the Navy Department quickly turned that situation around. Navy Secretary Gideon Welles purchased ships and built an effective navy that could both blockade the South and support land forces. By the end of 1861, the Union navy had 260 warships on the seas and a hundred more under construction.

The aged Winfield Scott drafted the initial Union military strategy. He ordered that the blockade of southern ports be combined with a strong Union thrust down the Mississippi River, the primary artery in the South's transportation system. This strategy would break the southern economy and split the Confederacy into two isolated parts. Scott believed that economic pressure would bring southern moderates forward to negotiate a settlement and perhaps return to the Union. However, this passive, diplomacy-oriented strategy did not appeal to war-fevered northerners who hungered for complete victory over those “arrogant southerners.” The northern press ridiculed what it called the **anaconda plan**.

When Congress convened on July 4, 1861, Lincoln explained his actions and reminded congressmen that he had neither the constitutional authority to abolish slavery nor

**brigade** A military unit consisting of two or more regiments and composed of between 1,500 and 3,500 men.

**anaconda plan** Winfield Scott's plan (named after a snake that smothers prey in its coils) to blockade southern ports and take control of the Mississippi River, thus splitting the Confederacy and causing an economic collapse.



any intention of doing so. Rebellion, not slavery, had caused the crisis, he said, and the seceding states must be brought back into the Union, regardless of the cost. “Our popular government has been called an experiment,” he argued, and the point to be settled now was “its successful maintenance against a formidable internal attempt to overthrow it.” On July 22 and 25, 1861, both houses of Congress passed resolutions validating Lincoln’s actions.

This seemingly unified front lasted only a short time. Viewing social reformation as the correct objective, **Radical Republicans** pressured Congress to create a special committee to oversee the conduct of the war. Radical leader Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania growled, “If their whole country must be laid waste, and made a desert, in order to save this union, so let it be.” Stevens and the Radicals pressed for and passed a series of confiscation acts that inflicted severe penalties against individuals in rebellion. Treason was punishable by death, and anyone aiding the Confederacy was to be punished with imprisonment, attachment of property, and confiscation of slaves. All persons living in the eleven seceding states, whether loyal to the United States or not, were declared enemies of the Union and subject to the provisions of the law.

The Radicals splintered any consensus Lincoln might have achieved in his own party, and northern Democrats railed against his accumulation of power. To keep an unruly Congress from undermining his efforts, Lincoln shaped early Union strategy to appease all factions and used military appointments to smooth political feathers. His attitudes frequently enraged radical abolitionists, but Lincoln maintained his calm in the face of their criticism and merely reinforced his intentions. “What I do about slavery and the colored race,” he stated in 1862, “I do because it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union.”

Nevertheless, Lincoln had far greater physical and human resources at his command than did the Confederates (see Table 14.1). The Union was home to more than twice as many people as the Confederacy, had vastly superior manufacturing and transportation systems, and enjoyed almost a monopoly in banking and foreign exchange. Lincoln also had a well-established government structure and formal diplomatic relations with other nations of the world. Still, these advantages could not help the war effort unless properly harnessed.

**Radical Republicans** Republican faction that tried to limit presidential power and enhance congressional authority during the Civil War; Radicals opposed any toleration of slavery.

### Confederate Policies and Objectives

At the start of the war, the Confederacy had no army, no navy, no war supplies, no government structure, no foreign alliances, and a political situation as ragged as the Union’s. Each Confederate state had its own ideas about the best way to conduct the war. After the attack on Fort Sumter, amassing supplies, troops, ships, and

**TABLE 14.1** Comparison of Union and Confederate Resources

	Union (23 States)	Confederacy (11 States)
Total population	20,700,000	9,105,000 <sup>a</sup>
Manufacturing establishments	110,000	18,000
Manufacturing workers	1,300,000	110,000
Miles of railroad	21,973	9,283
Troop strength (est.)	2,100,000	850,000

Source: Data from *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (1884–1888; reprinted ed., 1956).

<sup>a</sup>Includes 3,654,000 blacks, most of them slaves and not available for military duty.

war materials was the main task for Davis and his cabinet. Politics, however, influenced southern choices about where to field armies and who would direct them, how to run a war without offending state leaders, and how to pursue foreign diplomacy.

The Union naval blockade posed an immediate problem. The Confederacy had no navy and no capacity to build naval ships. Instead, the Confederates pinned their main hope of winning the war on the army. Fighting for honor was praiseworthy behavior in the South, and southerners, despite their disadvantages in manpower and resources, strongly believed they could “lick the Yankees.” Southern boys rushed to enlist to fight the northern “popinjays,” expecting a quick and glorious victory. Thousands volunteered before the Confederate war department was even organized. By the time Lincoln issued his call for seventy-five thousand militiamen, the Confederates already had sixty thousand men in uniform.

Despite this rush of fighting men, the South faced major handicaps. Even with the addition of the four Upper South states (Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas), as of 1860, the South built only 4 percent of all locomotives and only 3 percent of all firearms manufactured in the United States. The North produced almost all of the country’s cloth, **pig iron**, boots, and shoes. Early in the war, the South could produce enough food but lacked the means to transport it where it was needed. Quartermaster General Abraham Myers drew the mammoth task of producing and delivering tents, shoes, uniforms, blankets, horses, and wagons. All were in short supply.

The miracle worker in charge of supplying southern troops with weapons and ammunition was Josiah Gorgas, who became chief of **ordnance** in April 1861. Gorgas purchased arms from Europe while his ordnance officers bought or stole copper pots and tubing to make **percussion caps**, bronze church bells to make cannons, and lead weights to make bullets. He built factories and foundries to manufacture small arms. But despite his extraordinary skill, he could not supply all of the Confederate troops. When the Confederate congress authorized the enlistment of four hundred thousand additional volunteers in 1861, the war department had to turn away more than half of the enlistees because it lacked equipment for them.

Internal politics also plagued the Davis administration. First, he alienated his high-spirited populace by advocating a defensive war in the belief that counter attacking and yielding territory when necessary would buy time, making war so costly that the Union would give up. As one southern editor put it, the “idea of waiting for blows, instead of inflicting them is altogether unsuited to the genius of our people.” But even a defensive posture proved hard to maintain. Despite the shortage of arms, state governors hoarded weapons seized from federal arsenals for their own state militias and demanded that their states’ borders be protected, spreading troops dangerously thin. Politics also played a role in determining southern military leadership. Although the South had many more qualified officers at the beginning of the war than did the North, powerful state politicians with little military experience—such as Henry A. Wise of Virginia and Robert A. Toombs of Georgia—received appointments as generals.

**pig iron** Crude iron, direct from a blast furnace, that is cast into rectangular molds called pigs in preparation for conversion into steel, cast iron, or wrought iron.

**ordnance** Weapons, ammunition, and other military equipment.

**percussion cap** A thin metal cap containing an explosive compound, needed to fire the guns used in the Civil War.

### The Diplomatic Front

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing the Confederacy was gaining international recognition and foreign aid. The primary focus of Confederate foreign policy was Great Britain. For years, the South had been exporting huge amounts of cotton to Britain, and many southerners hoped that formal recognition of Confederate independence would immediately follow secession. Political and economic realities as well as ethical issues doomed them to disappointment. After all, the Union was still an

important player in international affairs, and the British were not going to risk offending the emerging industrial power without good cause. Also, many English voters were morally opposed to slavery and would have objected to an open alliance with the slaveholding Confederacy. Thus, while the British allowed southern agents to purchase ships and goods, they crafted a careful policy. On May 13, 1861, Queen Victoria proclaimed official neutrality but granted **belligerent status** to the South. This meant that Britain recognized the Confederates as responsible parties in a legitimate war, but did not recognize the Confederate States of America as yet ready to enter the international community.

The British pronouncement set the tone for other European responses and was much less than southerners had hoped for. It was also a major blow to the North, however, for Britain rejected Lincoln's position that the conflict was rebellion against duly authorized government. Lincoln could do little but accept British neutrality, for to provoke Britain might lead to full recognition of the Confederacy or to calls for arbitration of the conflict. At the same time, he cautiously continued efforts to block all incoming aid to the Confederacy. In November 1861, however, an incident at sea nearly scuttled British-American relations. James Murray Mason, the newly appointed Confederate emissary to London, and John Slidell, the Confederate minister to France, were traveling to their posts aboard the *Trent*, a British merchant ship bound for London. After the *Trent* left Havana, the U.S. warship *San Jacinto*, under the command of Captain Charles Wilkes, stopped the British ship. Wilkes had Mason, Slidell, and their staffs removed from the *Trent* and taken to Boston for confinement at Fort Warren.

Northerners celebrated the action and praised Wilkes, but the British were furious. They viewed the *Trent* affair as aggression against a neutral government, a violation of international law, and an affront to their national honor. President Lincoln, Secretary of State William Seward, and U.S. Ambassador to England Charles Francis Adams (son of former president John Quincy Adams) calmed the British by arguing that Wilkes had acted without orders. They ordered the release of the prisoners and apologized to the British, handling the incident so adroitly that the public outcry was largely forgotten when Mason and Slidell arrived in London.

**belligerent status** Recognition that a participant in a conflict is a nation engaged in warfare rather than a rebel against a legally constituted government; full diplomatic recognition is one possible outcome.

### The Union's First Attack

Like most southerners, northerners were confident that military action would bring the war to a quick end. General Irvin McDowell made the first move when his troops crossed into Virginia to engage troops led by General P. G. T. Beauregard.

McDowell's troops, though high-spirited, were poorly trained and undisciplined. They ambled along as if they were on a country outing, allowing Beauregard enough time to position his troops in defense of a vital rail center near Manassas Junction along a creek called **Bull Run**.

McDowell attacked on Sunday, July 21, and maintained the offensive most of the day. He seemed poised to overrun the Confederates until southern reinforcements under **Thomas J. Jackson** stalled the Union advance. Jackson's unflinching stand at Bull Run earned him the nickname "Stonewall," and under intense cannon fire, Union troops panicked and began fleeing into a throng of northern spectators who had brought picnic lunches and settled in to watch the battle. Thoroughly humiliated before a hometown crowd, Union soldiers retreated toward Washington. Jefferson Davis immediately ordered the invasion of the Union capital, but the Confederates were also in disarray and made no attempt to pursue the fleeing Union forces.

This battle profoundly affected both sides. In the South, the victory stirred confidence that the war would be short and victory complete. Northerners, disillusioned and

**Bull Run** A creek in Virginia not far from Washington, D.C., where Confederate soldiers forced federal troops to retreat in the first major battle of the Civil War, fought in July 1861.

**Thomas J. Jackson** Confederate general nicknamed "Stonewall"; he commanded troops at both battles of Bull Run and was mortally wounded by his own soldiers at Chancellorsville in 1863.

**George B. McClellan** U.S. general tapped by Lincoln to organize the Army of the Potomac; he was a skillful organizer but slow and indecisive as a field commander.

**Army of the Potomac** Army created to guard the U.S. capital after the Battle of Bull Run in 1861; it became the main Union army in the East.

embarrassed, pledged that no similar retreats would occur. Under fire for the loss and hoping to improve both the management of military affairs and the competence of the troops, Lincoln fired McDowell and appointed **George B. McClellan**. McClellan was assigned to create the **Army of the Potomac** to defend the capital from Confederate attack and spearhead any offensives into Virginia. Lincoln also replaced Secretary of War Simon Cameron with Edwin Stanton, a politician and lawyer from Pennsylvania.

General McClellan's strengths were in organization and discipline, and both were sorely needed. Before Bull Run, Union officers had lounged around Washington while largely unsupervised raw recruits in army camps received no military instruction. Under McClellan, months of training turned the 185,000-man army into a well-drilled and efficient unit. Calls to attack Richmond began anew, but McClellan, in no hurry for battle, continued to drill the troops and remained in the capital. Finally on January 27, 1862, Lincoln called for a broad offensive, but his general in chief ignored the order and delayed for nearly two months. Completely frustrated, Lincoln removed McClellan as general in chief on March 11 but left him in command of the Army of the Potomac. Even so, Union forces in the East mounted no major offensives.

## From Bull Run to Antietam

- ★ **How did military action during the opening years of the war affect people's perceptions of the war in the North and South?**
- ★ **Why did Lincoln issue the Emancipation Proclamation when and in the way he did? What sorts of responses did it elicit?**

Reorganizing the military and forming the Army of the Potomac did not accomplish Lincoln's and the nation's goal of toppling the Confederacy quickly and bringing the rebellious South back into the Union. In the second year of the war, Confederate forces continued to outwit and outfight numerically superior and better-equipped federal troops. After Bull Run it was clear that the war would be neither short nor glorious. Military, political, and diplomatic strategies became increasingly entangled as both North and South struggled for the major victories that would end the war.

### Struggle for the Mississippi

**Ulysses S. Grant** U.S. general who became general in chief of the Union army in 1864 after the Vicksburg campaign; he later became president of the United States.

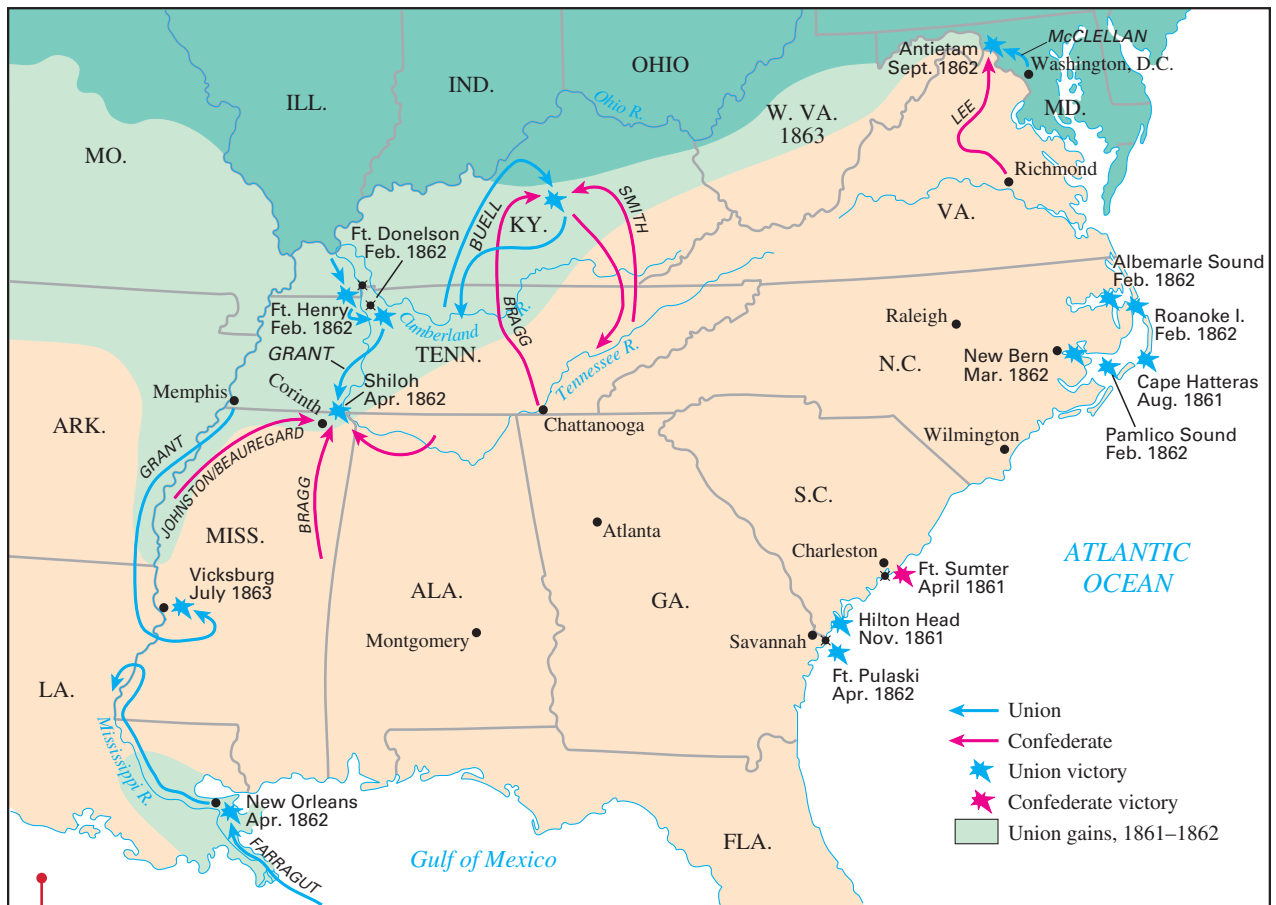
**William Tecumseh Sherman** U.S. general who captured Atlanta in 1864 and led a destructive march to the Atlantic coast.

**Battle of Shiloh** Battle in Tennessee in April 1862 that ended with an unpursued Confederate withdrawal; both sides suffered heavy casualties for the first time, but neither side gained ground.

While McClellan stalled in the East, one Union general finally had some success in the western theater of the war. Following the strategy outlined in General Scott's anaconda plan, **Ulysses S. Grant** moved against southern strongholds in the Mississippi Valley in 1862. On February 6, he took Fort Henry along the Tennessee River and ten days later captured Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River near Nashville, Tennessee (see Map 14.1). As Union forces approached Nashville, the Confederates retreated to Corinth, Mississippi. In this one swift stroke, Grant successfully penetrated Confederate western defenses and brought Kentucky and most of Tennessee under federal control.

At Corinth, Confederate general Albert Sidney Johnston finally reorganized the retreating southern troops while Grant was waiting for reinforcements. Early on April 6, to Grant's surprise, Johnston attacked at Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, near a small country meetinghouse called Shiloh Church. Some Union forces under General **William Tecumseh Sherman** were driven back, but the Confederate attack soon lost momentum as Union defenses stiffened. The **Battle of Shiloh** raged until midafternoon. When Johnston was mortally wounded, General Beauregard took





**MAP 14.1** The Anaconda Plan and the Battle of Antietam

This map illustrates the anaconda plan at work. The Union navy closed southern harbors while Grant's troops worked to seal the northern end of the Mississippi River. The map also shows the Battle of Antietam (September 1862), in which Confederate troops under Robert E. Lee were finally defeated by the Union army under General George McClellan.

command and by day's end believed the enemy was defeated. But Union reinforcements arrived during the night, and the next morning Grant counterattacked, pushing the Confederates back to Corinth. The staggering losses on both sides at Shiloh began to awaken soldiers and civilians alike to the potential for carnage the war would fulfill.

Farther south, Admiral David G. Farragut led a fleet of U.S. Navy gunboats against New Orleans, the commercial and banking center of the South, and on April 25 forced the city's surrender. Farragut then sailed up the Mississippi, hoping to take the well-fortified city of **Vicksburg**, Mississippi. He scored several victories until he reached Port Hudson, Louisiana, where the combination of Confederate defenses and shallow water forced him to halt. Meanwhile, on June 6, Union gunboats destroyed a Confederate fleet at Memphis, Tennessee, and brought the upper Mississippi under Union control. Vicksburg remained the only major obstacle to Union control over the entire river (see Map 14.1).

Realizing the seriousness of the situation in the West, the Confederates regrouped and invaded Kentucky. Union forces under General William S. Rosecrans stopped Confederate general Braxton Bragg's force on December 31 at Stone's River and did not pursue when the Confederates retreated. Back in Mississippi, Grant launched two unsuccessful

**Vicksburg** Confederate-held city on the Mississippi River that surrendered on July 4, 1863, after a lengthy siege by Grant's forces.

attacks against Vicksburg in December, but then Union efforts stalled. Nevertheless, northern forces had wrenched control of the upper and lower ends of the river away from the Confederacy.

### Lee's Aggressive Defense of Virginia

The anaconda plan was well on its way to cutting the Confederacy in two, but the general public in the North thought that the path to real victory led to Richmond, capital of the Confederacy. Thus, to maintain public support for the war,

Lincoln needed victories over the Confederates in the East, and campaigns there were given higher priority than campaigns in the West. Confederate leaders, realizing that Richmond would be an important prize for the North, took dramatic steps to keep their capital city out of enemy hands. In fact, defending Richmond was the South's primary goal: more supplies and men were assigned to campaigns in Virginia than to defending Confederate borders elsewhere.

Expecting to surprise the Confederates by attacking Richmond from the south, McClellan transported the entire Army of the Potomac by ship to Fort Monroe, Virginia. Initiating what would be called the **Peninsular Campaign**, the army marched up the peninsula between the York and James Rivers. In typical fashion, McClellan proceeded cautiously. The outnumbered Confederate forces took advantage of his indecision and twice slipped away, retreating toward Richmond while McClellan followed. Hoping to overcome the odds by surprising his opponent, General Joseph E. Johnston, commander of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, wheeled about and attacked at Seven Pines on May 31. Though the battle was indecisive—both sides claimed victory—it halted McClellan's progress and disabled Johnston, who was seriously wounded.

With McClellan stalled, Confederate stalwart Stonewall Jackson staged a brilliant diversionary thrust down the Shenandoah Valley toward Washington. Jackson, who had grown up in the region, seemed to be everywhere at once. In thirty days, he and his men (who became known as the "foot cavalry") marched 350 miles, defeated three Union armies in five battles, captured and sent back to Richmond a fortune in provisions and equipment, inflicted twice as many casualties as they received, and confused and immobilized Union forces in the region.

Meanwhile, Union forces were marking time near Richmond while McClellan waited for reinforcements. Determined to remove this threat, Confederate forces launched a series of attacks to drive McClellan away from the Confederate capital. Although his army had already proved itself against the Confederates at Seven Pines, a new factor weighed in against McClellan. With Johnston wounded, Davis had been forced to replace him, choosing Robert E. Lee. Lee was probably the Confederacy's best general. Daring, bold, and tactically aggressive, he enjoyed combat, pushed his troops to the maximum, and was well liked by those serving under him. Lee had an uncanny ability to read the character of his opponents, predict their maneuvers, and exploit their mistakes. In a move that became typical of his generalship, Lee split his forces and attacked from all sides over a seven-day period in August, forcing McClellan into a defensive position. The Peninsular Campaign was over. The self-promoting Union general had been beaten in part by his own indecisiveness.

Fed up with McClellan, Lincoln transferred command of the Army of the Potomac to General John Pope, but Pope's command was brief. Union forces encountered Lee's army again at the Manassas rail line on August 30. The Confederates pretended to retreat, and when Pope followed, Lee soundly defeated Lincoln's new general in the **Second Battle of Bull Run**. Thoroughly disappointed with Pope's performance, but lacking any other viable replacement, Lincoln once again named McClellan commander of the Army of the Potomac.

**Peninsular Campaign** McClellan's attempt in the spring and summer of 1862 to capture Richmond by advancing up the peninsula between the James and York Rivers; Confederate forces under Robert E. Lee drove his troops back.

**Second Battle of Bull Run** Union defeat near Bull Run in August 1862; Union troops led by John Pope were outmaneuvered by Lee.

### Lee's Invasion of Maryland

Feeling confident after the second victory at Bull Run, Lee devised a bold offensive against Maryland. His plan had three objectives. First, he wanted to move the fighting out of war-torn Virginia so that farmers could harvest food. Second, he hoped that he might attract volunteers from among the many slaveowners in Maryland to beef up his undermanned army. Third, he believed that a strong thrust against Union forces might gain diplomatic recognition for the Confederacy from Europe. In the process, he hoped to win enough territory to force the Union to sue for peace. On September 4, Lee crossed the Potomac into Maryland, formulating an intricate offensive by dividing his army into three separate attack wings. But someone was careless—Union soldiers found a copy of Lee's detailed instructions wrapped around some cigars at an abandoned Confederate campsite.

If McClellan had acted swiftly on this intelligence, he could have crushed Lee's army piece by piece, but he waited sixteen hours before advancing. By then, Lee had learned of the missing orders and quickly withdrew. Lee reunited some of his forces at Sharpsburg, Maryland, around **Antietam Creek** (see Map 14.1). There, on September 17, the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia engaged in the bloodiest single-day battle of the Civil War.

The casualties in this one battle were more than double those suffered in the War of 1812 and the War with Mexico combined. "The air was full of the hiss of bullets and the hurtle of grapeshot," one Union soldier said, and "the whole landscape turned red." The bitter fighting exhausted both armies. After a day of rest, Lee retreated across the Potomac. Stonewall Jackson, covering Lee's retreat, soundly thrashed a force that McClellan sent in pursuit. But for the first time, General Lee experienced defeat.

Although Lee's offensive had been thwarted, Lincoln was in no way pleased with the performance of his army and its leadership. He believed that McClellan could have destroyed Lee's forces had he attacked earlier or, failing that, had pursued the fleeing Confederate army with all haste. He fired McClellan again, this time for good, and placed Ambrose E. Burnside in command of the Army of the Potomac.

Burnside moved the Army of the Potomac to the east bank of the Rappahannock River overlooking **Fredericksburg**, Virginia (see Map 14.2), where he delayed for almost three weeks. Lee used the time to fortify the heights west of the city with men and artillery. On December 13, in one of the worst mistakes of the war, Burnside ordered a day-long frontal assault. The results were devastating. Federal troops, mowed down from the heights, suffered tremendous casualties, and once again the Army of the Potomac retreated to Washington.

### Diplomacy and the Politics of Emancipation

The first full year of the war ended with mixed results for both sides. Union forces in the West had scored major victories. But the failure of the Army of the Potomac under three different generals and against Lee and Jackson's brilliant maneuvers seemed to outweigh those successes. Lee's victories, however, carried heavy casualties, and the South's ability to supply and deploy troops was rapidly diminishing. A long, drawn-out conflict favored the Union unless Davis could secure help for the Confederacy from abroad.

The Confederacy still expected British aid, but nothing seemed to shake Britain's commitment to neutrality. In addition to the practical and ethical issues discussed earlier, this resistance was due to the efforts of Charles Francis Adams, Lincoln's ambassador in London, who demonstrated his diplomatic skill repeatedly during the war. Also,

**Antietam Creek** Site of a battle that occurred in September 1862 when Lee's forces invaded Maryland; both sides suffered heavy losses, and Lee retreated into Virginia.

**Fredericksburg** Site in Virginia of a Union defeat in December 1862 that demonstrated the incompetence of the new Union commander, Ambrose E. Burnside.

### MAP 14.2 Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg

This map shows the campaigns that took place during the winter of 1862 and spring of 1863, culminating in the Battle of Gettysburg (July 1863). General Meade's victory at Gettysburg may have been the critical turning point of the war.



Britain possessed a surplus of cotton and did not need southern supplies, neutralizing the South's only economic lever and frustrating Davis's diplomatic goals.

Yet Radical Republicans were also frustrated. No aspect of the war was going as they had expected. They had hoped that the Union army would defeat the South in short order. Instead, the war effort was dragging on. More important from the Radicals' point of view, nothing was being done about slavery. They pressed Lincoln to take a stand against slavery, and they pushed Congress for legislation to prohibit slavery in federal territories.

Politically astute as always, Lincoln acted to appease the Radical Republicans, foster popular support in the North for the war effort, and increase favorable sentiment for the Union cause abroad. During the summer of 1862, he drafted a proclamation freeing the slaves in the Confederacy and submitted it to his cabinet. Cabinet members advised that he postpone announcing the policy until after the Union had achieved a military victory. Five days after the Battle of Antietam, Lincoln unveiled the **Emancipation Proclamation**, which abolished slavery in the states "in rebellion" and would go into effect on January 1, 1863.

Although the Emancipation Proclamation was a major step toward ending slavery, it would free no slaves until military lines moved. The proclamation applied only to slavery in areas controlled by the Confederacy, not in any area controlled by the Union. The president could not afford to alienate the four slave states that had remained in the Union,

#### Emancipation Proclamation

Lincoln's order abolishing slavery as of January 1, 1863, in states "in rebellion" but not in border territories still loyal to the Union



# Investigating America

## Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, 1862

On September 22, 1862, in the wake of the battle of Antietam, Lincoln issued an executive order promising freedom to enslaved Americans living in the Confederate states. Under this order, Confederate states could surrender before January 1 and retain their slaves. When they did not, Lincoln issued a second executive order naming the regions where liberation was to take place. The following is from the proclamation of September 22.

.....  
**I** Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy thereof, do hereby proclaim and declare that hereafter, as heretofore, the war will be prosecuted for the object of practically restoring the constitutional relation between the United States, and each of the states, and the people thereof, in which states that relation is, or may be suspended or disturbed.

That it is my purpose, upon the next meeting of Congress to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure tendering pecuniary aid to the free acceptance or rejection of all slave-states, so called, the people whereof may not then be in rebellion against the United States, and which states may then have voluntarily adopted, or thereafter may voluntarily adopt, immediate, or gradual abolishment of slavery within their respective limits; and that the effort to colonize persons of African descent upon this continent, or elsewhere, will be continued.

That on the first day of January [1863], all persons held as slaves within any state, or designated part of a state, the people whereof thenceforward, and forever free; and the executive government of the United States will, during the continuance in office of the present incumbents, recognize such persons, as being free, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom. . . .

That attention is hereby called to an Act of Congress entitled "An Act to make an additional Article of War" Approved March 13, 1862, and . . . Also to the ninth and tenth

sections of an act entitled "An Act to suppress Insurrection, to punish Treason and Rebellion, to seize and confiscate property of rebels, and for other purposes," approved July 17, 1862, and which sections are: "SEC. 9. And be it further enacted, that all slaves of persons who shall hereafter be engaged in rebellion against the government of the United States, or who shall in any way give aid or comfort thereto, escaping from such persons and taking refuge within the lines of the army; and all slaves captured from such persons or deserted by them and coming under the control of the government of the United States; and all slaves of such persons found [or] being within any place occupied by rebel forces and afterwards occupied by the forces of the United States, shall be deemed captives of war, and shall be forever free of their servitude, and not again held as slaves. . . ."

And I do hereby enjoin upon and order all persons engaged in the military and naval service of the United States to observe, obey, and enforce, within their respective spheres of service, the act and sections above recited.

And the executive will [in due time] [at the next session of congress] recommend that all citizens of the United States who shall have remained loyal thereto throughout the rebellion, shall (upon the restoration of the constitutional relation between the United States, and their respective states, and people, if that relation shall have been suspended or disturbed) be compensated for all losses by acts of the United States, including the loss of slaves.

.....

- Critics at the time charged that Lincoln freed the slaves where he had no authority—in the rebellious Confederate states—but did not do so where he could, in his own country. By what authority did Lincoln claim this power, and could he legally have wielded it in Maryland or Delaware?
- Why do you think the president gave the Confederate states until January 1 to comply? And why did he specifically mention the two 1862 laws of Congress, generally known as the Confiscation Acts?



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

although he submitted a plan for compensated emancipation in those areas (which they chose not to accept). Lincoln made emancipation entirely conditional on a Union military victory, a gambit designed to force critics of the war, whether in the United States or Great Britain, to rally behind his cause.

Whether or not it was successful as a humanitarian action, issuing the Emancipation Proclamation at the time he did and in the form he did was a profoundly successful political step for Lincoln. Although a handful of northern Democrats and a few Union military leaders called it an “absurd proclamation of a political coward,” more joined Frederick Douglass in proclaiming, “We shout for joy that we live to record this righteous decree.” Meanwhile, some in Britain pointed to the paradox of the proclamation: it declared an end to slavery in areas where Lincoln could not enforce it, while having no effect on slavery in areas within the United States, where the president lacked the constitutional power to abolish it. But even there, most applauded the document and rallied against recognition of the Confederacy.

## The Human Dimensions of the War

- ★ **How did the burdens of war affect society in the North and the South during the course of the fighting?**
- ★ **How did individuals and governments in both regions respond to those burdens?**

The Civil War imposed tremendous stress on American society. As the men marched off to battle, women faced the task of caring for families and property alone. As casualties increased, the number of voluntary enlistments decreased, and both sides searched for ways to find replacements for dead and wounded soldiers. The armies consumed vast amounts of manufactured and agricultural products—constantly demanding not only weapons and ammunition but also food, clothing, and hardware. Government spending was enormous, hard currency was scarce, and inflation soared as both governments printed paper money to pay their debts. Industrial capability, transportation facilities, and agricultural production often dictated when, where, and how well armies fought. Society in both North and South changed to meet an array of hardships as individuals facing unfamiliar conditions attempted to carry on their lives amid the war’s devastation.

### Instituting the Draft

By the end of 1862, heavy casualties, massive desertion, and declining enlistments had depleted both armies. Burdened with a smaller population and growing disaffection on the part of nonslaveholding farmers, the Confederacy was forced to institute the first ever draft in the Western Hemisphere. Conscription in the South, however, met with considerable resentment and resistance. Believing that plantations were necessary to the war effort and that slaves would not work unless directly overseen by masters, in 1862 Confederate officials passed the **Twenty Negro Law**, which exempted planters owning twenty or more slaves from military service. This policy fostered the feeling that the poor were going off to fight while the rich stayed safely at home. The law was modified in 1863, requiring exempted planters to pay \$500, and in 1864, the number of slaves required to earn an exemption was lowered to fifteen. Nevertheless, resentment continued to smolder.

Although the North had a much larger population pool than the South to draw from, its enlistments sagged with its military fortunes during 1862. More than a hundred thousand Union soldiers were absent without official leave. Most volunteers had enlisted

**Twenty Negro Law** Confederate law that exempted planters owning twenty or more slaves from the draft on the grounds that overseeing farm labor done by slaves was necessary to the war effort.

in 1861 for limited terms. Calling on state militias netted few replacements because the Democrats, who made tremendous political gains at the state level in 1862, openly criticized Republican policies and at times refused to cooperate. In March 1863, Congress passed the **Conscription Act**, trying to bypass state officials and ensure enough manpower to continue the war. The law in effect made all single men between the ages of 20 and 45 and married men between 20 and 35 eligible for service. Government agents collected names in a house-to-house survey, and draftees were selected by lottery.

The conscription law did offer “escape routes.” Drafted men could avoid military service by hiring an “acceptable substitute” or by paying a \$300 fee to purchase exemption. The burden of service thus fell on farmers and urban workers—a large proportion of whom were immigrants—who were already suffering from the economic burden of high taxation and inflation caused by the war. Workers also feared that multitudes of former slaves freed by the Emancipation Proclamation would pour into the already crowded job market, further lowering the value of their labor. Together, conscription and emancipation created among the urban poor a sense of alienation, which exploded in the summer of 1863.

The trouble started on July 13 in New York City. Armed demonstrators protesting unfair draft laws engaged in a spree of violence, venting their frustration over the troubles plaguing working people. During three nights of rioting, white workingmen beat many African Americans and lynched six. The Colored Orphan Asylum and several homes owned by blacks were burned. Mobs ransacked businesses owned by African Americans and by people who employed them. Irish men and women and members of other groups that seemed to threaten whites’ job security also felt the fury as mobs attacked their churches, businesses, and homes. The homes of prominent Republicans and

**Conscription Act** Law passed by Congress in 1863 that established a draft but allowed wealthy people to escape it by hiring a substitute or paying the government a \$300 fee.



Many soldiers entered the Civil War expecting excitement and colorful pageantry, but the realities of war were harsh and ugly. And the new art of photography, introduced to the United States shortly before the war, brought the harsh reality home to Americans on both sides in the fighting. Scenes like this one became so common that veterans reported becoming numb to the shock of death and the meaning of death itself changed in the minds of many Americans. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. [LC-USZ62-104044].



abolitionists were vandalized. Protesting draft exemptions for the rich, rioters also set upon well-dressed strangers on the streets. After four days of chaos, federal troops put down the riot. Fearful of future violence, the city council of New York City voted to pay the \$300 exemption fee for all poor draftees who chose not to serve in the army.

### Wartime Economy in the North and South

In his 1864 message to Congress, Lincoln stated that the war had not depleted northern resources. Although the president exaggerated a bit, the statement contained some truth. Northern industry and population did grow during the Civil War.

Operating in cooperation with government, manufacturing experienced a boom. Manufacturers of war supplies benefited from government contracts. Textiles and shoemaking boomed as new labor-saving devices improved efficiency and increased production. Congress stimulated economic growth by means of subsidies and land grants to support a transcontinental railroad, higher tariffs to aid manufacturing, and land grants that states could use to finance higher education. In 1862 Congress passed the **Homestead Act** to make land available to more farmers. The law granted 160 acres of the public domain in the West to any citizen or would-be citizen who lived on, and improved, the land for five years.

Of course the economic picture was not entirely positive. The Union found itself resorting to financial tricks to keep the economy afloat. Facing a cash-flow emergency in 1862, Congress passed the Legal Tender Act, authorizing Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase to issue \$431 million in paper money, known as **greenbacks**, that was backed not by specie but only by the government's commitment to redeem the bills. Financial support also came through selling bonds. More than \$2 billion worth of government bonds were sold, and most of them were paid for in greenbacks. These emergency measures helped the Union survive the financial pressures created by the war, but the combination of bond issues and paper money not backed by gold or silver set up a highly unstable situation that came back to haunt Republicans after the war.

The South, an agrarian society, began the war without an industrial base. In addition to lacking transportation, raw materials, and machines, the South lacked managers and skilled industrial workers. The Confederate government intervened more directly in the economy than did its Union counterpart, offering generous loans to new or existing companies that would produce war materials and agree to sell at least two-thirds of their production to the government. Josiah Gorgas started government-owned production plants in Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. These innovative programs, however, could not compensate for inadequate prewar industrialization.

Southern industrial shortcomings severely handicapped the army. During Lee's Maryland campaign, many Confederate soldiers were barefoot because shoes were in such short supply. Ordnance was always in demand. Northern plants could produce more than five thousand muskets a day; Confederate production never exceeded three hundred. The most serious shortage, however, was food. Although the South was an agricultural region, most of its productive acreage was devoted to cotton, tobacco, and other crops that were essential to its overall economy but not suitable to eat. Corn and rice were the primary food products, but supplies were continually reduced by military campaigns and Union occupation of farmlands. Hog production suffered from the same disruptions as rice and corn growing, and although Southern cattle were abundant, most were range stock grown for hides and tallow rather than for food. Hunger became a miserable part of daily life for the Confederate armies.

Civilians in the South suffered from the same shortages as the army. Because of prewar shipping patterns, the few rail lines that crossed the Confederacy ran north and

**Homestead Act** Law passed by Congress in 1862 that promised ownership of 160 acres of public land to any citizen or would-be citizen who lived on and cultivated the land for five years.

**greenbacks** Paper money issued by the Union; it was not backed by gold.



south. Distribution of goods became almost impossible as invading Union forces cut rail lines and disrupted production. The flow of cattle, horses, and food from the West diminished when Union forces gained control of the Mississippi. Imported goods had to evade the Union naval blockade. Southern society, cut off from the outside world, consumed its existing resources and found no way to obtain more.

### Women in Two Nations at War

Because the South had fewer men than the North to send to war, a larger proportion of southern families were left in the care of women. Some women worked farms, herded livestock, and supported their families. Others found themselves homeless, living in complete poverty, as the ravages of war destroyed the countryside. Working-class wives often tried to persuade their husbands to desert, to come home to family and safety. One woman shouted to her husband, who was being drafted for the second time, “Desert again, Jake.” The vast majority, however, supported the war effort despite the hardships at home and at the front.

Women became responsible for much of the South’s agricultural and industrial production, overseeing the raising of crops, working in factories, managing estates, and running businesses. As one southern soldier wrote, women bore “the greatest burden of this horrid war.” Indeed, the burden of a woman was great—working the fields, running the



Women served in many different capacities during the Civil War. A very small number of them actually dressed as men to join the fighting. Frances Clayton was one of the few documented cases of such Civil War gender-bending. Boston Public Library/Rare Books Department—Courtesy of the Trustees.

# Investigating America

## Susie King Taylor, 1899

Like all African Americans, Susie King Taylor had a deep personal investment in the outcome of the American Civil War. Unlike most “contrabands” who joined the Union cause, Taylor recorded her experiences during the war, giving her contemporaries and modern historians a unique insight into the accomplishments and disillusionments that came with fighting for the freedom and equality that the war seemed to promise. Years after the war, in 1886, Taylor was one of the co-founders of the Women’s Relief Corp, an organization devoted to aiding Civil War veterans and furthering recognition for American soldiers. She was the president of the Massachusetts auxiliary in 1898, leading the organization to send aid to soldiers in the Spanish-American War (covered in Chapter 19). At the end of the Spanish-American War, Taylor reflected on the impact of American racial prejudice on Cubans and the ongoing denial of justice to African Americans.

.....

With the close of the Spanish war, and on the entrance of the Americans into Cuba, the same conditions confront us as the war of 1861 left. The Cubans are free, but it is a limited freedom, for prejudice, deep-rooted, has been brought to them and a separation made between the white and black Cubans, a thing that had never existed between

them before; but today there is the same intense hatred toward the negro in Cuba that there is in some parts of this country.

I helped to furnish and pack boxes to be sent to the soldiers and hospitals during the first part of the Spanish war; there were black soldiers there too. At the battle of San Juan Hill, they were in the front, just as brave, loyal, and true as those other black men who fought for freedom and the right; and yet their bravery and faithfulness were reluctantly acknowledged, and praise grudgingly given. All we ask for is “equal justice,” the same that is accorded to all other races who come to this country, of their free will (not forced to, as we were), and are allowed to enjoy every privilege, unrestricted, while we are denied what is rightfully our own in a country which the labor of our forefathers helped to make what it is.

.....

- In Taylor’s mind, what conditions did the end of the Spanish-American War leave unresolved? What does this say about her perceptions concerning her role in the Civil War?
- What was she suggesting about the way in which the contributions of African American Civil War veterans were regarded? What does this suggest about her motivations for writing about her experiences in that war?



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household, and waiting for news from loved ones at the front or for the dreaded message that she was now a widow or had lost a child.

Women in the North served in much the same capacity as their southern counterparts. They maintained families and homes alone, working to provide income and raise children. Although they did not face the shortages and ravages of battle that made life so hard for southern women, they did work in factories, run family businesses, teach school, and supply soldiers. Many served in managerial capacities or as writers and civil servants. Even before the war ended, northern women were going south to educate former slaves and help them find a place in American society. Women assumed new roles that helped prepare them to become more involved in social and political life after the war.

Women from both the South and the North actively participated in the war itself. Many women on both sides served as scouts, couriers, and spies, and more than four hundred disguised themselves as men and served as active soldiers until they were discovered. General William S. Rosecrans expressed dismay when one of his sergeants was delivered of “a bouncing baby boy.”

## Free Blacks, Slaves, and War

The changes the Civil War brought for African Americans, both free and slave, were radical and not always for the better. At first, many free blacks attempted to enlist in the Union army but were turned away. In 1861 General Benjamin F. Butler began using runaway slaves, called contrabands, as laborers. Several other northern commanders quickly adopted the practice. As the number of contrabands increased, however, the Union grappled with problems of housing and feeding them.

In the summer of 1862, Congress authorized the acceptance of “persons of African descent” into the armed forces, but enlistment remained low. After the Emancipation Proclamation, Union officials actively recruited former slaves, raising troops from among the freedmen and forming them into regiments known as the U.S. Colored Troops. Some northern state governments sought free blacks to fill state draft quotas; agents offered generous bonuses to those who signed up. By the end of the war, about 180,000 African Americans had enlisted in northern armies.

Army officials discriminated against African American soldiers in a variety of ways. Units were segregated, and until 1864, blacks were paid less than whites. All black regiments had white commanders; the government refused to allow blacks to lead blacks. Only one hundred were commissioned as officers, and no African American soldier ever received a commission higher than major.

As the war progressed, the number of African Americans in the Union army increased dramatically. By 1865, almost two-thirds of Union troops in the Mississippi Valley were black. Some southerners violently resented the Union’s use of these troops, and African American soldiers suffered atrocities because some Confederate leaders refused to take black prisoners. At Fort Pillow, Tennessee, for example, Confederate soldiers massacred more than a hundred African American soldiers who were trying to surrender.



Eager to fill constantly depleting army ranks, Union officials appealed to African Americans to volunteer for military service. This recruiting poster, which bore the legend “Come Join Us, Brothers,” presents a highly glorified vision of what conditions were like for black units. One accurate detail is that the only officer in the scene is white; in fact, hardly any African Americans were permitted to command troops during the Civil War. Chicago Historical Society.



**54th Massachusetts** Regiment of African American troops from Massachusetts commanded by abolitionist Colonel Robert Gould Shaw; it led an assault on Fort Wagner at Charleston Harbor.

**typhoid fever** An infectious disease transmitted through contact with contaminated water, milk, or food; causes severe intestinal distress and high fever.

**United States Sanitary Commission** Government commission established by Abraham Lincoln to improve public health conditions in military camps and hospitals.

**Clara Barton** Organizer of a volunteer service to aid sick and wounded Civil War soldiers; she later founded the American branch of the Red Cross.

**rifled** Having a series of spiral grooves inside the barrel of a gun that cause the projectile to spin, giving it greater range and accuracy.

About sixty-eight thousand black Union soldiers were killed or wounded in battle, and only twenty-one were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Probably no unit acquitted itself better in the field than the **54th Massachusetts**. On July 18, 1863, it led a frontal assault on Confederate defenses at Charleston Harbor. Despite sustaining grievous casualties, the African American troops captured the fort's front wall and held it for nearly an hour before being forced to retreat. Their conduct in battle had a large impact on changing attitudes toward black soldiers and emancipation.

### Life and Death at the Front

Many volunteers on both sides in the Civil War had romantic notions about military service. Most were disappointed. Life as a common soldier was anything but glorious. Letters and diaries written by soldiers most frequently tell of long periods of boredom in overcrowded camps punctuated by furious spells of dangerous action.

Though life in camp was tedious, it could be nearly as dangerous as time spent on the battlefield. Problems with supplying safe drinking water and disposing of waste constantly plagued military leaders faced with providing basic services for large numbers of people, often on short notice. Diseases such as dysentery and **typhoid fever** frequently swept through unsanitary camps. And in the overcrowded conditions that often prevailed, smallpox and other contagious diseases passed rapidly from person to person. At times, as many as a quarter of the uninjured people in camps were disabled by one or another of these ailments.

Lacking in resources, organization, and expertise, the South did little to upgrade camp conditions. In the North, however, women drew on the organizational skills they had gained as antebellum reformers and created voluntary organizations to address the problem. At the local level, women like Mary Livermore created small relief societies designed to aid soldiers and their families. Gradually these merged into regional organizations that would take the lead in raising money and implementing large-scale public health efforts, both in the army camps and at home. Mental health advocate and reformer Dorothea Dix was also one of these crusaders. In June 1861, President Lincoln responded to their concerns by creating the **United States Sanitary Commission**, a government agency responsible for advising the military on public health issues and investigating sanitary problems. Gradually enfolding many of the local and regional societies into its structure, "The Sanitary," as it was called, put hundreds of nurses into the field, providing much-needed relief for overburdened military doctors. Even with this official organization in place, many women continued to labor as volunteer nurses in the camps and in hospitals behind the lines.

Nurses on both sides showed bravery and devotion. Often working under fire at the front and with almost no medical supplies, these volunteers nursed sick and wounded soldiers, watched as they died not only from their wounds but also from infection and disease, and offered as much comfort and help as they could. **Clara Barton**, a famous northern nurse known as the "Angel of the Battlefield," recalled "speaking to and feeding with my own hands each soldier" as she attempted to nurse them back to health. Hospitals were unsanitary, overflowing, and underfunded.

The numbers of wounded who filled the hospital tents was unprecedented, largely because of technological innovations that had taken place during the antebellum period. New **rifled** muskets had many times the range of the old smooth-bore weapons used during earlier wars—the effective range of the Springfield rifle used by many Union soldiers was 400 yards, and a stray bullet could still kill a man at 1,000 yards. Waterproof cartridges, perfected by gunsmith Samuel Colt, made these weapons much less prone to



misfire and much easier to reload. Rifled artillery also added to the casualty count, as did exploding artillery shells, which sent deadly shrapnel ripping through lines of men.

Many surgeons at the front lines could do little more than amputate limbs to save lives. Hospitals, understaffed and lacking supplies and medicines, frequently became breeding grounds for disease. The war exacted a tremendous emotional toll on everyone, even on those who escaped physical injury. As one veteran put it, soldiers had seen “so many new forms of death” and “so many frightful and novel kinds of mutilation.”

Conditions were even worse in prison camps. Throughout much of the war, an agreement provided for prisoner exchanges, but that did not prevent overcrowding and unsanitary conditions. At the most notorious of the Civil War prison camps, **Andersonville**, in northern Georgia, thousands of Union captives languished in an open stockade with only a small creek for water and virtually no sanitary facilities. And as the war dragged on, the exchange system stopped working effectively, in part because moving and accounting for the large numbers of prisoners presented a serious organizational problem. Another contributing factor, though, was the refusal by Confederate officials to exchange African American prisoners of war—those who were not slaughtered like the men at Fort Pillow were enslaved. Also, late in the war, Union commanders suspended all prisoner exchanges in hopes of depriving the South of much-needed replacement soldiers.

Even death itself came to be redefined, as 8 percent of the white male population in the United States between the ages of 13 and 43 died in such a short time and in such grisly ways. People at the front reported being numbed by the horror. One army surgeon reported, “I pass over the putrefying bodies of the dead . . . and feel as . . . unconcerned as though they were two hundred pigs.” Nor was distance any insulation from the horrors of death—the new art of photography brought graphic images of the gruesome carnage directly into the nation’s parlors. “Death does not seem half so terrible as it did long ago,” one Texas woman reported. “We have grown used to it.”

## Waging Total War

- ★ **What factors contributed to the Union’s adoption of a total war strategy after 1863?**
- ★ **Was total war a justifiable option in light of the human and property damage it inflicted and the overall consequences it achieved? Why or why not?**

As northerners anticipated the presidential election of 1864, Lincoln faced severe challenges on several fronts. The losses to Lee and Jackson in Virginia and the failure to catch Lee at Antietam had eroded public support. Many northerners resented the war, conscription, and abolitionism. Others feared Lincoln’s powerful central government.

Northern Democrats advocated a peace platform and turned to George B. McClellan, Lincoln’s ousted general, as a potential presidential candidate. Lincoln also faced a challenge from within his own party. Radical Republicans, who regarded him as too soft on the South and unfit to run the war, began planning a campaign to win power. They championed the candidacy of John C. Frémont, who had become an ardent advocate of the complete abolition of slavery.

### Lincoln’s Generals and Southern Successes

The surest way for Lincoln to stop his political opponents was through military success. Lincoln had replaced McClellan with Burnside, but the results had been disastrous. Lincoln tried again, demoting Burnside and elevating General Joseph

**Chancellorsville** Site in Virginia where, in May 1863, Confederate troops led by Lee defeated a much larger Union force.

Hooker. Despite Hooker's reputation for bravery in battle—his nickname was "Fighting Joe"—Lee soundly defeated his forces at **Chancellorsville** in May 1863 (see Map 14.2). After Hooker had maneuvered Lee into a corner, Stonewall Jackson unleashed a vicious attack, and Fighting Joe simply "lost his nerve," according to one of his subordinates. Hooker resigned, and Lincoln replaced him with General George E. Meade.

Chancellorsville was a devastating loss for the North, but it was perhaps more devastating for the Confederates. They lost Stonewall Jackson. After he led the charge that unnerved Hooker, Jackson's own men mistakenly shot him as he rode back toward his camp in the darkness. Doctors amputated Jackson's arm in an attempt to save his life. "He has lost his left arm," moaned Lee, "but I have lost my right." Eight days later, Jackson died of pneumonia.

In the West, too, Union forces seemed mired during the first half of 1863. General Rosecrans was bogged down in a costly and unsuccessful campaign to take the vital rail center at Chattanooga, Tennessee. Grant had settled in for a long siege at Vicksburg (see Map 14.1). Nowhere did there seem to be a prospect for the dramatic victory Lincoln needed.

The summer of 1863, however, turned out to be a major turning point in the war. Facing superior northern resources and rising inflation, Confederate leaders met in Richmond to consider their options. Lee proposed another major invasion of the United States, arguing that such a maneuver would allow the Confederates to gather supplies and might encourage the northern peace movement, revitalize the prospects of foreign recognition, and perhaps capture the Union capital. Confederate leaders agreed and approved Lee's plan.

Lee's advance met only weak opposition as the Army of Northern Virginia crossed the Potomac River and marched into Union territory (see Map 14.2). In Maryland and Pennsylvania the troops seized livestock, supplies, food, clothing, and shoes. Union forces had been converging on the area of **Gettysburg**, Pennsylvania, since early June, anticipating Lee's move but unsure of his exact intention. Learning that the Federals were waiting and believing them to be weaker than they were, on June 29 Lee moved to engage the Union forces. Meade, who had been trailing Lee's army as it marched north from Chancellorsville, immediately dispatched a detachment to reinforce Gettysburg. On the following day, the two armies began a furious three-day battle.

Arriving in force on July 1, Meade took up an almost impregnable defensive position on the hills along Cemetery Ridge. The Confederates hammered both ends of the Union line but could gain no ground. On the third day, Lee ordered a major assault on the middle of the Union position. Eleven brigades, more than thirteen thousand men, led by fresh troops under Major General George E. Pickett, tried to cross open ground and take the hills held by Meade while Major J. E. B. "Jeb" Stuart's cavalry attacked from the east. Lee made few strategic mistakes during the war, but Pickett's charge was foolhardy. Meade's forces drove off the attack. The whole field was "dotted with our soldiers," wrote one Confederate officer. Lee met his retreating troops with the words "It's all my fault, my fault." Losses on both sides were high, but Confederate casualties exceeded twenty-eight thousand men, more than half of Lee's army. Lee retreated, his invasion of the North a failure.

On the heels of this major victory for the North came news from Mississippi that Vicksburg had fallen to Grant's siege on July 4. Sherman had been beating back Confederate forces in central Mississippi, and Union guns had been shelling the city continuously for nearly seven weeks, driving residents into caves and barricaded shelters. But it was starvation and disease that finally subdued the defenders. Then on July 9, after

**Gettysburg** Site in Pennsylvania where in July 1863, Union forces under General George Meade defeated Lee's Confederate forces, turning back Lee's invasion of the North.

receiving news of Vicksburg's fate, **Port Hudson**, the last Confederate garrison on the Mississippi River, also surrendered. The Mississippi River was totally under Union control. The "Father of Waters," said Lincoln, "again goes unvexed to the sea."

Despite jubilation over the recent victories, Lincoln and the North remained frustrated. Northern newspapers proclaiming Gettysburg to be the last gasp of the South had anticipated an immediate southern surrender, but Meade, like McClellan, acted with extreme caution and failed to pursue Lee and his retreating troops. Back in Washington, Lincoln waited for word of Lee's capture, believing it would signal the end of the rebellion. When he learned of Lee's escape, the president said in disbelief, "Our Army held the war in the hollow of their hand and they would not close it." With Lee and his army intact, the war, which in July had appeared to be so nearly over, was in Lincoln's words, "prolonged indefinitely." Lincoln needed a new kind of general.

### Grant, Sherman, and the Invention of Total War

In late fall of 1863, Lincoln took a break from his duties in the White House to participate in the dedication of a national cemetery at the site where, just months before, the Battle of Gettysburg had taken the lives of thousands. In the speech he delivered on November 19, 1863, Lincoln dedicated not only the cemetery but the war effort itself to the fallen soldiers, and also to a principle. "Fourscore and seven years ago," Lincoln said, "our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Though delivered in a low voice that most of the crowd could not hear, the **Gettysburg Address** was circulated in the media and galvanized many Americans who had come to doubt the war's purpose.

Grant, too, raised Northern morale by leading the defeat of a Confederate challenge in Tennessee. Lincoln, delighted with Grant's successes, promoted him to general in chief on March 10, 1864. Grant immediately left his command in the West to prepare an all-out attack on Lee and Virginia, authorizing Sherman to pursue a campaign into Georgia.

In Grant and Sherman, Lincoln had found what he needed. On the surface, neither seemed a likely candidate for a major role in the Union army. Both were West Point graduates but left the army after the War with Mexico to seek their fortunes. Neither had succeeded in civilian life: Grant was a binge drinker who had accomplished little, and Sherman had failed as a banker and a lawyer. Both were "political generals," owing their Civil War commissions to the influence of friends or relatives. Despite their checkered pasts, these two men invented a new type of warfare that eventually brought the South to its knees. Grant and Sherman were willing to wage **total war** in order to destroy the South's will to continue the struggle.

Preparing for the new sort of war he was about to inaugurate, Grant suspended prisoner-of-war exchanges. Realizing that the Confederates needed soldiers badly, he understood that one outcome of this policy would be slow death by starvation for Union prisoners. Cruel though his policy was, Grant reasoned that victory was his primary goal and that suffering and death were unavoidable in war. Throughout the remainder of the war, this single-mindedness pushed Grant to make decisions that cost tens of thousands of lives on both sides.

On May 4, Grant and Meade moved toward Richmond and Robert E. Lee. The next day, Union and Confederate armies collided in a tangle of woods called **The Wilderness**, near Chancellorsville. Two days of bloody fighting followed, broken by a night during which hundreds of the wounded burned to death in brushfires that raged between the

**Port Hudson** Confederate garrison in Louisiana that surrendered to Union forces in July 1863, thus giving the Union unrestricted control of the Mississippi River.

**Gettysburg Address** A speech given by Abraham Lincoln on November 19, 1863, dedicating a national cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; it expressed Lincoln's maturing view of the war and its purpose.

**total war** War waged with little regard for the welfare of troops on either side or for enemy civilians; the objective is to destroy both the human and the economic resources of the enemy.

**The Wilderness** Densely wooded region of Virginia that was the site in May 1864 of a devastating but inconclusive battle between Union forces under Grant and Confederates under Lee.

**Cold Harbor** Area of Virginia, about 10 miles from Richmond, where Grant made an unsuccessful attempt to drive his forces through Lee's center.

**vanguard** The foremost position in any army advancing into battle.

**Andrew Johnson** Tennessee senator who became Lincoln's running mate in 1864 and who succeeded to the presidency after Lincoln's assassination.

**Copperheads** Derogatory term (the name of a poisonous snake) applied to northerners who supported the South during the Civil War.

two lines. Grant decided to skirt Lee's troops and head for Richmond, but Lee anticipated the maneuver and blocked Grant's route at Spotsylvania. Twelve days of fighting ensued. Grant again attempted to move around Lee, and again Lee anticipated him. On June 1, the two armies met at **Cold Harbor**, Virginia. After each side had consolidated its position, Grant ordered a series of frontal attacks against the entrenched Confederates on June 3. Lee's veteran troops waited patiently in perhaps the best position they had ever defended, while Union soldiers expecting to die marched toward them. The assault failed amid unspeakable slaughter. But Grant's seeming wantonness was calculated, for the Confederates lost more than twenty-five thousand troops. And Grant knew, as did Lee, that the Union could afford the losses but the Confederacy could not.

After Cold Harbor, Grant guessed that Lee would expect him to try to assault nearby Richmond next. This time, though, he steered the Union army south of Richmond for Petersburg to try to take the vital rail center and cut off the southern capital. Once again, Lee reacted quickly: He rapidly shifted the **vanguard** of his troops, beat back Grant's advance, and occupied Petersburg. Grant bitterly regretted this failure, feeling that he could have ended the war. Instead, the campaign settled into a siege that neither side wanted. Lee and the Confederates could ill afford a siege that ate up supplies and munitions. And elections were rapidly approaching in the Union.

### The Election of 1864, and Sherman's March to the Sea

Lincoln was under fire from two directions. On May 31, 1864, the Republicans met in Cleveland and dumped him from the ticket, officially nominating John C. Frémont as their presidential candidate. Lincoln supporters, who began calling themselves the Union Party, held their nominating convention in June and renominated Lincoln. To attract Democrats who still favored fighting for a clear victory, Union Party delegates dumped Republican Hannibal Hamlin and chose **Andrew Johnson**, a southern Democrat, as Lincoln's running mate. Then, in August, the Democratic National Convention met at Chicago. The Democrats pulled together many **Copperheads** and other northerners who were so upset by the heavy casualties that they were determined to stop the war, even at the cost of allowing slavery to continue. The Democrats selected McClellan as their presidential candidate and included a peace plank in their platform. Thus Lincoln sat squarely in the middle between one group that castigated him for pursuing the war and another group that rebuked him for failing to defeat the South quickly enough.

Serving a single, six-year term, Confederate president Jefferson Davis did not face an election in 1864, but he too had plenty of political problems. As deprivation and military losses mounted, some factions began to resist the war effort. The Confederate congress called for a new draft, but several states refused to comply. Governors in Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, who controlled their state's militia, kept troops at home and defied Davis to enforce conscription.

Eager to solve their problems, Lincoln and Confederate vice president Alexander H. Stephens had conversations about negotiating a settlement. Lincoln stated his terms: reunion, abolition, and amnesty for rank-and-file Confederates. Southern officials balked, pointing out that "amnesty" applied to criminals and that the South had "committed no crime." The only possible outcomes of the war for the South, they concluded, were independence or extermination, even if it meant enduring the sight of "every Southern plantation sacked and every Southern city in flames." The words proved prophetic.

Grant had instructed Sherman "to get into the interior of the enemy's country as far as you can, inflicting all the damage you can against their war resources." Sherman





# It Matters Today

## THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

When the Civil War began, Lincoln made it clear that defending the Constitution was his only objective. But when he spoke on the Gettysburg battlefield two years later, commemorating the deaths of the thousands who fell there, he gave voice to a broader vision and a more noble goal. In that speech, Lincoln referenced the Declaration of Independence, *not* the Constitution, transforming Thomas Jefferson's stirring announcement of Enlightenment principle that "all men are created equal" into the central element in the great American struggle. Lincoln's speech changed the conception of the Constitution itself. After Lincoln's death, Congress enacted the Fourteenth Amendment, transforming Jefferson's—and Lincoln's—statement of principle into the law

of the land. To this day, "we hold this truth to be self-evident" in principle and in law through the Constitution Lincoln envisioned in that speech.

- What does the Gettysburg Address reflect about popular attitudes toward the war following the Battle of Gettysburg? Given what you know about the era, what do you think explains the speech's impact?
- In what significant ways did the principles stated by Lincoln at Gettysburg modify the nation's understanding of the Constitution? How has this understanding manifested itself in legislation and landmark legal cases in recent years?

responded with a vengeance. Slowly and skillfully his army advanced southward from Tennessee toward Atlanta, one of the South's few remaining industrial centers, against Confederate armies under the command of General Joseph E. Johnston. Only Johnston's skillful retreats kept Sherman from annihilating his army. President Davis then replaced Johnston with John Bell Hood, who vowed to take the offensive. Hood attacked, but Sherman inflicted such serious casualties that Hood had to retreat to Atlanta.

For days Sherman shelled Atlanta and wrought havoc in the surrounding countryside. When a last-ditch southern attack failed, Hood evacuated the city on September 1. The victorious Union troops moved in and occupied Atlanta on the following day. Sherman's victory caused tremendous despair among Confederates but gave great momentum to Lincoln's reelection campaign.

This victory proved the decisive factor in the election of 1864. Sherman's success defused McClellan's argument that Lincoln was not competent to direct the Union's military fortunes and quelled much antiwar sentiment in the North. Equally discredited, the Radical Republican platform and the Frémont candidacy disappeared before election day. As late as August, Lincoln had been expecting to lose the election in November, but the victory in Atlanta gave him some hope. When the votes were counted, Lincoln learned that he had defeated McClellan—by half a million popular votes and by a landslide margin of 212 to 21 in the Electoral College.

Sherman soon grew bored with the occupation of Atlanta and posed a bold plan to Grant. He wanted to ignore Hood, leave the battered Confederates loose at his rear, go on the offensive, and "cut a swath through to the sea." "I can make Georgia howl," he promised. Despite some misgivings, Grant agreed and convinced Lincoln.

A week after the election, Sherman began preparing for his 300-mile **March to the Sea**. His intentions were clear. "We are not only fighting hostile armies, but a hostile people," he stated. By devastating the countryside and destroying the South's ability to conduct war, he intended to break down southerners' will to resist. "We cannot change

**March to the Sea** Sherman's march through Georgia from Atlanta to Savannah from November 15 to December 21, 1864, during which Union soldiers carried out orders to destroy everything in their path.

the hearts of those people of the South,” he concluded, but we can “make them so sick of war that generations would pass away before they would again appeal to it.” With that, he burned Atlanta’s warehouses and then set out on his march to Savannah. His troops foraged for food and supplies along the way and destroyed rail lines and bridges found in their path. Sherman entered Savannah unopposed on December 21.

The March to the Sea completed, Sherman turned north. In South Carolina, the first state to secede and fire shots, Sherman’s troops took special delight in ravaging the countryside. When they reached Columbia, flames engulfed the city. Whether Sherman’s men or retreating Confederates started the blaze remains unclear, but African American regiments in Sherman’s command helped to put out the fires after Sherman occupied the South Carolina capital on February 17, 1865.

With the state capital in flames, Confederate forces abandoned their posts in South Carolina, moving north to join with Joseph E. Johnston’s army in an effort to stop Sherman from crossing North Carolina and joining Grant in Virginia. Union forces quickly moved into abandoned southern strongholds, including Charleston, where Major Robert Anderson, who had commanded Fort Sumter in April 1861, returned to raise the Union flag over the fort that he had surrendered four years earlier.

### The End of Lee and Lincoln

Under increasing pressure from Sherman, the Confederacy’s military situation was deteriorating rapidly. In a last-ditch effort to keep the Confederacy alive, Lee advised Davis to evacuate Richmond—the army intended to abandon the capital, moving west as rapidly as possible toward Lynchburg. From there Lee hoped to use surviving rail lines to move his troops south to join with Johnston’s force in North Carolina. The unified armies might then halt Sherman’s advance and wheel around to deal with Grant.

Suffering none of his predecessors’ indecisiveness, Grant ordered an immediate assault as Lee’s forces retreated from Petersburg. Lee had little ammunition, almost no food, and only thirty-five thousand men. As they retreated westward, under constant pressure from harassing attacks, hundreds of southern soldiers collapsed from hunger and exhaustion. By April 9, Union forces had surrounded Lee’s broken army. Saying, “There is nothing left for me to do but go and see General Grant,” Lee sent a note offering surrender.

The two generals met at a private home in the little village of Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia. Grant offered generous terms, allowing Confederate officers and men to go home “so long as they observe their paroles and the laws in force where they reside.” This guaranteed them immunity from prosecution for treason and became the model for surrender. Grant sent the starving Confederates rations and let them keep their horses.

On the following day, Lincoln addressed a crowd outside the White House about his hopes and plans for rebuilding the nation. He talked about the need for flexibility in pulling the nation back together after the long and bitter conflict. He had already taken steps to bring southerners back into the Union. In December 1863, he had issued a Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction offering pardons to any Confederates who would take a loyalty oath. After his reelection in 1864, Lincoln had begun to plan for the Confederacy’s eventual surrender, and he pushed for a constitutional ban on slavery, which passed on January 31, 1865.

With victory at hand and a peace plan in place, on April 14 Lincoln chose to relax by attending a play at Ford’s Theater in Washington. At about ten o’clock, **John Wilkes Booth**, an actor and a southern sympathizer, entered the president’s box and shot him. On following morning, Lincoln died.

**John Wilkes Booth** Actor and southern sympathizer who on April 14, 1865, five days after Lee’s surrender, fatally shot President Lincoln at Ford’s Theater in Washington.

Even though Lincoln was dead and Lee had fallen, the war continued. Joseph E. Johnston did not surrender until April 18. Jefferson Davis remained in hiding and called for guerrilla warfare and continued resistance. But one by one, the Confederate officers surrendered. On May 10, Davis was captured near Irwinville, Georgia, and placed in prison. Andrew Johnson, who had assumed the presidency upon Lincoln's death, issued a statement to the American people that armed rebellion against legitimate authority could be considered "virtually at an end."

## Summary

Both the Union and the Confederacy entered the war in 1861 with glowing hopes. Jefferson Davis pursued a defensive strategy, certain that northerners would soon tire of war and let the South withdraw from the Union. Abraham Lincoln countered by using the superior human, economic, and natural resources of the North to strangle the South into submission. But both leaders became increasingly frustrated during the first year of the war.

For Lincoln, the greatest frustration was military leadership. Beginning with the first Battle of Bull Run, Union forces seemed unable to win any major battles despite their numerical superiority. Although Union forces under Ulysses S. Grant's command scored victories in the Mississippi Valley, the Federals were stalemated. Robert E. Lee and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson seemed able to defeat any Union general that Lincoln sent to oppose them.

The war's nature and direction changed after the fall of 1862, however. Lee invaded Maryland and was defeated at Antietam. Despite this crushing loss, Union generals still failed to capture Lee or to subdue Confederate forces in Virginia. Still angered by military blundering, political attacks, and popular unrest, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in an effort to undermine southern efforts and unify northern ones. After the proclamation, the only option for either side was total victory or total defeat.

After further reversals in the spring of 1863, Union forces turned the tide in the war by defeating Lee's army at Gettysburg and taking Vicksburg to gain full control of the Mississippi. With an election drawing near, Lincoln spurred his generals to deal the death blow to the

Confederacy, and two in particular rose to the occasion. During the last half of 1864, William Tecumseh Sherman wreaked havoc, making Georgia "howl." And Grant, in a wanton display of disregard for human life, drove Lee into a defensive corner. In November, buoyed by Sherman's victories in Georgia, Lincoln was reelected.

Suffering was not confined to those at the front. Governments in both the North and the South had to dig deep into depleting economic resources to keep the war effort going. Inflation plagued both nations, and common people faced hunger, disease, and insufficient police protection. Riots broke out in major cities, including New York. But throughout the country many people responded heroically to their own privations and to suffering at the front. Women faced up to epidemics, enemy gunfire, and gender bias to institute public health standards and bring solace to suffering civilians and soldiers alike.

As hope dwindled for the South in the spring of 1865, Lee made a final desperate effort to keep the flagging Confederacy alive, racing to unify the last surviving remnants of the once-proud southern army. But Grant closed a net of steel around Lee's troops, forcing surrender. Lincoln immediately promoted a gentle policy for re-union, but his assassination ended this effort. The saintly American hero was gone, leaving a southern Democrat—Andrew Johnson—as president and a nation reeling in shock. The war was over, but the issues were still unresolved. Both the North and the South were beset with uncertainty about what would follow four years of suffering and sacrifice.

## Key Terms

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# Reconstruction: High Hopes and Shattered Dreams

## 1865–1877

## CHAPTER 15

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: *Blanche K. Bruce*

Rarely had the world changed so swiftly. Just eighteen years before in the Dred Scott decision, Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger B. Taney had pronounced that black Americans, even if free, were not citizens of the United States. Now, on a cold January day in 1875, Blanche Kelso Bruce, a former slave, raised his right hand to take the oath of office as U.S. Senator from Mississippi.

On the morning of his swearing-in, Bruce was still a young man. Born on March 1, 1841, in Farmville, Virginia, the boy then known as Branch and his five siblings were slaves because their mother, Polly Bruce, was a slave, and in the southern states legal status descended through the mother. Polly was a light-skinned domestic—her mother, an African woman, had been raped by a slave trader. But Branch was lighter still, because his father was also his master, Pettis Perkinson. In the language of the Old South, that made the boy a “quadroon,” three-quarters white, yet still a slave. Branch later insisted that his master treated him as “tenderly” as he treated his white children. Branch—who changed his name to Blanche while still in his teens—was taught to read.

In 1861, when Blanche’s white half-brother, William Perkinson, left home to join the Confederate army, Blanche decided the day had at last arrived “to emancipate [him]self.” Although Missouri was officially still part of the United States, roughly half of the state’s young men marched south to join the Confederacy. Using the exodus as cover, walking and begging rides on passing wagons when he could, Blanche crossed the Mississippi River into Lincoln’s Illinois, and he kept going until he reached Ohio. One year later, his brother Henry ran off to join him, bringing a slave girl he would later marry.

Bruce briefly attended Oberlin College, the rural Ohio school widely known for its abolitionist origins and progressive attitudes on educational integration. His meager financial resources forced him to withdraw, but with the war over,



### BLANCHE K. BRUCE

*Born to a slave mother and a white father, Blanche Kelso Bruce represented Mississippi as a Republican senator from 1875 to 1881. Only 34 years old, Bruce became the first African American to complete a full term in the Senate. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. [LC-USZ62-38572].*

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### **Presidential Reconstruction**

Republican War Aims

Approach to Reconstruction:  
“With Malice Toward None”

Abolishing Slavery Forever:  
The Thirteenth Amendment

Andrew Johnson and  
Reconstruction

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Mississippi  
Black Code, 1865

#### **Congressional Reconstruction**

Challenging Presidential  
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Defining Citizenship: The  
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#### **Freedom and the Legacy of Slavery**

Defining the Meaning of Freedom

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#### **Black Reconstruction**

The Republican Party in the South

Creating an Educational System  
and Fighting Discrimination

#### **The End of Reconstruction**

The “New Departure”

The 1872 Presidential Election

**THE POLITICS OF TERROR:** The  
“Mississippi Plan”

The Compromise of 1877

After Reconstruction

#### **Summary**

a classmate alerted him to new opportunities in the defeated southern states. Northern newspapers were filled with stories about the political battles between President Andrew Johnson and the Republican majority, and Bruce realized that Congress was serious about forcing a new political and economic order on the South. Arriving in Mississippi in February 1869—a state not yet readmitted to the Union—the industrious Bruce borrowed money to purchase land in Bolivar County, where blacks held the majority. He quickly won elections for sheriff, tax collector, and superintendent of education, all while editing a local newspaper. On February 3, 1874, Bruce was chosen by the state legislature to serve in the U.S. Senate. He was thirty-two years of age and became the first black American to serve a full term in the Senate. Bruce rode north toward Washington to join black congressmen representing districts in Mississippi, South Carolina, Alabama, and Florida. The political world had truly been turned upside down.

**freed people** Former slaves; *freed people* is the term used by historians to refer to former slaves, whether male or female.

**emancipation** The release from slavery.

**secede** To withdraw from membership in an organization; in this case, the withdrawal of eleven southern states from the United States in 1860–1861, giving rise to the Civil War.

Blanche Bruce was not the only African American who claimed freedom while the war was raging. Anderson's experience was repeated time and time again, with many variations, all across the South. Those decisions were made legal by the Emancipation Proclamation, enforced by the presence of Union armies, and made permanent by the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The **freed people** now faced a wide range of new decisions—where to live, where to work, how to create their own communities.

The war left many parts of the South in a shambles. Though southerners were dismayed by their ravaged countryside, many white southerners were even more distressed by the **emancipation** of 4 million slaves. In 1861, fears for the future of slavery under Republicans had caused the South to attempt to **secede** from the Union. With the end of the war, fears became reality. The end of slavery forced southerners of both races to develop new social, economic, and political patterns.

The years following the war were a time of physical rebuilding throughout the South, but the term *Reconstruction* refers primarily to the rebuilding of the federal Union and to the political, economic, and social changes that came to the South as it was restored to the nation. Reconstruction involved some of the most momentous questions in American history. How was the defeated South to be treated? What was to be the future of the 4 million former slaves? Should key decisions be made by the federal government or in state capitols and county courthouses throughout the South? Which branch of the government was to establish policies?

As the Republicans turned their attention from waging war to reconstructing the Union, they wrote into law and the Constitution new definitions of the Union itself. They also defined the rights of the former slaves and the terms on which the South might rejoin the United States. And they permanently changed the definition of American citizenship.

Most white southerners disliked the new rules emerging from the federal government, and some resisted. Disagreement over the future of the South and the status of the former slaves led to conflict between the president and Congress. A temporary result of this conflict was a more powerful Congress and a less powerful executive. A lasting outcome of these events was a significant increase in the power of the federal government and new limits on local and state governments.

Reconstruction significantly changed many aspects of southern life. In the end, however, Reconstruction failed to fulfill many African Americans' hopes for their lives as free people; for many Americans, Reconstruction simply did not go far enough.

# Chronology

<b>1863</b>	Emancipation Proclamation The Ten Percent Plan	<b>1868</b>	Impeachment of President Johnson Fourteenth Amendment (defining citizenship) ratified
<b>1864</b>	Abraham Lincoln reelected		Ulysses S. Grant elected president
<b>1865</b>	Freedmen's Bureau created Civil War ends Lincoln assassinated Andrew Johnson becomes president Thirteenth Amendment (abolishing slavery) ratified	<b>1869–1870</b>	Victories of "New Departure" Democrats in some southern states
		<b>1870</b>	Fifteenth Amendment (guaranteeing voting rights) ratified
<b>1866</b>	Ku Klux Klan formed Congress begins to assert control over Reconstruction Civil Rights Act of 1866 Riots by whites in Memphis and New Orleans	<b>1870–1871</b>	Ku Klux Klan Acts
		<b>1872</b>	Grant reelected
<b>1867</b>	Military Reconstruction Act Command of the Army Act Tenure of Office Act	<b>1875</b>	Civil Rights Act of 1875 Mississippi Plan ends Reconstruction in Mississippi
		<b>1876</b>	Disputed presidential election: Hayes versus Tilden
		<b>1877</b>	Compromise of 1877 Rutherford B. Hayes becomes president End of Reconstruction

## Presidential Reconstruction

★ **What did Presidents Lincoln and Johnson seek to accomplish through their Reconstruction policies? How did their purposes differ? In what ways were their policies similar?**

★ **How did white southerners respond to the Reconstruction efforts of Lincoln and Johnson? What does this suggest about the expectations of white southerners?**

On New Year's Day 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation took effect. More than four years earlier, Abraham Lincoln had insisted that "this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free." With the Emancipation Proclamation, President Lincoln began the legal process by which the nation became entirely free. At first, the Proclamation did not affect any slave because it abolished slavery only in territory under Confederate control, where it was unenforceable. But every advance of a Union army after January 1 brought the law of the land—and emancipation—to the Confederacy.

### Republican War Aims

For Lincoln and the Republican Party, freedom for the slaves became a central concern partly because **abolitionists** were an influential group within the party. During the 1860 electoral campaign, the Republican Party had promised only to prohibit slavery in the territories, and Lincoln initially defined the war as one to maintain the Union. Some leading Republicans, however, favored abolition of slavery everywhere.

**abolitionist** An individual who condemns slavery as morally wrong and seeks to abolish (eliminate) slavery.

**Radical Republicans** A group within the Republican Party during the Civil War and Reconstruction that advocated abolition of slavery, citizenship for the former slaves, and sweeping alteration of the South.

**racial integration** Equal opportunities to participate in a society or organization by people of different racial groups; the absence of race-based barriers to full and equal participation.

And abolitionists throughout the North—including Frederick Douglass, himself an escaped slave—began to argue that emancipation would be meaningless unless the government guaranteed the civil and political rights of the former slaves. Thus some Republicans expanded their definition of war objectives to include abolishing slavery, extending citizenship for the former slaves, and guaranteeing the equality of all citizens before the law. At the time, these were extreme views on abolition and equal rights, and the people who held them were called **Radical Republicans**, or simply Radicals.

Thaddeus Stevens, 73 years old in 1865, was perhaps the leading Radical in the House of Representatives. Born with a clubfoot, Stevens always identified with those outside the social mainstream. He became a compelling spokesman for abolition and an uncompromising advocate of equal rights for African Americans. Stevens, a masterful parliamentarian known for his honesty and his sarcastic wit, urged from the beginning of the war that the slaves be not only freed but also armed to fight the Confederacy. By the end of the war, some 180,000 African Americans, the great majority of them freed men, had served in the U.S. army and a few thousand in the Union navy. Many more worked for the army as laborers.

Another leading Radical was Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, who had argued for **racial integration** of Massachusetts schools in 1849 and won election to the U.S. Senate in 1851. Immediately establishing himself as the Senate's foremost champion of abolition, he became a martyr to the cause after he suffered a severe beating in 1856 because of an antislavery speech. After emancipation, Sumner, like Stevens, fought for full political and civil rights for the freed people.

Stevens, Sumner, and other Radicals demanded a drastic restructuring not only of the South's political system but also of its economy. They opposed slavery on moral grounds, but also because they believed free labor was more productive. Slaves worked to escape punishment, they argued, but free workers worked to benefit themselves. Eliminating slavery and instituting a free-labor system in its place would benefit everyone by increasing the nation's productivity. Free labor not only contributed centrally to the dynamism of the North's economy, it was crucial to democracy itself. "The middling classes who own the soil, and work it with their own hands," Stevens once proclaimed, "are the main support of every free government." For the South to be fully democratic, the Radicals concluded, it had to elevate free labor to a position of honor.

Not all Republicans agreed with the Radicals. All Republicans had objected to slavery, but not all Republicans were abolitionists. Similarly, not all Republicans wanted to extend full citizenship rights to the former slaves. Some favored rapid restoration of the South to the Union so that the federal government could concentrate on stimulating the nation's economy and developing the West.

### **Lincoln's Approach to Reconstruction: "With Malice Toward None"**

After the Emancipation Proclamation, President Lincoln and the congressional Republicans agreed that the abolition of slavery had to be a condition for the return of the South to the Union. Major differences soon appeared, however, over other terms for reunion and the roles of the president and Congress in establishing those terms. In his second inaugural address, a month before his death, Lincoln defined the task facing the nation: "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in."

Lincoln began to rebuild the Union on the basis of these principles. He hoped to hasten the end of the war by encouraging southerners to renounce the Confederacy and to accept emancipation. As soon as Union armies occupied portions of southern states,



he appointed temporary military governors for those regions and tried to restore civil government as quickly as possible.

Drawing on the president's constitutional power to issue **pardons** (Article II, Section 2), Lincoln issued a Proclamation of **Amnesty** and Reconstruction in December 1863. Often called the "Ten Percent Plan," it promised a full pardon and restoration of rights to those who swore their loyalty to the Union and accepted the abolition of slavery. Only high-ranking Confederate leaders were not eligible. Once those who had taken the oath in a state amounted to 10 percent of the number of votes cast by that state in the 1860 presidential election, the pardoned voters were to write a new state constitution that abolished slavery, elect state officials, and resume self-government. Some congressional Radicals disagreed with Lincoln's approach. When they tried to set more stringent standards, however, Lincoln blocked them, fearing their plan would slow the restoration of civil government and perhaps even lengthen the war.

**pardon** A governmental directive canceling punishment for a person or people who have committed a crime.

**Amnesty** A general pardon granted by a government, especially for political offenses.

### Abolishing Slavery Forever: The Thirteenth Amendment

Amid questions about the rights of freed people, congressional Republicans prepared the final destruction of slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation had been a wartime measure, justified by military necessity. It never applied in Union states. In early 1865, slavery remained legal in Delaware and Kentucky, and old, prewar state laws—which might or might not be valid—still permitted slavery in the states that had seceded. To destroy slavery forever, Congress in January 1865 approved the **Thirteenth Amendment**, which read simply, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

### Thirteenth Amendment

Constitutional amendment, ratified in 1865, that abolished slavery in the United States and its territories.

The Constitution requires any amendment to be ratified by three-fourths of the states—then twenty-seven of thirty-six. By December 1865, only nineteen of the twenty-five Union states had ratified the amendment. The measure passed, however, when eight of the reconstructed southern states approved it. In the end, therefore, the abolition of slavery hinged on action by reconstructed state governments in the South.

### Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction

After the assassination of Lincoln in April 1865, Vice President Andrew Johnson became president. Johnson was born in North Carolina. He never had the opportunity to attend school and spent his early life struggling against poverty. As a young man in Tennessee, he worked as a tailor before turning to politics. His wife tutored him in reading, writing, and arithmetic. A Democrat, Johnson relied on his oratorical skills to win several terms in the Tennessee legislature. He was elected to Congress and later was governor before winning election to the U.S. Senate in 1857. His political support came primarily from farmers and working people. The state's elite of plantation owners usually opposed him. Johnson, in turn, resented their wealth and power, and blamed them for secession and the Civil War.

Johnson was the only southern senator who rejected the Confederacy. Early in the war, Union forces captured Nashville, the capital of Tennessee, and Lincoln appointed Johnson as military governor. Johnson dealt harshly with Tennessee secessionists, especially wealthy planters. Radicals confused Johnson's severe treatment of former Confederates with sympathy for enslaved Tennesseans. Johnson was elected vice president in 1864, receiving the nomination in part because Lincoln wanted to appeal to Democrats and Unionists in border states.

**states' rights** A political position favoring limitation of the federal government's power and the greatest possible self-government by the individual states.

**empower** To increase the power or authority of some person or group.

**provisional** Temporary.

**repudiate** The act of rejecting the validity or authority of something; to refuse to pay.

**vagrancy** The legal condition of having no fixed place of residence or means of support.

**Ku Klux Klan** A secret society organized in the South after the Civil War to restore white supremacy by means of violence and intimidation.

When Johnson became president, Radicals hoped he would join their efforts to transform the South. As a Jacksonian Democrat, however, Johnson, soon made it clear that he was strongly committed to **states' rights** and opposed the Republicans' objective of a powerful federal government. "White men alone must manage the South," Johnson told one visitor. Self-righteous and uncompromising, Johnson saw the major task of Reconstruction as **empowering** the region's white middle class and excluding wealthy planters from power.

Johnson appointed **provisional** civilian governors for the southern states not already reconstructed. He instructed them to reconstitute functioning state administrations and to call constitutional conventions of delegates elected by pardoned voters. Some provisional governors, however, appointed former Confederates to state and local offices, outraging those who expected Reconstruction to bring to power loyal Unionists committed to a new southern society.

Johnson expected the state constitutional conventions to abolish slavery within each state, ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, renounce secession, and **repudiate** the states' war debts. State conventions during the summer of 1865 usually complied with these requirements, though some did so grudgingly. But Johnson specified nothing about the rights of the freed people, and every state rejected black suffrage.

By April 1866, a year after the close of the war, all the southern states had fulfilled Johnson's requirements for rejoining the Union and had elected legislators, governors, and members of Congress. Their choices troubled Johnson. He had hoped for the emergence of new political leaders in the South and was dismayed at the number of rich planters and former Confederate officials who won state contests.

Most white southerners, however, viewed Johnson as their protector, standing between them and the Radicals. His support for states' rights led white southerners to expect that they would shape the transition from slavery to freedom—that they, and not Congress, would define the status of the former slaves.

As civil governments began to function in late 1865 and 1866, state legislatures passed a series of "Black Codes" defining the new legal status of African Americans. These regulations varied from state to state, but every state placed significant restraints on black people. Most Black Codes required African Americans to have an annual employment contract, limited them to agricultural work, forbade them from moving about the countryside without permission, restricted their ownership of land, and provided for forced labor by those found guilty of **vagrancy**—which usually meant anyone without a job. Some Codes originated in prewar restrictions on slaves and free blacks. Some reflected efforts to ensure that farm workers would be on hand for planting, cultivating, and harvesting. Taken together, however, the Black Codes represented an effort by white southerners to define a legally subordinate place for African Americans and to put significant restrictions on their newly found freedom.

Some white southerners used violence to coerce freed people into accepting a subordinate status within the new southern society. Clara Barton, who had organized women as nurses for the Union army, visited the South from 1866 to 1870 and observed "a condition of lawlessness toward the blacks" and "a disposition . . . to injure or kill them on slight or no provocation."

Violence and terror became closely associated with the **Ku Klux Klan**, a secret organization formed in 1866 and led by a former Confederate general. The turn to terror suggests that Klan members felt themselves largely powerless through normal politics, and used terror to create a climate of fear among their opponents. Most Klan members were small-scale farmers and workers, but the leaders were often prominent within their own communities. As one Freedmen's Bureau agent observed about the Klan, "The most respectable

# Investigating America

## Mississippi Black Code, 1865

Pleased by Johnson's conservative approach to black rights, southern legislators sought to restore labor controls over their liberated work force by passing a series of laws collectively known as the Black Codes. They varied slightly from state to state in the defeated Confederacy, but the similarities found across state lines suggest white legislators frequently borrowed from laws passed in neighboring states. Mississippi's law of 1865, excerpted here, reveals what sort of legislative social and economic barriers confronted black veterans returning home from Lincoln's armies.

### An Act to Confer Civil Rights on Freedmen, and for other Purposes

Section 1. All freedmen, free negroes and mulattoes may sue and be sued . . . in all the courts of law and equity of this State, and may acquire personal property, and chooses in action, by descent or purchase, and may dispose of the same in the same manner and to the same extent that white persons may: Provided, That the provisions of this section shall not be so construed as to allow any freedman, free negro or mulatto to rent or lease any lands or tenements except in incorporated cities or towns, in which places the corporate authorities shall control the same. . . .

Section 3. All freedmen, free negroes or mulattoes who do now and have herebefore lived and cohabited together as husband and wife shall be taken and held in law as legally

married, and the issue shall be taken and held as legitimate for all purposes; and it shall not be lawful for any freedman, free negro or mulatto to intermarry with any white person; nor for any person to intermarry with any freedman, free negro or mulatto; and any person who shall so intermarry shall be deemed guilty of felony, and on conviction thereof shall be confined in the State penitentiary for life. . . .

Section 5. Every freedman, free negro and mulatto shall, on the second Monday of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-six, and annually thereafter, have a lawful home or employment, and shall have written evidence thereof . . . from the member of the board of police of his beat, authorizing him or her to do irregular and job work; or a written contract, as provided in Section 6 in this act; which license may be revoked for cause at any time by the authority granting the same. . . . Every civil officer shall, and every person may, arrest and carry back to his or her legal employer any freedman, free negro, or mulatto who shall have quit the service of his or her employer before the expiration of his or her term of service without good cause. . . .

- How was the title of this law chosen to disguise its true intent? What rights did former slaves gain under this law? How were the Black Codes similar to slavery?
- Why did these codes, and Johnson's refusal to condemn them, infuriate northern voters and veterans?



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citizens are engaged in it." Klan groups existed throughout the South, but operated with little central control. Their major goals were to restore **white supremacy** and to destroy the Republican Party. Other, similar organizations also formed and adopted similar tactics.

In 1866 two events dramatized the violence that some white southerners were inflicting on African Americans. In early May, in Memphis, Tennessee, black veterans of the Union army came to the assistance of a black man being arrested by white police, setting off a three-day riot in which whites, including police, indiscriminately attacked African Americans. Forty-five blacks and three whites died. In late July, in New Orleans, some forty people died, most of them African Americans, in an altercation between police and a largely black prosuffrage group. General Philip Sheridan, the military commander of the district, called it "an absolute massacre by the police." Events like these in Memphis and New Orleans were unusual only in the numbers of casualties.

**white supremacy** The racist belief that whites are inherently superior to all other races and are therefore entitled to rule over them.

## Congressional Reconstruction

- ★ **Why did congressional Republicans take control over Reconstruction policy? What did they seek to accomplish? How successful were they?**
- ★ **How did the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments change the nature of the federal Union?**

The Black Codes, violence against freed people, and the failure of southern authorities to stem the violence turned northern opinion against President Johnson's lenient approach to Reconstruction. Increasing numbers of moderate Republicans accepted the Radicals' arguments that the freed people required greater federal protection, and congressional Republicans moved to take control of Reconstruction. When stubborn and uncompromising Andrew Johnson ran up against the equally stubborn and uncompromising Thaddeus Stevens, the nation faced a constitutional crisis.

### Challenging Presidential Reconstruction

In December 1865, the Thirty-ninth Congress (elected in 1864) met for the first time. Republicans outnumbered Democrats by more than three to one. President Johnson proclaimed Reconstruction complete and the Union restored, but few Republicans agreed. Events in the South had convinced most Republicans of the need to protect free labor in the South and to establish basic rights for the freed people. Most also agreed that Congress could withhold representation from the South until reconstructed state governments met these conditions.

On the first day of the Thirty-ninth Congress, moderate Republicans joined Radicals to exclude newly elected congressmen from the South. Citing Article I, Section 5, of the Constitution (which makes each house of Congress the judge of the qualifications of its members), Republicans set up a Joint Committee on Reconstruction to evaluate the qualifications of the excluded southerners and to determine whether the southern states were entitled to representation. In the meantime, the former Confederate states had no representation in Congress.

Congressional Republicans also moved to provide more assistance to the freed people. Moderates and Radicals approved a bill extending the Freedmen's Bureau and giving it more authority against racial discrimination. When Johnson vetoed it, Congress drafted a slightly revised version. Similar Republican unity produced a **civil rights** bill, a far-reaching measure that extended citizenship to African Americans and defined some of the rights guaranteed to all citizens. Johnson vetoed both the civil rights bill and the revised Freedmen's Bureau bill, but Congress passed both over his veto. With creation of a Joint Committee on Reconstruction and passage of the Civil Rights and Freedmen's Bureau Acts, Congress took control of Reconstruction.

**civil rights** The rights, privileges, and protections that are a part of citizenship.

### The Civil Rights Act of 1866

The Civil Rights Act of 1866 defined all persons born in the United States (except Indians not taxed) as citizens. It also listed certain rights of all citizens, including the right to testify in court, own property, make contracts, bring lawsuits, and enjoy "full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of person and property." This was the first effort to define in law some of the rights of American citizenship. It placed significant restrictions on state actions on the grounds that the rights of national citizenship took precedence over the powers of state governments. The law expanded the power of the federal government in unprecedented ways and challenged traditional concepts of states' rights.



When President Johnson vetoed the bill, he argued that it violated states' rights. By defending states' rights and confronting his opponents, Johnson may have hoped to turn voters against the Radicals and generate enough political support to elect a conservative Congress in 1866 and to win the presidency in 1868. Instead, the veto led most moderate Republicans to abandon hope of cooperating with him. In April 1866, when Congress passed the Civil Rights Act over Johnson's veto, it was the first time ever that Congress had overridden a presidential veto of major legislation.

### Defining Citizenship: The Fourteenth Amendment

Leading Republicans, though pleased that the Civil Rights Act was now law, worried that it could be amended or repealed by a later Congress or declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Only a constitutional amendment, they concluded, could permanently safeguard the freed people's rights as citizens.

The **Fourteenth Amendment** began as a proposal made by Radicals seeking a constitutional guarantee of equality before the law. But the final wording—the longest of any amendment—resulted from many compromises. Section 1 of the amendment defined American citizenship in much the same way as defined in the Civil Rights Act of 1866, and then specified that:

*No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.*

The Constitution and Bill of Rights prohibit federal interference with basic civil rights. The Fourteenth Amendment extends this protection against action by state governments.

The amendment was vague on some points. For example, it penalized states that did not **enfranchise** African Americans by reducing their congressional and electoral representation, but it did not specifically guarantee to African Americans the right to vote.

Some provisions of the amendment stemmed from Republicans' fears that a restored South, allied with northern Democrats, might try to undo the outcome of the war. One section barred from public office anyone who had sworn to uphold the federal Constitution and then "engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same." Only Congress could override this provision. (In 1872 Congress did pardon nearly all former Confederates.) The amendment also prohibited federal or state governments from assuming any of the Confederate debt or from paying any claim arising from emancipation.

Not everyone approved of the final wording. Charles Sumner condemned the provision that permitted a state to deny suffrage to male citizens if it accepted a penalty in congressional representation. Stevens wanted to bar former Confederates not just from holding office but also from voting. Woman suffrage advocates, led by **Elizabeth Cady Stanton** and **Susan B. Anthony**, complained that the amendment, for the first time, introduced the word *male* into the Constitution in connection with voting rights.

Despite such concerns, Congress approved the Fourteenth Amendment by a straight party vote in June 1866 and sent it to the states for ratification. Tennessee promptly ratified the amendment, became the first reconstructed state government to be recognized by Congress, and was exempted from most future Reconstruction legislation.

Although Congress adjourned in the summer of 1866, the nation's attention remained fixed on Reconstruction. In May and July, the bloody riots in Memphis and New Orleans turned more moderates against Johnson's Reconstruction policies. Some interpreted the congressional elections that fall as a referendum on Reconstruction and the

### Fourteenth Amendment

Constitutional amendment, ratified in 1868, defining American citizenship and placing restrictions on former Confederates.

**enfranchise** To grant the right to vote to an individual or group.

**Elizabeth Cady Stanton** A founder and leader of the American woman suffrage movement from 1848 (date of the Seneca Falls Conference) until her death in 1902.

**Susan B. Anthony** Tireless campaigner for woman suffrage and close associate of Elizabeth Cady Stanton.



# It Matters Today

## THE FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT

The Fourteenth Amendment is one of the most important sources of Americans' civil rights, next to the Bill of Rights (the first ten amendments). One key provision in the Fourteenth Amendment is the definition of American citizenship. Previously, the Constitution did not address that question. The Fourteenth Amendment cleared up any confusion about who was, and who was not, a citizen.

The amendment also specifies that no state may abridge the liberties of a citizen "without due process of law." Until this time, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights restricted action by the *federal* government to restrict individual liberties. The Supreme Court has interpreted the Fourteenth Amendment to mean that the restrictions placed on the federal government by the First Amendment also limit state governments—that no *state* government may abridge freedom of speech, press, assembly, and religion.

The Supreme Court continues to interpret the Fourteenth Amendment when it is presented with new cases involving state restrictions on the rights of citizens. For example, the Supreme Court cited the Fourteenth Amendment to conclude that states may not prevent residents from buying contraceptives, and cited the due process clause among other provisions of the Constitution, in *Roe v. Wade*, to conclude that state laws may not prevent women from having abortions.

- Look up the Fourteenth Amendment in the back of this book. How does the Fourteenth Amendment define citizenship? Using an online newspaper, can you find recent proposals to change the definition of American citizenship? Can you find examples of other nations that have more restrictive definitions of citizenship?
- What current political issues may lead to court cases in which the Fourteenth Amendment is likely to be invoked?

Fourteenth Amendment, pitting Johnson against the Radicals. Johnson undertook a speaking tour to promote his views, but one of his own supporters calculated that Johnson's reckless tirades alienated a million voters. Republicans swept the 1866 elections, outnumbering Democrats 143 to 49 in the new House of Representatives, and 42 to 11 in the Senate. Lyman Trumbull, senator from Illinois and a leading moderate, voiced the consensus of congressional Republicans: Congress should now "hurl from power the disloyal element" in the South.

### Radicals in Control

As congressional Radicals struggled with President Johnson over control of Reconstruction, it became clear that the Fourteenth Amendment might fall short of ratification. Rejection by ten states could prevent its acceptance. By March 1867, the amendment had been rejected by twelve states—Delaware, Kentucky, and all the former Confederate states except Tennessee. Moderate Republicans who had expected the Fourteenth Amendment to be the final Reconstruction measure now became receptive to other proposals that the Radicals put forth.

On March 2, 1867, Congress overrode Johnson's veto of the Military Reconstruction Act, which divided the Confederate states (except Tennessee) into five military districts. Each district was to be governed by a military commander authorized by Congress to use military force to protect life and property. These ten states were to hold constitutional conventions, and all adult male citizens were to vote, except former Confederates barred from office under the proposed Fourteenth Amendment. The constitutional conventions were then to create new state governments that permitted black suffrage, and the new

governments were to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. Congress would then evaluate whether those state governments were ready to regain representation in Congress.

Congress had wrested a major degree of control over Reconstruction from the president, but it was not finished. Also on March 2, Congress further limited Johnson's powers. The Command of the Army Act specified that the president could issue military orders only through the General of the Army, then Ulysses S. Grant, who was considered an ally of Congress. It also specified that the General of the Army could not be removed without Senate permission. Congress thereby blocked Johnson from direct communication with military commanders in the South. The Tenure of Office Act specified that officials appointed with the Senate's consent were to remain in office until the Senate approved a successor, thereby preventing Johnson from removing federal officials who opposed his policies. Johnson understood both measures as invasions of presidential authority.

Early in 1867, some Radicals began to consider impeaching President Johnson. The Constitution (Article I, Sections 2 and 3) gives the House of Representatives exclusive power to **impeach** the president—that is, to charge the chief executive with misconduct. The Constitution specifies that the Senate shall hold trial on those charges, with the chief justice of the Supreme Court presiding. If found guilty by a two-thirds vote of the Senate, the president is removed from office.

**impeach** To charge a public official with improper, usually criminal, conduct.

In January 1867, the House Judiciary Committee considered charges against Johnson but found no convincing evidence of misconduct. Johnson, however, directly challenged Congress over the Tenure of Office Act by removing Edwin Stanton as secretary of war. This gave Johnson's opponents something resembling a violation of law by the president. Still, an effort to secure impeachment through the House Judiciary Committee failed. The Joint Committee on Reconstruction, led by Thaddeus Stevens, then took over and developed charges against Johnson. On February 24, 1868, the House adopted eleven articles, or charges, nearly all based on the Stanton affair. The actual reasons the Radicals wanted Johnson removed were clear to all: they disliked him and his actions.

To convict Johnson and remove him from the presidency required a two-thirds vote by the Senate. Johnson's defenders argued that he had done nothing to warrant impeachment. The Radicals' legal case was weak, but they urged senators to vote on whether they wished Johnson to remain as president. Republican unity unraveled when some moderates, fearing the precedent of removing a president for such flimsy reasons, joined with Democrats to defeat the Radicals. The vote, on May 16 and 26, 1868, was thirty-five in favor of conviction and nineteen against, one vote short of the required two-thirds. By this tiny margin, Congress endorsed the principle that it should not remove the president from office simply because members of Congress disagree with or dislike the president.

## Freedom and the Legacy of Slavery

- ★ **How did the freed people respond to freedom? What seem to have been the leading objectives among freed people as they explored their new opportunities?**
- ★ **How did southern whites respond to the end of slavery?**

As politicians argued in Washington, African Americans throughout the South set about creating new, free lives for themselves. In the antebellum South, all slaves and most free African Americans had led lives tightly constrained by law and custom. Blacks, previously permitted few social organizations of their own, responded to emancipation with a desire for freedom from white control, for **autonomy** as individuals and as a community.

**autonomy** Control of one's own affairs.

Before Emancipation, slaves typically made their own simple clothing or they received the used outfits of their owners and overseers. With Emancipation, those freed people who had an income could afford to dress more fashionably. The Harry Stephens family probably put on their best clothes for a visit to the photographer G. Gable in 1866. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gilman Collection, Purchase, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Gift, 2005 (2005. 100. 277).



The prospect of autonomy touched every aspect of life—family, churches, schools, newspapers. From this ferment of freedom came new, independent black institutions that provided the basis for southern African American communities. At the same time, the economic life of the South had been shattered by the Civil War and was being transformed by emancipation. Thus white southerners also faced drastic economic and social change.

### Defining the Meaning of Freedom

At the most basic level, freedom came every time an individual slave stopped working for a master and claimed the right to be free. Freedom did not come to all slaves at the same time or in the same way. For some, freedom came before the

Emancipation Proclamation, when they crossed into Union-held territory and asserted their liberty. As civil authority continued to break down throughout much of the South, many slaves declared their freedom and left the lands they had worked when they were in bondage. Some left for good, but many remained nearby, though with a new understanding of their relationship to their former masters. For some, freedom did not come until ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment.

Across the South, the approach of Yankee troops set off a joyous celebration—called a Jubilee—among those who knew that their enslavement was ending. As one Virginia woman remembered, “Such rejoicing and shouting you never heard in your life.” Once the celebrating was over, however, the freed people had to decide how best to use their freedom. The freed people expressed their new status in many ways. Some chose new names to symbolize their new beginning. Many freed people changed their style of dress, discarding the cheap clothing provided to slaves. A significant benefit of freedom was the ability to travel without a pass and without being checked by the **patrollers** who had enforced the **pass system**.

The towns and cities of the South attracted freed people looking for work. The presence of Union troops and federal officials promised protection from the random violence

**patrollers** During the era of slavery, white guards who made the rounds of rural roads to make certain that slaves were not moving about the countryside without written permission from their masters.

**pass system** Laws that forbade slaves from traveling without written authorization from their owners.



against freed people that occurred in many rural areas. In March 1865, Congress created the **Freedmen's Bureau** to assist the freed people in finding work and necessities in their transition to freedom, Black churches, newly established schools, and other social institutions, some begun by free blacks before the war, also emerged in cities and towns. Little housing was available, however, so freed people often crowded into hastily built shanties. Sanitation was poor and disease a common scourge.

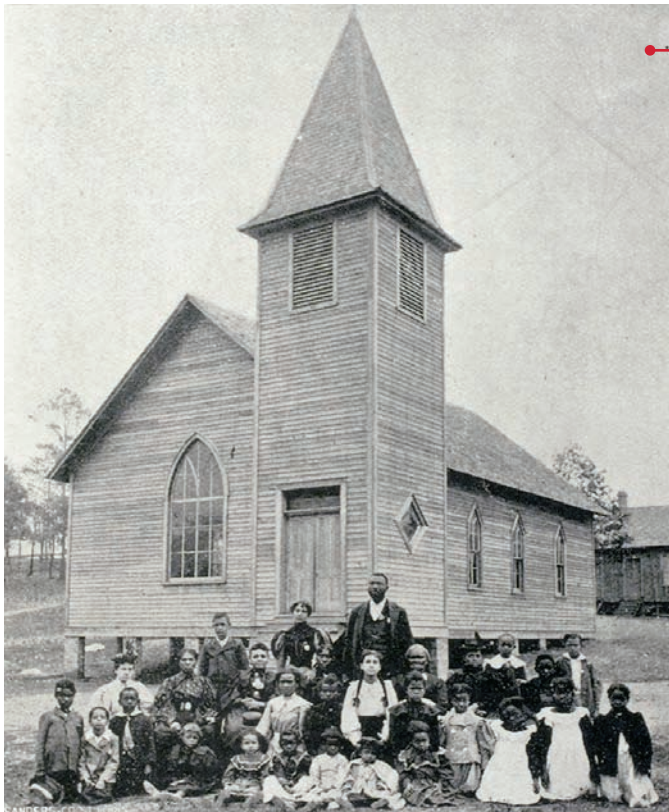
**Freedmen's Bureau** Agency established in 1865 to aid former slaves in their transition to freedom, especially by administering relief and sponsoring education.

### Creating Communities

During Reconstruction, African Americans created their own communities with their own social institutions, beginning with family ties. Joyful families were sometimes reunited after years of separation caused by the sale of a spouse or children. Some people spent years searching for lost family members.

The new freedom to conduct religious services without white supervision was especially important. Churches quickly became the most prominent social organizations in African American communities. Churches were, in fact, among the very first social institutions that African Americans fully controlled. During Reconstruction, black denominations, including the African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, and several Baptist groups, grew rapidly in the South. Black ministers often became key leaders within developing African American communities.

Throughout the cities and towns of the South, African Americans—especially ministers and church members—worked to create schools. Setting up a school, said one, was “the first proof” of independence. Many new schools were for both children and adults,



Churches were the first institutions in America to be completely controlled by African Americans, and ministers were highly influential figures in the African American communities that emerged during Reconstruction, both in towns and in rural areas. This photograph of the Colored Methodist Episcopal mission church in Hot Springs, Arkansas, was first published in 1898 in *The History of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America* by Charles H. Phillips, a bishop of that denomination. Schomburg Center/Art Resource, NY.

whose literacy and learning had been restricted by state laws prohibiting education for slaves. When African Americans set up schools, they faced severe shortages of teachers, books, and schoolrooms—everything but students.

The Freedmen’s Bureau played an important role in organizing and equipping schools. Freedmen’s Aid Societies also sprang up in most northern cities and, along with northern churches, collected funds and supplies for the freed people. Teachers—mostly white women, often from New England, and often acting on religious impulses—came from the North. By 1870, the Freedmen’s Bureau supervised more than four thousand schools, with more than nine thousand teachers and 247,000 students. Still, in 1870, only one-tenth of school-age black children were in school.

African Americans created other social institutions, in addition to churches and schools, including **fraternal orders**, **benevolent societies**, and newspapers. By 1866, the South had ten black newspapers, led by the *New Orleans Tribune*, and black newspapers played important roles in shaping African American communities.

In politics, African Americans’ first objective was recognition of their equal rights as citizens. Frederick Douglass insisted, “Slavery is not abolished until the black man has the ballot.” Political conventions of African Americans attracted hundreds of leaders of the emerging black communities. They called for equality and voting rights and pointed to black contributions in the American Revolution and the Civil War as evidence of patriotism and devotion. They also appealed to the nation’s republican traditions, in particular the Declaration of Independence and its dictum that “all men are created equal.”

**fraternal order** An organization of men, often with a ceremonial initiation, that typically provide rudimentary life insurance; many fraternal orders also had auxiliaries for the female relatives of members.

**benevolent society** An organization of people dedicated to some charitable purpose.

### Land and Labor

Former slave owners reacted to emancipation in many ways. Some tried to keep their slaves from learning of their freedom. Few former slave owners provided any compensation to assist their former slaves. One freedman later recalled, “I do know some of dem old slave owners to be nice enough to start der slaves off in freedom wid somethin’ to live on . . . but dey wasn’t in droves, I tell you.”

Many freed people looked to Union troops for assistance. When General William T. Sherman led his victorious army through Georgia in the closing months of the war, thousands of African American men, women, and children claimed their freedom and followed in the Yankees’ wake. Their leaders told Sherman that what they wanted most was to “reap the fruit of our own labor.” In January 1865, Sherman issued Special Field Order No. 15, setting aside the Sea Islands and land along the South Carolina coast for freed families. Each family was to receive 40 acres and the loan of an army mule, a policy that gave rise to the rallying cry of “forty acres and a mule.” By June, the area had filled with forty thousand freed people settled on 400,000 acres of “Sherman land.”

By the end of the war, the Freedmen’s Bureau controlled some 850,000 acres of land abandoned by former owners or confiscated from Confederate leaders. In July 1865, General Oliver O. Howard, head of the bureau, directed that this land be divided into 40-acre plots to be given to freed people. However, President Johnson ordered Howard to halt **land redistribution** and to reclaim land already handed over and return it to its former owners. Johnson’s order displaced thousands of African Americans who had already taken their 40 acres. They and others who had hoped for land felt disappointed and betrayed. One later recalled that they had expected “a heap from freedom dey didn’t git.”

**Sharecropping** slowly emerged across much of the South as an alternative both to land redistribution and to wage labor on the plantations. Sharecropping derived directly from the central realities of southern agriculture. Much of the land was in large holdings,

**land redistribution** The division of land held by large landowners into smaller plots that are turned over to people without property.

**sharecropping** A system for renting farmland in which tenant farmers give landlords a share of their crops, rather than cash, as rent.

# Investigating America

## Jourdan Anderson's Proposition, 1865

This letter appeared in the *New York Daily Tribune* on August 22, 1865, with the notation that it was a "genuine document," reprinted from the *Cincinnati Commercial*. At that time, all newspapers had strong connections to political parties, and both of these papers were allied to the Republicans. By then, battle lines were being drawn between President Andrew Johnson and Republicans in Congress over the legal and political status of the freed people.

DAYTON, Ohio, August 7, 1865

To my Old Master, Col. P. H. Anderson, Big Spring,  
Tennessee

Sir: I got your letter and was glad to find that you had not forgotten Jordan, and that you wanted me to come back and live with you again, promising to do better for me than anybody else can . . .

I want to know particularly what the good chance is you propose to give me. I am doing tolerably well here; I get \$25 a month, with victuals and clothing; have a comfortable home for Mandy (the folks here call her Mrs. Anderson), and the children, Milly[,] Jane and Grundy, go to school and are learning well. . . Now, if you will write and say what wages you will give me, I will be better able to decide whether it would be to my advantage to move back again.

As to my freedom, which you say I can have, there is nothing to be gained on that score, as I got my free-papers in 1864 from the Provost-Marshal-General of the Department at Nashville. Mandy says she would be afraid to go back without some proof that you are sincerely disposed to treat us justly and kindly—and we have concluded to test your sincerity by asking you to send us our wages for the time we served you. This will make us forget and forgive old sores, and rely on your justice and friendship in the future. I served you faithfully for thirty-two years, and Mandy twenty years, at \$25 a month for me and \$2 a week for Mandy. Our earnings would amount to

\$11,680. Add to this the interest for the time our wages has been kept back and deduct what you paid for our clothing and three doctor's visits to me, and pulling a tooth for Mandy, and the balance will show what we are in justice entitled to. . . If you fail to pay us for faithful labors in the past we can have little faith in your promises in the future. We trust the good Maker has opened your eyes to the wrongs which you and your fathers have done to me and my fathers, in making us toil for you for generations without recompense. . .

In answering this letter please state if there would be any safety for my Milly and Jane, who are now grown up and both good looking girls. You know how it was with poor Matilda and Catherine. I would rather stay here and starve and die if it had to come to that than have my girls brought to shame by the violence and wickedness of their young masters. You will also please state if there has been any schools opened for the colored children in your neighborhood, the great desire of my life now is to give my children an education, and have them form virtuous habits.

From your old servant, JOURDAN ANDERSON

- How does the author indicate that the lives of these freed people have changed by leaving Tennessee for Ohio?
- Anderson's monthly wages of \$25 in 1865 would be equivalent to about \$335 today. The amount he asks for as compensation for his slave labor, \$11,680 in 1865, would be equivalent to more than \$150,000 today. How does the author use this letter to raise a wide range of issues about the nature of slavery and about the uneasiness of freed people about life in the South in 1865? Evaluate the likelihood that this letter was actually written by a former slave. What are the other possibilities? Why do you think this letter appeared in newspapers in August of 1865?



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

**capital** Money, especially the money invested in a commercial enterprise.

**crop lien** A legal claim to a farmer's crop, similar to a mortgage, based on the use of crops as collateral for extension of credit by a merchant.

**coercion** Use of threats or force to compel action.

**terrorists** Those who use threats and violence to achieve ideological or political goals.

but the landowners had no one to work it. **Capital** was scarce. Many whites with large landholdings lacked the cash to hire farm workers. Many families, both black and white, wanted to raise their own crops with their own labor but had no land, no supplies, and no money. Under sharecropping, an individual—usually a family head—signed a contract with a landowner to rent land as home and farm. The tenant—the sharecropper—was to pay, as rent, a share of the harvest. The share might amount to half or more of the crop if the landlord provided mules, tools, seed, and fertilizer as well as land. Many landowners thought that sharecropping encouraged tenants to be productive, to get as much value as possible from their shares of the crop. The rental contract often allowed the landlord to specify what crop would be planted, and most landlords chose cotton so that their tenants would not hold back any of the harvest for personal consumption. Sharecropping may have increased the dependency of the South on cotton.

Southern farmers—black or white, sharecroppers or owners of small plots—often found themselves in debt to a local merchant who advanced supplies on credit. In return for credit, the merchant required a lien (a legal claim) on the growing crop. Many landlords ran stores that they required their tenants to patronize. Often the share paid as rent and the debt owed the store exceeded the value of the entire harvest. Furthermore, many rental contracts and **crop liens** were automatically renewed if all debts were not paid at the end of a year. In spite of their efforts to achieve greater control over their lives and labor, many southern farm families, black and white alike, found themselves trapped by sharecropping and debt. Still, sharecropping gave freed people more control over their daily lives than had slavery.

Landlords could exercise political as well as economic power over their tenants. Until the 1890s, casting a ballot on election day was an open process, and any observer could see how an individual voted. Thus, when a landlord or merchant advocated a particular candidate, the unspoken message was often an implicit threat to cut off credit at the store or to evict a sharecropper if he did not vote accordingly. Such forms of economic **coercion** had the potential to undercut voting rights.

### Political Terrorism and the Election of 1868

The Radicals' failure to unseat Johnson left him with less than a year remaining in office. As the election approached, the Republicans nominated Ulysses S. Grant for president.

A war hero, popular throughout the North, Grant had fully supported Lincoln and Congress in implementing emancipation. By 1868, he had committed himself to the congressional view of Reconstruction. The Democrats nominated Horatio Seymour, a former governor of New York, and focused their efforts on denouncing Reconstruction.

In the South, the campaign stirred up fierce activity by the Ku Klux Klan and similar groups. **Terrorists** assassinated an Arkansas congressman, three members of the South Carolina legislature, and several other Republican leaders. Throughout the South, mobs attacked Republican offices and meetings, and sometimes attacked any black person they could find. Such coercion had its intended effect at the ballot box. For example, as many as two hundred blacks were killed in St. Landry Parish, Louisiana, where the Republicans previously had a thousand-vote majority. On election day, not a single Republican vote was recorded from that parish.

Despite such violence, many Americans may have been anticipating a calmer political future. In June 1868, Congress had readmitted seven southern states that met the requirements of congressional Reconstruction. In July, the secretary of state declared the Fourteenth Amendment ratified. In November, Grant easily won the presidency, carrying twenty-six of the thirty-four states and 53 percent of the vote.



### Voting Rights and Civil Rights

With Grant in the White House, Radical Republicans now moved to secure voting rights for all African Americans. In 1867 Congress had removed racial barriers to voting in the District of Columbia and in the territories, but elsewhere the states still defined voting rights. Congress had required southern states to enfranchise black males as the price of readmission to the Union, but only seven northern states had taken that step by 1869. Further, any state that had enfranchised African Americans could change its law at any time. In addition to the principled arguments of Douglass and other Radicals, many Republicans concluded that they needed to guarantee black suffrage in the South if they were to continue to win presidential elections and enjoy majorities in Congress.

To secure suffrage rights for all African Americans, Congress approved the **Fifteenth Amendment** in February 1869. This amendment, widely considered to be the final step in Reconstruction, prohibited both federal and state governments from restricting a person's right to vote because of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." Like the Fourteenth Amendment, the Fifteenth marked a compromise between moderates and Radicals. Some African American leaders argued for language guaranteeing voting rights to all male citizens, because prohibiting some grounds for **disfranchisement** might imply the legitimacy of other grounds. Some Radicals tried, unsuccessfully, to add "**nativity**, property, education, or religious beliefs" to the prohibited grounds. Democrats condemned the Fifteenth Amendment as a "revolutionary" attack on states' authority to define voting rights.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and other advocates of woman suffrage opposed the amendment because it ignored restrictions based on sex. For nearly twenty years, the cause of women's rights and the cause of black rights had marched together. Once black male suffrage came under discussion, however, this alliance began to fracture. When one veteran abolitionist declared it to be "the Negro's hour" and called for black male suffrage, Anthony responded that she "would sooner cut off my right hand than ask the ballot for the black man and not for woman." The break between the women's movement and the black movement was eventually papered over, but the wounds never completely healed.

The Fifteenth Amendment did nothing to reduce the violence—especially at election time—that had become almost routine in the South after 1865. When Klan activity escalated in the elections of 1870, southern Republicans looked to Washington for support. In 1870 and 1871, Congress adopted several Enforcement Acts—often called the Ku Klux Klan Acts—to enforce the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.

Despite a limited budget and many obstacles, the prosecution of Klansmen began in 1871. Across the South many hundreds were indicted, and many were convicted. In South Carolina, President Grant declared martial law. By 1872, federal intervention had broken much of the strength of the Klan. (The Klan that appeared in the 1920s was a new organization that borrowed the regalia and tactics of the earlier organization.)

### Fifteenth Amendment

Constitutional amendment, ratified in 1870, that prohibited states from denying a person the right to vote because of race or because the person had been a slave.

**disfranchisement** The taking away of an individual's or group's right to vote.

**nativity** Place of birth.

## Black Reconstruction

★ **What major groups made up the Republican Party in the South during Reconstruction? Compare their reasons for being Republicans, their relative size, and their objectives.**

★ **What were the most lasting results of the Republican state administrations?**

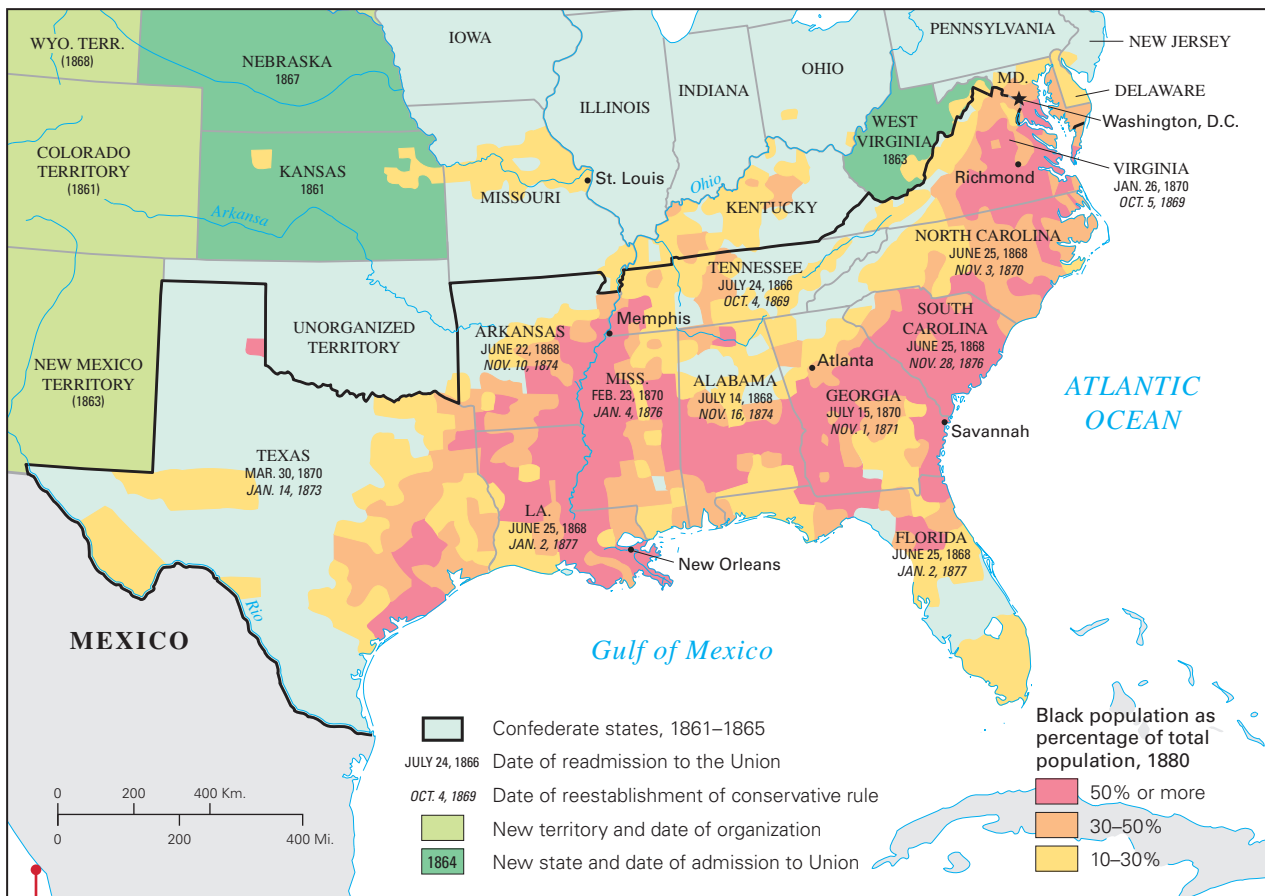
Congressional Reconstruction set the stage for new developments at state and local levels throughout the South, as newly enfranchised black men organized for political action. African Americans never completely controlled any state government, but they did form a significant element in the governments of several states. The period when African Americans participated

**Black Reconstruction** The period of Reconstruction when African Americans took an active role in state and local government.

prominently in state and local politics is usually called **Black Reconstruction**. It began with efforts by African Americans to take part in politics as early as 1865 and lasted for more than a decade. A few African Americans continued to hold elective office in the South long after 1877, but by then they could do little to bring about significant political change. Map 15.1 indicates the proportion of African Americans in each of the southern states, and also the years when each state was under a Reconstruction state government.

### The Republican Party in the South

Not surprisingly, African Americans who participated actively in politics did so as Republicans, and they formed the large majority of those who supported the Republican Party in the South. Nearly all black Republicans were new to politics, and they often braved considerable personal danger by participating in a party that many white southerners equated with the conquering Yankees. In the South, the Republican Party also included some southern whites along with a smaller number of transplanted northerners—both black and white.



**MAP 15.1** African American Population and the Duration of Reconstruction

This map shows the proportion of African Americans in the South, and also includes the dates when each of the former Confederate states was under a Reconstruction state government. Does the map suggest any relationship between the proportion of a state's population that was African American and the amount of time that the state spent under a Reconstruction state government?

Suffrage made politics a centrally important activity for African American communities. The state constitutional conventions that met in 1868 included 265 black delegates. Only in Louisiana and South Carolina were half or more of the delegates black. With suffrage established, southern Republicans began to elect African Americans to public office. Between 1869 and 1877, fourteen black men served in the national House of Representatives, and Mississippi sent two African Americans to the U.S. Senate: Hiram R. Revels and Blanche K. Bruce.

Across the South, six African Americans served as lieutenant governors, and one of them, P. B. S. Pinchback, succeeded to the governorship of Louisiana for forty-three days. More than six hundred black men served in southern state legislatures during Reconstruction, but only in South Carolina did African Americans have a majority in the state legislature. Elsewhere they formed part of a Republican majority but rarely held key legislative positions. Only in South Carolina and Mississippi did legislatures elect black presiding officers.

Although politically inexperienced, most African Americans who held office during Reconstruction had some education. Of the eighteen who served in statewide offices, all but three are known to have been born free. P. B. S. Pinchback, for example, was educated in Ohio and served in the army as a captain before entering politics in Louisiana. Most black politicians first achieved prominence through service with the army, the Freedmen's Bureau, the new schools, or the religious and civic organizations of black communities.

Southern Democrats applied the term **carpetbagger** to northern Republicans who came to the South after the war, regarding them as second-rate schemers—outsiders with their belongings packed in a cheap carpet bag. In fact, most northerners who came south were well-educated men and women from middle-class backgrounds. Most men had served in the Union army and moved south before blacks could vote. Some were lawyers, businessmen, and newspaper editors. Whether as teachers in the new schools or as agents of the Freedmen's Bureau, most hoped to transform the South by creating new institutions based on northern models, especially free labor and free public schools. Although few in number, transplanted northerners nonetheless took leading roles in state constitutional conventions and state legislatures. Some were also prominent advocates of economic modernization.

Southern Democrats reserved their greatest contempt for those they called **scalawags**, slang for someone completely unscrupulous and worthless. Scalawags were white southerners who became Republicans. They included many southern Unionists, who had opposed secession, and others who thought the Republicans offered the best hope for economic recovery. Scalawags included merchants, artisans, and professionals who favored a modernized South. Others were small-scale farmers who saw Reconstruction as a way to end political domination by the plantation owners.

The freedmen, carpetbaggers, and scalawags who made up the Republican Party in the South hoped to inject new ideas into that region. They tried to modernize state and local governments and make the postwar South more like the North. They repealed outdated laws and established or expanded schools, hospitals, orphanages, and penitentiaries.

**carpetbagger** Derogatory term for the northerners who came to the South after the Civil War to take part in Reconstruction.

**scalawag** Derogatory term for white southerners who aligned themselves with the Republican Party during Reconstruction.

### Creating an Educational System and Fighting Discrimination

Free public education was perhaps the most permanent legacy of Black Reconstruction. Reconstruction constitutions throughout the South required tax-supported public schools. Implementation, however, was expensive and proceeded slowly. By the mid-1870s, only half of southern children attended public schools.

In creating public schools, Reconstruction state governments faced a central question: would white and black children attend the same schools? Many African Americans favored racially integrated schools. On the other hand, southern white leaders, including many southern white Republicans, argued that integration would destroy the fledgling public school system by driving whites away. In consequence, no state required school integration. Similarly, southern states set up separate black normal schools (to train schoolteachers) and colleges.

On balance, most blacks probably agreed with Frederick Douglass that separate schools were “infinitely superior” to no public education at all. Some found other reasons to accept segregated schools—separate black schools gave a larger role to black parents, and they hired black teachers.

Funding for the new schools was rarely adequate. Creating and operating two educational systems, one white and one black, was costly. The division of limited funds posed an additional problem, and black schools almost always received fewer dollars per student than white schools. Despite their accomplishments, the segregated schools institutionalized discrimination.

Reconstruction state governments moved toward protection of equal rights in areas other than education. As Republicans gained control in the South, they often wrote into the new state constitutions prohibitions against discrimination and protections for civil rights. Some Reconstruction state governments enacted laws guaranteeing **equal access** to public transportation and public accommodations. Elsewhere efforts to pass equal access laws foundered on the opposition of southern white Republicans, who often joined Democrats to favor **segregation**. Such conflicts pointed up the internal divisions within the southern Republican Party. Even when equal access laws were passed, they were often not enforced.

**equal access** The right of any person to a public facility, such as streetcars, as freely as any other person.

**segregation** Separation on account of race or class from the rest of society, such as the separation of blacks from whites in most southern school systems.

## The End of Reconstruction

- ★ **What major factors brought about the end of Reconstruction? Evaluate their relative significance.**
- ★ **Many historians began to reevaluate their understanding of Reconstruction during the 1950s and 1960s. Why do you suppose that happened?**

From the beginning, most white southerners resisted the new order that the conquering Yankees imposed on them. Initially, resistance took the form of black codes and the Klan. Later, some southern opponents of Reconstruction developed new strategies, but terror remained an important instrument of resistance.

### The “New Departure”

By 1869, some leading southern Democrats had abandoned their last-ditch resistance to change, deciding instead to accept some Reconstruction measures and African American suffrage. At the same time, they also tried to secure restoration of political rights for former Confederates. Behind this **New Departure** for southern Democrats lay the belief that continued resistance would only cause more regional turmoil and prolong federal intervention.

Sometimes southern Democrats supported conservative Republicans for state and local offices instead of members of their own party, hoping to defuse concern in Washington and dilute Radical influence in state government. This strategy was tried first in Virginia, the last southern state to hold an election under its new constitution. There

**New Departure** Strategy of cooperation with some Reconstruction measures adopted by some leading southern Democrats in the hope of winning compromises favorable to their party.



William Mahone, a former Confederate general, railroad promoter, and leading Democrat, forged a broad political **coalition** that accepted black suffrage. In 1869 Mahone's organization elected as governor a northern-born banker and moderate Republican. In this way, Mahone got state support for his railroad plans, and Virginia successfully avoided Radical Republican rule.

Coalitions of Democrats and moderate Republicans won in Tennessee in 1869 and in Missouri in 1870. Elsewhere, leading Democrats endorsed the New Departure and accepted black suffrage but attacked Republicans for raising taxes and increasing state spending. And Democrats usually charged Republicans with corruption. Such campaigns brought a positive response from many taxpayers because southern tax rates had risen significantly to support the new educational systems, railroad subsidies, and other modernizing programs. In 1870 Democrats won the governorship in Alabama and Georgia. For Georgia, it meant the end of Reconstruction.

The victories of so-called **Redeemers** and New Departure Democrats in the early 1870s coincided with renewed terrorist activity aimed at Republicans. The worst single incident occurred in 1873. A group of armed freedmen fortified the town of Colfax, Louisiana, to hold off Democrats who were planning to seize the county government. After a three-week siege, well-armed whites overcame the black defenders and killed 280 African Americans. Leading Democrats rarely endorsed such bloodshed, but they reaped political advantages from it.

**coalition** An alliance, especially a temporary one of different people or groups.

**Redeemers** Southern Democrats who hoped to bring the Democratic Party back into power and to suppress Black Reconstruction.

### The 1872 Presidential Election

The New Departure movement, at its peak in 1872, coincided with a division within the Republican Party in the North. The Liberal Republican movement grew out of several elements within the Republican Party. Some were moderates, concerned that the Radicals had gone too far, especially with the Enforcement Acts, and had endangered federalism. Others opposed Grant on issues unrelated to Reconstruction. All were appalled by growing evidence of corruption in the Grant administration. Liberal Republicans found allies among Democrats by arguing against further Reconstruction measures.

Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Daily Tribune*, won the Liberal nomination for president. Greeley, an opponent of slavery before the Civil War, had given strong support to the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. But he had sometimes taken puzzling positions, including a willingness to let the South secede. One political observer described him as "honest, but . . . conceited, fussy, and foolish."

Greeley had long attacked the Democrats in his newspaper columns. Even so, the Democrats nominated him in an effort to defeat Grant. Many saw the Democrats' action as desperate opportunism, and Greeley alienated many northern Democrats by favoring restrictions on the sale of alcohol. Grant won convincingly, carrying 56 percent of the vote and winning every northern state and ten of the sixteen southern and border states.

### The Politics of Terror: The "Mississippi Plan"

By the time of the 1872 presidential race, nearly all southern whites had abandoned the Republicans, and Black Reconstruction had ended in several states. African Americans, however, maintained their Republican loyalties. As Democrats worked to unite all southern whites behind their banner of white supremacy, the South polarized politically along racial lines. Elections in 1874 proved disastrous for Republicans: Democrats won more than two-thirds of the South's seats in the House of Representatives and "redeemed" Alabama, Arkansas, and Texas.

Terrorism against black Republicans and their remaining white allies played a role in some victories by Democrats in 1874. Where the Klan had worn disguises and ridden at night, by 1874, Democrats in many places openly formed rifle companies, put on red-flannel shirts, and marched and drilled in public. In some areas, armed whites prevented African Americans from voting or terrorized prominent Republicans, especially African American Republicans.

During 1875 in Mississippi, political violence reached such levels that the use of terror to overthrow Reconstruction became known as the **Mississippi Plan**. Democratic rifle clubs broke up Republican meetings and attacked Republican leaders in broad daylight. One black Mississippian described the election of 1875 as “the most violent time we have ever seen.”

**Mississippi Plan** Use of threats, violence, and lynching by Mississippi Democrats in 1875 to intimidate Republicans and bring the Democratic Party to power.

### The Compromise of 1877

In 1876, on the centennial of American independence, the nation stumbled through a deeply troubled—and potentially dangerous—presidential election. As revelations of corruption in the Grant administration multiplied (discussed in the next chapter), both parties sought candidates known for their integrity. The Democratic Party nominated Samuel J. Tilden, governor of New York, as its presidential candidate. Tilden, a wealthy lawyer and businessman, had earned a reputation as a reformer by fighting political corruption in New York City. The Republicans selected **Rutherford B. Hayes**, a Civil War general and governor of Ohio, whose unblemished reputation proved to be his greatest asset. During the campaign in the South, intimidation of Republicans, both black and white, continued in many places.

First election reports indicated a victory for Tilden (see Map 15.2). In addition to the border states and the South, he also carried New York, New Jersey, and Indiana. Tilden received 51 percent of the popular vote versus 48 percent for Hayes.

Leading Republicans quickly realized that their party still controlled the counting and reporting of ballots in South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana, and that those three states could change the Electoral College majority from Tilden to Hayes. Charging **voting fraud**, Republican election boards in those states rejected enough ballots so that the official count gave Hayes narrow majorities and thus a one-vote margin of victory in the Electoral College. Crying fraud in return, Democratic officials in all three states submitted their own versions of the vote count. Angry Democrats vowed to see Tilden inaugurated, by force if necessary. Some Democratic newspapers ran headlines that read “Tilden or War.”

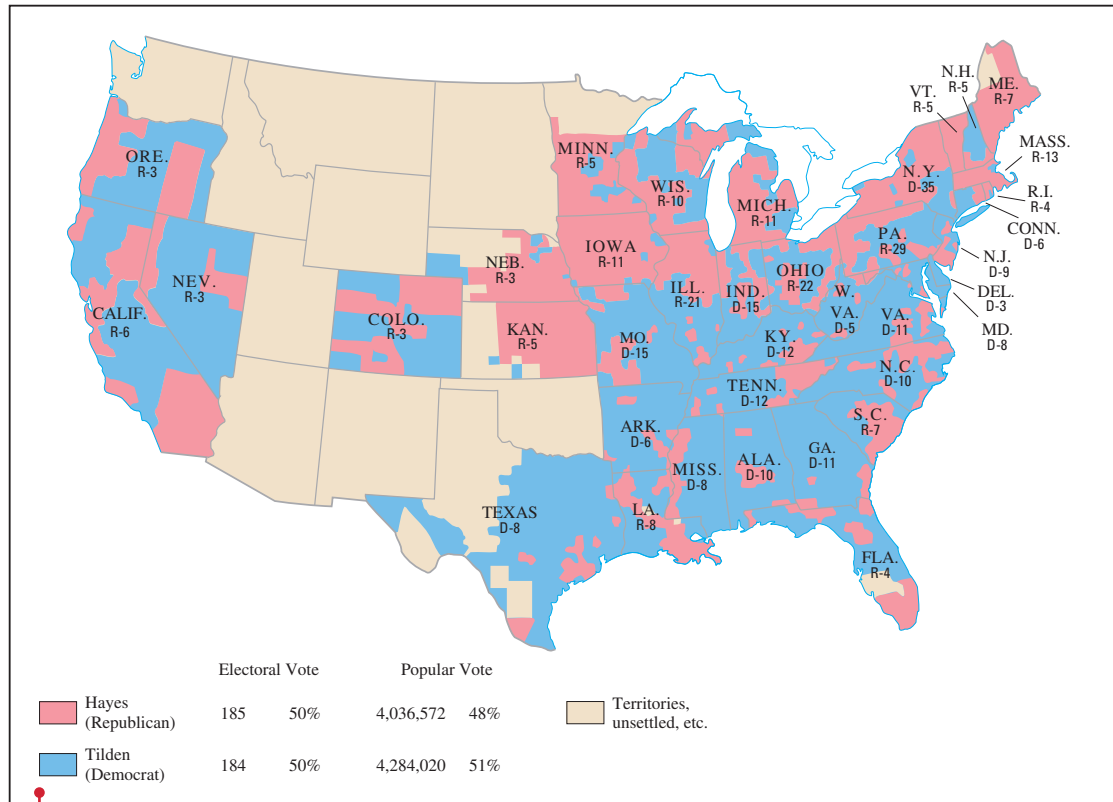
For the first time, Congress faced the problem of disputed electoral votes that could decide the outcome of an election. To resolve the challenges, Congress created a commission: five senators, chosen by the Senate, which had a Republican majority; five representatives, chosen by the House, which had a Democratic majority; and five Supreme Court justices, chosen by the justices. Initially, the balance was seven Republicans, seven Democrats, and one independent from the Supreme Court. The independent withdrew, however, and the remaining justices (all but one of whom had been appointed by Republican presidents) chose a Republican to replace him. The Republicans now had a one-vote majority on the commission.

This body needed to make its decision before the constitutionally mandated deadline of March 4. Some Democrats and Republicans worried over the potential for violence. However, as commission hearings droned on through January and into February 1877, informal discussions took place among leading Republicans and Democrats. The result has often been called the **Compromise of 1877**.

**Rutherford B. Hayes** Ohio governor and former Union general who won the Republican nomination in 1876 and became president of the United States in 1877.

**voting fraud** Altering election results by illegal measures to bring about the victory of a particular candidate.

**Compromise of 1877** Name applied by historians to the resolution of the disputed presidential election of 1876; it gave the presidency to the Republicans and made concessions to southern Democrats.



**MAP 15.2 Election of 1876**

The end of Black Reconstruction in most of the South combined with Democratic gains in the North to give a popular majority to Tilden, the Democratic candidate. The electoral vote was disputed, however, and was ultimately resolved in favor of Hayes, the Republican.

Southern Democrats demanded an end to federal intervention in southern politics but insisted on federal subsidies for railroad construction and waterways in the South. And they wanted one of their own as postmaster general because that office held the key to most federal patronage. In return, southern Democrats seemed willing to abandon Tilden's claim to the White House.

Although the Compromise of 1877 was never set down in one place or agreed to by all parties, most of its conditions were met. By a straight party vote, the commission confirmed the election of Hayes. Soon after his peaceful inauguration, the new president ordered the last of the federal troops withdrawn from occupation duties in the South. The Radical era of a powerful federal government pledged to protect "equality before the law" for all citizens was over. The last three Republican state governments fell in 1877. The Democrats, the self-described party of white supremacy, now held sway in every southern state. In parts of the South thereafter, election fraud and violence became routine. One Mississippi judge acknowledged in 1890 that since 1875, "we have been preserving the ascendancy of the white people" through "fraud and violence."

The Compromise of 1877 marked the end of Reconstruction. The Civil War was more than ten years in the past. Many moderate Republicans had hoped that the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments and the Civil Rights Act would guarantee black rights

without a continuing federal presence in the South. Southern Democrats tried hard to persuade northerners—on paltry evidence—that carpetbaggers and scalawags were all corrupt and self-serving, that they manipulated black voters to keep themselves in power, that African American officeholders were ignorant and illiterate and could not participate in politics without guidance by whites, and that southern Democrats wanted only to establish honest self-government. The truth of the situation made little difference.

Some Republicans, to be certain, kept the faith of their abolitionist and Radical forebears and hoped the federal government might again protect black rights. After 1877, however, Republicans routinely condemned violations of black rights, and few Republicans showed much interest in using federal power to prevent such outrages.

### After Reconstruction

Southern Democrats read the events of 1877 as permission to establish new systems of politics and race relations. Most Redeemers worked to reduce taxes, dismantle Reconstruction legislation and agencies, and grab political influence away from black citizens. They also began the process of turning the South into a one-party region, a situation that reached its fullest development around 1900 and persisted until the 1950s and, in some areas, even later.

Voting and officeholding by African Americans did not cease in 1877, but the context changed profoundly. Without federal enforcement of black rights, the threat of violence and the potential for economic retaliation by landlords and merchants sharply reduced meaningful political involvement by African Americans. Black political leaders soon understood that efforts to mobilize black voters posed dangers to candidates and voters, and they concluded that their political survival depended on favors from influential white Republicans or even from Democratic leaders. The public schools survived, segregated and underfunded, but presenting an important opportunity. Many Reconstruction-era laws remained on the books. Through much of the 1880s, many theaters, bars, restaurants, hotels, streetcars, and railroads continued to serve African Americans without discrimination.

Not until the 1890s did black disfranchisement and thoroughgoing racial segregation become widely embedded in southern law. African Americans continued to exercise some constitutional rights. White supremacy had been established by force of arms, however, and blacks exercised their rights at the sufferance of the dominant whites. Such a situation bore the seeds of future conflict.

After 1877, Reconstruction was held up as a failure. Although far from accurate, the southern whites' version of Reconstruction—that conniving carpetbaggers and scalawags had manipulated ignorant freedmen—appealed to many white Americans throughout the nation, and it gained widespread acceptance among many novelists, journalists, and historians. William A. Dunning, for example, endorsed that interpretation in his history of Reconstruction, published in 1907. Thomas Dixon's popular novel *The Clansman* (1905) inspired the highly influential film *The Birth of a Nation* (1915). Historically inaccurate and luridly racist, the book and the movie portrayed Ku Klux Klan members as heroes who rescued the white South, and especially white southern women, from domination and debauchery at the hands of depraved freedmen and carpetbaggers.

Against this pattern stood some of the first black historians. George Washington Williams, a Union army veteran, published a two-volume history of African Americans



in 1882. *Black Reconstruction in America*, by W. E. B. Du Bois, appeared in 1935. Both presented fully the role of African Americans in Reconstruction and the accomplishments of the Reconstruction state governments and black leaders. Historians today recognize that Reconstruction was not the failure that had earlier been claimed. The creation of public schools was the most important of the changes in southern life produced by the Reconstruction state governments. At a federal level, the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments eventually provided the constitutional leverage to restore the principle of equality before the law that so concerned the Radicals. Historians also recognize that Reconstruction collapsed partly because of internal flaws, partly because of divisions within the Republican Party, and partly because of the political terrorism unleashed in the South and the North's refusal to commit the force required to protect the constitutional rights of African Americans.

## Summary

At the end of the Civil War, the nation faced difficult choices regarding the restoration of the defeated South and the future of the freed people. Committed to ending slavery, President Lincoln nevertheless chose a lenient approach to restoring states to the Union, partly to persuade southerners to abandon the Confederacy and accept emancipation.

The end of slavery brought new opportunities for African Americans, whether or not they had been slaves. Taking advantage of the opportunities that freedom opened, they tried to create independent lives for themselves, and they developed social institutions that helped to define black communities. Because few were able to acquire land of their own, most became either sharecroppers or wage laborers. White southerners also experienced economic dislocation, and many also became sharecroppers. Most white southerners expected to keep African Americans in a subordinate role and initially used Black Codes and violence toward that end.

In reaction against the black codes and violence, Congress took control of Reconstruction away from President Johnson and passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866, the Fourteenth Amendment, and the Reconstruction Acts of 1867. An attempt to remove Johnson from the presidency

was unsuccessful. Additional federal Reconstruction measures included the Fifteenth Amendment and laws against the Ku Klux Klan. Several of these measures strengthened the federal government at the expense of the states.

Enfranchised freedmen, white and black northerners who moved to the South, and some southern whites created a southern Republican Party that governed most southern states for a time. The most lasting contribution of these state governments was the creation of public school systems.

In the late 1860s, many southern Democrats chose a "New Departure": they grudgingly accepted some features of Reconstruction and sought to recapture control of state governments. By the mid-1870s, however, southern politics turned almost solely on race. The 1876 presidential election was very close and hotly disputed. Key Republicans and Democrats developed a compromise: Hayes took office and ended the final stages of Reconstruction. Without federal protection for their civil rights, African Americans faced terrorism, violence, and even death if they challenged their subordinate role. With the end of Reconstruction, the South entered an era of white supremacy in politics and government, the economy, and social relations.

## Key Terms

- freed people, *p. 352*
- emancipation, *p. 352*
- secede, *p. 352*
- abolitionists, *p. 353*
- Radical Republicans, *p. 354*
- racial integration, *p. 354*
- pardons, *p. 355*
- Amnesty, *p. 355*
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- white supremacy, *p. 357*
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- voting fraud, *p. 372*
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# An Industrial Order Emerges

## 1865–1880

## CHAPTER 16

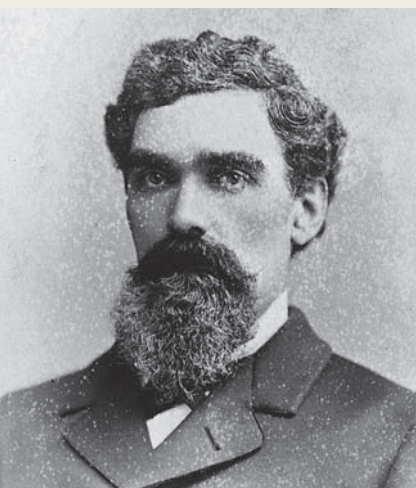
### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Frank Roney

Frank Roney arrived in New York from Ireland in 1868. Born in 1841, he had completed a seven-year apprenticeship and then qualified as a journeyman (skilled) iron molder. (Iron molders make objects of cast iron by heating iron until it melts and pouring it into molds.) Some of the molders from whom Roney learned his trade also taught him about the Friendly Society of Iron Molders, the Irish trade union for molders. Around the age of 21, Roney became involved with the struggle for Irish independence from England and was imprisoned. A judge gave Roney a choice: stay in prison or leave Ireland. Roney was soon on his way to America.

Roney found that many American foundry workers lacked the self-respect he associated with his craft. American molders, he complained, “seemed desirous of doing all the work required as if it were the last day of their lives.” Roney learned that many American workers were paid by the piece rather than by the day, so the more work they did, the more they were paid. Wages, he discovered, “were periodically reduced” and “the more this was done and the greater the reduction, the harder the men worked” to earn the same pay. For Roney, being a skilled iron molder was a mark of status, and he found the pace maintained by American workers to be both physically exhausting and personally degrading.

Traveling to Omaha, Roney worked in the shops of the Union Pacific Railroad and became an officer in Iron Molders Union No. 190. William Sylvis, national president of this union, was also head of the National Labor Union, and Roney eagerly joined, hoping the new organization and its associated political party might help to end poverty. After the collapse of that party, he went to Salt Lake City for a time, then pushed on to San Francisco, arriving in 1875.

In San Francisco, working in the Union Iron Works, the largest foundry on the Pacific Coast, Roney was again disgusted by the workers around him. “No foreman was needed to urge these men to work to the point of exhaustion. They labored



#### FRANK RONEY

*This photograph of Frank Roney was probably taken in the 1880s when Roney was head of the San Francisco Trades Assembly, an umbrella organization for the city's trade unions.*

Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### *Foundation for Industrialization*

- Resources, Skills, and Capital
- The Transformation of Agriculture
- The Impact of War and New Government Policies
- Overview: The Economy from the Civil War to World War I

#### *Railroads and Industry*

- Railroad Expansion
- Chicago: Railroad Metropolis
- Andrew Carnegie and the Age of Steel

#### IT MATTERS TODAY:

- Vertical Integration

#### INVESTIGATING AMERICA: Andrew

- Carnegie Explains the Gospel of Wealth, 1889
- Survival of the Fittest or Robber Barons?

#### *Workers in Industrial America*

- The Transformation of Work
- Workers for Industry
- Craft Unionism—and Its Limits

#### INVESTIGATING AMERICA: William

- Sylvis's Address in Chicago, 1865

#### *Politics: Parties, Spoils, Scandals, and Stalemate*

- Parties, Conventions, and Patronage
- Republicans and Democrats
- Grant's Troubled Presidency: Spoils and Scandals
- President Rutherford B. Hayes and the Politics of Stalemate
- Challenges to Politics as Usual: Grangers, Greenbackers, and Silverites
- The Great Railway Strike of 1877 and the Federal Response

#### *The United States and the World, 1865–1880*

#### *Summary*

hard of their volition and displayed an eagerness most discouraging to one who wished to see each of them [behave like] a man.” Manliness, for Roney, involved dignity. He became active in the local molders’ union and helped to form the Trades and Labor Assembly, a central body for trade unions. He also set out, in the shop and in union meetings, to persuade his fellow workers by word and deed to recognize the evils of “rushing” and competing with one another. Gradually, he sensed some success, and with it came the growth of the union. Roney became an officer and then a leader of organized labor in the city. Under his leadership, many San Francisco unions gained members and strength. Union activism, however, cost Roney his job.

Roney’s experiences in the iron works and the union hall came amidst an economy that was being dramatically and profoundly transformed by changes that far exceeded the wildest expectations of Americans living in 1865. Many Americans anticipated economic growth, but few could have imagined that steel production could increase a thousand times by 1900, or that railroads could operate nearly six times as many miles of track, or that farmers could triple their harvests. These economic changes and many others were the result of decisions by many individuals—where to seek work, where to invest, whether to expand production, how to react to a business competitor, whom to trust.

Like Roney, many Americans also had to make choices about competition and cooperation. Andrew Carnegie, leader of the new steel industry, loved competition, arguing that it “insures the survival of the fittest” and “insures the future progress of the race” by producing the highest quality, largest quantity, and lowest prices. Other entrepreneurs saw competition as the most unpredictable factor they faced and a serious constraint on economic progress. Carnegie’s zeal for competition was, in fact, unusual. Although many entrepreneurs publicly applauded the idea of the “survival of the fittest,” most loved competition only in the abstract and preferred to find alternatives to it in their own business affairs.

Other Americans also found themselves making choices regarding cooperation. Individualism was deeply entrenched in the American psyche, yet the increasing complexity of the economy presented repeated opportunities for cooperation. Railroad executives sometimes cooperated by dividing a market rather than competing in it. Like Frank Roney, wage earners sometimes joined with other workers in standing up to their employers and demanding better wages or working conditions. The result of these many decisions was the industrialization of the nation and the transformation of the economy.

## Foundation for Industrialization

- ★ **What were the most important factors that encouraged economic growth and industrial development after the Civil War?**
- ★ **What were the major changes in the U.S. economy from the Civil War to World War I?**

By 1865, conditions in the United States were ripe for rapid industrialization. A wealth of natural resources, a capable work force, an agricultural base that produced enough food for a large urban population, and favorable government policies combined to lay the foundation.



# Chronology

<b>1839–1842</b>	First Opium War (Britain defeats China, China cedes Hong Kong to Britain)	<b>1872–1874</b>	Granger laws
<b>1850s</b>	Development of Bessemer and Kelly steel-making processes	<b>1873</b>	“Salary Grab” Act Gold Standard adopted
<b>1854</b>	U.S. Navy opens trade with Japan	<b>1873–1879</b>	Depression
<b>1856</b>	Second Opium War (Britain and France defeat China, expanding opportunities for trade in China)	<b>mid-1870s</b>	Grange membership peaks
<b>1859</b>	Publication of Darwin’s <i>On the Origin of Species</i>	<b>1874</b>	Republicans lose majority in House of Representatives
<b>1861</b>	Protective tariff	<b>1875</b>	Whiskey Ring scandal Andrew Carnegie opens nation’s largest steel plant
<b>1865</b>	Civil War ends Former Confederates join the army of Maximilian in Mexico	<b>1877</b>	Disputed presidential election; Rutherford B. Hayes becomes president Reconstruction ends Great Railway Strike <i>Munn v. Illinois</i>
<b>1866</b>	National Labor Union organized	<b>1878</b>	Bland-Allison Act Greenback Party peaks
<b>1867</b>	First Grange formed French troops leave Mexico; Maximilian executed United States purchases Alaska from Russia Canada becomes self-governing dominion	<b>1879</b>	Publication of Henry George’s <i>Progress and Poverty</i>
<b>1868</b>	Ulysses S. Grant elected president	<b>1881</b>	Garfield becomes president
<b>1869</b>	First transcontinental railroad completed	<b>1882</b>	U.S. Navy opens trade with Korea
<b>1871</b>	William Marcy Tweed indicted		
<b>1872</b>	Crédit Mobilier scandal Grant reelected Montgomery Ward opens first U.S. mail-order business		

## Resources, Skills, and Capital

At the end of the Civil War, **entrepreneurs** could draw on vast and virtually untapped natural resources. Americans had long since plowed the fertile farmland of the Midwest (where corn and wheat dominated) and the South (where cotton was king). They had just begun to farm the rich soils of Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, and the Dakotas, as well as the productive valleys of California. Through the central part of the nation stretched vast grasslands that were well suited for grazing. The Pacific Northwest, the western Great Lakes region, and the South all held extensive forests untouched by the lumberman’s saw.

The nation was also rich in mineral resources. Before the Civil War, the iron **industry** had become centered in Pennsylvania as a result of easy access to iron ore and coal. Pennsylvania was also the site of early efforts to tap underground pools of crude oil. The California gold rush, beginning in 1848, had drawn many people west. Reserves of other minerals, including iron ore, coal, oil, gold and silver, and copper, lay unused or

**entrepreneur** A person who takes on the risks of creating, organizing, and managing a business enterprise.

**industry** A basic unit of business activity in which the various participants do similar activities; for example, the railroad industry consists of railroad companies and the firms and factories that supply their equipment.

undiscovered at the end of the war in various regions west of the Appalachians. Many of these natural resources were far from population centers, and their use awaited adequate transportation facilities. Exploitation of some of these resources also required new technologies.

In addition to natural resources, a skilled and experienced work force was essential for economic growth. In the 1790s and early nineteenth century, New Englanders had developed manufacturing systems based on **interchangeable parts** (first used for manufacturing guns and clocks) and factories for producing cotton cloth. These accomplishments gave them a reputation for “Yankee ingenuity”—a talent for devising new tools and inventive methods. Such abilities, however, were not limited to New England—they were key ingredients in nearly all large-scale manufacturing because early factories usually relied on skilled **artisans** to supervise less-skilled workers in assembling products. Some of the early artisans and factory owners came from Great Britain, where they had learned mechanical skills or honed entrepreneurial abilities in the world’s first industrial nation.

Another crucial element for industrialization was capital. During the years before the war, capital became centered in the seaport cities of the Northeast where prosperous merchants invested their profits in banks and factories. Banks were important instruments for mobilizing capital. Some bankers had begun to specialize in arranging financing for large-scale enterprises. **Stock exchanges** had also developed long before the Civil War as important institutions for raising capital for new ventures.

**interchangeable parts** Mechanical parts that are identical and can be substituted for one another.

**artisan** A skilled worker, whether self-employed or working for wages.

**stock exchange** A place where people buy and sell stocks (shares in the ownership of companies); stockholders may participate in election of the company’s directors and share in the company’s profits.

### The Transformation of Agriculture

The expanding economy rested on a highly productive agricultural base. Improved transportation—canals early in the nineteenth century and railroads later—speeded the expansion of agriculture by making it possible to move large amounts of agricultural produce over long distances. Up to the Civil War, farmers had developed 407 million acres into productive farmland. During the next thirty-five years, this figure more than doubled, to 841 million acres. Map 16.1 indicates where this growth occurred.

The federal government contributed to the rapid settlement of Kansas, Nebraska, the Dakotas, and Minnesota through the **Homestead Act** of 1862, a leading example of the Republican Party’s commitment to using federal landholdings to speed economic development. Under this act, any person could receive free as much as 160 acres (a quarter of a square mile) of government land by building a house, living on the land for five years, and farming it. Between 1862 and 1890, 48 million acres passed from government ownership to private hands in this way. Other federally owned land could be purchased for as little as \$1.25 per acre, and much more was obtained at this bargain price than was acquired free under the Homestead Act.

Production of leading commercial crops increased more rapidly than the overall expansion of farming. Although the total number of acres in farmland doubled between 1866 and 1900, the number of acres planted in corn, wheat, and cotton more than tripled. New farming methods increased harvests even more. During these years, farm output grew more than twice as much as the population, and as production of major crops rose, prices for them fell.

New machinery especially affected the production of grain crops by greatly increasing the amount of land one person could farm. A single farmer with a handheld scythe and cradle, for example, could harvest 2 acres of wheat in a day. Using the McCormick reaper (first produced in 1849), a single farmer and a team of horses could harvest 2 acres

**Homestead Act** Law passed by Congress in 1862 that offered ownership of 160 acres of designated public lands to any citizen who lived on and improved the land for five years.



**MAP I6.1** Expansion of Agriculture, 1860–1900

The amount of improved farmland more than doubled during these forty years. This map shows how agricultural expansion came in two ways—first, western lands were brought under cultivation; second, in other areas, especially the Midwest, land was cultivated much more intensively than before.

in an hour. For other crops too, a person with modern machinery could farm two or three times as much land as a farmer could fifty years earlier.

### The Impact of War and New Government Policies

In 1865, nearly three times as many Americans worked in agriculture as in manufacturing. Most manufacturing was small in scale and local in nature—for example, a shop with a few workers who made barrels or assembled farm wagons, mostly for people nearby. Nonetheless, many conditions were ripe for the emergence of large-scale manufacturing. The Civil War had encouraged some entrepreneurs to deliver military supplies to distant parts of the nation, and some of them sought to develop similar business patterns in peacetime. At the end of the war, too, some people found themselves looking for places to invest their wartime profits. By diverting labor and capital into war production, the Civil War may have slowed an expansion of manufacturing already underway. At the same time, new government policies encouraged a more rapid rate of economic growth.

When Republicans took command of the federal government in 1861, the South seceded because the new administration opposed slavery, and secession led to the Civil War. The Republicans also forged new policies intended to stimulate economic growth.

**protective tariff** A tax placed on imported goods for the purpose of raising the price of imports as high as or higher than the prices of the same item produced within the nation.

**public domain** Land owned by the federal government.

**Land-Grant College Act** Law passed by Congress in 1862 that gave states land to use to raise money to establish public universities that were to offer courses in engineering and agriculture and to train military officers.

First came a new **protective tariff**, passed in 1861. The tariff increased the price of imports to equal or exceed the price of American-made goods in order to protect domestic products from foreign competition and thereby encourage investment in manufacturing. The protective tariff remained central to federal economic policy for more than a half-century.

New federal land policies also stimulated economic growth. At the beginning of the Civil War, the federal government claimed a billion acres of land as federal property—the **public domain**—half of the land area of the nation. The Republicans used this land to encourage economic development in several ways, including free land for farmers, beginning with the Homestead Act (1862). Recognizing the importance of higher education, the **Land-Grant College Act** (1862)—often called the Morrill Act for its sponsor, Senator Justin Morrill of Vermont—gave federal land to each state (excluding those that had seceded) to sell or otherwise use to raise funds to establish a public university, which was required to provide education in engineering and agriculture and to train military officers. Also in 1862, Congress approved land grants for the first transcontinental railroad, and more land grants to railroads followed.

### Overview: The Economy from the Civil War to World War I

The nation grew dramatically in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Between 1865 and 1920, the nation's population increased by nearly 200 percent, from 36 million to 106 million. During the same years, railroad mileage increased by more than 1,000 percent, from 35,000 miles to 407,000 miles. Manufacturing output increased by a similar margin. Agricultural production grew far faster than the population. Perhaps most significantly, the total domestic product, per capita, in constant dollars, nearly tripled.

Much of this growth was sporadic. Economic historians think of the economy as developing through a cycle in which periods of **expansion** (growth) alternate with times of **contraction** (**recession** or **depression**, characterized by high unemployment and low productivity). Although this alternation between expansion and contraction is predictable, there is no predictability or regularity to the duration of any given up or down period. During the late nineteenth century, contractions were sometimes severe, producing widespread unemployment and distress. A major depression began in October 1873 and lasted until March 1879. Another began in January 1893 and lasted until June 1897. Between major depressions, periods of expansion and contraction occurred.

During boom periods, companies advertised for workers and ran their operations at full capacity. When the demand for manufactured goods fell, companies reduced production, cutting hours of work or dismissing employees as they waited for business to pick up. Unemployed workers had little to fall back on besides their savings or the earnings of other family members. Some churches and private charity organizations gave out food, but state and federal governments provided no unemployment benefits. Families who failed to find work might go hungry or even become homeless. Most adult Americans therefore understood the wisdom of saving up for hard times, whether or not they were able to do so.

The depression that began in 1873 was both severe and long-lasting. One bank in nine closed its doors, and nearly fifty-four thousand businesses failed. No reliable unemployment data exist, but evidence indicates that the contraction hit urban wage earners especially hard. One Massachusetts worker described the consequences for his family. “I have six children,” he wrote, and “I had to reduce the bread for my children and family, in order to get the required books to keep them at school. Every cent of my earnings is

**expansion** In the economic cycle, a time when the economy is growing, characterized by increased production of goods and services and usually by low rates of unemployment.

**contraction** In the economic cycle, a time when the economy has ceased to grow, characterized by decreased production of goods and services and often by high rates of unemployment.

**recession/depression** A recession is an economic contraction of relatively short duration; a depression is an economic contraction of longer duration.



consumed in my family; and yet I have not been able to have a piece of meat on my table twice a month for the last eight months.”

## Railroads and Industry

- ★ **What was the significance of the railroad and steel industries in the new industrial economy that emerged after the Civil War?**
- ★ **What might account for the changes in historians' views of the industrial entrepreneurs of the post-Civil War period?**

Railroads set much of the pace for economic expansion after the Civil War. Growth of the rail network stimulated industries that supplied materials for railroad construction and operation—especially steel and coal—and industries that relied on railroads to connect them to the emerging national economy. Railroad companies also came to symbolize “big business”—companies of great size, employing thousands of workers, operating over large geographic areas—and some Americans began to fear their power.

### Railroad Expansion

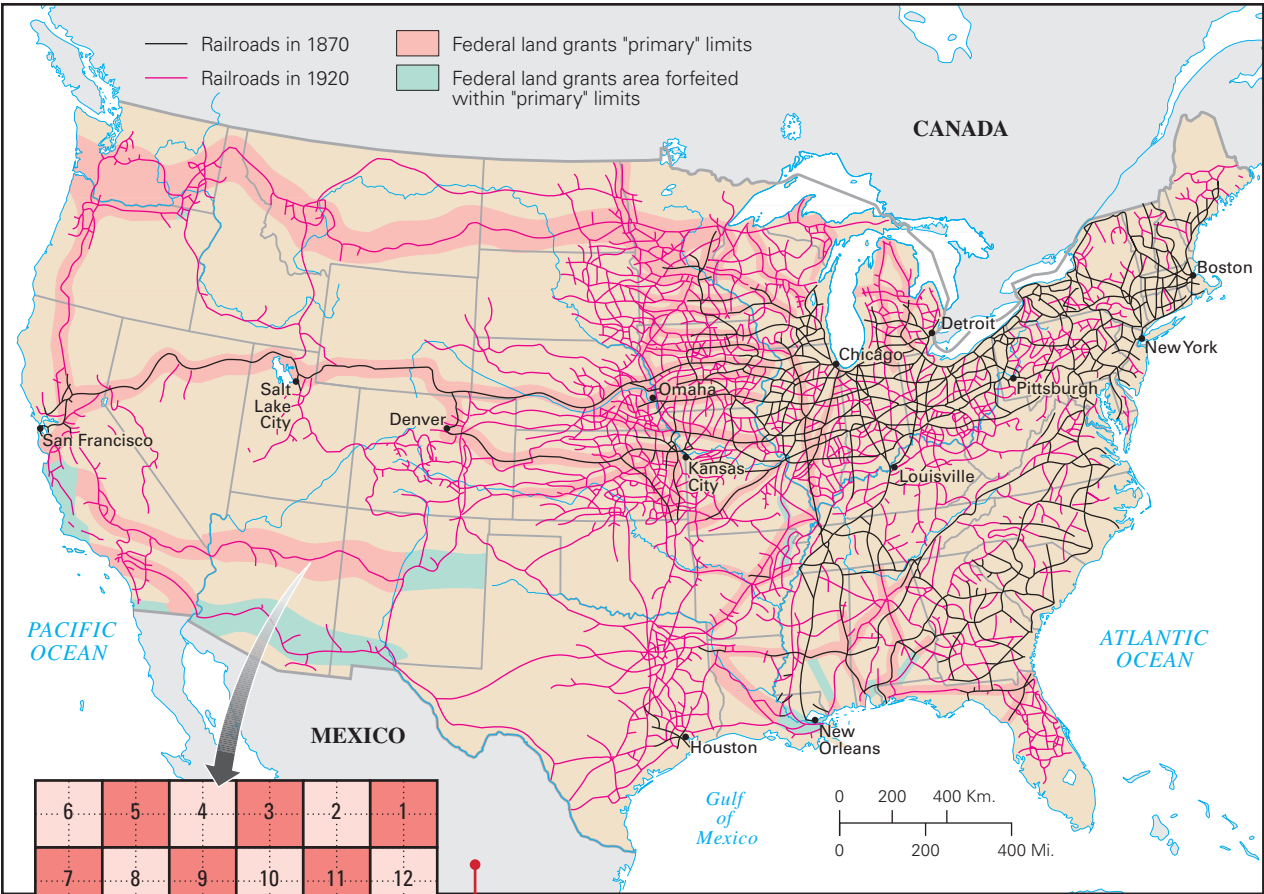
Before the Civil War, much of the nation's commerce moved on water—on rivers, canals, and coastal waterways. At the end of the Civil War, the nation still lacked a comprehensive national transportation network. Railroads clearly had that potential, but railway companies operated on tracks of varying **gauges**, which made the transfer of railcars from one line to another impossible. Instead, freight had to be moved by hand or wagon from the cars of one line to those of another. Few railway bridges crossed major rivers. Until 1869, no railroad connected the eastern half of the country to the booming Pacific Coast region. Travel time on every route between the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts required more than a month and posed both serious discomfort and danger. All choices were intimidating: a sea voyage around the storm-tossed tip of South America; or a boat trip to Central America, then transit over mountains and through malaria-infested jungles to the Pacific, and then another boat trip up the Pacific Coast; or a seemingly endless overland journey by riverboat and stagecoach.

By the mid-1880s, all the elements were finally in place for a national rail network. The first transcontinental rail line was completed in 1869, connecting California to Omaha, Nebraska (where Frank Roney briefly worked in the railroad's shops), and ultimately to eastern cities. Within the next fifteen years, three more rail lines linked the Pacific Coast to the eastern half of the nation, and a fourth was completed in 1893. Between 1865 and 1890, railroads grew from 35,000 miles of track to 167,000 miles (see Map 16.2). New inventions increased the speed, carrying capacity, and efficiency of trains. In 1886 the last major lines converted to a standard gauge, making it possible to transfer railcars from one line to another simply by throwing a switch. This rail network encouraged entrepreneurs to think in terms of a national economic system in which raw materials and finished products might move easily from one region to another.

Railroads, especially those in the West, expanded with generous governmental assistance. The first transcontinental rail line was made possible by the **Pacific Railway Act** of 1862. Congress provided the Union Pacific and Central Pacific companies not only with sizable loans but also with 10 square miles of the public domain for every mile of track laid—an amount doubled by a subsequent act in 1864. By 1871, Congress had authorized some seventy railroad land grants, involving 128 million acres, though not all companies proved able to claim their entire grants. Most railroads sold their land to raise capital for

**gauge** In this usage, the distance between the two rails making up railroad tracks.

**Pacific Railway Act** Law passed by Congress in 1862 that gave loans and land to the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroad companies to subsidize construction of a rail line between Omaha and the Pacific Coast.



**MAP 16.2** Railroad Expansion and Railroad Land Grants

Railroad expansion produced the transportation base for an industrial economy. Note the high density of rail lines in the industrial Northeast and Midwest. This map also shows federal land grants to railroads. The map above shows a typical survey township within the area of a railroad land grant. The railroad company typically received every odd-numbered section (1 square mile). Within the land grant, the price of the remaining federal land was doubled. Thus, the total income to the federal government was only slightly affected by the land grant.

railroad operations. By encouraging farmers, businesses, or organizations to develop the land, railroad companies could boost the demand for their freight trains to haul supplies to new settlers and carry their products (wheat, cattle, lumber, ore) to market.

The expansion of railroads created the potential for a nationwide market; stimulated the economic development of the West; and created a demand for iron, steel, locomotives, and similar products. Railroad companies also provided an organizational model for newly developing industrial enterprises.

Railroad companies required a much higher degree of coordination and long-range planning than did most existing businesses. They also required far more capital than needed by most manufacturing concerns. In 1875 the largest steel furnaces in the world cost \$741,000; at the same time, the Pennsylvania Railroad was capitalized at \$400 million. Even railroads that received government subsidies required large amounts of private

capital—and Congress gave out the last federal land grant in 1871. Private capital and support from state and local governments underwrote the enormous railroad expansion of the 1880s. The railroads' huge appetite for capital made them the first American businesses to seek investors on a nationwide and international scale. Those who invested their money could choose to buy either stocks or **bonds**. Sales of railroad stocks provided the major activity for the New York Stock Exchange through the second half of the nineteenth century.

Competition between railroads could become extreme. For example, Cornelius Vanderbilt controlled the New York Central Railroad (which ran along the Mohawk Valley in upstate New York) and connecting lines to New York City and into Ohio. He planned to extend his holdings all the way to Chicago. The Erie Railroad, controlled by Daniel Drew, ran parallel to Vanderbilt's lines in many places. Both Drew and Vanderbilt had reputations as hard-driving **moguls**, and when Vanderbilt raised his freight rates, Drew undercut him by 20 percent. When Vanderbilt set out to buy enough Erie stock to seize control from Drew, Drew and his allies, James "Diamond Jim" Fisk and Jay Gould, issued more stock and even offered some of it for sale, keeping Vanderbilt from control and enriching themselves in the process. At one point, the battle shifted to the New York state legislature, and stories circulated through Albany about shameless bidding for legislators' votes. A subsequent investigation indicated that Gould spent a million dollars in Albany. Finally Vanderbilt sent a simple message to Drew: "I'm sick of the whole damned business. Come and see me." Vanderbilt accepted his losses and conceded control of the Erie to Drew, Fisk, and Gould.

To compete more effectively, railroads adjusted their rates to attract companies that did a great deal of shipping. Large shipments sent over long distances cost the railroad companies less per mile than small shipments sent over short distances, so companies developed different rate structures for long hauls and short hauls. Thus the largest shippers, with the power to secure low rates and **rebates**, could ship more cheaply than could small businesses and individual farmers. Railroad companies defended the disparity on the basis of differences in costs, but small shippers who paid high prices saw themselves as victims of rate discrimination.

Railroads viewed state and federal governments as sources of valuable subsidies. At the same time, they constantly guarded against efforts by their customers to use government to restrict or regulate their enterprises—by outlawing rate discrimination, for example. Companies sometimes campaigned openly to secure the election of friendly representatives and senators and to defeat unfriendly candidates. They maintained well-organized operations to **lobby** public officials in Washington, D.C., and in state capitals.

### Chicago: Railroad Metropolis

Chicago experienced the most dramatic change as a consequence of railroad construction. Between 1850 and 1880, railroads transformed Chicago from a town of 30,000 residents to the nation's fourth-largest city, with a half-million people.

By 1890, it was second only to New York in population, and in 1900 it claimed 1.7 million people. By 1880, more than twenty railroad lines and 15,000 miles of tracks connected Chicago with nearly all of the United States and much of Canada. The boom in railroad construction during the 1880s only reinforced the city's prominence. Entrepreneurs in manufacturing and commerce soon developed new enterprises based on Chicago's unrivaled location at the hub of a great transportation network.

Chicago's rail connections made it the logical center for the new business of **mail-order sales**, and the two pioneers in that field—Montgomery Ward, in 1872, and Sears,

**bond** A certificate of debt issued by a government or corporation guaranteeing payment of the original investment plus interest at a specified future date.

**mogul** An important or powerful person, especially the head of a major company.

**rebate** The refund of part of a payment.

**lobby** To try to influence the thinking of public officials for or against a specific cause.

**mail-order sales** The business of selling goods using the mails; mail-order houses send out catalogs, customers submit orders, and the products are delivered all by mail.

Roebuck and Co., in 1893—began business there. Central location and rail connections also made Chicago a major manufacturing center. By the 1880s, Chicago's factories produced more farm equipment than those of any other city, and its iron and steel production rivaled that of Pittsburgh. Other leading Chicago industries produced railway cars and equipment, metal products, a wide variety of machinery, and clothing. The city also claimed title as the world's largest grain market.

**meatpacking** The business of slaughtering animals and preparing their meat for sale as food.

Location and rail lines made Chicago the nation's largest center for **meatpacking**. Livestock from across the Midwest and from as far as southern Texas was unloaded in Chicago's 400-acre Union Stockyards. Huge slaughterhouses received a steady stream of live cattle, hogs, and sheep and disgorged an equally steady stream of fresh, canned, and processed meat. The development in the 1870s of refrigeration for railroad cars and ships permitted fresh meat to be sent throughout the nation and to Europe.

### Andrew Carnegie and the Age of Steel

The new, industrial economy rode on a network of steel rails, propelled by locomotives made of steel. Steel plows broke the tough sod of the western prairies. Skyscrapers, the first of which appeared in Chicago in 1885, relied on steel frames.

Steel, a relative latecomer to the industrial revolution, defined the age.

Steel is made by combining carbon and molten iron and then burning out impurities, and it has greater strength, resilience, and durability than iron. This superior metal was difficult and expensive to make until the 1850s, when Henry Bessemer in England and William Kelly in Kentucky independently discovered ways to make steel in large quantities at a reasonable cost. Even so, by 1864 the entire nation produced only 10,000 tons of steel.

This photograph of Carnegie's Homestead plant, from about 1900, gives some sense of the enormous size of the plant. By 1900, the Homestead plant was one of the four largest industrial plants in the nation, each of which employed eight thousand to ten thousand workers. © CORBIS.







# It Matters Today

## VERTICAL INTEGRATION

Since Carnegie's day, vertical integration has been a central feature in the corporate structure of American manufacturing. Many manufacturing companies have sought a competitive advantage by controlling raw materials and other components of manufacturing (like Carnegie), or distribution and marketing of finished products (like automobile makers in the 1920s), or both.

In 1995, Disney, which makes films, bought ABC, which distributes films via television. In recent decades, much of meat production has become completely vertically integrated—Smithfield controls pork production from insemination of a sow to delivery of pork chops to supermarkets. When McDonald's opened fast-food restaurants in Russia, the company became Russia's largest

lettuce grower, to provide an important ingredient of the Биг Мак (Big Mac).

Some economic analysts now argue, however, that vertical integration no longer provides a competitive advantage in rapidly evolving technological fields such as computers.

- Use an online newspaper to research a recent corporate acquisition that provides vertical integration; for example, SBC's acquisition of AT&T. What advantages were presented to justify the acquisition? How does the acquisition affect those who work for the two companies?
- Why might vertical integration be disadvantageous in the computer industry?

In 1875, just south of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, **Andrew Carnegie** opened the nation's largest steel plant, employing fifteen hundred workers. From then until 1901 (when the plant had grown to more than eight thousand workers), Carnegie held central place in the steel industry. Carnegie was born in Scotland and came to the United States in 1848. As a young man, Andrew parlayed his skill as a telegraph operator into a position as personal telegrapher for a high official of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Carnegie rose rapidly within that company and moved into management at the age of 25. He invested in the iron and steel industry, and after the Civil War he applied to his own companies the management lessons he had learned with the railroad.

Carnegie's basic rule was "Cut the prices; scoop the market; run the mills full." An aggressive competitor, he took every opportunity to cut costs so that he might show a profit while charging less than his rivals. In 1864, steel rails sold for \$126 per ton; by 1875, Carnegie was selling them for \$69 per ton. Driven by improved technology and Carnegie's competitiveness, steel prices continued to fall, reaching less than \$20 a ton in the late 1890s. Carnegie was the largest steel manufacturer in the United States, though his company accounted for only a quarter of the nation's production. By then, the nation produced nearly 10 million tons of steel each year, more than any other nation.

During the late nineteenth century, drawing in part on railroads' innovations in managing large-scale operations, Carnegie and other entrepreneurs transformed the organizational structure of manufacturing. They often joined a range of operations formerly conducted by separate businesses—acquisition of raw materials, processing, distribution of finished goods—into one company, achieving **vertical integration**. Companies usually developed vertical integration to ensure steady operations and to gain a competitive advantage. Control over the sources and transportation of raw materials, for example, guaranteed a reliable flow of crucial supplies at predictable prices. Such control may also have denied materials to a competitor.

**Andrew Carnegie** Scottish-born industrialist who made a fortune in steel and believed the rich had a duty to act for the public benefit.

**vertical integration** The process of bringing together into a single company several of the activities in the process of creating a manufactured product, such as the acquiring of raw materials; the manufacturing of products; and the marketing, selling, and distributing of finished goods.

# Investigating America

## Andrew Carnegie Explains the Gospel of Wealth, 1889

Unlike other industrial magnates, Andrew Carnegie wrote extensively about his ideas on a wide range of topics, including competition and wealth. Carnegie's views, from the vantage point of the wealthy entrepreneur, contrast sharply with those of Frank Roney on the shop floor, as quoted from his autobiography in the Individual Choices feature at the beginning of this chapter. This selection, from an article written by Carnegie that he entitled "Wealth," appeared in *The North American Review* in June 1889.

.....

The price which society pays for the law of competition, like the price it pays for cheap comforts and luxuries, is also great; but the advantages of this law are also greater still, for it is to this law that we owe our wonderful material development, which brings improved conditions in its train. . . . It is here; we cannot evade it; no substitutes for it have been found; and while the law may be sometimes hard for the individual, it is best for the race, because it insures the survival of the fittest in every department. We accept and welcome, therefore, as conditions to which we must accommodate ourselves, great inequality of environment, the concentration of business, industrial and commercial, in the hands of a few, and the law of competition between these, as being not only beneficial, but essential for the future progress of the race . . .


This, then, is held to be the duty of the man of Wealth: First, to set an example of modest unostentatious living, shunning display or extravagance; to provide moderately for the legitimate wants of those dependent upon him; and after doing so to consider all surplus revenues which come to him simply as trust funds, which he is called upon to administer, and strictly bound as a matter of duty to administer in the

manner which, in his judgment, is best calculated to produce the most beneficial results for the community. . . . The best means of benefiting the community is to place within its reach the ladders upon which the aspiring can rise—parks, and means of recreation, by which men are helped in body and mind; works of art, certain to give pleasure and improve the public taste, and public institutions of various kinds, which will improve the general condition of the people. . . . Thus is the problem of the Rich and Poor to be solved. . . . Individualism will continue, but the millionaire will be but a trustee for the poor; intrusted for a season with a great part of the increased wealth of the community, but administering it for the community far better than it could or would have done for itself. . . .

The man who dies leaving behind him millions of available wealth, which was his to administer during life, will pass away "unwept, unhonored, and unsung," no matter to what uses he leaves the cross which he cannot take with him. Of such as these the public verdict will then be: "The man who dies thus rich dies disgraced." . . . Such, in my opinion, is the true Gospel concerning Wealth, obedience to which is destined some day to solve the problem of the Rich and the Poor, and to bring "Peace on earth, among men of Good-Will."

.....

- How do you think Frank Roney would have responded to Carnegie's praise of competition?
- How does Carnegie's notion of the Gospel of Wealth compare with Social Darwinism? Is Carnegie being consistent in arguing for the benefits of competition and survival of the fittest, on the one hand, and insisting on the obligations of the wealthy, on the other?

 See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

**Social Darwinism** The philosophical argument, inspired by Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, that competition in human society produced "the survival of the fittest" and so benefited society as a whole; Social Darwinists opposed efforts to regulate competitive practices.

### Survival of the Fittest or Robber Barons?

Many Americans were uneasy with the new economic powerhouses bred by industrialization. The concentration of power and wealth during the late nineteenth century in particular generated extensive comment and concern. One prominent view on the subject was known as **Social Darwinism**, reflecting its roots in Charles Darwin's work on evolution. In his book *On the Origin of Species* (published in 1859), Darwin concluded that those creatures that survive in competition against other creatures and in the face of an often inhospitable environment are those that have best adapted to their

surroundings. Such adaptation, he suggested, leads to the evolution of different species, each uniquely suited to a particular ecological niche.

Two philosophers, Herbert Spencer, writing in England in the 1870s and after, and William Graham Sumner, in the United States in the 1880s and after, put their own interpretations on Darwin's reasoning and applied it to the human situation, producing Social Darwinism (a philosophical perspective that bore little relation to Darwin's original work). Social Darwinists contended that competition among people produced "progress" through "survival of the fittest" and that unrestrained competition provided the best route for improving humankind and advancing civilization. Further, they argued that efforts to ease the harsh impact of competition only protected the unfit and thereby worked to the long-term disadvantage of all. Some concluded that powerful entrepreneurs constituted "the fittest" and benefited all humankind by their accomplishments.

Andrew Carnegie enthusiastically embraced Spencer's arguments and endorsed individualism and self-reliance as the cornerstones of progress. "Civilization took its start from that day that the capable, industrious workman said to his incompetent and lazy fellow, 'If thou dost not sow, thou shalt not reap,'" Carnegie wrote. When applied to government, this notion became a form of *laissez faire*.

Carnegie, though, was inconsistent. He also preached what he called the **Gospel of Wealth**: the idea that the wealthy should return their riches to the community by creating parks, art museums, and educational institutions. He spent his final eighteen years giving away his fortune. He funded three thousand public library buildings and forty-one hundred church organs all across the nation, gave gifts to universities, built Carnegie Hall in New York City, and created several foundations. (One humorist poked fun at Carnegie's libraries by suggesting that they would serve the community better if the poor might eat and sleep in them.) Like Carnegie, other great entrepreneurs of that time gave away vast sums—even as some of them also built ostentatious mansions, threw extravagant parties, and otherwise flaunted their wealth. Duke University, Stanford University, Vanderbilt University, the Morgan Library in New York City, and the Huntington Library in southern California all carry the names of men who amassed fortunes in the new, industrial economy and donated part of their riches to promote learning and research.

Many Americans disagreed with the Social Darwinists. Henry George, a San Francisco journalist, pointed out in *Progress and Poverty* (1879) that "amid the greatest accumulations of wealth, men die of starvation," and concluded that "material progress does not merely fail to relieve poverty—it actually produces it." Lester Frank Ward, a sociologist, posed a carefully reasoned refutation of Social Darwinism in 1886, suggesting that biological competition produced bare survival, not civilization.

Americans also disagreed about whether the railroad magnates and powerful industrialists were heroes or villains. Some accepted them wholeheartedly as benefactors of the nation. Others sided with E. L. Godkin, a journalist who in 1869 compared Vanderbilt to a medieval **robber baron**—a feudal lord who stole from travelers passing through his domain. Those who have called the wealthy industrialists and bankers robber barons describe them as unscrupulous, greedy, exploitative, and antisocial.

Thomas C. Cochran, a historian, has looked at the broad cultural context that affected not just prominent entrepreneurs but also most Americans. He identified three broadly shared "cultural themes" as central for understanding the period: (1) a belief that the economy operated according to self-correcting principles, especially the law of supply and demand; (2) the ideas of Social Darwinism; and (3) an assumption that people were motivated primarily by a desire for material gain. These themes shed light not

**laissez faire** The principle that the government should not interfere in the workings of the economy.

**Gospel of Wealth** Andrew Carnegie's idea that all possessors of great wealth have an obligation to spend or otherwise disburse their money to help people help themselves.

**robber baron** In medieval times, a feudal aristocrat who laid very high charges on all who crossed his territory; in the late nineteenth century, an insulting term applied to powerful industrial and financial figures, especially those who disregarded the public interest in their haste to make profits.

only on the actions of the entrepreneurs of the late nineteenth century but also on those of the political leaders of the day and on how Americans received those actions.

## Workers in Industrial America

- ★ **How did industrialization change the lives of those who came to work in the new industries?**
- ★ **What was the basis for craft unionism? How does the nature of its organization help to explain both its successes and its shortcomings?**

The rapid expansion of railroads, mining, and manufacturing created a huge demand for labor. America's new workers—men, women, and children from many ethnic groups—came from across the nation and around the world. Despite hopes for a rags-to-riches triumph such as Andrew Carnegie's, very few rose from the shop floor to the manager's office.

### The Transformation of Work

Most adult industrial workers had been born into a rural society, either in the United States or in another part of the world. They found industrial work quite different from work they had done in the past. Farm families might toil from sunrise to sunset, but did so at their own speed, avoiding exhaustion. Self-employed blacksmiths, carpenters, dressmakers, and other skilled workers also controlled the speed and intensity of their work, although, like the farmer, they might work very long hours. Frank Roney considered this autonomy to be part of the dignity of labor.

By the late nineteenth century, the workday in most industries averaged ten or twelve hours, six days a week. People from rural settings expected to work long hours, but they found that industrial work controlled them, rather than the other way around. The pace of the work and the resulting exhaustion, together with inadequate safety precautions, contributed to a high rate of industrial accidents, injuries, and deaths. Victims of industrial accidents rarely received any benefits from government or from their employers. On the contrary, many large businesses considered an injury on the job to be due to the carelessness of the employee and to be grounds for dismissal.

### Workers for Industry

The labor force grew rapidly after the Civil War, almost doubling by 1890. The largest increases occurred in industries undergoing the greatest changes. Agriculture continued to employ the largest share of the labor force, ranging downward from more than half in 1870 to two-fifths in 1900, but the proportional growth of the agricultural work force was the smallest of all major categories of workers.

Some workers for the rapidly expanding economy came from within the nation, especially from rural areas. The expanding economy, however, needed more workers than the nation itself could supply. As a result, the years between the Civil War and World War I witnessed a huge influx of immigrants: more than 26 million people, equivalent to three-quarters of the nation's entire population in 1865. By 1910, immigrants and their children made up more than 35 percent of the total population.

Large-scale immigration contributed many adult males to the work force—especially in mining, manufacturing, and transportation. But the expanding economy also pulled women and children into the industrial work force. By 1880, a million children (under the age of 16) worked for wages, the largest number in agriculture. Others worked as newsboys or domestic servants. Many children, mostly girls, were employed in the textile industry, especially in the South. They worked 70-hour weeks and earned 10 to 20 cents



a day. Children worked in tobacco and cotton fields in the South, operated sewing machines in New York, and sorted vegetables in Delaware canneries. Other children worked at home, alongside their parents who brought home **piecework**. Most working children turned over all their wages to their parents.

Most women who found employment outside the home were unmarried. Data before 1890 are unreliable, but in 1890, 40 percent of all single women worked for wages, along with 30 percent of widowed or divorced women. Among married women, only 5 percent did so. Black women were employed at much higher rates in all categories. Some occupations came to be filled mainly by women. By 1900, females—adults and children—made up more than 70 percent of the workers in clothing factories, knitting mills, and other textile operations. Women dominated certain types of office work, accounting for more than 70 percent of the nation's secretaries and typists and 80 percent of telephone operators. For women, office work usually paid less than factory work but was considered safer and of higher status.

Women and children workers almost always earned less than their male counterparts. In most industries, work was separated by age and gender, and adult males usually held the jobs requiring the most skill and commanding the best pay. This wage differential was often explained by the argument that a man had to support a family, whereas a woman worked to supplement the income of her husband or father.

Despite rags-to-riches success stories, extreme mobility was highly unusual. Nearly all successful business leaders, in fact, came from middle-class or upper-class families. Few workers moved more than a step or so up the economic scale. Few wage earners moved into the middle class.

**piecework** Work for which the pay is based on the number of items turned out, rather than by the hour.

### Craft Unionism— and Its Limits

Like Frank Roney, some workers reacted to the far-reaching changes in the nature of work by joining with other workers in efforts to maintain or regain control over their working conditions. Skilled workers remained indispensable in many fields, which allowed them to form the first unions, called **craft unions** or **trade unions**

**craft union, trade union** Labor union that organizes skilled workers engaged in a specific craft or trade.



Child labor was widespread through much of the United States. This photograph from the late 1860s is one of relatively few from that time period to show factory workers. The youngest seem to be about 8 or 10, and at least ten of the thirty-seven people in the picture appear to be children. Note, also, the two men standing to the right side of the picture. The one in the suit is probably the owner of the factory, and the man next to him is likely the foreman. William B. Becker Collection/American Museum of Photography.

# Investigating America

## William Sylvis's Address in Chicago, 1865

Even before the formation of the National Labor Union in 1867, Sylvis had been concerned about living and working conditions in the industrial North. During the Civil War, most northern factories had expanded production dramatically. Many industrialists kept their factories open around the clock, whereas others built new wings to better serve the demands of the Union army. The government of Abraham Lincoln was not insensitive to the plight of urban workers, but the Republicans' free wage labor ideology implicitly suggested that those workers who fell into poverty had only themselves to blame. For most northern businessmen, winning the war was the paramount concern; conditions within the factories could be dealt with later. That left it to organizers such as Sylvis to advocate for those in the factories. He delivered the following speech in January 1865.

.....

What would it profit us, as a nation, were we to preserve our institutions and destroy the morals of the people; save our Constitution, and sink the masses into hopeless ignorance, poverty, and crime; all the forms of our republican institutions to remain on the statute-books, and the great body of the people sunk so low as to be incapable of comprehending their most simple and essential principles; with the wealth of the nation concentrated in the hands of the few, and the toiling many reduced to squalid poverty and utter dependence on the lords of the land, and with every position of profit and honor filled by the proud and opulent? Again, allow me to ask, what would it profit us if the forms of our institutions were preserved and all else lost? But, Mr.

Chairman, I am told that I have mounted upon fancy's wing and gone rioting through the fields of imagination, and present a picture that is overdrawn; a state of affairs that can never come to pass; that our institutions are built upon a foundation as firm as the "eternal hills," against which the angry waves of foreign and domestic strife may surge in vain. But, fellow-workmen, be not deceived. Allow not yourselves to be rocked into a false security by these sweet lullabies. Remember that tyrants have ever sung of safety to the people while grinding the sword to stab their liberties. Remember, too, that all popular governments must depend for their stability and success upon the virtue and intelligence of the masses; that tyranny is founded upon ignorance, and liberty upon education; and that while long hours, low wages, and few privileges are the strength and support of the one, they are entirely incompatible with the other.

.....

- When Sylvis gave this speech, the Civil War was winding down but not yet finished. What connections did Sylvis draw between the principles the northern states had fought for and the declining condition of industrial families?
- Although Sylvis never mentioned southern slavery, how might Americans who had just survived a bloody conflict over unfree labor have interpreted his speech? How might Carnegie have responded to Sylvis's warning against being "rocked into a false security by these sweet lullabies?"

James C. Sylvis, *The Life, Speeches, Labors, and Essays of William H. Sylvis*. Philadelphia: Claxton, 1872.



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because membership was limited to skilled workers in a particular craft or trade. Before the Civil War, workers in most American cities created local trade unions in an attempt to regulate the quality of work, wages, hours, and working conditions within their craft. Local unions eventually formed national trade organizations—twenty-six of them by 1873, thirty-nine by 1880. They sometimes called themselves brotherhoods—for example, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, formed in 1881—and they drew on their craft traditions to forge bonds of unity.

The skills that defined craft unions' membership took years to develop and provided the basis for the craft workers' success. Employers valued the workers because they were difficult to replace. Such unions often limited their membership not just to workers

with particular skills but to white males with those skills. If most craft workers within a city belonged to the local union, a strike could badly disrupt or shut down the affected businesses.

A strike most often succeeded in times of prosperity, when the employer wanted to continue operating and was best able financially to make concessions to workers. In an economic downturn, employers sharply reduced work hours or laid off workers, and craft unions usually disintegrated because they could not use the strike effectively. Only after the 1880s did local and national unions develop strategies that permitted them to survive.

Shortly after the Civil War, in 1866, craft unionists representing a variety of local and national organizations joined with reformers to create the **National Labor Union** (NLU), headed by William Sylvis of the Iron Molders until his death in 1869. The NLU also included representatives of women's organizations and, after vigorous debate, decided to encourage the organization of black workers. The most important of the NLU objectives was to establish eight hours as the proper length for a day's work. In 1870 the NLU divided itself into a labor organization and a political party, the National Labor Reform Party, which Roney joined so hopefully when he was working in Omaha. In 1872 the political party nominated candidates for president and vice president, but the campaign was so unsuccessful and divisive that neither the NLU nor the party met again.

**National Labor Union** Federation of trade unions and reform societies organized at Baltimore in 1866; it lasted only six years but helped push through a law limiting government employees to an eight-hour workday.

## Politics: Parties, Spoils, Scandals, and Stalemate

- ★ **What was the significance of political parties in the late nineteenth century?**
- ★ **Compare the presidencies of Grant and Hayes. Which do you consider the more successful?**

At a time when the nation's economy was changing at a breakneck pace, politics seemed to change very little. Political parties dominated nearly every aspect of the political process from the 1830s until the early 1900s, more so than before or since. During those years, Americans expected that politics meant party politics and that all meaningful political choices came through the structure of parties. Men were expected to hold intense party loyalties—allegiances so strong they were even seen as part of a man's gender role. (All states barred women from voting, as did nearly all the territories.) An understanding of politics, therefore, must begin with an analysis of political parties—what they were, what they did, what they stood for, and what choices they offered to voters.

### Parties, Conventions, and Patronage

The two major parties—Democrats and Republicans—had similar organizations and purposes. Both nominated candidates, tried to elect them to office, and attempted to write and enact party objectives into law.

After the 1830s, nominations for political offices came from **party conventions**. Neighborhood voters first gathered in party **caucuses** to choose one or more delegates to represent them at local conventions. Conventions took place at county, state, and national levels and at the level of congressional districts and various state districts. At most conventions, the delegates listened to speech after speech, nominated candidates for elective offices or chose delegates to another convention, and adopted a **platform**, a written explanation of their positions on important issues and their promises for policy change. Party leaders worked to create compromises that satisfied major groups within

**party convention** Party meeting to nominate candidates for elective offices and to adopt a political platform.

**caucus** A gathering of people with a common political interest—for example, to choose delegates to a party convention or to seek consensus on party positions on issues.

**platform** A formal statement of the principles, policies, and promises on which a political party bases its appeal to voters.



their party, and such deal making sometimes occurred in informal settings—for example, hotel rooms thick with cigar smoke and cluttered with whiskey bottles. Such behind-the-scenes bargaining reinforced the notion of political parties as all-male bastions into which no self-respecting women would venture.

After choosing their candidates, the parties conducted their campaigns. Party organizers tried to identify all their supporters and to attract new ones. Campaigns were almost entirely focused on party identity. Nearly every newspaper identified itself with a political party. On election day, each party tried to mobilize all its supporters and make certain that they voted. This form of political campaigning produced very high levels of voter participation. In 1876 more than 80 percent of the eligible voters cast their ballots. Turnout sometimes rose even higher, although exact percentages were affected by poor record keeping or fraud. At the polling places, party workers distributed lists, or “tickets,” of their party’s candidates, which voters then used as ballots. Voting was not secret until the 1890s. Before then, everyone could see which party’s ballot a voter deposited in the ballot box. Such a system obviously discouraged voters from crossing party lines.

Once the votes were counted, the winners turned to appointing people to government jobs. In the nineteenth century, government positions not filled by elections were staffed through the **patronage system**—that is, newly elected presidents or governors or mayors appointed their loyal supporters to government jobs, considered an appropriate reward for hard work during a campaign. Those appointed to such jobs were expected to contribute part of their salaries to the party. The use of patronage for party purposes was often called the spoils system, after a statement by Senator William Marcy in 1831: “To the victor belong the spoils.” Its defenders were labeled **spoilsmen**.

**patronage system** System of appointment to government jobs that lets the winner in an election distribute nearly all appointive government jobs to loyal party members; also called the spoils system.

**spoilsmen** Derogatory term for defenders of the patronage or spoils system.

### Republicans and Democrats

Beneath the hoopla, fireworks, and interminable speeches, important differences characterized the two major parties. Some of these differences appeared in the ways the parties described themselves in their campaign appeals.

During the years after the Civil War, Republicans asserted a virtual monopoly on patriotism in a practice called waving the bloody shirt: Republicans had died defending the Union during the war, they asserted, and Democrats—especially southern Democrats—had been disloyal. “Every man that shot a Union soldier,” Robert Ingersoll, a Republican orator, proclaimed, “was a Democrat.” Republicans in Congress also voted to provide generous federal pensions to disabled Union army veterans and to the widows and orphans of those who died. Republican Party leaders carefully cultivated the **Grand Army of the Republic** (GAR), the organization of Union veterans, attending their meetings and urging them to “vote as you shot.” Republican presidential candidates were almost all Union veterans, as were many state and local officials throughout the North.

Prosperity was another persistent Republican campaign theme. Republicans insisted that the economic growth of the postwar era stemmed largely from their wise policies, especially the protective tariff. Democrats typically focused on what they opposed. Most leading Democrats stood firm against “governmental interference” in the economy, which they said privileged a favored few. The protective tariff, they charged, protected manufacturers from international competition at the expense of consumers who paid higher prices. The public domain, they argued, should provide farms for citizens, not subsidies for railroad corporations.

Democrats also opposed governmental interference in social relations and behavior. In the North, especially in Irish and German communities, they condemned **prohibition** (efforts to ban the sale of alcoholic beverages), which they called a violation of personal liberty. In the South, Democrats rejected federal enforcement of equal rights for

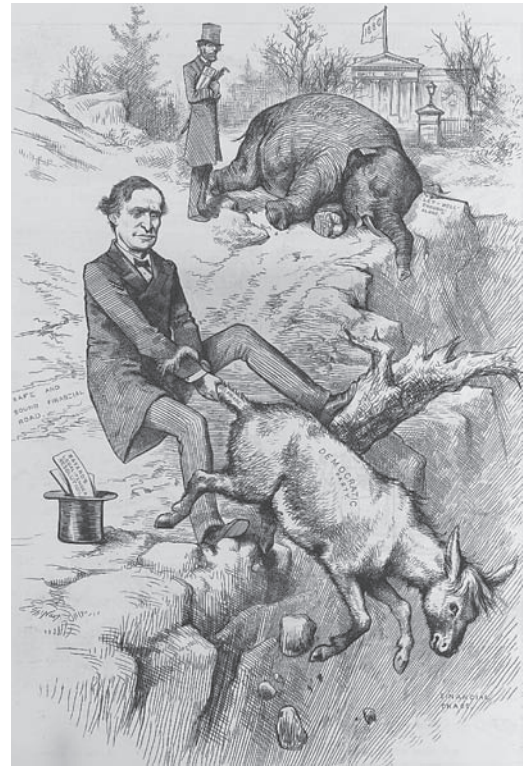
**Grand Army of the Republic** Organization of Union army veterans.

**prohibition** A legal ban on the manufacture, sale, and use of alcoholic beverages.





Thomas Nast, the most influential cartoonist of the 1870s, and the most talented cartoonist of his age, began the practice of using an elephant to symbolize the Republicans and a donkey for the Democrats. At the time, however, Republicans often preferred an eagle, and Democrats usually chose a rooster. (left) Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. [LC-USZ62-112163]; (right) Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. [LC-USZ62-56776].



African Americans, which they denounced as a violation of states' rights. There, Democrats called for white supremacy.

Most voters developed strong loyalties to one party or the other, often on the basis of **ethnicity**, race, or religion. Nearly all Catholics and many Irish, German, and other immigrants supported the Democrats. Poor voters in the cities usually supported the local party organization, which tended to be Democratic. Most southern whites supported the Democrats as the party of white supremacy. The Democrats' opposition to the protective tariff attracted those who favored more competition. The Democrats, all in all, held together primarily because the components of their diverse coalition could unite to oppose government action on social and economic matters.

Outside the South, most Protestants voted Republican, as did most Scandinavian and British immigrants. Nearly all African Americans and most veterans of the abolition movement supported the Republicans as the party of emancipation, as did many Union veterans. Republicans always did well among the voters of New England, Pennsylvania, and much of the Midwest and among Mexican Americans in California and New Mexico Territory. For the most part, the Republicans developed the more coherent political organization, united around a set of federal policies to encourage economic growth. As one leading Republican put it, "The Republican party does things, the Democratic party criticizes." Neither party, however, advocated government action to regulate, restrict, or tax the newly developing industrial corporations.

**ethnicity** Having to do with common racial, cultural, religious, or linguistic characteristics; an ethnic group is one that has some shared racial, religious, linguistic, cultural, or national heritage.

### Grant's Troubled Presidency: Spoils and Scandals

Ulysses S. Grant's success as a general failed to prepare him for the presidency. Elected in 1868 and reelected in 1872, he rarely challenged congressional dominance of domestic policymaking. He proved unable to form a competent cabinet and faced

**Whiskey Ring** Distillers and revenue officials in St. Louis who, in 1875, were revealed to have defrauded the government of millions of dollars in whiskey taxes, with the cooperation of federal officials. In this context, “ring” means a group of people who act together to exercise control over something.

**Crédit Mobilier** Company created to build the Union Pacific Railroad; in a scandalous deal uncovered in 1872–1873, it sold shares cheaply to congressmen who approved federal subsidies for railroad construction.

**William Marcy Tweed** New York City political boss; his shamelessly corrupt Tweed Ring controlled city government from the 1860s until his downfall in 1871.

**kickback** An illegal payment by a contractor to the official who awarded the contract.

constant turnover among his executive advisers. Many of his appointees, often friends with no particular qualifications, viewed their positions as little more than the spoils of party victory, and Grant proved too willing to believe their denials of wrongdoing.

In but one example of corruption within Grant’s administration, a **Whiskey Ring** of federal officials and distillers, centered in St. Louis, conspired to evade payment of taxes. In 1875, when Treasury Secretary Benjamin Bristow took action, the 230 men indicted included several of Grant’s appointees and even his private secretary. The next year, William Belknap, Grant’s secretary of war, resigned shortly before he was impeached for accepting bribes.

Congress supplied its own full share of scandal. One involved the **Crédit Mobilier**, a construction company that the chief shareholders in the Union Pacific Railroad created and then awarded a generous contract to build the railroad. Thus the company’s chief shareholders paid themselves handsomely for constructing their own railroad. To protect this arrangement from congressional scrutiny, the company sold Crédit Mobilier shares at cut-rate prices to several key members of Congress. Revelation of these arrangements in 1872 and 1873 scandalized the nation. No sooner did that furor pass than Congress voted itself a 50 percent pay raise and made the increase two years retroactive. Only after widespread public protest did Congress repeal its “salary grab.”

Public disgrace was not limited to the federal government. In New York City, the so-called Tweed Ring, led by **William Marcy Tweed**, supplied a seemingly endless string of city and state officials who were accused of using bribery, **kickbacks**, and padded accounts to steal money from New York City. Tweed’s organization dominated the city’s Democratic Party by 1868 and controlled much of city and state government. In 1871, however, evidence of corruption led to Tweed’s indictment and ultimately his conviction and imprisonment.

### President Rutherford B. Hayes and the Politics of Stalemate

Rutherford B. Hayes became president after the closely contested election of 1876 led to the Compromise of 1877. His personal integrity and principled stand on issues helped to restore the reputation of the Republican Party after the embarrassment of the Grant administration, but any hope he had for significant change ran up against the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives and significant opposition within his own party. His harshest Republican critic was Roscoe Conkling, senator from New York and boss of that state’s large and patronage-hungry Republican organization. He became especially hostile after Hayes refused to install Conkling’s followers in key federal patronage positions.

Hayes promised to serve only one term and probably could not have secured a second nomination had he sought one. His handling of patronage annoyed many Republicans, and he estranged reformers by not seeking a full-scale revision of the spoils system. When the White House stopped serving alcohol, Hayes’s opponents blamed his wife, Lucy Webb Hayes, the first college-educated First Lady and a committed reformer, and dubbed her “Lemonade Lucy.”

### Challenges to Politics as Usual: Grangers, Greenbackers, and Silverites

Although political change moved at a glacial pace, especially after 1874, at some times and in some places, groups challenged mainstream politics and sought new policies and approaches to government. Farmers were prominent in several significant movements.

After the Civil War, farmers joined organizations that they hoped would provide relief from falling prices and high railroad freight rates. Oliver H. Kelley formed the first

in 1867. The new organization, officially called the Patrons of Husbandry and usually known as the **Grange**, extended full participation to women as well as men. Kelley hoped that the Grange would provide a social outlet for farm families and educate them in new methods of agriculture.

The Grange grew rapidly, especially in the Midwest and the central South. In the 1870s, it became a leading proponent for **cooperative** buying and selling. Many local Grange organizations set up cooperative stores, and some even tried to sell their crops cooperatively. Members agree to shop at a cooperative store (or consumers' cooperative) and then divide any profits among themselves. In a producers' cooperative, farmers sought to hold their crops back from market and to negotiate over prices rather than simply to accept a buyer's offer. Grangers laid ambitious plans for cooperative factories producing everything from farm machinery to sewing machines. Some Grangers formed mutual insurance companies, and a few experimented with cooperative banks.

The Grange defined itself as nonpartisan. However, as Grange membership rapidly climbed in the 1870s, its midwestern and western members formed new political parties in eleven states. The central demand of these new parties, usually called "Granger Parties," was state legislation to prohibit railroad rate discrimination. Resulting state laws, most of them dating to 1872–1874, were usually called **Granger laws**. When the constitutionality of such regulation was challenged, the Supreme Court ruled, in *Munn v. Illinois* (1877), that businesses with "a public interest," including warehouses and railroads, "must submit to be controlled by the public for the common good."

The Grange reached its zenith in the mid-1870s. Hastily organized cooperatives soon began to suffer financial problems that were compounded by the national depression. The collapse of cooperatives often pulled down Grange organizations. Political activity brought some successes but also generated bitter disputes within the Granges. The organization lost many members. After the late 1870s, the surviving Granges tended to avoid both cooperatives and politics.

With the decline of the Grange, some farmers looked to **monetary policy** for relief. After the Civil War, most prices fell (a situation called **deflation**) because of increased production, more efficient techniques in agriculture and manufacturing, and the failure of the money supply to grow as rapidly as the economy. Deflation always injures debtors because the money used to pay off a loan has greater purchasing power than the money of the original loan. The Greenback Party argued that issuing more **greenbacks**, the paper money issued during the Civil War, would stabilize prices. They found a receptive audience among farmers in debt. They argued that if the currency (money in circulation, whether of paper or precious metal) grows more rapidly than the economy, the result is inflation (rising prices).

In the congressional elections of 1878, the Greenback Party received nearly a million votes and elected fourteen congressmen. In the 1880 presidential election, the Greenback Party not only endorsed inflation but also tried to attract urban workers by supporting the eight-hour workday, legislation to protect workers, and the abolition of child labor. They also called for regulation of transportation and communication, a **graduated income tax** (on the grounds that it was the fairest form of taxation), and woman suffrage. For president, they nominated James B. Weaver of Iowa, a Greenback congressman and former Union army general. Weaver got only 3.3 percent of the vote.

A similar monetary analysis motivated those who wanted the government to resume issuing silver dollars. Until 1873, federal law specified that federal mints would accept gold and silver and make them into coins as the easiest way to get money into circulation. In 1873 Congress dropped the silver dollar from the list of approved coins, following the lead of Britain and Germany, which had specified that only gold was to serve as money.

**Grange** Organization of farmers that combined social activities with education about new methods of farming and cooperative economic efforts; formally called the Patrons of Husbandry.

**cooperative** A business enterprise in which workers and consumers share in ownership and take part in management.

**Granger laws** State laws establishing standard freight and passenger rates on railroads, passed in several states in the 1870s in response to lobbying by the Grange and other groups, including merchants.

**monetary policy** Now, the regulation of the money supply and interest rates by the Federal Reserve. In the late nineteenth century, federal monetary policy was largely limited to defining the medium of the currency (gold, silver, or paper) and the relations between the types of currency.

**deflation** Falling prices, a situation in which the purchasing power of the dollar increases; the opposite of deflation is inflation, when prices go up and the purchasing power of the dollar declines.

**greenbacks** Paper money, not backed by gold, that the federal government issued during the Civil War.

**graduated income tax** Percentage tax that is levied on income and varies with income, so that individuals with the lowest income pay taxes at the lowest rates.



**gold standard** A monetary system based on gold; under such a system, legal contracts typically called for the payment of all debts in gold, and paper money could be redeemed in gold at a bank.

**Bland-Allison Act** Law passed by Congress in 1878 providing for federal purchase of limited amounts of silver to be coined into silver dollars.

**militia** A military force consisting of civilians who agree to be mobilized into service in times of emergency; organized by state governments during the nineteenth century but now superseded by the National Guard.

**general strike** A strike by members of all unions in a particular region.

#### Great Railway Strike of 1877

Largely spontaneous strikes by railroad workers, triggered by wage cuts.

Some Americans believed that adhering to this **gold standard** was essential if American businesses were to compete effectively in international markets. Soon after 1873, silver discoveries in the West drove down the commercial price of silver. Both farmers and silver-mining interests, a coalition soon called “Silverites,” argued for the coining of all available silver into dollars. In 1878, over Hayes’s veto, Congress passed the **Bland-Allison Act** authorizing a limited amount of silver dollars, but the act failed to counteract deflation, and neither side was satisfied. Silverites condemned the action as too feeble, and gold supporters denounced it for diluting the gold standard.

#### The Great Railway Strike of 1877 and the Federal Response

During Hayes’s first year in the presidency, the nation witnessed for the first time the implications of widespread labor strife. In response to the depression that began in 1873, railroad companies reduced costs by repeatedly cutting wages. Railroad workers’ pay fell by more than a third from 1873 to 1877. Union leaders talked of organizing a strike but failed to bring one off.

Railway workers took matters into their own hands when companies announced additional pay cuts. On July 16, 1877, a group of firemen and brakemen on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad stopped work in Maryland. The next day in West Virginia, a group of railway workers refused to work until the company restored their wages. The governor of West Virginia sent in the state **militia**, but the strikers prevented the trains from running. The governor then requested federal troops, and Hayes sent them.

Federal troops restored service on the Baltimore & Ohio, but the strike spread to other lines. Strikers shut down trains in Pittsburgh. When the local militia refused to act against the strikers, the governor of Pennsylvania sent militia units from Philadelphia. The troops killed twenty-six people. Strikers and their sympathizers then attacked the militia, forced the troops to retreat, and burned and looted railroad property throughout Pittsburgh.

Strikes erupted across Pennsylvania and New York and throughout the Midwest. Everywhere, the strikers drew support from their local communities. In various places, coal miners, factory workers, owners of small businesses, farmers, black workers, and women demonstrated their solidarity with the workers. In St. Louis, local unions declared a **general strike** to secure the eight-hour workday and to end child labor. State militia, federal troops, and local police eventually broke up the strikes, but not before hundreds had lost their lives. By the strikes’ end, railroad companies had suffered property damage worth \$10 million, half of the losses in Pittsburgh.

The **Great Railway Strike of 1877** revealed widespread dislike for the new railroad companies and significant community support for striking workers. However, the strike alarmed many other Americans. Some considered the use of troops only a temporary expedient and, like Hayes, hoped for “education of the strikers,” “judicious control of the capitalists,” and some way to “remove the distress which afflicts laborers.” Others saw in the strike a forecast of future labor unrest, and they called for better means to enforce law and order.

## The United States and the World, 1865–1880

★ **How did American policymakers define the role of the United States in North America during the period 1865 to 1880?**

★ **How did they define the role of the United States in other parts of the world?**

During much of the nineteenth century, the U.S. role in world affairs was slight, and most Americans expected that their nation would avoid foreign conflicts, in keeping with the advice of George Washington to “steer clear of permanent alliances with any



portion of the foreign world.” World events posed few threats to American interests, and the insulation of the Atlantic and Pacific reinforced Americans’ feeling of security. During the years 1865–1880, American involvement in world affairs began to expand, but gradually and uncertainly. The effect of America’s economic transformation on its foreign relations, as on its domestic politics, was slow in appearing.

A move toward expansion came in 1867. Secretary of State **William H. Seward**, who had often voiced his belief in America’s destiny to expand across the North American continent, learned from the Russian minister to the United States that Alaska might be for sale at the right price. Seward made an offer, and in 1867 the two diplomats agreed on slightly over \$7 million. For less than 2 cents per acre, the land that was to become the state of Alaska was in U.S. hands.

Unlike all previous treaties by which the United States acquired territory, the Alaska treaty extended citizenship to the territory’s inhabitants but carried no promise of eventual statehood. This half-step away from earlier patterns of territorial expansion foreshadowed later patterns of colonial acquisition.

To the south, American diplomats turned their attention after the Civil War to Latin America. In 1823 President James Monroe had announced that the United States would consider any attempt by a European power to colonize in the Western Hemisphere a threat to the United States. The **Monroe Doctrine**, though later a linchpin of American policy, was rarely mentioned by presidents over the next two-thirds of the nineteenth century.

In 1861 France, Spain, and Britain sent a joint force to Mexico to collect debts that Mexico could not pay. Spain and Britain soon withdrew, but French troops remained. Political opponents of Mexican president **Benito Juarez** cooperated with the French emperor, Napoleon III, to name Archduke **Maximilian** of Austria as emperor of Mexico in 1864. Maximilian, an idealistic young man, hoped to serve the Mexican people well. He antagonized some of his conservative supporters with talk of reform but failed to win over liberals. Juarez led a war of resistance, and Maximilian held power only because the French army kept his enemies at bay.

As these events were unfolding, the United States was involved in its own civil war. The Union recognized Juarez as president of Mexico but could do little else. When the Civil War ended, Secretary of State Seward demanded that Napoleon III withdraw his troops. At the time, the United States possessed perhaps the most formidable army in the world, and fifty thousand battle-hardened troops moved to the Mexican border. Thus confronted, Napoleon III agreed to withdraw. The last French soldiers sailed home in early 1867, but Maximilian unwisely remained behind, where he was defeated in battle by Juarez and then executed. Although Seward did not cite the Monroe Doctrine at any point, the withdrawal of the French troops renewed respect in Europe for the role of the United States in Latin America.

Some Americans had long regarded the Caribbean and Central America as potential areas for expansion. One vision was a canal through Central America to shorten the coast-to-coast shipping route around South America. In addition, after the Civil War, both the Caribbean and the Pacific attracted attention as regions where the navy might need bases. In 1871, President Grant proclaimed an extension, or **corollary**, of the Monroe Doctrine, specifying that no territory in the Western Hemisphere could ever be transferred to a European power.

Americans had taken a strong commercial interest in eastern Asia, and some Americans dreamed of profits from selling to China’s millions of potential consumers. American missionaries began to preach in China in 1830. Although they counted few converts, their lectures back in the United States stimulated public interest in the Asian nation.

**William H. Seward** U.S. secretary of state under Lincoln and Johnson, a former abolitionist who had expansionist views and arranged the purchase of Alaska from Russia.

**Monroe Doctrine** Announcement by President James Monroe in 1823 that the Western Hemisphere was off limits for future European colonial expansion.

**Benito Juarez** Elected president of Mexico who led resistance to the French occupation of his country in 1864–1867; the first Mexican president of Indian ancestry.

**Maximilian** Austrian archduke appointed emperor of Mexico by Napoleon III, who was emperor of France. Maximilian was later executed by Mexican republicans.

**corollary** A proposition that follows logically and naturally from an already proven point.

**most-favored-nation status** In a treaty between nation A and nation B, the provision that commercial privileges extended by A to other nations automatically become available to B.

The Chinese government had long placed severe restrictions on foreign trade. But after the British navy humiliated Chinese forces in a naval war in 1839–1842, China granted trading privileges to Britain and subsequently to other nations. The first treaty between China and the United States, in 1844, included a provision granting **most-favored-nation status** to the United States.

Japan and Korea had also refused to engage in trade. In 1854 an American naval force convinced the Japanese government to open its ports to foreign trade. A similar navy action opened Korea in 1882.

Growing trade prospects between eastern Asia and the United States fueled American interest in the Pacific. Whether in sailing ships or steamships, the American merchant marine needed ports in the Pacific for supplies and repairs. Interest focused especially on Hawai'i, which had attracted Christian missionaries from New England as early as 1819, shortly after King Kamehameha the Great united the islands into one nation. The missionaries were first concerned with preaching the Gospel and convincing the unabashed Hawaiians to wear clothes, but later some missionaries and their descendants came to exercise great influence over several Hawaiian monarchs.

The islands' location near the center of the Pacific made them an ideal place to stockpile supplies for ships crossing the Pacific and for whaling vessels. As early as 1842, President John Tyler announced that the United States would not allow the islands to pass under the control of another power, but Britain and France continued to take a keen interest in them.

In 1875 Hawaiian king David Kalakaua approved a treaty of reciprocity that gave Hawaiian sugar duty-free access to the United States. The outcome was a rapid expansion of the Hawaiian sugar industry as the sons and daughters of New England missionaries joined representatives of American sugar refiners in developing huge sugar plantations. Soon Hawaiian sugar spawned a vertically integrated industry that included American-owned sugar plantations, ships to carry raw sugar to the mainland, and sugar refineries in California—and the economies of the two nations became closely linked.

## Summary

After 1865, large-scale manufacturing developed quickly in the United States, built on a foundation of abundant natural resources, a pool of skilled workers, expanding harvests, and favorable government policies. The outcome was the transformation of the U.S. economy.

Entrepreneurs improved and extended railway lines, creating a national transportation network. Manufacturers and merchants now began to think in terms of a national market for raw materials and finished goods. Railroads were the first businesses to grapple with the many problems related to size, and they made choices that other businesses imitated. Steel was the crucial building material for much of industrial America, and Andrew Carnegie revolutionized the steel industry. He became

one of the best known of many entrepreneurs who developed manufacturing operations of unprecedented size and complexity. Social Darwinists acclaimed unrestricted competition for producing progress and survival of the fittest. Others criticized the negative aspects of the era's economy. At the time and later, some condemned the great entrepreneurs as robber barons, but more complex treatments by historians place such figures within the cultural context of their own time.

Industrial workers had little control over the pace or hours of their work and often faced unpleasant or dangerous working conditions. Even so, workers in both the United States and other parts of the world chose to migrate to expanding industrial centers from rural areas.

The new work force included not only adult males but also women and children. Some workers formed labor organizations to seek higher wages, shorter hours, and better conditions. Trade unions, based on craft skills, were the earliest and most successful of such organizations.

Americans in the late nineteenth century expected political parties to dominate politics. All elected public officials were nominated by party conventions and elected through the efforts of party campaigners. Most civil service employees were appointed in return for party loyalty. Republicans used government to promote rapid economic development, but Democrats argued that government works best when it governs least. Most voters divided between the major parties largely along the lines of region, ethnicity, and race. The presidency of Ulysses S. Grant was plagued by scandals. President Rutherford B. Hayes

restored Republican integrity but faced stormy conflict between Republican factions. Grangers, Greenbackers, and Silverites all challenged the major parties, appealing most to debt-ridden farmers. The Great Railway Strike of 1877 was the first indication of what widespread industrial strife could do to the nation's new transportation network based on railroads, and public officials resorted to federal troops to suppress the strike. From 1865 to 1889, few Americans expected their nation to take a major part in world affairs, at least outside North America. The United States did acquire Alaska and pressured the French to withdraw from Mexico. The United States began to open trade with eastern Asia, and the kingdom of Hawai'i became closely integrated with the American economy.

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# CHAPTER 17

# Becoming an Urban Industrial Society 1880–1890

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

### **Expansion of the Industrial Economy**

Standard Oil: Model for Monopoly  
Thomas Edison and the Power of Innovation

### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA: Nikola Tesla**

Explores Energy  
Selling to the Nation  
Railroads, Investment Bankers, and “Morganization”  
Economic Concentration in Consumer-Goods Industries

### **Organized Labor in the 1880s**

The Knights of Labor  
1886: Turning Point for Labor?

### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA: August Spies Addresses the Court, 1886**

Uniting the Craft Unions: The American Federation of Labor

### **New Americans from Europe**

A Flood of Immigrants  
Hyphenated America  
Nativism

### **The New Urban America**

Surging Urban Growth  
New Cities of Skyscrapers and Streetcars  
The New Urban Geography  
“How the Other Half Lives”

### **New Patterns of Urban Life**

The New Middle Class  
Ferment in Education  
Redefining Gender Roles

### **IT MATTERS TODAY: WCTU and Woman Suffrage Abroad**

### **The Politics of Stalemate**

The Presidencies of Garfield and Arthur  
Reforming the Spoils System  
Cleveland and the Democrats  
Urban Machine Politics  
Challenging the Male Bastion: Woman Suffrage

### **The United States and the World, 1880–1889**

### **Summary**

## **INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Nikola Tesla**

Nikola Tesla was born to Serbian parents in 1856, in a remote part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His father, an Orthodox priest, wanted Nikola also to become a priest. Electricity fascinated Nikola, however, and with great difficulty he persuaded his father to permit him to study engineering.

As a student, Tesla had a crucial insight into the central problem with existing electrical motors, all of which ran on direct current (DC). He worked through the solution over several years, finally producing a design for an electric motor powered by alternating current (AC). Despite success as an engineer in Europe, Tesla concluded that to develop his AC electric motor he needed to work with Thomas Edison, the world-famous “wizard” who had invented the electric light and many other electrical devices. Tesla arrived in the United States in 1884 and began work at Edison’s laboratory.

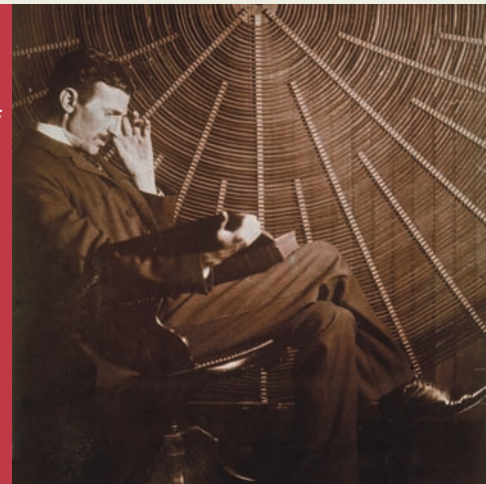
Tesla and Edison soon parted ways. Disillusioned with Edison’s lack of interest in the AC electric motor, Tesla set out on his own. In 1887, he patented his designs, securing some of the most valuable patents in American history. Soon after, he began to work with George Westinghouse, who had invented an effective brake for railroad cars and who recognized the future importance of electricity. Using Tesla’s patents, Westinghouse’s company challenged Edison’s General Electric for dominance in the electrical industry. Ultimately AC won out over DC. Today, throughout the world, the large majority of electrical devices operate on AC.

Tesla showed that AC made it possible to transmit electrical power over long distances, then set out to harness natural power sources, beginning with Niagara Falls. However, he never grew wealthy from his patents. Though he wanted to make money, he also had other goals—the substitution of machine power for human power, thus freeing people to be more creative, and the substitution of natural power sources for fossil fuels.

## **NIKOLA TESLA**

*Nikola Tesla was in his late 30s when he posed for this picture around 1895. He chose to show himself quietly sitting and reading in front of an enormous oscillating generator that he had designed.*

The Granger Collection, New York.





# Chronology

<b>1862</b>	Land-Grant College Act	<b>1883</b>	Pendleton Act
<b>1865</b>	Civil War ends 248,120 immigrants enter United States	<b>1884</b>	Grover Cleveland elected president
<b>1868</b>	First medical school for women	<b>1885</b>	William LeBaron Jenney designs first U.S. skyscraper
<b>1869</b>	National Woman Suffrage Association and American Woman Suffrage Association formed Wyoming Territory adopts woman suffrage	<b>1886</b>	<i>Wabash Railway v. Illinois</i> Knights of Labor reaches peak membership Haymarket Square bombing American Federation of Labor founded
<b>1870</b>	Utah Territory adopts woman suffrage Standard Oil incorporated 25 cities have populations exceeding 50,000	<b>1887</b>	New constitution adopted in Hawai'i American Protective Association founded Interstate Commerce Act Congress disfranchises women in Utah Territory Tesla patents his AC electrical motors and generators
<b>1873</b>	Samuel L. Clemens and Charles Dudley Warner name the Gilded Age	<b>1888</b>	First electric streetcar system Benjamin Harrison elected president
<b>1874</b>	Women's Christian Temperance Union founded	<b>1889</b>	North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Washington become states
<b>1875</b>	Andrew Carnegie opens nation's largest steel plant	<b>1890</b>	58 cities have populations exceeding 50,000 Idaho becomes a state Wyoming becomes a state, the first with woman suffrage National American Woman Suffrage Association formed
<b>1876</b>	Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone	<b>1893</b>	Colorado voters (all male) adopt woman suffrage First Sears, Roebuck and Co. general catalog
<b>1877</b>	Reconstruction ends		
<b>1879</b>	Thomas Edison and his research lab invent the incandescent light bulb		
<b>1880</b>	James A. Garfield elected president		
<b>1880s</b>	Railroad expansion and consolidation		
<b>1881</b>	Garfield assassinated Chester A. Arthur becomes president Standard Oil Trust organized 669,431 immigrants enter United States		
<b>1882–1885</b>	Recession		

Tesla came to the United States during a time that historians usually call the Gilded Age, after *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today*, a novel by Samuel L. Clemens and Charles Dudley Warner, published in 1873. In the novel—the first for either writer—Clemens and Warner satirized the business and politics of their day. (Clemens went on to fame, under the pen name Mark Twain, as author of *Huckleberry Finn*.) Applying the term “the Gilded Age” to the years from the late 1860s through the 1890s suggests both the gleam of a **gilded** surface and the cheap nature of the base metal underneath. Among the aspects of late-nineteenth-century life that might justify the label “gilded” were the dramatic expansion of the economy, the spectacular accomplishments of new technologies, the extravagant wealth and great power of the new industrial entrepreneurs, and the

**gild** To cover a cheaper metal with a very thin layer of gold.

rapid economic development of the West. The grim realities of life for most industrial workers and the plight of racial and ethnic minorities lay just below that thin golden surface. You will encounter both sides of the Gilded Age in this chapter.

## Expansion of the Industrial Economy

- ★ **How did the industrial economy change from the 1870s to the 1880s?**
- ★ **How and why did companies expand their operations and control within an industry?**

The new patterns of industry that became apparent after the Civil War, especially railroad construction and expansion of the steel industry, continued to evolve in the 1880s. Important new developments emerged as well. John D. Rockefeller took the lead in bringing vertical and horizontal integration to the production of kerosene and other petroleum products. Innovative technologies and the integrated railway network began to affect other parts of the economy, changing the ways that Americans shopped for goods from clothing to food to home lighting products.

**John D. Rockefeller** American industrialist who amassed great wealth through the Standard Oil Company and donated much of his fortune to promote research.

**refinery** An industrial plant that transforms raw materials into finished products; a petroleum refinery processes crude oil to produce a variety of products.

**cartel** A group of separate companies within an industry that cooperate to control the production, pricing, and marketing of goods within that industry; another name for a pool.

**horizontal integration** Merging one or more companies doing the same or similar activities as a way of limiting competition or enhancing stability and planning.

**monopoly** Exclusive control by an individual or company of the production or sale of a product.

**trust** A legal arrangement allowing centralized control over several companies; first used by John D. Rockefeller to consolidate Standard Oil.

### Standard Oil: Model for Monopoly

Just as Carnegie provided a model for other steel companies and for heavy industry in general, **John D. Rockefeller** revolutionized the petroleum industry and provided a model for other consumer-goods industries. Rockefeller was born in New York State in 1839 and was educated in Cleveland, Ohio. After working as a bookkeeper, he became a partner in a grain and livestock business in 1859 and earned substantial profits during the Civil War. Cleveland was then the center for refining oil from northwestern Pennsylvania, the nation's main source for crude oil. The major product of oil refining was kerosene, which transformed home lighting as kerosene lamps replaced candles and oil lamps. Rockefeller, in 1863, invested his wartime profits in a **refinery**. After the war, he bought control of more refineries and incorporated them as Standard Oil in 1870.

The refining business was relatively easy to enter and highly competitive. Recognizing that technology could bring a competitive advantage, Rockefeller recruited experts to make Standard the most efficient refiner. He secured reduced rates or rebates from railroads by offering a heavy volume of traffic on a predictable basis. He usually sought to persuade his competitors to join the **cartel** he was creating. If they refused, he often tried to drive them out of business.

By 1881, following a strategy of **horizontal integration**, Rockefeller and his associates controlled some forty refineries, with about 90 percent of the nation's refining capacity. In the 1880s, Standard moved toward vertical integration by gaining control of oil fields, building transportation facilities (including pipelines and oceangoing tanker ships), and creating retail marketing operations. By the early 1890s, Standard Oil had achieved almost complete vertical and horizontal integration of the American petroleum industry—a virtual **monopoly** over an entire industry.

Between 1879 and 1881, Rockefeller also centralized decision making among all his companies by creating the Standard Oil Trust. The **trust** was a new organizational form designed to get around state laws that prohibited one company from owning stock in another. To create the Standard Oil Trust, Rockefeller and others who held shares in the individual companies exchanged their stock for trust certificates issued by Standard Oil.

Standard Oil thus controlled all the individual companies, though technically it did not own them. Eventually, new laws in New Jersey made it legal for corporations chartered in New Jersey to own stock in other companies. So Rockefeller set up Standard Oil of New Jersey as a **holding company** for all the companies in the trust.

Once Rockefeller achieved his near-monopoly, Standard Oil consolidated its operations by closing many of its older refineries and building larger plants that incorporated the newest technology. These and other innovations reduced the cost of producing petroleum products by more than two-thirds, leading to a decline by more than half in the price paid by consumers of fuel and home lighting products. Standard also took a leading role in the world market, producing nearly all American petroleum products sold in Asia, Africa, and Latin America during the 1880s. Rockefeller then retired from active participation in business in the mid-1890s.

**holding company** A company that exists to own other companies, usually through holding a controlling interest in their stocks.

### Thomas Edison and the Power of Innovation

By the late nineteenth century, most American entrepreneurs had joined Rockefeller and Carnegie in viewing technology as a powerful competitive device. Railroads wanted more powerful locomotives, roomier freight cars, and stronger rails so they could carry more freight at a lower cost. Steel companies demanded larger and more efficient furnaces to make more steel more cheaply. Ordinary citizens as well as famous entrepreneurs seemed infatuated with technology. One invention followed another: the vacuum cleaner in 1869, the telephone in 1876, the phonograph in 1878, the electric light bulb in 1879, an electric welding machine in 1886, and the first American-made gasoline-engine automobile in 1895, to name only a few. By 1900, many Americans had come to expect a steady flow of ever-more-astounding creations, especially those that could be purchased by the middle and upper classes.

Many new inventions relied on electricity, and in the field of electricity one person stood out: **Thomas A. Edison**. Born in 1847, he began to experiment with electrical devices and in 1869 secured the first of his thousand-plus **patents**. In 1876 Edison set up the first modern research laboratory. He opened a new facility in 1887 that quickly became the world leader in research and development, especially for electricity. Edison promised “a minor invention every ten days and a big thing every six months,” and he backed up his words with results. Sometimes building on the work of others, Edison’s laboratories invented or significantly improved electrical lighting, electrical motors, the storage battery, the electric locomotive, the phonograph, and many other products. Research and development by Edison’s laboratories and by others soon translated into production and sales. Nationwide, sales of electrical equipment were insignificant in 1870 but reached nearly \$2 million ten years later and nearly \$22 million in 1890.

Sale of electrical devices depended on the availability of electricity. Generating and distribution systems had to be constructed, and wires for carrying electrical current had to be installed along city streets and in homes. The pace of this work picked up appreciably after Tesla demonstrated the superiority of alternating current to direct current for transmitting power over long distances.

Early developers of electrical devices and electrical distribution systems realized quickly that they needed major financial assistance, and investment bankers came to play an important role in public utilities industries. General Electric, for example, developed out of Edison’s company through a series of **mergers** arranged by the New York banking firm of J. P. Morgan.

**Thomas A. Edison** American inventor, especially of electrical devices, among them the microphone, the phonograph, and the light bulb.

**patent** A government statement that gives the creator of an invention the sole right to produce, use, or sell that invention for a set period of time.

**merger** The joining together of two or more organizations.

# Investigating America

## Nikola Tesla Explores the Problems of Energy Resources: 1897, 1900

Some of the leading figures of the Gilded Age seem to have been motivated largely by material concerns—how to organize an industry so as to produce more goods, at greater efficiency, and with greater profits. Nikola Tesla contributed to such goals. Tesla, however, also looked beyond the immediate circumstances in which he found himself and reflected on larger issues, some of which remain with humankind more than a century later.

In 1897, Tesla delivered an address entitled “On Electricity” at the launching of the great electrical generator he designed for Niagara Falls, which harnessed the energy of falling water without building a dam. The first excerpt below is from this address, which was printed in the *Electrical Review*, January 27, 1897. Tesla was also concerned, throughout his life, with the human behavior that he considered the most serious impediment to the future progress of humankind. He addressed this issue in an article entitled “The Problem of Increasing Human Energy,” published in *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* in June 1900, from which the second excerpt is taken.

From “On Electricity”:

.....

The development and wealth of a city, the success of a nation, the progress of the whole human race, is regulated by the power available. Think of the victorious march of the British, the like of which history has never recorded. . . . They owe the conquest of the world to—coal. For with coal they produce their iron; coal furnishes them light and heat; coal drives the wheels of their immense manufacturing establishments, and coal propels their conquering fleets. But the stores are being more and more exhausted . . . , and the demand is continuously increasing. . . . We have to evolve means for obtaining energy from stores which are forever inexhaustible, to perfect methods which do not imply consumption and waste of any material whatever. . . .

From “The Problem of Increasing Human Energy”:

There can be no doubt that, of all the frictional resistances, the one that most retards human movement is ignorance. . . . But however ignorance may have retarded the onward movement of man in times past, it is certain that, nowadays, negative forces have become of greater importance. Among these there is one of far greater moment than any other. It is called organized warfare. . . . It has been argued that the perfection of guns of great destructive power will stop warfare. So I myself thought for a long time, but now I believe this to be a profound mistake. . . . I think that every new arm that is invented, every new departure that is made in this direction, merely invites new talent and skill, engages new effort, offers new incentive, and so only gives a fresh impetus to further development. . . .

Again, it is contended by some that the advent of the flying-machine must bring on universal peace. This, too, I believe to be an entirely erroneous view. The flying-machine is certainly coming, and very soon, but the conditions will remain the same as before. In fact, I see no reason why a ruling power, like Great Britain, might not govern the air as well as the sea. . . . But, for all that, men will fight on merrily.

.....

- At the time of these writings, coal was the fossil fuel most widely used to drive most engines, including electrical generators. How does Tesla raise the issue of the exhaustion of supplies of fossil fuel? What do you think he proposed as the solution to the exhaustion of fossil fuels?
- How might Tesla’s own experiences as an immigrant from Europe have affected his understanding of world affairs? What do the two excerpts together suggest about how optimistic (or not) he was that humankind could manage technology for good and overcome its potential for abuse?



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### Selling to the Nation

vertically integrated manufacturer of consumer products often produced items that

The expansion of manufacturing in the 1880s produced an acceleration of earlier trends toward a larger array of new and more affordable consumer goods, from household utensils to ready-made clothing and processed foodstuffs. One large,



differed little from those of another and that cost virtually the same to produce. Such companies often came to compete not on the basis of price but instead by using advertising to create different images for their products.

By the late nineteenth century, manufacturers relied on large-scale advertising in newspapers and magazines to promote a host of mass-produced consumer goods. Along with advertising came new ways of selling to customers. Previously, most people expected to purchase goods directly from artisans who made items on order (shoes, clothes, furniture), or from door-to-door peddlers (pots and pans), or in small specialty stores (hardware, dry goods) or general stores. In urban areas during the Gilded Age, the first American **department stores** appeared and flourished, offering a wide range of choices in ready-made products—fashionable clothing, household furnishings, shoes, and much more. R. H. Macy's in New York City, Wanamaker's in Philadelphia, Marshall Field in Chicago, and similar stores relied heavily on newspaper advertising to attract large numbers of customers, especially women, from throughout the city and its **suburbs**. They targeted middle- and upper-class women, but the stores also appealed to young, single women who worked for wages and had an eye for the fashions that were now within their financial reach. Young, single women also often found white-collar jobs as clerks in the new department stores.

The variety presented by department stores paled when compared with the vast array of goods available through the new mail-order catalogs. Led by Montgomery Ward in 1872 and Sears, Roebuck and Co. after 1893—both based in Chicago—mail-order houses aimed at rural America. They offered a wider range of choices than most rural-dwellers had ever before seen—everything from hams to hammers, handkerchiefs to harnesses.

Department stores and mail-order houses became feasible because manufacturers had begun to produce many types of consumer goods in huge volumes, and because railroads could deliver catalogs and products to consumers across great distances and transport goods to department stores from distant factories. Together, advertising, mail-order catalogs (in rural areas), and the new department stores (in urban areas) began to change Americans' buying habits and what they expected to buy ready-made.

### Railroads, Investment Bankers, and "Morganization"

Railroads expanded significantly in the 1880s, laying over 75,000 miles of new track, but some lines earned little profit. Some traversed sparsely populated areas of the West. Others spread into areas already saturated by rail service. In the 1880s, however, a few ambitious, talented, and occasionally unscrupulous railway executives maneuvered to produce great regional railway systems. By consolidating lines within a region, railway executives tried to create more efficient systems with less duplication, fewer price wars, and more dependable profits.

To raise the enormous amount of capital necessary for construction and consolidation, railroad executives turned increasingly to **investment banks**. By the late 1880s, **John Pierpont Morgan** had emerged as the nation's leading investment banker. Born in Connecticut in 1837, he was the son of a successful merchant who turned to banking (and helped fund Andrew Carnegie's first big steel plant). After schooling in Switzerland, young Morgan began working in his father's bank in London. In 1857 he moved to New York, where his experience and growing stature in banking gave him access to capital within the United States and abroad, in London and Paris.

To give his investors a reliable **return**, Morgan tried to stabilize the railroad business, especially the cutthroat rate competition. Morgan insisted that companies seeking his help reorganize to simplify corporate structures and to combine small lines into larger, centrally controlled systems. He often demanded a seat on the board of directors as well, to guard against risky decisions in the future.

**department store** Type of retail establishment that developed in cities in the late nineteenth century and featured a wide variety of merchandise organized in separate departments.

**suburb** A residential area lying outside the central city; many of the residents of suburbs work and shop in the central city even though they live outside it.

**investment bank** An institution that acts as an agent for corporations issuing stocks and bonds.

**John Pierpont Morgan** The most prominent and powerful American investment banker in the late nineteenth century.

**return** The yield on money that has been invested in an enterprise. Today, companies typically pay a dividend (a proportionate share of the profits) to their stockholders each quarter.

### Economic Concentration in Consumer-Goods Industries

**oligopoly** A market or industry dominated by a few firms (from Greek words meaning “few sellers”); compare *monopoly* (from Greek words meaning “one seller”).

**cost analysis** Study of the cost of producing manufactured goods in order to find ways to cut expenses.

**dividend** A share of a company’s profits received by a stockholder.

Carnegie, Rockefeller, Edison, Morgan, and a few others redefined the expectations of American entrepreneurs and provided models for their activities. Massive, complex companies—vertically integrated, sometimes horizontally

integrated, often employing extensive advertising—appeared relatively suddenly in a number of consumer-goods industries in the 1880s. This situation sometimes resulted in a few firms pushing smaller competitors out of an industry. For example, in meatpacking, by 1890 half a dozen firms had followed Gustavus Swift’s lead to become vertically integrated, with their own slaughterhouses, refrigerated rail cars and storage plants, and sales and delivery operations. These few firms dominated the industry, creating an **oligopoly**. Oligopolies were (and are) more typical than monopolies.

Some of the new manufacturing companies did not sell stock or use investment bankers to raise capital. Standard Oil, like Carnegie Steel, never “went public”—that is, Rockefeller never used the stock exchange to raise capital. Instead, he expanded either through mergers or by making purchases capitalized by his profits. Rockefeller, Carnegie, and many others concentrated ownership and control in their own hands. As late as 1896, the New York Stock Exchange sold stock in only twenty manufacturing concerns.

Gradually, however, with the passing of the first generation of industrial empire builders, ownership grew apart from management. Many new business executives were professional managers. Ownership rested with stockholders, all of whom wanted a reliable return on their investment but remained uninvolved with business operations. Careful **cost analysis**, the desire for efficiency, and the need to pay shareholders regular **dividends** led many companies to treat most of their employees as expenses to be increased or cut as necessary, with little regard to the effect on individuals.



In 1908, Lewis Hine began work as an investigative photographer for the National Child Labor Committee, documenting the exploitation of American children. He used his camera not just to capture images but also to generate support to abolish child labor. His photographs—some of which are among the most famous photographs ever taken—made clear to the nation that violations of child labor laws were widespread, and that child labor was robbing children of their youth, of the chance for an education, and of the opportunity for a better life. Newberry, S. C. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

## Organized Labor in the 1880s

★ **How did the Knights of Labor differ from craft unions in membership and objectives?**

★ **Which type of labor organization was more successful? Why?**

The expansion of railroads and manufacturing and the growth of cities led to dramatic increases in the number of wage-earning workers. The Great Railway Strike of 1877 had suggested that working people could unite across lines of occupation, race, and gender, but no organization drew on that potential until the early 1880s, when the Knights of Labor emerged as an alternative to craft unions. The Knights scored some organizing successes, but they failed to sustain their organization when faced with external challenges and internal weaknesses.

### The Knights of Labor

The **Knights of Labor** grew out of an organization of Philadelphia garment workers that dated to 1869. Abandoning their craft union origins, they proclaimed that labor was “the only creator of values or capital,” and they recruited members from this “producing class”—those who, by their labor, created value. Anyone joining the Knights was required to have worked for wages at some time, but the organization specifically excluded only professional gamblers, stockbrokers, lawyers, bankers, and liquor dealers.

The Knights accepted African Americans as members, and some sixty thousand joined by 1886. In many cases, local organizations of black workers appear to have organized themselves and joined the Knights. After one organizer formed a local organization of women in 1881, the Knights officially opened their ranks to women and enrolled about fifty thousand by 1886. Some women and African Americans held leadership positions at local and regional levels, and the Knights briefly appointed a woman as a national organizer.

**Terence V. Powderly**, a machinist, directed the Knights from 1879 to 1893. Under his leadership, they focused on organization, education, and cooperation as their chief objectives. Powderly generally opposed strikes. A lost strike, he argued, often destroyed the local organization and thereby broke off the more important tasks of education and cooperation. The Knights favored political action to accomplish such labor reforms as health and safety laws for workers, the eight-hour workday, prohibition of child labor, equal pay for equal work regardless of gender, and the graduated income tax. They also endorsed government ownership of the telephone, telegraph, and railroad systems. In 1878 and twice thereafter, Powderly won election as mayor of Scranton, Pennsylvania, as the candidate of a labor party. Local labor parties often appeared in other cities where the Knights were strong.

A major objective of the Knights was “to secure to the workers the full enjoyment of the wealth they create.” Toward that end, they committed themselves in their first national meeting in 1878 to promote producers’ and consumers’ cooperatives, which they hoped would “supersede the wage-system.” They established some 135 cooperatives by the mid-1880s, but few lasted very long. Like the Grangers’ cooperatives in the 1870s, some of the Knights’ cooperatives folded because of lack of capital, some because of opposition from rival businesses, and some because of poor organization.

### 1886: Turning Point for Labor?

The 1877 railway strike of and the rise of the Knights seemed to signal a growing sense of common purpose among many working people. After 1886, however, labor organizations often found themselves on the defensive and divided between those trying to adjust to industrial capitalism and those seeking to change it.

**Knights of Labor** Organization founded in 1869; membership, open to all workers, peaked in 1886; members favored a cooperative alternative to capitalism.

**Terence V. Powderly** Leader of the Knights of Labor from 1879 to 1893; three-term mayor of Scranton, PA.

# Investigating America

## August Spies Addresses the Court, 1886

One of the activists sentenced to hang for the Haymarket bombing was August Spies. Born in Germany in 1855, Spies had immigrated to the United States in 1872 with his mother and five siblings following the death of his father. Spies eventually settled in Chicago, where he became an upholsterer, and soon after that, a member of the Socialist Labor Party. Spies, a fiery speaker and writer, began to edit the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, a German-language anarchist newspaper. Spies was one of the speakers on March 4. He was found guilty of the violence, even though he was still on the stage when the bomb was thrown. When asked by the judge if he had anything to say before sentencing, Spies responded with a long statement, excerpted here.

.....  
**Y**OUR HONOR: In addressing this court I speak as the representative of one class to the representative of another. . . . My efforts in behalf of the disinherited and disfranchised millions, my agitation in this direction, the popularization of economic teachings—in short, the education of the wage-workers, is declared “a conspiracy against society.” The word “society” is here wisely substituted for “the State,” as represented by the patricians of today. It has always been the opinion of the ruling classes that **THE PEOPLE MUST BE KEPT IN IGNORANCE**, for they lose their servility, their modesty and their obedience to the powers that be, as their intelligence increases. The education of a black slave a quarter of a century ago was a criminal offense. Why? Because the intelligent slave would throw off his shackles at whatever cost. Why is the education of the working people of today looked upon by a certain class as an offense against the State? For the same reason! The State, however, wisely avoided this point in the prosecution of this case. From their testimony one is forced to conclude that we had, in our speeches and publications, preached nothing else but destruction and dynamite . . .

This “conspiracy” nonsense is based upon an oration I delivered on the anniversary of Washington’s birthday I dwelt

upon the fact that our country was far from being what the great revolutionists of the last century had intended it to be. I said that those men if they lived today would undoubtedly be characterized as “wild Socialists.” It is not unlikely that I said **WASHINGTON WOULD HAVE BEEN HANGED** for treason if the revolution had failed. Grinnell made this “sacrilegious remark” his main arrow against me. Why? Because he intended to inveigh the know-nothing spirit against us. But who will deny the correctness of the statement? I may have told that individual who appeared here as a witness that the workingmen should procure arms, as force would in all probability be the ultima ratio; and that in Chicago there were so and so many armed, but I certainly did not say that we proposed to “inaugurate the social revolution.” And let me say here: Revolutions are no more made than earthquakes and cyclones. Revolutions are the effect of certain causes and conditions. I have made social philosophy a specific study for more than ten years, and I could not have given vent to such nonsense! I do believe, however, that the revolution is near at hand—in fact, that it is upon us. But is the physician responsible for the death of the patient because he foretold that death? If any one is to be blamed for the coming revolution it is the ruling class who steadily refused to make concessions as reforms became necessary; who maintain that they can call a halt to progress, and dictate a stand-still to the eternal forces, of which they themselves are but the whimsical creation.

- Spies’s statement to the court was every bit as incendiary as was his speech on March 4. Do his tone and rhetoric suggest he knew what sentence he was likely to receive? Why was the reference to George Washington particularly volatile?
- Although the prosecutor was never able to prove just who threw the bomb, he emphasized Spies’s call for “revenge” and for “workingmen to arms” in earlier speeches that spring. To what extent do words matter?

Library of Congress, Haymarket Affair Documents.



See our interactive  
eBook for map and  
primary source  
activities.



On May 1, 1886, some eighty thousand Chicagoans marched through the streets in support of an eight-hour workday, a cause that united many unions and radical groups. Three days later, Chicago police killed several strikers at the McCormick Harvester Works. Hoping to build on the May Day unity, a group of **anarchists** called a protest meeting for the next day at Haymarket Square. When police tried to break up the rally, someone threw a bomb at the officers. The police then opened fire on the crowd, and some protesters fired back. Eight policemen died, along with an unknown number of demonstrators, and a hundred people suffered injuries.

The Haymarket bombing sparked public anxiety and anti-union feelings. Employers who opposed unions played on fears of terrorism. Some people who had supported what they saw as legitimate union goals now shrank back in horror. In Chicago, amid widespread furor over the violence, eight leading anarchists stood trial for inciting the bombing and, on flimsy evidence, were convicted. Four were hanged, one committed suicide, and three remained in jail until a sympathetic governor, John Peter Altgeld, released them in 1893.

**anarchist** A person who believes that all forms of government are oppressive and should be abolished.

### Uniting the Craft Unions: The American Federation of Labor

Two weeks after the Haymarket bombing, trade union leaders met in Philadelphia to discuss the inroads the Knights of Labor were making among their members. In response, they organized the **American Federation of Labor** (AFL)

to coordinate their struggle for the loyalty of skilled workers. Membership in the AFL was limited to national trade unions. The combined membership of the thirteen founding unions amounted to about 140,000—only one-fifth of the number claimed by the Knights at the time.

**Samuel Gompers** became the AFL's first president. Born in London in 1850 to Dutch Jewish parents, he learned the cigarmaker's trade before coming to the United States in 1863. He joined the Cigarmakers' Union in 1864 and became its president in 1877. Except for one year, Gompers continued as president of the AFL from 1886 until his death in 1924. Gompers, a socialist in his youth, became more conservative as AFL president, opposing labor involvement with radicalism or politics. Instead, he and other AFL leaders favored what he called "pure and simple" unionism: higher wages, shorter hours, and improved working conditions for their own members, achieved not through politics but through the power of their organizations in relation to their employers. Most AFL unions did not challenge capitalism, but they did use strikes to achieve their goals and sometimes engaged in long and bitter struggles with employers.

After the 1880s, the AFL suffered little competition from the Knights of Labor, who declined swiftly: 703,000 members in 1886; 260,000 in 1888; 100,000 in 1890. The failure of several strikes involving the Knights in the late 1880s cost them many supporters. Some who abandoned the Knights were probably disappointed when a "cooperative commonwealth" was not quickly achieved. Some units of the Knights that were organized much like trade unions, most prominently the United Mine Workers of America, often preferred the more practical AFL to the visionary Powderly. The Mine Workers switched from the Knights to the AFL in 1890 but retained some central principles of the Knights, including commitments to include both whites and African Americans and to reach all workers in coal mining, rather than only the most skilled.

### American Federation of Labor

National organization of trade unions founded in 1886; it used strikes and boycotts to improve the lot of craft workers.

**Samuel Gompers** First president of the American Federation of Labor; he sought to divorce labor organizing from politics and stressed practical demands involving wages and hours.

## New Americans from Europe

- ★ **What expectations did immigrants have upon coming to the United States?**
- ★ **How did their expectations regarding assimilation compare with those of old-stock Americans?**

Many members and leaders of both the Knights of Labor and the AFL craft unions were immigrants from Europe, reflecting the numbers of immigrants in the American work force in the Gilded Age. The United States has attracted large numbers of immigrants throughout its history, but it had never before experienced a flood like the one that occurred between the Civil War and World War I. Nearly all of these immigrants came from Europe, and many settled in cities. (This era also saw significant numbers of immigrants from Asia, nearly all of whom settled in the West and, for that reason, are covered in the next chapter, which deals with the West.)

### A Flood of Immigrants

The numbers of immigrants varied from year to year—higher in prosperous years, lower in depression years—but the trend was constantly upward. Nearly a quarter of a million arrived in 1865, two-thirds of a million in 1881, and a million in 1905. In the 1870s and 1880s, most immigrants came from Great Britain, Ireland, **Scandinavia**, Germany, and Canada, but after about 1890, increasing numbers arrived from southern and eastern Europe.

Immigrants left their former homes for a variety of reasons, but most came to the United States because it was known everywhere as the “land of opportunity.” They came, as one bluntly said, for “jobs” and, as another declared, “for money.” Some were also attracted by the reputation of the United States for toleration of religious difference and commitment to democracy. In fact, the reasons for immigrating to America varied from person to person, country to country, and year to year.

Map 17.1 reveals concentrations of immigrants in the urban-industrial core region, or **manufacturing belt**, especially in urban areas, but immigrant communities were not limited to cities. Many of the immigrants who came in the 1870s and 1880s found good farmland in the north-central states, where farmland was relatively cheap or even free under the Homestead Act. Scandinavians, Dutch, Swiss, Czechs, and Germans were most likely to be farmers, but many other groups also formed rural farming settlements. One woman recalled that in rural Nebraska in the 1880s, her family could attend Sunday church services in Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, French, Czech, or German, as well as English.

**Scandinavia** The region of northern Europe consisting of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Iceland.

**manufacturing belt** A region that includes most of the nation’s factories; in the late nineteenth century, the U.S. manufacturing belt also included most of the nation’s large cities and railroad lines and much of its mining.

**old-stock** People whose ancestors have lived in the United States for several generations.

**assimilation** A process by which a minority or immigrant group is absorbed into another group or groups; among immigrants, the process of adopting some of the behaviors and values of the society in which they found themselves.

### Hyphenated America

In the nineteenth century, most **old-stock** Americans assumed that immigrants should quickly learn English, become citizens, and restructure their lives and values to resemble those of long-time residents. Most immigrants, however, **assimilated** slowly over a lifetime or even over generations. Most retained elements of their own cultures even as they embraced a new life in America. Their sense of identity drew on two elements—where they had come from and where they lived now—and they often came to think of themselves as hyphenated Americans: German-Americans, Irish-Americans, Norwegian-Americans.

On arriving in America, with its strange language and unfamiliar customs, many immigrants sought others who shared their cultural values, practiced their religion, and



**MAP 17.I Cities, Industry, and Immigration**

This map presents three types of information—major U.S. cities, areas where immigrants lived, and the urban-industrial “core” region that included a large proportion of both cities and manufacturing. Note, however, that western counties are much larger than eastern counties, so the western counties that appear to have large *proportions* of immigrants did not necessarily have *numbers* of immigrants comparable to eastern counties with lower proportions.

**ethnic group** A group that shares a racial, religious, linguistic, cultural, or national heritage.

**melting pot** A concept that American society is a place where immigrants set aside their distinctive cultural identities and are absorbed into a homogeneous culture.

**nativism** The view that old-stock values and social patterns were preferable to those of immigrants.

**American Protective Association**

An anti-Catholic organization founded in Iowa in 1887 and active during the next decade.

**restrictive covenant** Provision in a property title designed to restrict subsequent sale or use of the property, often specifying sale only to a white Christian.

especially, spoke their language. Ethnic communities emerged throughout regions with large numbers of immigrants and played a significant role in newcomers' transition from the old country to America. They gave immigrants a chance to learn about their new home with the assistance of those who had come before. At the same time, newcomers could, without apology or embarrassment, retain cultural values and behaviors from their homelands.

For members of nearly every **ethnic group**, religious institutions provided the most important building blocks of ethnic group identity. In most of Europe, a state church was officially sanctioned to perform certain functions. Membership in a religious body was voluntary in America, but religious ties often became stronger here, partly because religious organizations provided an important link among people with a similar language and cultural values. Churches in immigrant neighborhoods often took on the ethnic characteristics of the community, with services in the language of the local immigrants and special observances transplanted from the old country. Jewish congregations, too, often differed according to the ethnic background of their members.

### Nativism

As noted, many Americans (including some only a generation removed from immigrant forebears themselves) expected immigrants to blend quickly and neatly into old-stock American culture. This view eventually came to be identified with

the image of the **melting pot** after the appearance of a play by that name in 1908. It disturbed some Americans that the melting-pot metaphor rarely described the reality of immigrants' lives.

American **nativism** was often linked to anti-Catholicism. Irish and German immigrant groups, and later Italian and Polish groups, included large numbers of Catholics, and many old-stock Americans came to identify the Catholic Church as an immigrant church. The **American Protective Association**, founded in 1887, noisily proclaimed itself the voice of anti-Catholicism. Its members pledged not to hire Catholics, not to vote for them, and not to strike with them.

Jews, too, faced religious antagonism. In the 1870s, increasing numbers of organizations and businesses began to discriminate against Jews. Some employers refused to hire Jews. After 1900, such discrimination intensified. Many social organizations barred Jews from membership, and **restrictive covenants** kept them from buying homes in certain neighborhoods.

## The New Urban America

★ **What were the key factors in the transformation of American cities in the late nineteenth century?**

★ **What were some of the results of that transformation?**

By 1890, immigrants made up more than 40 percent of the population of New York, San Francisco, and Chicago, and more than a third of the population in several other major cities. But immigrants were not the only people who thronged to the cities. Others came from rural areas and small towns. Chicago doubled in size to take second rank, behind New York. In just ten years, Brooklyn grew by more than 40 percent, St. Louis by nearly 30 percent, and San Francisco by almost as much. Cities not only added more people but also expanded upward and outward, and became more complex, both socially and economically. But as cities grew, so did the population of their most disadvantaged residents.



### Surging Urban Growth

Filled with both glamour and destitution, cities grew rapidly. Cities with more than fifty thousand people grew almost twice as fast as rural areas. The nation had twenty-five cities of that size in 1870, with a total population of 5 million. By 1890, fifty-eight cities had reached that size and held nearly 12 million people. Most of these cities were in the Northeast and near the Great Lakes. America's farmlands contributed significantly to the growth of the cities; many of the other new urban residents who came from outside the United States also came from rural environments.

The growth of manufacturing went hand in hand with urban expansion. By the late nineteenth century, the nation had developed a manufacturing belt. This region, which included nearly all of the largest cities as well as the bulk of the nation's manufacturing and finance, is shown as the nation's urban-industrial "core" on Map 17.1. Some of the cities in this region—Boston, New York, Baltimore, Buffalo, and St. Louis, for example—had long been among the busiest ports in the nation. Now manufacturing also flourished there and came to be nearly as important as trade. In other cases, cities developed as industrial centers from their beginnings. Some cities became known for a particular product: iron and steel in Pittsburgh, clothing in New York City, meatpacking in Chicago, flour milling in Minneapolis. A few cities, especially New York, stood out as major centers for finance.

### New Cities of Skyscrapers and Streetcars

As the urban population swelled and the urban economy grew more complex, cities expanded upward and outward. In the early 1800s, most cities measured only a few miles across, and most residents got around on foot. Historians call such places "**walking cities.**" Buildings rarely exceeded four stories, and most were not designed for a specific economic function. Small factories existed here and there among warehouses and commercial offices near the docks. In the late nineteenth century, new technologies for construction and transportation transformed the cities.

William LeBaron Jenney usually receives credit for designing the first skyscraper—ten stories high, erected in Chicago in 1885. Chicago architects also took the lead in designing other tall buildings. They could do so because of new construction technologies that allowed a steel frame, rather than the lower walls, to carry the weight of the walls. Economical and efficient, skyscrapers created unique city skylines.

Just as steel-frame buildings allowed cities to grow upward, so new transportation technologies permitted cities to expand outward. From the 1850s, horse-drawn streetcars and some steam-powered trains had helped move people in cities. By the 1870s and 1880s, some cities boasted streetcar lines powered by underground moving cables. Electricity, however, revolutionized urban transit. Frank Sprague, a protégé of Thomas Edison, designed a streetcar driven by an electric motor that drew its power from an overhead wire. Sprague's system was first installed in Richmond, Virginia, in 1888. Electric streetcars replaced nearly all horse cars and cable cars within a dozen years. In the early 1900s, some large cities, choked with traffic, began to move their electrical streetcars above or below street level, thereby creating elevated trains and subways. Thus elaborate networks of rails came to crisscross most large cities, connecting suburban neighborhoods to central business districts.

As streetcars expanded the city beyond distances that residents could cover on foot, suburban railroad lines began to bring more distant villages within commuting distance of urban centers. Wealthier urban residents who could afford the passenger fare now left the city at the end of the workday. As early as 1873, nearly a hundred suburban

**walking city** Term that urban historians use to describe cities before changes in urban transportation permitted cities to expand beyond the distance that a person could easily cover on foot.

Chicago streetcars, 1906. Streetcars such as these made it possible for cities to expand dramatically between the 1860s and the early twentieth century. By 1900, Chicago took in 190 square miles, up from 17 square miles in 1860. “Streetcar suburbs” took in even more territory. *Chicago Daily News* negatives collection, DN-0004177, Courtesy of the Chicago History Museum.



communities sent between five and six thousand commuters into Chicago each day, and by 1890, seventy thousand suburbanites were pouring in daily. At about the same time, commuter lines brought more than a hundred thousand workers daily into New York City just from its northern suburbs.

**infrastructure** Basic facilities that a society needs to function, such as transportation systems, water and power lines, and public institutions such as schools, post offices, and prisons.

### The New Urban Geography

The new technologies that transformed the urban **infrastructure** interacted with the growth of manufacturing, commerce, and finance to change the geography of American cities. Within the largest cities, areas became increasingly specialized by economic function.

Early manufacturing in port cities was often scattered among warehouses near the waterfront. Other manufacturing firms required specially designed facilities. Iron and steel making, meatpacking, shipbuilding, and oil refining had to be established on the outskirts of a city. There, open land was plentiful and relatively cheap, freight transportation was convenient, and the city center suffered less from the noise, smoke, and odor of heavy industry.

Many manufacturing workers could not afford to ride the new streetcars, so they often had no choice but to live within walking distance of their work. Construction of industrial plants outside cities, therefore, usually meant working-class residential neighborhoods nearby. Some companies established planned communities: a manufacturing plant surrounded by residences, stores, and even parks and schools. Such company towns were sometimes well intended, but few earned good reputations among their residents. Workers whose employer was also their landlord and storekeeper usually resented the ever-present authority of the company—and the lack of alternatives to the rents and prices the company charged.

As heavy manufacturing moved to the outskirts of the cities, areas in the city centers often became more specialized. **Retail** shopping districts, anchored by the new department stores, emerged in a central location, where streetcar and railroad lines could bring middle-class and upper-class shoppers from the new suburbs. In the largest cities, banks,

**retail** Related to the sale of goods directly to consumers.

insurance companies, and headquarters of large corporations clustered to form a financial district. A hotel and entertainment district often lay close to the financial and retail blocks. These areas together made up a **central business district**.

### "How the Other Half Lives"

In 1890 Danish immigrant Jacob Riis shocked many Americans with the revelations in *How the Other Half Lives*. In a city of a million and a half inhabitants, Riis claimed, half a million (136,000 families) had begged for food at some time over the preceding eight years. Of these, more than half were unemployed, but only 6 percent were physically unable to work. Most of Riis's book described the appalling conditions of **tenements**—home, he claimed, to three-quarters of the city's population.

Strictly speaking, a tenement is an apartment house occupied by three or more families, but the term came to imply overcrowded and badly maintained housing that was hazardous to the health and safety of its residents. Such buildings, Riis insisted, "are the hotbeds of the epidemics that carry death to rich and poor alike; the nurseries of pauperism and crime that fill our jails and police courts. . . . Above all, they touch the family life with deadly moral contagion." He especially deplored the harmful influence of poverty and miserable housing conditions on children and families.

Crowded conditions in working-class sections of large cities developed in part because so many of the poor needed to live within walking distance of sources of employment for various family members. By dividing buildings into small rental units, landlords packed in more tenants and collected more rent. To pay the rent, many tenants took in lodgers. Such practices produced shockingly high population densities in lower-income urban neighborhoods.

Few agreed on the causes of urban poverty, even fewer on its cure. Riis divided the blame, in New York City, among greedy landlords, corrupt officials, and the poor themselves. Henry George, a San Franciscan, in *Progress and Poverty*, pointed to the increase in the value of real estate due to urbanization and industrialization, which made it difficult or impossible for many to afford a home of their own. The Charity Organization Society (COS), by contrast, argued for individual responsibility. With chapters in a hundred cities by 1895, the COS claimed that poverty usually stemmed from individual character defects and that assistance for such people only rewarded immorality or laziness. Help should be temporary, only until the person secured work, and the recipients of aid should be moral, thrifty, and hardworking.

**central business district** The part of a city that includes most of its commercial, financial, and manufacturing establishments.

**tenement** A multifamily apartment building, often unsafe, unsanitary, and overcrowded.

## New Patterns of Urban Life

- ★ **How did the middle class adjust to the changing demands and opportunities of the era?**
- ★ **What important new social patterns emerged in urban areas in the late nineteenth century?**

The decades following the Civil War brought far-reaching social changes to nearly all parts of the nation. The burgeoning cities presented new vistas of opportunity for some, especially the middle class. In the new urban environments, some women questioned traditionally defined gender roles, as did gays and lesbians.

### The New Middle Class

The Gilded Age brought significant changes to the lives of many middle-class Americans, especially urban-dwellers. The development of giant corporations and central business districts was accompanied by the appearance of an army

of accountants, lawyers, secretaries, insurance agents, and middle-level managers, who staffed corporate headquarters and professional offices. The new department stores succeeded by appealing to the growing urban middle class, especially women. Streetcar lines allowed members of the middle class to live beyond walking distance of their work. Thus industrialization and urban expansion produced not only large neighborhoods of the industrial working class and enclaves of the very wealthy but also an expansion of distinctively middle-class neighborhoods and suburbs.

Single-family houses set amid wide and carefully tended lawns were common in many new middle-class neighborhoods and suburbs in the late nineteenth century. Such developments accelerated the tendency of American urban and suburban areas to sprawl for miles and to have population densities much lower than those of expanding European cities of the same time. Acquiring land had long been central to the American dream. In the late nineteenth century, the single-family house became the realization of that dream for many middle-class families. Many members of the middle class found it especially attractive to acquire that house in a suburb, outside the city but connected to it by streetcar tracks or a commuter rail line. Moving to a middle-class suburb allowed them to avoid the congestion of the slums, the violence of labor conflicts, and the higher property taxes that funded city governments.

Middle-class families provided the major market for an expansion of daily newspapers, which began to include sections designed to appeal to women—household hints, fashion advice, and news of women’s organizations—along with sports sections aimed largely at men and comics for the children. Joseph Pulitzer’s *New York World* pioneered such innovations, and others soon emulated them. Urban middle-class households were also likely to subscribe to family magazines such as the *Ladies’ Home Journal* and the *Saturday Evening Post*, which included household advice, fiction, and news. Much of the advertising in such publications was aimed at the middle class, fostering the emergence of a so-called **consumer culture** among middle-class women, who became responsible for nearly all of their family’s shopping. Such publications, through both their articles and their advertising, also helped to extend middle-class patterns to readers across the country.

**consumer culture** A consumer is an individual who buys products for personal use; a consumer culture emphasizes the values and attitudes that derive from the participants’ roles as consumers.

**kindergarten** German for “children’s garden”; a preschool program developed in the late nineteenth century initially as childcare for working mothers; based on programs first developed in Germany.

### Ferment in Education

Middle-class parents’ concern for their children’s education combined with other factors to produce important changes in American education, from **kindergarten** through university. The number of kindergartens—first created outside the public schools to provide childcare for working mothers—grew from two hundred in 1880 to three thousand in 1900. Kindergartens also began to be included in the public school system in some cities, beginning with St. Louis in 1873. Between 1870 and 1900, most northern and western states and territories established school attendance laws, requiring children between certain ages (usually 8 to 14) to attend school for a minimum number of weeks each year, typically twelve to sixteen.

The largest increase in attendance was at the secondary level. There were fewer than eight hundred high schools in the entire nation in 1878, but fifty-five hundred by 1898. The proportion of high school graduates in the population tripled in the late nineteenth century. The high school curriculum also changed significantly, adding courses in the sciences, civics, business, home economics, and skills needed by industry, such as drafting, woodworking, and the mechanical trades. From 1870 onward, women outnumbered men among high school graduates. The growth of high schools, however, was largely an urban phenomenon. In rural areas, few students continued beyond the eighth grade.



College enrollments also grew, with the largest gains in the new state universities created under the Land-Grant College Act of 1862. Even so, college students came disproportionately from middle-class and upper-class families and rarely from farms. The college curriculum changed greatly, from a set of classical courses required of all students (mostly Latin, Greek, mathematics, rhetoric, and religion) to a system in which students focused on a major subject and chose courses from a list of electives. Land-grant universities were required to provide instruction in engineering and agriculture. Other new college subjects included economics, political science, modern languages, and laboratory sciences. Many universities also began to offer courses in business administration and teaching. In 1870 the curricula in most colleges still resembled those of a century before. By 1900, curricula looked more like those of today.

Despite the growing female majority through the high school level, only one college graduate in seven was a woman in 1870, and this ratio improved to only one in four by 1900. In 1879 fewer than half of the nation's colleges admitted women, although most public universities did so. Twenty years later, four-fifths of all colleges, universities, and professional schools enrolled women.

### Redefining Gender Roles

Greater educational opportunities for women marked only one part of a major reconstruction of gender roles. Throughout the nineteenth century, most Americans defined women's roles in domestic terms, as wife and mother and guardian of the family, responsible for its moral, spiritual, and physical well-being. This emphasis on **domesticity** also permitted women to take important roles in the church and the school. Business and politics, however, with their competition and potential for corruption, were thought to endanger women's roles as their families' spiritual guardians. Domesticity, some argued, required women to occupy a so-called **separate sphere**, immune from such dangers. Farm women and working-class women (including most women of color) witnessed too much of the world to fit easily into the patterns of dainty innocence prescribed by advocates of separate spheres.

Domesticity and, especially, separate spheres came under increasing fire in the late nineteenth century. One challenge came through education, especially at colleges. As more and more women finished college, some entered the professions. An early breakthrough came in medicine. In 1849 Elizabeth Blackwell became the first woman to complete medical school, and she helped to open a medical school for women in 1868. By 1900 about 3 percent of all physicians were women, proportionately more than during most of the twentieth century. After 1900, however, medical schools imposed admission practices that sharply reduced the number of female medical students and, hence, physicians. Access to the legal profession proved even more difficult. Arabella Mansfield was the first woman to be admitted to the bar, in 1869, but most law schools refused to admit women until the 1890s. Other professions also yielded very slowly to women seeking admission.

Professional careers attracted a few women, but many middle-class and upper-class women in towns and cities became involved in other women's activities. Women's clubs became popular among middle- and upper-class women in the late nineteenth century, claiming 100,000 members nationwide by the 1890s. Such clubs often began within the separate women's sphere as forums in which to discuss literature or art, but they sometimes led women out of their insulation and into reform activities. (Of course, women had publicly participated in reform before, especially in the movement to abolish slavery.)

**domesticity** The notion common throughout much of the nineteenth century that women's activities were ideally rooted in domestic labor and the nurture of children.

**separate sphere** The notion that men and women should engage in different activities: women were to focus on the family, church, and school, whereas men were to support the family financially and take part in politics, activities considered too competitive and corrupt for women.



# It Matters Today

## THE WCTU AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

Drawing on the proselytizing traditions of Protestantism, the Women's Christian Temperance Union sent "round-the-world missionaries" to carry the message of prohibition and women's political rights to Hawai'i (then an independent kingdom), New Zealand, Australia, China, Japan, India, South Africa, and elsewhere. Their efforts had their greatest immediate success when local recruits secured the adoption of woman suffrage in New Zealand in 1893, in the Colony of South Australia in 1894, in Western Australia in 1899, and in the newly established Commonwealth of Australia in 1902. New Zealand and Australia were the first two nations to extend the suffrage to women. WCTU missionaries also made

their presence felt in other parts of the world, helping to lay a basis for a women's movement in such places as Japan and India.

- Go online and research the nature of the women's movements in Japan and India. Do you find any indication of the original WCTU influence? Do you find evidence of current influence by American women?
- Go online and find a list of the countries that do not yet permit women to vote. Can you find any information about current efforts by American women to promote woman suffrage in those countries?

**Women's Christian Temperance Union** Women's organization founded in 1874 that opposed alcoholic beverages and supported reforms such as woman suffrage.

The **Women's Christian Temperance Union** (WCTU) was organized in 1874 by women who regarded alcohol as the chief reason for men's neglect and abuse of their families. WCTU members sought to protect the home and family by promoting abstinence and the legal prohibition of alcohol. The organization typically operated through old-stock Protestant churches—especially the Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists. From 1879 until her death in 1898, Frances Willard was the driving force in the organization. By the early 1890s, the WCTU claimed 150,000 members, making it the largest women's organization in the nation. Yet, for Willard the organization remained very much within the traditional women's arena of family and home. She once offered a simple statement of purpose for the WCTU: "to make the whole world home-like." In 1882 the WCTU endorsed woman suffrage, the first support for that cause from a major women's organization other than those formed specifically to advocate woman suffrage.

Just as women's gender roles were undergoing reconstruction in the late nineteenth century, so too were those of men. With the growth of the urban industrial society, fewer men had the opportunity to demonstrate courage or boldness. In response, some middle-class men seem to have turned to organizations and activities that emphasized male bonding or masculinity. Fraternal organizations modeled on the **Masons** multiplied in the late nineteenth century, usually providing both a ritualistic retreat to a preindustrial era. Professional athletics, including baseball and boxing, began to attract male spectators of all classes. Wilderness camping and hunting—necessities for many Americans in earlier times—became a middle-class and upper-class male sport.

Urbanization and economic change contributed to the social redefinition of middle-class gender roles, but a quite different redefinition occurred at the same time, as homosexuals and lesbians gravitated toward the largest cities and began to create distinctive **subcultures**. Reports of regular homosexual meeting places—clubs, restaurants, steam baths, parks, streets—issued from New York, Boston, Chicago, New Orleans, St. Louis, and San Francisco. Although most participants in these subcultures were secretive, some flaunted their sexuality. In a few places, "drag balls" featured cross-dressing, especially by men.

**Masons** The Order of Free and Accepted Masons is one of the largest secret fraternal societies. The order uses allegorical rituals, open only to members, to teach moral values. It is limited to men.

**subculture** A group whose members differ from the dominant culture on the basis of some values or interests but who share most values and interests with the dominant culture.

## The Politics of Stalemate

- ★ Compare the presidencies of Garfield, Arthur, and Cleveland. Which do you consider most successful? Why?
- ★ What were the major goals of the different reform groups, such as the Grangers and Greenbackers, prohibitionists, and supporters of woman suffrage? Why were some reformers able to accomplish more than others?

During the 1880s, as the nation's economy and social patterns changed with astonishing speed, American politics seemed to be stalled at dead center. From the end of the Civil War to the mid-1870s, much of American politics had revolved around issues arising out of the war. By the late 1870s, other issues emerged as crucial, notably the economy and political corruption. After the mid-1870s, however, voters divided almost evenly between the two major political parties, beginning a long political **stalemate** during which neither party enacted significant new policies.

**stalemate** A deadlock; in chess, a situation in which neither player can move.

### The Presidencies of Garfield and Arthur

As Rutherford B. Hayes neared the end of his term as president—a term made difficult by his conflicts with Roscoe Conkling and the railway strike of 1877—Republican leaders looked for a presidential candidate who could lead them to victory in 1880. James G. Blaine of Maine, a spellbinding orator who attracted loyal supporters and bitter enemies, sought the party's nomination. Conkling and his followers, calling themselves **Stalwarts**, tried to nominate former president Grant instead. Conkling dismissed Blaine and his supporters as **Half-Breeds**—not real Republicans. Few major differences of policy separated Conkling from Blaine.

After a frustrating convention deadlock, the Republicans compromised by nominating James A. Garfield, a congressman from Ohio. A minister, college president, and lawyer before the Civil War, Garfield had become the Union's youngest major general. For vice president, the delegates tried to placate the Stalwarts and secure New York's electoral votes by nominating Conkling's chief lieutenant, Chester A. Arthur.

The Democrats nominated Winfield Scott Hancock, a former Union general with little political experience. Both candidates avoided matters of substance during the campaign. Garfield won the popular vote by half a percentage point. He won the electoral vote convincingly, however, even though he failed to carry a single southern state. Republicans, it appeared, could win the White House without the southern black vote.

Garfield brought to the presidency a solid understanding of Congress and a careful and studious approach to issues. Hoping to work cooperatively with both Stalwarts and Blaine supporters, he appointed Blaine as secretary of state, the most prestigious cabinet position. When Conkling demanded the right to name his supporters to key federal positions, Garfield showed himself to be more politically shrewd than any president since Lincoln. Conkling acknowledged defeat by resigning from the Senate, and Garfield scored a victory for a stronger presidency.

On July 2, 1881, four months after taking office, Garfield was shot while walking through a Washington railroad station. His assassin, Charles Guiteau, a mentally unstable religious fanatic, called himself “a Stalwart of the Stalwarts” and claimed he had acted to save the Republican Party. Two months later, Garfield died of the wound—or of incompetent medical care.

Chester A. Arthur became president. Long Conkling's ally, Arthur was probably best known as a capable administrator and dapper dresser. However, as one of his former associates said, he soon showed that “He isn't ‘Chet’ Arthur any more; he's the President.”

**Stalwarts** Faction of the Republican Party led by Roscoe Conkling of New York; Stalwarts claimed to be the genuine Republicans.

**Half-Breeds** Insulting name that Roscoe Conkling gave to his opponents (especially James Blaine) within the Republican Party to suggest that they were not fully committed to Republican ideals.

In 1882 doctors diagnosed the president as suffering from Bright’s disease, a kidney condition that produced fatigue, depression, and eventually death. Arthur kept the news secret from all but his family and closest friends. Overcoming both political liabilities and his own physical limitations, Arthur proved a competent president.

### Reforming the Spoils System

The Republicans had slim majorities in Congress after the 1880 election, but the Democrats recovered control over the House of Representatives in 1882. Acting quickly, before the newly elected Democrats took their seats, the

Republicans enacted the first major tariff revision in eight years and the **Pendleton Act**, reforming the civil service. Both measures had support from a few Democrats.

The Pendleton Act, named for its sponsor, Senator George Pendleton (an Ohio Democrat), had far-reaching consequences, for it initiated a merit system for filling federal positions to replace the long-criticized spoils system. The new law designated certain federal positions, initially about 15 percent of the total, as “classified.” **Classified civil service** positions were to be filled only through competitive examinations.

The law authorized the president to add positions to the classified list. When an office was first classified, the patronage appointee then holding it was protected from removal for political reasons, so presidents could use the law to entrench their own appointees. When those appointees retired, however, their replacements came through the merit system. Within twenty years, the law applied to 44 percent of federal employees. Most state and local governments eventually adopted merit systems as well. Arthur’s approval of the measure marked his final break with the Stalwarts.

### Cleveland and the Democrats

In the end, Arthur proved more capable than anyone might have predicted. Given his failing health, he exerted little effort to win his party’s nomination in 1884. Blaine secured the Republican nomination. The Democrats nominated Grover

Cleveland, who as governor of New York had earned a reputation for integrity and political courage, particularly by attacking **Tammany Hall**, the dominant Democratic Party organization in New York City. Many Irish voters, who made up a large component in Tammany, retaliated by supporting Blaine.

The 1884 campaign quickly turned nasty. Many reformers disliked Blaine and revealed an old letter of his urging a cover-up of allegations that he had profited from pro railroad legislation. Blaine supporters gleefully trumpeted that Cleveland had avoided military service during the Civil War and had fathered a child outside marriage. Democrats chanted, “Blaine, Blaine, James G. Blaine! The continental liar from the state of Maine.” Republicans shouted back, “Ma! Ma! Where’s my pa?”

The election hinged on New York State, where Blaine expected to cut deeply into the usually Democratic Irish vote. A few days before the election, however, Blaine heard a preacher in New York City call the Democrats the party of “rum, Romanism [Catholicism], and rebellion.” Blaine ignored this insult to his Irish Catholic supporters until newspapers blasted it the next day. By then the damage was done. Cleveland won New York by a tiny margin, and New York’s electoral votes gave him the presidency.

Cleveland enjoyed support from many who opposed the spoils system, already being whittled away by the Pendleton Act. He did not dismantle the patronage system but did insist on demonstrated ability in appointees. He was also deeply committed to minimal government and cutting federal spending. Between 1885 and 1889, Cleveland vetoed 414 bills—most of them granting pensions to individual Union veterans—twice

**Pendleton Act** Law passed by Congress in 1883 that created the Civil Service Commission and instituted the merit system for federal hiring and jobs.

**classified civil service** Federal jobs filled through the merit system instead of by patronage.

**Tammany Hall** A New York City political organization that dominated city and sometimes state politics by dominating the Democratic Party in New York City.



as many vetoes as all previous presidents combined. Cleveland provided little leadership regarding legislation but did approve several important measures, including the Dawes Severalty Act and the Interstate Commerce Act.

The Interstate Commerce Act grew out of political pressure from farmers and small businesses. In the early 1870s, several midwestern states passed so-called Granger laws regulating railroad freight rates. Although the Supreme Court, in *Munn v. Illinois*, had first agreed that such businesses were subject to regulation, later, in *Wabash Railway v. Illinois* (1886), the court significantly limited states' power to regulate railroad rates.

In response to the *Wabash* decision and continuing protests over railroad rate discrimination, Congress passed the Interstate Commerce Act in 1887. The new law created the **Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC)**, the first federal regulatory commission. The law also prohibited pools, rebates, and differential rates for short and long hauls, and it required that rates be "reasonable and just." The ICC had little real power, however, until the Hepburn Act strengthened it in 1906.

Cleveland considered the nation's greatest problem to be the federal budget surplus. After the Civil War, the tariff usually generated more income than the country needed to pay federal expenses. Throughout the 1880s, the annual surplus often exceeded \$100 million. Worried that the surplus encouraged wasteful spending, Cleveland demanded in 1887 that Congress cut tariff rates. He hoped not only to reduce federal income but also, by reducing prices on raw materials, to encourage companies to compete with recently developed monopolies.

Cleveland's action provoked a serious division within his own party. So long as Democrats did not have responsibility for the tariff, they could criticize Republican policies without restraint. Urged to take positive action by their own party chief, however, they failed. In the end, Congress adjourned without voting on a bill, and Cleveland's call for tariff reform came to nothing.

In the 1888 presidential election, Democrats re-nominated Cleveland, but he backed off from the tariff issue and did little campaigning. Republicans nominated Benjamin Harrison, senator from Indiana and a former Civil War general. The Republicans launched a vigorous campaign focused on the virtues of the protective tariff. They raised unprecedented amounts of campaign money by systematically approaching business leaders on the tariff issue, and they issued more campaign materials than ever before. Harrison received fewer popular votes than Cleveland (47.9 percent to Cleveland's 48.7 percent), but he won in the Electoral College. Republicans also secured majorities in both the House and the Senate.

### The Mixed Blessings of Urban Machine Politics

Throughout the late nineteenth century, big-city politicians built loyal followings in poor neighborhoods by addressing the residents' needs directly and personally. In return, they wanted political loyalty from the poor. Such urban political organizations flourished during the years 1880 to 1910, and some survived long after that. Where they amassed great power, their rivals denounced the leader as a boss and the organization as a machine. Above all, the bosses centralized political decision making.

In 1905 a newspaper reporter published a series of conversations with George W. Plunkitt, a longtime participant in New York City politics. Plunkitt's observations provide insights into the nature of urban politics and its relation to urban poverty. Born in a poor Irish neighborhood of New York City, Plunkitt left school at the age of 11. He entered politics, eventually becoming a district leader of Tammany Hall. Between 1868 and 1904, he also served in a number of elected positions in state and city government.

### Interstate Commerce Commission

The first federal regulatory commission, created in 1887 to regulate railroads.

Plunkitt described to the reporter his formula for keeping the loyalty of the voters in his neighborhood: “If there’s a family in my district in want I know it before the charitable societies, and me and my men are first on the ground,” he explained. “The consequence is that the poor look up to George W. Plunkitt as a father, come to him in trouble—and don’t forget him on election day.”

In every city, opponents of the machine charged corruption. Most bosses were cautious, but some accumulated sizable fortunes—sometimes through gifts or retainers from companies seeking franchises or city contracts (their critics called these bribes), sometimes through advance knowledge of city planning.

### Challenging the Male Bastion: Woman Suffrage

In the masculine political world of the Gilded Age, men expected one another to display strong loyalty to a political party, but they considered women—who could not vote—to stand outside the party system. The concepts of domesticity and separate spheres dictated that women avoid politics, especially party politics. In fact, some women did involve themselves in political struggles by taking part in reform efforts, even though they could not cast a ballot on election day, and a few even took part in party activities. In the late nineteenth century, some women also pushed for full political participation through the right to vote.

The struggle for woman suffrage was of long standing. In 1848 Elizabeth Cady Stanton and four other women organized the world’s first Women’s Rights Convention, held at Seneca Falls, New York. The participants drafted a Declaration of Principles that announced, in part, “It is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise.” Stanton and Susan B. Anthony became the most prominent leaders in the struggle for women’s rights, especially voting rights. They achieved some success in convincing lawmakers to modify laws that discriminated against women but failed to change laws that limited voting to men. During the nineteenth century, however, women increasingly participated in public affairs through reform movements.

In 1869 Stanton and Anthony formed the **National Woman Suffrage Association** (NWSA), its membership open only to women. The NWSA sought an amendment to the federal Constitution as the only sure route to woman suffrage. It built alliances with other reform and radical organizations and worked to improve women’s status. In contrast, the **American Woman Suffrage Association** (AWSA), organized by Lucy Stone and other suffrage advocates, also in 1869, concentrated strictly on winning the right to vote and avoided other issues. For twenty years, these two organizations led the suffrage cause, disagreeing not on the goal but on the way to achieve it. They merged in 1890, under Stanton’s leadership, to become the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Until the early twentieth century, however, their support came largely from middle-class women—and men—who were largely of old-stock American Protestant descent.

The first victories for suffrage came in the West. In 1869, in Wyoming Territory, the territorial legislature extended the **franchise** to women, after Wyoming women had forged a well-organized suffrage movement. Thus women in Wyoming Territory could—and did—vote, serve on juries, and hold elective office. Wyoming achieved statehood—with woman suffrage—in 1890. Some congressmen had balked at admitting a state with woman suffrage; Wyoming legislators, however, bluntly stated, “We will remain out of the Union a hundred years rather than come in without the women.”

Utah Territory adopted woman suffrage in 1870. Mormon women far outnumbered the relatively few non-Mormon women, and by enfranchising women, Mormons strengthened their voting majority. However, Congress outlawed **polygamy** in 1887 and

#### National Woman Suffrage

**Association** Women’s suffrage organization formed in 1869 and led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony; it accepted only women as members and worked for related issues such as unionizing female workers.

#### American Woman Suffrage

**Association** Boston-based women’s suffrage organization formed in 1869 and led by Lucy Stone and Julia Ward Howe; it welcomed men and worked solely to win the vote for women.

**franchise** As used here, the right to vote; another word for suffrage.

**polygamy** The practice of a man having more than one wife; Mormons referred to this practice as plural marriage.



This sketch of women voting in Cheyenne, Wyoming Territory, appeared in 1888. In 1869, Wyoming became the first state or territory to extend suffrage to women. This drawing appeared shortly before Wyoming requested statehood, a request made controversial by the issue of woman suffrage. Library of Congress.

simultaneously disfranchised the women in Utah. Not until Utah became a state, in 1896, did its women regain the vote. In 1893, Colorado voters (all male) approved woman suffrage, making Colorado the first state to adopt woman suffrage through a popular vote. In Idaho, male voters approved woman suffrage in 1896. These western states were among the first places in the world to grant women equal voting rights with men.

In addition, several states began to extend limited voting rights to women, especially on matters outside party politics, such as school board elections and school bond issues. These concessions perhaps reflected the widespread assumption that women's gender roles included child rearing. By 1890, women could vote in school elections in nineteen states and on bond and tax issues in three.

## The United States and the World, 1880–1889

★ **What reasons may there be for the lack of attention to foreign relations during this time period?**

Presidents Garfield, Arthur, and Cleveland spent little time on foreign relations and paid little attention to the army and navy. After the end of most conflicts with American Indians in the late 1870s and early 1880s, the army was limited to a few garrisons, most

of them near Indian reservations. The navy's wooden sailing vessels deteriorated to the point that some people ridiculed them as fit only for firewood.

Whether from embarrassment or insight, Congress, in 1882, authorized construction of two steam-powered cruisers—the first new ships since the Civil War—and four more ships in 1883. Secretary of the Navy William C. Whitney persuaded Congress to fund several more cruisers and the first two modern battleships. However, most federal decision makers still understood the role of the navy as limited to protecting American coasts.

Diplomacy was similarly routine. The most active American secretary of state also served the shortest term. James G. Blaine, Garfield's secretary of state, promoted closer relations with Latin America to encourage more trade and to take a more active role among Latin American nations in resolving problems that might lead to war or European intervention. But when Garfield died, Blaine was replaced, and his ambitious plans for hemispheric cooperation were scrapped.

Hawai'i continued to attract the attention of some American entrepreneurs and policymakers. Despite economic ties between Hawai'i and the United States that had developed through the sugar trade and other connections, relations between King David Kalakaua and the *haole* business and planter community deteriorated. Kalakaua wanted to preserve political power for **indigenous** Hawaiians, but in 1887 when Kalakaua was implicated in corruption, leaders of the *haole* community forced a constitution on the king, greatly reducing his power. *Haoles* soon dominated much of the government. Among some members of the royal family, resentment festered over the new constitution and the extent of *haole* control. Those resentments would boil over after Kalakaua's death in 1891.

**Samoa**, in the South Pacific, likewise attracted attention from the United States, and also Britain and Germany. All three nations dispatched warships to the vicinity in 1889, but a conference in Berlin produced a treaty that provided for Samoan independence under the protection of the three Western nations.

**haole** Hawaiian word for persons not of native Hawaiian ancestry, especially whites.

**indigenous** Original to an area.

**Samoa** A group of volcanic and mountainous islands in the South Pacific.

## Summary

In the Gilded Age, as industrialization transformed the economy, urbanization and immigration challenged many established social patterns. John D. Rockefeller was one of the best known of many entrepreneurs who created manufacturing operations of unprecedented size and complexity, producing oligopoly and vertical integration in many industries. Technology and advertising emerged as important competitive devices. Investment bankers, notably J. P. Morgan, led in combining separate rail companies into larger and more profitable systems.

Espousing cooperatives and reform, the Knights of Labor chose to open their membership to the unskilled, to African Americans, and to women—groups usually not admitted to craft unions. The Knights died out after

1890. The American Federation of Labor was formed by craft unions, and its leaders rejected radicalism and sought instead to work within capitalism to improve wages, hours, and conditions for its members.

Many Europeans immigrated to the United States, lured by expectations of better opportunities in America. Immigrants often formed distinct communities, frequently centered on a church. The flood of immigrants, particularly from eastern and southern Europe, spawned nativist reactions among some old-stock Americans.

As rural Americans and European immigrants sought better lives in the cities, urban America changed dramatically. New technologies in construction, transportation, and communication produced a new urban geography



with separate retail, wholesale, finance, and manufacturing areas and residential neighborhoods defined by economic status. Urban growth brought a new urban middle class. Education underwent far-reaching changes, from kindergartens through universities. Socially defined gender roles began to change as some women chose professional careers and took active roles in reform. In the new urban setting, gay men and lesbians developed distinctive urban subcultures. The closely balanced strengths of the two parties contributed to a long-term political stalemate. Presidents James A. Garfield and Chester A. Arthur faced stormy conflict between factions in their own Republican

Party. But Congress passed and Arthur signed the Pendleton Act of 1883, establishing the merit system in the civil service. As president, Grover Cleveland approved the Interstate Commerce Act. The growth of cities encouraged a particular variety of party organization, based on poor neighborhoods, where politicians traded favors for political support. By the late nineteenth century, a well-organized woman suffrage movement had emerged.

Presidents during the 1880s largely neglected foreign relations. However, whites in Hawai'i asserted political control over native Hawaiians, and the United States made clear its interest in the Samoan Islands.

## Key Terms

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <i>gilded</i> , p. 403                 | <i>anarchists</i> , p. 411                      | <i>separate sphere</i> , p. 419                     |
| <i>John D. Rockefeller</i> , p. 404    | <i>American Federation of Labor</i> , p. 411    | <i>Women's Christian Temperance Union</i> , p. 420  |
| <i>refinery</i> , p. 404               | <i>Samuel Gompers</i> , p. 411                  | <i>Masons</i> , p. 420                              |
| <i>cartel</i> , p. 404                 | <i>Scandinavia</i> , p. 412                     | <i>subcultures</i> , p. 420                         |
| <i>horizontal integration</i> , p. 404 | <i>manufacturing belt</i> , p. 412              | <i>stalemate</i> , p. 421                           |
| <i>monopoly</i> , p. 404               | <i>old-stock</i> , p. 412                       | <i>Stalwarts</i> , p. 421                           |
| <i>trust</i> , p. 404                  | <i>assimilated</i> , p. 414                     | <i>Half-Breeds</i> , p. 421                         |
| <i>holding company</i> , p. 405        | <i>ethnic group</i> , p. 414                    | <i>Pendleton Act</i> , p. 422                       |
| <i>Thomas A. Edison</i> , p. 405       | <i>melting pot</i> , p. 414                     | <i>classified civil service</i> , p. 422            |
| <i>patents</i> , p. 405                | <i>nativism</i> , p. 414                        | <i>Tammany Hall</i> , p. 422                        |
| <i>mergers</i> , p. 405                | <i>American Protective Association</i> , p. 414 | <i>Interstate Commerce Commission</i> , p. 423      |
| <i>department stores</i> , p. 407      | <i>restrictive covenants</i> , p. 414           | <i>National Woman Suffrage Association</i> , p. 424 |
| <i>suburbs</i> , p. 407                | <i>walking cities</i> , p. 415                  | <i>American Woman Suffrage Association</i> , p. 424 |
| <i>investment banks</i> , p. 407       | <i>infrastructure</i> , p. 416                  | <i>franchise</i> , p. 424                           |
| <i>John Pierpont Morgan</i> , p. 407   | <i>retail</i> , p. 416                          | <i>polygamy</i> , p. 424                            |
| <i>return</i> , p. 407                 | <i>central business district</i> , p. 417       | <i>haole</i> , p. 426                               |
| <i>oligopoly</i> , p. 408              | <i>tenements</i> , p. 417                       | <i>indigenous</i> , p. 426                          |
| <i>cost analysis</i> , p. 408          | <i>consumer culture</i> , p. 418                | <i>Samoa</i> , p. 426                               |
| <i>dividends</i> , p. 408              | <i>kindergarten</i> , p. 418                    |   |
| <i>Knights of Labor</i> , p. 409       | <i>domesticity</i> , p. 419                     |   |
| <i>Terence V. Powderly</i> , p. 409    |   |   |



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## CHAPTER 18

# Conflict and Change in the West 1865–1902

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### **War for the West**

- The Plains Indians
- The Plains Wars

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Chief Joseph's Surrender Speech, 1877  
The Last Indian Wars

#### **Transforming the West: Mormons, Cowboys, and Sodbusters**

- Zion in the Great Basin
- Cattle Kingdom on the Plains
- Plowing the Plains

#### **Transforming the West: Railroads, Mining, Agribusiness, Logging, and Finance**

- Western Railroads
- Western Mining
- The Birth of Western Agribusiness
- Logging in the Pacific Northwest
- Western Metropolis: San Francisco
- Water Wars

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** Western Water  
and Global Warming

#### **Ethnicity and Race in the West**

- Immigrants to the Golden Mountain
- Forced Assimilation

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Helen Hunt Jackson Appeals for Justice, 1883  
Mexican Americans in the Southwest

#### **The West in American Thought**

- The West as Utopia and Myth
- The Frontier and the West

#### **Summary**

### **INDIVIDUAL CHOICES:** *María Amparo Ruiz de Burton*

María Amparo Ruiz de Burton spent much of her life fighting for land that she believed was hers. Like many other **Californios**, she relied on lawyers and courts to secure title to her lands. Ruiz de Burton, however, also employed another tool—her writing—to arouse sympathy for her situation and that of others like her.

Ruiz de Burton was born in 1831 in Baja California. In 1846, when she was 14, the United States declared war on Mexico. American troops quickly conquered both Alta and Baja California. Among the troops in Baja California was Captain Henry Burton. At the end of the war, María and her family moved north to Monterey, in the central part of what soon became the state of California. She and Burton were married in 1849. Soon Burton was transferred to San Diego, in southern California, where the Burtons bought the Jamul Rancho.

In 1859, Captain Burton was transferred back east, and Ruiz de Burton went with him. She followed her husband to most of his assignments during the Civil War. The end of the war found them in Rhode Island, where Burton died in 1869. During her ten-plus years in the East, Ruiz de Burton worked at perfecting her English and assimilating more generally, but she retained a deep sympathy for Mexico and experienced firsthand the extent of racism in American society. From Washington, she wrote to a fellow Californio, “come for a visit, to stay a winter in Washington and see what a great **humbug** is this Yankie nation.”

Her husband's death left Ruiz de Burton with a meager pension. She returned to California and spent the rest of her life seeking financial stability by securing titles to the Jamul Ranch and her grandfather's land in Mexico and by writing.

Her two novels make her the first known Latina novelist in the United States. Writing in English, Ruiz de Burton created fictional portrayals of events that paralleled her own experiences. She was highly critical of Yankee materialism and depicted Californio landholders as refined, white victims of racism and political cor-

ruption. Her first novel, *Who Would Have Thought It?* (1872), portrays Lola Medina, a Mexican American living with a New England family. *The Squatter and the Don* (1885), her second novel, centers on struggles over land in California.

In the end, Ruiz de Burton's novels were not especially successful financially or politically, but they remain a testimony to her acute observation of her world. In 1889, after nearly two decades of legal maneuvering, Ruiz de Burton secured legal title to only a small part of the Jamul Rancho. She died in 1895, in Chicago, pursuing legal assistance for her claim to lands in Mexico. Only in 1942 did her heirs finally secure a favorable ruling from a Mexican court regarding their claim for compensation.

**Californios** Spanish-speaking people living in California at the time it was acquired by the United States.

**humbug** Nineteenth-century colloquial expression for a “fraud or hoax.”

**B**efore the Civil War, the issue of slavery had blocked efforts to develop the West. The secession of the southern states in 1860 and 1861 permitted the Republicans who took over the federal government to open the West to economic development and white settlement, through measures such as the Pacific Railroad Act and the Homestead Act (both 1862).

As individual Americans began to shape the development of the West—from seeking free land under the Homestead Act to speculating in mining stock to adjusting to an unfamiliar environment—federal officials had to decide what to do about the American Indians who occupied much of the region. In most of the West, moreover, rainfall was markedly less than in the eastern United States. The scarcity of water presented new questions. What sort of development was appropriate in a region with little rain? Who would control the water, and who would benefit from it?

Similarly, the ethnic and racial composition of the West differed significantly from that in the East and South. Some American Indians lived east of the Mississippi, but larger numbers had been pushed westward and were sharing parts of the West with tribal groups who claimed it as their ancestral homeland. The Southwest was home to significant numbers of people who spoke Spanish, who were often of mixed white and Native American ancestry, and whose families had lived in the region for generations. The Pacific Coast attracted immigrants from Asia, especially China, who crossed the Pacific to seek their fortune in America. These concentrations of ethnic groups marked the West as a distinctive place.

Given the realities of the West, development there proved sometimes to be quite different from previous experience. The result was the transformation of the American West.

## War for the West

- ★ **What did federal policymakers after the Civil War hope to accomplish regarding American Indians? How did western Indians respond?**
- ★ **How can you explain the decisions of both federal policymakers and western Native Americans?**

When Congress decided to use the public domain—western land—to encourage economic development, most white Americans considered the West to be largely vacant. In fact, American Indians lived throughout most of the West, and their understanding of their

# Chronology

<b>1700s</b>	Horse culture spreads throughout Great Plains		Workingmen's Party of California attacks Chinese
<b>1847</b>	First Mormon settlements near Great Salt Lake		Profirio Díaz becomes president of Mexico
<b>1848</b>	Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo		
	Discovery of gold in California	<b>1881</b>	Surrender of Sitting Bull
<b>1862</b>	Homestead Act		Publication of Helen Hunt Jackson's <i>A Century of Dishonor</i>
	Pacific Railroad Act	<b>1882</b>	Chinese Exclusion Act
<b>1865</b>	Civil War ends	<b>1883</b>	Northern Pacific Railroad completed to Portland
<b>1866–1880</b>	Cattle drives north from Texas	<b>1884</b>	Federal court prohibits hydraulic mining
<b>1867–1868</b>	Treaties establish major western reservations		Publication of Helen Hunt Jackson's <i>Ramona</i>
<b>1868–1869</b>	Army's winter campaign against southern Plains Indians	<b>1885</b>	First U.S. skyscraper
<b>1869</b>	First transcontinental railroad completed		Publication of María Amparo Ruiz de Burton's <i>The Squatter and the Don</i>
<b>Early 1870s</b>	Cattle raising begins on northern plains		Canadian Pacific Railway completed
<b>1870s</b>	Destruction of buffalo herds	<b>1886</b>	Surrender of Geronimo
<b>1870s–1880s</b>	Extension of farming to Great Plains		First Sears, Roebuck and Co. mail-order catalog
<b>1871–1885</b>	Anti-Chinese riots across West		American Federation of Labor founded
<b>1872</b>	Publication of María Amparo Ruiz de Burton's first novel, <i>Who Would Have Thought It?</i>	<b>1886–1887</b>	Severe winter damages northern cattle business
<b>1874</b>	American Indian resistance ends on southern plains	<b>1887</b>	Dawes Severalty Act
	Patent issued for barbed wire	<b>Late 1880s</b>	Reduced rainfall forces many homesteaders off western farms
	Women's Christian Temperance Union founded	<b>1890</b>	Sitting Bull killed
<b>1876</b>	Indian victory in Battle of Little Big Horn		Conflict at Wounded Knee Creek
	Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone	<b>1892</b>	Sierra Club formed
<b>1877</b>	Reconstruction ends	<b>1893</b>	Great Northern Railway completed
	Army subdues last major Indian resistance on northern plains		Frederick Jackson Turner presents his frontier thesis
	Surrender and death of Crazy Horse	<b>1902</b>	Reclamation Act
	Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce flee		

relationship to the land differed greatly from that of most white Americans. Certainly the most tragic outcome of the development of the West was the upheaval in the lives of the American Indians who lived there.

## The Plains Indians

At the end of the Civil War, as many white Americans began to move west, the acquisition of horses and guns had long since transformed the lives of western Native Americans. This change was most dramatic among tribes living on or



near the **Great Plains**—the vast, relatively flat, and treeless region that stretches from north to south across the center of the nation (see Map 18.1) and was the rangeland of huge herds of buffalo. The introduction of the horse to the Great Plains took place slowly, trickling northward from Spanish settlements in what is now New Mexico and eventually reaching the upper plains in the mid-eighteenth century. By that time, French and English traders working northeast of the plains had begun to provide guns to the Indians in return for furs. Together, horses and guns transformed the culture of some Plains tribes.

The Native Americans of the plains included both farmers and nomadic hunters. The farmers lived most of the year in large, permanent villages. Among this group were the Arikaras, Pawnees, and Wichitas (who spoke languages of the Caddoan family) and the Mandans, Hidatsas, Omahas, Otos, and Osages (who spoke Siouan languages). On the northern plains, their large, dome-shaped houses were typically made of logs and covered with dirt.

**Great Plains** High grassland of western North America, stretching from roughly the 98th meridian to the Rocky Mountains; it is generally level, treeless, and fairly dry.



**MAP 18.1** The West in the Late Nineteenth Century

This map indicates major geographic features of the West in the late nineteenth century, including topography, major cities, sub-regions, and the major transcontinental railroads that had been completed by the 1890s.

**tipi** Conical tent made from buffalo hide and used as a portable dwelling by Indians on the Great Plains.

**Cheyennes** Indian people who became nomadic buffalo hunters after migrating to the Great Plains in the eighteenth century.

**horse culture** The nomadic way of life of those American Indians, mostly on the Great Plains, for whom the horse brought significant changes in their ability to hunt, travel, and make war.

**Lakotas** A confederation of Siouan Indian peoples who lived on the northern Great Plains.

**confederacy** An organization of separate groups who have allied for mutual support or joint action.

**sedentary** Living year-round in fixed villages and engaging in farming; as opposed to nomadic, or moving from camp to camp throughout the year.

**counting coup** Among Plains Indians, to win glory in battle by touching an enemy; *coup* is French for “blow,” and the term comes from the French fur traders who were the first Europeans to describe the practice.

**Sitting Bull** Lakota war leader and holy man.

In southern areas, their houses were often covered with grass. These Indians farmed the fertile river valleys. Women raised corn, squash, pumpkins, and beans, and also gathered wild fruit and vegetables. Men hunted and fished near their villages and cultivated tobacco. Before the arrival of horses, twice a year entire villages went, on foot, on extended hunting trips for buffalo—once in the early summer after their crops were planted, then again in the fall after the harvest. During these hunts, the people lived in **tipis**, cone-shaped tents of buffalo hide that were easy to move. Acquisition of horses changed the culture of these Indians only slightly.

The horse utterly revolutionized the lives of other Plains Indians. Because a hunter on horseback could kill twice as many buffalo as one on foot, the horse substantially increased the number of people the plains could support. The horse also increased mobility, permitting a band to follow the buffalo as they moved across the grasslands. The buffalo provided most essentials: food (meat), clothing and shelter (made from hides), implements (made from bones and horns), and even fuel for fires (dried dung). Some groups abandoned farming and became nomadic, living in tipis year-round and following the buffalo herds. The **Cheyennes**, for example, made this transition within a single generation after 1770. By the early nineteenth century, the **horse culture** existed throughout the Great Plains. The largest groups practicing this lifestyle included—from north to south—the Blackfeet, Crows, **Lakotas**, Cheyennes, Arapahos, Kiowas, and Comanches.

The Lakotas, largest of all the groups, were the westernmost members of a large group of Native American peoples often called Sioux; the eastern Sioux were called Dakotas or Nakotas. They did not call themselves *Sioux*—that name was applied to them by the French as a short version of an insulting name they were called by a neighboring, and enemy, tribe. Their name for themselves can be translated as *allies*, reflecting their organization as a **confederacy**. All the Lakotas shared a common language. Membership in the Lakota confederacy was not limited to those speaking a particular language, however, as the northern Cheyennes were generally considered members of the Lakota confederacy by the mid-nineteenth century.

Indians living on the Great Plains and in other areas of North America, whether nomadic buffalo hunters or **sedentary** farming people, understood the land differently from white settlers. From the time of the first European migrants to America, most white Americans had considered land to be a commodity to be bought and sold, owned and improved by individuals. According to Native American tradition, however, land was to be used but not individually owned. Horses, weapons, tipis, and clothing were all individually owned, but not land. Although they did not practice individual ownership of land, tribes did claim specific territories.

Before the arrival of horses, young men derived status from raiding a neighboring tribe to seize agricultural produce, capture a member of that tribe as a slave, or seek revenge for a raid. With the development of the horse culture, wealth was measured in horses. Now raids were staged primarily to steal horses, to retaliate, or both. A young man acquired status through demonstrations of daring and bravery in raids. Signs of success were the number of horses captured, the number of opponents defeated in battle, and success in returning home uninjured. An individual won special glory by **counting coup**—that is, by touching an enemy, either with one’s hand or with a stick.

Historians and anthropologists once thought that conflict between and among Plains tribes was largely related to stealing horses and seeking honor by counting coup. More recently, scholars have pointed to serious battles over territory—for example, the wars between Lakotas and Crows in the 1850s, when **Sitting Bull** first emerged as a leader. Conflicts over territory often developed as tribes were pushed to the west by other,



John Mix Stanley painted this buffalo hunt in 1845, dramatically illustrating how the horse increased the ability of Native American hunters to kill buffalo. Before the horse, a hunter could not safely have gone into the midst of a stampeding herd to drive a lance into a buffalo's heart. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; Art Resource, N.Y.

more eastern tribes, who were also being pushed west by expanding European settlements along the Atlantic Coast. The Lakotas and Cheyennes, for example, once lived just east of the northern plains but were pushed onto the plains as the tribes to their east came west under pressure.

### The Plains Wars

Before 1851, federal policymakers had considered the region west of Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, and Minnesota and east of the Rocky Mountains to be a permanent Indian country. But farmers bound for Oregon and gold seekers on their way to California carved trails across the central plains, and some people began promoting a railroad to connect the Pacific Coast to the East.

Congress approved a new policy in 1851, designed in part to open the central plains as a route to the Pacific. The new policy promised each tribe a definite territory “of limited extent and well-defined boundaries,” within which the tribe was to live. Federal officials first planned large reservations taking up much of the Great Plains.

Far more easterners thronged westward than federal officials had anticipated, and conflicts sometimes erupted along the trails. Then thousands of prospectors poured into Colorado after discovery of gold there in 1858. Withdrawal of many federal troops with the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 may have encouraged some Plains Indians to believe they could expel the invaders. A series of Cheyenne and Lakota raids in 1864 brought demands for reprisals. Late in November, at Sand Creek in Colorado, a territorial militia unit massacred a band of Cheyennes who had not been involved in the raids. Soon after, the discovery of gold in Montana prompted construction of forts to protect a road, the **Bozeman Trail**, through Lakota territory. Cheyennes and Lakotas, led by **Red Cloud**, mounted a sustained war against the road.

In April 1868, many members of the northern Plains tribes met at Fort Laramie and signed treaties creating a Great Sioux Reservation on the northern plains. They believed that they retained “unceded lands” for hunting in the Powder River country—present-day northeastern Wyoming and southeastern Montana. In return, the army abandoned its posts along the Bozeman Trail, a victory for the Lakotas and Cheyennes.

**Bozeman Trail** Trail that ran from Fort Laramie, Wyoming, to the gold fields of Montana.

**Red Cloud** Lakota chief who led a successful fight to prevent the army from keeping forts along the Bozeman Trail.



The creation of the new reservation was part of a larger plan. With the end of the Civil War in 1865, railroad construction crews prepared to build westward. Federal policymakers tried to head off hostilities by carving out a few great western reservations: one for northern Plains tribes, north of Nebraska; another for southern Plains tribes, south of Kansas; and a third for the tribes of the mountains and the Southwest, in the Southwest. The remainder of the West was to be opened for development—railroad building, mining, and farming. Native Americans on the reservations were to receive food and shelter, and agents were to teach them how to farm and raise cattle.

The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 was one of several negotiated in 1867 and 1868 in fulfillment of the new policy. In 1867 a conference at Medicine Lodge Creek produced treaties by which the major southern Plains tribes accepted reservations in what is now western Oklahoma. In May 1868 the Crows agreed to a reservation in Montana. In June 1868 the Navajos accepted a large reservation in the Southwest. Given the highly fluid structure of authority among most Indian peoples, however, those who signed the treaties did not necessarily obligate those who did not.

As some federal officials were negotiating these treaties, other federal officials were permitting and even encouraging white buffalo hunters to kill the buffalo—for sport, for meat, for hides. Slaughter of the buffalo accelerated when a market developed in the East for buffalo hides. The southern herd was wiped out by 1878, the northern herd by 1883. The Plains Indians' way of life, dependent on the buffalo, was doomed once the slaughter began. Some members of the southern Plains tribes refused to accept the terms of the Medicine Lodge Creek treaties, resisting efforts to move them onto the reservations. They occasionally attacked stagecoach stations, ranches, travelers, and military units. General William Tecumseh Sherman, the Civil War general and now head of the army, planned military strategy on the plains. Sherman's approach was the usual reaction of a conventional military force to guerrilla warfare: concentrate the friendly population in defined areas (in this case, reservations) and then open fire on anyone outside those areas. The brutality that ensued convinced most southern Plains tribes to abandon further resistance.

In the early 1870s, the Medicine Lodge Creek treaties permitted Indians to hunt buffalo on nonreservation land in the Red River region of Texas. When white buffalo hunters began encroaching on the area in 1874, young men from the Kiowa, Comanche, and southern Cheyenne tribes attacked them. The army responded with another **war of attrition**, destroying tipis, food, and animals. When winter came, the cold and hungry Indians surrendered to avoid starvation. Tribal war leaders were imprisoned in Florida, far from their families. Buffalo hunters then quickly exterminated the remaining buffalo on the southern plains.

Hunting grounds outside reservations also caused conflict on the northern plains. Many Lakotas and some northern Cheyennes, led by **Crazy Horse** and Sitting Bull, lived on unceded hunting lands in the Powder River region. Complicating matters further, gold was discovered in the Black Hills, in the heart of the Great Sioux Reservation, in 1874, touching off an invasion of Indian land by miners. As the Northern Pacific Railroad prepared to lay track in southern Montana, federal authorities determined to force all Lakota and Cheyenne people onto the reservation, triggering a conflict sometimes called the **Great Sioux War**.

Military operations in the Powder River region began in the spring of 1876. The offensive went dreadfully wrong when Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer sent his Seventh Cavalry against an Indian encampment on the **Little Big Horn River**, which proved to be one of the largest ever on the northern plains. Custer unwisely divided his force, and more than two hundred men, including Custer, met their deaths.

**war of attrition** A form of warfare based on deprivation of food, shelter, and other necessities; if successful, it drives opponents to surrender out of hunger or exposure.

**Crazy Horse** Lakota leader who resisted white encroachment in the Black Hills and fought at the Little Big Horn River in 1876; he was killed by U.S. soldiers in 1877.

**Great Sioux War** War between the U.S. Army and the tribes that took part in the Battle of Little Big Horn; it ended in 1881 with the surrender of Sitting Bull.

**Little Big Horn River** River in Montana where, in 1876, Lieutenant Colonel George Custer attacked a large Indian encampment; Custer and most of his force died in the battle.



# Investigating America

## Chief Joseph's Surrender Speech, 1877

In 1873, Joseph, or Hinmató wyahlahtit, a leader of the Nez Perce, negotiated an agreement that his people could stay on their land in the Wallowa Valley. But four years later, in 1877, the government reversed its policy. General Oliver O. Howard—the former commissioner of the Bureau of Refugees and Freedmen, and after whom Howard University is named—said he would attack if the Wallowa band did not relocate to the Idaho reservation with the other Nez Perce. Joseph initially agreed, but when various events made the situation more threatening, he and other Nez Perce chiefs decided to lead eight hundred of their people toward freedom in Canada. For the next three months, the Nez Perce marched 1,700 miles. Finally, after a devastating five-day battle, in freezing weather with no food or blankets, Chief Joseph formally surrendered to General Nelson Miles and made the following statement. His people were less than 40 miles south of Canada.

.....  
**T**ell General Howard I know his Heart. What He told me before I have in my heart. I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are dead; Looking Glass is dead. Too-Hul-hul-sote is dead. The old men are all dead. It is the young men who say yes or no. He who led on the young men is dead. It is cold and

we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them have run away to the hills, and have no blankets, no food; no one knows where they are—perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs. I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.

- As often happens with non-literate peoples, Chief Joseph's words were transcribed by a white man, in this case Lieutenant Charles Wood, who later became a poet and attorney. Some scholars suspect Wood manufactured some of the words or believe that Howard later edited the transcription. Others note that the eloquence here was typical of Joseph's other speeches.
- Why might Wood have created this surrender speech or altered or added to Joseph's wording? What evidence is there that this was a speech largely concocted by a white officer? In opposition, what suggests that Joseph would have said these words himself?

From THE FLIGHT OF NEZ PERCE by Mark H. Brown, p. 407.  
© 1967.

That winter, U.S. soldiers unleashed another campaign of attrition on the northern plains. Crazy Horse and his band held out until spring and surrendered only when told that they could live in the Powder River region. A few months later, Crazy Horse was killed when he resisted being put into an army jail. Sitting Bull and his band escaped to Canada and remained there until 1881, when he finally surrendered. The government cut up the Great Sioux Reservation into several smaller units and took away the Powder River region, including the Black Hills (which the Lakotas considered sacred), and other lands.

### The Last Indian Wars

The Great Sioux War ended sustained resistance. Small groups occasionally left their reservations but were promptly tracked down by troops. In 1877 the Nez Perce, led by **Chief Joseph**, attempted to flee to Canada when the army tried to force them to leave their reservation in western Idaho. Between July and early October, they evaded the army as they traveled east and north through Montana. More than two hundred members of the band died along the way. In the end, Joseph surrendered on the specific condition that the Nez Perce be permitted to return to their previous home.



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

**Chief Joseph** Nez Perce chief who led his people in an attempt to escape to Canada in 1877; after a grueling journey they were forced to surrender and were exiled to Indian Territory.

**Ghost Dance** Indian religion centered on a ritual dance; it held out the promise of an Indian messiah who would banish the whites, bring back the buffalo, and restore the land to the Indians.

**Wounded Knee Creek** Site of a conflict in 1890 between a band of Lakotas and U.S. troops, sometimes characterized as a massacre because the Lakotas were so outnumbered and overpowered; the last major encounter between Indians and the army.

Federal officials sent the Nez Perce not back to Idaho but to Indian Territory, where, in an unfamiliar climate, many died of disease.

The last major confrontation between the army and Native Americans came in 1890, in South Dakota. Some Lakotas had taken up a new religion, the **Ghost Dance**, which promised to return the land to the Indians, restore the buffalo, and sweep away the whites. Fearing an uprising as the Ghost Dance gained popularity, federal authorities insisted the Lakotas stop the ritual. Concerned that Sitting Bull might encourage defiance, they ordered his arrest. He was killed when some of his followers forcefully resisted. A small band of Lakotas, led by Big Foot, fled but was surrounded by the Seventh Cavalry near **Wounded Knee Creek**. When one Lakota refused to surrender his gun, both Indians and soldiers fired their weapons. The soldiers, with their vastly greater firepower, quickly prevailed. As many as two hundred fifty Native Americans died, as did twenty-five soldiers.

The events at Wounded Knee marked the symbolic end of armed conflict on the Great Plains. In fact, the end of the horse culture was written long before. Once the federal government began to encourage rapid economic development in the West, displacement of the Indians was probably inevitable. From the beginning, the Indians faced overwhelming odds—they had a superior knowledge of the terrain, superior horsemanship and mobility, and great courage, but the U.S. Army had superior numbers and superior technology. The army was also often able to find allies among Native American groups who were traditional enemies of the defiant tribes. The desperate nature of Indian resistance suggests that they clearly understood they were facing the loss of their culture and even their lives.

## Transforming the West: Mormons, Cowboys, and Sodbusters

- ★ **What did Mormons, cattle raisers, and farmers seek to accomplish in the West? How did they adapt their efforts to the western environment?**
- ★ **What were the motivations of these three groups in seeking to develop the West?**

Long before the last battles between the army and the Indians, the economic development of the West was well under way. Quite different groups sought to transform the West and make it suit their needs—among them, Mormons, cattle ranchers, and farmers.

**Mormons** Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, founded in New York in 1830.

**polygamy** The practice of having more than one wife at a time; Mormons referred to this as “plural marriage.”

**theocracy** A society governed by religious officials; the unity of religious and civic power.

### Zion in the Great Basin

By the end of the Civil War, development of the Great Basin region (between the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada) was well advanced owing to efforts by **Mormons**. Controversial because of their religious beliefs, which included **polygamy**, Mormons had been hounded out of one eastern state after another. In 1847 they finally settled near the Great Salt Lake, then part of northern Mexico. Led by Brigham Young, they planned to build a great Mormon state, which they called Deseret, in a region so remote that no one would interfere with them. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), which ended the Mexican War, incorporated the region into the United States. Congress created Utah Territory in 1850.

Nevertheless, in the remoteness of the Great Basin (see Map 18.1)—isolated by mountains and deserts from the rest of the nation—the Mormons created their Zion, organizing themselves into a **theocracy**. Church authority merged with politics, as a church-sponsored political party dominated elections for local and territorial officials.

Mormons eventually came under strong federal pressure to renounce polygamy. Proposals for Utah statehood were repeatedly blocked because of that issue. Many politicians were also concerned about the political power of the Mormon Church. In 1890, to clear the way for statehood, church leaders dissolved their political party, encouraged Mormons to divide themselves among the national political parties, and disavowed polygamy. Utah then became a state in 1896.

### Cattle Kingdom on the Plains

On the Great Plains, cattle dominated the economy. The expanding cities of the eastern United States were hungry for beef. At the same time, cattle were wandering the ranges of south Texas. When south Texas was part of New Spain (Mexico) Mexican ranchers developed an **open-range** system. The cattle grazed on unfenced plains, and *vaqueros* (cowboys) herded the half-wild longhorns from horseback. Many practices that developed in south Texas continued in the range-cattle industry, including **roundups** and **branding**.

To get cattle from south Texas to markets in the Midwest, Texans herded cattle north from Texas through Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) to the railroads being built westward. Half a dozen cowboys, a cook, and a foreman (the trail boss) could drive one or two thousand cattle. Between 1866 and 1880, some 4 million cattle plodded north from Texas.

As railroad construction crews pushed westward, cattle towns sprung up—notably Abilene and Dodge City, Kansas. In cattle towns, the trail boss sold his herd and paid off his cowboys, most of whom quickly headed for the saloons, brothels, and gambling houses. Eastern journalists and writers of **dime novels** discovered and embroidered the exploits of town marshals like **James B. “Wild Bill” Hickok** and **Wyatt Earp**, giving them national reputations—deserved or not—as “town-tamers” of heroic dimensions. In fact, the most important changes in any cattle town came when middle-class residents—especially women—organized churches and schools, and determined to create law-abiding communities like those from which they had come.

Most Texas cattle were loaded on eastbound trains, but some cattlemen took herds north to where they had virtually free access to vast lands still in the public domain. By the early 1870s, the profits in cattle raising on the northern plains attracted the attention of investors from the East, England, and elsewhere. The boom lasted until the mid-1880s, when severe winters decimated the open-range herds.

As the cattle industry grew, the cowboy became a popular **icon**. Fiction after the 1870s, and motion pictures later, created the cowboy image: a brave, white, clean-cut hero who spent his time outwitting rustlers and rescuing fair-haired white women from snarling villains. In fact, most real cowboys were young and unschooled; many were African Americans or of Mexican descent. On a cattle drive, they worked long hours (up to twenty a day), faced serious danger if a herd stampeded, slept on the ground, and ate biscuits and beans. They earned about a dollar a day and spent much of their working time in the saddle with no human companionship. Some joined the Knights of Labor.

### Plowing the Plains

Removal of the Native Americans and buffalo opened most of the Great Plains. When farmers entered this region, however, they encountered an environment significantly different from that to the east. Nevertheless, many first tried eastern farming methods. Some adapted successfully, but others failed and left.

**open range** Unfenced grazing lands on which cattle ran freely and cattle ownership was established through branding.

**roundup** A spring event in which cowboys gathered together the cattle herds, branded newborn calves, and castrated most of the new young males.

**branding** Burning a distinctive mark into an animal's hide using a hot iron as a way to establish ownership.

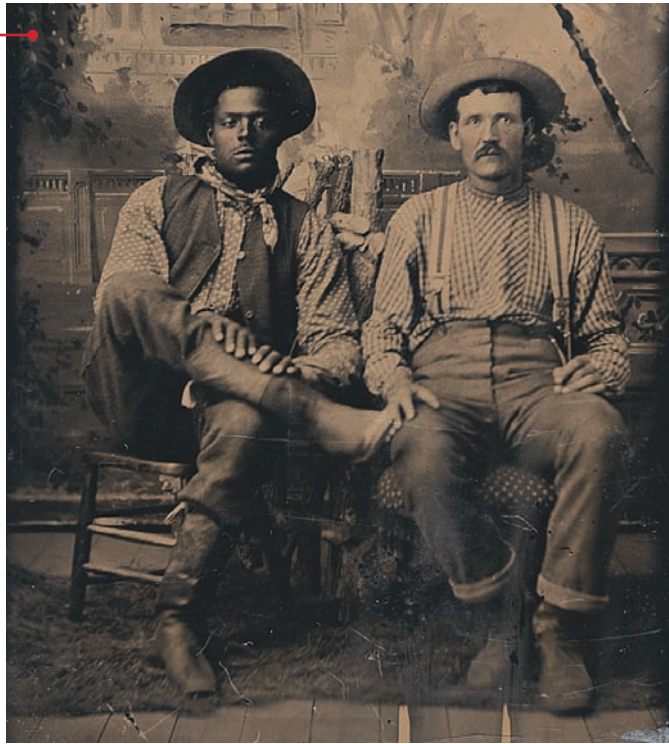
**dime novel** A cheaply produced novel of the mid-to late nineteenth century, often featuring the dramatized exploits of western gunfighters.

**James B. “Wild Bill” Hickok** Western gambler and gunfighter who for a time was the town marshal (law enforcement officer) in Abilene, Kansas.

**Wyatt Earp** American frontier marshal and gunfighter involved in a controversial shootout in 1881 at the O.K. Corral in Tombstone, Arizona, in which several men were killed.

**icon** A symbol, usually one with virtues considered worthy of copying.

At some time in the 1870s, these cowboys put on good clothes and sat for a photographer's portrait before a painted background. They probably worked together and were friends. Most cowboys were young African Americans, Mexican Americans, or poor southern whites. Collection of William Gladstone.



**aridity** Dryness; lack of enough rainfall to support trees or woody plants.

**meridian** One of the imaginary lines representing degrees of longitude that pass through the North and South Poles and encircle the Earth.

**ecosystem** A community of animals, plants, and bacteria, considered together with the environment in which they live.

**Bohemia** A region of central Europe now part of the Czech Republic.

**sod** A piece of earth on which grass is growing; the dense sod of the Plains was tough and fibrous with roots, dead grass from previous growing seasons, and hard-packed soil.

After the Civil War, the land most easily available for new farms stretched southward from Canada through the current state of Oklahoma. Mapmakers in the early nineteenth century had labeled this region the Great American Desert. It was not a desert, however, and some parts of it were very fertile. But west of the line of **aridity** (see Map 18.2)—sparse rainfall limited farming. Farmers who followed traditional farming practices risked not only failing but also damaging a surprisingly fragile **ecosystem**.

Those who came to farm were as diverse as the nation itself. Thousands of African Americans left the South, seeking farms of their own. Immigrants from Europe—especially Scandinavia, Germany, **Bohemia**, and Russia—also flooded in. Most homesteaders, however, moved from areas a short distance to the east, where farmland had become too expensive for them to buy.

Single women and homesteaders' wives could and did claim 160 acres of their own land. By one estimate, one-third of all homestead claims in Dakota Territory were held by women in 1886. Some single women seem to have seen homesteading as a speculative venture, intending to sell the land and use the money for such purposes as starting a business, paying college tuition, or creating a nest egg for marriage.

The Homestead Act, together with cheap railroad land, brought many people west, but the 160 acres the act provided were sufficient for a farm only east of the line of aridity. West of that line most crops, except possibly for wheat, required irrigation, or only cattle could be raised, requiring much more than 160 acres.

Those who complied with the Homestead Act's requirement to build a house and farm the land often faced unfamiliar difficulties. The plains were virtually barren of trees. The new plains settlers, therefore, scavenged for substitutes for the construction material and fuel that eastern pioneers obtained without cost from the trees on their land.

Initially, many families carved homes out of the land itself. Some tunneled into the side of a low hill to make a cavelike dugout. Others cut the tough prairie **sod** into blocks





**Map 18.2** Rainfall and Agriculture, ca. 1890

The agricultural produce of any given area depended on the type of soil, the terrain, and the rainfall. Most of the western half of the nation received relatively little rainfall compared with the eastern half, and crops such as corn and cotton could not be raised in the West without irrigation. The line of aridity, beyond which many crops required irrigation, lies between 28 inches and 20 inches of rain annually.

from which they fashioned a small house. Many combined dugout and sod construction. “Soddies” seldom made satisfactory dwellings. Years later, women told their grandchildren of their horror when snakes dropped from the ceiling or slithered out of walls. For fuel to use for cooking and heating, women burned dried cow dung or sunflower stalks. Sod houses were usually so dark that many household tasks were done outside whenever the weather permitted.

Plains families looked to technology to meet many of their needs. Barbed wire, first patented in 1874, provided a cheap and easy alternative to wooden fences. The barbs effectively kept ranchers’ cattle off farmland. Ranchers eventually used it, too, to keep their herds from straying. Because the sod was so tough, special plows were developed to make the first cut through it. These plows were so expensive that most farmers hired a specialist (a “sodbuster”) to break their sod. Much of the plains had abundant groundwater, but the **water table** was deeper than in the East. Windmills pumped water from great depths. Still, in periods when scarce rainfall fell below normal, crop failures drove many homesteaders off the plains. By one estimate, half of the population of western Kansas left between 1888 and 1892.

**water table** The level at which the ground is completely saturated with water.

Omer M. Kem (standing, slicing watermelon) posed for the photographer with his children and his aged father outside his sod-brick house in Custer County, Nebraska, in 1886. Four years later, Kem was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as a Populist, representing the grievances of western farmers. The photographer, Solomon Butcher, compiled pictures illustrating the nature of life on what one historian termed “the sod-house frontier.” Nebraska State Historical Society.



## Transforming the West: Railroads, Mining, Agribusiness, Logging, and Finance

- ★ **What difficulties confronted western entrepreneurs engaged in mining, agriculture, and logging? What steps did those entrepreneurs take to develop their industries?**
- ★ **How did economic development in the West during the late nineteenth century compare with that taking place in the eastern United States at the same time?**

At the end of the Civil War, most of the West was sparsely populated. However, the West of the lone cowboy and solitary prospector was also a region where most people lived in cities. In a region of great distances, few people, and widely scattered population centers, railroads were a necessity for economic development. Given the scarcity of water in much of the West, by 1900 many westerners had concluded that an adequate supply of water was as important for economic development as was their network of steel rails.

### Western Railroads

In the eastern United States, railroads moved through areas with developed economies, connected major cities, and hauled freight to and from the many towns along their lines. At the end of the Civil War, this situation existed almost

nowhere in the West.

Most western railroads were built first to connect the Pacific Coast to the eastern half of the country. Only slowly did they begin to find business along their routes. Railroad promoters understood that building a transcontinental line was very expensive and that such a railway was unlikely at first to carry enough freight to justify the

cost of construction. Thus they turned to the federal government for assistance. The Pacific Railroad Act of 1862 provided loans and also 10 square miles (later increased to 20) of the public domain for every mile of track laid. Federal lawmakers promoted railroad construction to tie California and Nevada, with their rich deposits of gold and silver, to the Union and to stimulate the rapid economic development of other parts of the West.

Two companies received federal support for the first transcontinental railroad: the Union Pacific, which began laying tracks westward from Omaha, Nebraska, and the Central Pacific, which began building eastward from Sacramento, California. Construction began slowly, partly because crucial supplies—rails and locomotives—had to be brought to each starting point from the eastern United States, either by ship around South America to California or by riverboat to Omaha. Both lines experienced labor shortages. The Union Pacific solved its labor shortages only after the end of the Civil War, when former soldiers and construction workers flooded the West. Many were Irish immigrants. The Central Pacific filled its rail gangs earlier by recruiting Chinese immigrants, but the sheer cliffs and rocky ravines of the Sierra Nevada slowed construction. Chinese laborers sometimes dangled from ropes to create a roadbed by chiseling away the solid rock face of a mountain. By 1868, Central Pacific construction crews totaled six thousand workers, Union Pacific crews five thousand. The tracks of the two companies finally met at Promontory Summit, north of Salt Lake City, on May 10, 1869 (see Map 18.1).

Westerners greeted the arrival of a railroad in their communities with joyful celebrations, but some soon wondered if they had traded isolation for dependence on a greedy monopoly. The Southern Pacific, successor to the Central Pacific, became known as the “Octopus” because of its efforts to establish a monopoly over transportation throughout California. It had a reputation for charging the most that a customer could afford. James J. Hill of the Great Northern, by contrast, was called the “Empire Builder,” for his efforts to build up the economy and prosperity of the region alongside his rails, which ran west from Minneapolis to Puget Sound. Whether “Octopus” or “Empire Builder,” railroads provided the crucial transportation network for the economic development of the West. In their wake, western mining, agriculture, and lumbering all expanded rapidly.

### Western Mining

During the forty years following the California gold rush (which began in 1849), prospectors discovered gold and silver throughout much of the West. Any such discovery brought fortune seekers surging to the area, and boomtowns sprang up almost overnight. Stores that sold miners’ supplies quickly appeared, along with boarding houses, saloons, gambling halls, and brothels. Once the valuable ore gave out, towns were sometimes abandoned.

Many of the first miners found gold by **placer mining**. The only equipment they needed was a pan, and even a frying pan would do. Miners “panning” for gold simply washed gravel that they hoped contained gold. Any gold sank to the bottom of the pan as the lighter gravel was washed away by the water.

Discoveries of precious metals and valuable minerals in the mountainous regions of the West inevitably prompted the construction of rail lines to the sites of discovery, and the rail lines in turn permitted rapid exploitation of the mineral resources by bringing in supplies and heavy equipment. After the early gold seekers had taken the most easily accessible ore, elaborate mining equipment became necessary. Gold-mining companies in California developed hydraulic systems to demolish entire mountainsides. One

**placer mining** A form of gold mining that uses water to separate gold from gravel deposits; because gold is heavier, it settles to the bottom of a container filled with water when the container is agitated.

**hydraulic** Harnessing the power of liquid moved in pipes under pressure; hydraulic mining uses water under great pressure to wash away soil from underlying mineral deposits.

**hydraulic** mining operation used sixteen giant water cannons to bombard hillsides with 40 million gallons of water a day—about the same amount of water used daily by the people of Baltimore. Hydraulic mining wreaked havoc downstream, filling rivers with sediment and causing serious flooding. It ended only when a federal court ruled in 1884 that the technique inevitably damaged the property of others and had to stop.

In most parts of the West, the exhaustion of surface deposits led to construction of underground shafts and tunnels. In Butte, Montana, for example, a gold discovery in 1864 led to discoveries of copper, silver, and zinc in what has been called the richest hill on Earth. Mine shafts there reached depths of a mile and required 2,700 miles of tunnels. Such operations required elaborate machinery to move men and equipment thousands of feet into the earth and to keep the tunnels cool, dry, and safe, and by the mid-1870s, some Nevada silver mines boasted the most advanced mining equipment in the world. The mining industry changed rapidly. Solitary prospectors panning for gold in mountain streams gave way to gigantic companies. Mining companies became vertically integrated, operating mines, ore-crushing mills, railroads, and companies that supplied fuel and water for mining. Western mine workers organized too. Beginning in Butte and spreading throughout the major mining regions of the West, miners' unions secured wages five to ten times higher than what miners in Britain or Germany earned.

### The Birth of Western Agribusiness

Throughout the Northeast, with a few exceptions, the family farm was the typical agricultural unit. In the South after the Civil War, family-operated farms, whether run by owners or by sharecroppers, also became typical. In California and other parts of the West, agriculture sometimes developed on a different scale, involving huge areas, the intensive use of heavy equipment, and wage labor. Today agriculture on such a large scale is known as **agribusiness**.

Wheat was the first major crop for which farming could be entirely mechanized. By 1880, in the Red River Valley of what is now North Dakota and in the San Joaquin Valley in central California, wheat farms were as large as 100 square miles. Such farming businesses required major capital investments in land, equipment, and livestock. One Dakota farm required 150 workers during spring planting and 250 or more at harvest time. By the late 1880s, some California wheat growers were using huge steam-powered tractors and **combines**.

Most of the great Dakota wheat farms had been broken into smaller units by the 1890s, but in some parts of California, agriculture flourished on a scale unknown in most parts of the country. One California cattle-raising company, Miller and Lux, held more than a million acres, scattered throughout three states. Although California wheat raising declined in significance by 1900, large-scale agriculture employing many seasonal laborers became established for several other crops.

Growers of fruits and similar crops tended to operate small farms, but they still required a large work force at harvest time to pick the crops quickly so that they could be shipped to distant markets while still fresh. At first, growers relied on Chinese immigrants for such seasonal labor needs. After the Exclusion Act of 1882 (discussed later in this chapter), the number of Chinese fell, and growers turned to other groups—Japanese, **Sikhs** from India, and eventually Mexicans.

### Logging in the Pacific Northwest

The coastal areas of the Pacific Northwest (see Map 18.2) are very different from other parts of the West. There, heavy winter rains and cool, damp, summer fogs nurture thick stands of evergreens, especially tall Douglas firs and coastal redwoods.

**agribusiness** A large-scale farming operation typically involving considerable land holdings, hired labor, and extensive use of machinery; may also involve processing and distribution as well as growing.

**combine** A large harvesting machine that both cuts and threshes grain.

**Sikh** Follower of sikhism, a religion founded in India in the sixteenth century.



The growth of California cities and towns required lumber, and it came first from the coastal redwoods of central and northern California. When the most accessible stands of timber had been cut, attention shifted north to Oregon and Washington. Seattle developed as a lumber town from the late 1850s onward, as companies in San Francisco helped to finance an industry geared to providing lumber for California cities. By the late nineteenth century, some companies had become vertically integrated, owning **lumber mills** along the northwest coast, a fleet of schooners that hauled rough lumber down the coast to California, and lumberyards in the San Francisco Bay area.

**lumber mill** A factory or place where logs are sawed into rough boards.

In 1883, the Northern Pacific Railroad reached Portland, Oregon, and was extended to the Puget Sound area a few years later. The Great Northern completed its line to Seattle in 1893 (see Map 18.1). Both railroads promoted the development of the lumber industry by offering cheap rates to ship logs. Lumber production in Oregon and Washington boomed, leaving behind treeless hillsides subject to severe erosion during heavy winter rains. Westerners committed to rapid economic development seldom thought about ecological damage, for the long-term cost of such practices was not immediately apparent.

### Western Metropolis: San Francisco

Lumber companies, the Miller and Lux cattle company, major mining companies, and the Southern Pacific Railroad all located their headquarters in San Francisco. Between the end

of the Civil War and 1900, that city emerged as the **metropolis** of the West and was long unchallenged as the commercial, financial, and manufacturing center for much of the region west of the Rockies.

**metropolis** An urban center, especially one that is dominant within a region.

From 1864 to 1875, the Bank of California, led by William Ralston, played a key role in development in the West. Like many western entrepreneurs, Ralston saw himself as a visionary leader bringing civilization into the wilderness, and he expected to profit from his efforts. He once argued that “what is for the good of the masses will in the end be of equal benefit to the bankers.” Seeking to build a diversified California economy, Ralston channeled profits from Nevada’s silver mines into railroad and steamboat lines and factories that turned out furniture, sugar, woolen goods, and more. Other entrepreneurs pursued similar endeavors. By the 1880s, San Francisco’s foundries produced locomotives, technologically advanced mining equipment, agricultural implements for large-scale farming, and ships.

### Water Wars

From the first efforts at western economic development, water was a central concern. Prospectors in the California gold rush needed water to separate worthless gravel from gold.

On the Great Plains, a cattle rancher claimed grazing land by controlling a stream. Throughout much of the West, water was scarce, and competition for water sometimes produced conflict—usually in the form of courtroom battles. The National Irrigation Association, created in 1899, sought federal assistance to move water to where it was needed for agriculture. The **Reclamation Act** of 1902 promised federal construction of irrigation facilities. The Reclamation Service, established by the law, eventually became a major power in the West. Reclamation projects sometimes drew criticism, however, for disproportionately benefiting large landowners.

**Reclamation Act** Law passed by Congress in 1902 that provided funding for irrigation of western lands and created the Reclamation Service to oversee the process.

Just as irrigation was vital to the success of agriculture, so water was vital to western urban growth. Beginning in 1901, San Francisco sought federal permission to put a dam across the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park in the Sierra Nevada, to create a reservoir. Opposition came from the **Sierra Club**, formed in 1892 and dedicated

**Sierra Club** Environmental organization formed in 1892; now dedicated to preserving and expanding parks, wildlife, and wilderness areas.



# It Matters Today

## WESTERN WATER AND GLOBAL WARMING

Westerners have always struggled with the problem of insufficient water. These days, many western cities draw their water from reservoirs created by dams in the mountains, where winter snow gradually melts during the spring and early summer. In California, where precipitation falls mostly in the winter and early spring, both cities and agriculture look to the Sierra Nevada snow pack for water in the summer and fall.

Global warming is likely to undermine this century-old solution to the problem of inadequate water. As the climate warms, most scientists project that more of the precipitation that falls in the mountains will be rain. Unlike snow, rain will come into the reservoirs all at once and may overwhelm their capacity. Water that runs downstream as winter and

spring floods will not be available for use in the summer and autumn. If these projections are accurate, western cities will need to devise new methods of conserving water.

- Go online and do research in western newspapers (the *Los Angeles Times* or *San Francisco Chronicle*) on the effect of global warming on urban water supplies. Are western city governments planning for future water shortages?
- What effect is global warming likely to have on the urban infrastructure of your city, especially those parts of the urban infrastructure created in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?

**aqueduct** A pipe or channel designed to transport water from a remote source, usually by gravity.

to preserving Sierra Nevada wilderness. Congress finally approved the project in 1913, and the enormous construction project took more than twenty years to complete. Los Angeles resolved its water problems in a similar way, by diverting the water of the Owens River to its use—even though Owens Valley residents tried to dynamite the **aqueduct** in resistance.

## Ethnicity and Race in the West

★ **Compare the experiences of American Indians, Mexican Americans, and Chinese Americans between the end of the Civil War (1865) and about 1900.**

In its ethnic and racial composition, the West has always differed significantly from the rest of the nation. In 1900 the western half of the United States included more than 80 percent of all Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Mexican Americans. The northeastern quarter of the nation remained predominantly white until World War I, and the South was largely a biracial society of whites and African Americans. The West has long had greater ethnic diversity.

### Immigrants to the Golden Mountain

**famine** A serious and widespread shortage of food.

Between 1854 and 1882, some 300,000 Chinese immigrants entered the United States. Most came from southern China, which in the 1840s and 1850s suffered from political instability, economic distress, and even **famine**. The fortune seekers who poured in from around the world as part of the California gold rush included significant numbers of Chinese. Among the early Chinese immigrants, California became known as “Land of the Golden Mountain.”

Although many Chinese worked in mining, they also formed a major part of construction labor in the West, especially for railroad building. Chinese immigrants worked

as agricultural laborers and farmers, too, especially in California, throughout the late nineteenth century. Some of them made important contributions to crop development, especially fruit growing.

In San Francisco and elsewhere in the West, they established **Chinatowns**—relatively autonomous and largely self-contained Chinese communities. In San Francisco's Chinatown, immigrants formed kinship organizations and district associations (whose members had come from the same part of China) to assist and protect each other. A confederation of such associations, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, eventually dominated the social and economic life of Chinese communities in much of the West. Such communities were largely male, partly because immigration officials permitted only a few Chinese women to enter the country, to prevent an American-born generation. As was true in many largely male communities, gambling and prostitution flourished, giving Chinatowns reputations as centers for vice.

Almost from the beginning, Chinese immigrants encountered discrimination and violence. In California, Chinese (along with Native Americans and African Americans) were prohibited from testifying in court against a white person. A state tax on foreign-born miners posed a significant burden on Chinese and Latino gold seekers. During the 1870s, many white workers blamed the Chinese for driving wages down and unemployment up. In fact, different economic factors depressed wage levels and brought unemployment, but white workers seeking a scapegoat instigated anti-Chinese riots in Los Angeles in 1871 and in San Francisco in 1877. In 1885 anti-Chinese riots swept through much of the West. Congress responded to repeated pressures from unions, especially Pacific Coast unions, by passing the **Chinese Exclusion Act** in 1882, prohibiting entry to all Chinese people except teachers, students, merchants, tourists, and officials. This was the first significant restriction on immigration. The law also reaffirmed that Asian immigrants were not eligible to become naturalized citizens.

In some parts of the West, the Chinese were subjected to segregation similar to that imposed on blacks in the South, including residential and occupational segregation

**Chinatown** A section of a city inhabited chiefly by people of Chinese birth or ancestry.

**Chinese Exclusion Act** Law passed by Congress in 1882 that prohibited Chinese laborers from entering the United States; it was extended periodically until World War II.



This public letter writer in San Francisco represents an institution that Chinese immigrants brought with them to America. By the 1880s, the Chinatowns of large western cities had become places of refuge that provided immigrants with some degree of safety from anti-Chinese agitation. California Historical Society, San Francisco, E. N. Sewell FN-01003.

**Mamie Tape** Chinese girl in San Francisco whose parents sued the city in 1885 to end the exclusion of Chinese students from the public schools.

rooted in local custom rather than law. In 1871 the San Francisco school board barred Chinese students from that city's public schools. The ban lasted until 1885, when the parents of **Mamie Tape** convinced the courts to order the city to provide education for their daughter. The city then opened a segregated Chinese school. Segregated schools for Chinese American children were also set up in a few other places, but most school segregation began to break down in the 1910s and 1920s.

When other immigrants began to arrive from Asia, they too concentrated in the West. Significant numbers of Japanese immigrants started coming to the United States after 1890. From 1891 through 1907, nearly 150,000 arrived, most through Pacific Coast ports. Whites in the West, especially organized labor, viewed Japanese immigrants in much the same way as they had earlier immigrants from China—with hostility and scorn. In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt, pushed by western labor organizations, negotiated an agreement with Japan to halt immigration of Japanese laborers.

### Forced Assimilation

As the headlines about the Great Sioux War and the Nez Perce faded from the nation's newspapers, many Americans began to describe American Indians as a “vanishing race.” But Indian people did not vanish. With the end of armed conflict, the relation between Native Americans and the rest of the nation entered a new phase.

By the 1870s, federal policymakers were developing plans to **assimilate** Native Americans into white society. After 1871, federal policy shifted from treating Indian tribes as sovereign dependent nations, with whom federal officials negotiated treaties, to viewing them as wards of the federal government. Leading scholars, notably Lewis Henry Morgan of the Smithsonian Institution, viewed culture as an evolutionary process. Rather than seeing each culture as unique, they analyzed groups as being at one of three stages of development: savagery (hunters and gatherers), barbarism (those who practiced agriculture and made pottery), and civilization (those with a written language). All peoples, they thought, were evolving toward “higher” cultural types. Most white Americans probably agreed that western Europeans and their descendants around the world had reached the highest level of development. Not until the early years of the twentieth century did this perspective come under challenge from anthropologists who held that every culture develops and should be understood on its own, rather than as part of an evolutionary chain.

Public support for a change in federal policy grew in response to speaking tours by American Indians and white reformers and to the publication of several exposés, notably Helen Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor* (1881) and *Ramona* (a novel, 1884). Soon federal policymakers accepted reformers' arguments for speeding up the evolutionary process for Native Americans. Apparently no reformers or federal policymakers understood that American Indians had complex cultures that were very different from—but not inferior to—the culture of Americans of European descent.

Education was an important element in the reformers' plans for “civilizing” the Indians. Federal officials worked with churches and philanthropic organizations to establish schools distant from the reservations, where many Native American children were sent to live and study. The teachers' goal was to educate their students to become part of white society, and to that end they forbade the Indian students to speak their languages, practice their religion, or otherwise follow their own cultural patterns. Other educational programs aimed to train adult Indian men to be farmers or mechanics. Federal officials also tried to prohibit some religious observances and traditional practices on reservations.

**assimilate** To absorb immigrants or members of a culturally distinct group into the prevailing culture.



# Investigating America

## Helen Hunt Jackson Appeals for Justice, 1883

Helen Hunt Jackson's novel *Ramona* (1884) was an eloquent appeal for justice for the so-called Mission Indians—the descendents of the people who had lived on the Spanish missions and Mexican ranchos of southern California for generations. The year before the publication of that novel, she published articles on the same theme. In these excerpts from her 1883 articles, she tells of the plight of the San Pasqual and Temecula bands, who had been driven from their traditional homes and had taken refuge in unwanted desert lands.

.....

While I am writing these lines, the news comes that, by an executive order of the President, the little valley in which these Indians took refuge has been set apart for them as a reservation. No doubt they know how much executive orders creating Indian reservations are worth. There have been several such made and revoked in California within their memories. The San Pasqual valley was at one time set apart by executive order as a reservation for Indians. This was in 1870. There were then living in the valley between two and three hundred Indians; some of them had been members of the original pueblo established there in 1835. [Due to political pressures from the white residents of that area] the order was revoked.

This sketch of the history of the San Pasqual and Temecula bands of Indians is a fair showing of what, with little variation, has been the fate of the Mission Indians all through Southern California. The combination of cruelty and unprincipled greed on the part of the American settlers, with culpable ignorance, indifference, and neglect on the part of the Government at Washington, has resulted in an aggregate of monstrous injustice, which no one can fully realize without studying the facts on the ground.


In the winter of 1882 I visited this San Pasqual valley... There are, in sight of the chapel, a dozen or so adobe houses, many of which were built by the Indians; in all of them except

one are now living the robber whites, who have driven the Indians out; only one Indian still remains in the valley. He earns a meagre living for himself and family by doing day's work for the farmers who have taken his land. The rest of the Indians are hidden away in the cañons and rifts of the near hills,—wherever they can find a bit of ground to keep a horse or two and raise a little grain.

The most wretched of all the Mission Indians now, however, are not these who have been thus driven into hill fastnesses and waterless valleys to wrest a living where white men would starve. There is in their fate the climax of misery, but not of degradation. The latter cannot be reached in the wilderness. It takes the neighborhood of the white man to accomplish it. On the outskirts of the town of San Diego are to be seen, here and there, huddled groups of what, at a distance, might be taken for piles of refuse and brush, old blankets, old patches of sailcloth, old calico, dead pine boughs, and sticks all heaped together in shapeless mounds; hollow, one perceives on coming nearer them, and high enough for human beings to creep under. These are the homes of Indians.

.....

- How does Helen Hunt Jackson relate the two groups to whom she assigns central responsibility for the misfortunes of the Mission Indians?
- Look back at the chapter opening and compare María Amparo Ruiz de Burton's experience with that of the Mission Indians. Do you think that she would have been sympathetic to the situation of these Indians? Why or why not?
- Helen Hunt Jackson died in 1885, two years before passage of the Dawes Severalty Act. Do you think Jackson, as an advocate for better treatment for Indians, would have favored the Dawes Act? Why or why not? How would you research this question?

 See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

The **Dawes Severalty Act** (1887) was another important tool in the “civilizing” effort. Its objective was to make the Indians into self-sufficient, property-conscious, profit-oriented, individual farmers—model citizens of nineteenth-century white America. The law created a governmental policy of severalty—that is, individual ownership of land by Native Americans. Reservations were to be divided into individual family farms of

**Dawes Severalty Act** Law passed by Congress in 1887 intended to break up Indian reservations to create individual farms (holding land in severalty, that is, individually).

160 acres. Once each family received its allotment, surplus reservation land was to be sold by the government and the proceeds used for Indian education. This policy therefore found enthusiastic support among reformers urging rapid assimilation and among westerners who coveted Indian lands.

Individual landownership, however, was at odds with traditional Native American views that land was for the use of all and that sharing was a major obligation. Dennis W. Bushyhead, principal chief of the Cherokee Nation, joined with delegates from the Cherokee, Creek, and Choctaw Nations in urging Congress to reject the law. Despite such protests, Congress approved the Dawes Act. The result bore out the warning of Senator Henry Teller of Colorado, who called it “a bill to despoil the Indians of their land.” Once allotments to Indian families were made, about 70 percent of the land area of the reservations remained, and much of it was sold outright. In the end, the Dawes Act did not end the reservation system, nor did it reduce the Indians’ dependence on the federal government. It did separate the Indians from a good deal of their land.

Native Americans responded to their situation in various ways. Some tried to cooperate with the assimilation programs. Susan La Flesche, for example, daughter of an Omaha leader, graduated from medical college in 1889 at the head of her class. But she disappointed her teachers, who wanted her to abandon Indian culture completely, when she set up her medical practice near the Omaha Reservation, treated both white and Omaha patients, and took part in tribal affairs. Dr. La Flesche seems to have moved easily between two cultures. Some Native Americans preferred the old ways, hiding their children to keep them out of school and secretly practicing traditional religious ceremonies.

### Mexican Americans in the Southwest

The United States annexed Texas in 1845 and soon after acquired vast territories from Mexico at the end of the Mexican War. Living in that region were large numbers of people who spoke Spanish, many of them **mestizos**—people of mixed Spanish and Native American ancestry. The treaties by which the United States acquired those territories specified that Mexican citizens living there automatically became American citizens.

Throughout the Southwest during the late nineteenth century, many Mexican Americans lost their land as the region attracted English-speaking whites (often called **Anglos** by those whose first language was Spanish). Treaty provisions had guaranteed Mexican Americans’ landholdings, but the vagueness of Spanish and Mexican land grants encouraged legal challenges. Sometimes Mexican Americans were cheated out of their land through fraud.

In California, some Californios had welcomed the break with Mexico. However, the California gold rush attracted fortune seekers from around the world, including Mexico and other parts of Latin America. Most came from the eastern United States and Europe and in northern California inundated the few thousand Mexican Americans. In southern California, however, there were fewer Anglos until late in the nineteenth century. There, Californios won election to local and state office, including Romualdo Pacheco, who served as state treasurer and lieutenant governor and who succeeded to the governorship in 1875.

By the 1870s, many of the **pueblos** (towns created under Mexican or Spanish governments) had become **barrios**—some rural, some in inner cities—centered on a Catholic church. In some ways, the barrios resembled the neighborhoods of European immigrants in the eastern United States at that time. Both had mutual benefit societies,

**mestizo** A person of mixed Spanish and Indian ancestry.

**Anglos** A term applied in the Southwest to English-speaking whites.

**pueblo** Town created under Mexican or Spanish government.

**barrio** A Spanish-speaking community, often a part of a larger city.

political associations, and newspapers published in the language of the community; and the cornerstone of both was often a church. There was an important difference, however. Neighborhoods of European immigrants consisted of people who had come to a new land where they anticipated making some changes in their own lives in order to adjust. The residents of the barrios, in contrast, lived in regions that had been home to Mexicans for generations but now found themselves surrounded by English-speaking Americans who hired them for cheap wages, denigrated their culture, and pressured them to assimilate.

Like Californios, some **Tejanos** (Spanish-speaking people born in Texas) had welcomed the break with Mexico. Lorenzo de Zavala, for example, served briefly as the first vice president of the Texas Republic. Also, like the Californios, some Tejanos lost their lands through fraud or coercion. By 1900, much of the land in south Texas had passed out of the hands of Tejano families—sometimes legally, sometimes fraudulently—but the new Anglo ranch owners usually maintained the social patterns characteristic of Tejano ranchers.

In New Mexico Territory, **Hispanos** (Spanish-speaking New Mexicans) were clearly the majority of the population and the voters throughout the nineteenth century. They consistently composed a majority in the territorial legislature and were frequently elected as territorial delegates to Congress (the only territorial position elected by voters). Republicans usually prevailed in territorial politics, their party led by wealthy Hispanos, and Anglos who began to arrive in significant numbers after the entrance of the first railroad in 1879. Although Hispanos were the majority and could dominate elections, many who had small landholdings lost their land in patterns similar to those in California and Texas—except that in New Mexico some who enriched themselves were wealthy Hispanos.

From 1856 to 1910, throughout the Southwest, the Latino population grew more slowly than the Anglo population. After 1910, however, that situation reversed itself as political and social upheavals in Mexico prompted massive migration to the United States. Probably a million people—equivalent to one-tenth of the entire population of Mexico in 1910—arrived over the next twenty years. More than half stayed in Texas, but significant numbers settled in southern California and throughout other parts of the Southwest. Inevitably, this new stream of immigrants changed some of the patterns of ethnic relations that had characterized the region since the mid-nineteenth century.

**Tejanos** Spanish-speaking people living in Texas at the time it was acquired by the United States.

**Hispanos** Spanish-speaking New Mexicans.

## The West in American Thought

- ★ **How have historians' views of the West changed?**
- ★ **How does the myth of the West compare with its reality?**

The West has long fascinated Americans, and the “winning of the West” has long been a national myth—one that sometimes obscures or distorts the actual facts. Many Americans have thought of the West in terms of a frontier—an imaginary line marking the westward advance of mining, cattle raising, and farming. According to this way of thinking, east of the frontier lay established society, and beyond it lay the wild, untamed West. Often this view was closely related to evolutionary notions of civilization like those put forth by Lewis Henry Morgan. For those who thought about the West in this way, the frontier represented the dividing point between barbarism and civilization.

**utopia** An ideally perfect place.

### The West as Utopia and Myth

During the nineteenth and much of the twentieth centuries, the West seemed a potential **utopia** to some who thought of the frontier as dividing emptiness from civilization. Generations of Americans dreamed of a better life on “new land” in the West, though relatively few ever ventured forth. In the popular mind of the late nineteenth century, the West was vacant, waiting to be filled and formed. Out there, it seemed, nothing was predetermined. A person could make a fresh start. People who dreamed of creating communities based on new social values often looked to the West.

The West achieved mythical status in popular novels, movies, and later television. Stories about the “winning of the West” usually begin with the grandeur of wide, grassy plains; towering, rocky mountains; and vast, silent deserts. In most versions, the western Indians face a sad destiny. They often appear as a proud, noble people whose tragic but unavoidable demise clears the way for the transformation of the vacated land by bold men and women of European descent. The starring roles in this drama are played by miners, ranchers, cowboys, farmers, and railroad builders who struggle to overcome both natural and human obstacles. These pioneers personify rugged individualism—the virtues of self-reliance and independence—as they triumph through hard work and personal integrity. Many of the human obstacles are villainous characters: brutal gunmen, greedy speculators, vicious cattle rustlers, unscrupulous moneylenders, selfish railroad barons. Some are only doubters—too timid or too skeptical of the promise of the West to risk all in the struggle to succeed.

### The Frontier and the West

Starting in the 1870s, accounts of the winning of the West suggested to many Americans the existence of an America more attractive than the steel mills and urban slums of their own day, a place where people were more virtuous than the barons of industry and corrupt city politicians, where individuals could thrive without labor strife or racial and ethnic discord. The myth has evolved and exerts a hold on Americans’ imagination even today. From at least the 1920s onward, the most prominent embodiment of the myth has been the cowboy: a brave and resourceful loner, riding across the West and dispelling trouble from his path and from the lives of others. He rarely does the actual work of a cowboy.

Like all myths, the myth of the West contains elements of truth but ignores others. The myth usually treats Indians as victims of progress. It rarely considers their fate after they meet defeat at the hands of the cavalry. Instead, they obligingly disappear. In fact, they did not disappear, but continued to live in the West. The myth rarely tempers its celebration of rugged individualism by acknowledging the fundamental role of government at every stage in the transformation of the West: dispossessing the Indians, subsidizing railroads, dispensing the public domain to promote economic development, and rerouting rivers to bring their precious water to both farmland and cities. The myth often overlooks the role of ethnic and racial minorities—from African American and Mexican cowboys to Chinese railroad construction crews—and it especially overlooks the extent to which these people were exploited as sources of cheap labor. Women typically appear only in the role of helpless victim or noble helpmate. Finally, the myth generally ignores the extent to which the economic development of the West replicated economic conditions in the East, including monopolistic, vertically integrated corporations and labor unions.

**Frederick Jackson Turner** American historian who argued that the frontier and cheap, abundant land were dominant factors in creating American democracy and shaping national character.

In 1893 **Frederick Jackson Turner**, a young historian, presented an influential essay called “The Significance of the Frontier in American History.” In it, he focused on the



frontier as a uniquely defining factor in the American historical experience. The western frontier, he claimed, was the region of maximum opportunity and widest equality, where individualism and democracy most flourished. Today, however, historians focus on many elements missing from Turner's analysis: the importance of cultural conflicts among different groups of people, the experiences of American Indians, gender issues and the experiences of women, and the ways in which the western economy resembles and differs from the economy of the East.

## Summary

The West underwent tremendous change during the thirty or forty years following the Civil War. Federal policymakers hoped for the rapid development of the region, and they often used the public domain to accomplish that purpose. Native Americans, especially those of the Great Plains, were initially seen as obstacles to development, but most were defeated by the army and relegated to reservations.

Throughout the West, railroad construction overcame the vast distances, making possible most forms of economic development. As western mining became highly mechanized, control shifted to large mining companies able to secure the necessary capital. In California especially, landowners transformed western agriculture into a large-scale commercial undertaking. The coniferous forests of the Pacific Northwest attracted lumbering companies. By the 1870s, San Francisco had become the center of much of the western economy. Water posed a significant constraint on economic development in many

parts of the West, prompting efforts to reroute natural water sources.

The western population included immigrants from Asia, American Indians, and Latino peoples in substantial numbers, but each group had significantly different expectations and experiences. White westerners used politics and sometimes violence to exclude and segregate Asian immigrants. Federal policy toward American Indians assumed that they could and should be rapidly assimilated and must shed their separate cultural identities, but such policies largely failed. Latinos—descendants of those living in the Southwest before it became part of the United States and those who came later from Mexico or elsewhere in Latin America—often found their lives and culture under challenge.

Americans have viewed the West both as a utopia and as the source of a national myth. But those views frequently romanticize or overlook important realities in the nature of western development and in the people who accomplished it.

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# Economic Crash and Political Upheaval 1890–1900

## CHAPTER 19

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: *Mary Elizabeth Lease*

In 1890, Mary Elizabeth Lease helped to organize the new People's Party and quickly became one of its best-known orators. All that fall, she spoke to enthusiastic audiences across her home state of Kansas. Her Republican opponents ridiculed her, calling her “Mary Yellin,” but the hard-pressed farmers who joined the new party idolized her.

Lease plunged into the male world of politics after years of personal hardship and a growing commitment to radical reform. Born in 1853 in Pennsylvania, Mary Elizabeth Clyens watched as the Civil War shattered her family—her father, older brother, and uncle all died fighting for the Union. At age seventeen, Mary went alone to Kansas to become a teacher. There she met and married Charles Lease. Charles and Mary tried to establish a farm but failed. They moved to Texas, returned to Kansas, and finally settled in Wichita. Along the way, Mary began giving speeches promoting temperance and woman suffrage. She joined the Knights of Labor, and her speaking became more radical. In Wichita, she studied law while raising four children, earning money by taking in laundry, and keeping a busy public speaking schedule. She was admitted to the Kansas bar in 1889.

As a leading Populist campaigner, Lease relentlessly attacked monopolies, railroads, bankers, and Wall Street, blaming them for the economic problems of farmers and workers. She is probably best remembered today for telling farmers to “Raise less corn and more hell,” but there is no solid evidence that she ever said it. However, she was credited with the phrase so often, by her opponents and supporters alike, that it has become forever linked to her name.



#### MARY ELIZABETH LEASE

*Although Mary Elizabeth Lease attracted a great deal of media attention in the early 1890s, this undated formal portrait is one of the few images of her that exist from that time.*

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.  
[LC-USZ62-36676].

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### ***Political Upheaval: The People's Party***

The Origins of the People's Party  
The People's Party

#### ***Political Upheaval, Part Two: The Politics of Race***

INVESTIGATING AMERICA: W.E.B.  
DuBois on Booker T. Washington

#### ***Political Upheaval, Part Three: The Failure of the Republicans***

Harrison and the Fifty-first  
Congress

The Elections of 1890 and 1892

IT MATTERS TODAY: Lodge Bill

#### ***Economic Collapse and Restructuring***

Economic Collapse and  
Depression

Labor Conflict and Corporate  
Restructuring

#### ***Political Realignment: The Presidential Election of 1896***

Failure of the Democrats

The 1896 Election: Bryan versus  
McKinley, Silver versus Protection

INVESTIGATING AMERICA: William  
Allen White, “What’s the Matter  
with Kansas?” 1896

After 1896: The New Republican  
Majority

#### ***Stepping into World Affairs: Harrison and Cleveland***

Building Up the Navy  
Revolution in Hawai‘i  
Crises in Latin America

#### ***Striding Boldly in World Affairs: McKinley, War, and Imperialism***

McKinley and War  
The “Splendid Little War”  
Republic or Empire:  
The Election of 1900  
The Open Door and China

#### ***Summary***

# Chronology

<b>1887</b>	Florida segregates railroads	<b>1895–1898</b>	Revolt against Spanish rule in Cuba
<b>1888</b>	Benjamin Harrison elected president	<b>1896</b>	Reconcentration policy in Cuba
<b>late 1880s</b>	Farmers' Alliances spread		William Jennings Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech
<b>1888–1892</b>	Australian ballot adopted in most states		William Allen White's "What's the Matter with Kansas?"
<b>1889–1891</b>	Fifty-first Congress: McKinley Tariff, Sherman Anti-Trust Act, Sherman Silver Purchase Act, significant increase in naval appropriation; federal elections bill defeated		William McKinley elected president
<b>1890</b>	<i>Alfred Thayer Mahan's Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783</i>		South Carolina adopts white primary
	Second Mississippi Plan	<b>1897</b>	<i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i>
	Populist movement begins	<b>1897–1899</b>	Dingley Tariff
<b>1891</b>	Lili'uokalani becomes Hawaiian queen	<b>1898</b>	European powers gain new concessions in China
	President Benjamin Harrison threatens war with Chile		De Lôme letter published in the New York Journal
<b>1892</b>	Homestead strike		U.S. warship <i>Maine</i> explodes
	Cleveland elected president again	<b>1899</b>	War with Spain
<b>1893</b>	Sherman Silver Purchase Act repealed		United States annexes Hawai'i by joint resolution
	Queen Lili'uokalani overthrown		Treaty of Paris signed
<b>1893–1897</b>	Depression		Senate debates imperialism
<b>1894</b>	Coxey's Army		Treaty of Paris ratified
	Pullman strike	<b>1899–1902</b>	Treaty of Berlin divides Samoa
<b>1895</b>	Booker T. Washington delivers Atlanta Compromise	<b>1900</b>	Open Door notes
<b>1895–1896</b>	Venezuelan boundary crisis	<b>1901</b>	Philippine insurrection suppressed
	Revolt against Spanish rule in the Philippines	<b>1902</b>	McKinley reelected
			United States Steel organized
			Civil government in the Philippines

During the early 1890s, populism was just one of the forces that were changing American politics. Another was the disfranchisement of black voters in the South. A major depression shook the economy, producing not only serious unemployment and deprivation but also political fallout. In the 1896 presidential race, the Populists merged with the Democrats in support of William Jennings Bryan. Voters, however, chose William McKinley, the Republican candidate, thereby endorsing a more conservative approach to federal economic policy. The long-term outcome was a decisive shift in American politics.

During the 1890s, too, the United States emerged as a major world power, with a strong, modern navy. In a war with Spain, the nation gained a colonial empire that stretched from the Caribbean nearly to the coast of eastern Asia. This, too, marked a major transformation of American politics, as foreign relations became a permanently important responsibility for federal policymakers.



## Political Upheaval: The People's Party

- ★ **What groups and which issues led to the formation of the Populist Party?**
- ★ **How did the Populists' proposals differ from the positions of the Republicans and Democrats entering the 1890s?**

In 1890–1891, farmers hard-pressed by debts, low prices for their crops, and the monopoly power of the railroads formed the People's Party, or **Populists**. Their efforts brought a significant restructuring of politics in several states and eventually had a major effect on national politics.

### The Origins of the People's Party

Populism grew out of the economic problems of farmers. During the 1870s and 1880s, farmers had become ever more dependent on the national railroad network, national markets for grain and cotton, and sources of credit in distant cities. Some of them felt increasingly apprehensive about the great concentrations of economic power that seemed to dominate their lives.

Many farmers had borrowed heavily to establish new farms and needed cash to pay those and other debts. Falling prices made it more difficult to repay their mortgages. Crop prices fell steadily after the Civil War as production of wheat, corn, and cotton grew much faster than the population. Some farmers, however, denied that prices were falling solely because of overproduction, pointing to the hungry and ragged residents in the slums. Farmers condemned the monopolistic practices of **commodity markets** in Chicago and New York that determined crop prices. Farmers knew that the bushel of corn they sold for 10 or 20 cents in October brought three or four times that amount in New York in December. The large majority of them, however, had to accept the October price because they could not store their crops for later sale.

Many farmers also targeted the railroads, which they insisted were greedy monopolies that charged as much as possible to deliver supplies to rural America and carry their crops to market. It sometimes cost four times as much to ship freight in the West as to ship the same amount over the same distance in the East. Farmers also protested that the railroads dominated politics in many states and distributed free passes to politicians in return for favorable treatment.

Crop prices, debt, and railroad practices were only some of the farmers' complaints. They protested, too, that local bankers charged 8, 9, or 10 percent interest—or even more—in western and southern states, compared with 6 percent or less in the Northeast. They argued that federal monetary policies contributed to falling prices and thereby compounded their debts. Farmers complained that the giant corporations that made farm equipment and fertilizer overcharged them. Even local merchants drew farmers' reproach for exorbitant markups. In the South, all these problems combined with sharecropping and crop liens.

### The People's Party

The Grange had demonstrated the possibility for united action, but its decline left an organizational vacuum among farmers, and the Greenback Party failed to fill it. In the 1880s, three new organizations emerged, all called **Farmers' Alliances**. One was centered in the north-central states. Another, the Southern Alliance, which limited its membership to white farmers, began in Texas in the late 1870s and spread eastward across the South. A third group, the Colored Farmers' Alliance, recruited southern black farmers. Like the Grange and Knights of Labor, the Alliances defined

**Populist** Nickname for the People's Party, formed in 1890–1891, which called for federal action to reduce the power of big business and to assist farmers and workers. The more general term **populist** refers to a politician who seeks to mobilize the people to change the existing power structure.

**commodity market** Financial market in which brokers buy and sell agricultural products in large quantities, thus determining the prices paid to farmers for their harvests.

**Farmers' Alliances** Organizations of farm families in the 1880s and 1890s, similar to the Grange.

**grain elevator** A facility for temporarily storing grain and loading it into railroad cars; such structures were equipped with mechanical lifting devices (elevators) to move the grain into railcars.

**antimonopolism** Opposition to great concentrations of economic power such as trusts and giant corporations, as well as to actual monopolies.

**collateral** Property pledged as security for a loan—that is, something owned by the borrower that can be taken by the lender if the borrower fails to repay the loan.

**initiative** Procedure allowing voters to petition to have a law placed on the ballot for consideration by the general electorate.

**referendum** Procedure whereby a bill or constitutional amendment is submitted to the voters for their approval after having been passed by a legislative body.

themselves as organizations of the “producing classes” and looked to cooperatives as a partial solution to their problems. Alliance stores were most common. The Texas Alliance also experimented with cooperative cotton selling, and some Midwestern Local Alliances built cooperative **grain elevators**.

Local Alliance meetings featured social and educational activities. The Alliances defined themselves as nonpartisan and expected their members to work for Alliance aims within the major parties. In the winter of 1889–1890, however, widespread support materialized for independent political action in the Midwest. By then, corn prices had fallen so low that some farmers found it cheaper to burn their corn than to sell it and buy fuel. Through the hot summer of 1890, members of the Alliance in Kansas, Nebraska, the Dakotas, Minnesota, and surrounding states formed new political parties to contest state and local elections. Women took a prominent part in Populist campaigning, especially in Kansas and Nebraska. Mary Elizabeth Lease was among the most effective.

The Populists emphasized three elements in their campaigns: **antimonopolism**, government action on behalf of farmers and workers, and increased popular control of government. Their antimonopolism drew on their own unhappy experiences with railroads, grain buyers, and manufacturing companies. It also derived from a long American tradition of opposition to concentrated economic power. Populists quoted Thomas Jefferson on the importance of equal rights for all, and they compared themselves to Andrew Jackson in his fight against the Bank of the United States.

The Populists’ solution to the dangers of monopoly was government action on behalf of farmers and workers, including federal ownership of the railroads and the telegraph and telephone systems, and government alternatives to private banks. Some Populists also endorsed a proposal of the Southern Alliance called the Sub-Treasury Plan, under which crops stored in government warehouses might be **collateral** for low-interest loans to farmers. Currency inflation, through greenbacks, silver, or both, formed an important part of the Populists’ platform, along with a graduated income tax. Through such measures, they hoped, in the words of their 1892 platform, that “oppression, injustice, and poverty shall eventually cease in the land.” They had some following within what remained of the Knights of Labor and expected to gain broad support among other urban and industrial workers by calling for the eight-hour workday and for restrictions on companies’ use of private armies in labor disputes.

Finally, the People’s Party favored a series of structural changes to make government more responsive to the people, including expansion of the merit system for government employees, election of U.S. senators by the voters instead of by state legislatures, a one-term limit for the president, the secret ballot, and the **initiative** and **referendum**. Many also favored woman suffrage. In the South, the Populists not only opposed disfranchisement of black voters but also posed a serious challenge to the prevailing patterns of politics by seeking to forge a political alliance of the disadvantaged of both races.

## Political Upheaval, Part Two: The Politics of Race

- ★ **How did southern white supremacists get around the guarantees of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments in their efforts to remove African Americans from politics in their states?**

At the same time that the angry farmers of the West and South were creating the Populist Party and demanding new economic policies, some southern white politicians were removing African Americans from politics. In the 1890s, politics in the South underwent

a major shift—toward writing white supremacy into law. Although Reconstruction came to an end in 1877, the Civil Rights Act of 1875, at least in theory, protected African Americans against discrimination in public places. Some state laws required racial separation—for example, many states prohibited racial intermarriage. State or local law, or sometimes local practice, had produced racially separate school systems, churches, hospitals, cemeteries, and other voluntary organizations. Segregation existed throughout the South, driven by local custom and the ever-present threat of violence against any African American who dared to challenge it. Restrictions on black political participation were also extralegal, enforced through coercion or intimidation.

Then, in the **Civil Rights cases** of 1883, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional. The Court said that the “equal protection” promised by the Fourteenth Amendment applied only to state governments and not to individuals and companies. State governments were obligated to treat all citizens as equal before the law, but private businesses need not offer equal access. In response, southern lawmakers slowly began to require businesses to practice segregation. In 1887 the Florida legislature ordered separate accommodations on railroad trains. Mississippi passed a similar law the next year, as did Louisiana in 1890, and four more states followed in 1891.

Mississippi whites took a more brazen step in 1890, holding a state constitutional convention to eliminate African Americans’ participation in politics. The new provisions did not mention the word *race*. Instead, they imposed a **poll tax**, a literacy test, and assorted other requirements for voting. Everyone understood, though, that these measures were designed to **disfranchise** black voters. Men who failed the literacy test could vote if they could understand a section of the state constitution or law when a local (white) official read it to them. The typical result was that the only illiterates who could vote were white. Most of the South watched this so-called Second Mississippi Plan unfold with great interest.

In 1895 a black educator signaled his apparent willingness to accept disfranchisement and segregation for the moment. Born into slavery in 1856, **Booker T. Washington** had worked as a janitor while studying at Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia, a school that combined preparation for elementary school teaching with vocational education in agriculture and industrial work. Washington soon returned to Hampton as a teacher. In 1881 the Alabama legislature authorized a black **normal school** at Tuskegee. Washington became its principal, and he made Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute into a leading black educational institution.

In 1895 Atlanta played host to the Cotton States and International Exposition. The exposition directors invited Washington to speak at the opening ceremonies, hoping he could reach out to the anticipated crowd of southern whites, southern blacks, and northern whites. Washington did not disappoint the directors. In his speech, he accepted an inferior status for blacks for the present: “No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top.” He also condoned segregation: “In all things that are purely social, we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.” Furthermore, he implied that equal rights had to be earned: “It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercise of these privileges.”

The speech—dubbed the **Atlanta Compromise**—won great acclaim for Washington. Southern whites were pleased to hear a black educator urge his race to accept segregation and disfranchisement. Northern whites, too, were receptive to the notion that the South would work out its thorny race relations by itself. Until his death in 1915, Washington was the most prominent black leader in the nation, at least among white Americans.

**Civil Rights cases** A series of cases that came before the Supreme Court in 1883, in which the Court ruled that private companies could legally discriminate against individuals based on race.

**poll tax** An annual tax imposed on each citizen; used in some southern states as a way to disfranchise black voters, as the only penalty for not paying the tax was the loss of the right to vote.

**disfranchise** To take away the right to vote; the opposite of enfranchise, which means to grant the right to vote.

**Booker T. Washington** Former slave who became an educator and founded Tuskegee Institute, a leading black educational institution; he urged southern African Americans to accept disfranchisement and segregation for the time being.

**normal school** A two-year school for preparing teachers for grades 1–8. The term is a translation from the French *école normale*, in which *école* means school and *normale* refers to norms or standards. Thus, an *école normale* was where future French teachers learned the curriculum that they were to teach to their students.

**Atlanta Compromise** Name applied to Booker T. Washington’s 1895 speech in which he urged African Americans to temporarily accept segregation and disfranchisement and to work for economic advancement as a way to recover their civil rights.

Even though other black leaders challenged the prominence of Booker T. Washington, he probably remained the best known African American in the United States from the time of his Atlanta Exposition speech until his death. He drew large crowds whenever he spoke. This photo was taken in 1915, in Shreveport, Louisiana, during Washington's last tour of the South. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution/Art Resource, NY.



Among African Americans, Washington's message found a mixed reception. Some accepted his approach as the best that might be secured. Others criticized him for sacrificing black rights. Henry M. Turner, a bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal church in Atlanta, declared that Washington "will have to live a long time to undo the harm he has done our race." Privately, however, Washington never accepted disfranchisement and segregation as permanent fixtures in southern life.

Even as African Americans debated Washington's Atlanta speech, southern lawmakers were redefining the legal status of African Americans. The rise of southern Populism, with its support for a black and white political coalition of the poor, alarmed southern conservatives. State after state followed the lead of Mississippi and disfranchised black voters. Louisiana, in 1898, added the infamous **grandfather clause**, which specified that men prevented from voting by the various new stipulations would be permitted to vote if their fathers or grandfathers had been eligible to vote in 1867 (before the Fourteenth Amendment extended the suffrage to African Americans). The rule reinstated poor or illiterate whites into the electorate but kept blacks out. Southern Democrats, who had long proclaimed themselves to be the "white man's party," also restricted their primaries and conventions to whites only. Even as southern states were removing African Americans from their political systems, some southern politicians sought to deflect the remaining attraction of Populism by arguing for the unity of all white voters in support of white supremacy.

Southern lawmakers also began to extend segregation by law. They were given a major assist by the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), a case that involved a Louisiana law requiring segregated railroad cars. When the Court ruled that "separate but equal" facilities did not violate the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, southern legislators soon applied that reasoning to other areas of life, eventually requiring segregation of everything from prisons to telephone booths—and especially such public places as parks and restaurants.

**grandfather clause** Provision in Louisiana law that permitted a person to vote if his father or grandfather had been entitled to vote in 1867; designed to permit white men to vote who might otherwise be disfranchised by laws targeting blacks.

***Plessy v. Ferguson*** Supreme Court decision in 1896 that upheld a Louisiana law requiring the segregation of railroad facilities on the grounds that "separate but equal" facilities were constitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment.



# Investigating America

## W.E.B. DuBois on Booker T. Washington, 1903

Activist and historian W.E.B. DuBois (discussed further in the next chapter) published the most influential critique of Booker T. Washington's policy of racial accommodation and gradualism in his book *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). As the following excerpt shows, DuBois rejected his one-time ally's willingness to avoid confrontation over race, demanding instead constant agitation for civil and political rights, as well as for the higher education of young African Americans.

.....

It startled the nation to hear a Negro advocating such a programme [the "Atlanta Compromise"] after many decades of bitter complaint; it startled and won the applause of the South, it interested and won the admiration of the North; and after a confused murmur of protest, it silenced if it did not convert the Negroes themselves. . . .

This "Atlanta Compromise" is by all odds the most notable thing in Mr. Washington's career. The South interpreted it in different ways: the [white supremacist] radicals received it as a complete surrender of the demand for civil and political equality; the [white] conservatives, as a generously conceived working basis for mutual understanding. So both approved it, and today its author is certainly the most distinguished Southerner since Jefferson Davis, and the one with the largest personal following. . . .

In the history of nearly all other races and peoples the doctrine preached at such crises has been that manly self-respect is worth more than lands and houses, and that a people who voluntarily surrender such respect, or cease striving for it, are not

worth civilizing. . . . Is it possible, and probable, that nine millions of men can make effective progress in economic lines if they are deprived of political rights, made a servile caste, and allowed only the most meagre chance for developing their exceptional men? If history and reason give any distinct answer to these questions, it is an emphatic No. . . .

[R]elentless color-prejudice is more often a cause than a result of the Negro's degradation . . . the way for a people to gain their reasonable rights is not by voluntarily throwing them away and insisting that they do not want them . . . Negroes must insist continually, in season and out of season, that voting is necessary to modern manhood, that color discrimination is barbarism, and that black boys need education as well as white boys.

.....

- How does DuBois use history to criticize Washington? How do you think the backgrounds of Washington and DuBois influenced each man's approach to racism?
- Washington was born a slave and lived his life in the South. DuBois was born in Massachusetts, the grandson of a doctor; he attended college in the South, and taught school there for a short time. In 1895 he became the first African American to earn a Ph.D. in history from Harvard, and then took a teaching position in the South. How might Washington's supporters have responded to DuBois's criticism? How might white southerners have responded?

Violence directed against blacks accompanied the new laws, providing an unmistakable lesson in the consequences of resistance. From 1885 to 1900, when the South was redefining relations between the races, the region witnessed more than twenty-five hundred deaths by lynching—about one every two days. The victims were almost all African Americans, and most victims lived in the states with the highest number of black residents. Once the new order was in place, lynching deaths declined slightly.



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### Political Upheaval, Part Three: The Failure of the Republicans

- ★ How did the Republicans in the Fifty-first Congress address the issues that were roiling politics? How did they address the concerns of the farmers who were attracted to the Populists?
- ★ Why did the Republicans fail in the elections of 1890 and 1892?

By 1888, the previous twenty-five years had seemed like one long political logjam, but the election that year seemed to the Republicans to hold the possibility for breaking the

blockage. When the new Congress convened late in 1889, the Republicans quickly set about writing their campaign promises into law.

### Harrison and the Fifty-first Congress

Benjamin Harrison had led Republicans to victory in the 1888 elections. With Harrison in the White House and Republican majorities in both houses of Congress, the Republicans set out to do a lot and to do it quickly. When the fifty-first session of Congress opened late in 1889, Harrison worked more closely with congressional leaders of his own party than any other president in recent memory. Democrats in the House of Representatives tried to delay, but Speaker Thomas B. Reed announced new rules designed to speed up House business.

The Republicans' first major task was tariff revision—to cut the troublesome federal surplus without reducing protection. Led by William McKinley of Ohio, the **House Ways and Means Committee** drafted a tariff bill that moved some items to the free list (notably sugar, a major source of tariff revenue) but raised tariff rates on other items, sometimes so high as to be prohibitive. Harrison signed the **McKinley Tariff** on October 1, 1890, and the revised tariff soon produced the intended result: it reduced the surplus by cutting tariff income.

In July the House also approved a federal elections bill, intended to protect the voting rights of African Americans in the South. Its Democratic opponents called it the “force bill,” to emphasize its potential for federal intervention in southern affairs. Proposed by Representative Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts, the bill would have permitted federal supervision over congressional elections to prevent disfranchisement, fraud, and violence. However, in a compromise with Democrats to ensure passage of the tariff bill, Republicans in the Senate tabled the Lodge bill.

The Senate, meanwhile, was laboring over two measures named for Senator John Sherman of Ohio: the **Sherman Anti-Trust Act** and the **Sherman Silver Purchase Act**. The Silver Purchase Act was an effort to address farmers' demands for inflation by slightly increasing the amount of silver to be coined. As had been the case with the Bland-Allison Act, however, both silverites and advocates of the gold standard found the law unsatisfactory. The Anti-Trust Act, the work of several Republican senators close to Harrison, was created in response to growing public concern about the new trusts and monopolies. Approved with only a single dissenting vote, the law declared that “every contract, combination in the form of trust or otherwise, or conspiracy, in restraint of trade or commerce among the several states, or with foreign nations, is hereby declared to be illegal.” Republicans thereby tried to be responsive to concerns about monopoly power, and the United States became the first industrial nation to attempt to prevent monopolies. In reality, however, the law proved difficult to interpret and enforce, and it had little effect on companies for more than ten years.

### The Elections of 1890 and 1892

Despite Republicans' hopes for breaking the political logjam, they immediately found themselves on the defensive. In the West, the Populists stood at the center of the campaign, lambasting both major parties for ignoring the needs of the people. In the South, Democrats held up Lodge's “force bill” as a warning of the potential dangers if Southern whites should bolt the party of white supremacy. There, members of the Southern Alliance worked within the Democratic Party to secure candidates committed to the farmers' cause. In the Northeast, Democrats attacked the McKinley Tariff

**House Ways and Means Committee** One of the most significant standing committees (permanently organized committees) of the House of Representatives, responsible for initiating all taxation measures.

**McKinley Tariff** Tariff passed by Congress in 1890 that sought not only to protect established industries but to stimulate the creation of new industries by prohibitory duties.

**Sherman Anti-Trust Act** Law passed by Congress in 1890 authorizing the federal government to prosecute any “combination” “in restraint of trade”; because of adverse court rulings, at first it was ineffective as a weapon against monopolies.

**Sherman Silver Purchase Act** Law passed by Congress in 1890 requiring the federal government to increase its purchases of silver to be coined into silver dollars.



# It Matters Today

## THE DEFEAT OF THE LODGE BILL

The failure of the Fifty-first Congress to approve the Lodge bill marked a retreat from federal enforcement of voting rights for seventy-five years. After the end of Reconstruction, some Republicans, especially those from New England, had continued to agitate for federal enforcement of voting rights but could not overcome the Democrats' control of the House of Representatives. After the defeat of the Lodge bill in a Republican Congress, Republicans generally made no further effort on behalf of federal enforcement of voting rights. Southern states systematically deprived African Americans of the voting rights supposedly guaranteed by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, as well as legally requiring the segregation of nearly every aspect of southern life.

Many African Americans and a few white allies continued to challenge this situation, but serious federal enforcement of voting rights came only with the Voting Rights Act of 1965, a measure that included a number of features similar

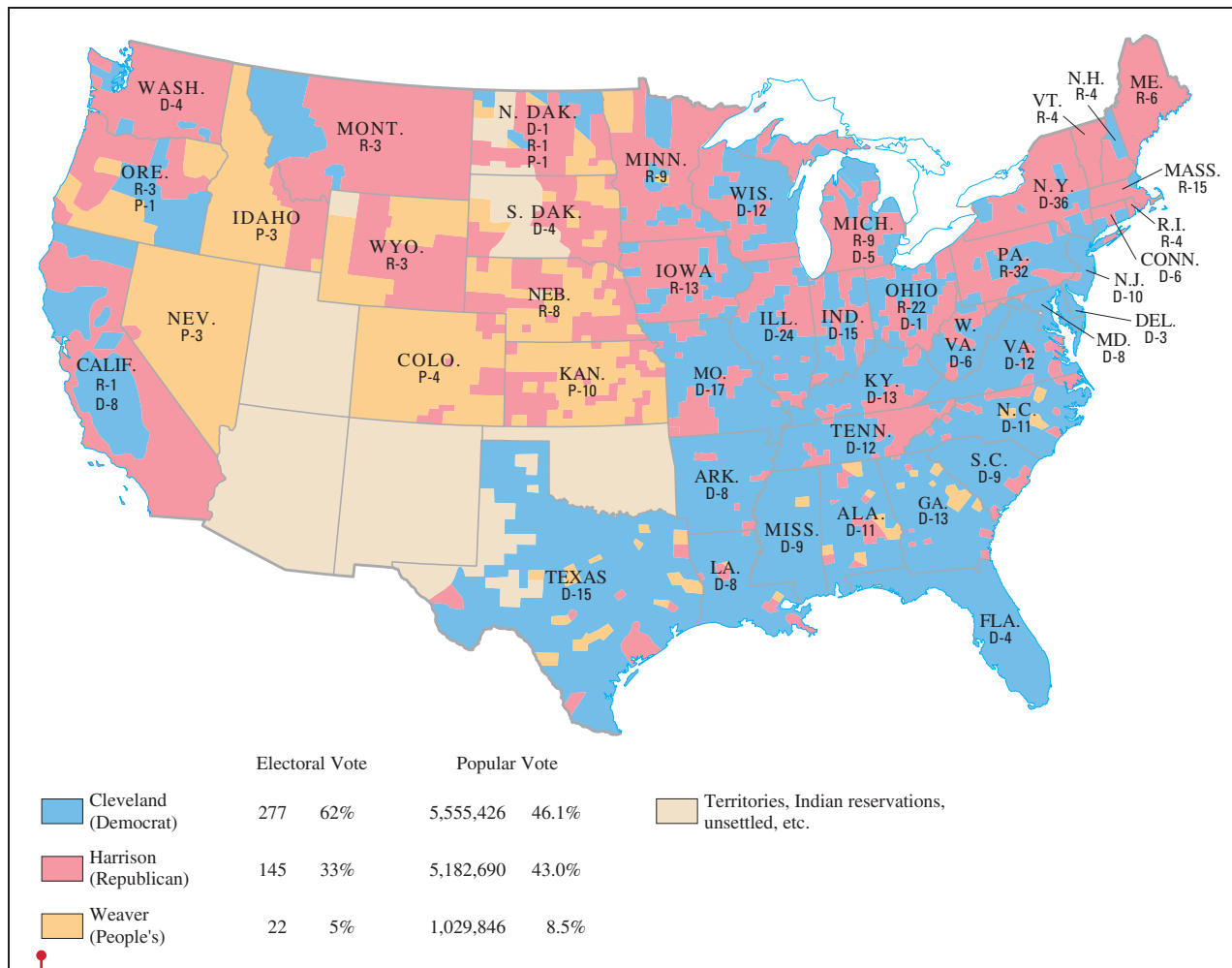
to the Lodge bill. The 1965 Act has since been amended, interpreted by the courts, and periodically extended. In 2006, the Republican leadership in Congress pushed through a renewal of the Voting Rights Act a year ahead of schedule, and President George W. Bush signed the bill into law.

- Go online and read the newspapers from 1965 when the original Voting Rights Act was being discussed in Congress. How is the Voting Rights Act similar to the Lodge bill? What were the arguments against the Voting Rights Act?
- Go online and read the newspapers from 2006 when the Voting Rights Act was most recently renewed. What were the arguments for early renewal? What opposition was there to renewal? How does the opposition in 2006 compare with the opposition to the Lodge bill? To the original act in 1965?

for producing higher prices for consumers. In the Rocky Mountain region, nearly all candidates pledged their support for unlimited silver coinage.

The new Populist Party scored several victories, marking it as the most successful new party since the appearance of the Republicans in the 1850s. Everywhere Republicans suffered defeat, losing to Populists in the West and to Democrats in the Midwest and Northeast. In the House of Representatives, the Republicans went from 166 seats in 1889 to only 88 in 1891. Many Republican candidates for state and local offices also lost. Republican disappointment in the results of the 1890 elections bred dissension within the party, and President Harrison could not maintain party unity.

For the 1892 presidential election, the Republicans renominated Harrison despite a lack of enthusiasm among many party leaders. The Democrats again chose Grover Cleveland as their candidate. Farmers' Alliance activists from the South joined western Populists to form a national People's Party and to nominate James Weaver, who had run for president as a Greenbacker twelve years earlier. Cleveland won with 46 percent of the popular vote, becoming the only president in American history to win two nonconsecutive terms. Harrison got 43 percent, and Weaver captured 8.5 percent. The Democrats kept control of the House of Representatives and won a majority in the Senate. Populists displayed particular strength in the West and South (see Map 19.1). The Democrats now found themselves where the Republicans had stood four years earlier: in control of the presidency and Congress and poised to translate their promises into law.



**MAP 19.1** Popular Vote for President, 1892

The Populist Party's presidential candidate, James B. Weaver, made a strong showing in 1892. This map indicates that his support was concentrated regionally in the West and South but that he had relatively little support in the northeastern states.

## Economic Collapse and Restructuring

- ★ **What were the short-term and long-term effects of the depression that began in 1893?**
- ★ **What conclusions might union leaders have drawn from Homestead and Pullman?**

After the Democrats swept to power in the 1892 elections, they suddenly faced the collapse of the national economy. Labor organizations suffered major defeats, putting unions on the defensive thereafter. As the nation began to recover from the depression, anxious entrepreneurs launched a merger movement intended to bolster economic stability that also brought much greater economic concentration.



### Economic Collapse and Depression

Ten days before Cleveland took office, the Reading Railroad declared bankruptcy. A **financial panic** quickly set in. One business journal reported in August that “never before has there been such a sudden and striking cessation of industrial activity.” Everywhere, industrial plants shut down in large numbers. More than fifteen thousand businesses failed in 1893, more proportionately than in any year since the depression of the 1870s.

At the time, no one understood why the economy collapsed so suddenly and completely. In retrospect, the collapse of a major English bank led some British investors to call back their investments in the United States, so some gold began to flow out of the United States. This outflow of gold combined with the reduction in federal revenues caused by the McKinley Tariff to produce a sharp decline in federal **gold reserves**. This reduction in federal gold reserves, in turn, combined with the bankruptcies of a few large companies to trigger a stock market crash in May–June of 1893.

Beyond these immediate events, the most important underlying weaknesses included the slowing of agricultural expansion and railroad construction. Some railway companies found they lacked sufficient traffic to pay their fixed costs, and almost one-fifth of the nation’s railroad mileage fell into bankruptcy. Banks with investments in railroads and steel companies then collapsed. A third or more of the workers in manufacturing may have been out of work. Many who kept their jobs received smaller paychecks, as employers cut wages and hours. Many who lost their jobs had little to fall back on except charity. A dramatic demonstration against unemployment began in January 1894, when Jacob S. Coxey, an Ohio Populist, proposed that the government hire the unemployed to build or repair roads and other public works and pay them with greenbacks, thereby inflating the currency. He called on the unemployed to join him in a march on Washington to push this program. Although most of Coxey’s supporters were not able to travel to Washington, the response electrified the nation—all across the country, men and women tried to join the march. When **Coxey’s Army** of several hundred arrived in Washington, police arrested Coxey and others for trespassing and dispersed the rest. Never before had so many voices urged federal officials to create jobs for the unemployed, nor had so many protesters ever marched on Washington.

### Labor Conflict and Corporate Restructuring

In the 1890s, workers often found that even the largest unions could not withstand the power of the new industrial companies. At Carnegie Steel’s major plant, located in Homestead, Pennsylvania, the company tried to break the union by bringing in strikebreakers protected by Pinkerton guards. A day-long battle led to the surrender of the Pinkertons, but also to the governor’s decision to send in the state militia, which protected the strikebreakers and thereby destroyed the union. In 1894, the nation’s largest union, the American Railway Union, found itself in conflict with the General Managers Association (GMA). The GMA was formed in 1893 and represented the twenty-four railway companies whose lines entered Chicago. The ARU and its charismatic president, **Eugene V. Debs**, sought to organize all railway employees into one **industrial union**. Striking workers at the Pullman Palace Car Company (a manufacturer of luxury railway cars) asked the ARU to boycott **Pullman cars**—to disconnect them from trains and proceed without them. The ARU agreed and put itself on a collision course with the GMA. The managers threatened to fire any worker who observed the boycott, but their real purpose, as expressed by the GMA chairman, was to eliminate the ARU and “to wipe him [Debs] out.”

**financial panic** Widespread anxiety about financial and commercial matters; in a panic, investors often sell large amounts of stock to cut their own losses, which drives prices much lower.

**gold reserves** The stockpile of gold with which the federal government backed up the currency.

**Coxey’s Army** Unemployed workers led by Jacob S. Coxey, who marched on Washington to demand relief measures from Congress following the depression of 1893.

**Eugene V. Debs** American Railway Union leader who was jailed for his role in the Pullman strike; he later became a leading socialist and ran for president.

**industrial union** Union that organizes all workers in an industry, whether skilled or unskilled, and regardless of occupation.

**Pullman car** A luxury railroad passenger car.

**injunction** A court order requiring an individual or a group to do something or to refrain from doing something.

Soon all 150,000 ARU members were on strike. Rail traffic in and out of Chicago and in many other parts of the nation, was ground to a halt. The companies found an ally in U.S. Attorney General Richard Olney, a former railroad lawyer. Olney obtained an **injunction** against the strikers on two grounds: (1) the strike prevented delivery of the mail and (2) it violated the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. President Cleveland sent thousands of U.S. marshals and federal troops to protect trains operated by strikebreakers. Mobs then lashed out at railroad property, especially in Chicago, burning trains and buildings. ARU leaders condemned the violence, but a dozen people died before the strike ended. Union leaders, including Debs, were jailed, and the ARU was destroyed.

The depression that began in 1893 further weakened the unions. In 1894 Samuel Gompers acknowledged that nearly all AFL affiliates “had their resources greatly diminished and their efforts largely crippled” through lost strikes and unemployment. Nevertheless, the AFL hung on. By 1897, the organization claimed fifty-eight national unions with a combined membership of nearly 270,000.

Just as American workers responded to hard times by organizing into labor unions, companies increasingly merged in hopes of avoiding bankruptcy. The most prominent example of this “merger movement” was United States Steel. As the economy edged out of the depression, J. P. Morgan began combining separate steel-related companies to create a vertically integrated operation. Andrew Carnegie had never carried vertical integration to the point of manufacturing final steel products such as wire, barrels, or tubes. By vertically integrating to include that last step, Morgan threatened to close off a significant part of Carnegie’s market. Faced with the formidable prospect of having to build his own manufacturing plants for finished products, Carnegie sold all his holdings to Morgan for \$480 million. In 1901 Morgan combined Carnegie’s company with his own to create United States Steel, the first corporation capitalized at over a billion dollars.

## Political Realignment: The Presidential Election of 1896

- ★ **What main issues divided the candidates in the 1896 presidential election?**
- ★ **What were the short-term and long-term results of the election?**

Nationally, Cleveland and the Democrats failed to stabilize the collapsing economy, which opened the door to Republican victories in 1894. When the Democrats in 1896 adopted some of the Populists’ issues and nominated a candidate sympathetic to many Populist goals, the People’s Party threw in its lot with the Democrats, but the rebounding Republicans scored a major victory that year.

### The Failure of the Divided Democrats

Democrats swept the elections in 1892, winning the presidency and control of Congress. When Congress met in 1893, Democrats faced several controversial issues, especially silver coinage and the tariff. The depression and unemployment also demanded attention. President Cleveland, holding staunchly to his party’s traditional commitment to minimal government and *laissez faire*, opposed any federal assistance to those in need. Instead, business leaders argued that the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890 had caused the gold drain that set off the depression, but many western and southern Democrats supported it as better than no silver coinage at all. Convinced that silver coinage had contributed to the economic collapse, Cleveland urged Congress to repeal the Silver Purchase Act. In Congress, most Republicans voted for repeal, but more



In 1896, William Jennings Bryan (left), candidate for the Democratic, Populist, and Silver Republican Parties, traveled some 18,000 miles in three months, speaking to about 5 million people. William McKinley (right), the Republican, stayed home in Canton, Ohio, greeting thousands of well-wishers. Bryan: Nebraska State Historical Society; McKinley: Ohio Historical Society.

than a third of House Democrats voted against it and about half of Senate Democrats did so. Cleveland won but divided his own party, pitting the Northeast against the West and much of the South.

The Democrats still faced the major challenge of the tariff. After their harsh condemnation of the McKinley Tariff and their commitment to cut tariff rates during the 1892 elections, they now had to keep their word. The tariff bill produced by the House reduced duties, tried to balance sectional interests, and created an income tax to replace lost federal revenue. In the Senate, however, some Democrats tagged on so many amendments and compromises that Cleveland characterized the result as “party dishonor.” He refused to sign it, and it became law without his signature in 1894. (The Supreme Court soon declared the income tax unconstitutional.)

Voters recorded their disgust with the disorganized Democrats in the 1894 elections. Democrats lost everywhere but in the Deep South, giving up 113 seats in the House of Representatives. Populists made few gains and suffered losses in some of their previous strongholds. Republicans scored their biggest gain in Congress ever, adding 117 House seats. Not surprisingly, Republicans looked forward eagerly to the approaching 1896 presidential election.

### The 1896 Election: Bryan versus McKinley, Silver versus Protection

Republicans confidently anticipated victory in the presidential election of 1896. They nominated William McKinley, a Union veteran who had risen to the rank of major. McKinley had served fourteen years in Congress and two terms as governor of Ohio. Known as a calm and competent leader, McKinley billed himself as the “Advance Agent of Prosperity.” The Republican platform supported the gold standard and opposed silver, but McKinley preferred to focus on the tariff. When the convention voted against silver, several western Republicans walked out of the convention and out of the party.

When the Democratic convention met, silverites held the majority but were split among several candidates. Then the platform committee chose **William Jennings Bryan**

**William Jennings Bryan** Nebraska congressman who advocated free coinage of silver, opposed imperialism, and ran for president unsuccessfully three times on the Democratic ticket.

# Investigating America

## William Allen White, "What's the Matter with Kansas?" 1896

William Allen White, a Republican and editor of the *Emporia [Kansas] Gazette*, published this editorial on August 15, 1896. The McKinley campaign reprinted a million copies in pamphlet form, making sure that every middle-class voter in the Midwest had a copy.

Not only has [Kansas] lost population, but she has lost money. Every moneyed man in the state who could get out without loss has gone. . . . Yet the nation has grown rich; other states have increased in population and wealth. . . .

What's the matter with Kansas? We all know; yet here we are at it again. We have an old mossback Jacksonian who snorts and howls because there is a bathtub in the state house; we are running that old jay for Governor. We have another shabby, wild-eyed, rattle-brained fanatic who has said openly in a dozen speeches that "the rights of the user are paramount to the rights of the owner"; we are running him for Chief Justice, so that capital will come tumbling over itself to get into the state. . . . Then, for fear some hint that the state had become respectable might percolate through the civilized portions of the nation, we have decided to send three or four harpies out lecturing, telling the people that Kansas is raising hell and letting the corn go to weeds. . . .

What we are after is the money power. Because we have become poorer and ornerier all and meaner than a spavined, distempered mule, we, the people of Kansas, propose to kick; we don't care to build up, we wish to tear down.

"There are two ideas of government," said our noble Bryan at Chicago. "There are those who believe that if you just legislate to make the well-to-do prosperous, this prosperity will leak through on those below. The Democratic idea has

been that if you legislate to make the masses prosperous their prosperity will find its way up through every class which rests upon them." That's the stuff! Give the prosperous man the dickens! Legislate the thriftless man into ease. . . . Whoop it up for the ragged trousers; put the lazy, greasy fizzle, who can't pay his debts, on an altar, and bow down and worship him. Let the state ideal be high. What we need is not the respect of our fellow men, but the chance to get something for nothing. . . .

What's the matter with Kansas? Nothing under the shining sun. . . . Kansas is all right. She has started in to raise hell, as Mrs. Lease advised, and she seems to have an overproduction. But that doesn't matter. Kansas never did believe in diversified crops. Kansas is all right. There is absolutely nothing wrong with Kansas.

- Does it seem reasonable, as White sarcastically implies, that investors would avoid Kansas because of candidates like the one for chief justice White quotes?
- Next, White refers to Mary Elizabeth Lease and other women who campaigned for the Populists. How has White twisted the meaning of the phrase, "Raise less corn and more hell"? How do you think Lease would respond to this?
- A frequent theme in anti-Populist and anti-Bryan rhetoric was that criticism of monopoly and of Wall Street was just "kicking" and had no positive aspects. Are you persuaded that White's version is the true meaning of Bryan's statement? Does this sort of political rhetoric strike you as likely to be effective in changing voters' minds? Why or why not?



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

of Nebraska to speak in a convention debate on silver. Blessed with a commanding voice, Bryan had won election to the House of Representatives in 1890 and 1892 and gained national attention for his eloquent defense of silver. His speech was masterful, defining the issue as a conflict between "the producing masses" and "the idle holders of idle capital." His closing rang defiant: "We will answer their demand for a gold standard by saying to them: You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns. You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold." The speech provoked an enthusiastic half-hour demonstration in support of silver—and Bryan. Only 36 years old, Bryan soon won the presidential nomination.



The Populists and the defecting western Republicans, who were quickly dubbed Silver Republicans, held nominating conventions next, amid frustration that the Democrats had stolen their thunder. Bryan favored silver, the income tax, and a broad range of reforms that Populists also favored, and he had worked closely with Populists. Populists felt compelled to give him their nomination too, and Silver Republicans did the same. Subsequently, a group of Cleveland supporters nominated a Gold Democratic candidate.

Bryan and McKinley fought all-out campaigns but used sharply contrasting tactics. McKinley stayed at home in Canton, Ohio, and campaigned from his front porch, but Bryan, vigorous and young, took his case and his oratory directly to the voters in four grueling train journeys through twenty-six states and more than 250 cities. Speaking to perhaps 5 million people in all, he stressed over and over that silver was the most important issue and that other reforms would follow once it was settled. Large crowds of excited and enthusiastic supporters greeted him nearly everywhere. Yet business leaders feared that Bryan and silver coinage would bring financial collapse, and McKinley's campaign manager, Marcus Hanna, played on such fears to secure a campaign fund more than double the size of any previous effort.

McKinley won by the largest margin of victory since 1872. Bryan carried the South and nearly the entire West. McKinley's victory came in the urban, industrial Northeast. Of the twenty largest cities in the nation, only New Orleans went for Bryan. The crucial battleground was the Midwest, where McKinley carried not only the urban industrial regions but also many farming areas.

Bryan's defeat spelled the end of the Populist Party. A few Populists tried to hold together the tattered remnants of their party, whereas others scattered among the Democrats, Socialists, and Republicans; and some simply ignored politics. The issues they had raised—control of huge corporations, the extension of democratic processes, a fair monetary system—lived on, to be addressed by others. Their influence remained especially prominent in Bryan's wing of the Democratic Party.

### After 1896: The New Republican Majority

McKinley's victory ushered in a generation of Republican dominance of national politics. Republicans retained majorities in the House of Representatives for twenty-eight of the thirty-six years after 1894, and in the Senate for thirty of those thirty-six years. Yet the events of the 1890s brought about drastic changes in the Democratic Party, as Bryan and his allies moved the party away from its commitment to minimal government and *laissez faire*. Bryan and other party leaders agreed with the Populists that the solution to the problems of economic concentration lay in a more active government that could limit monopoly power. "A private monopoly," Bryan never tired of repeating, "is indefensible and intolerable."

McKinley provided strong executive leadership and worked closely with leaders of his party in Congress to develop and implement new policies. In 1897 a revised protective tariff (the Dingley Tariff) fulfilled that Republican campaign promise, driving tariff rates sharply higher and reducing the list of imports that could enter the nation without charge. In 1900 the **Gold Standard Act** wrote that Republican pledge into law.

In the 1890s, American politics changed. American politics in 1888 looked much like American politics in 1876 or even 1844. But in the 1890s, party loyalties based on ethnicity became less intense as voters heeded policy differences and felt pulled toward the party that served their personal interests of the moment. In the early 1900s, the continued decline of political parties and partisan loyalties among voters combined with the

**Gold Standard Act** Law passed by Congress in 1900 that made gold the monetary standard for all currency issued.

emergence of organized interest groups to create even more change, producing the major structural features of American politics in the twentieth century.

## Stepping into World Affairs: Harrison and Cleveland

★ **How and why did some Americans' attitudes about the U.S. role in world affairs begin to change between 1889 and 1897?**

★ **What were the policy implications of these changes?**

During the 1890s, America's involvement in world affairs changed in important ways. One element revolved around a new role for the U.S. Navy; another related to the emergence and acceptance of new concepts of America's global status and foreign policy.

**Alfred Thayer Mahan** Naval officer and specialist on naval history who stressed the importance of sea power in international politics and diplomacy.

### Building Up the Navy

**Alfred Thayer Mahan** played a key role in the development of a modern navy. Mahan, president of the Naval War College, exerted a powerful influence. In his writings and lectures, Mahan argued that sea power had been the determin-

ing factor in European power struggles for the previous 150 years. He found a receptive audience with President Harrison and the Republicans in both houses of Congress.

Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy convinced Congress to modernize the navy and to expand it significantly, creating a modern navy centered on battleships. When construction was under way on three of eighteen modern battleships, Tracy happily announced that “we shall rule [the sea] as certainly as the sun doth rise!”

Naval expansion came as some Americans began, in Mahan's phrase, to “look outward.” Appeals for change came from many sources: Protestant ministers, scholars, business figures, historians, politicians. Together they redefined the way many Americans, and American policymakers, viewed the role of the nation in world affairs. Social Darwinism and the notion of “progress” merged with a belief in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxons—the people of England and their descendants—who thereby had a duty to enlighten and uplift other peoples.

### Revolution in Hawai'i

New views on the strategic significance of the Pacific focused the attention of many Americans on Hawai'i when a revolution broke out there early in 1893. The most immediate causes of the revolution stemmed from changes in American

tariff rates on sugar. In 1890, when the McKinley Tariff put sugar on the free list, all imported sugar entered the United States without a tariff. Previously only Hawaiian sugar had entered duty-free. Now it faced stiff competition in the American market, notably from Cuban sugar. The McKinley Tariff had also provided that sugar grown within the United States was to receive a subsidy of 2 cents per pound. Facing economic disaster, many Hawaiian planters began to talk of annexation to the United States.

In 1891 King Kalakaua died and was succeeded by his sister, **Lili'uokalani**, who hoped to restore Hawai'i to the indigenous Hawaiians and to return political power to the monarchy. Some *haole* entrepreneurs feared that they might lose both their political clout and their economic holdings. On January 17, 1893, a group of plotters proclaimed a republic and announced that they would seek annexation by the United States. John L. Stevens, the U.S. minister to Hawai'i, ordered the landing of 150 U.S. Marines. Lili'uokalani surrendered, as she put it, “to the superior force of the United States.” Stevens immediately recognized the new republic, declared it a **protectorate** of the United States, and raised the American flag.

**Lili'uokalani** Last reigning queen of Hawai'i, whose desire to restore land to the Hawaiian people and perpetuate the monarchy prompted *haole* planters to remove her from power in 1893.

**protectorate** A country partially controlled by a stronger power and dependent on that power for protection from foreign threats.

The Harrison administration **repudiated** Stevens's overzealous deeds but opened negotiations with representatives of the new republic. The Senate received a treaty of annexation shortly before Cleveland became president. When Cleveland learned that the revolution could not have succeeded without the intervention of the marines, he asked the new officials to restore the queen. They refused, and Hawai'i continued as an independent republic, dominated by its *haole* business and planter community.

**repudiate** To reject as invalid or unauthorized.

### Crises in Latin America

Although Harrison and Cleveland disagreed regarding Hawai'i, they moved in similar directions with regard to Latin America. Both presidents extended American involvement, and both threatened the use of force.

In 1895–1896, Cleveland took the nation to the edge of war over a boundary dispute between Venezuela and British Guiana. Venezuela proposed arbitration, but Britain refused. Eventually Cleveland asked Congress for authority to determine the boundary and enforce it. Faced by the possibility of conflict with the United States, Britain agreed to arbitration. Cleveland's major objective was to serve notice to European imperial powers that the Western Hemisphere was off-limits in the ongoing scramble for colonies. Cleveland reacted more cautiously to a situation in Cuba. Cuba and Puerto Rico were all that remained of the once-mighty Spanish empire in the Americas, and Cubans had rebelled against Spain repeatedly. In 1894, changes in American tariff policies on sugar caused economic distress in Cuba. A new insurrection erupted, and advocates of *Cuba libre* ("a free Cuba") received support from sympathizers in the United States. In 1896, in response to the **insurgents' guerrilla warfare**, the Spanish commander, General Valeriano Weyler, established a **reconcentration** policy. The civilian population was ordered into fortified towns or camps. Everyone who remained outside these fortified areas was assumed to be an insurgent, subject to military action. Disease and starvation soon swept through the camps, killing many Cubans.

American newspapers—especially **Joseph Pulitzer's** *New York World* and **William Randolph Hearst's** *New York Journal*—vied in portraying Spanish atrocities. Papers sent their best reporters to Cuba and exaggerated the reports, a practice called **yellow journalism**. Sickened from the steady diet of such sensational stories, many Americans began clamoring for action to rescue the Cubans.

**insurgent** Rebel or revolutionary; one who takes part in an insurrection or rebellion against constituted authority.

**guerrilla warfare** An irregular form of war carried on by small bodies of men acting independently.

**reconcentration** Spanish policy in Cuba in 1896 that ordered the civilian population into fortified camps so as to isolate the Cuban revolutionaries who remained outside the camps.

**Joseph Pulitzer** Hungarian-born newspaper publisher whose *New York World* printed sensational stories about Cuba that helped precipitate the Spanish-American War.

**William Randolph Hearst** Publisher and rival to Pulitzer whose newspaper, the *New York Journal*, distorted stories and actively promoted the war with Spain.

**yellow journalism** The use of sensational exposés, embellished reporting, and attention-grabbing headlines to sell newspapers.

## Striding Boldly in World Affairs: McKinley, War, and Imperialism

★ **What events led the United States into war with Spain?**

★ **What new attitudes about America's role in world affairs appeared in the debate over the acquisition of new possessions?**

In 1898 the United States went to war with Spain over Cuba. Far from combat, John Hay, the American ambassador to Great Britain, celebrated the conflict as "a splendid little war," and the description stuck. Some who promoted American intervention envisioned a quick war to establish a Cuban republic. Others saw war with Spain as an opportunity to seize territory and acquire a colonial empire for the United States.

### McKinley and War

William McKinley became president amid increasing demands for action regarding Cuba. He moved cautiously, however, gradually stepping up diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis. Late in 1897, Spain responded by softening the

**Enrique Dupuy de Lôme** Spanish minister to the United States whose private letter criticizing President McKinley was stolen and printed in the *New York Journal*, increasing anti-Spanish sentiment.

**U.S.S. Maine** American warship that exploded in Havana Harbor in 1898, inspiring the motto “Remember the *Maine*!” which spurred the Spanish-American War.

**mediation** An attempt to bring about the peaceful settlement of a dispute through the intervention of a neutral party.

**Teller Amendment** Resolution approved by the U.S. Senate in 1898, by which the United States promised not to annex Cuba; introduced by Senator Henry Teller.

**Philippine Islands** A group of islands in the Pacific Ocean southeast of China that came under U.S. control in 1898 after the Spanish-American War; they became an independent nation after World War II.

**Theodore Roosevelt** American politician and writer who advocated war against Spain in 1898; elected as McKinley’s vice president in 1900 and became president in 1901 upon McKinley’s assassination.

reconcentration policy and offering the Cubans limited self-government. In February 1898, two events pushed the United States toward war.

First, Cuban insurgents stole a letter written by **Enrique Dupuy de Lôme**, the Spanish minister to the United States, and released it to the *New York Journal*. In it, de Lôme criticized President McKinley as being weak and implied that the Spanish government had no serious commitment to reform in Cuba.

A few days later, on February 15, an explosion ripped open the American warship **U.S.S. Maine**, anchored in Havana Harbor, and it sank, killing more than 260 Americans. The yellow press accused Spain of sabotage. An official inquiry blamed a submarine mine but could not determine whose it may have been. (Years later, an investigation indicated that the blast was probably of internal origin, resulting from a fire.) Regardless of how the explosion occurred, those advocating intervention now had a rallying cry: “Remember the *Maine*!”

McKinley now demanded an immediate end to the fighting, an end to reconcentration, measures to relieve the suffering, and **mediation** by McKinley. The Spanish government replied with some concessions, but said nothing about mediation or independence for Cuba.

On April 11, McKinley sent a message to Congress stating that “the war in Cuba must stop” and asking for authority to act. Congress answered on April 19 with four resolutions: (1) declaring that Cuba was and should be independent, (2) demanding that Spain withdraw “at once,” (3) authorizing the president to use force to accomplish Spanish withdrawal, and (4) disavowing any intention to annex the island. The first three resolutions amounted to a declaration of war. The fourth is usually called the **Teller Amendment** for its sponsor, Senator Henry M. Teller. In response, Spain declared war.

### The “Splendid Little War”

Many Americans were surprised that the first engagement in the war occurred in the **Philippine Islands**—nearly halfway around the world from Cuba. The Philippines had been a Spanish colony for three hundred years, but had rebelled repeatedly, most recently in 1896.

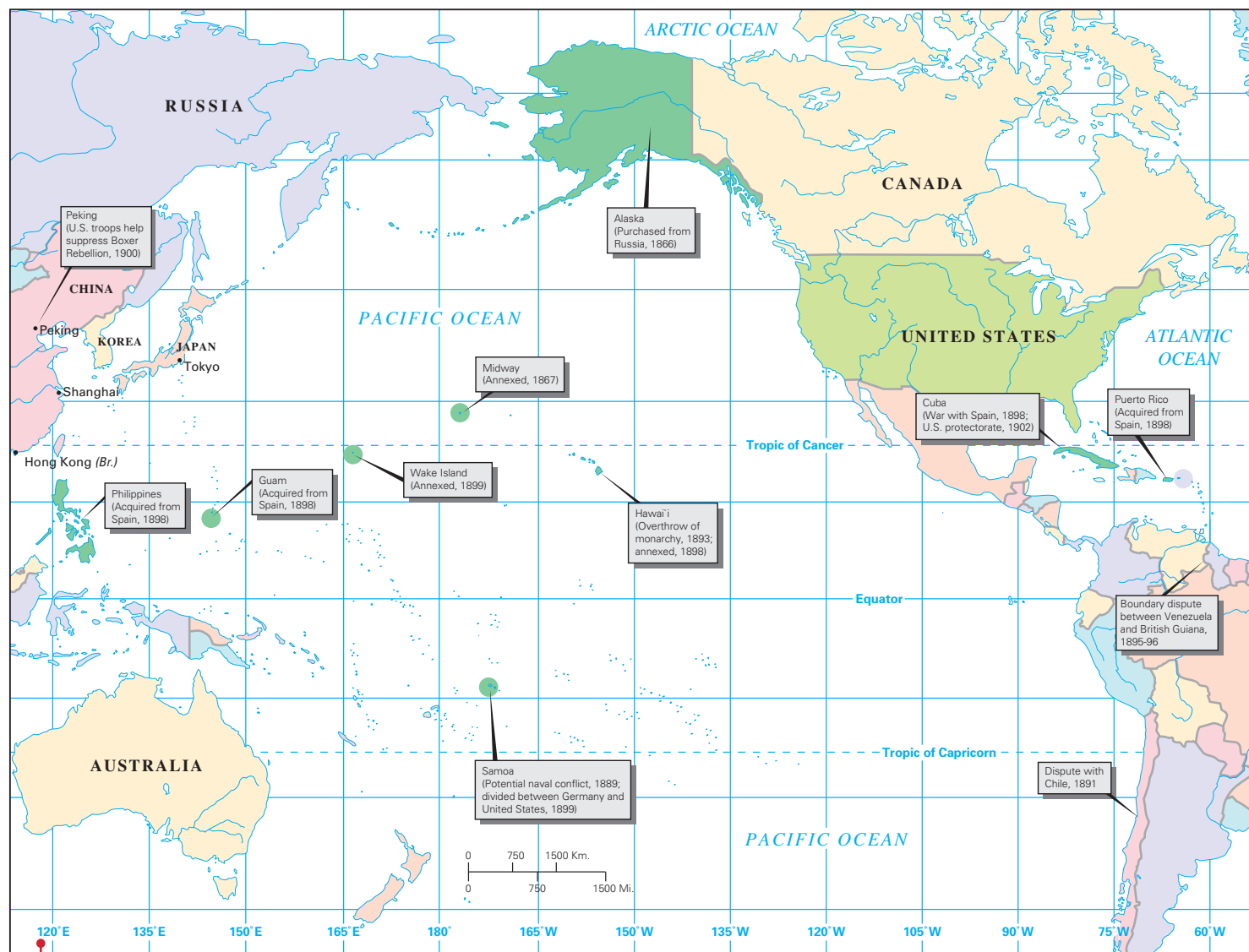
Some Americans understood the islands’ strategic location with regard to eastern Asia—including Assistant Secretary of the Navy **Theodore Roosevelt**. In February 1898, six weeks before McKinley’s war message to Congress, Roosevelt had cabled George Dewey, the American naval commander in the Pacific, to crush the Spanish fleet at Manila Bay if war broke out.

At sunrise on Sunday, May 1, Dewey’s squadron of four cruisers and three smaller vessels steamed into the harbor and quickly destroyed or captured ten Spanish cruisers and gunboats. The Spanish lost 381 men, and the Americans lost one. Dewey instantly became a national hero. A few weeks later, an American cruiser secured the surrender of Spanish forces on the island of Guam, three-quarters of the way from Hawai’i to the Philippines (see Map 19.2).

Dewey’s victory at Manila focused public attention on the Pacific and, for some, raised the prospect of a permanent American presence there, reviving interest in the Hawaiian Islands. With the possibility of an American base in the Philippines, McKinley proposed to annex Hawai’i using the joint-resolution precedent by which Texas had been annexed in 1844. A majority vote in both houses of Congress adopted the joint resolution, rather than the two-thirds vote of the Senate needed to approve a treaty.

Dewey’s victory demonstrated that the American navy was clearly superior to Spain’s. In contrast, the Spanish army in Cuba outnumbered the entire American army by five





**MAP 19.2** American Involvement in the Caribbean and Pacific

As a result of the war with Spain, the United States acquired possessions stretching nearly halfway around the world, from Puerto Rico to the Philippines. Note, too, how the acquisition of various Pacific islands and island groups provided crucial “stepping stones” from the American mainland to eastern Asia.

to one. When war was declared, McKinley called for volunteers. Nearly a million men responded—five times as many as the army could enlist. Sent to training camps in the South, the new soldiers found chaos and confusion. Supplies arrived at one location while the intended recipients waited at another. Disease raged through some camps, killing many men. Some African American soldiers refused to comply with racial segregation, and many white southerners objected to the presence in their communities of uniformed and armed black men. Congress declared war in late April, but not until June did the first troops head for Cuba.

When American forces finally arrived in Cuba, they tried to capture the port city of Santiago, where the Spanish fleet had taken refuge. Theodore Roosevelt had resigned as assistant secretary of the navy to organize a cavalry unit known as the **Rough Riders**. At Kettle Hill, outside Santiago, he led a successful charge of Rough Riders and regular army units, including parts of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry, made up of African Americans. All but Roosevelt were on foot because their horses had not yet arrived. Driving the Spanish from the crest of Kettle Hill cleared a serious impediment to the assault on nearby, and strategically more important, San Juan Heights and San Juan Hill.

Once American troops gained control of the high ground around Santiago harbor, the Spanish fleet tried to escape. A larger American fleet met them and duplicated Dewey's rout at Manila. The Spanish suffered 323 deaths, the Americans one.

Their fleet destroyed, and surrounded by American troops, the Spanish in Santiago surrendered on July 17. A week later American forces occupied Puerto Rico. Spanish land forces in the Philippines surrendered when the first American troops arrived in mid-August. The “splendid little war” lasted only sixteen weeks. More than 306,000 men served in the American forces. Only 385 of them died in battle, but more than 5,000 died of disease and other causes.

On August 12, the United States and Spain agreed to stop fighting and to hold a peace conference in Paris. The major question for the conference centered on the Philippines. At first, McKinley appeared to favor U.S. presence only on a naval base, leaving Spain in control elsewhere. However, Spanish authority collapsed throughout the islands by mid-August as Filipino insurgents took charge. Britain, Japan, and Germany watched carefully, and one or another of them seemed likely to step in if the United States withdrew. McKinley and his advisers then decided that a naval base on Manila Bay would require control of the entire island group. No one seriously considered the Filipinos' desire for independence.

**Rough Riders** The First Volunteer Cavalry, a brigade recruited for action in the Spanish-American War by Theodore Roosevelt, who served first as the brigade's lieutenant colonel and then its colonel.

Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders, on foot because there was not room aboard ship for their horses, are shown in the background of this artist's depiction of the battle for Kettle Hill, a part of the larger battle for San Juan Hill, overlooking the city of Santiago, Cuba. The artist has put into the foreground members of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry, both African American units, who played a key role in that engagement, but one often overlooked because of the attention usually given Roosevelt and the Rough Riders. Chicago History Museum.



The **Treaty of Paris**, signed in December 1898, required Spain to surrender all claim to Cuba, cede Puerto Rico and Guam to the United States, and sell the Philippines for \$20 million. For the first time in American history, a treaty acquiring new territory failed to confer U.S. citizenship on the territory's residents; nor did the treaty mention future statehood. Thus these acquisitions represented a new kind of expansion—America had become a colonial power.

**Treaty of Paris** Treaty ending the Spanish-American War, under which Spain granted independence to Cuba, ceded Puerto Rico and Guam to the United States, and sold the Philippines to the United States for \$20 million.

### Republic or Empire: The Election of 1900

Bryan hoped to make independence for the Philippines the central issue in the 1900 presidential election. He easily won the Democratic nomination for a second time, and the Democrats' platform condemned the McKinley administration for its "**imperialism.**" However, many conservative anti-imperialists withheld support because Bryan still insisted on silver coinage and attacked big business.

The Republicans renominated McKinley. For vice president, they chose Theodore Roosevelt, "hero of San Juan Hill." The McKinley reelection campaign seemed unstoppable. Republican campaigners pointed proudly to a short and highly successful war, legislation on the tariff and gold standard, and the return of prosperity. While Bryan repeatedly attacked imperialism, McKinley and Roosevelt took pride in expansion. Republican campaigners questioned the patriotism of anyone who proposed to pull down the flag where it had once been raised. McKinley easily won a second term with 52 percent of the vote, carrying not only the states that had given him his victory in 1896 but also many of the western states where Populism had flourished.

The Teller Amendment specified that the United States would not annex Cuba, but the McKinley administration refused to recognize the insurgents as a legitimate government. Instead, the administration drafted, and Congress adopted, terms for Cuba to adopt before the army would withdraw. Called the **Platt Amendment** for its sponsor, Senator Orville Platt, the terms specified that (1) Cuba was not to make any agreement with a foreign power that impaired the island's independence, (2) the United States could intervene in Cuba to preserve Cuban independence and maintain law and order, and (3) Cuba was to lease facilities to the United States for naval bases and coaling stations. Cubans reluctantly agreed, and in 1902 Cuba thereby became a protectorate of the United States.

**imperialism** The practice by which a nation acquires and holds colonies and other possessions, denies them self-government, and usually exploits them economically.

**Platt Amendment** An amendment to the Army Appropriations Act of 1901, sponsored by Senator Orville Platt, that set terms for the withdrawal of the U.S. Army from Cuba.

Establishment of a civil government in the Philippines took longer. Between Dewey's victory and the arrival of the first American soldiers three months later, a Philippine independence movement led by **Emilio Aguinaldo** established a provisional government and took control everywhere but Manila. Aguinaldo and his government wanted independence. When the United States determined to keep the islands, the Filipinos resisted.

**Emilio Aguinaldo** Leader of unsuccessful struggles for Philippine independence, first against Spain and then against the United States.

Quelling what American authorities called the "Philippine insurrection" required three years, took the lives of forty-two hundred American soldiers (more losses than in the Spanish-American War) and perhaps 700,000 or more Filipinos (most through disease and other noncombat causes), and cost \$400 million (twenty times the price of the islands). When some Filipinos resorted to guerrilla warfare, U.S. troops adopted the same practices that Spain had used in Cuba. But with the capture of Aguinaldo in 1901, Congress set up a government for the Philippines. Filipinos became citizens of the Philippine Islands, but not of the United States. The president of the United States appointed the governor. Filipino voters elected one house in the two-house legislature, and the governor appointed the other. Both the governor and the U.S. Congress could veto laws passed by the legislature. **William Howard Taft**, governor of the islands from

**William Howard Taft** Governor of the Philippines from 1901 to 1904; he was elected president of the United States in 1908 and became chief justice of the Supreme Court in 1921.

1901 to 1904, tried to build local support for American control, secured limited land reforms, and started to build public schools, hospitals, and sanitary facilities. However, when the first Philippine legislature met, in 1907, more than half of its members favored independence.

### The Open Door and China

Late in 1899, Britain, Germany, and the United States signed the Treaty of Berlin, which divided Samoa between Germany and the United States. The new Pacific acquisitions of the United States—Hawai‘i, the Philippines, Guam, and Samoa—were all endowed with excellent harbors and suitable sites for naval bases. Combined with the modernized navy, these acquisitions greatly strengthened American ability to assert power in the region and to protect access to commercial markets in eastern Asia. The United States now began to seek full participation in the East Asian **balance of power**.

Weakened by war with Japan in 1894–1895, the Chinese government could not resist European nations’ demands for territory. Britain, Germany, Russia, and France carved out **spheres of influence**—areas where they claimed special rights, usually a monopoly over trade, and sought to exclude other powers. The United States argued instead for the “Open Door”—the principle that citizens of all nations should have equal status in seeking trade. American diplomats, however, began to fear the breakup of China and the exclusion of American commerce.

In 1899 Secretary of State John Hay circulated a letter to Germany, Russia, Britain, France, Italy, and Japan, asking them to preserve Chinese sovereignty within their spheres of influence and to observe the Open Door within their spheres. Hay wanted both to prevent the dismemberment of China and to maintain commercial access for American entrepreneurs throughout China. Some replies proved less than fully supportive, but Hay announced in a second letter that all had agreed to his “Open Door” principles. Hay’s letters have usually been called the **Open Door notes**.

**balance of power** In international politics, the notion that nations may restrict one another’s actions because of the relative equality of their naval or military forces.

**sphere of influence** A territorial area where a foreign nation exerts significant authority.

**Open Door notes** An exchange of diplomatic letters in 1899–1900 by which Secretary of State Hay announced American support for Chinese autonomy and opposed efforts by other powers to carve China into exclusive spheres of influence.

## Summary

The 1890s saw important and long-lasting changes in American politics. A political upheaval began when western and southern farmers joined the Farmers’ Alliances and then launched a new political party, the Populist Party. Southern Democrats began to write white supremacy into law by disfranchising black voters and requiring segregation of the races. In 1889–1890, Republicans wrote most of their campaign promises into law, breaking the political logjam of the preceding fourteen years. In 1892 voters rejected the Republicans in many areas, choosing either the new Populist Party or the Democrats.

The nation entered a major depression in 1893. Organized labor suffered defeat in two dramatic encounters, one at the Homestead steel plant in 1892 and the other over the Pullman car boycott in 1894. At the end of the 1890s, entrepreneurs and investment bankers launched

a merger movement that lasted until 1902, producing, among other massive new companies, United States Steel.

President Grover Cleveland proved unable to meet the political challenges of the depression, and his party, the Democrats, lost badly in the 1894 congressional elections. In 1896 the Democrats chose as their presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan, a supporter of silver coinage. The Republicans nominated William McKinley, who favored the protective tariff. McKinley won, beginning a period of Republican dominance in national politics that lasted until 1930. Under Bryan’s long-term leadership, the Democratic Party discarded its commitment to minimal government and instead adopted a willingness to use government against monopolies and other powerful economic interests.



During the 1890s, the United States took on a new role in foreign affairs. During the administration of Benjamin Harrison, Congress approved creation of a modern navy. Although a revolution presented the United States with an opportunity to annex Hawai'i, President Cleveland rejected that course. However, Cleveland threatened war with Great Britain over a disputed boundary between Venezuela and British Guiana, and Britain backed down.

A revolution in Cuba led the United States into a one-sided war with Spain in 1898. The immediate result was acquisition of an American colonial empire that included the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico. Congress annexed Hawai'i in the midst of the war, and the United States acquired part of Samoa by treaty in 1899. Filipinos resisted American authority, leading to a three-year war that cost more lives than the Spanish-American War. With the Philippines and an improved navy, the United States took on a new prominence in eastern Asia, especially in China, where U.S. diplomatic and commercial interests promoted the Open Door policy.

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# CHAPTER 20

# The Progressive Era 1900–1917

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### **Organizing for Change**

- The Settlement Houses
- Women and Reform
- Moral Reform
- Racial Issues
- Challenging Capitalism:  
Socialists and Wobblies

### **The Reform of Politics, the Politics of Reform**

- Exposing Corruption:  
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### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**

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### **IT MATTERS TODAY: The Federal Reserve Act**

- Another Round of Reform  
and the Election of 1916

### **Progressivism in Perspective Summary**

## **INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Theodore Roosevelt**

In September 1901, President McKinley was shaking the hands of well-wishers at an exposition in Buffalo, New York. Suddenly anarchist Leon Czolgosz opened fire with a handgun. McKinley died a week later, and Theodore Roosevelt became president.

Roosevelt was 42 years old, the youngest person ever to assume the presidency. He came from a distinguished family background and had written more than a dozen books on history, natural history, and his own experiences as a rancher and hunter. He also made a career in Republican politics and captured the popular imagination as the "Hero of San Juan Hill."

Less than a year after assuming the presidency, Roosevelt faced a potential crisis, and he dealt with it in a way that set him apart from his predecessors. In June 1902, coal miners went on strike in Pennsylvania, seeking higher wages, an eight-hour workday, and union recognition. Mine owners refused even to meet with union representatives.

As the strike dragged on and cold weather approached, public concern grew because many people heated their homes with coal. Roosevelt knew that nothing in the Constitution required him to intervene, but he did so nonetheless. In early October, Roosevelt called both sides to Washington and urged them to submit to arbitration by a board that he would appoint. The owners refused and instead insisted that the president use the army against the miners—as Cleveland had done in breaking the Pullman strike ten years before. Roosevelt, now angry, blasted them as "insolent" and "well-nigh criminal."

Roosevelt instead began to consider using the army to dispossess the mine owners and reopen the mines. He sent his secretary of war, Elihu Root, to talk with J. P. Morgan, the prominent investment banker, who held a significant stake in the railroad companies. After meeting with Root, Morgan convinced the companies to

### **THEODORE ROOSEVELT**

*President Theodore Roosevelt's distinctive face attracted photographers and cartoonists, and he was often shown with a big grin. He loved fun, and a friend of his once observed that "You must always remember that the President is about six."*

Brown Brothers.



accept arbitration. The arbitration board granted the miners higher wages and a nine-hour workday but denied their other objectives. The companies were permitted to raise their prices to cover their additional costs.

No previous president had ever intervened in a strike by treating a union as equal to the owners, let alone threatening to use the army against companies. Roosevelt acted as what he called “the steward of the people,” mediating a conflict between organized interest groups in an effort to advance the public interest. In this and other ways, Roosevelt significantly changed both the office of the presidency and the authority of the federal government.

Roosevelt became president at a time that historians call the Progressive Era—a time when “reform was in the air,” as William Allen White later recalled. Many individuals and groups joined the crusade, often with quite different expectations. Progressivism took shape through various decisions by voters and political leaders. A basic question loomed behind many of those decisions: Should government play a larger role in the lives of Americans? This question lay behind debates over regulation of railroads in 1906 and regulation of banking in 1913, as well as behind proposals to prohibit alcoholic beverages and to limit working hours of women factory workers. Time after time, Americans chose a greater role for government. Often the consensus favoring government intervention was so broad that the only debate was over the form of intervention. As Americans gave government more power, they also tried to make it more responsive to ordinary citizens. They put limits on parties and introduced ways for people to participate more directly in politics. The changes of the Progressive Era, following on the heels of the political realignment of the 1890s, fundamentally altered American public affairs and government in the twentieth century and gave birth to many aspects of modern American politics.

## Organizing for Change

- ★ **What important changes transformed American politics in the early twentieth century?**
- ★ **What did women and African Americans seek to accomplish by creating new organizations devoted to political change?**

As the United States entered the twentieth century, the lives of many Americans changed in important ways. The railroad, telegraph, and telephone had transformed concepts of time and space and fostered formation of new organizations. Executives of new industrial corporations now thought in terms of regional and national markets. Union members allied with others of their trade in distant cities. Farmers in Kansas and Montana studied grain prices in Chicago and Liverpool. Physicians organized to establish higher standards for medical schools.

Manufacturers, farmers, merchants, carpenters, teachers, lawyers, physicians, and many others established or reorganized national associations to advance their economic or professional interests. Sometimes that meant seeking governmental assistance. As early as the 1870s, for example, associations of merchants, farmers, and oil producers had pushed for laws to regulate railroad freight rates.

# Chronology

<b>1890</b>	National American Woman Suffrage Association formed	<b>1906</b>	Upton Sinclair's <i>The Jungle</i> Hepburn Act Meat Inspection Act Pure Food and Drug Act
<b>1895</b>	Anti-Saloon League formed <i>United States v. E. C. Knight</i>	<b>1907</b>	Financial panic
<b>1898</b>	South Dakota adopts initiative and referendum War with Spain	<b>1908</b>	<i>Muller v. Oregon</i> Race riot in Springfield, Illinois First city manager government, in Staunton, Virginia William Howard Taft elected president
<b>1899</b>	Permanent Court of Arbitration (the Hague Court) created	<b>1909</b>	Payne-Aldrich Tariff
<b>1900</b>	First city commission, in Galveston, Texas Robert M. La Follette elected governor of Wisconsin President William McKinley reelected	<b>1910</b>	State of Washington approves woman suffrage National Association for the Advancement of Colored People formed Mann Act Taft fires Pinchot Hiram W. Johnson elected governor of California Mass woman suffrage movement
<b>1901</b>	Socialist Party of America formed McKinley assassinated; Theodore Roosevelt becomes president Formation of U.S. Steel by J. P. Morgan	<b>1910–1920</b>	Revolution and Civil War in Mexico
<b>1902</b>	Muckraking journalism begins Oregon adopts initiative and referendum Antitrust action against Northern Securities Company Roosevelt intervenes in coal strike Cuba becomes protectorate	<b>1911</b>	Fire at Triangle Shirtwaist factory
<b>1903</b>	Women's Trade Union League formed W.E.B. Du Bois's <i>Souls of Black Folk</i> First World Series Panama becomes a protectorate Hay–Bunau–Varilla Treaty; construction begins on Panama Canal Elkins Act	<b>1912</b>	Progressive ("Bull Moose") Party formed Wilson elected president Nicaragua becomes a protectorate
<b>1904</b>	Roosevelt Corollary Lincoln Steffens's <i>The Shame of the Cities</i> Roosevelt elected president	<b>1913</b>	Sixteenth Amendment (federal income tax) ratified Seventeenth Amendment (direct election of U.S. senators) ratified Underwood Tariff Federal Reserve Act
<b>1905</b>	Niagara Movement formed Industrial Workers of the World organized Roosevelt mediates Russo-Japanese War Dominican Republic becomes third U.S. protectorate	<b>1914</b>	Clayton Antitrust Act Federal Trade Commission Act World War I begins Panama Canal completed
		<b>1915</b>	National Birth Control League formed
		<b>1916</b>	Louis Brandeis appointed to the Supreme Court Jeannette Rankin of Montana becomes first woman elected to U.S. House of Representatives Wilson reelected
		<b>1917</b>	United States enters World War I



Sooner or later, many of the new associations sought changes in laws to help them reach their objectives. Increasing numbers of citizens related to politics through such organized **interest groups**, even as the traditional political parties found they could no longer count on the voter loyalty typical of the Gilded Age.

Many of these new groups optimistically believed that responsible citizens, acting together, assisted by technical know-how, and sometimes drawing on the power of government, could achieve social progress—improvement of the human situation. As early as the 1890s, some had begun to call themselves “progressive citizens.” By 1910, many were simply calling themselves “progressives.”

Historians use the term *progressivism* to signify three related developments during the early twentieth century: (1) the emergence of new concepts of the purposes and functions of government, (2) changes in government policies and institutions, and (3) the political agitation that produced those changes. A progressive, then, was a person involved in one or more of these activities. The many groups promoting their own visions of change made progressivism a complex phenomenon. There was no single progressive movement. To be sure, an organized **Progressive Party** emerged in 1912 and sputtered for a brief time after, but it failed to capture the allegiance of all those who called themselves progressives. Although there was no typical progressive, many aspects of progressivism reflected concerns of the urban middle class, especially urban middle-class women.

Progressivism appeared at every level of government—local, state, and federal. And progressives promoted a wide range of new government activities: regulation of business, moral revival, consumer protection, conservation of natural resources, educational improvement, tax reform, and more. Through all these avenues, they brought government more directly into the economy and more directly into the lives of most Americans.

### “Spearheads for Reform”: The Settlement Houses

During the 1890s, in several large cities, young college-educated men and women began to provide a range of assistance for the poor to deal with the problems they faced in housing, nutrition, and sanitation. The **settlement house** idea originated in England in 1884, at Toynbee Hall, a house in London’s slums where idealistic university graduates lived among the poor and tried to help them. The concept spread to New York in 1886 with the opening of a settlement house staffed by young male college graduates. In 1889 several women who had graduated from Smith College (a superb women’s college) opened another settlement house in New York.

Also in 1889, Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr opened **Hull House**, the first settlement house in Chicago. For many Americans, Jane Addams became synonymous with the settlement house movement and with reform more generally. Born in 1860 in a small town in Illinois, Addams attended college, then traveled in Europe. There she and Ellen Gates Starr, a friend from college, visited Toynbee Hall and learned about its approach to helping the urban poor. Inspired by that example, the two set up Hull House in a working-class, immigrant neighborhood in Chicago. Hull House offered a variety of services to the families of its neighborhood: a nursery, a kindergarten, classes in child rearing, a playground, and a gymnasium. Addams, Starr, and other Hull House activists also challenged the power of city bosses and lobbied state legislators, seeking cleaner streets, the abolition of child labor, health and safety regulations for factories, and compulsory school attendance. Their efforts brought national recognition and helped to establish the reputation of the settlement houses as what one historian called “spearheads for reform.”

**interest group** A coalition of people identified with a particular cause, such as an industry or occupational group, a social group, or a policy objective.

**Progressive Party** Political party formed in 1912 with Theodore Roosevelt as its candidate for president; it fell apart when Roosevelt returned to the Republicans in 1916.

**settlement house** Community center operated by resident social reformers in a slum area to help poor people in their own neighborhoods.

**Hull House** Settlement house founded by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr in 1889 in Chicago.

Other settlement house workers across the country provided similar assistance to poor urban families. Nearly all tried to minimize class conflict because they agreed with Addams that “the dependence of classes on each other is reciprocal.” Historians agree that, like Addams, many settlement house workers became forces for urban reform, promoting better education, improved public health and sanitation, and honest government. Settlement houses spread rapidly, with some four hundred operating by 1910. By then, three-quarters of settlement house workers were women, and settlement houses became the first institutions created and staffed primarily by college-educated women. They led to a new profession—social work. When universities began to offer study in social work (first at Columbia, in 1902), women dominated that field, too. Women college graduates thus created a new and uniquely urban profession at a time when many other careers remained closed to them.

**Social Gospel** A reform movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, led by Protestant clergy members who drew attention to urban problems and advocated social justice for the poor.

**papal encyclical** A letter from the pope to all Roman Catholic bishops, intended to guide them in their relations with the churches under their jurisdiction.

**feminism** The conviction that women are and should be the social, political, and economic equals of men.

**Margaret Sanger** Birth-control advocate who believed so strongly that information about birth control was essential to help women escape poverty that she disobeyed laws against its dissemination.

**Muller v. Oregon** Supreme Court case in 1908, upholding an Oregon law that limited the hours of employment for women.

Church-affiliated settlement houses often reflected the influence of the **Social Gospel**, a movement popularized by urban Protestant ministers who were concerned about the social and economic problems of the cities. One of the best known, Washington Gladden, of Columbus, Ohio, called for “Applied Christianity,” by which he meant the application to business of Christ’s injunctions to love one another and to treat others as you would have them treat you. A similar strain of social activism appeared among some Catholics, especially those inspired by Pope Leo XIII’s 1891 *Rerum Novarum* (“Of New Things”), a **papal encyclical** urging the church to pay greater attention to the problems of the industrial working class.

### Women and Reform

The settlement houses are among the many organizations formed by or dominated by women that burst onto politics during the Progressive Era. By 1900 or so, a new ideal for women had emerged from the settlement houses, women’s colleges, and women’s clubs, and from discussions on national lecture circuits and in the press. The New Woman stood for self-determination rather than unthinking acceptance of roles prescribed by the concepts of domesticity and separate spheres. By 1910, this attitude, sometimes called **feminism**, was accelerating the transition from the nineteenth-century movement for suffrage to the twentieth-century struggle for equality and individualism.

Women’s increasing control over one aspect of their lives is evident in the birth rate, which fell steadily throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Abortion was illegal, and state and federal laws banned the distribution of information about contraception. As a result, those seeking to prevent conception often had little guidance. In 1915 a group of women formed the National Birth Control League to seek the repeal of laws that barred contraceptive information. In 1916 **Margaret Sanger**, a nurse practicing among the poor in New York City, attracted wide attention when she went to jail for informing women about birth control.

Some women formed organizations, like the National Consumers’ League (founded in 1890), that tried to improve the lives of working women. Such efforts received a tragic boost in 1911 when fire roared through the Triangle Shirtwaist Company’s clothing factory in New York City, killing 146 workers—nearly all young women—who were trapped in a building with no outside fire escapes and locked exit doors. The public outcry led to a state investigation and, in 1914, a new state factory safety law. Some states passed laws specifically to protect working women. In **Muller v. Oregon** (1908), the Supreme Court approved the constitutionality of one such law, limiting women’s hours of work. Louis Brandeis, a lawyer working with the Consumers’ League, defended the law on the



This cartoon, entitled "The Awakening," shows a western woman, draped in a golden robe, bringing the torch of woman suffrage from the western states that had adopted suffrage to enlighten the darkness of the eastern states that had not done so. In the dark eastern states, women eagerly reach toward the light from the West. Yellow had become closely associated with the suffrage movement, and western suffrage advocates often depicted suffrage as a woman in a golden robe. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. [LC-USZC2-1206].

grounds that women needed special protection because of their social roles as mothers. Such arguments ran contrary to the New Woman's rejection of separate spheres and ultimately raised questions for women's drive for equality. At the time, however, the decision was widely hailed as a vital and necessary protection for women wage earners. By 1917, laws in thirty-nine states restricted women's working hours.

Most women could neither vote nor hold office, and both issues were prominent in reform politics. Support for suffrage grew, however, as more women recognized the need for political action to bring social change. By 1896, four western states had extended the vote to women. No other state did so until 1910, when Washington approved female suffrage. Seven more western states followed over the next five years. In 1916 **Jeannette Rankin** of Montana—born on a ranch, educated as a social worker, experienced as a suffrage campaigner—became the first woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Suffrage scored few victories outside the West, however.

Convinced that only a federal constitutional amendment would gain the vote for all women, the **National American Woman Suffrage Association** (NAWSA), led by Carrie Chapman Catt, developed a national organization geared to lobbying in Washington, D.C. Some

**Jeannette Rankin** Montana reformer who in 1916 became the first woman elected to Congress; she worked to pass the woman suffrage amendment and to protect women in the workplace. **National American Woman Suffrage Association** Organization formed in 1890 that united the two major women's suffrage groups of that time.

white suffragists tried to build an interracial movement for suffrage—NAWSA, for example, condemned lynching in 1917—but most feared that attention to other issues would weaken their position.

Although its leaders were predominantly white and middle class, the cause of woman suffrage ignited a mass movement during the 1910s, mobilizing women of all ages and socioeconomic classes. Opponents of woman suffrage argued that voting would bring women into the male sphere, expose them to corrupting influences, and render them unsuitable as guardians of the moral order. Some suffrage advocates turned that argument on its head, claiming that women would make politics more moral and family oriented. Others, especially feminists, argued that women should vote because they deserved full equality with men.

### Moral Reform

Other causes also stirred women to action. Moral reformers focused especially on banning alcohol, which they labeled Demon Rum. By the late nineteenth century, temperance advocates increasingly looked to government to prohibit the production, sale, and consumption of alcoholic beverages. Many saw prohibition as a progressive reform and expected government to safeguard what they saw as the public interest. Few reforms could claim as many women activists as prohibition.

Earlier prohibitionists had organized into the Prohibition Party and the Women's Christian Temperance Union. By the late 1890s, the **Anti-Saloon League** became the model for successful interest-group politics. Proudly describing itself as “the Church in action against the saloon,” the Anti-Saloon League usually operated through mainstream old-stock Protestant churches. The League focused on the saloon as corrupting not only individuals—men who neglected their families—but politics as well, given the identification of saloons with big-city political machines.

The League endorsed only politicians who opposed Demon Rum, regardless of their party or their stands on other issues. As the prohibition cause demonstrated growing political clout, more politicians lined up against the saloon. At the same time, the League promoted statewide referendums to ban alcohol. Between 1900 and 1917, voters adopted prohibition in nearly half of the states, including nearly all of the West and the South. Elsewhere, many towns and rural areas voted themselves “dry” under **local option laws**.

The drive against alcohol, ultimately successful at the national level, was not the only target for moral reformers. Other moral reform efforts—to ban gambling or prostitution, for example—also represented attempts to use government power to regulate individual behavior.

### Racial Issues

During the Progressive Era, racial issues attracted relatively few reformers. Only a few white progressives actively opposed disfranchisement and segregation in the South. Indeed, southern white progressives often took the lead in enacting discriminatory laws. Journalist Ray Stannard Baker was one of the few white progressives to examine the situation of African Americans. In his book *Following the Color Line* (1908), Baker asked, “Does democracy really include Negroes as well as white men?” For most white Americans, the answer appeared to be no.

Lynchings and violence continued as facts of life for African Americans. Between 1900 and World War I, lynchings claimed more than eleven hundred victims, most in the South but many in the Midwest. During the same years, race riots wracked several cities. In 1906 Atlanta erupted into a riot as whites randomly attacked African Americans,

**Anti-Saloon League** Political interest group advocating prohibition, founded in 1895; it organized through churches.

**local option laws** A state law that permitted the residents of a town or city to decide, by an election, whether to ban liquor sales in their community.



killing four, injuring many more, and vandalizing property. In 1908, in Springfield, Illinois (where Abraham Lincoln had made his home), a mob of whites lynched two black men, injured others, and destroyed black-owned businesses. During the Progressive Era, some African Americans challenged the accommodationist leadership of Booker T. Washington. **W.E.B. Du Bois** (introduced in Chapter 19) was the first African American to receive a Ph.D. degree from Harvard and wrote some of the first scholarly studies of African Americans. He emphasized the contributions of black men and women, disproved racial stereotypes, urged African Americans to take pride in their accomplishments, and exhorted African Americans to struggle for their rights “unceasingly.”

The Springfield riot so shocked some white progressives that they called a biracial conference to seek ways to improve race relations. In 1910 delegates formed the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People** (NAACP), which later provided important leadership in the fight for black equality. Du Bois served as the NAACP’s director of publicity and research.

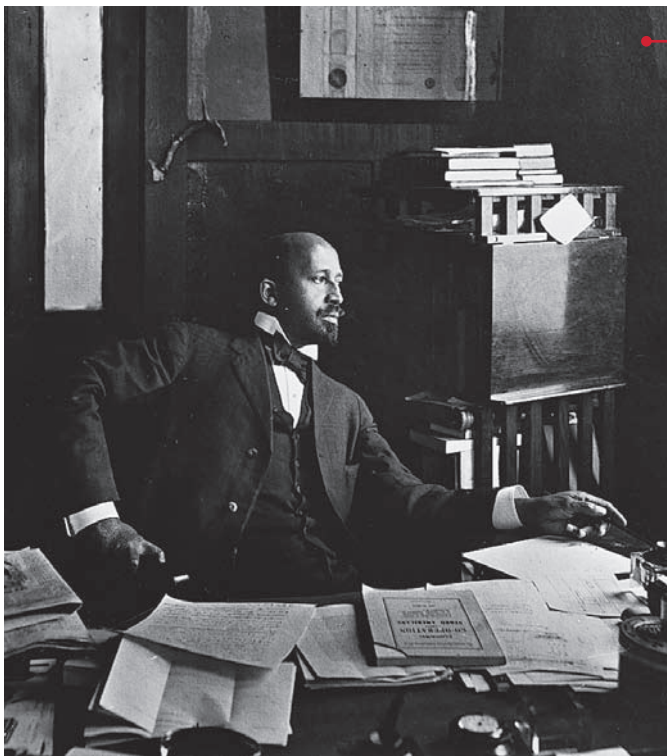
**Ida B. Wells** provided important leadership for the struggle against lynching. Born in Mississippi in 1862, Wells attended a school set up by the Freedmen’s Bureau and worked as a rural teacher. Then, in Memphis, Tennessee, she began to write for the black newspaper *Free Speech* and attacked lynching, arguing that several local victims had been targeted as a way of eliminating successful black businessmen. When a mob destroyed the newspaper office, she moved north. During the 1890s and early 1900s, Wells crusaded against lynching, speaking throughout the North and in England and writing *Southern Horrors* (1892) and *A Red Record* (1895). Initially a supporter of the NAACP, she came to regard it as too cautious.

**W.E.B. Du Bois** African American intellectual and civil rights leader, author of important works on black history and sociology, who helped to form and lead the NAACP.

**National Association for the Advancement of Colored People**

Racially integrated civil rights organization founded in New York City in 1910; it continues to work to end discrimination in the United States.

**Ida B. Wells** African American reformer and journalist who crusaded against lynching and advocated racial justice and woman suffrage; upon marrying in 1895, she became Ida Wells-Barnett.



A brilliant young intellectual, W.E.B. Du Bois had to choose between leading the life of a quiet college professor or challenging Booker T. Washington’s claim to speak on behalf of African Americans. Schomburg Center/Art Resource, NY.

**Socialist Party of America** Political party formed in 1901 and committed to socialism—that is, government ownership of most industries.

**Marxist** A believer in the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who opposed private ownership of property and looked to a future in which workers would control the economy.

**sweatshop** A shop or factory in which employees work long hours at low wages under poor conditions.

**migrant** Traveling from one area to another.

### Challenging Capitalism: Socialists and Wobblies

Many progressive organizations reflected middle- and upper-class concerns, such as businesslike government, prohibition, and greater reliance on experts. Not so the **Socialist Party of America (SPA)**, formed in 1901. Proclaiming themselves the political arm of workers and farmers, the Socialists rejected most progressive proposals as inadequate and called instead for workers to control the means of production. Most looked to the political process and the ballot box to accomplish this transformation.

The Socialists' best-known national leader was Eugene V. Debs, leader of the Pullman strike and virtually the only person able to unite the many socialist factions, ranging from theoretical **Marxists** completely opposed to capitalism to Christian Socialists, who drew their inspiration from religion rather than from Marx. Strong among immigrants, some of whom had become socialists in their native lands, the SPA attracted some trade unionists, municipal reformers, and intellectuals, including W.E.B. Du Bois, Margaret Sanger, and Upton Sinclair (discussed in the next section).

In 1905 a group of unionists and radicals organized the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, or “Wobblies”). IWW organizers set out to organize the most exploited unskilled and semiskilled workers. They aimed their message at **sweatshop** workers in eastern cities, **migrant** farm workers who harvested western crops, southern sharecroppers, women workers, African Americans, and the “new immigrants” from southern and eastern Europe. Such workers were usually ignored by the American Federation of Labor, which instead emphasized skilled workers, most of them white males. The Wobblies' objective was simple: when most workers had joined the IWW, they would call a general strike, labor would refuse to work, and capitalism would collapse.

## The Reform of Politics, the Politics of Reform

- ★ **What did the muckrakers and new professional groups contribute to reform?**
- ★ **What were the characteristics of the reforms of city and state government?**
- ★ **How did the rise of interest groups reflect new patterns of politics and government?**

Progressivism emerged at all levels of government as cities elected reform-minded mayors and states swore in progressive governors. Some reformers hoped only to make government more honest and efficient. Others wanted to change the basic structure and function of government, to make it more responsive to the needs of an urban industrial society. In their quest for change, reformers sometimes found themselves in conflict with the entrenched leaders of political parties and sought to limit the power of those parties.

### Exposing Corruption: The Muckrakers

Journalists played an important role in preparing the ground for reform. By the early 1900s, magazine publishers discovered that their sales boomed when they presented dramatic exposés of political corruption, corporate wrongdoing, and other scandalous offenses. Those who practiced this provocative journalism acquired the name **muckrakers** in 1906 when President Theodore Roosevelt compared them to “the Man with the Muck-rake,” a character in John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* who is so preoccupied with raking through the filth at his feet that he doesn’t notice he is being offered a celestial crown in exchange for his rake. Roosevelt intended the comparison as a criticism, but journalists accepted the label with pride.

**muckrakers** Progressive Era journalists who wrote articles exposing corruption in city government, business, and industry.

# Investigating America

## Ida Tarbell Exposes Standard Oil Company, 1904

Ida Tarbell, known today as one of the founders of investigative journalism, was born in a log home in Hatch Hollow, Pennsylvania, a region that was home to oil production. In 1872, when Ida was fifteen, a secret agreement between John D. Rockefeller and the railroads put her father's small oil company out of business. After graduating from Alleghany College (as the only woman in her class), Tarbell taught school, traveled abroad, and finally began to write magazine essays. Her expose on Standard Oil grew into a nineteen-part series and was published in 1903 as *The History of Standard Oil Company*.

.....

While Mr. Rockefeller produces only about a third of the entire production [of oil], he controls all but about ten percent of it; that is, all but about ten percent goes immediately into his custody on coming from the wells. It passes entirely out of the hands of the producers when the Standard pipeline takes it. The oil is in Mr. Rockefeller's hands, and he, not the producer, can decide who is to have it. The greater portion of it he takes himself, of course, for he is the chief refiner of the country. In 1898 there were about twenty-four million barrels of petroleum products made in this country. Of this amount about twenty million were made by the Standard Oil Company; fully a third of the balance was produced by the Tidewater Company, of which the Standard holds a large minority stock, and which for twenty years has had a running arrangement with the Standard. Reckoning out of the Tidewater's probable output, and we have an independent output of about 2,500,000 in twenty-four million. It is obvious that this great percentage of the business gives the Standard the control of prices. This control can be kept in the domestic markets so long as the Standard can keep under competition as successfully as it has in the past.

It is not only in the power of the Standard to cut off outsiders from it, it is able to keep up transportation prices.

Mr. Rockefeller owns the pipe system—a common carrier—and accounting cost for transporting their oil, while outsiders pay just what they paid twenty-five years ago. There are lawyers who believe that if this condition were tested in the courts, the National Transit Company would be obliged to give the same rates to others as the Standard refineries ultimately pay. It would be interesting to see the attempt made.

There is no doubt that today, as before the Interstate Commerce Commission, a community of interest exists between railroads and the Standard Oil Company sufficiently strong for the latter to get any help it wants in making it hard for rivals to do business. The Standard owns stock in most of the great systems. It is represented on the board of directors of nearly all the great systems, and it has an immense freight not only in oil products, but in timber, iron, acids, other industries, iron, steel, and copper, and can swing freight away from a road which does not oblige it. It has great influence in the money market and can help or hinder a road in securing money. It has great influence in the stock market and can depress or inflate a stock if it sets about it. Little wonder that the railroads, being what they are, are afraid to "disturb their relations with the Standard Oil Company," or that they keep alive a system of discriminations the same in effect as those which existed before 1887.

.....

- Tarbell once noted that she did not condemn capitalism itself, "but the open disregard of decent ethical business practices" by men like Rockefeller. How does her critique of Rockefeller's connections to the railroads suggest that Tarbell, like many progressives, simply wanted to see greater competition among companies?
- How might Tarbell's own experience as the daughter of a small businessman have inspired her ideas? Why do you think Tarbell preferred the term "historian" to "muckraker"?



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*McClure's Magazine* led the surge in muckraking journalism, especially after October 1902, when the magazine began a series by **Lincoln Steffens** on corruption in city governments. By early 1903, *McClure's* had added a series by **Ida Tarbell** on Standard Oil's sordid past and a piece by Ray Stannard Baker revealing corruption and violence in labor unions. Sales of *McClure's* soared, and other journals—including *Collier's* and

**Lincoln Steffens** Muckraking journalist and managing editor of *McClure's Magazine*, best known for investigating political corruption in city governments.

**Ida Tarbell** Progressive Era journalist whose exposé revealed the ruthlessness of the Standard Oil Company.

**Upton Sinclair** Socialist writer and reformer whose novel *The Jungle* exposed unsanitary conditions in the meatpacking industry and advocated socialism.

**Pure Food and Drug Act** Law passed by Congress in 1906 forbidding the sale of impure and improperly labeled food and drugs.

**Meat Inspection Act** Law passed by Congress in 1906 requiring federal inspection of meatpacking.

**municipal reform** Political activity intended to bring about changes in the structure or function of city government.

**city council** A body of representatives elected to govern a city.

**ward** A division of a city or town, especially an electoral district, for administrative or representative purposes.

**commission system** System of city government in which all executive and legislative power is vested in a small elective board, each member of which supervises some aspect of city government.

**city manager plan** System of city government in which a small council, chosen on a nonpartisan ballot, hires a city manager who exercises broad executive authority.

*Cosmopolitan*—copied its style, publishing exposés on patent medicines, fraud by insurance companies, child labor, and more.

Muckraking soon extended from periodicals to books. Many muckraking books were simply reports on social problems. The most famous muckraking book, however, was a novel: *The Jungle*, by **Upton Sinclair** (1906). In following the experiences of fictional immigrant laborers in Chicago, Sinclair exposed the disgusting failings of the meatpacking industry. He described in chilling detail the afflictions of packinghouse workers—severed fingers, tuberculosis, blood poisoning. The nation was shocked to read of men who “fell into the vats” and “would be overlooked for days, till all but the bones of them had gone out to the world as Durham’s Pure Leaf Lard!” Sinclair, a Socialist, hoped readers would recognize that the offenses he portrayed were the results of industrial capitalism.

*The Jungle* horrified many Americans. President Roosevelt appointed a commission to investigate its allegations, and the report confirmed Sinclair’s charges. Congress responded with the **Pure Food and Drug Act**, which banned impure and mislabeled food and drugs; and the **Meat Inspection Act**, which required federal inspection of meatpacking. Sinclair, however, was disappointed because his revelations produced regulation rather than converting readers to socialism. “I aimed at the public’s heart,” Sinclair later complained, “and by accident I hit it in the stomach.”

### Reforming City Government

Lincoln Steffens’s muckraking articles helped to focus public concern on city government. By the time of his first article (1902), advocates of **municipal reform** had already won office and brought changes to some cities, and municipal reformers soon appeared elsewhere.

reformers soon appeared elsewhere.

Municipal reformers urged honest and efficient government and usually argued that corruption and inefficiency were inevitable without major changes in the structure of city government. **City councils** usually consisted of members elected from **wards** corresponding roughly to neighborhoods. Reformers recognized the support for political bosses and machines in poor immigrant neighborhoods and concluded that ward leaders’ devotion to voter needs kept the machine in power despite its corruption. They argued that citywide elections, in which all city voters chose from one list of candidates, would produce city council members who could better address the problems of the city as a whole—men with citywide business interests, for example—and that citywide elections would undercut the influence of ward bosses and machines.

Some municipal reformers proposed more fundamental changes in the structure of city government, notably the **commission system** and the **city manager plan**. Both reflect prominent traits of progressivism: a distrust of political parties and a desire for expertise and efficiency. The commission system first developed in Galveston, Texas, after a devastating hurricane and tidal wave in 1900. The governor appointed five businessmen to run the city, and they garnered widespread publicity for their efficiency and effectiveness. Within two years, some two hundred communities had adopted a commission system. Typically, the city’s voters elected the commissioners, and each commissioner managed a specific city function. The city manager plan—an application of the administrative structure of the corporation to city government—had similar objectives. It featured a professional city manager (similar to a corporate executive) who was appointed by an elected city council (similar to a corporate board of directors) to handle most municipal administration.

The Progressive Era also saw early efforts at city planning. Previously, most urban growth had been unplanned, driven primarily by the market economy. In the early twentieth century, city officials began to designate separate zones for residential, commercial, and industrial use (first in Los Angeles, in 1904–1908) and to plan more efficient transportation



systems. A small number of cities tried to improve housing. By 1910, a few cities had created ongoing city planning commissions. The emergence of **city planning** represents an important transition in thinking about government and the economy, for it emphasized expertise and presumed greater government control over use of private property.

**city planning** The policy of planning urban development by regulating land use.

### Reforming State Government

As reformers launched changes in many cities and as new professionals considered ways to improve society, Republican **Robert M. La Follette** pushed Wisconsin to the forefront of reform. La Follette entered politics soon after graduating from the University of Wisconsin. He served three terms in Congress in the 1880s but found his political career blocked when he accused the leader of the state Republican organization of unethical behavior. He was firmly convinced of the need for reform when he finally won election as governor in 1900.

**Robert M. La Follette** Governor of Wisconsin who instituted reforms such as direct primaries, tax reform, and anticorruption measures in Wisconsin.

Conservative legislators, many of them Republicans, defeated La Follette's proposals to regulate railroad rates and replace nominating conventions with the **direct primary** (in which the voters affiliated with a party choose that party's candidates through an election). La Follette threw himself into an energetic campaign to elect reformers to the state legislature. He earned the nickname "Fighting Bob" as he traveled the state and propounded his views. Most of his candidates won, and La Follette built a strong following among Wisconsin's farmers and urban wage earners, who returned him to the governor's mansion in 1902 and 1904.

**direct primary** An election in which voters who identify with a specific party choose that party's candidates to run later in the general election against the candidates of other parties.

La Follette secured legislation to regulate both corporations and political parties. Acclaimed as a "laboratory of democracy," Wisconsin adopted the direct primary, set up a commission to regulate railroad rates, increased taxes on railroads and other corporations, enacted a merit system for state employees, and restricted lobbyists. In many of his efforts, La Follette drew on the expertise of faculty members at the University of Wisconsin. These reforms, along with reliance on experts, came to be called the **Wisconsin Idea**. La Follette won election to the U.S. Senate in 1905 and remained there as a leading progressive voice until his death in 1925. La Follette's success prompted imitation elsewhere.

**Wisconsin Idea** The program of reform sponsored by La Follette in Wisconsin, designed to decrease political corruption, foster direct democracy, regulate corporations, and increase expertise in government.

Progressivism came to California relatively late. California reformers accused the Southern Pacific Railroad of running a powerful political machine that controlled the state by dominating the Republican Party. In 1906 and 1907 a highly publicized investigation revealed widespread bribery in San Francisco government. The ensuing trials made famous one of the prosecutors, **Hiram W. Johnson**. Reform-minded Republicans persuaded Johnson to run for governor in 1910. He conducted a vigorous campaign and won.

**Hiram W. Johnson** Governor of California who promoted a broad range of reforms, including regulation of railroads and measures to benefit labor.

In power, California progressives produced a volume of reform that rivaled that of Wisconsin. Johnson pushed for regulation of railroads and public utilities, restrictions on political parties, protection for labor, and conservation. Progressives in the legislature went beyond Johnson's proposals when they sent a state constitutional amendment on woman suffrage to the voters, who approved the measure. Johnson appointed union leaders to state positions and supported several measures to benefit working people, including an eight-hour workday law for women, **workers' compensation**, and restrictions on child labor. California progressives in both parties, however, condemned Asian immigrants and Asian Americans. In 1913 progressive Republicans pushed through a law that prohibited Asian immigrants from owning land in California.

**workers' compensation** Payments to workers injured on the job. In some states, employers were required to carry insurance for this purpose. Other states required employers to pay into a state workers' compensation fund.

### The Decline of Parties and the Rise of Interest Groups

Like California, many other states moved to restrict political parties. Reformers charged that bosses and machines manipulated nominating conventions, managed public officials, and controlled law enforcement. They claimed that bosses, in

return for payoffs, used their influence on behalf of powerful interests. Articles by muck-rakers and a few highly publicized bribery trials convinced many voters that the reformers were correct. The mighty party organizations that had dominated politics during the nineteenth century now came under attack along a broad front.

Progressives nearly everywhere proposed measures to enhance the power of individual voters and reduce the power of party organizations. State after state adopted the direct primary, and many reformers sought to replace state patronage systems with the merit system. In many states, judgeships, school board seats, and educational offices were made nonpartisan.

A number of cities and states also adopted the initiative and referendum. The initiative permitted voters to adopt a new law directly: If enough voters signed a petition, the proposed law would be voted on at the next election; if approved by the voters, it became law. The referendum permitted voters, through a petition, to accept or reject a law adopted by the legislature. Adopted first in South Dakota in 1898, the initiative and referendum gained national attention after Oregon voters approved them in 1902. They received so much attention that the initiative and referendum were sometimes called the **Oregon System**. Some states also adopted the **recall**, permitting voters through petitions to initiate a special election to remove an elected official from office. The direct primary, initiative, referendum, and recall are known collectively as **direct democracy** because they remove intermediate steps between the voter and final political decisions.

One outcome of the switch to direct primaries and decline of party organizations was a new approach to campaigning for office. Candidates now appealed directly to voters rather than to party leaders and convention delegates. Campaigns focused more on individual candidates and less on parties, and advertising supplanted the armies of party retainers who had mobilized voters in the nineteenth century. At the same time, new voter registration laws and procedures disqualified some voters, especially transient workers. Voter turnout fell. Ironically, the emergence of new channels for political participation created the illusion of a vast outpouring of public involvement in politics—but proportionally fewer voters actually cast ballots.

Organized interest groups often focused their attention on the legislative process. They retained full-time representatives, or **lobbyists**, who urged legislators to support their group's position on pending legislation, reminded lawmakers of their group's electoral clout, and arranged campaign backing for those who supported their cause. Eventually many legislators became dependent on lobbyists for information about their **constituents** and sometimes relied on lobbyists to help draft legislation and raise campaign funds. Pushed one way by the AFL and the other by the National Association of Manufacturers, under opposing pressure from the Anti-Saloon League and liquor interests, some elected officials came to see themselves less as loyal members of a political party and more as mediators among competing interest groups.

**Oregon System** Name given to the initiative and referendum, first used widely in state politics in Oregon after 1902.

**recall** Provision that permits voters, through the petition process, to hold a special election to remove an elected official from office.

**direct democracy** Provisions that permit voters to make political decisions directly, including the direct primary, initiative, referendum, and recall.

**lobbyist** A person who tries to influence the opinions of legislators or other public officials for or against a specific cause.

**constituents** Voters in the home district of a member of a legislature.

## Roosevelt, Taft, and Republican Progressivism

★ **What did Theodore Roosevelt mean by a “Square Deal”? How do his accomplishments exemplify this description? Do any of his actions not fit this model?**

★ **How did the role of the federal government in the economy and the power of the presidency change as a consequence of Theodore Roosevelt's activities in office?**

When Theodore Roosevelt became president upon McKinley's death, his buoyant optimism and boundless energy fascinated Americans—one visitor reported that the most exciting things he saw in the United States were “Niagara Falls and the President . . . both

great wonders of nature!” Americans soon saw Roosevelt as the embodiment of progressivism. In seven years, he changed the nation’s domestic policies more than any president since Lincoln—and made himself a legend.

### Roosevelt: Asserting the Power of the Presidency

Roosevelt was unlike most politicians of his day. Born to wealth, he had added to it from the many books he had written. He saw politics as a duty he owed the nation rather than an opportunity for personal advancement, and he defined his political views in terms of character, morality, hard work, and patriotism. Uncertain whether to call himself a “radical conservative” or a “conservative radical,” he considered politics a tool for forging an ethical and socially stable society. Roosevelt was confident in his own personal principles and did not hesitate to wield to the fullest the powers of the presidency. He liked to use the office as what he called a “bully pulpit,” to bring attention to his concerns.

In his first message to Congress, in December 1901, Roosevelt sounded a theme that he repeated throughout his political career: the growth of powerful corporations was “natural,” but some of them exhibited “grave evils” that needed correction. As Roosevelt later explained, “When I became President, the question as to the method by which the United States Government was to control the corporations was not yet important. The absolutely vital question was whether the Government had power to control them at all.” He set out to establish that power.

The chief obstacle to regulating corporations was the Supreme Court decision in *United States v. E. C. Knight* (1895), preventing the Sherman Anti-Trust Act from being used against manufacturing monopolies. Roosevelt looked for an opportunity to challenge the *Knight* decision. In 1901, some of the nation’s most prominent business leaders—J. P. Morgan, the Rockefeller interests, and railroad magnates James J. Hill and Edward H. Harriman—joined forces to create the Northern Securities Company, combining several railroad lines to create a railroad monopoly in the Northwest. The *Knight* case had involved manufacturing; the Northern Securities Company provided interstate transportation. If any industry could satisfy the Supreme Court that it fit the language of the Constitution authorizing Congress to regulate interstate commerce, Roosevelt believed, the railroads could.

In 1902, Roosevelt’s Attorney General, Philander C. Knox, filed suit against the Northern Securities Company for violating the Sherman Act. Wall Street leaders condemned Roosevelt’s action, but most Americans applauded. For the first time, the federal government was challenging a powerful corporation. In 1904, the Supreme Court agreed that the Sherman Act could be applied to the Northern Securities Company and ordered it dissolved.

Roosevelt then launched additional antitrust suits, but he used **trustbusting** selectively. Large corporations, he thought, were natural, inevitable, and potentially beneficial. He thought regulation was preferable to breaking them up. Companies that met Roosevelt’s standards of character and public service had no reason to fear antitrust action. His bold action produced what he liked to call a **Square Deal**—fair treatment for all parties.

### The Square Deal in Action: Creating Federal Economic Regulation

Roosevelt’s trustbusting and handling of the coal strike brought him great popularity across the country. In 1903, Congress approved several measures he requested or endorsed: the Expedition Act, to speed up prosecution of antitrust suits; creation of a cabinet-level Department of Commerce and Labor, including

**trustbusting** Use of antitrust laws to prosecute and dissolve big businesses (“trusts”).

**Square Deal** Theodore Roosevelt’s term for his efforts to deal fairly with all.

# Investigating America

## Theodore Roosevelt on Presidential Powers, 1913

Theodore Roosevelt's extensive reading, especially in history and natural history, made him one of the nation's most informed presidents, as evidenced by his many written works. Among his interests was the nature of executive power. In Roosevelt's *Autobiography* (1913), he discussed some of his ideas about the nature of the presidency.

.....

The most important factor in getting the right spirit in my Administration, next to the insistence upon courage, honesty, and a genuine democracy of desire to serve the plain people, was my insistence upon the theory that the executive power was limited only by specific restrictions and prohibitions appearing in the Constitution or imposed by the Congress under its Constitutional powers. . . . I declined to adopt the view that what was imperatively necessary for the Nation could not be done by the President unless he could find some specific authorization to do it. . . . I did and caused to be done many things not previously done by the President and the heads of the departments. I did not usurp power, but I did greatly broaden the use of executive power. . . . I did not care a rap for the mere form and show of power; I cared immensely for the use that could be made of the substance . . .

There have long been two schools of political thought. . . . The course I followed, of regarding the executive as subject only to the people, and, under the Constitution, bound to serve the people affirmatively in cases where the Constitution does not explicitly forbid him to render the service, was substantially the course followed by both Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln. Other honorable and well-meaning Presidents, such as James Buchanan, took the opposite and,

as it seems to me, narrowly legal view that the President is the servant of Congress rather than of the people, and can do nothing, no matter how necessary it be to act, unless the Constitution explicitly commands the action. . . .

In foreign affairs the principle from which we never deviated was to have the Nation behave toward other nations precisely as a strong, honorable, and upright man behaves in dealing with his fellow-men. . . .

In internal affairs I cannot say that I entered the Presidency with any deliberately planned and far-reaching scheme of social betterment. I had, however, certain strong convictions . . . I was bent upon making the Government the most efficient possible instrument in helping the people of the United States to better themselves in every way, politically, socially, and industrially. I believed with all my heart in real and thoroughgoing democracy, and I wished to make this democracy industrial as well as political . . . I believed that the Constitution should be treated as the greatest document ever devised by the wit of man to aid a people in exercising every power for its own betterment, and not as a straitjacket cunningly fashioned to strangle growth . . .

- .....
- Which of Roosevelt's actions were "things not previously done by a President"?
  - Can you find examples of the behavior Roosevelt describes in U.S. foreign affairs? In domestic policy? Can you find contrary examples?
  - How successful was Roosevelt in meeting his own standard? What dangers might result from Roosevelt's views of sweeping presidential powers?



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**Elkins Act** Law passed by Congress in 1903 that supplemented the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887 by penalizing railroads that paid rebates.

a Bureau of Corporations to investigate corporate activities; and the **Elkins Act**, which penalized railroads that paid rebates.

Roosevelt won the 1904 election by one of the largest margins up to that time, securing more than 56 percent of the popular vote. Now elected in his own right, with a powerful demonstration of public approval, Roosevelt set out to secure meaningful regulation of the railroads, largest of the nation's big businesses.

Roosevelt and reformers in Congress wanted to regulate the prices railroads charged for hauling freight and carrying passengers. In Roosevelt's year-end message to Congress in 1905, he asked for legislation to regulate railroad rates, to open the financial records of railroads to government inspection, and to increase federal authority in strikes involving interstate commerce. In June 1906, Congress passed the



**Hepburn Act**, allowing the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to establish maximum railroad rates and extending ICC authority to other forms of transportation. The next day, Congress approved the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act, as the aftermath to Sinclair's stomach-turning revelations. Congress also passed legislation defining employers' liability for workers injured on the job in the District of Columbia and on interstate railroads.

### Regulating Natural Resources

An outspoken proponent of strenuous outdoor activities, Roosevelt took great pride in establishing five national parks and more than fifty wildlife preserves, to save what he called "beautiful and wonderful wild creatures whose existence was threatened by greed and wantonness." **Preservationists**, such as John Muir of the Sierra Club, applauded these actions and urged that such wilderness areas be kept forever safe from developers. Setting aside parks and wildlife refuges, however, was only one element in Roosevelt's **conservation** agenda.

Roosevelt and **Gifford Pinchot**, the president's chief adviser on natural resources, believed conservation required not only preservation of wild and beautiful lands but also carefully planned use of resources. Trained in scientific forestry in Europe, Pinchot combined scientific and technical expertise with a managerial outlook. He and Roosevelt withdrew large tracts of federal timber and grazing land from public sale or use. By establishing close federal management of these lands, they hoped to provide for the needs of the present and still leave resources for the future. During his presidency, Roosevelt removed nearly 230 million acres from public sale, more than quadrupling the land under federal protection.

### Taft's Troubles

Soon after Roosevelt won the election of 1904, he announced that he would not seek reelection in 1908. He remained immensely popular, however, and virtually named his successor. Republicans nominated William Howard Taft, who had served as governor of the Philippines before joining Roosevelt's cabinet as secretary of war in 1904.

William Jennings Bryan, leader of the progressive wing of the Democratic Party, won his party's nomination for the third time. Roosevelt's popularity and his strong endorsement of Taft carried the day. Taft won just under 52 percent of the vote, and Republicans kept control of the Senate and the House. Roosevelt turned over the presidency to Taft, then set off to hunt big game in Africa.

Unlike Roosevelt, Taft hated campaigning and disliked conflict. His legalistic approach often appeared timid when compared with Roosevelt's boldness. But Taft's attorney general initiated some ninety antitrust suits in four years, twice as many as during Roosevelt's seven years. And Taft approved legislation to strengthen regulatory agencies.

During the Taft administration, progressives amended the Constitution twice. Reformers had long considered an income tax to be the fairest means of raising federal revenues. With support from Taft, enough states ratified the **Sixteenth Amendment** (permitting a federal income tax) for it to take effect in 1913. By contrast, Taft took no position on the **Seventeenth Amendment**, proposed in 1912 and ratified shortly after he left office in 1913. It changed the method of electing U.S. senators from election by state legislatures to election by voters, another long-time goal of reformers, who claimed that corporate influence and outright bribery had swayed state legislatures and shaped the Senate.

**Hepburn Act** Law passed by Congress in 1906 that authorized the Interstate Commerce Commission to set maximum railroad rates and to regulate other forms of transportation.

**preservationist** One who advocates reserving and protecting a portion of the natural environment against human disturbance.

**conservation** The careful management of natural resources so that they yield the greatest benefit to present generations while maintaining their potential to meet the needs of future generations.

**Gifford Pinchot** Head of the Forestry Service from 1898 to 1910; he promoted conservation and urged careful planning in the use of natural resources.

### Sixteenth Amendment

Constitutional amendment ratified in 1913 that gives the federal government the authority to establish an income tax.

### Seventeenth Amendment

Constitutional amendment ratified in 1913 that requires the election of U.S. senators directly by the voters of each state, rather than by state legislatures.

**Payne-Aldrich Tariff** Tariff passed by Congress in 1909; the original bill was an attempt to reduce tariffs, but the final version retained high tariffs on most imports.

Roosevelt had left Taft a Republican Party divided between progressives and conservatives. Those divisions grew, and Taft increasingly sided with the conservatives. In 1909, he called on Congress to reform the tariff. The resulting **Payne-Aldrich Tariff** retained high rates on most imports, but Taft signed the bill against the wishes of Republican progressives.

A dispute over conservation further damaged Republican unity. Taft had kept Gifford Pinchot as head of the Forest Service. Pinchot soon charged that Taft's secretary of the interior, Richard A. Ballinger, had weakened the conservation program and favored corporate interests by opening reserved lands. Taft concluded, however, that Ballinger had done nothing improper. When Pinchot persisted with public charges against Ballinger, Taft fired him. By 1912, when Taft faced reelection, the Republican Party was in serious disarray, and he faced opposition from most progressive Republicans.

## "Carry a Big Stick": Roosevelt, Taft, and World Affairs

- ★ **What were Theodore Roosevelt's objectives for the United States in world affairs? What did he do to realize those objectives?**
- ★ **How did Roosevelt reshape America's foreign policy?**

Theodore Roosevelt not only remolded the presidency and established new federal powers over the economy, he also significantly expanded America's role in world affairs. Few presidents have had so great an influence. He once expressed his fondness for what he referred to as a West African proverb: "Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far." As president, however, Roosevelt seldom spoke softly. He was well read in history and current events, and entered the presidency with definite ideas on the place of the United States in the world. As Roosevelt advised Congress in 1902, "The increasing interdependence and complexity of international political and economic relations render it incumbent on all civilized and orderly powers to insist on the proper policing of the world." The United States, Roosevelt made clear, stood ready to do its share of "proper policing."

### Taking Panama

While McKinley was still president, American diplomats began efforts to create a canal through Central America. Many people had long shared the dream of such a passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. A French company actually began construction in the late 1870s, but abandoned the project when the task proved too great.

Experts identified two possible locations for a canal: Nicaragua and Panama (then part of Colombia). The Panama route was shorter, and the French company had completed some of the work. **Philippe Bunau-Varilla**—formerly the chief project engineer for the French effort, now a major stockholder and indefatigable lobbyist—did his utmost to sell the French company's interests to the United States. But negotiations with Colombia bogged down over Colombia's sovereignty. When American representatives applied pressure, the Colombian government offered to accept limitations on its sovereignty in return for more money. Outraged, Roosevelt called the offer "pure bandit morality." Bunau-Varilla and his associates then encouraged and financed a revolution in Panama. Roosevelt ordered U.S. warships to the area to prevent Colombian troops from crushing the uprising. The revolution quickly succeeded. Panama declared its independence on November 3, 1903, and the United States immediately extended diplomatic recognition. Bunau-Varilla became Panama's minister to the United States and promptly

**Philippe Bunau-Varilla** Chief engineer of the French company that attempted to build a canal through the Panamanian isthmus, chief planner of the Panamanian revolt against Colombia, and later minister to the United States from the new Republic of Panama.

signed a treaty that gave the United States much the same arrangement earlier rejected by Colombia.

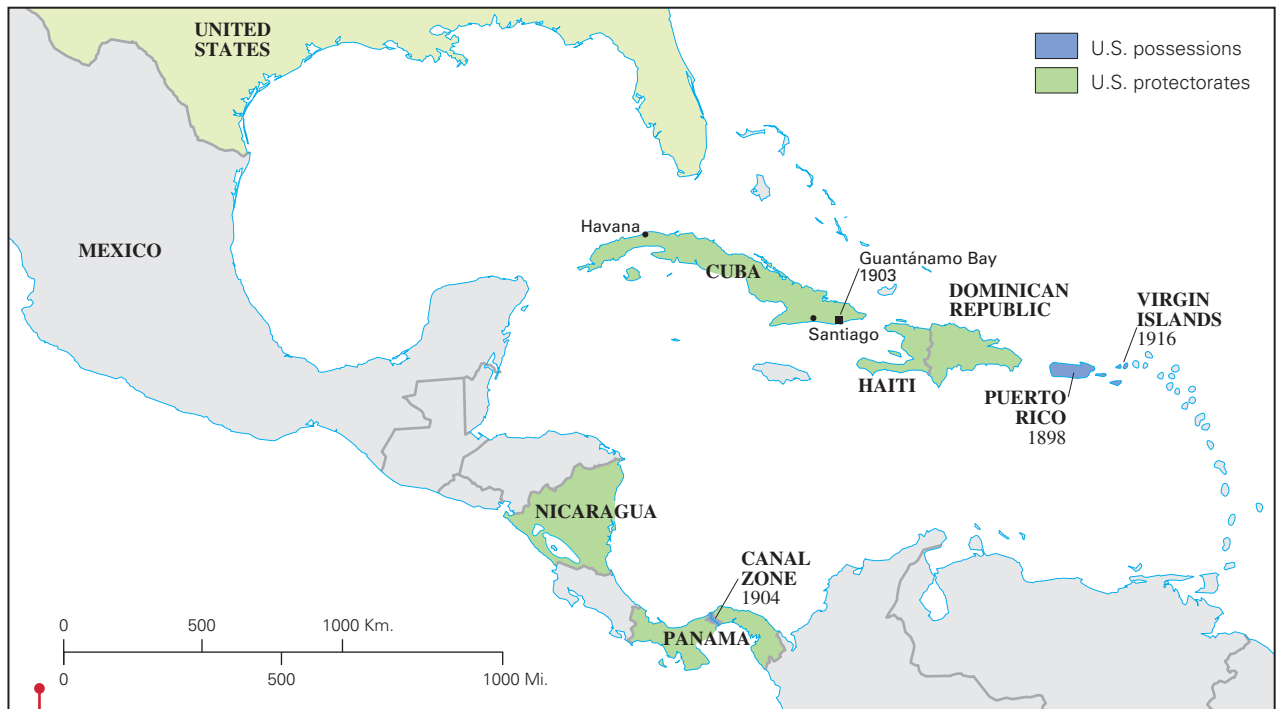
The **Hay–Bunau–Varilla Treaty** (1903) granted the United States perpetual control over the Canal Zone, a strip of Panamanian territory 10 miles wide, for a price of \$10 million and annual rent of \$250,000; it also made Panama the second American protectorate (Cuba was the first—see Map 20.1). The United States purchased the assets of the French company and began construction. Roosevelt considered the canal his crowning deed in foreign affairs. “When nobody else could or would exercise efficient authority, I exercised it,” he wrote in his *Autobiography* (1913). He always denied any part in instigating the revolution, but he once bluntly claimed, “I took the canal zone.”

Construction proved difficult. Although the canal was just over 40 miles long, it took ten years to build and cost nearly \$400 million. Completed in 1914, just as World War I began, it was considered one of the world’s great engineering feats (see Map 20.2).

**Hay–Bunau–Varilla Treaty** 1903 treaty with Panama that granted the United States sovereignty over the Canal Zone in return for a \$10 million payment plus an annual rent.

### Making the Caribbean an American Lake

With canal construction underway, American policymakers considered how to protect it. Roosevelt determined to establish American dominance in the Caribbean and Central America, where the many harbors might permit a foreign power to prepare for a strike against the canal or even the Gulf Coast of the United States. Acquisition of Puerto Rico, protectorates over Cuba and Panama, and naval facilities in all three locations as well as on the Gulf Coast made the United States a powerful presence.

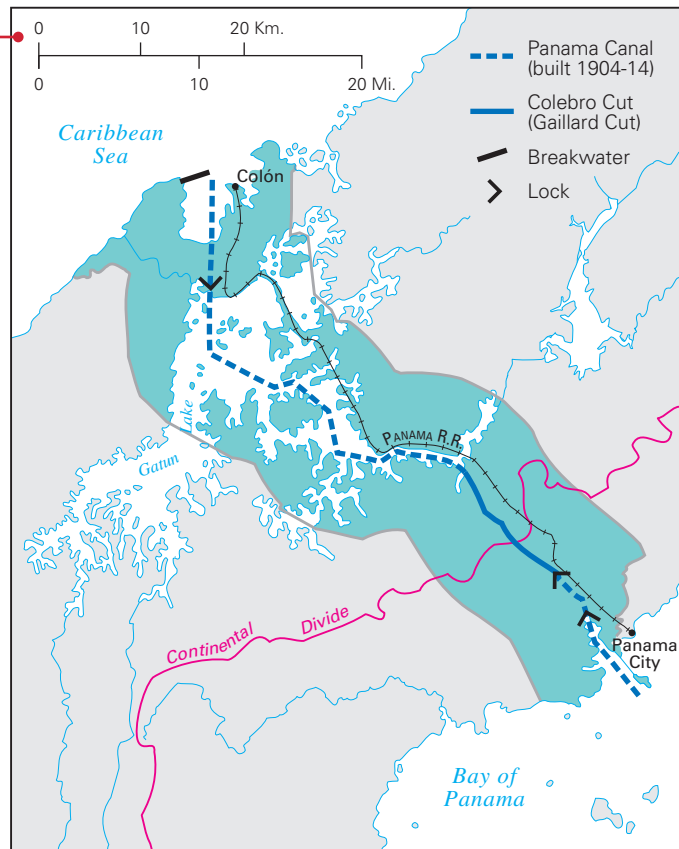


**MAP 20.1** The United States and the Caribbean, 1898–1917

Between 1898 and 1917, the United States expanded into the Caribbean by acquiring possessions and establishing protectorates. As a result, the United States was the dominant power in the region throughout this period.

**MAP 20.2 The Panama Canal**

The Panama Canal could take advantage of some natural waterways. The most difficult part of the construction, however, was devising some way to move ships over the mountains near the Pacific end of the canal (*lower right*). This problem was solved by a combination of cutting a route through the mountains and constructing massive locks to raise and lower ships over differences in elevation.



The Caribbean and the area around it contained twelve independent nations. Britain, France, Denmark, and the Netherlands held nearly all the smaller islands, and Britain had a coastal colony (British Honduras, now Belize). Several Caribbean nations had borrowed large amounts of money from European bankers, raising the prospect of intervention to secure loan payments. In 1902, for example, Britain and Germany declared a blockade of Venezuela over debts owed their citizens. In 1904, when several European nations hinted that they might intervene in the Dominican Republic, Roosevelt presented what became known as the **Roosevelt Corollary** to the Monroe Doctrine. He warned European nations against any intervention in the Western Hemisphere. If intervention by what he termed “some civilized nation” became necessary in the Caribbean or Central America in order to correct “chronic wrongdoing,” Roosevelt insisted that the United States would handle it, acting as “an international police power.”

Roosevelt’s successors, William Howard Taft and Woodrow Wilson, continued and expanded American domination in the Caribbean region. The Taft administration encouraged Americans to invest there. Taft hoped that diplomacy could open doors for American investments and that American investments would both block investment by other nations and stabilize and develop the Caribbean economies. Taft supported such “**dollar diplomacy**” throughout the region, especially in Nicaragua.

**Roosevelt Corollary** Extension of the Monroe Doctrine announced by Theodore Roosevelt in 1904, in which he proclaimed the right of the United States to police the Caribbean areas.

**dollar diplomacy** Name applied by critics to the Taft administration’s policy of supporting U.S. investments abroad.

### Roosevelt and Eastern Asia

In eastern Asia, Roosevelt built on the Open Door policy. He was both concerned and optimistic about the rise of Japan as a major industrial and imperial power. Aware of Alfred Thayer Mahan’s warnings that Japan posed a potential danger to the



United States in the Pacific, Roosevelt hoped that Japan might exercise the same sort of international police power in its vicinity that the United States claimed under the Roosevelt Corollary.

In 1904 Russia and Japan went to war over **Manchuria**, part of northeastern China. Russia had pressured China to grant so many concessions in Manchuria that it seemed to be turning into a Russian colony. Russia seemed also to have designs on Korea, a nominally independent kingdom. Japan saw Russian expansion as a threat to its own interests and responded with force. The Japanese scored smashing naval and military victories over the Russians but had too few resources to sustain a long-term war.

Roosevelt concluded that American interests were best served by reducing Russian influence in the region so as to maintain a balance of power. Such a balance, he thought, would be most likely to preserve nominal Chinese sovereignty in Manchuria. Early in the war, he indicated some support for Japan. As its resources ran low, Japan asked Roosevelt to act as mediator. The president agreed, concerned by then that Japanese victories might be as dangerous as Russian expansion. The peace conference took place in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The **Treaty of Portsmouth** (1905) recognized Japan’s dominance in Korea and gave Japan the southern half of Sakhalin Island and Russian concessions in southern Manchuria. Russia kept its railroad in northern Manchuria. China remained responsible for civil authority in Manchuria. For his mediation, Roosevelt received the 1906 Nobel Peace Prize.

That same year, Roosevelt mediated another dispute. The San Francisco school board ordered students of Japanese parentage to attend the city’s segregated Chinese school. The Japanese government protested what it considered an insult, and some Japanese newspapers hinted at war. Roosevelt brought the school officials to Washington, convinced them to withdraw the order, and promised in return to curtail Japanese immigration. He soon negotiated a so-called **gentlemen’s agreement**, by which Japan agreed to limit the departure of laborers to the United States.

In 1908 the American and Japanese governments further agreed to respect each other’s territorial possessions (the Philippines and Hawai’i for the United States; Korea, Formosa, and southern Manchuria for Japan) and to honor as well “the independence and integrity of China” and the Open Door.

**Manchuria** A region of northeastern China.

**Treaty of Portsmouth** 1905 treaty that ended the Russo-Japanese War; negotiated at a conference in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, through Theodore Roosevelt’s mediation.

**gentlemen’s agreement** An agreement rather than a formal treaty; in this case, Japan agreed in 1907 to limit Japanese emigration to the United States.



Political buttons continued to be everywhere in 1912. Roosevelt and his running mate, Hiram Johnson, the governor of California, are pictured with the Bull Moose that came to symbolize the Progressive Party after Roosevelt exclaimed that he felt as fit as a bull moose. Taft, the Republican candidate, and Wilson, the Democrat, are depicted with more traditional symbols of patriotism and party. Collection of Janice L. and David J. Frent.

## Wilson and Democratic Progressivism

★ **What choices confronted American voters in the presidential election of 1912? What were the short-term and long-term outcomes of the election?**

★ **How did the Wilson administration change the role of the federal government in the economy?**

The presidential election of 1912 marks a moment when Americans actively and seriously debated their future. All three nominees were well educated and highly literate. Roosevelt and Wilson had written respected books on American history and politics. They approached politics with a sense of destiny and purpose, and they talked frankly to the American people about their ideas for the future.

### Debating the Future: The Election of 1912

As Taft watched the Republican Party unravel, Theodore Roosevelt was traveling, first hunting in Africa and then hobnobbing with European leaders. When he returned in 1910, he undertook a speaking tour and proposed a broad program

of reform he labeled the **New Nationalism**. Roosevelt did not openly question Taft's reelection, but other Republican progressives began to do so. In the 1910 congressional elections, Republicans fared badly, plagued by divisions within their party and an economic downturn. For the first time since 1892, Democrats won a majority in the House of Representatives. Democrats, including Woodrow Wilson in New Jersey, also won a number of governorships.

By early 1911, many Republican progressives were looking to Robert La Follette to wrest the Republican nomination from Taft. Roosevelt had lost confidence in Taft, but he found La Follette too radical and irresponsible. Finally, in February 1912, Roosevelt announced he would oppose Taft for the Republican presidential nomination.

Thirteen states had established direct primaries to select delegates to the national nominating convention. There Roosevelt won 278 delegates to 48 for Taft and 36 for La Follette. Elsewhere, Taft had all the advantages of an incumbent president in control of the party machinery. At the Republican nominating convention, many states sent rival delegations, one pledged to Taft and one to Roosevelt. Taft's supporters controlled the **credentials committee** and gave most contested seats to Taft delegates. Roosevelt's supporters stormed out, complaining that Taft was stealing the nomination. The remaining delegates nominated Taft on the first ballot.

Roosevelt refused to accept defeat. "We stand at Armageddon," he thundered, invoking the biblical prophecy of a final battle between good and evil. "And," he continued, "we battle for the Lord." His supporters quickly formed the Progressive Party, nicknamed the **Bull Moose Party** after Roosevelt's boast that he was "as fit as a bull moose." At their convention, they sang "Onward, Christian Soldiers" and issued a platform based on the New Nationalism, including tariff reduction, regulation of corporations, a minimum wage, an end to child labor, woman suffrage, and the initiative, referendum, and recall. Women were prominent at the Progressive convention and helped draft the platform—especially the sections dealing with labor. Jane Addams addressed the convention to second the nomination of Roosevelt.

Democrats were overjoyed, certain that the Republican split gave them their best chance at the presidency in twenty years. The nomination was hotly contested, requiring forty-six ballots to nominate Woodrow Wilson. The Democrats' platform attacked monopolies, favored limits on campaign contributions by corporations, and called for

**New Nationalism** Program of labor and social reform that Theodore Roosevelt advocated before and during his unsuccessful bid to regain the presidency in 1912.

**credentials committee** Party convention committee that settles disputes arising when rival delegations from the same state demand to be seated.

**Bull Moose Party** Popular name given to the Progressive Party in 1912.

major tariff reductions. Wilson labeled his program the **New Freedom**. After Wilson's nomination, he met with **Louis Brandeis**, a Boston attorney and leading critic of corporate consolidation. Brandeis convinced Wilson to center his campaign on the issue of big business.

Roosevelt argued that the behavior of corporations was the problem, not their size, and that regulation was the solution. Following Brandeis's lead, Wilson depicted monopoly itself as the problem, not the misbehavior of individual corporations, and pushed for antitrust actions. In the end, Wilson received most of the usual Democratic vote and won with 42 percent of the total. Democrats also won sizable majorities in both houses of Congress. Roosevelt and Taft split the traditional Republican vote, 27 percent for Roosevelt and 23 percent for Taft. Debs, with only 6 percent, placed first in a few counties and city precincts.

### Wilson and Reform, 1913–1914

Woodrow Wilson was born in Virginia in 1856, and grew up in the South during the Civil War and Reconstruction. His father, a Presbyterian minister, impressed on him lessons in morality and responsibility that remained with him his entire life. Wilson earned a Ph.D. degree from Johns Hopkins University, and his first book, *Congressional Government*, analyzed federal lawmaking. He was a professor at Princeton University after 1890 and became president of Princeton in 1902.

In 1910, the conservative leaders of the New Jersey Democratic Party needed a respectable candidate for governor. Party leaders picked Wilson because of his reputation as a conservative and a good public speaker. He won the election but shocked his party's leaders by embracing reform. As governor, he led the legislature to adopt several progressive measures, including a direct primary and regulation of railroads and public utilities. His record won support from many Democratic progressives when he sought the 1912 presidential nomination.

Wilson firmly believed in party government and an active role for the president in policymaking. He set out to work closely with Democrats in Congress and succeeded to such an extent that, like Roosevelt, he changed the nature of the presidency itself. Confident in his oratorical skills, he became the first president since John Adams to address Congress in person.

Wilson first tackled tariff reform, arguing that high tariff rates fueled the creation of monopolies by reducing competition. Despite an outcry from manufacturers, Congress passed the **Underwood Tariff** in October 1913, establishing the most significant reductions since the Civil War. To offset federal revenue losses, the Underwood Act also implemented the income tax recently authorized by the Sixteenth Amendment.

The next matter facing Wilson and the Democrats was reform of banking. The national banking system dated to 1863, and periodic economic problems—most recently, a panic in 1907—had confirmed the system's major shortcomings: it had no real center to provide direction and no way to adjust the **money supply** to meet the needs of the economy. A 1913 congressional investigation also revealed the concentration of great power in the hands of the few investment bankers. Conservatives, led by Carter Glass of Virginia, joined with bankers in proposing a more centralized system with minimal federal regulation. Progressive Democrats, especially William Jennings Bryan (now Wilson's secretary of state) and Louis Brandeis, favored strong federal control.

The debate ended in compromise. In December 1913, Wilson approved the **Federal Reserve Act**, establishing twelve regional Federal Reserve Banks. These banks were “bankers’ banks,” institutions where commercial banks kept their reserves. All national banks

**New Freedom** Program of reforms that Woodrow Wilson advocated during his 1912 presidential campaign, including reducing tariffs and prosecuting trusts.

**Louis Brandeis** Lawyer and reformer who opposed monopolies and defended individual rights; in 1916 he became the first Jewish justice on the Supreme Court.

**Underwood Tariff** Law passed by Congress in 1913 that substantially reduced tariffs and made up for the lost revenue by providing for a graduated income tax.

**money supply** The amount of money in the economy, such as cash and the contents of checking accounts.

**Federal Reserve Act** Law passed by Congress in 1913 establishing twelve regional Federal Reserve Banks to hold the cash reserves of commercial banks and a Federal Reserve Board to regulate aspects of banking.



# It Matters Today

## THE FEDERAL RESERVE ACT

The Federal Reserve Act stands as the most important domestic act of the Wilson administration, for it still provides the basic framework for the nation's banking and monetary system. Although the original act of 1913 has been amended many times, the Federal Reserve System remains an independent entity within the federal government, having both public purposes and private aspects.

Today, Congress has charged the Federal Reserve to carry out the nation's monetary policy, including regulating the money supply and interest rates to accomplish the goals of maximum employment, stable prices, and moderate long-term interest rates. The Federal Reserve also supervises

and regulates banks and financial institutions to ensure their safety and soundness.

- Look at an online newspaper and find the most recent story about the Federal Reserve Board or the chairman of "the Fed." What does the story imply about the significance of the Federal Reserve for American business?
- Look at a basic macroeconomics textbook for its description of the role of the Federal Reserve. How does that text present the functions of the Federal Reserve? How does "the Fed" seek to control inflation?

were required to belong to the Federal Reserve System, and state banks were invited to join. The participating banks owned all the stock in their regional Federal Reserve Bank and named two-thirds of its board of directors; the president named the other third. The regional banks were to be regulated and supervised by the Federal Reserve Board, a new federal agency with members chosen by the president. Economists agree that creation of the Federal Reserve system was the most important single measure to come out of the Wilson administration.

In 1914 Congress passed the **Clayton Antitrust Act**, prohibiting specified business practices, including **interlocking directorates** among large companies that could be proven to inhibit competition. It also exempted farmers' organizations and unions from antitrust prosecution under the Sherman Act. The antitrust sections in the final version of the Clayton Act, however, did little to break up big corporations. Instead of breaking up big business, Wilson now moved closer to Roosevelt's position favoring regulation. Wilson also supported passage of the **Federal Trade Commission Act** (1914), a regulatory measure intended to prevent unfair methods of competition.

**Clayton Antitrust Act** Law passed by Congress in 1914 banning monopolistic business practices such as price fixing and interlocking directorates; it also exempted farmers' organizations and unions from prosecution under antitrust laws.

**interlocking directorates** Situation in which the same individuals sit on the boards of directors of various companies in one industry.

**Federal Trade Commission Act** Law passed by Congress in 1914 that outlawed unfair methods of competition in interstate commerce and created a commission appointed by the president to investigate illegal business practices.

### Another Round of Reform and the Election of 1916

During his first year in office, Wilson drew sharp criticism from some northern social reformers when his appointees initiated racial segregation in several federal agencies. At a cabinet meeting shortly after Wilson took office, the postmaster general (a southerner) proposed racial segregation of federal employees. No cabinet member objected, and several federal agencies began to segregate African Americans. As a southerner, Wilson believed in segregation and was surprised at the swell of protest, not just from African Americans but also from some white progressives in the North and Midwest. He never designated a change in policy, but the process of segregating federal facilities slowed significantly.

Many progressives applauded Wilson for tariff reform, the Federal Reserve, and the Clayton Act, but some progressives criticized his appointees to the Federal Trade



Commission and the Federal Reserve Board as being too sympathetic to business and banking. Moreover, Wilson considered federal action to outlaw child labor to be unconstitutional, and he questioned the need to amend the Constitution for woman suffrage. Then the approach of the 1916 presidential election seems to have spurred Wilson to reconsider. In 1912 he had received less than half of the popular vote and had won the White House only because the Republicans split. As the 1916 election approached, Wilson joined Democratic progressives in Congress—and social reformers outside Congress—in pushing measures intended to secure his claim as the true voice of progressivism and to capture the loyalty of all progressive voters.

In January 1916, Wilson nominated Louis Brandeis for the Supreme Court. Brandeis's reputation as a staunch progressive and critic of business aroused intense opposition from conservatives. The Senate vote on the nomination was close, but Brandeis was confirmed in June 1916. Wilson followed up that victory with support for several reform measures—credit facilities for farmers, workers' compensation for federal employees, and the elimination of child labor. Under threat of a national railroad strike, Congress passed and Wilson signed the Adamson Act, securing an eight-hour workday for railroad employees.

The presidential election of 1916 was conducted against the background of the war that had been raging in Europe since 1914 (covered in the next chapter). Wilson's shift toward social reform helped solidify his standing among progressives. His support for organized labor earned him strong backing among unionists, and labor's votes probably ensured his victory in a few states, especially California. In states where women could vote, many of them seem to have preferred Wilson, probably because he backed issues of interest to women, such as outlawing child labor and keeping the nation out of war. In a very close election, Wilson won with 49 percent of the popular vote to 46 percent for Charles Evans Hughes, a progressive Republican.

## Progressivism in Perspective

- ★ **Was progressivism successful? How do you define success?**
- ★ **How did progressivism affect modern American politics?**

The Progressive Era began with efforts at municipal reform in the 1890s and sputtered to a close during World War I. Some politicians who called themselves progressives remained in prominent positions after the war, and progressive concepts of efficiency and expertise continued to guide government decision making. But American entry into the war, in 1917, diverted attention from reform. By the end of the war, political concerns had changed, and by the mid-1920s, many of the major leaders of progressivism had passed from the political stage.

The changes of the Progressive era transformed American politics and government. Before the Hepburn Act and the Federal Reserve Act, the federal government's role in the economy consisted largely of distributing land grants and setting protective tariffs. After the Progressive Era, the federal government became a significant and permanent player in the economy, regulating a wide range of economic activity and enforcing laws to protect consumers and some workers. The income tax quickly became the most significant source of federal funds. Without the income tax, it is impossible to imagine the many activities that the federal government has assumed since then—from vast military expenditures to social welfare to support for the arts. Since the 1930s, the income tax has sometimes been an instrument of social policy, by which the federal government can redistribute income.

During the Progressive Era, political parties declined in significance, and political campaigns were increasingly focused on personality and driven by advertising. These patterns accelerated in the second half of the twentieth century under the influence of television and public opinion polling. Organized pressure groups have proliferated and become ever more important. Women's participation in politics has continued to increase, especially in the last third of the twentieth century.

The assertion of presidential authority by Roosevelt and Wilson reappeared in the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933–1945). The two Roosevelts and Wilson transformed Americans' expectations of the office of the presidency itself. Throughout the nineteenth century, Congress had dominated the making of domestic policy. During the twentieth century, Americans came to expect domestic policy to flow from forceful executive leadership in the White House.

## Summary

Progressivism, a phenomenon of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, refers to new concepts of government, to changes in government based on those concepts, and to the political process by which change occurred. Those years marked a time of political transformation, brought about by many groups and individuals who approached politics with often contradictory objectives. Organized interest groups became an important part of this process. Women broke through long-standing constraints to take a more prominent role in politics. Some African Americans fought segregation and disfranchisement, notably W.E.B. Du Bois and the NAACP. Socialists and the Industrial Workers of the World saw capitalism as the source of many problems, but few Americans embraced their radical solutions.

Political reform took place at every level, from cities to states to the federal government. Muckraking journalists exposed wrongdoing and suffering. Municipal reformers introduced modern methods of city government in a quest for efficiency and effectiveness. Some tried to use government to remedy social problems by employing the expertise of new professions such as public health and social work. Reformers attacked the power of party bosses and machines by reducing the role of political parties.

At the federal level, Theodore Roosevelt set the pace for progressive reform. Relishing his reputation as a

trustbuster, he challenged judicial constraints on federal authority over big business and promoted other forms of economic regulation, thereby increasing government's role in the economy. He also regulated the use of natural resources. His successor, William Howard Taft, failed to maintain Republican Party unity and eventually sided with conservatives against progressives.

Roosevelt played an important role in defining America's status as a world power, as he secured rights to build a U.S.-controlled canal through Panama and established Panama as an American protectorate. The Roosevelt Corollary declared that the United States was the dominant power in the Caribbean and Central America. In eastern Asia, Roosevelt tried to bolster the Open Door policy by maintaining a balance of power. In 1912 Roosevelt led a new political party, the Progressives, making that year's presidential election a three-way contest. Roosevelt called for regulation of big business, but Wilson, the Democrat, favored breaking up monopolies through antitrust action. Wilson won the election but soon preferred regulation over antitrust actions. He helped to create the Federal Reserve System to regulate banking nationwide. As the 1916 election approached, Wilson also pushed for social reforms in an effort to unify all progressives behind his leadership. In many ways, progressivism marked the origin of modern American politics and government.

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# CHAPTER 21

## The United States in a World at War 1913–1920

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### **Inherited Commitments and New Directions**

Anti-Imperialism, Intervention,  
and Arbitration  
Wilson and the Mexican  
Revolution

#### **The United States in a World at War, 1914–1917**

The Great War in Europe  
American Neutrality  
Neutral Rights and German  
U-Boats  
The Decision for War

#### **The Home Front**

Mobilizing the Economy  
Mobilizing Public Opinion  
Civil Liberties in Time of War  
The Great Migration and White  
Reactions

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** The Supreme Court Limits Free Speech, 1919

#### **Americans “Over There”**

Mobilizing for Battle  
“Over There”

#### **Wilson and the Peace Conference**

Bolshevism, the Secret Treaties,  
and the Fourteen Points  
The World in 1919

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Wilson’s Fourteen Points, 1918

#### **IT MATTERS TODAY:** Redrawing the Map of the Middle East Wilson at Versailles

The Senate and the Treaty

#### **America in the Aftermath of War, November 1918–November 1920**

“HCL” and Strikes  
Red Scare  
Race Riots and Lynchings  
Amending the Constitution:  
Prohibition and Woman Suffrage  
The Election of 1920

#### **Summary**

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Charles Young

In 1917, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Young was the highest-ranking African American in the U.S. Army. When the United States went to war against Germany, many African Americans expected Young to command a division, made up of the four black regular army regiments, and to take a prominent role in the war in Europe. Young also wanted to do this, in part because he was a patriotic army officer, eager to carry out the duties for which he had prepared. He also wanted to show that a black commanding officer and black soldiers were fully as capable as white troops of confronting an enemy under fire.

Growing up in Ohio, the son of former slaves, Young always considered his father’s U.S. Army service as a “heritage of honor.” Young secured an appointment to West Point through his academic accomplishments. After graduating, he was assigned to the 10th Cavalry, one of the army’s two black cavalry units. Like many other aspects of American life, the army was segregated, with two black cavalry regiments and two black infantry regiments.

Young commanded black troops in the Philippines, during the war against Aguinaldo’s government. He had diplomatic assignments to Haiti and Liberia, and he served with Pershing’s expedition into Mexico. When the war with Germany came, Young hoped to serve and to command. However, all four black units in the regular army were assigned to duties far from Europe. Young was given a medical retirement. Unwilling to accept that status, Young rode his horse from Xenia, Ohio, to Washington, D.C., to prove his physical fitness. Toward the end of the war, he was returned to active duty and promoted to colonel, but too late to take part in the fighting. He died of a kidney infection in 1923.

Charles Young’s experience was part of a larger pattern of discrimination against African Americans in nearly every aspect of American life. Young, a capable and experienced officer, was often given teaching or diplomatic duties rather than com-

#### CHARLES YOUNG

Despite discrimination, Charles Young remained a patriotic army officer to the end of his life, even as he opposed racism and segregation. In 1919, he inscribed this photograph with his favorite dedication, “Yours for Race and Country,” signifying his two central causes.

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.





manding troops, most likely to prevent him from giving orders to white officers. In 1917, he was again denied command, almost certainly for the same reason.

In 1919, when Young was asked about plans for a monument to African Americans who had died in the military, he suggested that the most fitting memorial would not be a monument but instead “liberty, justice, equal opportunities and educational facilities, the suppression of lynching by making it a federal crime and the abolition of [segregated railroad] cars.”

On June 28, 1914, a Serbian terrorist killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary. Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, were visiting Sarajevo, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which Austria had recently annexed against the wishes of neighboring Serbia. In response to the assassinations, Austria consulted with its ally Germany and then made stringent demands on Serbia. Serbia sought help from Russia, which was allied with France. Tense diplomats invoked elaborate, interlocking alliances. Huge armies began to move. By August 4, Europe was at war.

Before the events of August 1914, many Americans thought that war had become unthinkable among what Theodore Roosevelt called the world’s “civilized” nations. Thus, many Americans were shocked, saddened, and repelled in August 1914 when the leading “civilized” nations of the world—all of which had been busily accumulating arsenals—lurched into war.

When the nations of Europe went to war, the United States was no minor player on the international scene. Between 1898 and 1908, America acquired the Philippines and the Panama Canal, came to dominate the Caribbean and Central America, and actively participated in the balance of power in eastern Asia. The three presidents of the Progressive era—Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson—agreed wholeheartedly that the United States should exercise a major role in world affairs.

## Inherited Commitments and New Directions

- ★ ***Before the outbreak of war in Europe, how did Wilson conceive of America’s role in dealing with other nations?***
- ★ ***In what new directions did Wilson steer U.S. foreign policy before the coming of war in Europe?***

When Woodrow Wilson entered the White House in 1913, he expected to spend most of his time dealing with domestic issues. Although he was well read on international affairs, he had neither significant international experience nor carefully considered foreign policies. For secretary of state he chose William Jennings Bryan, who also had devoted most of his political career to domestic matters. Both men were devout Presbyterians, sharing a confidence that God had a plan for humankind. Both hoped—idealistically and perhaps naively—that they might make the United States a model for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Initially, Wilson fixed his attention on the three regions of greatest American involvement: Latin America, the Pacific, and eastern Asia. There, he tried to balance the anti-imperialist principles of his Democratic Party against the expansionist practices of his Republican predecessors. He marked out some new directions, but in the end he extended many previous commitments.

# Chronology

<b>1912</b>	Woodrow Wilson elected president		Russia withdraws from the war
<b>1913</b>	Victoriano Huerta takes power in Mexico; Wilson denies U.S. recognition		Railroads placed under federal control
	Secretary of State Bryan proposes cooling-off treaties	<b>1917–1918</b>	Union membership rises sharply
<b>1914</b>	U.S. Navy occupies Veracruz	<b>1918</b>	Wilson presents Fourteen Points to Congress
	War breaks out in Europe		Lynchings increase
	United States declares neutrality		National War Labor Board
	Stalemate on the western front		Sedition Act
	Bryan-Chamorro Treaty		Britain creates Iraq as protectorate
<b>1915</b>	German U-boat sinks the <i>Lusitania</i>		U.S. troops sent to northern Russia and Siberia
	United States occupies Haiti		Republican majorities in Congress
<b>1915–1920</b>	Great Migration	<b>1918–1919</b>	Armistice in Europe
<b>1916</b>	U.S. troops pursue Pancho Villa into Mexico	<b>1918–1920</b>	Worldwide influenza epidemic
	National Defense Act		Civil war in Russia
	Sussex pledge		Rampant U.S. inflation
	United States occupies Dominican Republic	<b>1919</b>	Signing of Treaty of Versailles, including Covenant of the League of Nations
	Wilson reelected		Eighteenth Amendment (Prohibition) approved
<b>1917</b>	Wilson calls for “peace without victory”		General strike in Seattle
	American troops leave Mexico		Urban race riots
	United States acquires Virgin Islands from Denmark		Wilson suffers stroke
	Germany resumes submarine warfare		Boston police strike
	Overthrow of tsar of Russia	<b>1919–1920</b>	Senate defeats Versailles treaty
	United States declares war on Germany		Steel strike
	Committee on Public Information		Red Scare
	War Industries Board	<b>1920</b>	Palmer raids
	Selective Service Act		Senate defeats Versailles treaty again
	Espionage Act		League of Nations established
	Race riot in East St. Louis		Nineteenth Amendment (woman suffrage) approved
	Government crackdown on IWW		Warren G. Harding elected president
	Bolsheviks seize power in Russia; publish secret treaties		Nazi Party founded in Germany

### Anti-Imperialism, Intervention, and Arbitration

Wilson's party had opposed many of the foreign policies of McKinley, Roosevelt, and Taft, especially imperialism. Secretary of State Bryan was a leading anti-imperialist who had criticized Roosevelt's "Big Stick" in foreign affairs. "The man who speaks softly does not need a big stick," Bryan said, adding, "If he yields to temptation and equips himself with one, the tone of his voice is very likely to change." During the Wilson administration, the Democrats wrote into law a limited version of the anti-imperialism they had proclaimed for some twenty years. In 1916 Congress established a bill of rights for residents of the Philippine Islands and promised them independence, without specifying a date. The next year, Congress made Puerto Rico an American territory and extended American citizenship to its residents.

Democrats had criticized Roosevelt's actions in the Caribbean, but Wilson eventually intervened more in Central America and the Caribbean than did any other administration. In Nicaragua, Taft had used marines to prop up the rule of President Adolfo Dias. Wilson now sought more authority for the United States within that country. Senate Democrats rejected his efforts, reminding him of their party's opposition to further protectorates. Even so, the **Bryan-Chamorro Treaty** of 1914 gave the United States significant concessions, including the right to build a canal through Nicaragua.

In 1915, Wilson sent the marines to restore order in politically unstable Haiti, and a subsequent treaty made Haiti a protectorate in which American forces controlled most aspects of government until 1933. Wilson sent marines into the Dominican Republic in 1916, and U.S. naval officers exercised control there until 1924. In 1917, the United States bought the Virgin Islands from Denmark for \$25 million.

Wilson and Bryan tried to bring a new approach to the arbitration of international disputes. Bryan drafted a model arbitration treaty and first obtained approval from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The State Department then distributed the proposal—called "President Wilson's Peace Proposal"—to all forty nations that maintained diplomatic relations with the United States. Twenty-two treaties were finally ratified. All featured a cooling-off period for disputes, typically a year, during which the nations agreed not to go to war and instead to seek arbitration. These treaties marked the beginning of a process by which Wilson sought to redefine international relations, substituting rational negotiations for raw power.

### Wilson and the Mexican Revolution

In Mexico, Wilson attempted to influence internal politics but eventually found himself on the verge of war. Beginning in 1911, Mexico experienced significant instability, as various political factions fought over power. In 1913, commander of the army General **Victoriano Huerta** took control of the government and had his predecessor executed. Wilson privately vowed "not to recognize a government of butchers." In public, he announced that he was withholding recognition because Huerta's regime did not rest on the consent of the governed. In the meantime, anti-Huerta forces led by **Venustiano Carranza** made significant gains.

In 1914, Mexican officials briefly detained a few American sailors who had come ashore. Wilson used the harmless incident to justify ordering the U.S. Navy to occupy **Veracruz**, Mexico's main port. The occupation cut off the major source of the Huerta government's revenue (from customs) and the landing point for most government military supplies. It also cost more than a hundred Mexican lives and turned many Mexicans against Wilson for violating their national sovereignty. Huerta's government collapsed

**Bryan-Chamorro Treaty** Treaty in 1914 in which Nicaragua received \$3 million in return for granting the United States exclusive rights to a canal route.

**Victoriano Huerta** Mexican general who overthrew President Francisco Madero in 1913 and established a military dictatorship until forced to resign in 1914.

**Venustiano Carranza** Mexican revolutionary leader who helped lead armed opposition to Victoriano Huerta; he gained the presidency in 1914 and was overthrown in 1920.

**Veracruz** Major port city, located in east-central Mexico on the Gulf of Mexico; in 1914, Wilson ordered the U.S. Navy to occupy the port.

**Francisco “Pancho” Villa** Mexican bandit and revolutionary who led a raid into New Mexico in 1916, which prompted the U.S. government to send troops into Mexico in unsuccessful pursuit.

and, facing Carranza’s forces without munitions and revenue, he fled the country in mid-July. Wilson withdrew the last American forces from Veracruz in November.

Carranza succeeded Huerta as president, and Wilson officially recognized his government. Carranza faced armed opposition, however, from **Francisco “Pancho” Villa** in northern Mexico. When Villa suffered serious setbacks, he apparently decided to try to involve Carranza in a war with the United States by raiding Columbus, New Mexico, and killing several Americans. Wilson sent an expedition of nearly seven thousand men, commanded by General John J. Pershing, into Mexico to punish Villa.

A clash between Mexican government forces and American soldiers produced deaths on both sides. Carranza asked Wilson to withdraw the American troops, but Wilson sent more men into Mexico. Carranza again insisted that American forces withdraw. Wilson still refused. Only in early 1917, when Wilson recognized that America might soon go to war with Germany, did he pull back the troops, leaving behind deep resentment and suspicion toward the United States.

## The United States in a World at War, 1914–1917

- ★ **Why did Wilson proclaim American neutrality? What were the attitudes of Americans toward this objective?**
- ★ **What forces outside the United States made neutrality difficult? What forces within the United States were pushing for the nation to enter the war?**

At first, Americans paid only passing attention to the assassinations at Sarajevo. When Europe plunged into war, however, Wilson and all Americans faced difficult choices.

### The Great War in Europe

**Triple Entente** Informal alliance that linked France, Great Britain, and Russia in the years before World War I; *entente* is a French word that means “understanding.”

**Triple Alliance** Alliance that linked Germany, Italy, and Austria-Hungary in the years before World War I.

**mobilize** To make ready for combat or other forms of action.

**Central Powers** In World War I, the coalition of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire.

**western front** The western line of battle between the Allies and Germany in World War I, located in French and Belgian territory; the eastern front was the line of battle between the Central Powers and Russia.

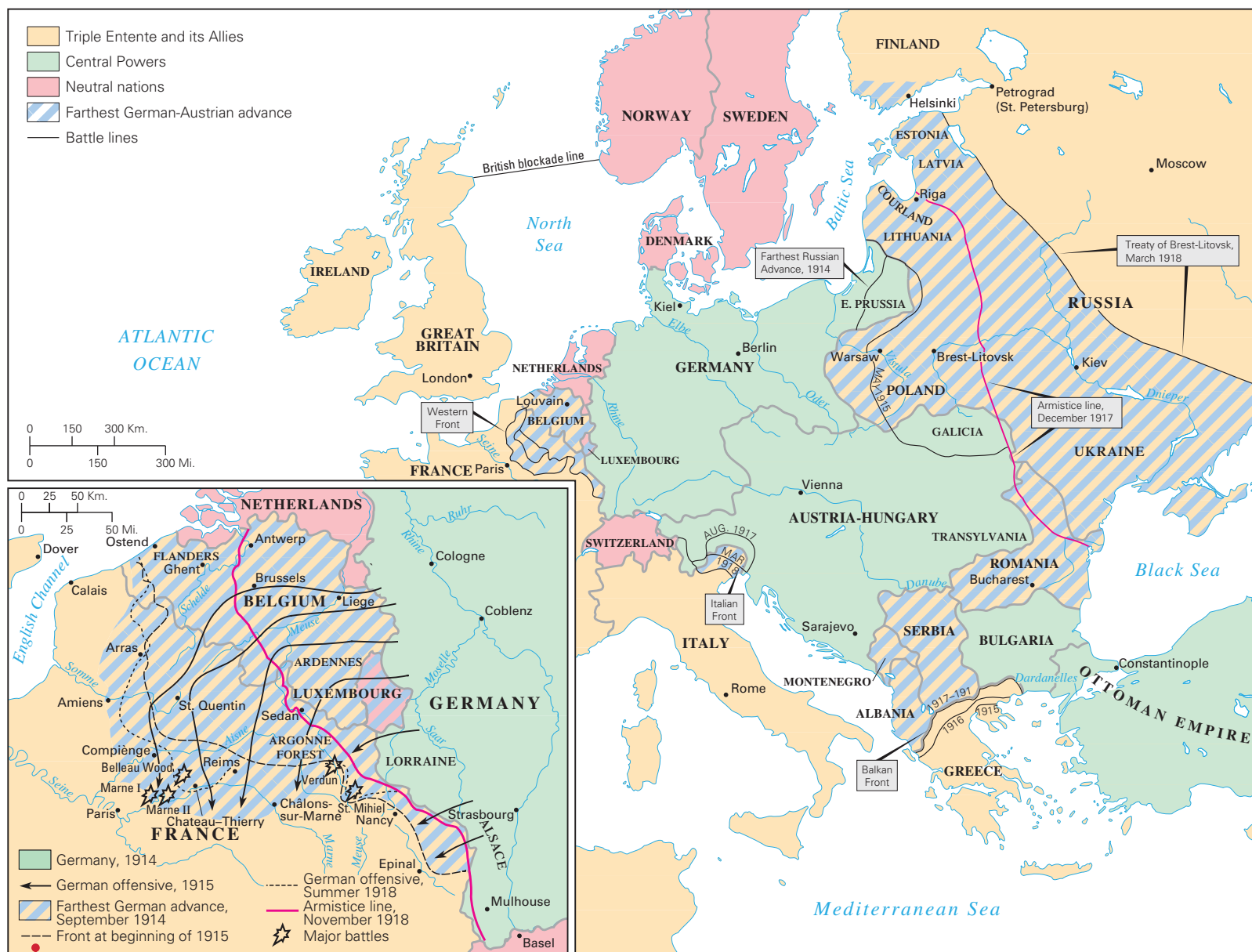
The major powers of Europe had avoided war with one another since 1871, when Germany had humiliated France. But they had continued to prepare for war. Eventually European diplomats constructed two major alliance systems: the **Triple Entente** (Britain, France, and Russia) and the **Triple Alliance** (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy). Britain was also allied with Japan.

Thus the events at Sarajevo came in the midst of an arms race between rival alliances. The assassinations grew out of a territorial conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. Austria-Hungary feared that Serbia might mold a strong Slavic state on its south. Russia, alarmed over Austrian expansion in the Balkans, presented itself as the protector of Serbia. Called the “powder keg of Europe,” the Balkans lived up to their explosive nickname in 1914.

Austria assured itself of Germany’s backing, then declared war on Serbia. Russia confirmed France’s support, then **mobilized** its army in support of Serbia. Germany declared war on Russia on August 1 and on France soon after. To bypass French defenses, Germany invaded neutral Belgium (see Map 21.1). Britain entered the war in defense of Belgium. By August 4, much of Europe was at war. Eventually Germany and Austria-Hungary combined with Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire to form the **Central Powers**. Italy abandoned its Triple Alliance partners and joined Britain, France, Russia, Romania, and Japan as the Allies.

The Germans expected a quick victory over France. The Belgians, however, resisted long enough for French and British troops to block the Germans. The opposing armies settled into defensive lines across 475 miles of Belgian and French countryside, from the English Channel to the Alps (see Map 21.1). Soon the **western front** consisted of





**MAP 21.1** The War in Europe, 1914–1918

This map identifies the members of the two great military coalitions, the Central Powers and the Allies, and charts the progress of the war. Notice how much territory Russia lost by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk as compared with the armistice line (the line between the two armies when Russia sought peace).

**no man's land** The field of battle between the lines of two opposing, entrenched armies.

**neutral** A neutral nation is one not aligned with either side in a war; traditionally, a neutral nation had the right to engage in certain types of trade with nations that were at war.

**propagandist** A person who provides information in support of a cause, especially one-sided or exaggerated information.

**Hun** Disparaging term used to describe Germans during World War I; the name came from a warlike tribe that invaded Europe in the fourth and fifth centuries.

**belligerent** A nation formally at war.

**contraband** Goods prohibited from being imported or exported; in time of war, contraband included materials of war.

**U-boat** German submarine (in German, *Unterseeboot*).

elaborate networks of trenches on both sides, separated by a desolate **no man's land** filled with coils of barbed wire, where any movement brought a burst of machine-gun fire. As the war progressed, terrible new weapons—poison gas, aerial bombings, tanks—took thousands of lives but failed to break the deadlock.

### American Neutrality

On August 4, Wilson announced that the United States was **neutral**. Soon after, he urged Americans to be “neutral in fact as well as in name . . . impartial in thought as well as in action.”

Wilson's hope that Americans could remain impartial was unrealistic. American socialists probably came the closest as they condemned all the warring nations for seeking imperial spoils at the expense of the workers who filled the trenches. Most Americans probably sided with the Allies. England had cultivated American friendship for decades, and trade and finance united many members of their business communities. French assistance during the American Revolution helped to fuel support for France. And the martyrdom of Belgium aroused American sympathy. Allied **propagandists** worked hard to generate anti-German sentiment in America, publicizing—and exaggerating—German atrocities and portraying the war as a conflict between civilized peoples and barbaric **Huns**.

Not all Americans sympathized with the Allies. Of the nearly 97 million people in the United States, 8 million had one or both parents from Germany or Austria. Not surprisingly, many of them took offense at depictions of their cousins as bloodthirsty barbarians. Many of the 5 million Irish Americans disliked England for ruling their ancestral homeland.

### Neutral Rights and German U-Boats

Wilson and Bryan agreed that the United States should remain neutral. They took different approaches for carrying out that goal, however. Bryan proved willing to sacrifice traditional neutral rights if insistence on those rights seemed

likely to pull the United States into the conflict. Wilson, in contrast, stood firm on maintaining all traditional rights of neutral nations, a posture that favored the Allies.

Bryan initially opposed loans to **belligerent** nations as incompatible with neutrality. Wilson agreed at first. Then Wilson realized that the ban hurt the Allies more, and he agreed to permit buying goods on credit. Eventually, he dropped the ban on loans, partly because neutrals had always been permitted to lend to belligerents and partly, perhaps, because the freeze endangered the stability of the American economy.

Traditional neutral rights included freedom of the seas: neutrals could trade with all belligerents. But Britain commanded the seas at the war's outset and tried to redefine neutral rights by announcing a blockade of German ports and neutral ports from which goods could reach Germany. Britain also expanded definitions of **contraband** to include anything that might indirectly aid its enemy—even cotton and food.

Germany also challenged neutral rights, declaring a blockade of the British Isles, to be enforced by its submarines, called **U-boats**. Because U-boats were relatively fragile, a lightly armed merchant ship might sink one that surfaced and ordered the merchant ship to stop in the traditional manner. Consequently, submarines struck from below the surface without issuing the warning called for by traditional rules of warfare. Britain began disguising its ships by flying the flags of neutral countries, so Germany declared that a neutral flag no longer guaranteed protection.

On February 10, 1915, Wilson warned that the United States would hold Germany to “strict accountability” for its actions and would do everything necessary to “safeguard

American lives and property and to secure to American citizens the full enjoyment of their acknowledged rights on the high seas.” On May 7, 1915, a German U-boat torpedoed the British passenger ship *Lusitania*. More than a thousand people died, including 128 U.S. citizens. Americans reacted with shock and horror. Bryan learned that the *Lusitania* carried ammunition and other contraband and urged restraint in protesting to Germany. Wilson, however, sent a message that stopped just short of demanding an end to submarine warfare against unarmed merchant ships. The German response was noncommittal. When Wilson composed an even stronger protest, Bryan feared it would lead to war. He resigned as secretary of state rather than sign it.

Robert Lansing, Bryan’s successor, strongly favored the Allies. Where Bryan had counseled restraint, Lansing urged a show of strength. U-boat attacks continued. Wilson sent more protests but knew that most Americans opposed going to war over that issue. Then a U-boat sank the unarmed French ship *Sussex* in March 1916, injuring several Americans. Wilson now warned Germany that if unrestricted submarine warfare did not stop, “the United States can have no choice” but to sever diplomatic relations—usually the last step before declaring war. Germany responded with the **Sussex pledge**: U-boats would no longer strike noncombatant vessels without warning, provided the United States convinced the Allies to obey “international law.” Wilson accepted the pledge but did little to persuade the British to change their tactics.

The war strengthened America’s economic ties to the Allies. Exports to Britain and France soared from \$756 million in 1914 to \$2.7 billion in 1916. American companies exported \$6 million worth of explosives in 1914 and \$467 million in 1916. Even more significant was the transformation of the United States from a debtor to a **creditor nation**. By April 1917, American bankers had loaned more than \$2 billion to the Allied governments. However, the British blockade stifled Americans’ trade with the Central Powers, which fell from around \$170 million in 1914 to almost nothing two years later.

Wilson concluded that the best way to keep the United States neutral was to end the war. He sent his closest confidant, Edward M. House, to London and Berlin early in 1916. Wilson directed House to present proposals for peace, **disarmament**, and a league of nations to maintain peace in the future. House received no encouragement from either side and concluded that they were not interested in negotiations.

**Lusitania** British passenger liner torpedoed by a German submarine in 1915; more than one thousand drowned, including 128 Americans, creating a diplomatic crisis between the United States and Germany.

**Sussex pledge** German promise in 1916 to stop sinking merchant ships without warning if the United States would compel the Allies to obey “international law.”

**creditor nation** A nation whose citizens or government have loaned more money to the citizens or governments of other nations than the total amount that they have borrowed from the citizens or governments of other nations.

**disarmament** The reduction or dismantling of a nation’s military forces or weaponry.

**OCEAN TRAVEL**

**NOTICE!**

TRAVELLERS intending to embark on the Atlantic voyage are reminded that a state of war exists between Germany and her allies and Great Britain and her allies; that the zone of war includes the waters adjacent to the British Isles; that, in accordance with formal notice given by the Imperial German Government, vessels flying the flag of Great Britain, or of any of her allies, are liable to destruction in those waters and that travellers sailing in the war zone on ships of Great Britain or her allies do so at their own risk.

**IMPERIAL GERMAN EMBASSY,**  
WASHINGTON, D. C., APRIL 22, 1915.

**OCEAN TRAVEL**

**CUNARD**



**EUROPE VIA LIVERPOOL**

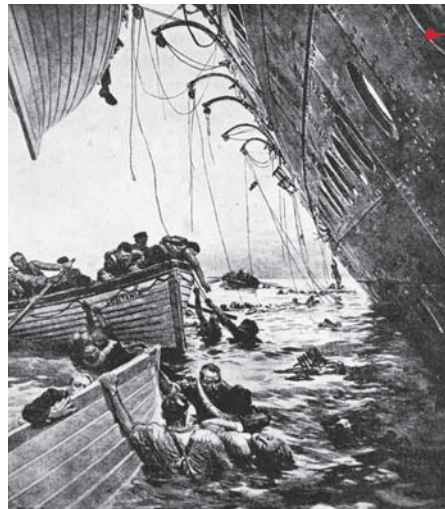
**LUSITANIA**

Fastest and Largest Steamer now in Atlantic Service Sails

SATURDAY, MAY 1, 10 A. M.

Transylvania - Fri., May 7, 5 P.M.  
Orduna, - - - Tues., May 18, 10 A.M.  
Tuscania, - - - Fri., May 21, 5 P.M.  
LUSITANIA, - Sat., May 29, 10 A.M.  
Transylvania, - Fri., June 4, 5 P.M.

Gibraltar—Genoa—Naples—Piræus



Although New York newspapers carried warnings from the German embassy about the dangers of trans-Atlantic travel, the passengers who boarded the *Lusitania* on May 1, 1915, probably did not imagine themselves in serious danger from submarine attack. Warning: National Archives; Sketch: Culver Pictures.

Some Americans had begun to demand “preparedness”—a military buildup. In the summer of 1916, Congress appropriated funds to expand the army and navy, and Wilson approved. When the Democrats nominated Wilson for a second term, they campaigned on their domestic reforms and preparedness programs, frequently repeating the slogan “He kept us out of war.” Republicans nominated Charles Evans Hughes, a Supreme Court justice and former governor of New York with a reputation as a progressive. The vote was very close. Wilson won by uniting the always-Democratic South with the West, much of which was progressive. Wilson also received significant backing from unions, socialists, and women in states where women could vote.

### The Decision for War

After the election, events moved the United States very quickly toward war. In January 1917, Wilson spoke to the Senate on the need to achieve and preserve peace. He eloquently called for a league of nations to keep peace in the future through “a community of power,” and a “peace without victory” in which neither side exacted gains from the other. He called for government by consent of the governed, freedom of the seas, and reductions in armaments. Wilson admitted that he had really aimed his speech toward the people of the warring countries, hoping to build public pressure on those governments to seek peace, but the British, French, and German governments had no interest in “peace without victory.”

Then the German government decided to resume unrestricted submarine warfare, expecting that this would bring the United States into the war. The Germans gambled on being able to defeat the British and French before American troops could make a difference. Wilson broke off diplomatic relations. German U-boats began immediately to devastate Atlantic shipping.

Wilson soon released an intercepted message from the German foreign minister, **Arthur Zimmermann**, to the German minister in Mexico. Zimmermann proposed that, if the United States went to war with Germany, Mexico should ally itself with Germany and attack the United States. Zimmermann promised that, if Germany and Mexico won, Mexico would recover its “lost provinces” of Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. Zimmermann also proposed that Mexico should encourage Japan to enter the war against the United States. Zimmermann’s suggestions outraged Americans.

By March 21, German U-boats had sunk six American ships. Wilson could avoid war only by backing down from his insistence on “strict accountability.” He did not retreat. On April 2, 1917, Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany. Wilson apparently thought that the nation was unlikely to go to war solely to protect American commerce with the Allies, and he probably felt the need to justify war in more noble terms. In fact, his major objective in going to war seems to have been to put the United States, and himself, in a position to demand the sort of peace he had outlined in January. In asking for war, Wilson tried to unite Americans in a righteous, progressive crusade. He condemned German U-boat attacks as “warfare against mankind.” “The world must be made safe for democracy,” he proclaimed, and he promised that the United States would fight for self-government and a league of nations.

Not all members of Congress agreed that war was necessary, and not all were ready to join Wilson’s crusade to transform the world. Senator George W. Norris, a progressive Republican from Nebraska, best voiced the arguments of the opposition. The nation, he claimed, was going to war “upon the command of gold” to “preserve the commercial right of American citizens to deliver munitions of war to belligerent nations.” In the Senate, Norris, Robert La Follette, and four others voted no, but eighty-two senators

**Arthur Zimmermann** German foreign minister who proposed in 1917 that if a U.S.-German war began, Mexico should ally with Germany to win back Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico.



voted for war. Jeannette Rankin of Montana, the first woman to serve in the House of Representatives, was among those who said no when the House voted 373 to 50 for war. In December, Congress also declared war against Austria-Hungary.

## The Home Front

- ★ **What steps did the federal government take to mobilize the economy and society in support of the war? How successful were these mobilization efforts?**
- ★ **How did the war affect Americans, especially women, African Americans, and opponents of war?**

Historians call World War I the first “total war” because it was the first war to demand mobilization of an entire society and economy. The war produced unprecedented centralization of economic decision making. Mobilization extended beyond war production to the people themselves and especially to shaping their attitudes toward the war.

### Mobilizing the Economy

The ability to wage war effectively depended on a fully engaged industrial economy. Thus warring nations sought to direct economic activities toward supplying their war machines. In the United States, railway transportation delays, shortages of supplies, and the sluggish pace of some manufacturing led to increased federal direction over transportation, food and fuel production, and manufacturing. This was not unusual among the nations at war and, in fact, was probably less extreme than in other nations. Even so, the extent of direct federal control over so much of the economy has never been matched since World War I.

The **War Industries Board** (WIB) supervised production of war materials. In early 1918, Wilson appointed Bernard Baruch, a Wall Street financier, to head the board. By pleading, bargaining, and sometimes threatening, Baruch usually managed to persuade companies to set and meet production quotas, allocate raw materials, develop new industries, and streamline operations. And industrial production increased by 20 percent.

Efforts to conserve fuel included the first use of **daylight saving time**. To improve rail transportation, the federal government consolidated the country’s railroads and ran them as a single system for the duration of the war. The government also took over the telegraph and telephone systems and launched a huge shipbuilding program to expand the merchant marine.

The **National War Labor Board**, created in 1918, endorsed **collective bargaining** to facilitate production by resolving labor disputes. The board gave some support for an eight-hour workday in return for a no-strike pledge from unions. Many unions secured contracts with significant wage increases. Union membership boomed from 2.7 million in 1916 to more than 4 million by 1919. Most union leaders fully supported the war.

The demands for increased production at a time when millions of men were marching off to war created labor shortages, which opened opportunities for women in many fields. The number of women employed in factory, office, and retail jobs had increased before the war, and the war accelerated that trend. At the war’s end, many women’s war-time jobs returned to male hands, but in office work and some retail positions women continued to predominate after the war.

The war severely disrupted European agriculture, and the Allies relied on food from America. Wilson appointed as food administrator **Herbert Hoover**, who had already won wide praise for directing the relief program in Belgium at a time when America was

**War Industries Board** Federal agency headed by Bernard Baruch that coordinated American production during World War I.

**daylight saving time** Setting of clocks ahead by one hour to provide more daylight at the end of the day during late spring, summer, and early fall.

**National War Labor Board** Federal agency created in 1918 to resolve wartime labor disputes.

**collective bargaining** Negotiation between the representatives of organized workers and their employer to determine wages, hours, and working conditions.

**Herbert Hoover** U.S. food administrator during World War I, known for his proficient handling of relief efforts; he later served as secretary of commerce (1921–1928) and president (1929–1933).

In 1918, this poster by James Montgomery Flagg appealed to American women to contribute to victory by conserving food through raising and preserving food for their families. The woman is sowing seeds (in the way that grain was planted before the development of agricultural machinery for that task), garbed in a dress made from an American flag, and wearing a red Liberty cap, a symbol that originated in the French Revolution. Ohio Historical Society.



still neutral. He tirelessly promoted conservation and increased production of food, urging families to conserve food through Meatless Mondays and Wheatless Wednesdays and to plant “war gardens” to raise vegetables. Farmers brought large areas under cultivation for the first time. Food shipments to the Allies tripled.

Some progressives urged that the Wilson administration pay for the war by taxing the wartime profits and earnings of corporations. That did not happen, but taxes—especially the new income tax—did account for almost half of the \$33 billion that the United States spent on the war between April 1917 and June 1920. The government borrowed the rest, most of it through **Liberty Loan** drives. Rallies, parades, and posters pushed all Americans to buy “Liberty Bonds.”

**Liberty Loan** One of four bond issues floated by the U.S. Treasury Department from 1917 to 1919 to help finance World War I.

### Mobilizing Public Opinion

Not all Americans supported the war. Some German Americans were reluctant to send their sons to war against their cousins. Some Irish Americans became even more hostile to Britain after the English brutally suppressed an attempt at Irish independence in 1916. The Socialist Party openly opposed the war, and Socialist candidates dramatically increased their share of the vote in several places in 1917—to

22 percent in New York City and 34 percent in Chicago—suggesting that their antiwar stance attracted many voters.

To mobilize public opinion in support of the war, Wilson created the Committee on Public Information, headed by George Creel. Creel set out to sell the war to the American people. The **Creel Committee** eventually counted 150,000 lecturers, writers, artists, actors, and scholars championing the war and whipping up hatred of the “Huns.”

State and local governments joined in as well. Some states prohibited the use of foreign languages in public. Officials removed German books from libraries and sometimes publicly burned them. Some communities banned the music of Bach and Beethoven, and some dropped German classes from their schools. Even words became objectionable: sauerkraut became “liberty cabbage.”

**Creel Committee** The U.S. Committee on Public Information (1917–1919), headed by George Creel; it used films, posters, pamphlets, and news releases to mobilize American public opinion in favor of World War I.

### Civil Liberties in Time of War

Along with German Americans, pacifists, socialists, and other radicals became targets for government repression and **vigilante** action. Congress passed the **Espionage Act** in 1917 and the **Sedition Act** in 1918, prohibiting interference with the draft and outlawing criticism of the government, the armed forces, or the war effort. Violators faced large fines and long prison terms. Officials arrested fifteen hundred people for violating the Espionage and Sedition Acts, including Eugene V. Debs, leader of the Socialist Party. The Espionage Act permitted the postmaster general to decide what could pass through the nation’s mails. By the war’s end, the Post Office Department had denied mailing privileges to some four hundred periodicals, including, at least temporarily, the *New York Times* and other mainstream publications.

When opponents of the war challenged the Espionage Act as unconstitutional, the Supreme Court ruled that freedom of speech was never absolute. Employing the curious metaphor that the First Amendment gave no one the right to falsely shout “Fire!” in a theater—the young socialist in question was quietly handing out anti-draft literature—Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., ruled that in time of war no one has a constitutional right to say anything that might endanger the security of the nation. The Court also upheld the Sedition Act in 1919, by a vote of seven to two.

The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) made no public pronouncement against the war, but most Wobblies probably opposed it. IWW members and leaders quickly came under attack from employers, government officials, and patriotic vigilantes, most of whom had disliked the IWW before the war. In September 1917, Justice Department agents raided IWW offices nationwide and arrested the union’s leaders, who were sentenced to jail for up to twenty-five years and fined millions of dollars. Deprived of most of its leaders and virtually bankrupted, the IWW never recovered.

**vigilante** A person who takes law enforcement into his or her own hands, usually on the grounds that normal law enforcement has broken down.

**Espionage Act** Law passed by Congress in 1917, mandating severe penalties for anyone found guilty of interfering with the draft or encouraging disloyalty to the United States.

**Sedition Act** Law passed by Congress in 1918 to supplement the Espionage Act by extending the penalty to anyone deemed to have abused the government in writing.

### The Great Migration and White Reactions

The war had a great impact on African American communities. Until the war, about 90 percent of all African Americans lived in the South, 75 percent in rural areas. By 1920, as many as a half-million had moved north in what has been called the **Great Migration**. Many of them went to the industrial cities of the Midwest. Outside the Midwest, New York City, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles attracted many blacks. Several factors combined to produce this migration, but the brutality and hardships of southern life were important elements. “Every time a lynching takes place in a community down South,” said T. Arnold Hill of Chicago’s Urban League, “colored people will arrive in Chicago within two weeks.” Perhaps the most significant factor in the Great

**Great Migration** Movement of about a half-million black people from the rural South to the urban North during World War I.

# Investigating America

## The Supreme Court Limits Free Speech, 1919

In 1917, Charles Schenck was the general secretary of the Socialist Party of America, and like most of those who belonged to the party, he believed that the war was ultimately about the protection of business interests and European colonies. He began to distribute fifteen thousand copies of a pamphlet he wrote denouncing the conflict and urging young men to resist the draft on the grounds that conscription amounted to involuntary servitude and was a violation of the Thirteenth Amendment. Schenck was arrested under the 1917 Espionage Act and appealed his conviction to the Supreme Court on the basis of the First Amendment. But in a unanimous 1919 decision, excerpted here, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes ruled that the constitution did not protect speech that creates a “clear and present danger.”

.....  
Of course, the document would not have been sent unless it had been intended to have some effect, and we do not see what effect it could be expected to have upon persons subject to the draft except to influence them to obstruct the carrying of it out. . . .

But it is said, suppose that that was the tendency of this circular [pamphlet], it is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution. . . . Two of the strongest expressions are said to be quoted respectively from well known public men. It will may be that the prohibition of laws abridging the freedom of speech is not confined to previous restraints. . . . We admit

that, in many places and in ordinary times, the defendants, in saying all that was said in the circular, would have been within their constitutional rights. But the character of every act depends upon the circumstances in which it is done. The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic. It does not even protect a man from an injunction against uttering words that may have all the effect of force. The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent. It is a question of proximity and degree. When a nation is at war, many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight, and that no Court could regard them as protected by any constitutional right.

- .....
- Is limiting freedom of speech justified if the speech in question poses a clear and present danger to the government that protects freedom of speech? If so, who should determine the existence of a “clear and present danger”? Explain your answers.
  - Does the tone of this excerpt suggest that Holmes perhaps based his ruling on emotion as well as points of law? Why do you think he employed the metaphor of “shouting fire”?



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Migration was the labor needs of northern cities, which attracted hundreds of thousands of African Americans seeking better jobs and higher pay. In the North, one could earn almost as much in a day as earned in a week in the South.

Racial conflicts erupted in several cities at the northern end of the Great Migration trail. One of America’s worst race riots swept through the industrial city of East St. Louis, Illinois, on July 2, 1917. Thousands of black laborers, most from the South, had settled in the city during the previous two years. Thirty-nine African Americans perished in the riot, and six thousand lost their homes. Incensed that such brutality could occur just weeks after the nation’s moralistic entrance into the war, W.E.B. Du Bois charged, “No land that loves to lynch [black people] can lead the hosts of Almighty God,” and the NAACP led a silent protest parade of ten thousand people through **Harlem**.

**Harlem** A section of New York City in the northern part of Manhattan; it became one of the largest black communities in the United States.



## Americans “Over There”

- ★ **What role did American ships and troops play in ending the war?**
- ★ **In what ways did Wilson try to keep America’s participation in the war separate from that of the Allies? Why?**

With the declaration of war, the United States needed to mobilize quickly for combat in a distant part of the world. The navy was large and powerful after nearly three decades of shipbuilding, and preparedness measures in 1916 further strengthened it. The army, however, was tiny compared with the armies contesting in Europe. Millions of men and thousands of women had to be inducted, trained, and transported to Europe.

### Mobilizing for Battle

The navy quickly began to strike back at the German fleet. The American and British navies’ convoy technique, in which several ships traveled together under the protection of destroyers, cut shipping losses in half by late 1917. By spring 1918, U-boats ceased to pose a significant danger.

In April 1917, the combined strength of the U.S. Army and National Guard stood at only 372,000 men. Many men volunteered but not enough. In May, Congress passed the **Selective Service Act**, requiring men ages 21 to 30 (later extended to 18 to 45) to register with local boards to determine who would be drafted (that is, called to duty). Twenty-four million men registered, and 2.8 million were drafted—comprising about 72 percent of the entire army. By the end of the war, the combined army, navy, and Marine Corps counted 4.8 million members. The law exempted those who opposed war on religious grounds, but such **conscientious objectors** were sometimes badly treated.

No women were drafted, but almost thirteen thousand joined the navy and marines, most serving in clerical capacities. For the first time, women held naval and marine rank and status. Nearly eighteen thousand women served in the Army Corps of Nurses, but without army rank, pay, or benefits. At least five thousand civilian women served in France, sometimes near the front lines, with the largest number in the Red Cross, which helped to staff hospitals and rest facilities.

Nearly 400,000 African Americans served during World War I. Emmett J. Scott, an African American and former secretary to Booker T. Washington, became special assistant to the secretary of war, responsible for the uniform application of the draft and the morale of African Americans. Black soldiers were treated as second-class citizens—they served in segregated units in the army, were limited to food service in the navy, and were excluded altogether from the marines. More than six hundred African Americans earned commissions as officers, but the army was reluctant to commission more and refused to put a black officer in authority over white officers. White officers commanded most black troops.

**Selective Service Act** Law passed by Congress in 1917 establishing compulsory military service for men ages 21 to 30.

**conscientious objector** Person who refuses to bear arms or participate in military service because of religious beliefs or moral principles.

### “Over There”

Shortly after the United States entered the war, a new song by the popular composer George M. Cohan rocketed to national popularity:

*Over there, over there,  
Send the word, send the word over there,  
The Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming,  
And we won’t come back ’til it’s over over there*

**American Expeditionary Force**

American army that served in Europe during World War I under the command of General John J. Pershing.

**salient** Part of a battle line, surrounded by the enemy on three sides.

**casualty** A member of the military lost through death, wounds, injury, sickness, or capture.

**influenza** Contagious viral infection characterized by fever, chills, congestion, and muscular pain, nicknamed “the flu”; an unusually deadly strain, usually called “Spanish flu,” swept the world in 1918 and 1919.

**tsar** The monarch of the Russian Empire; also spelled *czar*.

**Bolsheviks** Radical socialists, later called Communists, who seized power in Russia in November 1917.

A few Yanks—troops in the **American Expeditionary Force** (AEF)—arrived in France in June 1917, commanded by General John J. Pershing. Throughout the war, Wilson held the United States apart from the Allies, referring to the United States as an Associated Power, rather than one of the Allies, and trying as much as possible to keep American troops separate. This distinction stemmed partly from his distrust of Allied war aims but more from his wish to make the American contribution to victory as prominent as possible so as to maximize American influence in defining the peace.

As American troops trickled into France in mid-1917, the Central Powers seemed close to victory. French offensives in April 1917 had failed, and a British summer effort in Flanders produced enormous casualties but little gain. A Russian drive in midsummer proved disastrous. Russia withdrew from the war late in 1917, and German commanders shifted troops from east to west (see Map 21.1). Hoping to win the war before American troops could reinforce the Allies, the Germans planned a massive offensive for spring 1918.

The German thrust came in Picardy with sixty-four divisions smashing into the French and British lines and attempting to advance along the Marne River. AEF units were hurried to the front to block their advance.

The Allies launched a counteroffensive in July as American troops poured into France, topping the million mark. In September Pershing successfully launched a major offensive against the St. Mihiel **salient** (see Map 21.1). AEF forces then joined a larger Allied offensive in the Meuse River–Argonne Forest region, the last major assault of the war and one of the fiercest battles in American military history.

By late October, German military leaders were urging their government to seek an armistice. Fighting ended at 11:00 A.M., November 11 (the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month), 1918. By then, more than 2 million American soldiers were in France, giving the Allies an advantage of about 600,000 men.

At the time of the armistice, thirty-two nations had declared war on one or more of the Central Powers. Nearly 9 million combatants died: Germany lost 1.8 million, Russia 1.7 million, France 1.4 million, Austria-Hungary 1.2 million, the British Empire 908,400. France sustained the greatest proportionate losses of any belligerent. American losses were small in comparison—365,000 **casualties**, including 126,000 deaths. Millions of people worldwide, including civilians, died from starvation and disease, especially during a global **influenza** epidemic in 1918 and 1919 that killed 500,000 Americans.

## Wilson and the Peace Conference

- ★ **Do you think that Wilson was successful at the peace conference? On what basis?**
- ★ **What caused the defeat of the treaty in the Senate? Who was responsible—Wilson, Lodge, or the irreconcilables?**

When the war ended, Wilson hoped that the peace process would not sow the seeds of future wars. He hoped, too, to create an international organization to keep the peace. Most of the Allies, however, were more interested in grabbing territory and punishing Germany.

### Bolshevism, the Secret Treaties, and the Fourteen Points

In March 1917, war-weary and hungry, Russians deposed their **tsar** and created a provisional government. In November, a group of radical socialists, the **Bolsheviks**, seized power. Soon renamed Communists, the Bolsheviks sought to

destroy capitalism and imperialism. **Vladimir Lenin**, the Bolshevik leader, immediately began peace negotiations with the Germans. The **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk**, in March 1918, was harsh and humiliating, requiring Russia to surrender vast territories including a third of its population, half of its industries, its most fertile agricultural land, and a quarter of its territory in Europe.

Condemning the war as a scramble for imperial spoils, the Bolsheviks in December 1917 published the secret treaties by which the Allies had agreed to strip colonies and territories from the Central Powers and divide those spoils among themselves. These exposés strengthened Wilson's resolve to separate American war aims from those of the Allies and to impose his war objectives on the Allies.

On January 8, 1918, Wilson spoke to Congress. He began by condemning the harsh terms demanded by the Germans in the negotiations underway at Brest-Litovsk. He also denounced the secret treaties and tried to seize the initiative in defining a basis for peace. American goals, he said, derived from "the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities." Wilson presented fourteen objectives, soon called the **Fourteen Points**. Points one through five provided a general context for lasting peace: no secret treaties, freedom of the seas, reduction of barriers to trade, reduction of armaments, and adjustment of colonial claims based partly on the interests of colonial peoples. Point six dealt with Russia, calling for other nations to withdraw from Russian territory and to welcome Russia "into the society of free nations." Points seven through thirteen addressed particular situations: return of territories France had lost to Germany in 1871 and self-determination in Central Europe and the Middle East. The fourteenth point called for "a general association of nations" that could afford "mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike."

The Allies reluctantly accepted Wilson's Fourteen Points as a starting point for discussion but expressed little enthusiasm for them. The Germans were more interested. When they asked for an end to the fighting, they made clear that their request was based on the Fourteen Points.

### The World in 1919

In December 1918, Wilson sailed for France—the first American president to go to Europe while in office and the first president to negotiate directly with other world leaders. Wilson brought along some two hundred experts on European history, culture, and geography. Huge, welcoming crowds in France, Italy, and Britain cheered the great "peacemaker from America."

Delegates to the peace conference assembled amid the collapse of ancient empires and birth of new republics. The Austro-Hungarian Empire had crumbled, producing the new nations of Poland and Czechoslovakia and the republics of Austria and Hungary. The German monarch, Kaiser Wilhelm, had **abdicated**, and a republic was forming. In January 1919, communists tried unsuccessfully to seize power in Berlin. Throughout the ruins of the Russian Empire, ethnic groups were proclaiming independent republics (most of which were eventually incorporated into the Soviet Union by the Bolsheviks' **Red Army**). The Ottoman Empire was collapsing, too, as Arabs, with aid from Britain and France, overthrew Turkish rule in many areas.

In Russia, civil war raged between the Bolsheviks and their opponents. When the Bolsheviks left the world war, the Allies pushed Wilson to join them in intervening in Russia, ostensibly to protect war supplies from falling into German hands. In mid-1918, Wilson sent American troops as part of Allied expeditions to northern Russia and eastern Siberia. In Siberia, his intent was primarily to head off a Japanese grab of Russian

**Vladimir Lenin** Leader of the Bolsheviks and of the revolution of November 1917 and head of the Soviet Union until 1924.

### Treaty of Brest-Litovsk

Humiliating treaty with Germany that Russia signed in March 1918 to withdraw from World War I; it required Russia to surrender vast territories along its boundary with Germany.

### Fourteen Points

President Wilson's post-World War I program for peace that called for arms reduction, national self-determination, and a league of nations.

**abdicate** To relinquish a high office; usually said only of monarchs.

**Red Army** The army created by the Bolsheviks; the Red Army was the army of the Soviet Union throughout its existence.

# Investigating America

## Woodrow Wilson Proposes His Fourteen Points, 1918

President Woodrow Wilson spoke to a joint session of Congress on January 8, 1918, and presented his objectives for peace, including his Fourteen Points. This is a condensed version of that speech.

.....  
It will be our wish and purpose that the processes of peace, when they are begun, shall be absolutely open. . . . The day of conquest and aggrandizement is gone by; so is also the day of secret [treaties]. . . .

We entered this war because violations of right had occurred which touched us to the quick and made the life of our own people impossible unless they were corrected and the world secure once and for all against their recurrence. What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest. . . . The program of the world's peace, therefore, is our program; and that program, the only possible program, as we see it, is this:

- I. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.
- II. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters. . . .
- III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations.
- IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.

- V. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that . . . the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined . . .

- VI. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike. . . .

For such arrangements and covenants we are willing to fight and to continue to fight until they are achieved; but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war . . .

An evident principle runs through the whole program I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak . . . The people of the United States could act upon no other principle . . . The moral climax of this the culminating and final war for human liberty has come . . .

.....

- To what events does this passage refer? To whom is it directed?
- How do Wilson's statements on why the United States went to war compare with the outcome of the peace conference? What are the connections between Points I through V, the causes of the war in general, and the reasons for American's entrance into the war in particular? Was Wilson creating unrealistic expectations with statements such as these?



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# It Matters Today

## REDRAWING THE MAP OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Many of the current nation-states in the Middle East arose out of World War I and the mandate system created through the League of Nations. When the war began, Britain assisted Arabs in revolting against the Ottoman Empire. In 1916, in a secret treaty, Britain and France divided much of the former Ottoman Empire between them, including areas that Britain had promised its Arab allies as part of an independent Arab state. At stake, the British knew, was oil in Iraq and along the Persian Gulf.

The boundaries of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Trans-Jordan (now Jordan) were drawn to accomplish the political purposes of Britain and France. Britain received the League mandate for Iraq, an entity Britain had created by combining three former provinces of the Ottoman Empire that included known oilfields.

In 1932, Iraq achieved independence as a constitutional monarchy under a king chosen by the British, who continued to exercise influence. From the beginning, Iraq experienced ongoing conflict between Sunni and Shia. Kurds in the north had not wanted to be part of Iraq, and opposed their inclusion, sometimes violently. The result was a highly unstable government from 1920 until Saddam Hussein consolidated his power in the 1970s.

- How do the decisions made at Versailles continue to influence world affairs ninety years later?
- Do more research on Iraq from 1920 onward. If you had been planning an invasion of Iraq in 2003 to overthrow Saddam Hussein, would you have assumed that removing the dictator would produce a stable, democratic government? Why or why not?

territory. Lenin had initially accepted the intervention in northern Russia as necessary, but the purpose of the Allied intervention soon changed to support for the foes of the Bolsheviks. Wilson was expressing concern over what he called “mass terrorism” directed by the Bolsheviks toward “peaceable Russian citizens.” Before the last American troops withdrew—from northern Russia in May 1919 and from eastern Siberia in early 1920—they had engaged in conflict with units of the Red Army.

### Wilson at Versailles

The peace conference opened on January 18, 1919, just outside Paris, at the glittering Palace of Versailles, once home to French kings. Representatives attended from all nations that had declared war against the Central Powers, but all major decisions were made by the Big Four: Wilson, David Lloyd George of Britain, Georges Clemenceau of France, and Vittorio Orlando of Italy. Germany was excluded. Terms of peace were to be imposed, not negotiated. Russia, too, was absent, on the grounds that it had withdrawn from the war and made a separate peace with Germany. Although Russia was barred from Versailles, anxiety about Bolshevism hung over the proceedings, especially affecting decisions about central and eastern Europe.

Wilson quickly realized that European leaders were far more interested in pursuing their own national interests than in his Fourteen Points. Clemenceau could recall Germany’s humiliating defeat of France in 1871 and hoped to disable Germany so thoroughly that it could never again threaten his nation. Lloyd George agreed in principle with many of Wilson’s proposals but felt that British voters required heavy **reparations** from Germany. Orlando insisted on the territorial gains promised when Italy joined the Allies in 1915. Various Allies were also expecting to gain the territories promised in the

**reparations** Payments required as compensation for damage or injury.

**League of Nations** A world organization proposed by President Wilson and created by the Versailles peace conference; it worked to promote peace and international cooperation.

**Treaty of Versailles** Treaty signed in 1919 ending World War I; it imposed harsh terms on Germany, created several territorial mandates, and set up the League of Nations.

**mandate** Under the League of Nations, mandate referred to a territory that the League authorized a member nation to administer, with the understanding that the territory would move toward self-government.

**League Covenant** The constitution of the League of Nations; Article 10 pledged League members to protect one another with joint economic and military action against aggressors.

**Henry Cabot Lodge** Prominent Republican senator from Massachusetts and chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee who led congressional opposition to Article 10 of the League of Nations.

secret treaties. In addition, the European Allies feared the spread of Bolshevism and were intent on setting up buffers to keep it at bay.

Facing the insistent and acquisitive Allies, Wilson had to compromise. He did secure a **League of Nations**. Instead of “peace without victory,” however, the **Treaty of Versailles** imposed harsh victors’ terms, requiring Germany to accept the blame for starting the war, pay reparations to the Allies (the exact amount to be determined later), and surrender all its colonies along with Alsace-Lorraine (which Germany had taken from France in 1871) and other European territories (see Map 21.2). The treaty deprived Germany of its navy and merchant marine and limited its army. German representatives signed on June 28, 1919.

Wilson reluctantly agreed to the massive reparations but insisted that colonies taken from Germany and territories taken from the Ottoman Empire should not go permanently to the Allies. These territories, called **mandates**, were to be administered by one of the Allies on behalf of the League of Nations. The League intended that the mandates move toward self-government and independence. In nearly every case, however, the mandate went to the nation slated to receive the territory under the secret treaties. Wilson blocked Italy’s most extreme territorial demands but gave in on others. The peace conference recognized the new republics of Central Europe, thereby creating a buffer zone between Russian Bolshevism and western Europe. No one gave a hearing to people—from Ireland to Vietnam—seeking the right of self-determination in colonies held by one of the victorious Allies. Japan failed to secure a statement supporting racial equality.

Although Wilson compromised on nearly all of his Fourteen Points, every compromise intensified his commitment to the League of Nations. The League, he hoped, would resolve future controversies without war and also solve problems created by the compromises. Wilson was especially pleased with Article 10 of the **League Covenant**—he called it the League’s “heart.” It specified that League members agreed to protect one another’s independence and territory against external attacks and to take joint economic and military action against aggressors.

### The Senate and the Treaty

While Wilson was in Paris, opposition to his plans was brewing at home. The Senate, controlled by Republicans since the 1918 elections, had to approve any treaty.

Presented with the treaty, the Senate split into three groups. **Henry Cabot Lodge**, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, led the largest faction, called reservationists after the *reservations*, or amendments, to the treaty that Lodge developed. Lodge especially feared that Article 10 of the League Covenant might be used to commit American troops to war without congressional approval. A small group, mostly Republicans, were called irreconcilables because they opposed any American involvement in European affairs. A third Senate group, nearly all Democrats, supported the president and his treaty.

Wilson appealed directly to the American people for support of the treaty. In September 1919, he undertook an arduous speaking tour—9,500 miles with speeches in twenty-nine cities. The effort proved too demanding for his fragile health, and he collapsed in Pueblo, Colorado. Soon after, he suffered a serious stroke. Half-paralyzed and weak, Wilson could fulfill few of his duties. His wife, Edith Bolling Wilson, exercised what she later called a “stewardship,” strictly limiting her husband’s visitors.

Lodge now proposed that the Senate accept the treaty with fourteen reservations, his retort to the Fourteen Points. Some of his amendments were minor, but others would have permitted Congress to block action under Article 10. Wilson refused to compromise.



**MAP 21.2** Postwar Boundary Changes in Central Europe and the Middle East

This map shows the boundary changes in Europe and the Middle East that resulted from the defeat of the four large, multiethnic empires—Austria-Hungary, Germany, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire.



On November 19, 1919, the Senate defeated the treaty with the Lodge reservations by votes of 39 to 55 and 41 to 50, with the irreconcilables joining the president's supporters in opposition. Then the Senate defeated the original version of the treaty by 38 to 53, with the irreconcilables joining the reservationists in voting no. The United States did not join the League of Nations.

## America in the Aftermath of War, November 1918–November 1920

- ★ **How did Americans react to the outcome of the war and the events of 1919? How did the war contribute to conflict within the nation in 1919?**
- ★ **How did the events of 1917–1920 affect the 1920 presidential election? What was unusual about that contest?**

**subversion** Efforts to undermine or overthrow an established government.

Almost as soon as French church bells pealed for the armistice, the United States began to demobilize. By November 1919, nearly 4 million men and women were out of uniform. Industrial demobilization occurred even more quickly, as officials canceled war contracts with a month's notice. The year 1919 saw not only the return of American troops from Europe but also raging inflation that had begun in 1918, massive strikes, bloody race riots, widespread fear of radical **subversion**, violations of civil liberties, and two new constitutional amendments that embodied important elements of progressivism—prohibition and woman suffrage.

### "HCL" and Strikes

Inflation—described in newspapers as "HCL" for "High Cost of Living"—was the most pressing single problem after the war. Between 1913 and 1919, prices almost doubled. Inflation contributed to labor unrest. The armistice ended unions' no-strike pledge, and organized labor made wage demands to match the soaring cost of living. In 1919, however, employers were ready for a fight.

Many companies wanted to return labor relations to prewar patterns. They blamed wage increases for inflation, and some linked unions to "dangerous foreign ideas" from Bolshevik Russia. In February 1919, Seattle's Central Labor Council called out the city's unions in a five-day general strike to support striking shipyard workers. Seattle's mayor claimed the strike was a Bolshevik plot. Boston's police struck in September 1919 after the city's police commissioner fired nineteen policemen for joining an AFL union. The governor of Massachusetts, Calvin Coolidge, refused to negotiate and instead called out the national guard to maintain order and break the union. By mid-1919, many unionists concluded that conservative politicians had joined business leaders to block union organizing and roll back wartime gains. Late that year, a strike against the giant United States Steel Corporation failed when company guards protected strikebreakers and the U.S. military rounded up radicals among the strike organizers and supporters.

### Red Scare

The steel industry leveled charges of Bolshevism to discredit strikers, and many government and corporate leaders had been declaiming against Bolshevism's dangers. In April 1919, thirty-four bombs addressed to prominent Americans—including J. P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, and Supreme Court justice Oliver Wendell Holmes—were discovered in various post offices after the explosion of two others addressed to a senator



and to the mayor of Seattle. In June, bombs in several cities damaged buildings and killed two people. The bombs, most likely the work of a small number of **anarchists**, helped fuel fears of a nationwide conspiracy against the government.

Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer organized an anti-Red campaign. “Like a prairie fire,” Palmer claimed, “the blaze of revolution was sweeping over every American institution.” He appointed **J. Edgar Hoover**, a young lawyer, to head a new antiradical division of the Justice Department’s Bureau of Investigation, the predecessor of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In November 1919, Palmer launched the first of what came to be called the **Palmer raids** to arrest suspected radicals. Authorities rounded up some five thousand people by January 1920. Although officials found a few firearms and no explosives, the raids led to the **deportation** of several hundred aliens who had some tie to radicalism.

State legislatures joined with their own antiradical measures, including **criminal syndicalism laws**—measures criminalizing the advocacy of Bolshevik or IWW ideologies. In January 1920, the assembly of the New York state legislature expelled five members elected as Socialists, solely because they were Socialists.

After a wide range of respected public figures denounced the legislature’s action as undemocratic, public opinion regarding the **Red Scare** began to shift. With the approach of May 1, the major day of celebration for radicals, Palmer issued dramatic warnings for the public to be on guard against a general strike and more bombings. When nothing happened, many concluded that the radical threat might have been overstated.

As the Red Scare sputtered to an end, in May 1920, police in Massachusetts arrested **Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti**, Italian-born anarchists, and charged them with robbery and murder. Despite inconclusive evidence and the accused men’s protestations of innocence, a jury found them guilty, and they were sentenced to death. Many Americans argued that the two had been convicted because of their political beliefs and Italian origins. Many doubted that they had received a fair trial because of the nativism

**anarchist** A person who believes that all forms of government are oppressive and should be abolished.

**J. Edgar Hoover** Official appointed to head a new antiradical division in the Bureau of Investigation of the Justice Department in 1919; he served as head of the FBI from its official founding in 1924 until his death in 1972.

**Palmer raids** Government raids on individuals and organizations in 1919 and 1920 to search for political radicals and to deport foreign-born activists.

**deportation** Expulsion of an undesirable alien from a country.

**criminal syndicalism laws** State laws that made membership in organizations that advocated communism or anarchism subject to criminal penalties.

**Red Scare** Wave of antiradicalism in the United States in 1919 and 1920.

**Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti** Italian anarchists convicted in 1921 of the murder of a Braintree, Massachusetts, factory paymaster and theft of a \$16,000 payroll; in spite of public protests on their behalf, they were electrocuted in 1927.



This cartoon, by Fred Morgan for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, in 1919, portrays an unsavory-looking radical lurking under the cover of the American flag, armed to kill and burn. Morgan’s dramatic cartoon was far more sophisticated than most political cartoons of his time, but it also suggests that he had limited understanding of the radicalism he was condemning. He labeled his radical as both “Bolshevik” and “anarchist,” but in fact Bolsheviks and anarchists had little in common beyond opposition to capitalism. The Granger Collection, New York.

and antiradicalism that infected the judge and jury. Over loud protests at home and abroad and after long appeals, both men were executed in 1927. Historians continue to debate the evidence in the case. Most now think that Sacco was probably guilty and Vanzetti innocent.

### Race Riots and Lynchings

The racial tensions of the war years continued into the post-war period. Some whites greeted homecoming black troops with furious violence intended to restore prewar race relations. Southern mobs lynched ten returning black soldiers, some still in uniform. In all, rioters lynched more than seventy blacks in the first year after the war and burned eleven victims alive.

Rioting also struck outside the South. In July 1919, violence reached the nation's capital, where white mobs, many of them soldiers and sailors, attacked blacks throughout the city for three days, killing several. The city's African Americans organized their own defense, sometimes arming themselves. In Chicago in late July, war raged between white and black mobs for nearly two weeks, despite efforts by the national guard. The rioting caused thirty-eight deaths (fifteen white, twenty-three black). A thousand families—nearly all black—were burned out of their homes. In Omaha in September, a mob tried to hang the mayor when he bravely stood between them and a black prisoner accused of rape. Police saved the mayor but not the prisoner.

By the end of 1919, race riots had flared in more than two dozen places. The year saw not only rampant lynchings but also the appearance of a new Ku Klux Klan. Despite violence and coercion directed at African Americans, some things had changed. As W.E.B. Du Bois observed, black veterans “would never be the same again. You cannot ask them to go back to what they were before. They cannot, for they are not the same men.”

### Amending the Constitution: Prohibition and Woman Suffrage

In the midst of the turmoil at the end of the war, two of the great crusades of the Progressive Era finally realized their goals. Both had roots deep in the nineteenth century, and both had attracted numerous and diverse supporters during the Progressive Era. Prohibition was adopted as the **Eighteenth Amendment** to the Constitution, and woman suffrage as the Nineteenth Amendment. In some ways, these two measures marked the last gasp of the reforming zeal that had energized much of progressivism.

Spearheaded by the Anti-Saloon League, prohibition advocates convinced Congress to pass a temporary prohibition measure in 1917, as a war measure to conserve grain. Congress then adopted and sent to the states the Eighteenth Amendment, prohibiting the manufacture, sale, or transportation of alcoholic beverages. Intense lobbying by dry advocates persuaded three-fourths of the state legislatures to ratify the amendment, and it took effect in January 1920.

In June 1919, by a narrow margin, Congress proposed the **Nineteenth Amendment**, to enfranchise women over 21, and sent it to the states for ratification. After a grueling, state-by-state battle, ratification came in August 1920. Although many women by then already exercised the franchise, especially in western states, ratification meant that the electorate for the 1920 elections was significantly expanded.

#### Eighteenth Amendment

Constitutional amendment, ratified in 1919, that forbade the manufacture, sale, or transportation of alcoholic beverages.

#### Nineteenth Amendment

Constitutional amendment, ratified in 1919, that prohibited federal and state governments from restricting the right to vote on account of sex.

### The Election of 1920

Republicans confidently expected to regain the White House in 1920. The Democrats had lost their congressional majorities in the 1918 elections, and the postwar confusion and disillusionment often focused on Wilson. The situation almost

guaranteed election for any competent Republican nominee. Several candidates attracted significant support, but no candidate could muster a majority in the convention. Finally a small group of party leaders brokered a compromise, the nomination of Ohio senator Warren G. Harding. Even some of his supporters were unenthusiastic—one called him “the best of the second-raters.” For vice president, the Republicans nominated Calvin Coolidge, the governor who had broken the Boston police strike.

The Democrats also suffered severe divisions. After forty-four ballots, they chose James Cox, the governor of Ohio, as their presidential candidate. For vice president, they nominated Wilson’s assistant secretary of the navy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, a remote cousin of Theodore Roosevelt.

Harding, usually described as good-natured and likable—and sometimes as bumbling—had published a small-town newspaper in Ohio until his wife, Florence, and some of his friends pushed him into politics. He eventually won election to the Senate. Unhappy with his marriage, Harding apparently took pleasure from a series of mistresses. The press knew of Harding’s liaisons but never reported them.

During the campaign, however, an uproar arose over a claim that Harding’s ancestry included African Americans. The story spread rapidly, and a reporter asked Harding, “Do you have any Negro blood?” Harding replied mildly, “How do I know, Jim? One of my ancestors may have jumped the fence.” The allegation, and Harding’s response to it, apparently did not hurt his cause. After the stress of the war and the postwar years, voters responded with enthusiasm to Harding’s promise of returning to “normalcy.” Republicans won in a landslide. Wilson had hoped the election might be a “solemn referendum” on the League of Nations, but it proved more a reaction to the war and its aftermath—a war launched with lofty ideals that turned sour at Versailles, the high cost of living, and the strikes and riots of 1919. Americans, it seemed, had had enough of idealism and sacrifice for a while.

## Summary

Woodrow Wilson took office expecting to focus on domestic policy, not world affairs. He fulfilled some Democratic Party commitments to anti-imperialism but intervened extensively in the Caribbean. He also intervened in Mexico but failed to accomplish all of his objectives there.

When war broke out in Europe in 1914, Wilson declared the United States to be neutral, and most Americans agreed. German submarine warfare and British restrictions on commerce, however, threatened traditional definitions of neutrality. Wilson secured a German pledge to refrain from unrestricted submarine warfare. He was reelected in 1916 on the argument that “he kept us out of war.” Shortly after he won reelection, however, the Germans violated their pledge, and in April 1917 Wilson asked for war against Germany.

The war changed nearly every aspect of the nation’s economic and social life. To overcome inefficiency, the federal government developed a high degree of centralized economic planning. Fearing that opposition to the war might limit mobilization, the Wilson administration tried to mold public opinion and to restrict dissent. When the federal government backed collective bargaining, unions registered important gains. In response to labor shortages, more women and African Americans entered the industrial work force, and many African Americans moved to northern and Midwestern industrial cities. In the end, the American forces turned the balance in the war, defeating Germany.

In his Fourteen Points, Wilson expressed his goals for peace. Facing opposition from the Allies, Wilson compromised at the Versailles peace conference but hoped

that the League of Nations would be able to maintain the peace. Fearing the obligations that League membership might place on the United States, enough senators opposed the treaty to defeat it. Thus the United States did not become a member of the League.

The end of the war brought disillusionment and a year of high prices, costly strikes, a Red Scare, and race riots and lynchings. In 1920 the nation returned to its previous Republican majority when it elected Warren G. Harding, a mediocre conservative, to the White House.

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Venustiano Carranza, *p. 505*

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# Prosperity Decade

## 1920–1928

## CHAPTER 22

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Clara Bow

At the age of 21, Clara Bow became the “It” Girl—star of the movie *It*, loosely based on Elinor Glyn’s novel. “It” was sex appeal, or, in Glyn’s words, “an inner magic, an animal magnetism.” And Clara Bow, the “It” Girl, was the most popular movie star of the late 1920s.

Clara was born in Brooklyn in 1905. She and her mother were frequently abandoned by her father. Clara’s schizophrenic mother showed no affection for her daughter, and Clara grew up streetwise, able to defend herself with her fists. Clara left school at 13, began to work, and soon decided to become a movie actress. Clara’s mother threatened to kill her if she persisted in her goal of acting and was confined to a mental institution. She died soon after. Left alone, Clara was raped by her father.

Bow landed a contract with a Hollywood studio by the time she was 17. She appeared in thirty-five movies before reaching the age of 21. Her first substantial role was as a tomboy, but by 1925 her studio labeled her “the hottest jazz baby in films.” The *New York Times* agreed: “She radiates an elfin sensuousness.” *It*, released in 1927, clinched her fame as the essential **flapper** (see next page). F. Scott Fitzgerald claimed that “Clara Bow is the quintessence of what the term ‘flapper’ signifies . . . pretty, impudent, superbly assured, as worldly-wise, briefly-clad and ‘hard-berled’ [tough] as possible.”

On the screen, Bow was flirtatious and sensuous, conscious of her sexuality and willing to use it, and aggressive in accomplishing her goal. In the process, she usually revealed as much skin as the censors permitted. In her own life, she behaved in much the same way, attracting the most handsome men in Hollywood, making them her lovers, and discarding them for someone new. Perhaps reflecting on her parents’ marriage, she told a reporter, “Marriage ain’t woman’s only job no more . . . I wouldn’t give up *my* work for marriage.”

### CLARA BOW

Clara Bow zoomed to stardom in Hollywood in the 1920s, and she came just as rapidly to symbolize a new and more open expression of sexuality and sensuality that Americans attributed to the movies and to popular magazines. This picture is undated, but appears to be from about 1925 or perhaps slightly later.

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### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### **Prosperity Decade**

- The Economics of Prosperity
- Targeting Consumers
- The Automobile: Driving the Economy
- Changes in Banking and Business
- “Get Rich Quick”—Speculative Mania
- Agriculture: Depression in the Midst of Prosperity

#### **The “Roaring Twenties”**

- Putting People on Wheels
- A Homogenized Culture Searches for Heroes
- Alienated Intellectuals
- Renaissance Among African Americans

#### **Traditional America Roars Back**

- Prohibition
- Fundamentalism and Evolution

#### **IT MATTERS TODAY: Evolution**

- The Ku Klux Klan

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA: The Klan**

#### **Ethnicity, Race, Class, and Gender in the 1920s**

- Ethnicity and Race: North, South, and West
- Beginnings of Change in Federal Indian Policy
- Mexican Americans
- Labor on the Defensive
- Changes in Women’s Lives
- Development of Gay and Lesbian Subcultures

#### **The Politics of Prosperity**

- Harding’s Failed Presidency
- The Three-Way Presidential Election of 1924
- The Politics of Business
- The 1928 Campaign and the Election of Hoover

#### **The Diplomacy of Prosperity**

- America and the European Economy
- Encouraging International Cooperation

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA: The Kellogg-Briand Pact, 1928**

#### **Summary**

**flapper** In the 1920s, a young woman with short hair and short skirts who flaunted her avant-garde dress and behavior.

But she finally married actor Rex Bell and moved to a remote ranch in Nevada. She starred in two films in 1933, both successful at the box office and with the critics. But Bow was done with Hollywood. Eventually she was diagnosed with schizophrenia and depression. She later returned to live in solitude in Los Angeles and died there, in 1965.

Called the “Jazz Age” and the “Roaring Twenties,” the 1920s sometimes seem to be a swirl of conflicting images. Flappers were flaunting new freedoms for women while prohibition marked an ambitious effort to preserve the values of nineteenth-century America. The booming stock market promised prosperity to all with money to invest even as thousands of farmers were abandoning the land because they could not survive financially. Business leaders celebrated the expansion of the economy while many wage earners in manufacturing endured the destruction of their unions. White-sheeted Klansmen marched as self-proclaimed defenders of Protestant American values and white supremacy, but African Americans’ cultural expression in art, literature, and music was flowering.

## Prosperity Decade

★ **What was the basis for the economic expansion of the 1920s?**

★ **What weaknesses existed within the economy?**

By 1920, the American economy had been thoroughly industrialized, with most industry controlled by large corporations and run by professional managers. During the 1920s, the rise and growth of the automobile industry dramatized the new prominence of industries producing **consumer goods**. This significant change in direction carried implications for advertising, banking, and even the stock market.

**consumer goods** Products such as clothing, food, automobiles, and radios, intended for purchase and use by individuals or households, as opposed to products such as steel beams, locomotives, and electrical generators, intended for purchase and use by corporations.

### The Economics of Prosperity

With the end of the war in 1918, the government cancelled most orders for war supplies, from ships to uniforms. Large numbers of recently discharged military and naval personnel now swelled the ranks of job seekers. Such postwar conditions often bring on a recession or depression. At the end of World War I, however, no immediate economic collapse ensued. Given wartime shortages and overtime pay, many Americans had been earning more than they could spend. At the end of the war, their spending helped to delay the postwar slump until 1920 and 1921. But the economy quickly rebounded. Gross national product increased by 15 percent between 1921 and 1922, a bigger jump than during the booming war years. Unemployment remained at 2 to 5 percent from 1923 through 1929, and prices for most manufactured goods remained relatively stable. Income for many increased. Thus many Americans seemed slightly better off by 1929 than they were in 1920: they earned more and paid somewhat less for necessities.

### Targeting Consumers

By the 1920s, many business leaders understood that persuading Americans to consume their products was crucial to keeping the economy healthy. In 1921 General Foods Company invented Betty Crocker to give its baking products a

# Chronology

<b>1908</b>	Henry Ford introduces Model T General Motors formed		Wheaties marketed as “Breakfast of Champions” Full citizenship for American Indians
<b>1914</b>	Universal Negro Improvement Association founded War breaks out in Europe		Dawes Plan U.S. forces withdraw from Dominican Republic
<b>1915</b>	D. W. Griffith’s <i>Birth of a Nation</i> Ku Klux Klan revives	<b>1924–1929</b>	Great Bull Market
<b>1918</b>	World War I ends	<b>1925</b>	Scopes trial Bruce Barton’s <i>The Man Nobody Knows</i> F. Scott Fitzgerald’s <i>The Great Gatsby</i> Ku Klux Klan claims 5 million members Klan leader convicted of murder One automobile for every three residents in Los Angeles Chrysler Corporation formed Publication of Hitler’s <i>Mein Kampf</i>
<b>1920</b>	Eighteenth Amendment (Prohibition) takes effect Nineteenth Amendment (women suffrage) takes effect Sinclair Lewis’s <i>Main Street</i> Warren G. Harding elected president First commercial radio broadcasts		
<b>1920–1921</b>	Nationwide recession	<b>1926</b>	Ernest Hemingway’s <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> United States intervenes in Nicaragua Railway Labor Act of 1926
<b>1921–1922</b>	Washington Naval Conference		
<b>1922</b>	Fordney-McCumber Tariff Nine-Power Pact Fascists take power in Italy Sinclair Lewis’s <i>Babbitt</i> T. S. Eliot’s <i>The Waste Land</i>	<b>1927</b>	Clara Bow stars in <i>It</i> Coolidge vetoes McNary-Haugen bill Charles Lindbergh’s transatlantic flight Duke Ellington conducts jazz at Cotton Club
<b>1923</b>	Harding dies Calvin Coolidge becomes president Jean Toomer’s <i>Cane</i> American Indian Defense Association formed France occupies Ruhr Valley	<b>1928</b>	Coolidge vetoes McNary-Haugen bill again Ford introduces Model A Kellogg-Briand Pact Herbert Hoover elected
<b>1923–1927</b>	Harding administration scandals revealed	<b>late 1920s</b>	Stalin emerges as leader of Soviet Union
<b>1924</b>	National Origins Act Coolidge elected First disposable handkerchiefs	<b>1929</b>	Great Depression begins
		<b>1931</b>	Al Capone convicted and imprisoned
		<b>1933</b>	Twenty-first Amendment repeals Prohibition
		<b>1934</b>	U.S. forces withdraw from Haiti

womanly, domestic image. In 1924 General Mills first advertised Wheaties as the “Breakfast of Champions,” thereby tying cold cereal to star athletes. Americans responded by buying those products and many others, all with their own creative pitches. “We grew up founding our dreams on the infinite promises of American advertising,” Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald later wrote.

Changes in fashion also encouraged increased consumption. Short hairstyles for women led to the development of hair salons and stimulated sales of the recently invented bobby pin. Cigarette advertisers began to target women, as when the American Tobacco Company advised women to “Reach for a Lucky instead of a sweet” to attain a fashionably slim figure. Disposable products promoted regular, recurring consumer buying of throwaway items. Technological advances in the processing of wood cellulose fiber led in 1921 to the marketing of Kotex, the first manufactured disposable sanitary napkin, and in 1924 to the first disposable handkerchiefs, later known as Kleenex tissues.

Technological advances contributed in other ways to the growth of consumer-oriented manufacturing. In 1920 about one-third of all residences had electricity. By the end of the decade, electrical power had reached nearly all urban homes but fewer than 10 percent of farm homes. As the number of residences with electricity increased, advertisers stressed that housewives could save time and labor by using electric washing machines, irons, vacuum cleaners, and toasters. Between 1919 and 1929, consumer expenditures for household appliances grew by more than 120 percent.

Increased consumption encouraged changes in people’s spending habits. Before the war, most families saved their money until they could pay cash for what they needed. In the 1920s many retailers urged buyers to “Buy now, pay later.” Many consumers did so, taking home a new radio today and worrying about paying for it tomorrow. By the late 1920s, about 15 percent of all retail purchases were made through the installment plan, especially furniture, phonographs, washing machines, and refrigerators. Charge accounts in department stores also became popular, and **finance companies** (which made loans) grew rapidly.

**finance company** Business that makes loans to clients based on some form of collateral, such as a new car, thus allowing a form of installment buying when sellers do not extend credit.

**Henry Ford** Inventor and manufacturer who founded the Ford Motor Company in 1903 and pioneered mass production in the auto industry.

**Model T** Lightweight automobile that Ford produced from 1908 to 1927 and sold at the lowest possible price on the theory that an affordable car would be more profitable than an expensive one.

### The Automobile: Driving the Economy

The automobile epitomized the new consumer-oriented economy of the 1920s. Early automobiles were luxuries, but **Henry Ford** developed a mass-production system that drove down production costs.

Ford, a former mechanic, built his success on the **Model T**, introduced in 1908. It was a dream-come-true for many middle-income Americans. Families came to love their ungraceful but reliable “Tin Lizzies,” so named because of their lightweight metal bodies. By 1927, Ford had produced more than 15 million of them, dominating the market by selling the largest possible number of cars at the lowest possible price. “Get the prices down to the buying power,” Ford ordered. His dictatorial style of management combined with technological advances and high worker productivity to bring the price of a new Model T as low as \$290 by 1927 (equivalent to \$3,200 today). The Model T sacrificed style and comfort for durability, ease of maintenance, and the ability to handle almost any road. It made Henry Ford into a folk hero—a wealthy one. By 1925, Ford Motor Company showed a daily profit of some \$25,000.

Ford’s company provides an example of efforts by American entrepreneurs to reduce labor costs by improving efficiency. In the process, work on Ford’s assembly line became a thoroughly dehumanizing experience. Ford workers were prohibited from talking, sitting, smoking, singing, or even whistling while working. As one critic put it, workers were to “put nut 14 on bolt 132, repeating, repeating, repeating until their hands shook and their legs quivered.”

Ford, however, paid his workers well, and they could increase their pay more by completing the company’s Americanization classes. Ford workers earned enough to buy their own Model T. Ford’s high wages pushed other automakers to increase pay for their workers as well, to keep their best workers from defecting to Ford. Auto workers





This photo shows an assembly line at Ford's main assembly plant in 1928. Model-A Fords are seen here under production, as assembly-line workers repeat the same task on car after car, as the chassis moves past them at the rate of 6 feet per minute. Ford pioneered the assembly line as a way to reduce both cost and reliance on skilled workers. He paid the highest wages in Detroit but required complete obedience from his workers, even to the point of prohibiting whistling during work. From the Collections of Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village.

thus came to enjoy some of the consumer buying previously restricted to middle- and upper-income groups.

In the advertising of the day, the automobile came to symbolize not only the ability of many Americans to acquire material goods but also technology, progress, and the freedom of the open road. American consumers were receptive. By the late 1920s, about 80 percent of the world's registered vehicles were in the United States. By then, America's roadways sported nearly one automobile for every five people.

The automobile industry in the 1920s often led the way in devising new sales techniques. By 1927 two-thirds of all American automobiles were sold on credit. GM led the way in introducing new models every year. This practice tempted owners to trade in their cars to keep up with changes in design, color, and optional features. Dozens of small automakers closed when they could not compete with Chrysler, Ford, and GM—the Big Three. By 1929, the Big Three were making 83 percent of all cars manufactured in the country. The industry had become an oligopoly.

### Changes in Banking and Business

Just as Henry Ford helped to bring automobiles within reach of most Americans, **A. P. Giannini** revolutionized banking. Giannini, the son of Italian immigrants, founded the Bank of Italy in 1904 as a bank for shopkeepers and workers in San

Francisco's Italian neighborhood. Until then, most banks had only one location, in the center of a city, and limited their services to businesses and substantial citizens. Giannini based his bank on dealings with ordinary people, and he opened branches near people's homes and workplaces. Called the greatest innovator in twentieth-century American banking, Giannini broadened the base of banking by encouraging working people to open small checking and savings accounts and to borrow for such purposes as

**A. P. Giannini** Italian American who changed the banking industry by opening multiple branches and encouraging the use of banks for small accounts and personal loans.

car purchases. In the process, his bank—later renamed the Bank of America—became the third largest in the nation by 1927.

Giannini's bank and Ford's auto factory survived as relics of family management in a new world of modern corporations with large bureaucracies. Ownership and control continued to grow apart, as salaried managers came to run most big businesses.

Leading entrepreneurs emerged as popular and respected public figures. Perhaps the ultimate glorification of the entrepreneur came in 1925, in a book entitled *The Man Nobody Knows*. The author, Bruce Barton, later founder of a leading advertising agency, suggested that Jesus Christ could best be understood as a business executive who “had picked up twelve men from the bottom ranks of business and forged them into an organization that conquered the world.” Portraying Jesus' parables as “the most powerful advertisements of all time,” Barton's book led the nonfiction bestseller lists for two years.

### “Get Rich Quick”– Speculative Mania

During the 1920s, the stock market captured people's imagination as the fast track to riches. Stock market speculation—buying a stock with the expectation of making money by selling it at a higher price—ran rampant. Articles in popular magazines proclaimed that everyone could participate and get rich in no time, even with a small investment. By 1929, 4 million Americans owned stock, equivalent to about 10 percent of American households.

Just as Americans purchased cars and radios on the installment plan, some also bought stock on credit. One could purchase stock listed at \$100 a share with as little as \$10 down and the other \$90 “on margin”—that is, owed to the stockbroker. If the stock price advanced to \$150, the investor could sell, pay off the broker, and gain a profit of \$50 (500 percent!) on the \$10 investment. Unfortunately, if the stock price fell to \$50, the investor would still owe \$90 to the broker. Fewer than 1 percent of those who bought stocks did so on margin, and the size of the margin rarely exceeded 45 or 50 percent. A larger number of people borrowed money to buy stocks, but buying stocks with borrowed money carried the same potential for disaster as buying on margin.

Driven partly by real economic growth and partly by speculation, stock prices rose higher and higher. Standard and Poor's index of common stock prices tripled between 1920 and 1929. As long as the market stayed **bullish** and stock prices kept climbing, prosperity seemed endless.

The ever-rising stock prices and corporate dividends of the 1920s encouraged the creation of holding companies. Samuel Insull created a vast empire of electrical utilities companies. Much of his enterprise—and others like it—consisted of holding companies, which existed solely to own the stock of another company, some of which existed primarily to own the stock of yet another company. The entire structure rested on the dividends produced by the underlying **operating companies**. Those dividends enabled the holding companies to pay dividends on their bonds. Any interruption in the flow of dividends from the operating companies was likely to bring the collapse of the entire pyramid, swallowing up the investments of speculators.

**bullish** Optimistic or confident; when referring to the stock market; a bull market is when stock prices are going up, and a bear market is when stock prices come down.

**operating company** A company that exists to sell goods or services, as opposed to a holding company that exists to own other companies, including operating companies.

### Agriculture: Depression in the Midst of Prosperity

Prosperity never extended to most farmers, and farmers made up nearly 30 percent of the work force in 1920. During the war, many farmers expanded their operations in response to government demands for more food, and exports of farm products nearly quadrupled. After the war, European farmers resumed production, and agricultural prices dropped. Exports of farm products fell by half. Throughout the 1920s,

American farmers consistently produced more than the domestic market could absorb, and this **overproduction** caused prices to fall.

Annual farm income fell to a dreadful \$517 in 1921, then slowly rose but never reached the levels of 1917 to 1920 until World War II. Although farmers’ net income, when adjusted for inflation, fell in the immediate postwar years and never recovered to prewar levels, their mortgage payments more than doubled over prewar levels, partly because of debts farmers had incurred to expand wartime production. Tax increases, purchases of tractors and trucks—now necessities on most farms—and the growing cost of fertilizer and other essential supplies bit further into farmers’ meager earnings. And as the farm economy continued to hemorrhage, the average value of an acre of farmland, in constant dollars, fell by more than half between 1920 and 1928. The average farm was actually less valuable in 1928 than in 1912. Thousands of people left farming each year, and the proportion of farmers in the work force fell from nearly 30 percent to less than 20 percent.

**overproduction** Production that exceeds consumer need or demand.

## The “Roaring Twenties”

- ★ **What groups most challenged traditional social patterns during the 1920s? Why?**
- ★ **What role did technology play in social change during the 1920s?**

“The world broke in two in 1922 or thereabouts,” wrote novelist Willa Cather, and she didn’t much like what came after. F. Scott Fitzgerald, another novelist, agreed with the date but embraced the change. He believed 1922 marked “the peak of the younger generation,” who brought about an “age of miracles”—that, he admitted, became an “age of excess.” Evidence of sudden and dramatic social change was easy to see, from automobiles, radios, and movies to a new youth culture and an impressive cultural outpouring by African Americans.

### Putting a People on Wheels: The Automobile and American Life

The automobile profoundly changed American patterns of living. Highways significantly shortened the travel time from rural areas to cities, reducing the isolation of farm life. One farm woman, when asked why her family had an automobile but no indoor plumbing, responded, “Why, you can’t go to town in a bathtub.” Trucks allowed farmers to take more products to market more quickly and conveniently than before. Tractors significantly expanded the amount of land that one family could cultivate. Gasoline-powered farm vehicles reduced the need for human farm labor, so they stimulated migration to urban areas.

The automobile changed life in the cities even more profoundly. The 1920 census, for the first time, recorded more Americans living in urban areas (defined as places having 2,500 people or more) than in rural ones. As the automobile freed suburbanites from their dependence on commuter rail lines, new suburbs mushroomed and streetcars steadily declined. Most of the new suburban growth was in the form of single-family houses. From 1922 through 1928, construction began on an average of 883,000 new homes each year. New home construction rivaled the auto industry as a major driving force behind economic growth.

The automobile soon demonstrated its ability to strangle urban traffic. One response was the development of traffic lights. Various versions were tried, but the four-directional, three-color traffic light first appeared in Detroit in 1920. But if most cities were not designed to handle automobile traffic, the fastest-growing major city of the early twentieth

century—Los Angeles—was. The population of Los Angeles increased tenfold between 1900 and 1920, then more than doubled by 1930, reaching 2.2 million. Expansion of citrus-fruit raising, major oil discoveries, and the development of the motion-picture industry laid an economic foundation for rapid population growth in southern California.

Lack of sufficient water threatened to limit Los Angeles' growth until city officials diverted the Owens River through a 233-mile-long aqueduct, opened in 1913. Throughout the 1920s, southern California promoters attracted hundreds of thousands of people by presenting an image of perpetual summer, tall palm trees lining wide boulevards filled with automobiles, fountains gushing water into the sunshine, and broad sandy beaches.

Los Angeles boomed as the automobile industry was promoting the notion of a car for every family and real-estate developers were pushing the ideal of the single-family home. By 1930, 94 percent of all residences in Los Angeles were single-family homes, an unprecedented level for a major city, and Los Angeles had the lowest urban population density of any major city in the nation.

Life in Los Angeles came to be organized around the automobile. The first modern supermarket, offering "one-stop shopping," appeared there, and the "Miracle Mile" along Wilshire Boulevard was the first large shopping district designed for the automobile. Such innovations set the pace for new urban development everywhere. The *Los Angeles Times* put it this way in 1926: "Our forefathers in their immortal independence creed set forth 'the pursuit of happiness' as an inalienable right of mankind. And how can one pursue happiness by any swifter and surer means . . . than by the use of the automobile?" By then, Los Angeles had one automobile for every three residents—twice the national average.

### A Homogenized Culture Searches for Heroes

Los Angeles was the capital of the movie industry. By the mid-1920s, most towns of any size boasted at least one movie theater, and movie attendance increased rapidly from a weekly average of 40 million people in 1922 to 80 million in 1929—

the equivalent of two-thirds of the total population. As Americans all across the country laughed or wept at the same movie, this new medium helped to **homogenize** the culture—that is, to make it more uniform by breaking down differences based on region or ethnicity.

Radio also contributed to greater homogeneity. The first commercial radio station began broadcasting in 1920. Within six years, 681 stations were operating. By 1930, 40 percent of all households had radios. Other important factors in promoting more homogeneity included the automobile, which cut travel time, and new laws that sharply reduced immigration.

The media also helped to create national sports heroes. In the 1920s, spectator sports became an obsession. Baseball had long been the preeminent national sport, and radio now began to broadcast baseball games nationwide. Other sports began to vie with baseball for fans' dollars. The rapid spread of movie theaters created a new category of fame—the movie star. Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd, and others brought laughter to the screen. Tom Mix was the best known movie cowboy. Sex made stars of Clara Bow, the "It" girl, and Rudolph Valentino soared to fame as a male sex symbol, with his most famous film, *The Sheik*, set in a fanciful Arabian desert.

The greatest popular hero of the 1920s, however, was neither an athlete nor an actor but a small-town airmail pilot—**Charles Lindbergh**. At the time, aviation was barely out of its infancy. The earliest regular airmail deliveries in the United States began in 1918,

**homogenize** To make something uniform throughout.

**Charles Lindbergh** American aviator who made the first solo transatlantic flight in 1927 and became an international hero.



and night flying did not become routine until the mid-1920s. A few transatlantic flights had been logged by 1926, but the longest nonstop flight before 1927 was from San Diego to New York—2,500 miles.

Lindbergh, in 1927, decided to collect the prize of \$25,000 offered by a New York hotel owner to the pilot of the first successful nonstop flight between New York and Paris—3,500 miles. His plane, *The Spirit of St. Louis*, was a stripped-down, one-engine craft. In a sleepless, 33½-hour flight, Lindbergh earned both the \$25,000 and the adoration of crowds on both sides of the Atlantic. In an age devoted to materialism and dominated by a corporate mentality, Lindbergh’s accomplishment suggested that old-fashioned individualism, courage, and self-reliance could still triumph over odds and adversity.

### Alienated Intellectuals

Lindbergh flew to Paris and became a living legend. Other Americans, too, went to Paris and other European cities in the 1920s, but for different reasons. These **expatriates** left the United States to escape what they considered America’s intellectual shallowness, dull materialism, and spreading uniformity. As Malcolm Cowley put it in *Exile’s Return* (1934), his memoir of his life in France, “by expatriating himself, by living in Paris, Capri or the South of France, the artist can break the puritan shackles, drink, live freely, and be wholly creative.” Paris in the 1920s, he added, “was a great machine for stimulating the nerves and sharpening the senses.”

Although **Sinclair Lewis** and H. L. Mencken did not move to Paris, they were leading critics of middle-class materialism and uniformity. Lewis, in *Main Street* (1920), presented small-town, middle-class existence as not just boring but stifling. In *Babbitt* (1922), Lewis presented a suburban businessman (George Babbitt) as materialistic, narrow-minded, and complacent, speaking in clichés and buying every gadget on the market. H. L. Mencken, the influential editor of *The American Mercury*, relentlessly pilloried the “booboisie,” jeered at all politicians, and celebrated only writers who shared his disdain for most of American life.

Where some writers celebrated pleasure seeking and excitement, F. Scott Fitzgerald, in *The Great Gatsby* (1925), revealed a grim side of the hedonism of the 1920s as he portrayed the pointless lives of wealthy pleasure seekers and their careless disregard for life and values. Ernest Hemingway, in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), depicted disillusioned and frustrated expatriates. Other expatriates extended the theme of hopelessness. In *The Waste Land* (1922), T. S. Eliot, an American poet who had fled to England in 1915, presented the barrenness of modern life.

### Renaissance Among African Americans

For the most part, feelings of despair and disillusionment troubled white writers and intellectuals. Such sentiments were rarely apparent in the striking outpouring of literature, music, and art by African Americans in the 1920s.

African Americans continued to move from the South to northern cities in the 1920s. Harlem, the largest black neighborhood in New York City, quickly came to symbolize the new urban life of African Americans. The term **Harlem Renaissance**, or Negro Renaissance, refers to a literary and artistic movement in which black artists and writers insisted on the value of black culture and drew upon African and African American traditions in their writing, painting, and sculpture. Black actors, notably Paul Robeson, began to appear in serious theaters and earn acclaim for their abilities. Earlier black writers, especially Alain Locke, James Weldon Johnson, and Claude McKay, encouraged and guided the novelists and poets of the Renaissance.

**expatriate** A person who takes up long-term residence in a foreign country.

**Sinclair Lewis** Novelist who satirized middle-class America in works such as *Babbitt* (1922) and became the first American to win the Nobel Prize for literature.

**Harlem Renaissance** Literary and artistic movement in the 1920s, centered in Harlem, in which black writers and artists described and celebrated African American life.

**jazz** Style of music developed in America in the early twentieth century, characterized by strong, flexible rhythms and improvisation on basic melodies.

**Marcus Garvey** Jamaican black nationalist active in America in the 1920s.

**black separatism** A strategy of creating separate black institutions, based on the assumption that African Americans can never achieve equality within white society.

Among the movement's poets, Langston Hughes became the best known. Hughes was born in Joplin, Missouri, in 1902. He began to write poetry in high school, briefly attended college, then worked and traveled in Africa and Europe. By 1925, he was a significant figure in the Harlem Renaissance, sometimes reading his poetry to the musical accompaniment of jazz. Some of his works present images from black history, such as "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" (1921), and others, such as "Song for a Dark Girl" (1927), vividly depict racism.

Other important writers included Zora Neale Hurston, who came from a poor southern family, won a scholarship to Barnard College, and began her long writing career with several short stories in the 1920s. Jean Toomer's novel *Cane* (1923), dealing with African Americans in rural Georgia and Washington, D.C., has been praised as "the most impressive product of the Negro Renaissance."

The 1920s have sometimes been called the Jazz Age. **Jazz** developed in the early twentieth century, drawing from several strains in African American music, particularly the blues and ragtime. Created and nurtured by African American musicians in southern cities, especially New Orleans, jazz moved north and began to attract white audiences in the 1910s. Jazz influenced leading white composers, notably George Gershwin, whose *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924) brought jazz into the symphony halls. Some attacked the new sound, claiming it encouraged people to abandon self-restraint, especially with regard to sex. Despite—or perhaps because of—such condemnation, the wail of the saxophone became as much a part of the 1920s as the roar of the roadster and the flicker of the movie projector.

The great black jazz musicians of the 1920s—Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Fletcher Henderson, Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton, and others—drew white audiences into black neighborhoods. Harlem came to be associated with exotic nightlife and glittering jazz clubs, with the Cotton Club the best known. There Edward "Duke" Ellington came in 1927 to lead the club band, and there he began to develop the works that made him one of America's most respected composers.

Few African Americans experienced the glitter of the Cotton Club, but one Harlem black leader affected black people throughout the country and beyond. **Marcus Garvey**, born in Jamaica, advocated a form of **black separatism**. His organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), founded in 1914, stressed racial pride, the importance of Africa, and racial solidarity across national boundaries. Garvey supporters urged blacks around the world to help Africans overthrow colonial rule and build a strong Africa. Garvey established a steamship company, the Black Star Line, which he envisioned would carry African Americans to Africa, and he promoted other black enterprises. His message of racial pride and solidarity attracted wide support among African Americans, especially in the cities. However, black integrationist leaders, especially W.E.B. Du Bois of the NAACP, opposed Garvey's separatism and argued that the first task facing blacks was integration and equality in the United States. Garvey and Du Bois each labeled the other a traitor to his race.

## Traditional America Roars Back

- ★ **Why and how did some Americans try to restore traditional social values during the 1920s?**
- ★ **What were some of the results of their efforts?**

Americans embraced cars, movies, and radios, but many felt threatened by the pace of change and the upheaval in social values that seemed centered in the cities. However, it is not accurate to see the 1920s as a time of cultural warfare between rural and urban

values. In nearly every case, efforts to stop the tide of change were strong in cities as well as in rural areas, and many of those efforts dated to the prewar era. In the 1920s, several movements seeking to restore elements of an older America came to fruition at the same time as Fitzgerald's "age of excess."

### Prohibition

The **Eighteenth Amendment** (Prohibition) came to epitomize many of the cultural struggles of the 1920s to preserve white, old-stock, Protestant values. However, many Americans simply ignored the Eighteenth Amendment, and it grew less popular the longer it lasted. By 1926, a poll indicated that only 19 percent of Americans supported Prohibition, 50 percent wanted the amendment modified, and 31 percent favored outright **repeal**. Prohibition, however, remained the law, if not the reality, from 1920 until 1933, when the Twenty-first Amendment finally did repeal it.

Prohibition did reduce drinking somewhat, and may have produced a decline in drunkenness and in the number of deaths from alcoholism. It was never well enforced anywhere, however, partly because of the immensity of the task and partly because Congress never provided enough money for serious federal enforcement. In 1923 a federal agent visited major cities to see how long it took to find an illegal drink: 35 seconds in New Orleans, 3 minutes in Detroit, and 3 minutes and 10 seconds in New York City.

Neighborhood saloons had often functioned as social centers for working-class and lower-middle-class men, but the new speakeasies were often more glamorous, attracting an upper- and middle-class clientele, women as well as men. **Bootlegging**—production and sale of illegal beverages—flourished. Some bootleggers brewed only small amounts of beer and sold it to their neighbors. In the cities, bootlegging provided criminals with a fresh and lucrative source of income, part of which they used to buy influence in city politics and protection from police. Deadly violence often broke out among gangsters—many of recent immigrant background, including Italians, Irish, Germans, and Jews—who competed for riches in liquor, gambling, prostitution, and **racketeering**. Through racketeering they gained power in some labor unions. The gangs, killings, and corruption confirmed other Americans' long-standing distrust of cities and immigrants, and they clung to the vision of a dry America as the best hope for renewing traditional values.

### Fundamentalism and the Crusade Against Evolution

Another effort to maintain traditional values came with the growth of fundamentalist Protestantism. **Fundamentalism** emerged from a conflict between science and faith. Christian modernists tried to reconcile their religious beliefs with modern science. Fundamentalists rejected anything—including science—that they considered incompatible with the Scriptures. Every word of the Bible, they argued, is the revealed word of God. The fundamentalist movement grew throughout the first quarter of the twentieth century, led by figures such as Billy Sunday, a baseball player turned evangelist.

In the early 1920s, some fundamentalists focused on **evolution** as contrary to the Bible. Biologists cite evolutionary theory to explain how living things developed over millions of years. The Bible states that God created the world and all living things in six days. Fundamentalists saw in evolution not just a challenge to the Bible's account of creation but also a challenge to religion itself.

William Jennings Bryan, the former Democratic presidential candidate and secretary of state, fixed on the evolution controversy after 1920. His energy, eloquence, and enormous following—especially in the rural South—guaranteed that the issue received wide

### Eighteenth Amendment

Constitutional amendment, ratified in 1919, that forbade the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcoholic beverages.

**repeal** The act of making a law or regulation no longer valid and enforceable; repeal of a constitutional amendment requires a new amendment.

**bootlegging** Illegal production, distribution, and/or sale of liquor.

**racketeering** Commission of crimes such as extortion, loansharking, and bribery, sometimes behind the front of a seemingly legitimate business or union.

**fundamentalism** A Christian religious movement that emphasizes the literal truth of the Bible and opposes those who seek to reconcile the Bible with scientific knowledge.

**evolution** The central organizing theorem of the biological sciences, which holds that organisms change over generations, mainly as a result of natural selection; it includes the concept that humans evolved from nonhuman ancestors.



# It Matters Today

## TEACHING EVOLUTION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Following Scopes's conviction, other state legislatures followed Tennessee and prohibited the teaching of evolution. Textbook publishers diluted or omitted treatment of evolution. Not until the 1950s, when national science education standards were developed, did a thorough treatment of evolution return to most high school textbooks.

In 1968, the U.S. Supreme Court considered a case challenging a 1928 Arkansas law that prohibited the teaching of evolution. The Court concluded that the reason for the Arkansas law was that a particular religious group considered evolution to conflict with the Bible. The Court further concluded that, because the law established a particular religious view, it violated the First Amendment, which prohibits Congress from adopting any law that privileges one religious group, and the Fourteenth Amendment, which applies the prohibitions of the First Amendment to state governments.

Opponents of evolution then secured laws requiring the teaching of "creationism" as an alternative to evolution. This the U.S. Supreme Court struck down in 1987, in a case involving a Louisiana law. Since then, opponents of evolution have often used the term "intelligent design" rather than "creationism." In 2005, President George W. Bush endorsed teaching both intelligent design and evolution in high school biology classes.

- Search online newspapers to find examples of recent controversies over the teaching of evolution. What arguments are made by the two sides?
- William Jennings Bryan argued, in part, that in a democracy elected officials should control the content of courses in the public schools. What's your reaction to this idea? Should course content be determined by elected officials or by specialists in each discipline? What potential downsides do you see with either or both possibilities?

attention. "It is better," Bryan wrote, "to trust in the Rock of Ages than to know the age of rocks." Bryan played a central role in the most famous of the disputes over evolution—the Scopes trial.

In March 1925, the Tennessee legislature passed a law making it illegal for any public school teacher to teach evolution. When the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) offered to defend a teacher willing to challenge the law, John T. Scopes, a young biology teacher in Dayton, Tennessee, accepted. Bryan volunteered to assist the local prosecutors, who faced an ACLU defense team that included the famous attorney **Clarence Darrow**. Bryan claimed that the only issue was the right of the people to regulate public education as they saw fit, but Darrow insisted he was there to prevent "ignoramuses from controlling the education of the United States."

The court proceedings were carried nationwide via radio. Toward the end of the trial, in a surprising move, Darrow called Bryan to the witness stand as an authority on the Bible. Under Darrow's withering questioning, Bryan revealed that he knew little about findings in archaeology, geology, and linguistics that cast doubt on Biblical accounts, and he also admitted, to the dismay of many fundamentalists, that he did not always interpret the words of the Bible literally. "Darrow never spared him," one reporter wrote. "It was masterful, but it was pitiful." Bryan died a few days later. Scopes was found guilty, but the Tennessee Supreme Court threw out his sentence on a technicality, preventing appeal.

**Clarence Darrow** A leading trial lawyer of the early twentieth century, who often defended those challenging the status quo.

**restrictive covenant** Provision in a property title that prohibits the sale of property to specified groups of people, especially people of color and Jews.

### Nativism, Immigration Restriction, and Eugenics

Throughout the 1920s, nativism and discrimination flourished, sometimes taking violent forms. In West Frankfort, Illinois, during three days in August 1920, rioting townspeople beat and stoned Italians. **Restrictive covenants** attached



to real-estate titles prohibited the future sale of the property to particular groups, typically African Americans and Jews. Exclusive eastern colleges placed quotas on the number of Jews admitted each year, and some companies refused to hire Jews. In 1920 Henry Ford accused Jewish bankers of controlling the American economy, then suggested an international Jewish conspiracy to control virtually everything from baseball to bolshevism. After Aaron Sapiro, an attorney, sued Ford for defamation and challenged him to prove his claims, Ford retracted his charges and apologized in 1927.

Laws to restrict immigration resulted in significant part from nativist anxieties that immigrants, especially those from southern and eastern Europe, were transforming the United States. Advocates of restriction redoubled their efforts in response to an upsurge in immigration after the war—430,000 in 1920 and 805,000 in 1921, with more than half from southern and eastern Europe. In 1924 the **National Origins Act**, limited total immigration to 150,000 people each year. Quotas for each country were to be based on 2 percent of the number of Americans whose ancestors came from that country, but the law completely excluded Asians (while placing no limits on immigrants from Latin America and Canada). Quotas were based on the 1890 census (before the largest wave of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe). In attempting to freeze the ethnic composition of the nation, the law reflected the arguments of those nativists who contended that immigrants from southern and eastern Europe and from Asia made less-desirable citizens than people from northern and western Europe.

In its transparent effort to close down most immigration from southern and eastern Europe while admitting much larger numbers of immigrants from northern and western Europe, the 1924 National Origins Act reflects the concerns of one group of **eugenics** advocates. The eugenics movement developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; its proponents hoped to use information about genetics and heredity to improve the human race by selective breeding. Some eugenicists argued that most immigrants from southern and eastern Europe showed undesirable genetic traits, and therefore favored barring them from immigration. Other eugenicists focused on mental ability or mental illness to argue that those with “undesirable” traits should not be permitted to marry or should be sterilized. In 1927, the United States Supreme Court approved a Virginia law that permitted the state to sterilize those considered mentally retarded; such state laws were widespread by the 1920s, and most continued in force until the 1960s.

**National Origins Act** Law passed by Congress in 1924, establishing quotas for immigration to the United States; it limited immigration from southern and eastern Europe, permitted larger numbers of immigrants from northern and western Europe, and prohibited immigration from Asia.

**eugenics** The eugenics movement developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in an effort to use information about genetics to improve the human race by selective breeding.

### The Ku Klux Klan

Nativism, anti-Catholicism, anti-Semitism, and fear of radicalism all contributed to the spectacular growth of the Ku Klux Klan in the early 1920s. The original Klan, created during Reconstruction to intimidate former slaves, had long since died out. But D. W. Griffith’s hugely popular film *The Birth of a Nation*, released in 1915, glorified the old Klan.

The new Klan portrayed itself as devoted to traditional American values, old-fashioned Protestant Christianity, and white supremacy and opposed to Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and blacks, along with bootleggers, corrupt politicians, and gamblers. Growth came slowly at first but surged to 5 million members nationwide by 1925.

The Klan was strong in the South, Midwest, West, and Southwest, and in towns and cities as well as rural areas. Klan members participated actively in local politics. Its leaders exerted powerful political influence in some communities and in state governments, notably in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Oregon, and Indiana. In Oklahoma, the Klan led a successful impeachment campaign against a governor who tried to restrict its activities. In Oregon, the Klan claimed responsibility for a 1922 law aimed at eliminating Catholic

# Investigating America

## The Klan's Imperial Nighthawk, 1923

By comparison to the secretive Klan of the Reconstruction era, the postwar Klan was an open organization that functioned much as other fraternal organizations did. In midwestern states like Indiana, the Klan created a female auxiliary, and perhaps as many as one-eighth of the 4 million Klan members were women. The Klan offered friendship networks and social services to isolated farm families, even as its leadership played on their fears of Jews, Catholics, African Americans, and immigrants. The Klan newspaper, the *Imperial Nighthawk*, here emphasizes the social aspects of membership.

.....  
At a recent meeting addressed by two members of the Imperial Klonselium at Kansas City, Mo., and which was attended by ten thousand Klansmen a novel feature was introduced. Powerful searchlights suddenly illuminated a white-robed horseman, on a white steed standing on a hill near the meeting while an airplane bearing a huge fiery cross swooped low above the celebration.

A great Klan meeting was held at Clinton, Mo., a few days ago when Senator Zach Harris addressed seventy-five hundred people on the principles of the order. The meeting was under the direction of Clinton Klan, a very progressive organization.

Jacksonville Klan, Realm of Florida, is now one of the most active Klans in that section of the country. A few days ago representatives of the Klan called at the Calvary Baptist Church "revival tent" and expressed appreciation on the part of the order of the work of Evangelist Allen C. Shuler.

Bloxom Klan, Realm of Virginia, a few days ago presented an American flag and a forty-foot flagpole to Bloxom High School. The presentation speech was made by a local minister and the flag was accepted by the principal of the school.

Members of the Quincy, Ill., Klan visited Woodlawn Cemetery on the night of May 30 with the fiery cross and American flag. They laid a cross of red carnations on the grave of Virgil Johnson as hundreds of people watched them.

York Klan Number I, Realm of Pennsylvania, recently conducted the funeral services of Horace H. Heiney, a prominent and respected citizen and the first member of their Klan to pass on into the empire invisible. At the graveside a committee of Klansmen bore fiery crosses of roses, and one of the members in full regalia, who is a well-known York minister, offered prayer. The services in the cemetery were witnessed by a large number of people.

Klansmen Should Stop at the Sisson Hotel, Klansmen who visit Chicago will make no mistake if they register at the Hotel Sisson, Lake Michigan at Fifty-third Street. When the Unity League recently published a list of alleged Chicago Klansmen the name of Harry W. Sisson, proprietor of the hotel, appeared upon it. As a consequence this hotel is boycotted by Jews and Catholics.

- .....
- The newspaper often emphasized the positive aspects of Klan membership and hinted at the Klan's political power. How does the image conveyed by these newspaper items fit with Klan violence against the groups it feared?
  - Why would hatred of certain groups seem socially attractive and unifying? How did the Klan, like the Scopes trial, reflect a troubled post-war society struggling to understand changing times?

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Excerpted from The Klan's IMPERIAL NIGHTWAWK, June 13, 1923.



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

schools. (The Supreme Court ruled the law unconstitutional.) Many local and state elections in 1924 divided along pro- and anti-Klan lines. At the same time, Klan members in the South engaged in lynching African Americans, and Klan members elsewhere were also involved in acts of violence, including public whippings and tar-and-feathering.

Extensive corruption underlay the Klan's self-righteous rhetoric. Some Klan leaders joined primarily for the profits, both legal (from recruiting) and illegal (mostly from political payoffs). Some shamelessly violated the morality they preached. In 1925, D. C.



This image is from a Ku Klux Klan pamphlet published in the mid-1920s, when the Klan claimed as many as 5 million members nationwide. The Klan portrayed itself as defending traditional, white, Protestant America against Jews, Catholics, and African Americans. Private collection.

Stephenson, Grand Dragon of Indiana and one of the most prominent Klan leaders, was convicted of second-degree murder after the death of a woman who had accused him of raping her. When the governor refused to pardon him, Stephenson produced records proving the corruption of many Indiana officials, including the governor, a member of Congress, and the mayor of Indianapolis. Klan membership fell sharply amid factional disputes and further evidence of fraud and corruption.

## Ethnicity, Race, Class, and Gender in the 1920s

- ★ **How did minority-group and gender relations during the 1920s show continuities with earlier patterns? What new elements appeared?**
- ★ **Is it appropriate to describe the 1920s as “the lean years” for working people?**

The Harlem Renaissance and Klan nightriders represent the polar extremes of race relations in the 1920s. For most people of color, the realities of daily life fell somewhere in between. For working people, the 1920s represented the lean years, when gains from the



African Americans intensified their efforts to put an end to lynching. This protest parade was held in Washington, D.C., in 1922. The NAACP's efforts to secure a federal anti-lynching law, however, were repeatedly defeated by southerners in Congress.

© Corbis/Bettmann.



Progressive Era and World War I were lost and unions remained on the defensive. For women, the 1920s opened with a political victory in the form of suffrage, but the unity mustered in support of that measure soon broke down.

### **Ethnicity and Race: North, South, and West**

Discrimination against Jews, violence against Italians, and the Klan's appeal to white Protestants all point to the continuing significance of ethnicity in American life during the 1920s. Throughout the decade, racial relations remained deeply troubled at best, violent at worst.

The Harlem Renaissance helped produce greater appreciation for black music and other accomplishments, but racial discrimination continued to confront most African Americans, no matter where they lived. The NAACP continued to lobby for a federal anti-lynching law, but southern legislators defeated each attempt, arguing against any federal interference in the police power of the states. As part of its efforts to combat lynching, the NAACP tried to educate the public by publicizing crimes against blacks.

In the eastern parts of the United States, whether the North or the South, race relations usually meant black-white relations. In the West, race relations were always more complex, and became even more so in the years around World War I, when Filipinos began to arrive in Hawai'i and on the West Coast, most of them working in agriculture.

California had long led the way among western states in passing laws discriminating against Asian Americans. Some Asian immigrants and Asian Americans responded to discrimination through court actions, but with little success. In the early 1920s, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed that only white persons and persons of African descent could become naturalized citizens, denying citizenship to persons born in Japan or India. The U.S. Supreme Court also ruled that Mississippi could require a Chinese American schoolchild to attend the segregated school established for African Americans.



### Beginnings of Change in Federal Indian Policy

During the 1920s, several events began to come together in support of significant changes in federal policy toward American Indians. In the early 1920s, Interior Secretary Albert Fall tried to lease parts of reservations to white developers and to extinguish Pueblo Indians' title to lands along the Rio Grande. Fall's proposals generated significant opposition and were dropped or modified. The Pueblo land question led directly to the organization of the **American Indian Defense Association** (AIDA), created in 1923 by John Collier, an eastern social worker, to support the Pueblos.

Collier and AIDA soon emerged as leading voices calling for changes in federal Indian policy. They sought better health and educational services on the reservations, creation of tribal governments, tolerance of Indian religious ceremonies and other customs, and an end to land allotments—all in all, major policy changes, away from a policy of assimilation toward a policy of recognizing Indian cultures and values. The political pressure that the AIDA and similar groups applied, as well as political efforts by Indians themselves, secured several new laws favorable to Indians, including one in 1924 extending full citizenship to all Native Americans. These efforts to support and extend Indian rights, especially the work of Collier, laid the basis for a significant shift in federal policy in the 1930s.

### American Indian Defense

**Association** Organization founded in 1923 to defend the rights of American Indians; it pushed for an end to land allotment and a return to tribal government.

### Mexican Americans

California and the Southwest have been home to many Mexican and Mexican American families since the region was part of Mexico. Those states also attracted growing numbers of Mexican immigrants in the 1920s. Many Mexicans went north, most of them to Texas and California, to escape the revolution and civil war that devastated their nation from 1910 into the 1920s. Nearly 700,000 Mexicans legally fled to the United States between 1910 and 1930, and probably the same number came illegally.

The agricultural economies of the Southwest were changing. In south Texas, some cattle ranches were converted to farms, mostly for cotton but also for fruit and vegetables. By 1925, the Southwest was relying on irrigation to produce 40 percent of the nation's fruits and vegetables, crops that were highly labor-intensive. In the late 1920s, Mexicans made up 80 to 85 percent of farm laborers in that region. At the same time, the southwestern states also experienced large increases in their Anglo populations. These changes in population and economy reshaped relations between Anglos and Mexicans.

In California, Mexican workers' efforts to organize and strike for better pay and working conditions often sparked violent opposition. Strikes in the early 1920s were broken quickly and brutally. Local authorities arrested and often beat strikers, and growers' private guards beat or kidnapped them. Leaders were likely to be deported. Nevertheless, Mexican labor had become vital to agriculture, and growers opposed any proposals to restrict immigration from Mexico. They made certain that the National Origins Act of 1924 permitted unlimited immigration from the Western Hemisphere. In Lemon Grove, a small town near San Diego, in 1931, Mexican American parents mounted the first successful court challenge to school segregation.

### Labor on the Defensive

Difficulties in establishing unions among Mexican workers mirrored a larger failure of unions in the 1920s. When unions tried to recover lost purchasing power by striking in 1919 and 1920, nearly all failed. After 1921, employers took advantage of the conservative political climate to challenge Progressive Era legislation

**American Plan** Term that some employers in the 1920s used to describe their policy of refusing to negotiate with unions.

**welfare capitalism** Program adopted by some employers to provide to their employees benefits such as lunchrooms, paid vacations, bonuses, and profit-sharing plans.

benefiting workers. The Supreme Court responded by limiting workers' rights, voiding laws that eliminated child labor, and striking down minimum wage laws for women and children.

Many companies undertook anti-union drives. Arguing that unions were not necessary and had become either corrupt or radical, some employers used the term **American Plan** to describe their refusal to recognize unions as representing employees. At the same time, many companies began to provide workers with benefit programs such as insurance, retirement pensions, cafeterias, paid vacations, and stock purchase plans, an approach sometimes called **welfare capitalism**. Such innovations stemmed both from genuine concern about workers' well-being and from the expectation that such improvements would increase productivity and discourage unionization.

The 1920s marked the first period of prosperity since the 1830s when union membership declined, falling from 5 million in 1920 to 3.6 million in 1929, a 28 percent decline at a time when the total work force increased by 15 percent. AFL leaders, holding fast to their concept of separate unions for each different skill group, made no serious effort to organize the great mass-production industries. Some unions suffered from internal battles—the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union lost two-thirds of its members during power struggles between Socialists and Communists.

### Changes in Women's Lives

The attention given to the flapper in accounts of the 1920s should not detract from important changes in women's gender roles during those years. Significant changes occurred in two arenas: family and politics.

Marriage among white, middle-class women and men came increasingly to be valued as companionship between two partners. Although the ideal of marriage was often expressed in terms of man and woman taking equal responsibility for a relationship, the actual responsibility for the smooth functioning of the family typically fell on the woman.

Many women in the 1920s seem to have increased their control over decisions about childbearing. Usually in American history, prosperity brings increases in the birth rate. In the 1920s, however, changing social values together with more options for birth control resulted in fewer births.

The declining birth rate in the 1920s reflected, in part, some degree of success for earlier efforts to secure wider availability of birth-control information and devices—for example, diaphragms. Margaret Sanger continued her efforts to extend birth-control information, and she persuaded more doctors to join her efforts. As the birth-control movement gained the backing of male physicians, it became a more respectable, middle-class reform movement. By 1925, the American Medical Association, the New York Academy of Medicine, and the New York Obstetrical Society had all declared their support for birth control. Nevertheless, until 1936, federal law restricted public distribution of information about contraception. Abortion continued to be an important way that some women terminated unwanted pregnancies.

After the implementation of the Nineteenth Amendment (woman suffrage) in 1920, the unity of the suffrage movement disintegrated in disputes over the proper role for women voters. Both major political parties welcomed women as voters and modified the structure of their national committees to provide that each state be represented by both a national committeeman and a national committeewoman. Some suffrage activists joined the League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan group committed to social and political reform. The Congressional Union, led by Alice Paul, had earlier converted itself

into the National Woman's Party and, after 1923, focused its efforts largely on securing an **Equal Rights Amendment** to the Constitution. The League of Women Voters disagreed, arguing that such an amendment would endanger laws that provided special rights and protections for women. In the end, woman suffrage seemed not to have dramatically changed either women or politics.

**Equal Rights Amendment** Proposed constitutional amendment, first advocated by the National Woman's Party in 1923, to give women in the United States equal rights under the law.

### Development of Gay and Lesbian Subcultures

In the 1920s, gay and lesbian subcultures became more established and relatively open in several cities, including New York. *The Captive*, a play about lesbians, opened in New York in 1926, and some movies included unmistakable homosexual references. Novels with gay and lesbian characters were published in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In Chicago, the Society for Human Rights was organized to advocate equal treatment. A relatively open gay and lesbian community emerged in Harlem, where some prominent figures of the Renaissance were gay or bisexual.

At the same time, however, more and more psychiatrists and psychologists were labeling homosexuality a **perversion**. By the 1920s, the work of **Sigmund Freud** had become well known, and most psychiatrists labeled homosexuality a sexual disorder that required a cure, though no "cure" ever proved viable. Freud's theories may have been a liberating influence with regard to heterosexual relations, but they proved harmful for same-sex relations.

**perversion** Sexual practice considered abnormal or deviant.

**Sigmund Freud** Austrian who played a leading role in developing the field of psychoanalysis, known for his theory that the sex drive underlies much individual behavior.

The new medical definitions were slow to work their way into the larger society. The armed forces, for example, continued previous practices, making little effort to prevent homosexuals from enlisting and taking disciplinary action only against behavior that clearly violated the law.

## The Politics of Prosperity

★ **What was the attitude of the Harding and Coolidge administrations toward the economy? Compare this with the attitude of the Roosevelt and Wilson administrations.**

★ **In what ways did the third-party candidacy of La Follette in 1924 resemble that of Roosevelt in 1912 and the Populists in 1892?**

Sooner or later, nearly all the social and economic developments of the 1920s found their way into politics, from highway construction to prohibition, from immigration restriction to the teaching of evolution, from farm prices to lynching. After 1918, the Republicans resumed the majority role they had exercised from the mid-1890s to 1912, and they continued as the unquestioned majority throughout the 1920s. Progressivism largely disappeared, although a few veterans of earlier struggles persisted in their efforts to limit corporate power. The Republican administrations of the 1920s shared a faith in the ability of business to establish prosperity and benefit the American people. Those in power considered government the partner of business, not its regulator.

### Harding's Failed Presidency

Elected in 1920, Warren G. Harding looked presidential—handsome, dignified, warm, and outgoing—but had little intellectual depth. For some of his appointments, he chose the most respected leaders of his party, including Charles Evans Hughes for secretary of state, Andrew Mellon for secretary of the Treasury, and Herbert

Hoover for secretary of commerce. Harding, however, was most comfortable playing poker with his friends, and he gave hundreds of government jobs to his cronies and political supporters. They turned his administration into one of the most corrupt in American history. As their misdeeds began to come to light, Harding put off any action until after a trip to Alaska. During his return, on August 2, 1923, he died when a blood vessel burst in his brain.

The full extent of the corruption became clear after Harding's death. Albert Fall, secretary of the interior, had accepted huge bribes from oil companies for leases on federal oil reserves at Elk Hills, California, and Teapot Dome, Wyoming. Attorney General Harry Daugherty and others pocketed payoffs to approve the sale of government-held property for less than its value. Daugherty may also have protected bootleggers. The head of the Veterans Bureau swindled the government out of more than \$200 million. In all, three cabinet members resigned, four officials went to jail, and five men committed suicide. As if all this were not enough, in 1927 Nan Britton published a book claiming that she had been Harding's mistress, had borne his child, and had carried on trysts with him in the White House.

### The Three-Way Presidential Election of 1924

When Harding died, Vice President Calvin Coolidge became president. Fortunately for the Republican Party, the new president exemplified honesty, virtue, and sobriety. In 1924 Republicans quickly chose Coolidge as their candidate for president.

The Democratic convention, however, sank into a long and bitter deadlock. Since the Civil War, the party had divided between southerners (mostly Protestant and committed to white supremacy) and northerners (often city-dwellers and of recent immigrant descent, including many Catholics). In 1924 the Klan was approaching its peak membership and exercised significant influence among many Democratic delegates from the South and parts of the Midwest.

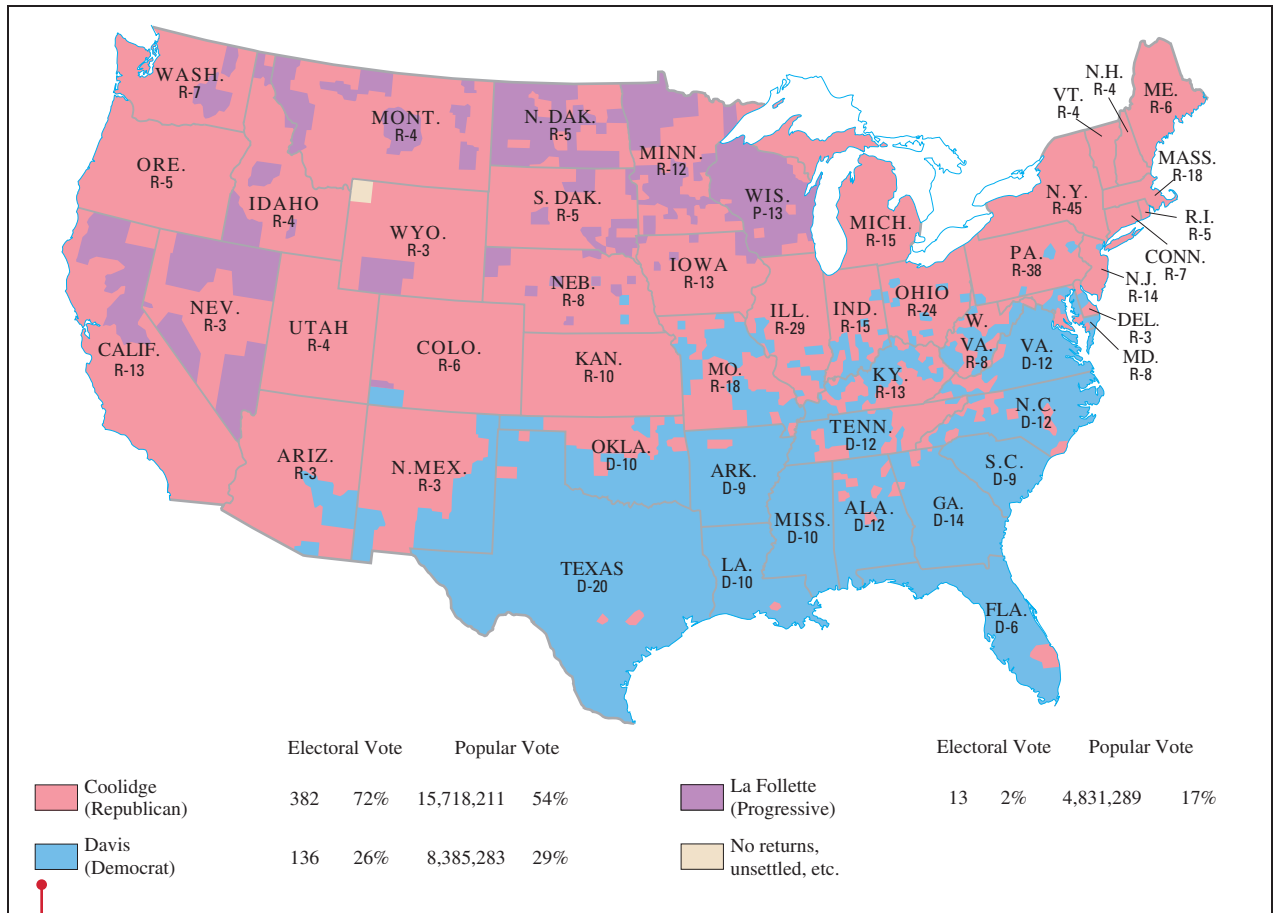
Northern Democrats tried to nominate **Al Smith** for president. Smith was highly popular as governor of New York and epitomized urban, immigrant America. Catholic and the son of immigrants, he was everything the Klan—and most of the southern convention delegates—opposed. After nine hot days of stalemate and 103 ballots, the exhausted Democrats turned to a compromise candidate, John W. Davis. Davis had served in the Wilson administration and then became a leading corporate lawyer. All in all, the convention seemed to confirm the observation by the contemporary humorist Will Rogers: “I belong to no organized political party. I am a Democrat.”

Surviving progressives welcomed the independent candidacy of Senator Robert M. La Follette. La Follette was nominated at the convention of a new Progressive party that expressed the concerns of farmers, unions, and an assortment of reformers dating back as far as the Populist Party of the 1890s. The La Follette Progressives attacked big business and promoted collective bargaining, public ownership of railroads and water power resources, and a public referendum on questions of war and peace. La Follette was the first presidential candidate to be endorsed by the American Federation of Labor, and the Socialist Party of America threw him its support as well.

Republican campaigners largely ignored Davis and focused on portraying La Follette as a dangerous radical. Coolidge won with nearly 16 million votes and 54 percent of the total, as voters seemed to champion the status quo. Davis held on to most traditional Democratic voters, especially in the South, receiving 8 million votes and 29 percent. La Follette carried only his home state of Wisconsin but garnered almost 5 million votes,

**Al Smith** New York governor who unsuccessfully sought the Democratic nomination for president in 1924 and was the unsuccessful Democratic candidate in 1928.





**MAP 22.1** Election of 1924

The presidential election of 1924 was complicated by the campaign of Senator Robert La Follette of Wisconsin, who ran as a Progressive. As you can see, much of his support came from Republicans living in the north-central and northwestern regions where the agricultural economy was most hard-hit. Compare this map to Maps 19.1 and 20.3.

17 percent, and did well both in urban working-class neighborhoods and in parts of the rural Midwest and Northwest (see Map 22.1).

### The Politics of Business

Coolidge was committed to limited government and was content to let problems work themselves out. He tried to reduce the significance of the presidency—and succeeded. He once announced that “the business of America is business,” and he believed that the free market and free operation of business leadership would best sustain economic prosperity for all. As president, he set out to prevent government from interfering in the operation of business.

Coolidge had little sympathy for efforts to secure federal help for the faltering farm economy. Congress tried to address the related problems of low prices for farm products and persistent agricultural surpluses with the **McNary-Haugen bill**, which would have created federal price supports and authorized the government to buy farm surpluses and sell them abroad at prevailing world prices. Farm state representatives pushed the bill

**McNary-Haugen bill** Farm relief bill that provided for government purchase of crop surpluses during years of large output; Coolidge vetoed it in 1927 and in 1928.

**Railway Labor Act of 1926** Federal law that guaranteed collective bargaining for railroad employees, the first peacetime federal law to extend this guarantee to any group of workers.

through Congress in 1927, but Coolidge vetoed it. The same thing happened in 1928. By contrast, the **Railway Labor Act of 1926** drew on wartime experiences to establish collective bargaining for railroad employees. Passed by overwhelming margins in Congress, the new law met most of the railway unions' demands and effectively removed them from politics.

Andrew Mellon, one of the wealthiest men in the nation, served as secretary of the treasury throughout the Republican administrations of the 1920s. Acclaimed by Republicans and business leaders as the greatest secretary of the Treasury since Alexander Hamilton, Mellon argued that high taxes on the wealthy stifled the economy. He secured tax breaks for the affluent, arguing that they would bring economic benefits to all through "productive investments" of their tax savings. The administration also cut federal spending and staffed federal agencies with people who shared the distaste for too much government. Unlike Harding, Coolidge found honest and competent appointees. Like Harding, he named probusiness figures to regulatory commissions and put conservative, probusiness judges in the courts.

### The 1928 Campaign and the Election of Hoover

In August 1927, President Coolidge told reporters, "I do not choose to run in 1928." Coolidge's announcement stunned the country and his party. Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover immediately declared his candidacy, and Republicans found him an ideal candidate, representing what most Americans believed was best about the United States: individual effort and honestly earned success.

Son of a Quaker blacksmith from Iowa, Hoover was orphaned at age 10 and raised by uncles. He grew up believing that hard work was the only way to success. After graduating from Stanford University, he traveled the world as a mining engineer. By 1914 his fortune was more than \$4 million. Having succeeded in business, Hoover turned to public service. When World War I broke out, he offered to help provide relief to Belgium through the Committee for the Relief of Belgium. Hoover traveled across war-torn Europe seeking funds and supplies for Belgium. "This man is not to be stopped anywhere under any circumstance," the Germans noted on his passport. When the United States entered the war, President Wilson named Hoover to head the U.S. Food Administration. By the end of the war, Hoover emerged as an international hero. As secretary of commerce under Harding and Coolidge, he attracted wide support in the business community for his efforts to encourage economic growth through associationalism—voluntary cooperation among otherwise competing groups.

The Democrats nominated Al Smith. Like Hoover, Smith was a self-made man. Unlike Hoover, who had gone to Stanford, Smith had received his education on the streets of the Lower East Side of New York City and as part of Tammany Hall, the Democratic machine that ran the city. As a reform-minded, progressive governor of New York, Smith had streamlined state government, improved its efficiency, and supported legislation to set a minimum wage and maximum hours of work and to establish state ownership of hydroelectric plants.

In many places, Smith became the main issue in the campaign. Opponents attacked his Catholic religion, his big-city background, his opposition to Prohibition, his Tammany connections, and even his New York accent. Hoover won easily, with 58 percent of the popular vote. Prosperity and the nation's long-term Republican majority probably would have spelled victory for any competent Republican. Smith's religion and anti-Prohibition stance cost him support in the South, where Hoover carried some areas that had not voted Republican since the end of Reconstruction. Smith, however, helped Democrats

make important gains in northern cities. In 1928 Smith won a slim majority overall in the twelve largest cities, partly by drawing to the polls Catholic voters, especially women, who had not previously voted. Voter participation spiked upward in 1928, interrupting the long-term downward trend.

## The Diplomacy of Prosperity

★ What is “independent internationalism”?

★ What were Hughes’s goals for the Washington Naval Conference? How successful was he?

Two realities shaped American foreign policy in the 1920s: rejection of Woodrow Wilson’s internationalism and a continuing quest for economic expansion by American business. As president, Harding dismissed any American role in the League of Nations and refused to accept the Treaty of Versailles. Undamaged by the war, American firms outproduced and out-traded the rest of the world. U.S. trade amounted to 30 percent of the world’s total, and American firms produced more than 70 percent of the world’s oil and almost 50 percent of the world’s coal and steel. American bankers loaned billions of dollars to other nations, expanding the global economy.

Neither Harding nor Coolidge had any expertise or interest in foreign affairs, so they left most foreign-policy decisions to their secretaries of state: Charles Evans Hughes and Frank Kellogg, respectively. Both were capable men interested in developing American business and influence abroad through what historians have called “independent internationalism.” Independent (or **unilateral**) internationalism had two central thrusts: avoidance of **multilateral** commitments—sometimes called **isolationism**—and expansion of economic opportunities overseas. The Commerce and State Departments promoted American business activities worldwide and encouraged private American investments in Japan and China. American officials also worked to make it possible for U.S. oil companies to drill in Iran, Iraq, the Persian Gulf region, and Saudi Arabia. Their efforts to expand Americans’ economic position in Latin America and Europe were quite successful. As president, Hoover and his secretary of state, Henry L. Stimson, followed the approach that had characterized the earlier 1920s.

### America and the European Economy

World War I shattered much of Europe physically and economically. The American economy soared to unprecedented heights, however, and the United States became the world’s leading creditor nation. After the war, Republican leaders joined with business figures to expand exports and restrict imports. In 1922 the **Fordney-McCumber Tariff** set the highest rates ever for most imported industrial goods. The tariff had the effect of not only limiting European imports but also making it difficult for Europeans to acquire the dollars needed to repay their war debts to the United States.

While Harding and Coolidge sought debt repayment, Secretary of State Hughes and Secretary of Commerce Hoover worked to expand American economic interests in Europe, especially Germany. They believed that if Germany recovered economically and paid its \$33 billion war reparations, other European nations would also recover and repay their debts. With government encouragement, over \$4 billion in American investments flowed into Europe, doubling American investments there. General Motors purchased Opel, a German automobile firm. Ford built the largest automobile factory outside the United States, in England, and constructed a tractor factory in the Soviet Union.

**unilateral** An action taken by a country by itself, as opposed to actions taken jointly with other nations.

**multilateral** Involving more than two nations.

**isolationism** The notion that the United States should avoid political, diplomatic, and military entanglements with other nations.

**Fordney-McCumber Tariff** Tariff passed by Congress in 1922 to protect domestic production from foreign competitors; it raised tariff rates to record levels and provoked foreign tariff reprisals.

**Ruhr Valley** Region surrounding the Ruhr River in northwestern Germany that contained many major industrial cities and valuable coal mines.

**Dawes Plan** Arrangement for collecting World War I reparations from Germany; it scheduled annual payments and stabilized German currency.

#### Washington Naval Conference

International conference that in 1921–1922 produced a series of agreements to limit naval armaments and prevent conflict in the Far East and the Pacific.

**capital ships** Generally, a navy's largest, most heavily armed ships; at the Washington Naval Conference, ships weighing over 10,000 tons and using guns with at least an 8-inch bore were classified as capital ships.

**Nine-Power Pact** Agreement signed in 1922 by Britain, France, Italy, Japan, the United States, China, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Belgium to recognize China and affirm the Open Door policy.

Even with the infusion of American capital, Germany could not keep up its reparation payments, defaulting in 1923 to France and Belgium. France responded by sending troops to occupy Germany's **Ruhr Valley**, a key economic region, igniting an international crisis. Hughes sent Charles G. Dawes, a Chicago banker and prominent Republican, to resolve the situation. Under the **Dawes Plan**, American bankers loaned \$2.5 billion to Germany for economic development, and the Germans promised to pay \$2 billion in reparations to the European Allies, who, in turn, were to pay \$2.5 billion in war debts to the United States. This circular flow of capital was the butt of jokes at the time but worked fairly well until 1929, when the Depression ended nearly all loans and payments.

#### Encouraging International Cooperation

Committed to independent internationalism, the Republican policymakers of the 1920s also understood that some international cooperation was necessary to achieve policy goals and solve international problems. On such issues, they were willing to cooperate with other nations and enter into international agreements, but only with the understanding that the United States was not entering an alliance or otherwise agreeing to commit resources or troops in defense of another nation.

Disarmament was such an issue. The destruction caused by World War I had spurred pacifism and calls for disarmament. In the United States, support for arms cuts was widespread and vocal. In early 1921, Senator William E. Borah of Idaho suggested an international conference to reduce the size of the world's navies. Fearing that naval expenditures would prevent tax cuts, Treasury Secretary Mellon and many members of Congress joined the disarmament chorus.

When the delegates assembled for the **Washington Naval Conference**, Hughes shocked them with a radical proposal to scrap nearly 2 million tons of warships, primarily battleships. He also called for a ten-year ban on naval construction and for limits on the size of navies that would keep the Japanese navy well behind the size of the British and American fleets. Hughes suggested a ratio of 5 to 5 to 3 for the United States, Britain, and Japan. Italy and France were allocated smaller ratios—1.7 each. Hughes's plan gained immediate support among the American public and most of the nations attending—but not Japan. The Japanese called it a national insult and demanded equality. Discussions dragged on for two months, but the Japanese finally agreed. U.S. intelligence had broken the Japanese diplomatic code, so Hughes knew that the Japanese delegates had orders to concede if he held firm.

In February 1922, the United States, Britain, Japan, France, and Italy agreed to build no more **capital ships** for ten years and to abide by the 5:5:3:1.7:1.7 ratio for future shipbuilding. A British observer commented that Hughes had sunk more British ships in one speech "than all the admirals of the world have sunk in . . . centuries." The powers also agreed to prohibit the use of poison gas and not to attack one another's Asian possessions. The **Nine-Power Pact** affirmed the sovereignty and territorial boundaries of China and guaranteed equal commercial access to China—maintaining the Open Door.

Hughes considered the meetings successful, although critics complained that the agreements included no enforcement provisions and no mention of smaller naval ships, including submarines. Other attempts to reduce naval and land forces had mixed outcomes. In 1930 at London, Britain, the United States, and Japan established a series of ratios for cruisers and destroyers similar to those of the Washington Conference. Thereafter, competition reigned: by the mid-1930s, Japan's demands for naval equality ended British and American cooperation and spurred renewed naval construction by all three sea powers.



# Investigating America

## The Kellogg-Briand Pact, 1928

Horrified by the casualties and chaos wrought by the Great War, diplomats and intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic sought not only to decrease armaments and navies but to eliminate war itself. Professor J. T. Shotwell of Columbia University was the first to advocate a law against conflict, and in 1927 he raised the idea with French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand. American Secretary of State Frank Kellogg thought little of the idea, but the American press and public increasingly demanded the "outlawry of war." The Senate approved the pact by a vote of 85 to 1, with only Wisconsin Republican John Blaine voting no. The short Kellogg-Briand Pact, together with Kellogg's response to Blaine's concerns about self-defense, is excerpted below.

.....

Deeply sensible of their solemn duty to promote the welfare of mankind; Persuaded that the time has come when a frank renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy should be made to the end that the peaceful and friendly relations now existing between their peoples may be perpetuated; Convinced that all changes in their relations with one another should be sought only by pacific means and be the result of a peaceful and orderly process, and that any signatory Power which shall hereafter seek to promote its national interests by resort to war should be denied the benefits furnished by this Treaty. . . .

### ARTICLE I

The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and

renounce it, as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another.

### ARTICLE II

The High Contracting Parties agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them, shall never be sought except by pacific means. . . .

The question was raised as to whether this treaty prevented a country from defending itself in the event of an attack. It seemed to me incomprehensible that any nation should believe that a country should be deprived of its legitimate right of self-defense. No nation would sign a treaty expressly or clearly implying an obligation denying it the right to defend itself if attacked by another country.

.....

- How did the pact reflect not merely the desire to avoid devastating conflicts like the Great War but also the optimism of the pre-crash 1920s?
- Critics observed that the treaty permitted countries to wage defensive wars, and asked: How many countries ever claimed to fight an offensive war? Still other critics believed the pact was actually dangerous because it lulled the American nation, already behind in naval building, into an empty sense of security. But how much of this criticism is hindsight, since modern readers are aware that the world collapsed into World War II?
- Was Shotwell wrong to believe that humankind does not need to resort to war?

Many Americans and Europeans applauded the achievements of the Washington Naval Conference but wanted to go further, seeking a repudiation of war. In 1923 Senator Borah introduced a resolution in the Senate to outlaw war. In 1924 La Follette campaigned for a national referendum as a requirement for declaring war. In 1927 the French foreign minister, Aristide Briand, suggested a pact formally outlawing war between the France and the United States, privately hoping that such an agreement would commit the United States to aid France, if attacked. Secretary of State Kellogg instead suggested a multinational statement opposing war and thereby removed any hint of an American commitment to any specific nation. On August 27, 1928, the United States and fourteen other nations, including Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan, signed the Pact of



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

**Kellogg-Briand Pact** Treaty signed in 1928 by fifteen nations, including Britain, France, Germany, the United States, and Japan, renouncing war as a means of solving international disputes.

**signatory** One who has signed a treaty or other document.

Paris, or **Kellogg-Briand Pact**. By doing so, they renounced war “as an instrument of national policy” and agreed to settle disputes peacefully. Eventually sixty-four nations signed, but the pact included no enforcement provisions, and nearly every **signatory** reserved its right to defend itself and its possessions.

By 1928, American independent internationalism seemed a success. Investments and loans by American businesses were fueling an expansive world economy and contributing to American prosperity. Avoiding entangling alliances, the United States had protected its Asian and Pacific interests against Japan, while protecting China and promoting disarmament and world peace. In Latin America, the United States had withdrawn some troops from the Caribbean, avoided intervention in Mexico, and tried to broker a peace in Nicaragua. Foreign policies based on economic expansion and noncoercive diplomacy appeared to be establishing a promising era of cooperation and peace in world affairs.

## Summary

The 1920s were a decade of prosperity. Unemployment was low, productivity grew steadily, and many Americans fared well. Sophisticated advertising campaigns created bright expectations, and installment buying freed consumers from having to pay cash. Many consumers bought more and bought on credit—stimulating manufacturing and expanding personal debt. Expectations of continuing prosperity also encouraged speculation. The stock market boomed, but agriculture did not share in this prosperity.

During the Roaring Twenties, Americans experienced significant social change. The automobile, radio, and movies, abetted by immigration restriction, produced a more homogeneous culture. Many American intellectuals, however, rejected the consumer-oriented culture. During the 1920s, African Americans produced an outpouring of significant art, literature, and music. Some young people rejected traditional constraints, and one result was the emergence of a youth culture.

Not all Americans embraced change. Some tried instead to maintain or restore earlier cultural values. The outcomes were mixed. Prohibition was largely unsuccessful. Fundamentalism grew and prompted a campaign against the teaching of evolution. Nativism helped produce significant new restrictions on immigration. The Ku Klux Klan, committed to nativism, traditional values, and white supremacy, experienced nationwide growth until 1925, but membership declined sharply thereafter.

Discrimination and occasional violence continued to affect the lives of people of color. Federal Indian policy had long stressed assimilation and allotment, but some groups successfully promoted different policies based on respect for Indian cultural values. Immigration from Mexico greatly increased the Latino population in California and the Southwest, and some Mexicans working in agriculture tried, in vain, to organize unions. Nearly all unions faced strong opposition from employers. Some older women’s roles broke down as women gained the right to vote and exercised more control over the choice to have children. An identifiable gay and lesbian subculture emerged, especially in cities.

The politics of the era were marked by greater conservatism than before World War I. Warren G. Harding was a poor judge of character, and some of his appointees accepted bribes. Harding and his successor, Calvin Coolidge, expected government to act as a partner with business, and their economic policies minimized regulation and encouraged speculation. With some exceptions, progressive reform disappeared from politics, and efforts to secure federal assistance for farmers fizzled. The federal government was strongly conservative, staunchly probusiness, and absolutely unwilling to intervene in the economy. Herbert Hoover defeated Al Smith in the 1928 presidential election, in which the values of an older rural America seemed to be pitted against those of the new, urban, immigrant society.

During the 1920s, the United States followed a policy of independent internationalism that stressed voluntary cooperation among nations, while at the same time

enhancing opportunities for American business around the world. The Washington Naval Conference held out the hope for preventing a naval arms race.

## Key Terms

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Model T, *p. 530*  
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## CHAPTER 23

# The Great Depression and the New Deal 1929–1939

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### **Hoover and Economic Crisis**

The Great Crash and the Depression  
Hoover and the Depression

#### **The New Deal**

Roosevelt Confronts the Depression  
Seeking Recovery  
Remembering the “Forgotten Man”  
Changing Focus

#### **IT MATTERS TODAY: Social Security**

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Frances Perkins Explains the Social Security Act, 1935  
Waning of the New Deal

#### **Surviving the Depression**

“Making Do”—Families and the Depression  
Women and Minorities in the Depression  
A New Deal for Women and Minorities

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Eleanor Roosevelt Addresses Civil Rights, 1939

#### **Summary**

### **INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Frances Perkins**

On February 22, 1933, Roosevelt asked Frances Perkins to be secretary of labor. She had served Roosevelt in a similar capacity when he was governor of New York. She agreed on the condition that she was allowed to push for specific legislation, including the abolition of child labor, the establishment of old-age pensions, and a minimum wage. Roosevelt agreed but told her that she would “have to invent the way to do these things” and not to “expect too much help from” him. She accepted, becoming the first woman to serve in a president’s cabinet.

As secretary of labor, she played key roles in supporting jobs and relief programs. But her central goal was to create a system that provided permanent benefits. She helped draft a social security bill that provided workers with a retirement plan, increased unemployment compensation, and support for children. “You care about this thing,” Roosevelt told her, “I know you will put your back to it.”

In creating the Social Security Act of 1935, Perkins made choices. For fiscal and political reasons, it was decided to have workers pay into the system instead of having benefits paid out of taxes. Perkins wanted medical coverage, but it was excluded, in large part by a hostile medical profession. Hundreds of public speeches and countless appearances before congressional committees later, the bill passed, and the relationship between the federal government and the people fundamentally changed.

Perkins was not satisfied with passage of Social Security, however. She also wanted to set standards for workers’ wages and hours of work. No “self-supporting and self-respecting democracy,” she argued, could justify any “economic reason for chiseling workers’ wages or stretching workers’ hours.” Opponents called it too much government intrusion, but it passed nonetheless. When the Fair Labor Standards Act was passed in 1938, it affected more than 12 million workers. To Perkins’s pleasure, it also barred industrial labor for children under the age of 16. Frances Perkins left office in 1945 but remained an advocate for workers and their families until her death in 1965.

### **FRANCES PERKINS**

*Beginning in 1911, Frances Perkins sought to improve working conditions for the nation’s men, women, and children. Perkins was the first woman cabinet member, and as secretary of labor, she tirelessly worked to create the Social Security system, establish a minimum wage for workers, and limit the number of hours people could be required to work.*

Collection of The New York Historical Society [1947.182].





# Chronology

<b>1928</b>	Herbert Hoover elected president	<b>1934</b>	Huey Long's Share the Wealth plan
<b>1929</b>	Stock market crash Mexican repatriation begins		Father Charles Coughlin forms National Union for Social Justice
<b>1929–1933</b>	Depression deepens 9,000 U.S. banks fail 90,000 American businesses fail Unemployment rises from 9 to 25 percent		Indian Reorganization Act Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) created American Liberty League established Dr. Francis Townsend's movement begins Federal Housing Administration
<b>1930</b>	Hawley-Smoot Tariff		
<b>1931</b>	Scottsboro Nine convicted Depression spreads to Europe Japanes troops seize Manchuria	<b>1935</b>	Second Hundred Days Works Progress Administration created NRA ruled unconstitutional in <i>Schechter</i> case Rural Electrification Administration (REA) formed National Youth Administration created National Labor Relations Board created (Wagner Act) Social Security Act passed Long assassinated Committee of Industrial Organizations (CIO) established
<b>1932</b>	Glass-Steagall Act Federal Home Loan Bank Act Reconstruction Finance Corporation Emergency Relief Division of Reconstruction Finance Corporation Milo Reno forms Farmers' Holiday Association Bonus Army marches to Washington Franklin D. Roosevelt elected president Erskine Caldwell's <i>Tobacco Road</i>	<b>1936</b>	Roosevelt reelected "Black Cabinet" organized Sit-down strikes begin
<b>1933</b>	Drought begins that turns Midwest into Dust Bowl Franklin D. Roosevelt inaugurated New Deal begins Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany National Bank Holiday First fireside chat First Hundred Days (March 9–June 16) Civilian Conservation Corps created Agricultural Adjustment Administration created Tennessee Valley Authority created Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) created National Industrial Recovery Act passed (NRA and PWA) Twenty-first Amendment (repealing Prohibition) ratified Bank Act of 1933	<b>1937</b>	Court-packing plan "Roosevelt's recession" U.S. unemployment climbs to 19 percent
		<b>1938</b>	Works Progress Administration rolls double Fair Labor Standards Act Republican victories in congressional elections Congress of Industrial Organizations formed
		<b>1939</b>	Marian Anderson's concert at Lincoln Memorial John Steinbeck's <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>
		<b>1940</b>	Richard Wright's <i>Native Son</i>

**T**he Great Depression affected all Americans—rich, poor, and in between. When Hoover became president, most Americans assumed the country would enjoy continued prosperity. Those optimistic voices were soon proven wrong. By the end of the 1920s, the American and world economies collapsed, and the Great Depression had started.

Hoover fought the Depression with ideas and actions he expected would produce economic recovery, but they failed to change the course of the Depression. Against the backdrop of economic disaster, Americans faced widespread economic insecurity as the number of the unemployed and underemployed soared. Some feared society and political structures might collapse, but their fears proved to be unfounded. Americans proved resilient; making do with less—getting by and making choices. Among those choices was to elect Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Roosevelt had few qualms about using the power of the government to combat the Depression and institute changes. With a program called the “New Deal,” the administration unleashed a barrage of legislation along three paths: economic recovery, relief, and reform. Critics warned about the expanding power of government and moving down the path toward socialism. But most Americans accepted an activist role for government. Workers, farmers, women, and minorities found new avenues of expression; and thousands of African Americans flocked to the Democratic Party.

By 1938, the New Deal was sputtering to an end. It had not rescued the economy, but it had changed the definition of “liberalism,” and it had expanded the responsibilities and power of the federal government. Roosevelt dominated the American scene for thirteen years. He was revered and reviled, but no one denied his impact.

## Hoover and Economic Crisis

- ★ **What was the impact of the stock market crash on the American economy, and what major economic weaknesses contributed to the crash and the Great Depression?**
- ★ **What choices did Hoover make in dealing with the problems created by the Depression, and why were Hoover's efforts to fight the Depression unsuccessful?**

Campaigning for the presidency, Herbert Hoover had promised a “New Day” for America, but his sweeping victory was more a vote for the status quo. The United States had seen almost a decade of economic growth and rising standards of living, and people had voted for Hoover expecting that trend to continue. The outcome was much different as the nation soon tested by economic and social trauma.

### The Great Crash and the Depression

Hoover assumed office as ever-rising stock prices, shiny new cars, and rapidly expanding suburbs seemed to verify his observation about “the final triumph over poverty.” But behind the rush for radios, homes, and vacuum cleaners were economic weaknesses, overproduction, poor distribution of income, excessive credit buying, and weak and weakening sectors of the economy. Eight months later, on Black Thursday, October 24, 1929, those hidden weaknesses became visible as the stock market crashed and the American economy stumbled and then fell. The value of stocks plummeted, and across the country frenzied brokers rushed to place sell orders.

The market rebounded, holding its own on Friday, but it slipped again on Monday. Then, on October 29—Black Tuesday—prices plunged and would continue to fall

throughout the year. By mid-November, the *New York Times* industrials (selected industrial stocks chosen as indicators of trends in the economy) had declined from 469 to 221. Hundreds of brokers and speculators were ruined.

The crash is a convenient starting point for the **Great Depression**, but it was not its cause. The Depression was a product of overproduction, poor distribution of income, too much credit buying, and uneven economic growth. The prosperity of the 1920s had in part rested on robust, expanding industries—chemical, automobile, and electronics, among others—that pushed the rest of the economy forward. But by 1927, even those industries were slowing down. Construction starts fell from 11 billion to 9 billion units between 1926 and 1929, causing furniture companies and other producers of consumer merchandise to reduce their labor forces to shave production costs. The outcome of a slowing economy was even worse in less robust sectors of the economy.

Throughout the 1920s, older industries such as railroads, textiles, and iron and steel had barely made a profit, while agriculture and mining suffered steady losses. Workers in those jobs saw little increase in wages or standards of living. Agriculture was especially weak. The postwar economic expansion had totally bypassed agriculture, and farmers watched their incomes and property values slip to about half of their wartime highs. Compounding these problems, credit had virtually dried up in rural America because five thousand banks closed between 1921 and 1928. By the end of 1928, thousands of people had left their farms, and agriculture was approaching an economic crisis.

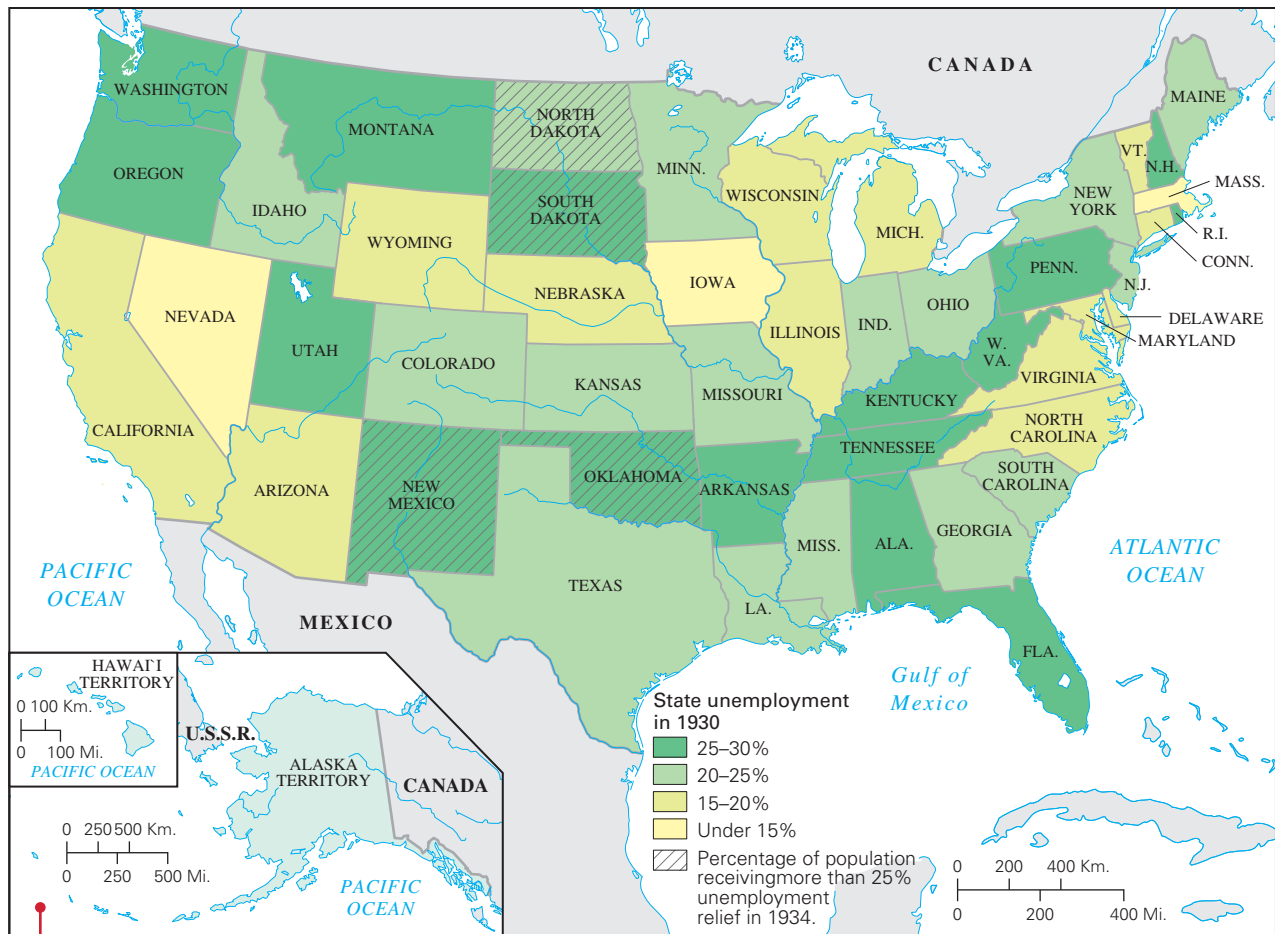
Another weakness of the economy was a **misdistribution of wealth**. The nation had over 513 millionaires, but that concentration of wealth represented too much money in too few hands to maintain consumer spending. The Brookings Institute judged that an annual salary of \$2,500 provided an American family a comfortable standard of living. It also found that 70 percent of American families earned less than that amount. When Hoover took office, most people were exhausting nearly all of their monthly income on food, housing, and a variety of consumer products and were supplementing their wages with credit buying. Increasingly, Americans were in debt. Still, few worried as long as the economy seemed stable, unemployment remained low, and Americans had confidence in the economy. All that changed with the stock market crash.

When the market crashed, economic confidence was undermined, and the weaknesses of the economy were highlighted. A soaring stock market was a symbol of a vigorous economy, but the market's continued fall made investors and business leaders wary. Corporations were more likely to cut production and lay off workers, who could ill afford any reduction in wages. Consumers were hesitant to spend their money. The Federal Reserve raised interest rates, and banks became less willing to lend money. As the economy spiraled downward in the months following the crash, the banking system appeared to be collapsing.

Many of the nation's banks had made too many loans and questionable investments, and were vulnerable to the slowing economy. Even before the stock market crash, "runs" on banks occurred as customers lined up at teller windows to empty their accounts. Runs intensified after the crash, and more and more banks, unable to meet their obligations, went into bankruptcy. The New York Bank of the United States had held over \$280 million in savings accounts, but in December 1930 it closed its doors, and thousands of customers lost all their money in the bank. The failure of the nation's banks forecast a serious economic crisis for the growing number of unemployed and jarred the well-being of many upper- and middle-class families, who suddenly found they had little or no savings (see Map 23.1). Across the nation, Americans faced a deepening depression—the result of the stock market crash, too much credit, loss of economic confidence, and the existing weaknesses within the economy.

**Great Depression** The years 1929 to 1941 when the economy of the United States suffered its greatest decline, millions of people were unemployed, and thousands of businesses went bankrupt; President Hoover used the term *depression* rather than the more traditional *panic* in hopes that it would reduce the public's fears.

**misdistribution of wealth** Unequal distribution of wealth among population groups. In 1929, the richest fifth of the population controlled 52.3 percent of the nation's wealth, the middle fifth held only 14.4 percent, while the poorest fifth had access to only 5.4 percent.



**MAP 23.1** The Great Depression and Unemployment

As Herbert Hoover confronted Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Great Depression in the race for the presidency in 1932, the nation was experiencing historically high unemployment. This map shows the percentage of the work force unemployed by state during that time.

The declining American economy had an international dimension as well. During the last half of the 1920s, the European economy was recovering from the devastation of the Great War, greatly aided by over \$5.1 billion borrowed from American sources. However, by the end of 1928, many American investors had reduced the amount of loans to Europe to half of what they had been. The onset of the Depression in the United States made the contraction even worse. As the Depression spread, many nations, including the United States, raised tariffs to protect their industries from foreign goods. The 1930 Hawley-Smoot Tariff set the highest tariff rates in U.S. history. While these actions may have protected domestic markets from foreign competition, they also undermined world trade. World trade slowed to a crawl in 1931 as European banks and industries closed and unemployment exploded. In several countries, like Germany and Japan, new governments arose. Germany's newly installed chancellor, Adolf Hitler, initiated costly programs that pumped money into the economy, resulting in Germany's impressive recovery within a few years.



## Hoover and the Depression

The most common response to the plunge in stock prices was voiced by Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon, who stated that the economy remained strong and that the plunge of the market was temporary and would in fact strengthen the economy. Most experts believed the government should let the economy heal itself. Hoover disagreed and summoned the nation's economic leaders, asking them to help absorb the economic shock by reducing profits rather than the work force and wages. At the same time, he urged Congress, states, and cities to increase spending on **public works projects**, including buildings, highways, government facilities. He called on local groups to raise money to help the unemployed as part of the President's Organization for Unemployment Relief program (POUR). The Agricultural Marketing Act (1929) attempted to solve farmers' problems with the creation of a Farm Board to help support agricultural prices. Although initially there were some successes, they did not last long. As profits declined, businesses cut production and wages and laid off workers. At the same time, agricultural prices continued to collapse, and state, local, and private efforts to aid the growing number of unemployed were overwhelmed.

With the country slipping further into the Depression, in 1931 Hoover took new steps. He asked Congress for banking reforms, financial support for home mortgages, the creation of the **Reconstruction Finance Corporation** (RFC), and higher taxes to pay for it all. Congress responded with the **Glass-Steagall Act** of 1932, which increased bank reserves to encourage lending, and the **Federal Home Loan Bank Act**, which allowed homeowners to remortgage their homes at lower rates and payments. But it was through the RFC that Hoover intended to fight the Depression by pumping money into the economy. Using federal funds, the RFC was to provide loans to banks, railroads, and large corporations to prevent their collapse and encourage expanded operations. Hoover and his advisers believed the money would "trickle down" to workers and the unemployed through higher wages and new jobs. Within five months of operation, the RFC had loaned over \$805 million, but little money seemed to be trickling down to workers. Liberal critics branded the program "welfare for the rich" and insisted Hoover do more for the poor and unemployed. Hoover opposed federal relief, the "dole," to the poor, believing that it was too expensive and eroded work ethic. But with unemployment reaching nearly 25 percent and mounting pressure from Congress and the public, Hoover accepted an Emergency Relief Division within the RFC. It was to provide \$300 million in loans to states to pay for relief. Yet the plan suffered as the RFC loaned funds too cautiously, and few states wanted to borrow and put themselves deeper in debt. By the end of 1932, 90 percent of the relief fund was still intact. Whether for relief or recovery, the RFC did not make enough funds available to relieve the economic crisis.

The onslaught of the Depression had changed Hoover's and the nation's fortunes. Many Americans blamed the president and the Republicans for the worsening economy and callousness toward the hardships faced by many Americans. In the traditionally conservative farm belt, militant farmers joined the **Farmers' Holiday Association**, led by **Milo Reno**. He accused the government of inaction and being in the "grip of Wall Street." Reno called on farmers to resist **foreclosures** and to destroy their crops. Farmers responded. On several occasions, they used numbers and threats of violence to force "penny auctions" that ensured that foreclosed farms were returned to their owners for a fraction of their value. Farmers were not alone. Across the nation, strikes, protest rallies, "bread marches," and rent riots took place as citizens demanded more jobs, higher wages, and relief payments. In Detroit, three workers died when a workers' demonstration against Ford was attacked by police and security guards.

**public works projects** Highways, dams, and other construction projects financed by public funds and carried out by the government.

### Reconstruction Finance Corporation

Organization established at Hoover's request in 1932 to promote economic recovery; it provided emergency financing for banks, life insurance companies, railroads, and farm mortgage associations.

**Glass-Steagall Act** Law passed by Congress in 1932 that expanded credit through the Federal Reserve System to counteract foreign withdrawals and domestic hoarding of money.

### Federal Home Loan Bank Act

1932 law that established twelve banks across the nation to supplement lending resources to institutions making home loans in an effort to reduce foreclosures and stimulate the construction industry.

### Farmers' Holiday Association

Organization of farmers that called for direct actions—such as destroying crops and resisting foreclosures—to protest the plight of agriculture and the lack of government support.

**Milo Reno** Leader of the Farmers' Holiday Association who, in 1932, called on farmers to strike, to "stay home, buy nothing, sell nothing"; rejected President Roosevelt's farm program as a threat to independence and liberty.

**foreclosure** Confiscation of property by a bank or other institutions when mortgage payments are delinquent.

**Bonus Army** Unemployed World War I veterans who marched to Washington in 1932 to demand early payment of a promised bonus; Congress refused, and the army evicted protesters who remained.

**Hooverville** Crudely built camp set up by the homeless on the fringes of a town or city during the Depression; the largest Hooverville was outside Oklahoma City and covered over 100 square miles.

A longer protest took place in Washington, D.C., as thousands of World War I veterans, the **Bonus Army**, converged to support the “bonus bill,” which would provide them with an early payment of their \$1,000 veteran’s bonus, scheduled to be paid in 1945. The marchers set up their **Hooverville** across from Congress at Anacosta Flats and picketed Congress and the White House demanding passage of the bill. When the bill failed, most of the Bonus Marchers left, but nearly ten thousand stayed behind. To remove the protesters, Hoover turned to the army, led by Army Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur. Using sabers, rifles, tear gas, and fixed bayonets, the army drove the “squatters” from their encampment. In a one-sided fight, the soldiers forced the veterans and their families from the huts and tents while the smell of smoke and tear gas hung over the city. Over one hundred veterans were injured, but rumors quickly swelled the number and added several fatalities, including the death of a baby who reportedly succumbed to tear gas. The rumors intensified the public’s angry reaction. Upon hearing of the forced eviction of the marchers, the governor of New York, Franklin D. Roosevelt, crowed, “This will elect me.”

## The New Deal

- ★ *How did the New Deal’s “First Hundred Days” represent a change in the role of the federal government? In particular, what measures did it include, and how did they promote recovery?*
- ★ *How did the New Deal change the structure of government and Americans’ expectations about the role of government?*

Nearly any Democratic candidate could have defeated Hoover in 1932, but the Democrats nominated an exceptional politician in Franklin D. Roosevelt. Born into wealth and privilege, he had attended Groton Academy and Harvard University, schools popular with America’s aristocracy. Neither academically nor athletically gifted, Roosevelt was nonetheless popular and after graduation, with a recognizable name, entered New York politics. Tall, handsome, charming, glib, he quickly moved up the political ladder, being nominated for vice president in 1920. Even though he and presidential candidate James Cox were defeated, his future looked bright. Suddenly, in 1921, it appeared his political career was over when he was stricken with polio and paralyzed from the waist down. Greatly aided by his wife, Eleanor, he kept his political career alive and in 1928 won the governorship of New York. Roosevelt was one of the few governors to mobilize his state’s limited resources to help the unemployed and poor. While making little headway against the Depression, his efforts projected an image of a caring and energetic leader—a champion of the “forgotten man.” The opposite seemed true of Hoover, who seemed to have little concern for the 11 million unemployed Americans.

When Roosevelt was nominated for president in 1932, he flew to Chicago to give his acceptance speech. He sought to emphasize two points: he was a man of action who promoted change, and his paralysis in no way hindered his activity. He also established a theme for the coming campaign. Roosevelt promised a “new deal for the American people.” The media quickly picked up on the term, handing Roosevelt a memorable slogan for his campaign: the **New Deal**. Although the acceptance speech offered no concrete solutions to the problems facing the country, it stirred the desire for hope and instilled the belief that Roosevelt would move the nation along new paths. The election proved to be a huge success for the Democratic Party and Roosevelt. Across the nation, people voted for Democrats at every level, from local to national. Roosevelt won in a landslide, burying

**New Deal** Term applied to Roosevelt’s policies to attack the problems of the Depression, which included relief for poor and unemployed, efforts to stimulate economic recovery, and social security.

Hoover with 22.8 million votes, 57.4 percent of over 39.7 million votes cast. Hoover carried only six states—the rest belonged to Roosevelt (see Map 23.2).

### Roosevelt Confronts the Depression

In the four months between the election and Inauguration Day, Americans eagerly waited for the New Deal to start even as the economy worsened. To many, it appeared that Roosevelt and his advisers, labeled by the press as the **Brain Trust**, were developing a clear plan to restore prosperity. It was an illusion. In fact, the Brain Trust and Roosevelt's other advisers were frequently at odds about which path to follow. Some, like Rexford Tugwell and Raymond Moley, supported a collective approach, working with big businesses through increased regulation and joint economic planning. Others, like Harry Hopkins, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Felix Frankfurter, advocated social programs and a more competitive economic system. All agreed, however, that the worst path was doing nothing and that federal power must be used.

Riding a wave of popular support and great expectations, Roosevelt faced a unique political climate of almost total **bipartisanship**. The result was that within its first hundred days in office, the administration passed legislation that changed the public's vision of the role of the federal government. Roosevelt took office on March 4, as the nation faced the possible collapse of its banking system. Nearly all the country's banks were closed, and the economy faced paralysis. The country waited anxiously to see how the new president would act. They were not disappointed. On Inauguration Day, Roosevelt spoke reassuringly to the American public and let the nation know that he was taking action. Millions listened to the radio as the president calmly stated that Americans had "nothing to fear but fear itself" and promised that the economy would revive. "We must

**Brain Trust** Group of specialists in law, economics, and social welfare who, as advisers to President Roosevelt, helped develop the social and economic principles of the New Deal.

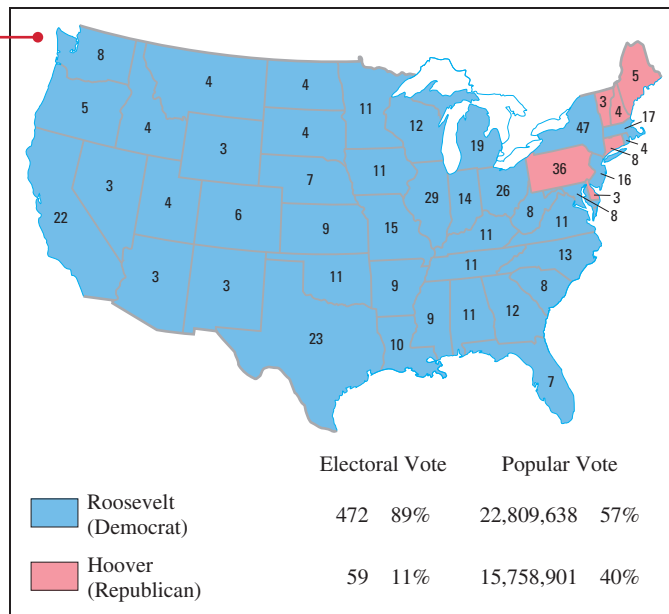
**bipartisanship** In American politics, it is when the two major parties agree on a set of issues and programs.



Paralyzed from the waist down by polio in 1921, Roosevelt was largely confined to a wheelchair—yet few pictures exist of him in a wheelchair. Here he relaxes at Hyde Park with family members. Associated Press.

**MAP 23.2 Election of 1932**

In the election of 1932, Herbert Hoover faced not only Franklin D. Roosevelt but also the Great Depression. With many Americans blaming Hoover and the Republicans for the economic catastrophe and with Roosevelt promising a New Deal, the outcome was not close. Roosevelt won forty-two of forty-eight states. While gaining no electoral votes, minor party candidates drew about 3 percent of the vote.



**Bank Holiday** Temporary shutdown of banks throughout the country by executive order of President Roosevelt in March 1933.

**Emergency Banking Bill** (Act) Law passed by Congress in 1933 that permitted sound banks in the Federal Reserve System to reopen and allowed the government to supply funds to support private banks.

**fireside chats** Radio talks in which President Roosevelt promoted New Deal policies and reassured the nation; Roosevelt delivered twenty-eight fireside chats.

**Agricultural Adjustment Act** Law passed by Congress in 1933 to reduce overproduction by paying farmers not to grow crops or raise livestock. In 1936 the Supreme Court declared the AAA unconstitutional.

act quickly,” he added, announcing that he would ask Congress for sweeping powers to deal with the crisis. On March 6, Roosevelt declared a national **Bank Holiday** that closed all the country’s banks. Three days later, as freshmen congressmen were still finding their seats, the president presented Congress with the **Emergency Banking Bill**. Without even seeing a written version of the bill, Democrats and Republicans gave Roosevelt what he wanted in less than four hours. It allowed the Federal Reserve and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (which had outlasted Hoover) to support the nation’s banks by providing funds and buying stocks of preferred banks. On Sunday evening, March 12, in the first of his **fireside chats**, the president said that the federal government was solving the banking crisis and banks would be safe again. Over 60 million Americans listened to the speech, and most believed in their leader. On the following day in Atlanta, deposits outnumbered withdrawals by over 3 to 1. Within a month nearly 75 percent of the nation’s banks were operating again. The New Deal had begun.

### Seeking Recovery

The New Deal moved along three paths as it developed over the following months: recovery, relief, and reform. Among the first bills Roosevelt offered Congress was the **Agricultural Adjustment Act**. It was designed to provide a profit for agriculture by using national planning and government payments to raise farm prices. Passed by Congress on May 12, the act created the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), which encouraged farmers to reduce production by paying them *not* to plant. Focusing on wheat, cotton, field corn, rice, tobacco, hogs, and milk and milk products, a planning board set a domestic allotment and determined the amount to be removed from production. To pay for the program, a special tax on the industrial food processors was levied. Some critics argued that the AAA gave too much power to the government. Others complained that it did nothing to help small farmers, sharecroppers, and tenant farmers or make the surplus food available for the needy.





Dorothea Lange became one of the most famous photographers of the Depression. Her photo of 32-year-old Florence Thompson and her children at a migrant camp in Nipomo, California, captured the human tragedy of the Depression. Seeking jobs and opportunities, over 350,000 people traveled to the state, most finding little relief. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USF34-009093-C].

Despite criticisms, most farmers put their trust in Roosevelt and the AAA. By 1935, the program appeared to be working as farm prices climbed and the purchasing power of farmers increased. But there was a cost. Tenant farmers and sharecroppers usually received no share of the AAA payments paid to their landlords and found themselves evicted from their farms—a million by the end of 1935. Nature also helped take land out of production as high winds swept across the drought-plagued Great Plains, creating what became known as the **Dust Bowl**. Dust storms sometimes stretched more than 200 miles across and over 7,000 feet high. In 1938 alone, over 850 million tons of topsoil were lost to wind erosion.

In 1938, as the Dust Bowl reached its worst point, Congress approved a second Agricultural Adjustment Act that reestablished the principle of federally set commodity quotas, acreage reduction, and **parity** payments. A year later, farm income had more than doubled since 1932, with the government providing over \$4.5 billion in aid to farmers. Initially intended as a short-term measure, federal support for farm prices lasted over fifty years and significantly changed the relationship between agricultural producers and the federal government.

The AAA addressed the problem of agriculture, and in May 1933, the Roosevelt administration offered Congress a program for dealing with the problem of industrial recovery.

**Dust Bowl** Name given by a reporter in 1935 to the region devastated by drought and dust storms that began in 1932; the worst years (1936–1938) saw over sixty major storms per year, seventy-two in 1937.

**parity** A price paid to American farmers designed to give them the same income that they had between 1910 and 1914. The AAA provided parity prices on corn, cotton, wheat, rice, tobacco, hogs, and milk and milk products.

**National Industrial Recovery**

**Act** Law passed by Congress in 1933 establishing the National Recovery Administration to supervise industry and the Public Works Administration to create jobs.

**National Recovery Administration**

Agency created by the NIRA to draft national industrial codes and supervise their implementation.

**Public Works Administration**

Headed by Harold Ickes, secretary of the interior, the Public Works Administration sought to increase employment and to stimulate economic recovery by putting people to work.

**General Hugh Johnson** Head of the National Recovery Administration; consumer and labor advocates accused him of being too favorable to business interests.

**price fixing** The artificial setting of commodity prices.

**Schechter Poultry Corporation v. the United States** Supreme Court decision (1935) declaring the NRA unconstitutional because it regulated companies not involved in interstate commerce.

**Tennessee Valley Authority**

Independent public corporation created by Congress in 1933 and authorized to construct dams and power plants in the Tennessee River valley region.

**Boulder Dam** Dam on the Colorado River between Nevada and Arizona; its construction began during Hoover's administration and was completed in 1935.

**Rural Electrification Administration**

Government agency established in 1935 for the purpose of loaning money to rural cooperatives to produce and distribute electricity in isolated areas.

The **National Industrial Recovery Act** (NIRA) was approved in June, with Roosevelt calling it the “most important and far reaching legislation passed by the American Congress.” The act created two agencies: the **National Recovery Administration** (NRA) for long-term economic revival and the **Public Works Administration** (PWA) for more immediate work relief. The goal of the National Recovery Administration, led by **General Hugh Johnson**, was to stimulate the economy through national economic planning. Industrial codes established prices, production levels, and wages for a variety of industries from steel to broomsticks. Business supported the NRA because it allowed **price fixing** that raised both prices and profits. Labor was attracted by pro-labor codes—in Section 7a of the national codes—that gave workers the right to organize and bargain collectively, outlawed child labor, and established minimum wages and maximum hours of work. By the beginning of 1935, over seven hundred industries and 2.5 million workers were covered by NRA codes. But almost from the beginning, dissatisfaction brewed, and critics dubbed the NRA the “National Run Around.” Workers complained that wages were too low, hours too long, and that employers resisted unionization. Consumers grumbled that prices rose without any noticeable growth in wages or jobs. Farmers griped that NRA-generated price increases ate up any AAA benefits they received. As production and profitability increased, businesses soon resisted federal restrictions and regulations and questioned the government's right to impose such controls. Many opponents called the NRA unconstitutional, and on May 27, 1935, the Supreme Court agreed. In **Schechter Poultry Corporation v. the United States**, the Court held that the government could not set national codes or set wages and hours in local plants. Roosevelt was furious at the Court, saying it had a “horse and buggy” mentality.

Perhaps the most innovative and successful recovery program was the **Tennessee Valley Authority** (TVA). The program's goal was to showcase federally directed regional planning and development of a rural and impoverished 40,000-square-mile region. The most immediate benefit was new jobs, as flood controls were improved and dams repaired and built. But the TVA was much more. Hundreds of miles of river and lakes were made more navigable, soil erosion was reduced, and the TVA dams provided electricity through federally owned and operated hydroelectric systems. Critics opposed the government-owned agencies that operated factories and power companies, blasting the system as socialist. In the West, the federal government also reshaped water and electrical power usage, providing valuable water and electricity for the economic and demographic growth of the region. **Boulder Dam** served southern California, while the Central Valley Project in central California harnessed the Sacramento River and its tributaries. In Washington and Oregon, a series of dams and hydroelectric plants along the Columbia River, including the massive Grand Coulee Dam, provided the foundation for further growth.

The TVA's electrification program provided a precedent, and in 1935, the Roosevelt administration committed itself to the electrification of rural America through the **Rural Electrification Administration** (REA). Utility companies had argued that rural America was too isolated and poor to make service profitable, and in the early 1930s only about 30 percent of farms had electricity. The REA bypassed opposition from private utility companies and state power commissions by aiding in the formation of rural and farmer electrical cooperatives. Twelve years later, electricity powered 45 percent of rural homes and farms. The electrification of rural America helped integrate those areas with the culture of modern urban America. Electricity improved education, health, and sanitation, and encouraged the diversification of agriculture and the introduction of new industries. It lessened the drudgery of farm life, giving families running water and access to

a variety of electrical appliances. Within eight months, new electrical service customers bought about \$180 in appliances—the first purchase typically was a washing machine.

### Remembering the “Forgotten Man”

Recovery was only one thrust of Roosevelt’s offensive against the Depression. He had campaigned on the slogan of helping the “forgotten man.” In March 1933, unemployment was at a historic high—25 percent of the population, nearly 12 million people. In industrial states such as New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Illinois, unemployment pushed toward 33 percent. Recognizing that state and private relief sources were unable to cope with people’s needs, the administration accepted responsibility. During his First Hundred Days, Roosevelt proposed and Congress enacted four major relief programs. Although all were temporary measures, they established a new role for the federal government. By the end of the decade, about 46 million people had received some form of relief support.

The first relief program was the **Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)**, created in March 1933. It established over 2,650 army-style segregated camps to house and provide a healthy, moral environment for unemployed urban males ages 18 to 25. Within months it had enrolled over 300,000 men, paying them \$30 a month, \$25 of which had to be sent home. By 1941, enrollment was over 2 million men. The “Conservation Army” swept across the nation, building, developing, and improving national park facilities, constructing roads and firebreaks, erecting telephone poles, digging irrigation ditches, and planting trees. In the camps, 35,000 men were taught to read. But the CCC touched only a small percentage of those needing relief. To widen the range of assistance, the Roosevelt administration created the **Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA)**, which provided states with money for their relief needs, the Public Works Administration (PWA), and the short-lived **Civil Works Administration**.

The Public Works Administration provided funds for a variety of projects that had social and community value. It paid 45 cents an hour for unskilled labor and \$1.10 an hour for skilled workers, and sought, frequently unsuccessfully, equal pay regardless of race. Eventually the PWA provided over \$4 billion to state and local governments for more than 34,000 projects, including sidewalks, roads, schools, and community buildings. PWA funds also constructed two aircraft carriers, the *Yorktown* and the *Enterprise*.

Not all relief programs were aimed at the homeless and poor. Two aided homeowners. The **Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC)**, established in May 1933, permitted homeowners to refinance their mortgages at lower interest rates through the federal government. Before it stopped making loans in 1936, the HOLC had refinanced 1 million homes, including 20 percent of all mortgaged urban homes. The National Housing Act, passed in June 1934, created the **Federal Housing Administration (FHA)**, which still provides federally backed loans for home mortgages and repairs.

Interspersed among the recovery and relief programs were a number of reforms that sought to prevent the recurrence of the events that had triggered the Depression and to place more constraints on the unfair practices of business. To correct problems within the banking and securities industries, the Bank Act of 1933 gave more power to the Federal Reserve System and created the **Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)**. The act provided federal insurance for those who had deposited money in member banks. In less than six months, 97 percent of all commercial banks had joined the system. The **Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)**, created by the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, more closely regulated stock market activities.

### Civilian Conservation Corps

Organization created by Congress in 1933 to hire young unemployed men for conservation work, such as planting trees, digging irrigation ditches, and maintaining national parks. The majority of those recruited were white, but African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans also served in segregated camps, including more than eighty thousand Native Americans who served on reservations.

### Federal Emergency Relief

**Administration** Agency created in May 1933 to provide direct grants to states and municipalities to spend on relief.

### Civil Works Administration

Emergency unemployment relief program in 1933 and 1934; it hired 4 million jobless people for federal, state, and local work projects. Critics argued that it should not have bypassed state and local authorities and that in many cases it created useless jobs, like moving dirt from one place to another.

### Home Owners’ Loan Corporation

Government agency created in 1933 that refinanced home mortgage debts for nonfarm homeowners and allowed them to borrow money from the agency to pay property taxes and make repairs.

### Federal Housing Administration

Agency created by the National Housing Act (1934) to insure loans made by banks and other institutions for new home construction, repairs, and improvements.

### Federal Deposit Insurance

**Corporation** Agency created by the Bank Act of 1933 to insure deposits up to a fixed sum in member banks of the Federal Reserve System and state banks that chose to participate.

### Securities and Exchange

**Commission** Agency created by the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to license stock exchanges and supervise their activities, including the setting of margin rates.



### Changing Focus

The New Deal started with almost total support in Congress and among the people. But as proposals flowed from the White House and the economy improved, opposition emerged. By mid-1933, most Republicans actively opposed relief programs, federal spending, and increased governmental controls over business. Conservatives fumed that Roosevelt threatened free enterprise, if not capitalism. The Hearst newspaper chain instructed its editors to tell the public that the New Deal was a “raw deal” and that Roosevelt planned to “Soak the Successful” and lead the nation toward socialism.

Three critics were especially popular: **Father Charles Coughlin**, Senator **Huey Long**, and Dr. Francis Townsend. At 3:00 every Sunday afternoon, Father Coughlin, a Roman Catholic priest, used the radio to preach to nearly 30 million Americans.

The “radio priest” had strongly supported Roosevelt, but in mid-1934, he turned his influential voice against the New Deal and the president. His organization, the National Union for Social Justice, which he called the “people’s lobby,” advocated a guaranteed annual income, the redistribution of wealth, tougher antimonopoly laws, and the nationalization of banking. Senator Huey Long of Louisiana also suggested programs to help the average American. His “Share the Wealth” plan included tempting provisions: every family would receive an annual check for \$2,000, a home, a car, a radio, and a college education for each child. The system would be funded by taxing the rich, with incomes over \$1 million to be taxed at 100 percent. Share the Wealth societies, crying “Soak the Rich,” mushroomed to over 4 million followers in every part of the country. Townsend’s goal was to create a retirement system paying \$200 per month for those over the age of 60.

Roosevelt and his advisers were also aware of growing pressure from workers and unions for legislation that would support unionization and help industrial laborers. The national codes of the NRA had raised workers’ expectations but workers were disappointed in the NRA’s actual support for their interests. As union membership grew, especially within the fast-growing industrial unions, strikes became more common. In 1934, more than 1,800 strikes occurred. Three of the largest included a Maine to Alabama strike by textile workers and the San Francisco and Minneapolis general strikes. At the same time, many labor leaders were asking their members to support, with votes and contributions, politicians who were friends of labor and willing to promote workers’ goals. The Committee of Industrial Organizations (CIO) within the AFL reflected a more political and militant stance in 1935. Composed of industrial unions and led by John L. Lewis of the coal miners union, the CIO left the AFL three years later to form an independent and more activist **Congress of Industrial Organizations**.

Responding to these pressures, Roosevelt announced a change in priorities. He asked Congress to provide more **work relief**, to implement an old-age and unemployment insurance program, and to pass legislation regulating holding companies and utilities. A solidly Democratic and largely liberal Congress responded with a Second Hundred Days of legislation. In April 1935, Congress allocated nearly \$5 billion for relief and created a new agency, the **Works Progress Administration** (WPA), led by **Harry Hopkins**. The WPA’s goal was to put people to work, and it did. Between 1935 and 1938, the WPA employed over 2.1 million people a year. Most did manual labor—building roads, schools, and other public facilities. In its actions, the WPA established a maximum 140-hour work month and sought to pay wages higher than relief payments but lower than local wages. Wages for nonwhites and women were the exception—these generally exceeded the local rate. But the WPA went further than duplicating the PWA; it also created jobs for professionals, white-collar workers, writers, artists, actors and actresses, photographers, and

**Father Charles Coughlin** Roman Catholic priest whose influential radio addresses in the 1930s at first emphasized social justice but eventually became anti-Semitic and pro-fascist.

**Huey Long** Louisiana governor, then U.S. senator, who ran a powerful political machine and whose advocacy of redistribution of income was gaining him a national political following at the time of his assassination in 1935.

**Congress of Industrial Organization** Labor organization established in 1938 by a group of powerful unions that left the AFL to unionize workers by industry rather than by trade.

**work relief** A system of governmental monetary support that provided work for the unemployed, who were usually paid a limited hourly or daily wage.

**Works Progress Administration** Agency established in 1935 and headed by Harry Hopkins that hired the unemployed for constructions, conservation, and arts programs.

**Harry Hopkins** Close advisor to Roosevelt during his four administrations. He headed several New Deal agencies, including the Works Progress Administration.





# It Matters Today

## SOCIAL SECURITY

Passage of the Social Security Act in 1935 established one of the most durable legacies of the New Deal. Since its inception, amendments have changed the methods of payments, instituted cost of living allowance increases, and added medical coverage. From its first payment of 17 cents in 1937, millions of Americans have benefited from the system. Today, Social Security payments take about 18 percent of the budget as one in every seven Americans receive benefits. As America's work force ages, many worry that between 2040 and 2070 there will not be enough funds in the Social Security trust fund to cover its benefits. Fearful of future shortfalls, in 1996 amendments began to eliminate

some benefits and beneficiaries and pushed back retirement ages. "Reforming" the Social Security system has become one of the most important and highly charged issues facing the federal government.

- Should Social Security provide economic security, or should it be a part of individual efforts to provide retirement and medical needs?
- What options do you believe are available to deal with the projected Social Security shortfall? In what ways does your answer to the first question shape the options available?

musicians. Historians conducted oral interviews, including those of ex-slaves, and wrote state and local histories. The WPA's Writers Project provided jobs for established and new novelists, including Saul Bellow and Richard Wright. Professional theater groups toured towns and cities, performing Shakespeare and other plays. By 1939 an estimated 30 million people had watched WPA productions.

The WPA also made special efforts to help women, minorities, students, and young adults. Prodded by Eleanor Roosevelt, the WPA employed between 300,000 and 400,000 women a year. Although some were hired as teachers and nurses, the majority, especially in rural areas, worked on sewing and canning projects. Efforts to ensure African American employment met with success in the northeastern states but were less successful in the South. The **National Youth Administration (NYA)**, created in 1935 and directed by Aubrey Williams, developed a successful program that provided aid for college and high school students and programs for young people not in school. **Mary McLeod Bethune**, an African American educator, directed the NYA's Division of Negro Affairs, and through determination, and constant, skillfully applied pressure, she obtained support for black schools and colleges and increased the number of African Americans enrolled in vocational and recreational programs.

The WPA reasserted Roosevelt's support for the common American, but it was the establishment of a federal old-age and survivor insurance program that set the tone of the Second Hundred Days and significantly modified the government's role in society. Frances Perkins was a driving force behind the **Social Security Act** of 1935. Passed by Congress in August, the act's most controversial element was a pension plan for retirees 65 or older. The program would begin in 1937, and initial benefits would vary depending on how much the individual had paid in to the system.

Compared with many existing European systems, the U.S. Social Security system was limited and conservative. It required payments by workers, failed to cover domestic and agricultural laborers, and provided no health insurance. Nonetheless, within two years, every state was part of the unemployment compensation system, paying between \$15

### National Youth Administration

Program established by executive order in 1935 to provide employment for young people and to help needy high school and college students continue their education.

**Mary McLeod Bethune** African American educator who, as director of the Division of Negro Affairs within the National Youth Administration, was a strong and vocal advocate for equality of opportunity for African Americans during the New Deal.

**Social Security Act** Law passed by Congress in 1935 to create systems of unemployment, old-age, and disability insurance and to provide for child welfare.

# Investigating America

## Frances Perkins Explains the Social Security Act, 1935

On September 2, 1935, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins spoke over the radio to countless Americans to explain the importance of the recently passed Social Security Act. As the Social Security bill was being drafted and considered by Congress, it had come under attack from both the right and the left. Conservatives argued that the bill imposed "big government" into an area best served by private and individual efforts. Liberals objected that it was not inclusive enough, leaving out large segments of the work force and providing no health benefits. Perkins's speech was for many Americans the first explanation they had heard of how the new act would change their lives. In the following excerpt from her radio address, Secretary Perkins underscores not only what the new law will accomplish for those participating in the program but also how the milestone legislation charts new territory for the federal government.

.....

People who work for a living in the United States . . . can join with all other good citizens . . . in satisfaction that the Congress has passed the Social Security Act. . . . It provides for old-age pensions which mark great progress over the measures upon which we have hitherto depended in caring for those who have been unable to provide for the years when they no longer can work. It also provides security for dependent and crippled children, mothers, the indigent disabled and the blind.

Old-age benefits in the form of monthly payments are to be paid to individuals who have worked and contributed to the insurance fund in direct proportion to the total wages earned by such individuals in the course of their employment subsequent to 1936. The minimum monthly payment is to be \$10, the maximum \$85. These payments will begin in the year 1942 and will be to those who have worked and contributed.

Because of difficulty of administration not all employments are covered in this plan at this time . . . but it is sufficiently broad to cover all normally employed industrial workers. . . . It is a sound and reasonable plan. . . . It does not represent a complete solution to the problems of economic security, but it does represent a substantial, necessary beginning.

This is truly legislation in the interest of the national welfare . . . its enactment into law would not only carry us a long way toward the goal of economic security for the individual, but also a long way toward the promotion and stabilization of mass purchasing power without which the present economic system cannot endure. . . .

The passage of this act . . . with so much intelligent public support is deeply significant of the progress which the American people have made in . . . using cooperation through government to overcome social hazards against which the individual alone is inadequate.

.....

- When the Social Security Act was passed, what type of worker was most likely to receive an old-age pension? What type of worker was less likely?
- A Mississippi newspaper in 1935 argued that the Social Security plan was a bad one because it would provide a pension to African Americans, who would then live idly on their benefits "while cotton and corn crops are crying for workers"? How do you think Perkins would have answered this charge?
- Members of the Roosevelt administration believed that the Social Security program was an important reform in preventing another depression. Why would they believe that?
- Finally, in what ways does Perkins's speech respond to criticisms of conservatives? Of liberals?



**See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.**

**Wagner Act** The National Labor Relations Act, a law passed by Congress in 1935 that defined unfair labor practices and protected unions against coercive measures such as blacklisting.

and \$18 a week in unemployment compensation, per worker, and supplying support to over 28 million people.

The Second Hundred Days also responded to organized labor with the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) in 1935. Largely the work of Senator Robert Wagner, and also called the **Wagner Act**, the NLRA strengthened unions by putting the power of government behind workers' right to organize and to bargain with employers

for wages and benefits. It created the National Labor Relations Board to ensure workers' rights—including their right to conduct elections to determine union representation—and to prevent unfair labor practices, such as firing or **blacklisting** workers for union activities. Despite its limitations, the NLRA altered the relationships between business, labor, and the government and created a source of support for workers within the executive branch. Other legislation during the Second Hundred Days raised income tax rates for those making over \$50,000 a year and improved regulatory controls over public utilities. The Resettlement Act sought to find land and new lives for sharecroppers and small and tenant farmers displaced by the AAA and the Dust Bowl. It established planned communities outside of several cities and organized communal farms in Arizona, Missouri, and Arkansas. The Resettlement Act only touched a small percentage of those in need, but nonetheless demonstrated concern for the common man just in time for the 1936 election.

**blacklisting** Practice in which businesses share information to deny employment to workers known to belong to unions.

### Waning of the New Deal

By the end of 1935, Roosevelt had effectively reasserted his leadership and popularity. The chances of a successful Republican or third-party challenge to the president were remote. In a less than enthusiastic convention, Republicans nominated **Alfred Landon** of Kansas, the only Republican governor reelected in 1934. As governor, he had accepted and used most New Deal programs, but in keeping with party wishes he attacked Roosevelt and the New Deal as destroying the values of America. As for Roosevelt's liberal critics, Huey Long was assassinated in 1935, and although Townsend and Coughlin continued to protest and formed a third party, the Union Party, they were no longer any threat to Roosevelt's reelection. Roosevelt followed a wise path, reminding voters of the New Deal's achievements and denouncing big business as greedy. It worked, and Roosevelt won in a landslide. Landon carried only two states, Maine and Vermont.

**Alfred Landon** Kansas governor who ran unsuccessfully for president on the Republican ticket in 1936.

Despite this victory, a Third Hundred Days failed to materialize. By 1937, the waning of public and political support for new programs made the once-sprinting New Deal slow to a crawl. Roosevelt's mishandling of the Supreme Court and of the economy were two of the most important reasons behind the decline of support for the New Deal. Instead of promoting new social legislation, Roosevelt pitched his popularity against the Supreme Court—and lost. The president's anger at the High Court had been growing since the *Schechter* case, and as 1937 began, legal challenges to the Wagner Act and the Social Security Act were on the Court's docket. Roosevelt feared the Court was determined to undo the New Deal and sought to prevent it. Without consulting congressional leaders or close advisers, Roosevelt planned to enlarge the Court. His rationale was that the Court's elderly judges were unable to meet the demands of the bench. He wanted the authority to add a new justice for every one over age 70 who had served more than ten years on the Court. Although changing the Court was a congressional power, many thought Roosevelt's "Court-packing plan" threatened the checks-and-balances system of government. The scheme was a major political miscalculation. Several Democrats, especially those in the South, saw an opportunity to safely break with the president and led opposition in the Senate. Roosevelt's effort was further weakened when the Court reversed its course, the **Judicial Revolution of 1937**, and upheld a state's minimum wage law, the Wagner Act, and the Social Security system. After conservative justice Willis Van Devanter announced his retirement, Roosevelt dropped the issue and happily appointed Hugo Black, a southern New Dealer, to the Court. Justice Black was followed to the Court by eight other Roosevelt appointments.

**Judicial Revolution of 1937** The belief that in 1937 the Supreme Court changed its course and began to accept New Deal-style legislation.

**Roosevelt's recession** Economic downturn that occurred when Roosevelt, responding to improving economic figures, cut \$4 billion from the federal budget, mostly by reducing relief spending.

**Fair Labor Standards Act** Law passed by Congress in 1938 that established a minimum wage and a maximum workweek and forbade labor by children under 16.

Another setback that snagged the Roosevelt agenda was a recession, dubbed **Roosevelt's recession** by critics. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau pointed out that the economy was steady—industrial outputs had reached their 1929 levels, and unemployment had fallen to 14 percent. He urged Roosevelt to reduce government spending and move toward a more balanced budget. Roosevelt agreed and cut back programs. Relief programs were targeted, with nearly 1.5 million workers released from the WPA. But the economy was not strong enough to cope with reduced government spending and thousands of people seeking jobs. Unemployment rapidly soared to 19 percent. The recovery collapsed, and in April 1938, Roosevelt restored spending. The WPA and other agencies subsequently rehired those released. But Roosevelt's image of being able to manage recovery was tarnished. It was not just the Court-packing scheme and the recession that weakened the New Deal. People were also reacting to higher taxes, including payments into the Social Security system required by the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) of 1935, and labor strife. The public's mood had changed. The American people, Hopkins observed, were now "bored with the poor, the unemployed, and the insecure."

Despite waning support for New Deal-style legislation, the administration managed to pass two more significant pieces of legislation. In 1938, a second Agricultural Adjustment Act reestablished the principle of federally set quotas on specific commodities, acreage reduction, and parity payments. The **Fair Labor Standards Act** also passed in 1938 addressed causes that Frances Perkins had long championed. It established a standard workweek (forty-four hours), set a minimum wage (25 cents an hour), and outlawed child labor (under age 16). With its minimum-wage provision, the act was especially beneficial to unskilled, nonunion, and minority workers. It was also the last piece of New Deal legislation. In the November 1938 congressional elections, Roosevelt failed in his effort to get New Deal supporters elected and watched as Republicans increased in numbers and influence in Congress. The new Congress was more conservative and determined to derail any more of the president's "socialistic" ideas. Roosevelt recognized political reality and asked for no new domestic programs. The legislative New Deal was over, but the changes it generated would remain part of the American social, economic, and political culture. By 1939, the economy was recovering, reaching the point where it had been in 1929 and 1937, before the "Roosevelt recession." But unemployment and underemployment still persisted. Eight million were still unemployed, and there was no effort to provide more relief jobs or programs. Jobs and full "recovery" would have to wait until 1941, when the United States mobilized for a second world war. It would be spending connected with the war, and not the New Deal, that propelled the American economy out of the Depression and to new levels of prosperity.

## Surviving the Depression

- ★ **Amid the sweeping social changes taking place during the Depression, how did Americans manage to hold on to social and cultural values?**
- ★ **What opportunities opened for women and minorities—African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans—and what challenges faced these groups as an outcome of the Depression?**

One reason the New Deal was able to establish new paths of government responsibility was that the Depression touched every segment of American life. Poverty and hardship were no longer reserved for those viewed as unworthy or relegated to remote areas and



inner cities. Now poverty included blue- and white-collar workers, and even some of the once-rich. American industry, according to *Fortune*, suffered 46 percent unemployment, but in many areas it was much worse. In Gary, Indiana, nearly the entire working class was out of a job by 1932. Average annual income dropped 35 percent—from \$2,300 to \$1,500—by 1933. Although income rose after 1933, most Americans worried about their futures and economic insecurity. Would the next day bring a reduction in wages, the loss of a job, or the closing of a business?

### **“Making Do”—Families and the Depression**

To help those facing economic insecurity, magazines and newspapers provided useful hints and “Depression recipes” that stretched budgets and included information about nutrition. According to home economists, a careful shopper could feed a family of five on as little as \$8 a week. This was comforting news for those with that much to spend, but for many families and for relief agencies \$8 a week for food was beyond possibility. To feed his family of seven, Angelos Douvitos received work relief from Ann Arbor, Michigan, at 30 cents an hour and took home a mere \$4.20 a week. New York City provided only \$2.39 a week for each family. Things were bad, comedian Groucho Marx joked, when “pigeons started feeding people in Central Park.”

“Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without” became the motto of most American families. In many working-class and middle-class neighborhoods, “making do” meant that many homes sprouted signs announcing a variety of services—household beauty parlors, kitchen bakeries, rooms for boarders. A Milwaukee wife recalled, “I did baking at home to supplement our income. I got 9 cents for a loaf of bread and 25 cents for an apple cake. . . . I cleared about \$65 a month.” A Singer sewing machine salesman commented that he was selling more and more machines to people who in the past would not have sewn. Feed sacks became a source of material. “I grew up in a small, exclusive suburb,” recalled Florence Davis, who remembered her mother making a pretty new school dress out of one sack that had “a sky-blue background with gorgeous mallard ducks on it.”

Still, even with “making do,” many families—especially in the working class—failed, first losing jobs, and then homes. Once evicted, fortunate families moved in with relatives. Don Blincoe remembered that during the Depression most households were like his, “where father, mother, children, aunts, uncles and grandma lived together.” Approximately one-sixth of America’s urban families “doubled up.” Millions of others took to the road. Many trekked toward California, whose population by the end of the decade had jumped by over a million. Others found their families and lives torn apart. Those called “hobos” rode the rails, hitching rides in boxcars, living in shantytowns—“Hoovervilles”—begging and scrounging for food and supplies along the road. Records show increased numbers of suicides, people admitted to state mental hospitals, and children placed in orphanages. Some worried about the psychological problems created as women and children replaced husbands and fathers as breadwinners. A social worker wrote: “I used to see men cry because they didn’t have a job.”

Despite the hardships and migrations, American society did not collapse, as some had predicted. The vast majority of Americans clung tightly to traditional social norms and even expanded family togetherness. Economic necessity kept families at home. They played board games and cards, read books and magazines, and tended vegetable and flower gardens. The game of *Monopoly* was introduced, allowing players to fantasize about becoming millionaires. Church attendance rose, and the number of divorces declined. Fewer people got married, and the birth rate fell. But marriages were only delayed,

and the lower birth rate resulted not so much from economic fears as from the increased availability of birth-control devices.

Movies and radio provided a break from the woes of the Depression. On a national average, 60 percent of the people saw a movie a week. An even larger audience was reached by radio, which was heard in nearly 90 percent of American households. Both provided a way to escape from the concerns of the Depression. Writers, however, were frequently more critical of American society, culture, and politics. Many authors stressed the immorality of capitalism and the inequities caused by racism and class differences. Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), Erskine Caldwell's *Tobacco Road* (1932), and Richard Wright's *Native Son* (1940) featured "losers" but showed that their misery was not of their own making, but rather society's fault. In these and similar novels, writers assailed the rich and powerful and praised the humanitarian spirit and fair play of the poor.

### Women and Minorities in the Depression

Depression and the New Deal provided mixed experiences for women and minorities. As unemployment rose, public opinion polls found that most people, including women, believed that men should have jobs. This view was particularly true of married women, and in many cases companies dismissed or refused to hire married women. The number of women in the professions declined from 14.2 to 12.3 percent during the Depression. Teachers were particularly vulnerable. By 1932, 2 million women were out of work, and an estimated 145,000 women were homeless, wandering across America. But employment patterns were uneven. Women in low-paying and low-status jobs were less likely to be laid off and more likely to find employment. In Detroit, auto-makers preferred to hire women at 4 cents an hour rather than pay a man 10 cents an hour. White women also took jobs traditionally held by minorities, especially in domestic service.

Few working women, however, found that bringing home the paycheck changed their status or role within the family. Husbands still maintained authority and dominance in the home, even if they were unemployed. Rarely did husbands help with work around the house. One husband agreed to help with the laundry but refused to hang the wash outside for fear that neighbors might see him. At home women renewed and reaffirmed traditional roles: they sewed, baked bread, and canned fruits and vegetables. As wives and mothers, if not workers, women were praised as pillars of stability in a changing and perilous society. Reflecting on her own steadiness, one woman remembered, "I did what I had to do. I seemed to always find a way to make things work."

While the Depression's economic impact on women was mixed, it only intensified the economic and social difficulties for minorities. African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians faced increased racial hostility and demands that they give up their jobs to whites. In Tucson, Arizona, "Mexicans" were accused of "taking the bread out of our white children's mouths." Low-paying, frequently temporary jobs and high unemployment made life in the *colonias* deplorable, where, according to one observer, mothers and children went "up and down alleys, searching . . . for cast-off food." On farms in California, Mexican American workers were being replaced by Anglos, including those fleeing the Dust Bowl. Those managing to find work in the fields earned only \$289 a year—about a third of what the government estimated it took to maintain a subsistence budget.

Throughout the nation, the United States Immigration Bureau worked with local authorities to facilitate **repatriation** of Mexican nationals to Mexico. Many local and state agencies gave free transportation to the border for those willing to leave. In one Indiana town, Mexicans and Mexican Americans were denied welfare and encouraged

**colonias** Village settlements of Mexicans and Mexican Americans, frequently constructed by or for migrant citrus workers in southern California.

**repatriation** The return of people to their nation of birth or citizenship; repatriation of Mexicans from the United States during the Depression was at its height from 1929 to 1931.

to board a special train to Mexico. “They weren’t forcing you to leave,” recalled one *repatriado*, “they gave you a choice—starve or go back to Mexico.” In Los Angeles and several other cities, the Immigration Bureau conducted sweeps of Mexican American communities to scare Mexicans into leaving and to round up illegal immigrants for deportation. Nationally, more than half a million Mexicans left the United States by 1937.

Officials made no effort to repatriate Asians living on the West Coast, but Asian immigrants and Asian Americans remained isolated, and received inadequate relief. In San Francisco, where nearly one-sixth of the Asian population picked up benefits, they received from 10 to 20 percent less than whites. Hoping to remove economic and social barriers, some sought to assimilate, becoming “200 percent Americans.” Before 1929, African Americans working as sharecroppers, farm hands, and tenant farmers in the South already were experiencing depression conditions, earning only about \$200 a year. Their lives worsened as farm prices continued to fall and as the number of evictions rose during the Depression. Many decided to leave and migrated to urban areas, seeking more economic security. Cities, however, provided few opportunities because whites were taking jobs previously held by African Americans, including low-paying and low-status domestic service jobs typically held by black women. In most cases, joblessness among African Americans in urban areas averaged 20 to 50 percent higher than for whites. Compounding the high unemployment, across the nation blacks faced increased racial hostility, violence, and intimidation. In 1931 the attention of the nation was drawn to Scottsboro, Alabama, where nine black men had been arrested and charged with raping two white prostitutes. Although no physical evidence linked the men to any crime, a jury of white males did not question the testimony of the women and quickly found the so-called **Scottsboro Nine** guilty. Eight were sentenced to death; the ninth, a minor, escaped the death penalty. Through appeals, intervention by the Supreme Court, retrials, parole, and escape, all those convicted were free by 1950.

**Scottsboro Nine** Nine African Americans convicted of raping two white women in a freight train in Alabama in 1931; their case became famous as an example of racism in the legal system.

### A New Deal for Women and Minorities

Like the Depression, the New Deal impacted women and minorities in different ways, but generally it inspired a belief that the Roosevelt government cared and was trying to improve their lives. Eleanor Roosevelt was at the center of this image of compassion. She frequently acted as the social conscience of the administration and prodded her husband and other New Dealers not to forget women and minorities. “I’m the agitator,” she said. “He’s the politician.” She crossed the country meeting and listening to people. She received thousands of letters that described people’s hardships and asked for help. Although she was rarely able to provide any direct assistance, her replies emphasized hope and pointed to the changes being made by the New Deal.

Within the White House, Eleanor Roosevelt helped convene a special White House conference on the needs of women in 1933 and, with the help of Frances Perkins and other women in the administration, worked to ensure that women received more than just token consideration from New Deal agencies. Ellen Woodward, who served as assistant director of the FERA and the WPA, was successful in promoting a few women’s programs—headed by women. Still, New Deal agencies frequently paid women less than men, and fewer women were enrolled in relief programs. Women made up only 10 percent of the WPA’s work force, and most of them were placed in programs that focused on traditional women’s skills, such as sewing. Women were also virtually ignored by the provisions of the Social Security Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act, which excluded coverage of domestic workers and waitresses and professions largely composed of women.

**Black Cabinet** Semiofficial advisory committee on racial affairs organized by Mary McLeod Bethune in 1936 and made up of African American members of the Roosevelt administration.

For African Americans and Hispanics, the Roosevelts and the New Deal provided a large amount of hope and a lesser amount of change. More African Americans than ever before were appointed to government positions. Educator Mary Bethune headed the Division of Negro Affairs within the National Youth Administration and in 1936 organized African Americans in the administration into a **“Black Cabinet”** that acted as a semiofficial advisory commission on racial relations. “We must think in terms of a ‘whole’ for the greatest service of our people,” she said. Among the most pressing needs, the “Black Cabinet” concluded, was access to relief and jobs. The New Deal provided both, but never to the extent needed. The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Tennessee Valley Authority practiced segregation and wage discrimination. Still, by 1938, nearly 30 percent of African Americans were receiving some federal relief, with the WPA alone supporting almost a million African American families. But even in the best of cases, it was not enough. Across the nation, black unemployment and poverty remained higher than for whites.

The Roosevelt administration also shrank from supporting civil rights legislation. When confronted by black leaders for his refusal to promote an anti-lynching law, Roosevelt explained, “If I come out for the anti-lynching bill now, they will block every bill I ask Congress to pass . . . I just can’t take that risk.” Again, acting as an advocate, Eleanor Roosevelt was willing to take more risks and visibly supported equality for minorities. In 1939, when the Daughters of the American Revolution refused to allow renowned black opera singer Marian Anderson to sing at their concert hall in Washington, the First Lady resigned her membership and helped arrange a public concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Anderson’s performance before Lincoln’s statue attracted more than 75,000 people.

Hispanics benefited from the New Deal in much the same way as African Americans—indirectly. New Deal agencies such as the CCC, PWA, and WPA provided welcome jobs and income. A worker in a CCC camp in northern New Mexico remembered, “I had plenty to eat . . . I had brand new clothes when I went to the CCC camps.” Throughout the Southwest, federal relief agencies not only included Mexican Americans but also sometimes paid wages that exceeded what they received in the **private sector**. The WPA paid \$8.54 a week for unskilled labor, whereas a comparable job in the private sector would have yielded an average of \$6.02 or less. Discrimination, however, was still practiced, and enhanced by language differences.

New Deal legislation also helped union organizers trying to assist Hispanic workers throughout the West. San Antonio’s Mexican American pecan shellers, mostly women, were among the lowest-paid workers in the country, earning less than 4 cents per pound of shelled pecans, which amounted to an annual wage of less than \$180. In 1934, 1935, and again in 1938, CIO organizers, including local activist “Red” Emma Tenayuca, led the pecan shellers in strikes, finally gaining higher wages and union recognition in 1938. However, not every New Deal administrator or agency was committed to aiding minorities. In the fields of central California, local authorities supported growers; Mexican American unions had little success and received negligible support from the federal government. Nor did the New Deal lessen efforts to repatriate Mexicans to Mexico.

Despite its limitations, the New Deal provided hope and support for many women and minorities, who in turn praised Roosevelt. “The WPA came along, and Roosevelt came to be a god,” said one African American. “You worked, you got a paycheck, and you had some dignity.” Politically, such sentiments were more than praise because where they could vote, minorities voted for Roosevelt and the Democratic Party. Blacks bolted the Republican Party and enlisted in extraordinary numbers in the Democratic Party.

**private sector** Businesses run by private citizens rather than by the government.



# Investigating America

## Eleanor Roosevelt Addresses Civil Rights, 1939

During the 1930s, African American contralto Marian Anderson of Philadelphia sang in Europe's most famous concert halls, but when she returned to the United States she encountered entrenched racism and discrimination. In January 1939, the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.), who had a policy of not allowing black performers at its Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., denied Anderson's request to perform there.

Certainly the best-known member of the D.A.R. was First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. As a champion of civil rights, she welcomed blacks into the White House and had invited Anderson to perform there in 1936. On February 26, 1939, Eleanor Roosevelt sent a letter to the Chairwoman of the D.A.R. announcing her resignation. The letter is excerpted here as part of Roosevelt's popular "My Day" newspaper column. Roosevelt's action brought national attention to the issue of civil rights.

### MY DAY

Eleanor Roosevelt

Washington, D.C., Sunday. . . .

[From her letter of resignation] I am afraid that I have never been a very useful member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, so I know it will make very little difference to you whether I resign, or whether I continue to be a member of your organization.

However, I am in complete disagreement with the attitude taken in refusing Constitution Hall to a great artist. You have set an example which seems to me unfortunate, and I feel obliged to send in to you my resignation. You had an opportunity to lead in an enlightened way and it seems to me that your organization has failed.

[From her newspaper column] I have been debating in my mind for some time, a question which I have had to debate with myself once or twice before in my life. Usually I have decided differently from the way in which I am deciding now. The question is, if you belong to an organization and

disapprove of an action which is typical of a policy, should you resign or is it better to work for a changed point of view within the organization? In the past, when I was able to work actively in any organization to which I belonged, I have usually stayed in until I had at least made a fight and had been defeated.

Even then, I have, as a rule, accepted my defeat and decided I was wrong or, perhaps, a little too far ahead of the thinking of the majority at that time. I have often found that the thing in which I was interested was done some years later. But, in this case, I belong to an organization in which I can do no active work. They have taken an action which has been widely talked of in the press. To remain as a member implies approval of that action, and therefore I am resigning.

I realize that many people will not agree with me, but feeling as I do this seems to me the only proper procedure to follow. . . .

- Students today are surely struck by the First Lady's polite tone, and the remainder of her "My Day" column was spent chatting about her travels in New Mexico. Why, then, did Roosevelt's words and actions prove so explosive?
- The D.A.R. responded that no concert hall in the southern city of Washington, D.C., was integrated, and southern newspapers referred to Anderson as "Singer Anderson" so they would not have to pay her the common deference of calling her "Miss Anderson." Should the D.A.R. have been criticized for doing what was common in border South towns and cities?
- President Roosevelt routinely argued that he had to move slowly on civil rights so as not to alienate powerful southern Congressmen. Why could the First Lady ignore such concerns?

From Eleanor Roosevelt's 2/26/39 "My Day" newspaper column. Reprinted by permission from Nancy Roosevelt Ireland."

In the 1936 presidential election, Roosevelt carried every black ward in Cleveland and, nationally, received nearly 90 percent of the black vote. By 1939, the Democratic Party again was emphasizing its working-class orientation, supplying a political vehicle for the aspirations of industrial workers, minorities, and farmers.



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

When the Daughters of the American Revolution denied opera singer Marian Anderson the use of Constitution Hall because of her race, Eleanor Roosevelt arranged a public concert at the Lincoln Memorial that drew more than seventy-five thousand people. Thomas D. Mcavoy/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images.



**Indian Reorganization Act** Law passed by Congress in 1934 that ended Indian allotment and returned surplus land to tribal ownership; it also sought to encourage tribal self-government and to improve economic conditions on reservations.

Unlike most minorities, Native Americans directly benefited from the New Deal. They had two strong supporters in Secretary of the Interior Ickes and Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier. Both opposed existing Indian policies that since 1887 had sought to destroy the reservation system and eradicate Indian cultures. At Collier's urging, Congress passed the **Indian Reorganization Act** in 1934. The act returned land and community control to tribal organizations. It provided Indian self-rule on the reservations and prevented individual ownership of tribal lands. To improve the squalid conditions found on most reservations and to provide jobs, Collier organized a CCC-type agency for Indians and ensured that other New Deal agencies played a part in improving Indian lands and providing jobs. He also promoted Native American culture. Working with tribal leaders, Collier took measures to protect, preserve, and encourage Indian customs, languages, religions, and folkways.

Reservation school curricula incorporated Indian languages and customs, and Native Americans could once more openly and freely exercise their religions. Although a positive effort, Collier's New Deal for Native Americans did little to improve the standard of living for most American Indians. Funds were too few, and the problems created by years of poverty and government neglect were too great. At best, Collier's programs slowed a long-standing economic decline and allowed Native Americans to regain some control over their cultures and societies.

# Summary

The Great Depression brought about significant changes in the nature of American life, altering expectations of government, society, and the economy. When Hoover assumed the presidency, most believed that the economy and the quality of life would continue to improve. The Depression changed that. Flaws in the economy were suddenly exposed as the stock market crashed, legions of banks and businesses closed, unemployment soared, and people lost their homes and their hope in the future.

More than previous presidents, Hoover expanded the role of the federal government to meet the economic and social crises, Hoover's measures, including the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, failed to stimulate a worsening economy, in part because of his philosophy of limited government. Most Americans lost faith in Hoover and put their trust in Roosevelt and his promise of a New Deal. Roosevelt won easily and took office amid widespread expectations for a major shift in the role of government. The First Hundred Days witnessed a barrage of legislation, most new measures dealing with the immediate problems of unemployment and economic collapse. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) and the National Recovery Administration (NRA) were designed to restore the economy, while a variety of relief programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Public Works Administration (PWA) put people to work.

In 1935, assailed by both liberals and conservatives, Roosevelt responded with a second burst of legislation that focused more on social legislation, like Social Security, and putting people to work than on programs for business-oriented recovery. The overwhelming Democratic victory in 1936 confirmed the popularity of Roosevelt and the changes brought by his New Deal, and raised expectations of further social and economic regulatory

legislation. A Third Hundred Days, however, never materialized. The Court-packing scheme, an economic downturn, labor unrest, and growing conservatism generated more political opposition than New Deal forces could overcome. The outcome was that the New Deal wound down after 1937.

The Depression affected all Americans, as they had to adjust their values and lifestyles to meet the economic and psychological crisis. People worried about economic insecurity, but industrial workers and minorities were the most likely to face hard times and carried the extra burdens of discrimination and loss of status. Lives were disrupted, homes and businesses lost, but most people learned to cope with the Great Depression and hoped for better times.

Roosevelt and the New Deal provided hope and made coping easier. Farmers, blue-collar workers, women, and minorities directly and indirectly benefited from the New Deal. The Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) saved thousands of homes; the Social Security Act provided some with retirement funds and established a national network of unemployment compensation; and the Fair Labor Standards Act guaranteed a minimum wage. But more than specific programs, the New Deal provided a sense of hope and a growing expectation about government's role in promoting the economy and providing for the welfare of those in need.

The New Deal never fully restored the economy, but it engineered a profound shift in the nature of government and in society's expectations about the federal government's role in people's lives. After the New Deal, the economy, society, government, and politics would ever be the same.

## Key Terms

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# America's Rise to World Leadership 1929–1945

## CHAPTER 24

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Minoru Kiyota

In 1944, 20-year-old Minoru Kiyota, a Japanese American, renounced his American citizenship. He was hoping to leave the Topaz Relocation Center in Utah, where he had been interred, to go to college. Minoru met with an FBI agent, who was more interested about him being a **kibei** (see next page) than about his going to college. After being called a “dirty Jap,” Minoru explained he had spent four years in Japan before returning to go to high school and emphasized he was an American citizen. It had no affect as the agent next asked what organizations Minoru had joined since his return.

Minoru said “none.” But the agent accused him of belonging to *Butoku-kai*. Perplexed, Minoru replied he had taken **kendo** lessons but was not a member of *Butoku-kai*. The answer did not appease the agent. He labeled Minoru “a dangerous individual” and wanted to know what “sabotage” Minoru had been ordered to carry out. The interview ended when the agent announced: “You’re not getting out of this camp.”

Still shaken and angry, months later, Minoru refused to sign a loyalty pledge. In his opinion, the government had no right to demand his loyalty. His refusal classified him as disloyal, and he was sent to Tule, a more secure camp. There Minoru found angry guards and gangs of ultranationalistic, pro-Japanese **Nisei** who terrorized the camp and frequently brought the army’s wrath down on everyone. His despair deepened, his health worsened, and he renounced his American citizenship. He quickly regretted the decision. Minoru started efforts to undo his choice and legally challenge the Renunciation Law.

The war over, he was released in 1946, applied to college, and graduated in 1949. Using his Japanese language skills, he took a civilian position with the Air Force Intelligence Service but lied on his application form, saying he was a U.S. citizen. He served in Korea and Japan, where, in 1954, his past caught up. He was

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### *The Road to War*

Diplomacy in a Dangerous World  
Roosevelt and Isolationism  
War and American Neutrality  
The Battle for the Atlantic  
Pearl Harbor

#### *America Responds to War*

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Roosevelt’s War Speech, 1941  
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#### *Waging World War*

Halting the Japanese Advance  
The Tide Turns in Europe  
Stresses in the Grand Alliance  
Defeating Hitler  
Closing the Circle on Japan  
Entering the Nuclear Age

#### *Summary*



#### TOPAZ RELOCATION CENTER

Located in the high desert of Utah where temperatures ranged from 106 in the summer to minus 30 in the winter, the Topaz Relocation Center housed nearly nine thousand people, the majority of whom had failed their “loyalty” test. In April 1943, 63-year-old James Hatsuaki Wakasa was killed by a guard as he approached the barbed wire fence that surrounded the camp.

Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

**kibei** Japanese Americans who returned to America after being educated in Japan.

**Butoku-kai** A philosophy started in eighth-century Japan to instill martial prowess and chivalry among the warrior class. In 1895, it became a society to promote and standardize martial arts. Abolished in 1946, the society was rechartered in 1953.

**kendo** Literary “way of the sword,” it was instruction in swordsmanship and was included in *Butoku-kai*. It became part of the Japanese physical education program and in 1939 made mandatory training for all boys.

**Nisei** A person born in the United States of parents who emigrated from Japan.

dismissed from service and stripped of his U.S. passport. A man without a country, he enrolled at Tokyo University, majoring in Indian Philosophy.

In 1955, he regained his citizenship when the Renunciation Law was thrown out by the Supreme Court. He returned to the United States in 1963, taking a position as a professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of Wisconsin. He retired in 1999.

**T**he Great Depression shook the world. Governments collapsed, and three nations emerged willing to use military force to achieve their goals. Japan, seeking raw materials and markets, annexed Manchuria in 1931. Adolf Hitler assumed power determined to restore Germany as a major power. In Italy, Benito Mussolini moved to expand his imperial designs.

Between 1933 and 1939, Roosevelt wrestled with how to improve U.S. economic and political positions abroad, while protecting economic and political interests at home. He wanted to take a more active role in world affairs, but understood political reality. The public and Congress remained strongly isolationist; consequently, he had little success in promoting internationalist goals. The onslaught of the war in Europe in 1939, however, provided Roosevelt with new opportunities. Deciding that the United States must help Britain defeat Hitler, Roosevelt provided economic and military assistance to Britain. To check Japanese expansion, he used trade restrictions. Britain held on, but Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor indicated the failure of economic diplomacy in Asia.

The war restored American prosperity and increased presidential power. The full mobilization of the United States' resources resulted in full employment and unparalleled cooperation among business, labor, and government. As over 15 million Americans marched off to war, those at home faced new challenges and opportunities. The result for women and minorities was mixed: they experienced greater opportunities, but they also were expected by most to relinquish their newfound status once the war ended.

In planning for the war, Roosevelt chose to allocate most of the nation's resources to defeat Hitler. Allied with Britain and the Soviet Union, the United States began its efforts to liberate Europe by invading North Africa and Italy before invading France. In the Pacific, the victory at Midway gave the United States a naval and air advantage that eventually allowed American forces to close the circle on Japan. By the end of May 1945, Hitler's Third Reich was in ruins, and American forces were on the verge of victory over Japan. Roosevelt had died, and it was left to President Harry S. Truman to chart the final path to victory. Choosing to end the war as soon as possible, Truman approved the use of

# Chronology

<b>1929</b>	Herbert Hoover becomes president	Germany invades Soviet Union
<b>1931</b>	Japan seizes Manchuria	Atlantic Charter
<b>1933</b>	Franklin D. Roosevelt becomes president	U-boats attack U.S. warships
	London Economic Conference	Japan attacks Pearl Harbor
	Gerardo Machado resigns as president of Cuba	United States enters World War II
	United States recognizes Soviet Union	<b>1942</b> War Production Board created
	Hitler and Nazi party take power in Germany	Manhattan Project begins
<b>1934</b>	Fulgencio Batista assumes power in Cuba	Japanese conquer Philippines
<b>1935</b>	First Neutrality Act	Japanese Americans interned
	Italy invades Ethiopia	Battle of Midway
<b>1936</b>	Germany reoccupies the Rhineland	Congress of Racial Equality founded
	Italy annexes Ethiopia	U.S. troops invade North Africa
	Spanish Civil War begins	<b>1943</b> U.S. forces capture Guadalcanal
	Second Neutrality Act	Soviets defeat Germans at Stalingrad
<b>1937</b>	Third Neutrality Act	Smith-Connally War Labor Disputes Act
	Roosevelt's quarantine speech	U.S. and British forces invade Sicily and Italy; Italy surrenders; Sept. 8 Tehran Conference
	Sino-Japanese War begins	<b>1944</b> Operation Overlord—June 6 invasion of Normandy
	Japanese aircraft sink the U.S.S. <i>Panay</i>	Allies reach Rhine River
<b>1938</b>	Germany annexes Austria and Sudetenland	G.I. Bill becomes law
	Munich Conference	U.S. forces invade the Philippines
	Pan-American Conference	Roosevelt reelected
<b>1939</b>	Germany invades Czechoslovakia	Soviet forces liberate Eastern Europe
	German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact	Battle of the Bulge
	Germany invades Poland; Britain and France declare war on Germany; World War II begins; Soviets invade Poland	<b>1945</b> Yalta Conference
	Neutrality Act of 1939	Roosevelt dies
<b>1940</b>	Germany occupies most of Western Europe	Harry S. Truman becomes president
	U.S. economic sanctions against Japan	United Nations created
	Burke-Wadsworth Act	Soviets capture Berlin
	Destroyers-for-bases agreement	Germany surrenders; U.S. forces capture Iwo Jima and Okinawa; Potsdam Conference
	Roosevelt reelected	United States drops atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki
<b>1941</b>	Lend-Lease Act	Japan surrenders
	Fair Employment Practices Commission created	
	U.S. forces occupy Greenland and Iceland	

atomic bombs against two Japanese cities. The destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki led to Japan's surrender. It also announced the beginning of a new age of atomic energy, and the United States' emergence as a superpower.

## The Road to War

- ★ **How did Roosevelt's policies reflect those of Hoover, especially in Latin America? How was the Good Neighbor policy a change from previous American policies toward Latin America?**
- ★ **What obstacles did Roosevelt face in trying to implement a more interventionist foreign policy from 1933 to 1939?**

When Hoover became president in 1929, the world appeared stable, peaceful, and increasingly prosperous. He saw no reason to change foreign policy. The United States remained aloof from the world's political and diplomatic bickering and expanded its trade. The onslaught of the Depression only strengthened most Americans' resolve to stay out of world affairs and attend to business at home. But not all nations reacted the same way. As the global depression deepened and governments changed, some opted to seek solutions to internal problems abroad. Japan was the first as it seized Manchuria in 1931.

Japan's economy rested in part on international commerce, and with the collapse of world trade many Japanese nationalists sought other means to ensure economic vitality and power. They looked first at Manchuria, a province of China, situated north and west of Japanese-controlled Korea. Manchuria was rich in iron and coal, accounted for 95 percent of Japanese overseas investment, and supplied large amounts of foodstuffs. Equally important, Japan maintained an army in Manchuria to protect its interests. In September 1931, Japanese officers executed a plan that allowed the army to seize the province. The world, including the League of Nations, condemned Japan's aggression, but did little else as Japan created a new puppet nation, Manchukuo, under its control. Hoover instituted a policy of **non-recognition** of the new state.

**non-recognition** A policy of not acknowledging changes in government or territory to show displeasure with the changes. Secretary of State Henry Stimson announced such a policy, sometimes called the Stimson Doctrine, in 1932, in which the United States did not accept the creation of the Japanese-created nation of Manchuku.

### Diplomacy in a Dangerous World

Hoover's Latin American policy had affirmed that the Monroe Doctrine did not give the United States the right to intervene in regional affairs. Roosevelt agreed, especially after Japan's actions in Manchuria. But with Cuba, Roosevelt's commitment to nonintervention was put to the test. In 1933, political unrest swept across Cuba, seeking to topple Cuba's oppressive president, Gerardo "the Butcher" Machado. Roosevelt sent special envoy Sumner Wells to Havana to convince Machado to resign. He grudgingly resigned, but his successor, Ramon Grau San Martin, did not match Wells's expectation. Wells considered him too radical and asked Roosevelt for armed intervention to remove him. Roosevelt refused but chose to apply non-recognition to the new regime. In Cuba, Wells turned to **Colonel Fulgencio Batista** and convinced him to oust Grau and establish a new government. Batista's regime was immediately recognized by the United States and received a favorable trade agreement.

Mexico also tested Roosevelt's commitment to nonintervention in 1938 by nationalizing foreign-owned oil properties. American oil interests argued that Mexico had no right to seize their properties, demanded their return, and asked that Roosevelt intervene with military force if necessary. Roosevelt rejected the idea and instead accepted the principle of nationalization and sought a fair monetary settlement for the American companies. Not until 1941 did Mexico and the United States agree on the proper

**Colonel Fulgencio Batista** Dictator who ruled Cuba from 1934 through 1958; his corrupt, authoritarian regime was overthrown by Fidel Castro's revolutionary movement.



amount of compensation, but throughout, American relations with Mexico remained cordial. The **Good Neighbor policy** was also enhanced as the United States announced at the Pan-American Conference in 1938 that there were no acceptable reasons for armed intervention.

### Roosevelt and Isolationism

While Roosevelt upheld nonintervention and American interests in Latin America, maintaining American interests and peace around the world was becoming difficult. Tensions between Japan and China were heightening while in Europe, Germany and Italy were seeking to expand their influence and power. Adolf Hitler took office in 1933, promising to improve the economy and Germany's role in the world. Benito Mussolini, ruling Italy since 1921, argued that Italy needed to expand its influence abroad and to enlarge its interests in Africa. As the two dictators implemented policies to achieve their goals, American isolationists became more and more concerned that the United States might be drawn into another European conflict.

As tensions increased in Asia, Africa, and Europe, isolationists were in full cry. A Gallup poll revealed that 67 percent of Americans believed that the nation's intervention in World War I had been wrong, and a congressional investigation chaired by Senator Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota alleged that America's entry into the war had been the product of arms manufacturers, bankers, and war profiteers—"the merchants of death." Congress responded in August 1935 by enacting the **Neutrality Act of 1935**. It prohibited the sale of arms and munitions to any nation at war, whether the aggressor or the victim. It also permitted the president to warn Americans traveling on ships of **belligerent** nations that they sailed at their own risk. Isolationist senator Hiram Johnson of California declared the Neutrality Act would keep the United States "out of European controversies, European wars, and European difficulties." Roosevelt would have preferred **discriminatory neutrality**, but, anxious to see the Second Hundred Days through Congress, he accepted political reality. Most Americans thought that the Neutrality Act came just in time. On October 3, 1935, Benito Mussolini's Italian troops invaded the African nation of Ethiopia. Roosevelt immediately announced American neutrality toward the conflict, denying the sale of war supplies to either side. Aware that Italy was buying increasing amounts of American nonwar goods, including coal and oil, Roosevelt asked Americans to apply a "moral **embargo**" on Italy. The request had no effect. American trade continued, as did Italian victories. On May 9, 1936, Italy formally annexed Ethiopia.

As the Italian-Ethiopian war drew to a conclusion, international tensions were heightened when in March 1936, German troops violated the Treaty of Versailles by occupying the **Rhineland**. Roosevelt proclaimed that the remilitarization of the Rhineland was of no concern to the United States and then left on a fishing trip. European stability was further weakened when in July, civil war broke out in Spain. Most Americans agreed when Roosevelt applied neutrality legislation to both sides of the Spanish Civil War. Taking no chances, Congress modified the neutrality legislation (the Second Neutrality Act) to require noninvolvement in civil wars and to forbid making loans to countries at war—whether victim or aggressor.

With the peace seemingly slipping away, both American political parties entered the 1936 elections as champions of neutrality. Roosevelt easily defeated Republican candidate Alfred Landon and, with strong public support, approved the **Neutrality Act of 1937**. This act required warring nations to pay cash for all "nonwar" goods and to carry them away on their own ships, and it barred Americans from sailing on belligerents' ships. Roosevelt would have liked a more flexible law, but because he was involved in his Supreme Court

### Good Neighbor policy

An American policy toward Latin America that stressed economic ties and nonintervention; begun under Hoover but associated with Roosevelt.

**Neutrality Act of 1935** Seeking to ensure that the events that pushed America into World War I would not be repeated, Congress forbade the sale and shipment of war goods to all nations at war and authorized the president to warn U.S. citizens against traveling on belligerents' vessels.

**belligerent** Used diplomatically to signify nations at war with each other.

**discriminatory neutrality** The ability to withhold aid and trade from one nation at war while providing it to another.

**embargo** A ban on trade with a country or countries, usually ordered and enforced by a government.

**Rhineland** Region of western Germany along the Rhine River, which under the terms of the Versailles Treaty was to remain free of troops and military fortifications.

**Neutrality Act of 1937** Law passed by Congress requiring warring nations to pay cash for "nonwar" goods and barring Americans from sailing on their ships; known as the Third Neutrality Act.

**appeasement** A policy of granting concessions to potential enemies to maintain peace. Because the Munich agreement did not appease Hitler, appeasement has become a policy that most nations avoid.

struggle, he signed the act. He did, however, appreciate a provision that allowed him to determine which nations were at war and which goods were nonwar goods.

As fighting raged on in China and Spain, Hitler pronounced in 1938 his intentions to unify all German-speaking lands and create a new German empire, or *Reich*. He first annexed Austria and then incorporated the Sudeten region of western Czechoslovakia into the German Reich. With a respectable military force and defense treaties with France and the Soviet Union, the Czechoslovakian government was prepared to resist. However, France, the Soviet Union, and Britain wanted no confrontation with Hitler. Choosing a policy of **appeasement**, in late September, Britain's prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, met with Hitler in Munich and accepted Germany's annexation of the Sudetenland. France concurred. Chamberlain returned to England smiling and promising that he had secured "peace for our time." Within Germany, Hitler stepped up the persecution of the country's nearly half a million Jews. In 1938 he launched government-sponsored violence against the German-Jewish population. Synagogues and Jewish businesses and homes were looted and destroyed. Detention centers—concentration camps—at Dachau and Buchenwald soon confined over fifty thousand Jews. Thousands of German and Austrian Jews fled to other countries. Many applied to enter the United States, but most were turned away. American anti-Semitism was strong, and Congress rejected a bill designed to permit twenty thousand Jews to come to the United States. In all, only about sixty thousand Jewish refugees entered the United States between 1933 and 1938—many of them scientists, academics, and musicians.

Even so, Roosevelt was convinced that Hitler was a threat to humanity and sounded a dire warning to Americans in his 1939 State of the Union address. "Events abroad have made it increasingly clear to the American people that the dangers within are less to be feared than dangers without," he cautioned. "This generation will nobly save or meanly lose the last best hope of earth." He then asked Congress to increase military spending for the construction of aircraft and to repeal the arms embargo section of the 1937 Neutrality Act. Congress approved aircraft construction but rejected changing neutrality laws.

In quick succession, events seemed to verify Roosevelt's prediction of danger. Hitler ominously concluded a military alliance with Italy and a nonaggression pact with the Soviet Union (which America had recognized in November 1933). He seized what remained of Czechoslovakia and demanded that Poland turn over to Germany the Polish Corridor, which connected Poland to the Baltic Sea. Angered by Warsaw's refusal and no longer worried about a Soviet attack, Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. Two days later, Britain and France declared war on Germany. Within a matter of days, German troops had overrun nearly all of Poland. On September 17, Soviet forces entered the eastern parts of Poland as they had secretly agreed to do in their **German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact**.

**German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact** Agreement in 1939 which Germany and the Soviet Union pledged not to fight each other and secretly arranged to divide Poland after Germany conquered it.

### War and American Neutrality

As hostilities began in Europe, isolationism remained strong in the United States, with public opinion polls showing that Americans had little desire to become involved. A poll taken just weeks before the invasion of Poland indicated that 66 percent opposed the United States going to war even to save France and Britain from defeat by an unnamed dictatorship. Roosevelt proclaimed neutrality, but was determined to do everything possible, short of war, to help those nations opposing Hitler. He called Congress into special session and asked that the cash-and-carry policy of the Neutrality Act of 1937 be modified to allow the sale of any goods, including arms, to any nation, provided the goods were paid for in cash and carried away on ships belonging to the purchasing country. A "peace bloc" argued that the request was a ruse to aid France and Britain and would certainly drag America into the war. Responding to the rapid collapse of Poland,

Congress yielded to the president and passed the **Neutrality Act of 1939** in November. With this act, any nation could now buy weapons from the United States. Roosevelt also worked with Latin American neighbors to establish a 300-mile neutrality zone around the Western Hemisphere, excluding Canada and other British and French possessions. Within the zone, patrolled by the U.S. Navy, warships of warring nations were forbidden.

As Roosevelt shaped American neutrality, Hitler embarked on a wider war. In April 1940 he unleashed his forces on Denmark and Norway, which quickly fell under Nazi domination. On May 10 the German offensive against France began with an invasion of Belgium and the Netherlands. On May 26 Belgian forces surrendered, while French and British troops began their remarkable evacuation to England from the French port of Dunkirk. On June 10 Mussolini entered the war on Germany's side and invaded France from the southeast. Twelve days later, France surrendered, leaving Germany and Italy, called the **Axis powers**, controlling most of Western and Central Europe. Britain now faced the seemingly invincible German army and air force alone.

England's new prime minister, **Winston Churchill**, pledged never to surrender until the Nazi threat was destroyed. On August 8 the **Battle of Britain** began with the German air force bombing targets throughout England in preparation for an invasion of the island. Britain's Royal Air Force outfought the German *Luftwaffe* and denied them air superiority. Hitler eventually cancelled the invasion. To defend England and defeat Hitler, Churchill turned to Roosevelt for aid. His ultimate goal was to bring the United States into the war, but his first request was for war supplies. Roosevelt convinced Congress to increase the military budget, placed orders for the production of more than fifty thousand planes a year, and ordered National Guard units to active federal duty.

In September he signed the **Burke-Wadsworth Act**, creating the first peacetime military draft in American history, and by executive order, he exchanged fifty old destroyers for ninety-nine-year leases of British military bases in Newfoundland, the Caribbean, and British Guiana. By the end of the year, Congress had approved over \$37 billion for military spending—more than the total cost of World War I.

As the 1940 presidential election neared, opinion polls on American foreign policy showed public confusion. Ninety percent of those asked said they hoped the United States would stay out of the war, but 70 percent approved giving Britain the destroyers, and 60 percent wanted to support England, even if doing so led to war. Determined to prevent support for Britain from diminishing, Roosevelt chose to run for an unprecedented third term. Guided by their isolationist positions, Republicans, to the surprise of nearly everyone, bypassed leading Republicans such as Senators Robert Taft of Ohio and nominated as their candidate Wendell Willkie, an ex-Democrat from Indiana. Initially, Willkie accepted the bulk of the New Deal, supported aid to Britain and increased military spending, and focused on the issue of Roosevelt's third term. With Willkie trailing in the preference polls, Republican leaders convinced him to be more critical of the New Deal and to attack Roosevelt for pushing the nation toward war. Willkie's popularity surged upward. Roosevelt countered with a promise to American mothers: "Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars." Hearing of the speech, Willkie remarked, "That is going to beat me." He was right. Roosevelt won easily, but his victory did not sweep other Democrats into office; Republicans gained seats in both the Senate and House of Representatives.

**Neutrality Act of 1939** Law passed by Congress repealing the arms embargo and authorizing cash-and-carry exports of arms and munitions even to belligerent nations.

**Axis powers** Coalition of nations that opposed the Allies in World War II, first consisting of Germany and Italy and later joined by Japan.

**Winston Churchill** Prime minister who led Britain through World War II; he was known for his eloquent speeches and his refusal to give in to the Nazi threat. He would be voted out of office in July 1945.

**Battle of Britain** Series of battles between British and German planes fought over Britain from August to October 1940, during which English cities suffered heavy bombing.

**Burke-Wadsworth Act** Law passed by Congress in 1940 creating the first peacetime draft in American history.

### The Battle for the Atlantic

While Roosevelt relaxed during a postelection vacation, he received an urgent message from Churchill. Britain was out of money to buy American goods, as required by the 1939 Neutrality Act. Churchill needed credit to pay for supplies. He also asked

Roosevelt to allow American ships to carry goods to Britain and for American help to protect

merchant ships from German submarines. Roosevelt agreed, but knowing that both requests would face tough congressional and public opposition, he turned to his powers of persuasion. In his December fireside chat, he told his audience that if England fell, Hitler would surely attack the United States next. He then presented Congress with a bill allowing the president to lend or lease goods to any country considered vital to American security. The request drew the expected fire from isolationists. Senator Burton K. Wheeler from Montana called it a military Agricultural Adjustment Act that would “plow under every fourth American boy.” Supporters countered with “Send guns, not sons.” On March 11, 1941, the 60-year-old president breathed a sigh of relief when the **Lend-Lease Act** passed easily.

**Lend-Lease Act** Law passed by Congress in 1941 providing that any country whose security was vital to U.S. interests could receive arms and equipment by sale, transfer, or lease from the United States.

For a time it appeared that Lend-Lease might have come too late. German submarines were sinking so much cargo and so many irreplaceable ships that not even Britain’s minimal needs were reaching its ports. German forces plowed into Yugoslavia and Greece, heading toward the Mediterranean and North Africa. The nonaggression pact having served its role, Hitler planned to crush the Soviets with the largest military force ever assembled on a single front. On June 22, 1941, German forces opened the eastern front. Claiming he would join even the devil to defeat Hitler, Churchill made an ally of Stalin, while Roosevelt extended credits and lend-lease goods to the Soviet Union. Despite initial crushing victories in which German soldiers surrounded Leningrad and advanced within miles of Moscow, by November it was becoming clear that the Soviets were not going to collapse.

With the battle for the Atlantic reaching a turning point, Roosevelt and Churchill met secretly off the coast of Newfoundland in the Argentia Conference, of August 1941. They discussed strategies, supplies, and future prospects. Churchill pleaded for an American declaration of war, but Roosevelt’s main concern was more political than strategic. He urged Churchill to support the formation of a postwar world that subscribed to the Wilsonian goals of self-determination, freedom of trade and the seas, and the establishment of a “permanent system of general security” in the form of a new world organization. Roosevelt wanted the **Atlantic Charter** to highlight the distinctions between the open, multilateral world of the democracies and the closed, self-serving world of fascist expansion. Churchill reluctantly agreed but reminded Roosevelt that Britain could not fully accept the goals of self-determination within the British Empire. Roosevelt, who saw the Atlantic Charter as a domestic tool and not as a blueprint for foreign policy, had no objection to the prime minister’s exceptions.

**Atlantic Charter** Joint statement issued by Roosevelt and Churchill in 1941 to formulate American and British postwar aims of international economic and political cooperation.

On September 4, 1941, an incident occurred that allowed the United States to step closer to ending its neutrality. In the North Atlantic, near Iceland, a German U-boat fired two torpedoes at the American destroyer *Greer*. Both missed, and the *Greer* counterattacked. Neither ship was damaged, but Roosevelt used the skirmish to get Congress to amend the neutrality laws to permit armed U.S. merchant ships to sail into combat zones. In October, following an attack on the U.S.S. *Kearney* and the sinking of the U.S.S. *Reuben James*, Congress rescinded all neutrality laws. As American ships were being attacked, the War Department sent its war plan, “the Victory Program,” to the president. It concluded that the United States would have to fight a two-front war: one against Germany and another against Japan. It also stated that Hitler needed to be defeated before the Japanese, and that July 1943 was about the earliest date that American troops could be ready for any large-scale operation.

### Pearl Harbor

Beginning in 1937, Japanese troops seized more and more of coastal China, while the United States did little but protest. By 1940, popular sentiment favored not only beefing up American defenses in the Pacific but also using economic pressure to slow



Japanese aggression. In July 1940, Roosevelt began placing restrictions on Japanese-American trade, forbidding the sale and shipment of aviation fuel, steel, and scrap iron.

The situation in East Asia soon worsened. The **Vichy** French government, knuckling under to German and Japanese pressure, allowed Japanese troops to enter French Indochina, and Japan signed a defense treaty with Germany and Italy. America promptly strengthened its forces in the Philippines, tightened trade restrictions on Japan, and as a deterrent, sent long-range bombers to the Philippines that could “set the paper cities of Japan on fire.” Within the Japanese government of Prime Minister Fumimaro Konoye, those fearful of confrontation with the United States sought to negotiate. The subsequent discussions between Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura, Japan’s ambassador to the United States, were confused and nonproductive. The lack of progress in the negotiations convinced many in the Japanese government that war was unavoidable to break the “circle of force” that denied Japan its interests.

For Minister of War Hideki Tojo, the choice had become simple: either submit to American demands, giving up the achievements of the past ten years and accepting a world order defined by the United States, or safeguard the nation’s honor and achievements by initiating a war. In his mind, war could be averted only if the United States, which had frozen Japanese assets in July, agreed to suspend aid to China, cap its military presence in the Pacific, and resume full trade with Japan. If these concessions did not occur, Tojo decided, Japan would begin military operations in the first week of December. Naval aircraft would strike the American fleet at Pearl Harbor, in Hawai`i, while the army would invade the Philippines, Malaya, Singapore, and the Dutch East Indies. Negotiations remained stalled until November 26, when Hull made it clear that the United States would make no concessions and insisted that Japan withdraw from China.

On November 26, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto dispatched part of the Japanese fleet, including six aircraft carriers, toward Hawai`i. At 7:49 A.M. December 7 (Hawaiian time), before Japan’s declaration of war had been received in Washington, Japanese planes struck the American fleet anchored at Pearl Harbor. By 8:12, seven battleships of the American Pacific fleet lined up along Battleship Row were aflame, sinking, or badly damaged. Eleven other ships had been hit, nearly two hundred American aircraft were destroyed, and twenty-five hundred Americans lost their lives.

The attack on Pearl Harbor, however, was only a small part of Japan’s strategy. Elsewhere that day Japanese planes struck Singapore, Guam, the Philippines, and Hong Kong. Everywhere, British and American positions in the Pacific and East Asia were being overwhelmed. Roosevelt declared that the unprovoked, sneak attack on Pearl Harbor made December 7 “a date which will live in infamy” and asked Congress for a declaration of war against Japan.

**Vichy** City in central France that was the capital of unoccupied France from 1940 to 1942; the Vichy government continued to govern French territories and was sympathetic to the fascists.

## America Responds to War

- ★ **What actions did Roosevelt take to mobilize the nation for war? How did new wartime necessities affect the relationship between business and government?**
- ★ **How did the war open doors for women? How were the military experiences of the Nisei, Mexican Americans, African Americans, and Indians different, and why?**

Americans were angry and full of fight, and the attack on Pearl Harbor unified the nation as no other event had done. Afterward, it was almost impossible to find an American

# Investigating America

## Franklin Roosevelt's War Speech, 1941

On December 8, 1941, the day after Japanese forces attacked the American base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Franklin Roosevelt dramatically addressed Congress and requested a Declaration of War against Japan. The Senate and House of Representatives approved the war declaration with the exception of a single vote. Only Representative Jeannette Rankin of Montana, a pacifist, kept the December 8 declaration of war from being unanimous. Three days later, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States. In England, Churchill hoped that with the economic and human resources of the United States finally committed to war, the Axis would be "ground to powder." An excerpt from Roosevelt's speech follows.

.....  
**Y**esterday, December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan. . . .

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. I regret to tell you that very many American lives have been lost. In addition American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu. . . .

Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday and today speak for themselves. The people of the United

States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our Nation. As Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense. But always will our whole Nation remember the character of the onslaught against us.

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory. I believe that I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger. With confidence in our armed forces—with the unbounding determination of our people—we will gain the inevitable triumph—so help us God. I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

- .....
- Roosevelt's brief address is regarded as one of the most famous speeches of the twentieth century. How, like Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, did the president use brevity to make a powerful point?
  - How did Roosevelt's words draw a clear distinction between the righteousness of the American cause and the immorality of the Japanese government? How did this six-minute speech compare to the lengthy abstractions of Wilson's 1917 war message (the subject of an Investigating America feature in Chapter 21)?



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isolationist. Thousands of young men rushed to enlist. Eventually over 16.4 million Americans would serve in the armed forces during World War II.

The shock of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor raised fears of further attacks, especially along the Pacific Coast. On the night of December 7 and throughout the next week, West Coast cities reported enemy planes overhead and practiced blackouts. Stores everywhere removed "made in Japan" goods from shelves. Alarm and anger were focused especially on Japanese Americans. Rumors circulated wildly that they



Roosevelt called it a day of “infamy”—December 7, 1941, when Japanese planes attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawai‘i, without warning and before a declaration of war. In this photo, the U.S.S. *West Virginia* sinks in flames—one of eight battleships sunk or badly damaged in the attack. National Archives.

intended to sabotage factories and military installations, paving the way for the invasion of the West Coast. Within a week, the FBI had arrested 2,541 citizens of Axis countries: 1,370 Japanese; 1,002 Germans; and 169 Italians.

### Japanese American Internment

Nearly 125,000 Japanese Americans resided in the country, about three-fourths of whom were *Nisei*—Japanese Americans who had been born in the United States. The remaining fourth were Japanese immigrants, or *Issei*—officially citizens of Japan, although nearly all had lived in the country prior to 1924 when Asians were barred from the United States. Almost immediately a belief emerged that they posed a threat. General John L. De Witt, commanding general of the Western Defense District, stated, “We must worry about the Japanese all the time . . . until he is wiped off the map.” Echoing long-standing anti-Japanese sentiment, the West Coast moved to “protect” itself. Japanese Americans were fired from state jobs, and their law and medical licenses were revoked. Banks froze Japanese American assets, stores refused service, and loyal citizens vandalized *Nisei* and *Issei* homes and businesses. The few voices that came forward to speak on behalf of Japanese Americans were shouted down by those demanding their removal from the West Coast. On February 19, 1942, Roosevelt signed **Executive Order #9066**, which allowed the military to remove anyone deemed a threat from official military areas. When the entire West Coast was declared a military area, the eviction of those of Japanese ancestry from the region began. By the summer of 1942, over 110,000 *Nisei* and *Issei* had been transported to ten **internment camps**. When tested in court, the executive order was upheld by the Supreme Court in *Korematsu v. the United States* in 1944.

Having disposed of a lifetime of possessions, Japanese Americans began the process of internment. Tags with numbers were issued to every family to tie to luggage and coats—no names, only numbers. “From then on,” wrote one woman, “we were known

**Issei** A Japanese immigrant to the United States.

**Executive Order #9066** Order of President Roosevelt in 1942 authorizing the removal of “enemy aliens” from military areas; it was used to isolate Japanese Americans in internment camps.

**internment camps** Camps to which more than 110,000 Japanese Americans living in the West were moved soon after the attack on Pearl Harbor; Japanese Americans in Hawai‘i were not confined in internment camps.



# Investigating America

## Hugo Black Defends Japanese Internment, 1944

Japanese American Fred Korematsu did not report for internment and was arrested in May 1942 and sentenced to 5 years probation. He was sent to the Topaz relocation camp where, with the aid of the American Civil Liberties Union, he unsuccessfully appealed his conviction to the Supreme Court. In December 1944, in a split decision, the Court upheld his conviction. Writing the majority opinion, excerpted here, Justice Hugo Black of Alabama, a former Klansman, argued that the needs of war could abridge the rights of citizenship.

.....  
**I**t should be noted . . . all legal restrictions which curtail the civil rights of a single racial group are immediately suspect. That is not to say that all such restrictions are unconstitutional. . . . Pressing public necessity may sometimes justify the existence of such restrictions . . .

Exclusion of those of Japanese origin was deemed necessary because of the presence of . . . disloyal members of the group, most of whom we have no doubt were loyal to this country. . . . we could not reject the finding . . . [it was because] it was impossible to . . . [segregate] the disloyal from the loyal that we sustained the validity of the curfew order. . . . That there were members of the group who retained loyalties in Japan has been confirmed. . . . Approximately five thousand American citizens of Japanese ancestry refused to swear unqualified allegiance to the United States and to renounce allegiance to the Japanese Emperor. . . . [The Court was] not unmindful of the hardships imposed. . . . But hardships are part of war. . . . Compulsory exclusion of large groups of citizens from their homes . . . is inconsistent with our basic governmental institutions. But when under conditions of modern warfare our shores are

threatened by hostile forces, the power to protect must be commensurate with the threatened danger. . . .

It is said [this is a] . . . case of imprisonment of a citizen . . . solely because his ancestry, without evidence or inquiry concerning his loyalty and good disposition towards the United States. . . . To cast this case into outlines of racial prejudice, without reference to the real military dangers which were presented, merely confuses the issue. Korematsu was not excluded from the Military Area because of . . . his race. He was excluded because we are at war with the Japanese Empire, because the properly constituted military authorities feared an invasion of our West Coast and felt constrained to take proper security measures, because they decided that the military urgency of the situation demanded that all citizens of Japanese ancestry be segregated from the West Coast. . . . There was evidence of disloyalty . . . the military authorities considered that the need for action was great, and time was short. We cannot—by availing ourselves of the calm perspective of hindsight—now say that at that time these actions were unjustified.

.....

- How did Minoru Kiyota, discussed at the start of the chapter, match Justice Black's definition of "disloyal"? In what way was Fred Korematsu "disloyal"?
- Under what criteria did Justice Black dismiss race as a basis of the decision being contested by Korematsu? What reasons did Black use to prevent the use of hindsight? What does this view suggest about the Court's ability to reverse past decisions made by the government?



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as family #10710." In the camps, the Nisei and Issei were surrounded by barbed wire and watched over by guards. The internees were assigned to 20-by-25-foot apartments in long barracks of plywood covered with tarpaper, and each camp was expected to create a community complete with farms, shops, and small factories. Within a remarkably short period of time, they did. Making the desert bloom, by 1944 the internees at Manzanar, east of the Sierra in California's Owens Valley, were producing more than \$2 million worth of agricultural products.

Some internees were able to leave the camps by working outside, supplying much-needed labor, especially farm work. By the fall of 1942, one-fifth of all males had left





# It Matters Today

## INTERMENT

Does war or national crisis allow for the reduction and elimination of a person's rights? Of a citizen's rights? During the war the government interned 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry because they were regarded as potential threats to American security. With the memory of Pearl Harbor still fresh, fears of spying and sabotage played a role; race, too, was a factor. Many argued that the culture and values of Japan made the conflict a "race war" and that all Japanese, even those who were citizens, could not be trusted: "Once a Jap always a Jap!" The dissenting Justices in the Korematsu case believed that Korematsu's arrest and internment were clearly a result of racism that violated

the American concept of democracy and that the Supreme Court's decision was the "legalization of racism." How societies act in time of war often provides insights into not only the strengths of the nation but its weaknesses as well.

- Since the Al Qaeda attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States has fought a war on international terrorism and defined radical Islamic fundamentalism as a source of that terrorism. These actions have raised the issue of race, religion, and culture, and have led to comparisons to the treatment of the Nisei and the Issei during World War II. Are these comparisons valid? Why or why not?

the camps to work. Others left for college or volunteered for military service. Japanese American units served in both the Pacific and European theaters, the most famous being the four-thousand-man 442nd Regimental Combat Team, which saw action in Italy, France, and Germany. The men of the 442nd would be among the most decorated in the army. Decades later, in 2000, the federal government, citing racial bias during the war for the delay, awarded the Medal of Honor to twenty-one Asian Americans—most belonging to the 442nd Regiment. Included in the group was Daniel Ken Inouye, who was elected to the U.S. Senate from Hawai`i in 1960. In 1988, after several lawsuits on behalf of victims, a semi-apologetic federal government paid \$20,000 in compensation to each of the surviving sixty thousand internees.

### Mobilizing the Nation for War

When President Roosevelt made his first fireside chat following Pearl Harbor, "Dr. New Deal" became "Dr. Win the War." He called on Americans to produce the goods necessary for victory—factories were to run twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Gone was the antibusiness attitude that had characterized much New Deal rhetoric, and in its place was the realization that only big business could produce the vast amount of armaments and supplies needed. Overall, the United States paid over \$240 billion in defense contracts, with 82 percent of them going to the nation's top one hundred corporations. At the same time, more than half a million small businesses collapsed. Every part of the nation benefited from defense-based prosperity, but the South and the coastal West saw huge economic gains. The South experienced a remarkable 40 percent increase in its industrial capacity, and the West did even better.

Millions of dollars were also spent on research and development (R&D) to create and improve a variety of goods from weapons to medicines. In "science cities" constructed by the government across the country, researchers and technicians of the **Manhattan Project** harnessed atomic energy and built an atomic bomb. Hundreds of colleges and universities and private laboratories, such as Bell Labs, received research and development

**Manhattan Project** A secret scientific research effort begun in 1942 to develop an atomic bomb.

grants that created new technologies or enhanced the operation of a variety of products. Improved radar and sonar allowed American forces to detect and destroy enemy planes and ships. New medical techniques and new, more effective medicines, including penicillin, saved millions of lives. Potent pesticides fought insects that carried typhus, malaria, and other diseases at home and overseas.

As the economy retooled to provide the machines of war, Roosevelt acted to provide government direction and planning. An array of governmental agencies and boards arose to regulate prices and production. The size of the federal bureaucracy grew 400 percent. The War Production Board (WPB) and the War Labor Board (WLB), both created in January 1942, sought to coordinate and plan production, establish the allotment of materials, and ensure harmonious labor relations. An Office of Price Administration (OPA), established in 1941, sought to limit inflation and equalize consumption by setting prices and issuing ration books with coupons needed to buy a wide range of commodities, such as shoes, coffee, meat, and sugar. Seeking to improve coordination, in 1942 and 1943 Roosevelt added two new umbrella agencies: the Office of Economic Stabilization (OES) and the **Office of War Mobilization**. To direct both agencies, he appointed former Supreme Court Justice **James F. Byrnes**. Armed with extensive powers and the president's trust, Byrnes controlled a far-flung economic empire of programs that touched every American and produced the machinery to win wars. By the fall of 1943, production was booming, jobs were plentiful, wages and family incomes were rising, and inflation was under control. Even farmers were climbing out of debt as farm income had tripled since 1939.

The war provided full employment and new opportunities for both labor and its opponents. Unions, especially the CIO, grew rapidly during the war, and by 1945 union membership had reached a high of 15 million workers. Union leaders hoped that the unions' voluntary agreements not to strike during wartime would persuade industry to agree to union recognition, collective bargaining, **closed shops**, and increased wages. Opponents argued that unions should be forbidden to strike or otherwise hinder war production and accept the open shop. In 1942 OPA and the WLB hammered out a compromise promoting union membership and accepting the closed shop and collective bargaining, but also expecting unions to control wages and oppose strikes. Although most workers and employers accepted the guidelines, others did not, and strikes consistently plagued Roosevelt's administration.

The most serious confrontation occurred in 1943 when CIO president and head of the United Mine Workers John L. Lewis led a strike demanding higher wages and safer working conditions. An angry president threatened to take over the mines. Congress wanted Lewis jailed as a traitor and pushed through, over the president's veto, the **Smith-Connally War Labor Disputes Act**. It gave the president the power to seize and operate any strike-bound industries considered vital for war production. Eventually, the parties in the mine strike compromised, giving higher wages to the miners. By the end of the war, American workers had not only produced a massive amount of material but were receiving higher wages than ever before. Moreover, unions represented 35 percent of the labor force. Union leaders had gained unprecedented influence during the war and expected that it would continue into the postwar period.

Taxes were also up, reflecting Roosevelt's desire to fund the war through taxation. But tax revenues paid for only about half of the cost of the war. The government borrowed the rest. The national debt jumped from \$40 billion in 1940 to near \$260 billion by 1945. The most publicized borrowing effort encouraged the purchase of **war bonds**. Movie stars and other celebrities asked Americans to "do their part" and buy bonds. The

#### Office of War Mobilization

Umbrella agency created in 1943 to coordinate the production, procurement, and distribution of civilian and military supplies.

**James F. Byrnes** Supreme Court justice who left the Court to direct the nation's economy and war production; known as the "Assistant President," he directed the Office of Economic Stabilization and the Office of War Mobilization and later became secretary of state under President Truman.

**closed shop** A business or factory whose workers are required to be union members.

#### Smith-Connally War Labor Disputes Act

Law passed by Congress in 1943 authorizing the government to seize plants in which labor disputes threatened war production; it was later used to take over the coal mines.

**war bonds** Bonds sold by the government to finance the war effort.

public responded by purchasing more than \$40 billion in individual bonds, but the majority of bonds—\$95 billion—were bought by corporations and financial institutions.

### Wartime Politics

As Roosevelt mobilized the nation for war, Republicans and conservative Democrats moved to bury what was left of the New Deal. But Roosevelt, seeking an unprecedented fourth term in 1944, hoped to recapture some social activism and called for the passage of an economic bill of rights that included government support for higher-wage jobs, homes, and medical care, but his plea fell on deaf ears. Instead, Congress passed a smaller version that would reward veterans of the war. In June the **G.I. Bill** became law. It guaranteed a year's unemployment compensation for veterans while they looked for "good" jobs, provided economic support if they chose to go to school, and offered low-interest home loans.

Roosevelt brushed aside concerns about his age and health, but responding to conservatives in the party, he agreed to drop his liberal vice president, Henry Wallace, and replace him with a more conservative running mate. The choice was Senator **Harry S. Truman** from Missouri. Republicans nominated Governor Thomas Dewey of New York as their candidate. Dewey argued that his youth—age 42—made him a better candidate than Roosevelt. Voters reelected Roosevelt, whose winning totals, although not as large as those in 1940, were still greater than pollsters had predicted and proved that the president still generated widespread support.

**G.I. Bill** Law passed by Congress in 1944 to provide financial and educational benefits for American veterans after World War II; *G.I.* stands for "government issue."

**Harry S. Truman** Democratic senator from Missouri whom Roosevelt selected in 1944 to be his running mate for vice president; in 1945, on Roosevelt's death, Truman became president.

### A People at Work and War

America's entry into the war changed nearly everything about daily life. Government agencies set prices and froze wages and rents. Cotton, silk, gasoline, and items made of metal, including hair clips and safety pins, became increasingly scarce. By the end of 1942, most Americans had a ration book containing an array of different-colored coupons of various values that limited their purchases of such staples as meat, sugar, and gasoline. Explaining why most Americans received only 3 gallons of gasoline a week, Roosevelt noted that a bomber required nearly 1,100 gallons of fuel to bomb Naples, Italy—the equivalent of about 375 gasoline ration tickets. Also, the War Production Board changed fashion to conserve fabrics. In men's suits, lapels were narrowed, and vests and pant cuffs were eliminated. Families collected scrap metal, paper, and rubber to be recycled for the war effort and grew **victory gardens** to support the war.

Even with rationing, most Americans were experiencing a higher-than-ever standard of living. Consumer spending rose by 12 percent. But, war industrial cities, with their expanding populations, experienced massive problems providing homes, water, electricity, and sanitation. Marriage, divorce, family violence, and juvenile delinquency rates soared. Contributing to the social problems of the booming cities were those posed by many unsupervised teenage children. Juvenile crime increased dramatically during the war, much of it blamed on lockout and latchkey children whose working mothers left them alone during their job shifts.

**victory garden** Small plot cultivated by a patriotic citizen during World War II to supply household food and allow farm production to be used for the war effort.

### New Opportunities and Old Constraints

Mobilization forced the restructuring and redirecting of economic and human resources. Families had to adjust to new challenges. Minorities and women confronted new roles and accepted new responsibilities, both on the home front and in the military. Like men, many women were anxious to serve in the military. But the armed forces did not employ women except as nurses. To expand women's roles,

As during World War I, the Second World War opened up new job opportunities for women. In this picture, a real-life “Rosie the Riveter” works on the fuselage of a bomber. Farm Security Administration—Office of War Information Collection 12002–39. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USW36-109].



Congresswoman Edith Norse Rogers prodded Congress and the Army in March 1942 to create the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC), which became the Women's Army Corps (WAC) a year later. Other services followed suit by creating the navy's Women Appointed for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) and the marines' Women's Reserve. Most women were relegated to noncombat roles and served as nurses and clerical workers. Those in the Women's Airforce Service Pilots (WASPS) tested planes, ferried planes across the United States and Canada, and trained male pilots, but these were still considered noncombat roles. By war's end, over 350,000 women had donned uniforms, earned equal pay with men who held the same rank, and provided a new female image.

Women serving in the military were not the only break with tradition. With over 10 million men marching off to war, employers increasingly turned to women. Until 1943, employers did not actively recruit women, preferring to hire white males. But as the labor shortage deepened, they turned to women and minorities to work the assembly lines. The federal government conducted an emotional campaign, suggesting that women could shorten the war if they joined the work force. The image of Rosie the Riveter became the symbol of the patriotic woman doing her part. As more jobs opened, women filled them—some because of patriotism, but most because they wanted both the job and the wages. Other women left menial jobs for better-paying positions with industries and the federal government. By 1944, 37 percent of all adult women were working—almost 19.4 million. Of these, the majority (72.2 percent) were married, and over half were 35 or older. Despite the number of women entering the work force, most stayed home. They supported the war effort in their homes and communities, providing volunteer efforts to organizations such as the Red Cross and Civil Defense.

Whether working or volunteering, women faced familiar constraints. Professional and supervisory positions were still dominated by men, and not all was rosy at work. Male workers resented and harassed women, who were generally paid lower wages than men, and constantly reminded their female coworkers that their jobs were temporary. With the end of the war, the government reversed itself and pronounced that patriotism lay at home with the family. By the summer of 1945, many of the women who had entered the work force during the war found themselves unemployed. Shipyards and the aircraft plants dismissed nearly three-fourths of their women employees. Those who managed to remain at work were frequently transferred to less attractive, poorly paying



jobs. Thus, for most women, the war experience was mixed with new choices cut short by changing circumstances.

Like the war experiences of women, those of minorities were mixed. New employment and social opportunities existed, but they were accompanied by racial and ethnic tensions and the knowledge that when the war ended, the opportunities were likely to vanish. Initially, the war provided few opportunities for African Americans. Shipyards and other defense contractors wanted white workers. North American Aviation Company spoke for the aircraft industry when, in early 1942, it announced that it would not hire blacks “regardless of their training.”

The antiblack bias began to change by mid-1942 for a variety of reasons. One reason was that African Americans were unwilling to be denied job opportunities. Even before the war, in early 1941, **A. Philip Randolph**, leader of the powerful Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union, proposed that African Americans march on Washington to demand equality in jobs and the armed forces. To avoid such an embarrassing demonstration, Roosevelt issued Executive Order #8802 in June 1941, creating the **Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC)**, and forbade racial job discrimination by the government and companies holding government contracts. Bending under federal pressure and recognizing worsening labor shortage, businesses began to integrate their work force.

Segregation and discrimination did not end, however. Black wages rose from an annual average of \$457 to \$1,976 but remained only about 65 percent of white wages. To continue their quest for equality, blacks advocated the “Double V” campaign: victory over racist Germany and victory over racism at home. Membership of the NAACP and Urban League increased as both turned to public opinion, the courts, and Congress to attack segregation, lynching, the poll tax, and discrimination. In 1942 the newly formed **Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)** adopted the sit-in tactic to attempt to integrate public facilities. Led by black civil rights activist **James Farmer**, CORE integrated some public facilities in Chicago and Washington, although it failed in the South, where many CORE workers were badly beaten.

The opportunities and difficulties of African Americans in uniform paralleled those of black civilians. Prior to 1940, blacks served at the lowest ranks and in the most menial jobs in a segregated army and navy. The Army Air Corps and the Marines Corps refused to accept blacks at all. Compounding the problem, most in the military openly agreed with Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson when he asserted, “Leadership is not embedded in the Negro race.” The manpower needs of war changed the role of the black soldier, opening up new ranks and occupations. In April 1942, Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal permitted black **noncommissioned officers** in the U.S. Navy, although blacks would wait until 1944 before being commissioned as officers. With only a small number of African American officers, in 1940 the army began to encourage the recruitment of black officers and promoted **Benjamin O. Davis Jr.**, from colonel to brigadier general. By the beginning of 1942, the Army Air Corps had an all-black unit—the 99th Pursuit Squadron. Eventually six hundred African Americans were commissioned as pilots. The army also organized other African American units that fought in both the European and Pacific theaters of operations, such as the 371st Tank Battalion, which battled its way across France and into Germany and liberated the concentration camps of Dachau and Buchenwald.

Latinos, too, found new opportunities during the war while encountering continued segregation and hostility. Like other Americans, Latinos, almost invariably called “Mexicans” by their fellow soldiers, rushed to enlist as the war started. More than 300,000

**A. Philip Randolph** African American labor leader who organized the 1941 march on Washington that pressured Roosevelt to issue an executive order banning racial discrimination in defense industries.

**Fair Employment Practices Commission** Commission established in 1941 to halt discrimination in war production and government.

**Congress of Racial Equality** Civil rights organization founded in 1942 and committed to using nonviolent techniques, such as sit-ins, to end segregation.

**James Farmer** Helped to organize the Congress of Racial Equality in 1942; led the organization from 1961 to 1966. In 1969 he became Assistant Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

**noncommissioned officers** Enlisted member of the armed forces who has been promoted to a rank such as corporal or sergeant, conferring leadership over others.

**Benjamin O. Davis, Jr.** Army officer who in 1940 became the first black general in the U.S. Army.

Latinos served—the highest percentage of any ethnic community—and seventeen won the nation's highest award for valor—the Medal of Honor. Although they faced some institutional and individual prejudices in the military, Latinos, unlike African Americans and most Nisei, served in integrated units and generally faced less discrimination in the military than in society.

For those remaining at home, more jobs were available, but still Latinos almost always worked as common laborers and agricultural workers. In the Southwest, it was not until 1943 that the FEPC attempted to open semiskilled and skilled positions to Mexican Americans. Jobs drew Mexican Americans to cities, creating a serious shortage of farm workers. The government turned to Mexico for agricultural workers. Mexico agreed but insisted that the *braceros* (Spanish for “helping arms”) receive fair wages and adequate housing, transportation, food, and medical care. In practice, guarantees promised in *bracero* contracts mattered little. Most ranchers and farmers paid low wages and provided substandard facilities. The average Mexican American family earned about \$800 a year, well below the government-established \$1,130 annual minimum standard for a family of five.

Like other disadvantaged groups during the war, American Indians took advantage of new job opportunities and higher wages, which lured more than forty thousand away from their reservations, many of whom never returned following the war. In addition, over twenty-five thousand Indians served in the military. Among the most heralded were about four hundred Navajos who served as code talkers for the Marine Corps, using their native language as a secure means of communication. Although often called “chief,” the American Indian, unlike other minorities, met little discrimination in the military. Whether in the armed forces or in the domestic work force, those who left the reservations saw their families' average incomes rise from \$400 a year in 1941 to \$1,200 in 1945, and many chose to assimilate into American culture, abandoning their old patterns of life.

**braceros** Mexican nationals who worked on U.S. farms beginning in 1942 because of the labor shortage during World War II.

About 700,000 African Americans served in segregated units in all branches of the military, facing discrimination at all levels. Among those units were the four squadrons of the Tuskegee Army Airfield Command, commanded by General Benjamin O. Davis. “We fought two wars” commented Airman Louis Parnell, “one with the enemy and the other back home.” National Archives.



## Waging World War

★ **What stresses strained the Grand Alliance?**

★ **Why did Truman and his advisers choose to use the atomic bomb?**

In the days that followed the attack on Pearl Harbor, many Americans wanted the defeat of Japan to be the country's first priority. To Churchill's and Stalin's relief, Roosevelt remained committed to victory first in Europe. But what was the best strategy to defeat Hitler? The Soviets fighting against 3.3 million Germans called for a northern European second front as soon as possible. Initially, American military planners supported such an operation, whereas the British considered it too risky and vigorously opposed a cross-channel invasion. Instead, they promoted a 1942 Allied landing in western North Africa—Operation Torch. It would be an easier, safer venture that also would help the British army fighting in western Egypt. Believing the people needed a victory anywhere, Roosevelt ignored his chiefs of staff's opposition and approved the operation.

### Halting the Japanese Advance

Despite the commitment to defeating Germany, the nation's first victories came in the Pacific. One occurred around **Midway Island**. Having deciphered secret Japanese codes, American military planners learned of a Japanese

thrust aimed at Midway.

The Battle of Midway, June 4–6, 1942, helped change the course of the war in the Pacific. The air-to-sea battle was several hours old when a flight of thirty-seven American dive-bombers attacked the Japanese carriers in the middle of re-arming and refueling their planes. Their decks cluttered with planes, fuel, and bombs, the Japanese carriers suffered staggering casualties and damage. Four sank in the battle. Although the U.S.S. *Yorktown* was lost, the carrier-based air superiority of the Japanese had been destroyed. In the war of machines, the United States quickly replaced the *Yorktown* and by the end of the war had constructed fourteen additional large carriers—Japan was able to build only six.

The next step was to retake lost territory and begin a campaign that would seize selected islands, often at great cost, in a campaign to close in on Japan itself (see Map 24.1).

**Midway Island** Strategically located Pacific island that the Japanese navy tried to capture in June 1942; American forces repulsed the attack and inflicted heavy losses on Japanese carriers.

### The Tide Turns in Europe

While American troops sweated in the jungles of South Pacific islands, British and American forces were closing in on German forces in North Africa (see Map 24.2). The British had halted the German advance at El Alamein on November 4, 1942, and had begun an offensive driving the Germans west toward Tunisia.

On November 8, Operation Torch successfully landed American troops in Morocco, where they began to push eastward toward the British. By early May 1943, the Americans had linked up with the British, forcing the last German forces in North Africa to surrender.

German losses in North Africa were light compared with those in Russia, where Soviet and German forces were locked in a titanic struggle. Through the summer and fall of 1942, German armies advanced steadily, but during the winter the Soviet army drove them from the Caucasus oil fields and trapped them at Stalingrad. On February 2, 1943, after a three-month Soviet counteroffensive in the dead of winter, 300,000 German soldiers surrendered, their 6th Army having lost more than 140,000 men. As German strength in Russia ebbed, Soviet strength grew. Although it was hard to predict in February, the tide of the war had turned in Europe. Soviet forces would continue



**MAP 24.1** Closing the Circle on Japan, 1942–1945

Following the Battle of Midway, with the invasion of Guadalcanal (August 1942), American forces began the costly process of island-hopping. This map shows the paths of the American campaign in the Pacific, closing the circle on Japan. After the Soviet Union entered the war and Hiroshima and Nagasaki were destroyed by atomic bombs, Japan surrendered on August 14, 1945.

**Battle of Stalingrad** Battle for the Russian city that was besieged by the German army in 1942 and recaptured by Soviet troops in 1943; regarded by many as the key battle of the European war.

to grind down the German army all the way to Berlin (see Map 24.3). But in February, Stalin knew only that the **Battle of Stalingrad** had cost the Russians dearly and that German strength was still formidable. He again demanded a second front in Western Europe. Again, he would be disappointed. Churchill, meeting with Roosevelt at Casablanca (January 1943), once more overcame American desires for a cross-channel attack. Roosevelt agreed instead to invade Sicily and Italy, targets that Churchill called the “soft underbelly of the Axis.”

The invasion of Sicily—Operation Husky—took place in early July 1943, and in a month the Allies controlled the island. In response, the Italians overthrew Mussolini, and opened negotiations with Britain and the United States to change sides. Italy surrendered unconditionally on September 8, just hours before Allied troops landed at Salerno in Operation Avalanche. Immediately, German forces assumed the defense of Italy and halted the Allied advance just north of Salerno. Not until late May 1944 did Allied forces





**MAP 24.2** The North African and Italian Campaigns

Having rejected a cross-channel attack on Hitler's "Atlantic Wall," British and American forces in 1942 and 1943 invaded North Africa and Italy, where victory seemed more assured. This map shows the British and American advances across North Africa and the invasions of Sicily and Italy. German forces fought stubbornly in Italy, slowing Allied advances up the peninsula. By February 1945, Allied forces were still advancing toward the Po Valley.

finally break through the German defenses in southern Italy. On June 4, U.S. forces entered Rome. Two days later, the world's attention turned toward Normandy along the west coast of France. The second front demanded by Stalin had, at long last, begun (see Map 24.3).

The leaders of the **Grand Alliance**—Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin—had affirmed their support for the cross-channel attack at the **Tehran Conference** (1943), where they also discussed strategy and considered the process of establishing a postwar settlement. Confident that he could handle Stalin, Roosevelt obtained the Soviet dictator's agreement to support a new world organization and to declare war against Japan once the battle with Hitler was over. Militarily, the three also agreed on plans to coordinate a Soviet offensive with the Allied landings at Normandy.

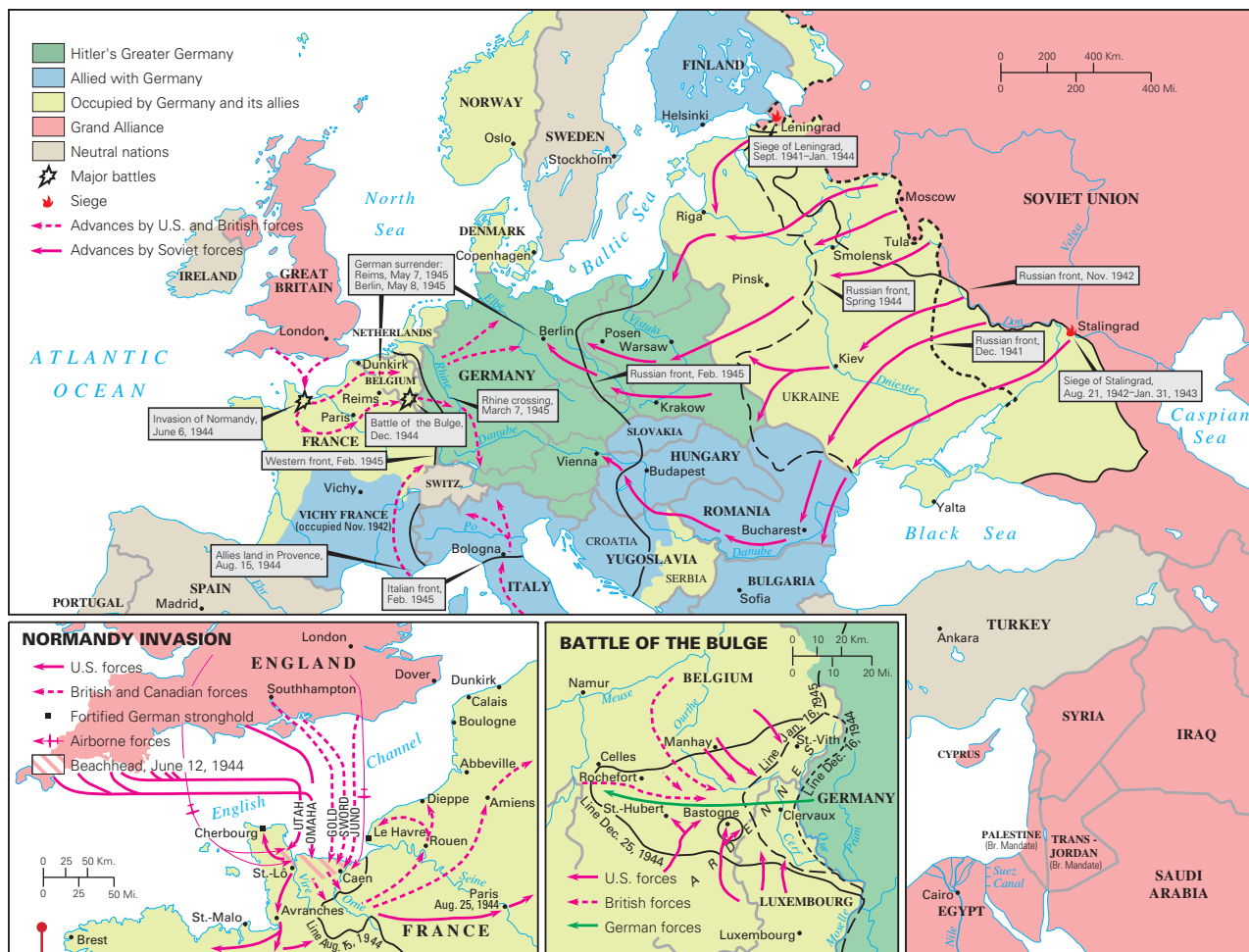
The invasion of Normandy, France—**Operation Overlord**—was the grandest **amphibious** assault ever assembled: 6,483 ships, 1,500 tanks, and 200,000 men. Opposing the Allies were thousands of German troops behind the Atlantic Wall they had constructed along the coast to stop such an invasion. On D-Day—June 6, 1944—American forces landed on Utah and Omaha Beaches, while British and Canadian forces hit Sword, Gold, and Juno Beaches (see Map 24.3, inset). At the landing sites, German resistance varied:

**Grand Alliance** A term used to refer to those allied nations working to defeat Hitler; often used to refer to the Big Three: Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union.

**Tehran Conference** Meeting in Iran in 1943 at which Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin discussed the invasion of Western Europe, plans for a new world organization, and Stalin's renewed promise to enter the war against Japan.

**Operation Overlord** The Allied invasion of Europe on June 6, 1944—D-Day—across the English Channel to Normandy; D-Day is short for "designated day."

**amphibious** In historical context, a military operation that coordinates air, land, and sea military forces to land on a hostile shore.



**MAP 24.3** The Fall of the Third Reich

In 1943 and 1944, the war turned in favor of the Allies. On the eastern front, Soviet forces drove German forces back toward Germany. On June 6, 1944, D-Day, British, Canadian, and American forces landed on the coast of Normandy to begin the liberation of France. This map shows the course of the Allied armies as they fought their way toward Berlin. On May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered.

the fiercest fighting was at Omaha Beach, where the American 1st and 29th Divisions suffered heavy casualties.

After a week of attacks and counterattacks, the five beaches finally were linked, and British and American forces coiled to break through the German positions blocking the roads to the rest of France. On July 25, American soldiers under General Omar Bradley pierced the stubbornly held German defensive lines, and on October 21, the German city of Aachen on the west side of the Rhine River fell to the Allies. From November 1944 to March 1945, American forces readied themselves to attack across the Rhine. While the British and Americans advanced across France, Allied bombers and fighter-bombers were doing what they had been doing since the spring of 1942: bombing German-held Europe night and day. They destroyed vital industries and transportation systems as well as German cities. In one of the worst raids, during the night of February 13, 1945, three flights of British and American bombers set Dresden aflame, creating a firestorm that

killed more than 135,000 civilians. Nearly 600,000 German civilians would die in Allied air raids, with another 800,000 injured.

### Stresses in the Grand Alliance

As Allied forces struggled to move eastward toward the Rhine, the Soviets advanced rapidly westward, pushing the last German troops from Russia by the end of June 1944. Behind Germany's retreating eastern armies, the Soviets occupied parts of Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Following the Red Army were Soviet officials and Eastern European Communists who had lived in exile in the Soviet Union before and during the war. The Soviet goal was to establish new Eastern European governments that would be "friendly" to the Soviet Union. A Communist government was established in Lublin, Poland, while in Romania and Bulgaria "**popular front**" governments, heavily influenced by local and returning Communist Party members, took command. Only Czechoslovakia and Hungary managed to establish non-Communist-dominated governments as the German occupation collapsed.

On February 4, 1945, the Big Three met at the Black Sea resort of **Yalta** amid growing Western apprehension about Soviet territorial and political goals in Eastern Europe. Roosevelt was confident that he could work with Stalin, and wanted the Soviets to show some willingness to modify their controls over Eastern Europe. Stalin's goals were Western acceptance of a Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, the weakening of Germany, and the economic restoration of the Soviet Union. Central to Allied differences over Eastern Europe was the nature of the Polish government. The Soviet Union supported the Lublin government, whereas Roosevelt and Churchill supported a London-based government in exile. After considerable acidic haggling, the powers agreed on a vaguely worded compromise. Roosevelt reluctantly but realistically concluded that it was the best he could do for Poland at the moment. Roosevelt was ill with high blood pressure and a heart condition throughout the Yalta meetings. Nevertheless, he negotiated well, achieving two of his major goals: maintaining Soviet support to defeat Japan and promoting a new world organization. Although disappointed over the continued Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, Roosevelt realized that little could be done to prevent the Soviet Union from keeping what it already had.

Roosevelt understood that postwar stability and security were impossible without Soviet cooperation, and he was especially hopeful that the "spirit of Yalta" would contribute to the formation of an effective **United Nations (UN)**. Building on a series of high-level discussions in April 1945, a conference in San Francisco finished the task: the United Nations was born. The charter of the United Nations established an organization composed of six distinct bodies, the most important of which are the **General Assembly** and the **Security Council**. The General Assembly, composed of all member nations, was the weaker body, having the authority only to discuss issues but not to resolve them. More important was the smaller Security Council. Although the Security Council was composed of eleven nations, the real power was held by five permanent members: the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, China, and France. The Security Council established and implemented policies and could apply economic and military pressures against other nations. The United Nations represented the concept of peace through world cooperation, but its structure clearly left the future of peace in the hands of the major powers.

### Defeating Hitler

With his forces crumbling in the east, Hitler approved a last-ditch attempt to halt the Allied advance late in 1944. Taking advantage of bad weather that grounded Allied aircraft, on December 16 German forces launched an attack through the

**popular front** An organization or government composed of a wide spectrum of political groups; popular fronts were used by the Soviet Union in forming allegedly non-Communist governments in Eastern Europe.

**Yalta** Site in the Crimea of the last meeting, in 1945, of Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin; they discussed the final defeat of the Axis powers and the problems of postwar occupation.

**United Nations** International organization established in 1945 to maintain peace among nations and foster cooperation in human rights, education, health, welfare, and trade.

**General Assembly** Assembly of all members of the United Nations; it debates issues but neither creates nor executes policy.

**Security Council** The executive agency of the United Nations; it included five permanent members with veto power (China, France, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and the United States) and ten members elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms.

As Allied armies fought their way closer to Berlin, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin met at the Black Sea resort of Yalta in February 1945 to discuss military strategy and postwar concerns. Among the most important issues were the Polish government, German reparations, and the formation of the United Nations. Two months later, Roosevelt died and Harry S. Truman assumed the presidency. National Archives.



**Battle of the Bulge** The last major Axis counteroffensive, in December 1944, against the Allied forces in Western Europe; German troops gained territory in Belgium but were eventually driven back.

**General Dwight D. Eisenhower** Supreme Commander of Allied forces in Europe during World War II, who planned D-Day invasion; later became president of the United States.

**Holocaust** Mass murder of European Jews and other groups systematically carried out by the Nazis during World War II.

**Final Solution** German plan to exterminate Jews through mass executions in concentration camps or by special mobile forces; by the end of the war, the Nazis had killed 6 million Jews.

**War Refugee Board** Created to take action to rescue as many persecuted minorities of Europe as possible from Nazi oppression.

Ardennes Forest that drove a 50-mile “bulge” into the Allied lines in Belgium. If successful, the attack would have split American forces. It was a desperate gamble that failed. After ten days, the weather improved and the German offensive slowed and halted (see Map 24.3, inset). This last major Axis counteroffensive on the western front—known as the **Battle of the Bulge**—delayed **General Dwight D. Eisenhower’s** eastward assault briefly, but by costing Germany valuable reserves and equipment, it hastened the end of the war.

On March 7, 1945, American forces crossed the Rhine and began to battle their way into the heart of Germany. While American and British troops moved steadily eastward, Russian soldiers began the bloody, house-to-house conquest of Berlin. On April 25, American and Soviet infantrymen shook hands at the Elbe River 60 miles south of Berlin. Inside the city, unwilling to be captured, Hitler committed suicide on April 30, having ordered aides to burn his body. On May 8, 1945, German officials surrendered. The war in Europe was over.

Roosevelt, however, did not live to see Hitler’s defeat. On April 12, 1945, while relaxing and recovering from the strains of Yalta, he died of a massive cerebral hemorrhage at Warm Springs, Georgia. Nor did Roosevelt live to know the full horror of what came to be called the **Holocaust**. No atrocity of war could equal what advancing Allied armies found as they fought their way toward Berlin. In 1941 the Nazi political leadership had decided on what they called the **Final Solution** to rid German-occupied Europe of Jews. In concentration camps, Jews, along with homosexuals, gypsies, and the mentally ill, were brutalized, starved, worked as slave labor, and systematically exterminated. At Auschwitz, Nazis used gas chambers—disguised as showers—to execute twelve thousand victims a day. From 1936 to the end of the war, the Roosevelt administration and the press chose to not emphasize the plight of Jews in Germany and Europe. Only in January 1944, did Roosevelt establish a **War Refugee Board**. American troops were among those to liberate the camps, inviting reporters and photographers to record the reality of



the horror found there. Although thousands were saved, over 6 million Jews, nearly two-thirds of prewar Europe's Jewish population, were slaughtered in the death camps.

### Closing the Circle on Japan

Victory in Europe—**V-E Day**—touched off parades and rejoicing in the United States. But Japan still had to be defeated. Japan's defensive strategy was simple: force the United States to invade a seemingly endless number of Pacific islands before it could launch an invasion against Japan—with each speck of land costing the Americans dearly in lives and materials. The American military, however, realized that it had to seize only the most strategic islands. With carriers providing mobile air superiority, the Americans could bypass and isolate others.

The island campaign had secured airfields on Tinian, Saipan, and Guam that provided bases for bombing targets in Japan. In February 1944, long-range bombers, the B-29s, began devastating raids against Japanese cities, with the intention of weakening the Japanese will to resist. Although the estimated number of Japanese civilians killed in the bombing exceeded by far the number of Japanese soldiers killed in combat, the bombing failed to significantly reduce Japanese citizens' support for the war or the government. In October, American forces landed on Leyte in the center of the Philippine archipelago. The Japanese navy acted to halt the invasion, and in the largest naval battle in history, the **Battle of Leyte Gulf** (October 23–25, 1944), American naval forces shattered what remained of Japanese air and sea power.

After the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the full brunt of the American Pacific offensive bore down on Iwo Jima and **Okinawa**, only 750 miles from Tokyo. To defend the islands, Japan also made large-scale use of *kamikaze*—pilots who made suicide crashes on targets in explosive-laden airplanes. The American assault on Iwo Jima began on February 19 and became the worst experience faced by U.S. Marines in the war. Before the assault ended on March 17, virtually all of the 21,000 Japanese defenders had fought to the death, and American losses approached one-third of the landing force: 6,821 dead and 20,000 wounded. On Okinawa, from April through June, the carnage was even worse.

### Entering the Nuclear Age

The experience of Iwo Jima suggested to most American planners that any invasion of Japan would result in large numbers of American casualties. But by the summer of 1945, the United States had a possible alternative to invasion: a new and untried weapon—the atomic bomb. The A-bomb was the product of years of British-American research and development—the Manhattan Project. From the beginning of the conflict, science had played a vital role in the war effort by developing and improving the tools of combat. Among the outcomes were radar, sonar, flamethrowers, rockets, and a variety of other useful and frequently deadly products. But the most fearsome and secret of the projects was the drive started in 1941 to construct a nuclear weapon. Between then and 1945, the Manhattan Project scientists, led by physicists J. Robert Oppenheimer and Edward Teller, controlled a chain reaction involving uranium and plutonium to create the atomic bomb. By the time Germany surrendered, the project had consumed more than \$2 billion, but the bomb had been born. When it was tested at Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16, 1945, the results were spectacular. Word of the successful test was quickly relayed to Truman, who had assumed the presidency when Roosevelt died in April and who at the time was meeting with Churchill and Stalin at Potsdam, outside Berlin.

**V-E Day** May 8, 1945, the day marking the official end of the war in Europe, following Germany's unconditional surrender.

**Battle of Leyte Gulf** Naval battle in October 1944 in which American forces near the Philippines crushed Japanese air and sea power.

**Okinawa** Pacific island that U.S. troops captured in the spring of 1945 after a grueling battle in which over a quarter-million soldiers and civilians were killed.

**Potsdam Declaration** The demand for Japan's unconditional surrender, made near the end of the Potsdam Conference.

**Hiroshima** Japanese city that was the target, on August 6, 1945, of the first atomic bomb, called "Little Boy."

**Nagasaki** City in western Japan devastated on August 9, 1945, by the second atomic bomb, called "Fat Man."

Truman had traveled to Potsdam with a new secretary of state, James F. Byrnes. Before leaving for Germany, they agreed not to tell Stalin any details about the atomic bomb and to use the bomb as quickly as possible against Japan. Truman and Byrnes hoped that using the atomic bomb would serve two purposes: it would force Japan to surrender without an invasion, and it would impress the Soviets and, just maybe, make them more amenable to American views on the postwar world order. With Prime Minister Clement Attlee of Britain, Truman released the **Potsdam Declaration**, which called on Japan to surrender by August or face total destruction. On July 25, Truman ordered the use of the atomic bomb as soon after August 3 as possible, provided the Japanese did not surrender.

On the island of Tinian, B-29s were readied to carry the two available bombs to targets in Japan; a third was waiting to be assembled. A B-29 bomber named the *Enola Gay* dropped the first bomb over **Hiroshima** at 9:15 A.M. on August 6, 1945. Hiroshima, Japan's eighth-largest city, had a population of over 250,000 and had not to that point suffered heavy bombing. In the atomic blast and fireball, almost 100,000 Japanese were killed or terribly maimed. Another 100,000 would eventually die from the effects of radiation. The United States announced that unless the Japanese surrendered immediately, they could "expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth."

In Tokyo, peace advocates in the Japanese government sought to use the Soviets as an intermediary. They wanted some guarantee that Emperor Hirohito would be allowed to remain as emperor and a symbol of Japan. The Soviet response was to declare war and advance into Japanese-held Manchuria on August 8, exactly three months after V-E Day. On August 9, as a high-level Japanese council considered surrender, a second atomic bomb destroyed **Nagasaki**. Nearly sixty thousand people were killed. Although some within the Japanese army argued for continuing the fight, Emperor Hirohito, watching the Red Army slice through Japanese forces and afraid of losing more cities to atomic attacks, made the final decision. On August 14, 1945, Japan officially surrendered, and the United States agreed to leave the position of emperor intact.

World War II was over, but much of the world now lay in ruins. Some 50 million people, military and civilian, had been killed. The United States was spared most of the destruction. It had suffered almost no civilian casualties, and its cities and industrial centers stood unharmed. In many ways, in fact, the war had been good to the United States. It had decisively ended the Depression, and although some economists predicted an immediate postwar recession, the overall economic picture was bright. Government regulations and planning for the economy that had their beginnings in the New Deal took root and flourished during the war. As the war ended, only a few wanted a return to the laissez-faire-style government that had characterized the 1920s. Big government was here to stay, and at the center of big government was a powerful presidency ready to direct and guide the nation.

## Summary

In the lengthening shadow of world conflict, the majority of Americans maintained isolationism, and Congress passed neutrality laws designed to keep the nation from involvement in the faraway conflicts. Roosevelt wanted to take a more active role in world affairs but found himself

hobbled by isolationist sentiment and by the need to fight the Depression. Even as Germany invaded Poland in September 1939, the majority of Americans were still anxious to remain outside the conflict. Roosevelt, however, reshaped American neutrality to aid those nations

fighting Germany, linking the United States' economic might first to England and then to the Soviet Union.

Roosevelt also used economic and diplomatic pressures on Japan in response to its conquest of China and occupation of French Indochina. But the pressure only heightened the crisis, convincing many in the Japanese government that the best choice was to attack the United States before it grew in strength. Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, brought a fully committed American public and government into World War II.

Mobilizing the nation for war ended the Depression and increased government intervention in the economy. Another outcome of the war was a range of new choices for women and minorities in the military and the workplace. Japanese Americans, however, suffered a loss of freedom and property as the government placed them in internment camps.

Fighting a two-front war, American planners gave first priority to defeating Hitler. The British and American offensive to recover Europe began in North Africa in 1942, expanded to Italy in 1943, and to France in 1944. By the beginning of 1945, Allied armies were threatening Nazi Germany from the west and the east, and on May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered. In the Pacific theater, the victory at Midway in mid-1942 checked Japan's offensive and allowed the use of aircraft carriers to begin tightening the noose around the enemy. To bring the war to a close without a U.S. invasion, Truman elected to use the atomic bomb. Following the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrendered on August 14, 1945, ending the war and for many Americans ushering in the beginning of "America's century."

## Key Terms

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*Butoku-kai*, *p.* 579

kendo, *p.* 579

Nisei, *p.* 579

non-recognition, *p.* 582

Colonel Fulgencio Bastista, *p.* 582

Good Neighbor policy, *p.* 583

Neutrality Act of 1935, *p.* 583

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## CHAPTER 25

# Truman and Cold War America 1945–1952

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### **The Cold War Begins**

Truman and the Soviets

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** George Kennan's "Long Telegram," 1946  
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**IT MATTERS TODAY:** Appeasement  
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#### **The Korean War**

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#### **Postwar Politics**

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#### **Cold War Politics**

The Red Scare

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Rising Expectations  
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#### **Summary**

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: George Frost Kennan

Soviet-American relations were deteriorating. In February 1946, George F. Kennan was asked to examine Soviet foreign policy. His reply, the "Long Telegram," had a staggering impact on the Truman administration and helped to define the course of U.S. policy for the next forty years.

Kennan's stint at the American embassy in Moscow from 1934 to 1937 confirmed his view that Communism was another "painful" step in Russian history. He left pessimistic about Soviet-American relations because their fundamental differences were too great.

He returned to Moscow in 1944. He appreciated the Soviets' role in defeating Germany and understood the necessity for working with them but feared Soviet expansionism. He argued that American policy was too weak, and his opinions had little effect. Then Washington's request arrived.

Kennan's reply catapulted him from being a minor voice in American foreign policy to a major player. He described Soviet policy as driven by traditional Russian goals and the need Soviet leaders had to maintain control over the people and the state. He argued that there could be no permanent truce with the Soviets and that the United States should use its power to contain Soviet expansionism. Already angry with and suspicious of the Soviet Union, American policymakers found in the report a clear, understandable, and logical explanation of Soviet behavior. The Soviets were responsible for the hostility between the two nations, and Washington should limit the growth of Soviet power and influence. Kennan repeated his views to a wider audience in the journal *Foreign Affairs*. Again, he argued that the Soviets were expansionistic and that the United States needed to use vigilant "counter-force" to contain Moscow's advances. Regarded as the "Father of Containment," he speculated that containment, if applied correctly, would erode Soviet power. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, many credited the policies advocated by George Kennan as the root cause, and he again enjoyed great popularity for his foreign-policy wisdom and insight.

#### GEORGE F. KENNAN

Following his graduation from Princeton University, Kennan was trained by the State Department to be an expert on the Soviet Union. As such, he provided the Truman administration with evaluations of Soviet foreign policy that became the foundation of American foreign policy throughout the Cold War. He left the State Department in 1952 and became a respected historian, writer, and lecturer on foreign-policy issues.

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution/Art Resource, NY.





# Chronology

<b>1945</b>	Yalta Conference President Roosevelt dies Harry S. Truman becomes president Soviets capture Berlin United Nations formed Germany surrenders Potsdam Conference Japan surrenders	<b>1948</b>	Communist coup in Czechoslovakia Western zones of Germany unified State of Israel founded Congress approves Marshall Plan <i>Shelley v. Kraemer</i> Berlin blockade begins Truman defeats Dewey
<b>1946</b>	Kennan's "Long Telegram" Churchill's "iron curtain" speech Iran crisis Strikes by coal miners and railroad workers Construction begins on first Levittown Vietnamese war for independence begins	<b>1949</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization created Allied airlift causes Stalin to lift Berlin blockade West Germany created Soviet Union explodes atomic bomb Communist forces win civil war in China Alger Hiss convicted of perjury
<b>1947</b>	Truman Doctrine Truman's Federal Employee Loyalty Program India and Pakistan gain independence from England Taft-Hartley Act House Un-American Activities Committee begins investigation of Hollywood Jackie Robinson joins Brooklyn Dodgers Marshall Plan announced <i>To Secure These Rights</i> issued Rio Pact organized	<b>1950</b>	U.S. hydrogen bomb project announced McCarthy's announcement of Communists in the State Department NSC-68 Korean War begins North Korean forces retreat from South Korea; UN forces cross into North Korea China enters Korean War McCarran Internal Security Act
		<b>1951</b>	General MacArthur relieved of command Korean War peace talks begin Rosenbergs convicted of espionage <i>Dennis et al. v. United States</i>
		<b>1953</b>	Korean War armistice signed

When World War II ended, Americans expected a peaceful world where they could find a good job, own a home, and enjoy the benefits of a consumer society. Their hopes were only partially fulfilled. Many found jobs, moved to the suburbs, and lived the "American Dream." World peace, however, failed to materialize as the United States descended into a Cold War that affected every aspect of American life. Reflecting Kennan's recommendations, the United States implemented a policy to contain Soviet influence, first in Western Europe and then in Asia. The American isolationism that had existed after the First World War was now replaced by internationalism. When North Korea invaded South Korea, the Cold War suddenly turned "hot" as Truman committed American troops to halt Communist aggression.

The Cold War also had an important effect on politics and society. The growing fear of communism provided many with ammunition to attack ideas, institutions, and people they believed were too liberal. Conservatives and businessmen asserted that unions had become too powerful—they needed to be restrained and purged of their communist members. Southern whites charged that civil rights advocates were tainted with socialistic values. Across the nation, change and diversity were increasingly suspect. Spearheading America's defense against the dangers of communism were the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy. Both claimed that American institutions were rife with disloyal Americans whose values threatened the existence and soul of the nation.

The expanding Cold War also made it more difficult for Truman to introduce expensive New Deal-style programs. Calls for civil rights, a national health system, and expansions of existing programs proved too expensive and too liberal for many. Consequently, Truman had to accept the “politics of the possible,” a moderate agenda that pleased neither ardent liberals nor staunch conservatives.

Despite concerns about communism, the majority of Americans looked forward to transitioning to a postwar society. The GI Bill would provide veterans with opportunities to own a home, find a job, and improve their education. Many believed that women would cheerfully give up their wartime jobs and return full-time to more traditional roles of wife and mother.

These prospects, however, seemed out of reach to most African Americans and other minorities. They too were expected to leave their wartime gains behind and return to their customary place at the foot of American society. Yet many remained optimistic about the future—change was taking place. The skills, experiences, and self-confidence they gained in the war could not be taken away. Jackie Robinson was breaking the color line in professional baseball, and in the Southwest federal courts were rejecting the separation of Mexican Americans and Anglos in public schools.

## The Cold War Begins

- ★ **What were Americans' expectations for the postwar world and U.S.-Soviet relations? How did Soviet actions counter those expectations?**
- ★ **How was the containment theory applied to Western Europe between 1947 and 1951?**
- ★ **Outside Western Europe, how did the Truman administration promote and protect American interests?**

Germany, Italy, and Japan had been defeated, and the world hoped that an enduring peace would follow. But could the cooperative relationship of the victorious Allies continue into the postwar era without a common enemy to unite them? Suspicion and distrust had already surfaced when Britain and the United States objected to the establishment of pro-Soviet governments in Eastern Europe. President Roosevelt believed he could work with the Soviets and had deemed their cooperation more important than the composition of Eastern European governments. But Roosevelt's death in April 1945 left Harry S. Truman the imposing tasks of finishing the war and creating the peace. Winning the war was mostly a matter of following existing policies, but establishing a new international system required new ideas and original policies. Unlike Roosevelt, Truman took a harsher position toward the Soviets. Truman loved history and especially the notion that great individuals shaped it. A plaque on his desk proclaimed, “The buck stops here.” Truman had read history; now he hoped to shape it.

### Truman and the Soviets

Truman and other American leaders identified two overlapping paths to peace: international cooperation and **deterrence** based on military strength. They concluded that the United States must maintain its atomic monopoly and continue to field a strong military force with bases in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. But deterrence alone could not guarantee peace and a stable world. Policymakers needed to address the underlying causes of war. They drew on lessons learned from World War II, especially the failed policies of appeasement and isolationism: aggressors would have to be halted, democratic governments supported, and a prosperous world economy created. These were the ideals of the Atlantic Charter, and most Americans saw them as fundamental values on which to construct peace. To achieve these ends required that the United States assume a leadership role and work with individual nations or through regional organizations or the United Nations.

Not all nations accepted the American vision for peace and stability. The Soviets, given their different political and economic systems and historical experiences—two invasions from Western Europe in thirty years—had markedly different postwar objectives: they wanted to be treated as a major power, to have Germany reduced in power, and to see “friendly” governments in neighboring states, especially in Eastern Europe. While accepting the United Nations, the Soviets preferred to work bilaterally and to continue the relationship of the Big Three (Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States) that was established during the war. The Soviets believed that the Truman administration was not as friendly as Roosevelt’s and that the “spirit of Yalta” was decaying. In September 1946, the Soviet ambassador in Washington, Nikolai Novikov, in a memorandum similar to Kennan’s “Long Telegram,” pictured the United States as globally aggressive, seeking to establish military bases around the world and keeping a monopoly over atomic technology. He regarded the United States as using its economic power to further its capitalistic goals while forcing other countries to adopt American interests, and he praised the Soviet Union for resisting the power and demands of the United States.

When Truman became president, he had little knowledge of diplomatic affairs or of Roosevelt’s policies toward the Soviet Union. He turned to experienced advisers, most of whom were critical of Soviet behavior. They noted that Moscow was ignoring the principles of the Atlantic Charter and following an “ominous course” in Eastern Europe that violated the Yalta agreements by creating undemocratic **puppet governments** and closing the region to free trade. By the end of 1945, Truman concluded that he was “tired of babying the Soviets,” and expected them to accept American proposals more than halfway. Soviet attitudes appeared to be taking a more anti-Western stance as well. As 1946 began, Soviet officials and the press warned of “capitalist encirclement” and accused the United States of poisoning Soviet-American relations. Alarmed, the State Department asked its Russian expert, George Kennan, to evaluate Soviet policy.

Kennan’s “Long Telegram” described Soviet totalitarianism as internally weak. Soviet leaders, he said, held communist ideology secondary to remaining in power, needing Western capitalism to serve as an enemy. But, he argued, Soviet leaders were not fanatics and would retreat when met with opposition. He recommended a policy of **containment**, meeting head-on any attempted expansion of Soviet power. His report immediately drew high praise from Washington’s official circles. Soon thereafter, Truman adopted a policy designed to “set will against will, force against force, idea against idea” until Soviet expansion was finally “worn down.”

**deterrence** Measures that a state takes to discourage attacks by other states, often including a military buildup.

**puppet governments** Governments imposed, supported, and directed by an outside force, usually a foreign power.

**containment** The U.S. policy of checking the expansion or influence of communist nations by making strategic alliances, aiding friendly nations, and supporting weaker states in areas of conflict.

# Investigating America

## George Kennan's "Long Telegram," 1946

Kennan's "Long Telegram" is one of the most important documents in American foreign policy. It provided the Truman administration with an intellectual understanding of what drove the Soviet Union as the two superpowers inched toward a Cold War that would last nearly fifty years. Sent to the State Department on February 22, 1946, the document—excerpted here—was widely read within the administration and was instrumental in shaping U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union. (The cost of a telegram was tied to the number of words, so Kennan left out some words not essential to understanding.)

.....  
At the bottom of the Kremlin's neurotic view of world affairs is traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity. . . . Russian rulers have invariably sensed that their rule was . . . fragile and . . . unable to stand comparison or contact with political systems of Western countries. For this reason they have always feared foreign penetrations, feared direct contact between Western world and their own.

. . . Marxist dogma . . . became the perfect vehicle for the sense of insecurity with which Bolsheviks, even more than previous Russian rulers, were afflicted. In this . . . they found justification for the dictatorship without which they did not know how to rule, for cruelties they did not dare to inflict, for sacrifices they felt bound to demand. . . . Today they cannot dispense with it [Marxism] . . . . Without it they would stand before history . . . as only the last of that long succession of cruel and wasteful Russian rulers. . . .

Soviet policy . . . is conducted on two planes: (1) official . . . and (2) subterranean. . . .

On official plane we must look for following:

- (a) Internal policy devoted to increasing in every way strength and prestige of Soviet state. . . .
- (b) Wherever it is considered timely and promising, efforts will be made to advance official limits of Soviet Power. . . .
- (c) Russians will participate officially in international organizations where they see opportunity of extending Soviet power or of inhibiting or diluting power of others. . . .  
on Unofficial, or Subterranean Plane . . .
- (d) In foreign countries Communists will . . . work toward destruction of all forms of personal independence, economic, political, or moral. . . .

(e) Everything possible will be done to set major Western Powers against each other. . . .

(f) In general, all Soviet efforts on unofficial international plane will be negative and destructive, . . . designed to tear down sources of strength beyond reach of Soviet control. . . .

[W]e have here a political force committed fanatically to the belief that . . . it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken, if Soviet power is to be secure. . . .

[Kennan offers "observations" on how to deal with the Soviets without "general military conflict"].

(1) Soviet power . . . does not work by fixed plans. It does not take unnecessary risks. Impervious to logic of reason, and it is highly sensitive to logic of force. For this reason it can easily withdraw—and usually does when strong resistance is encountered. . . .

(2) Gauged against Western World . . . Soviets are still by far the weaker force. Thus their success will really depend on degree of cohesion, firmness and vigor which Western World can muster. . . .

(3) Much depends on health and vigor of our own society. World communism is like malignant parasite which feeds only on diseased tissue. . . .

(4) We must formulate and put forward for other nations a much more positive and constructive picture of world we would like to see than we have put forward in the past. . . . Many foreign peoples . . . are seeking guidance. . . . We should be better able than Russians to give them this. . . . And unless we do, the Russians certainly will. . . ."

.....

- How did Kennan see both history and Marxism at work in shaping Soviet foreign policy? Which do you think seems more important today?
- What tactics did the Soviets have at their disposal to implement their foreign-policy goals? What events during the Truman administration might be said to have countered Soviet tactics? Given the Soviet goals identified and explained here, what actions did Kennan suggest the United States take? Why?



### Truman and the Soviets

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as toward Iraq and Turkey. Some believed that war was imminent. Britain and the United States sent harshly worded telegrams to Moscow and petitioned the United Nations to consider an Iranian complaint against the Soviet Union. Soviet forces soon evacuated Iran, and the crisis ended, but it convinced many Americans that war with the Soviets was possible and that the United States had to assume a leadership role in world affairs. “Red Fascism” had replaced Nazi fascism, and for the sake of civilization there could be no more appeasement.

### The Division of Europe

As the crisis in Iran receded, events in Europe assumed priority. The deepening economic crisis across Europe appeared to favor leftist parties and their assertion that state controls and state planning led to quicker economic recovery. Politics had become economics, and the United States extended loans to nations on the basis of ideology. Western European nations received American loans, whereas those nations on the other side of the “iron curtain” were denied. The United States even used its influence to reduce United Nations-based aid to Eastern Europe. By the beginning of 1947, Greece and Turkey emerged as an international trouble spot. Turkey was being pressured by the neighboring Soviets to permit them some control over the Dardanelles, the straits linking the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. In Greece, a civil war between Communist-backed rebels and the British-supported conservative government raged, and in February 1947, Britain informed Washington that it was no longer able to provide economic and military aid to the two eastern Mediterranean nations. Britain asked for the United States to assume its role in the region to prevent the expansion of communism. The Truman administration was eager to assume the responsibility of “world leadership with all of its burdens and all of its glory.”

To convince Congress and gain public support for \$400 million to support Greece and Turkey, Truman overstated the “crisis” and presented an image of the world under attack from the forces of evil. In March 1947, he set forth the **Truman Doctrine**, offering an ideological, black-and-white view of world politics. He said it was the duty of the United States “to support free people” who resisted subjugation “by armed minorities or by outside pressure.” Congress accepted the president’s request and provided aid for Greece and Turkey. Bolstered by American support, Turkey resisted Soviet pressure and retained control over the straits, and the Greek government was able to defeat the Communist rebels in 1949.

Although the Truman administration asked Congress only to support Greece and Turkey, officials admitted among themselves that the request was just the beginning. “It happens that we are having a little trouble with Greece and Turkey at the present time,” stated a War Department official, “but they are just one of the keys on the keyboard of this world piano.”

On June 5, 1947, in a commencement address at Harvard, Secretary of State George Marshall uncovered more of the keyboard. He offered Europe a program of economic aid—the **Marshall Plan**—to restore stability and prosperity. For the Truman administration, the difficult question was not whether to provide Western Europe with aid, but whether to include the Soviets and Eastern Europeans. To allow the Soviets and their satellites to participate seemed contrary to the intent of the Truman Doctrine. Would a Congress that had just spent \$400 million to keep Greece and Turkey out of Soviet hands be willing to provide millions of American dollars to the Soviet Union? But if the Soviets were excluded, the United States might seem to be encouraging the division of Europe, an image the State Department wanted to avoid. The State Department planning staff,

**Truman Doctrine** Anti-Communist foreign policy that Truman set forth in 1947; it called for military and economic aid to countries whose political stability was threatened by communism.

**Marshall Plan** Program launched in 1948 to foster economic recovery in Western Europe in the postwar period through massive amounts of U.S. financial aid.



# It Matters Today

## APPEASEMENT

Some say that history provides lessons for the present. This may be true, but too often a past experience is used as an analogy, simplifying a complex issue into something like a “sound bite.” The complicated problems of security, war, and peace are frequently oversimplified. The image of Munich and appeasement, a “lesson” learned from World War II, is one such example. “No more Munichs!” is an adage that has been used by nearly every administration since 1945 to justify choices to use force or coercion rather than diplomacy. This analogy suggests that negotiations with a stubborn opponent are nonproductive and should

not be tried and that more forceful policies need to be implemented.

- Diplomacy involves give and take to reach mutually suitable conclusions. Under what circumstances might diplomacy be considered appeasement, and thus requiring other choices? When might diplomacy be an effective policy?
- Examine decisions and statements made by recent policymakers regarding Iran and Iraq, North Korea, and terrorists to determine if the imagery of appeasement, Munich, and Hitler, have been applied.

chaired by Kennan, recommended that the United States take “a hell of a big gamble” and offer economic aid to all Europeans. Kennan was certain that the Soviets would reject the offer because it involved economic and political cooperation with capitalists. Thus, when Marshall spoke at Harvard, he invited all Europeans to work together and write a program “designed to place Europe on its feet economically.”

The gamble worked. At a June 26, 1947, meeting in Paris of potential Marshall Plan participants, Soviet foreign minister Molotov rejected a British and French proposal for an economically integrated Europe, joint economic planning, and a requirement to purchase mostly American goods. At first the Marshall Plan looked like a “tasty mushroom,” commented one Soviet official, but on closer examination it turned out to be a “poisonous toadstool.” Unwilling to participate in any form of economic integration, the Soviets and the Eastern Europeans left the conference. Over the next ten months the Soviet Union took steps to solidify control over its satellite states. In July 1947, Moscow announced the Molotov Plan, which further incorporated Eastern European economies into the Soviet system. Throughout the region non-Communist elements were expelled from governments, an effort that culminated in February 1948 in a Soviet-engineered **coup** that toppled the Czechoslovakian government. The Czech coup helped convince Congress to approve \$12.5 billion in Marshall Plan aid to Western Europe.

The “sovietization” of Eastern Europe prompted the United States, Britain, and France to economically and politically unify their German occupation zones. In March 1948, the United States announced that the western zones were eligible for Marshall Plan aid. They would hold elections to select delegates to a constitutional convention and would utilize a standard currency. A West German state was being formed. Faced with the prospect of a pro-Western, industrialized, and potentially remilitarized Germany, Stalin reacted. On June 24, the Russians blockaded all land traffic to and from Berlin, which had been divided into British-, French-, Soviet-, and U.S.-controlled zones after the war. With a population of more than 2 million, West Berlin lay isolated 120 miles inside the Soviet zone of Germany. The Soviet goal was to force the West either to abandon the creation of West Germany or to face the loss of Berlin. Americans viewed the blockade simply as further proof of Soviet hostility and were determined not to back

**coup** Sudden overthrow of a government by a group of people, usually with military support.

down. Churchill affirmed the West's stand. We want peace, he stated, "but we should by now have learned that there is no safety in yielding to dictators, whether Nazi or Communist."

American strategists confronted the dilemma of how to stay in Berlin without starting a shooting war. Truman chose an option that would not violate Soviet-occupied territory or any international agreements. Marshaling a massive effort of men, provisions, and aircraft, British and Americans flew supply planes to three Berlin airports on an average of one flight every three minutes, month after month. The **Berlin airlift** was a victory for the United States in the Cold War. The increasing flow of supplies into West Berlin's three airports testified not only to America's economic and military power but also to America's resolve to stand firm against the Soviets and protect Western Europe. In May 1949, Stalin, finding no gains from the blockade, without explanation ended it and allowed land traffic to cross the Soviet zone to Berlin. Berlin was saved, but the crisis bore other fruit too. It silenced those who had protested a permanent American military commitment to Western Europe. In June 1949, Congress approved American entry into the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization** (NATO). Membership in the alliance ensured that American forces would remain in the newly created West Germany and that Western Europe would be eligible for additional American economic and military aid. The Mutual Defense Assistance Act passed in 1949 provided \$1.5 billion in arms and equipment for NATO member nations. By 1952, 80 percent of American assistance to Europe was military aid.

**Berlin airlift** Response to the Soviet blockade of West Berlin in 1948 involving tens of thousands of continuous flights by American and British planes to deliver supplies.

**North Atlantic Treaty Organization** Mutual defense alliance formed in 1949 among most of the nations of Western Europe and North America in an effort to contain communism.

When the Soviets blockaded the western zones of Berlin, in one of the first confrontations of the Cold War, the United States replied by staging one of the most successful logistical feats of the twentieth century, Operation Vittles, in which vital supplies were flown into the city. The airlift lasted 321 days, and American planes flew more than 272,000 missions and delivered 2.1 million tons of supplies. Walter Sanders/Timpix.





## A Global Presence

To facilitate fighting a global Cold War, Congress passed the National Security Act in 1947. It created the Air Force as a separate service and unified command of the military with a new cabinet position, the Department of Defense. To improve coordination between the State Department and the Department of Defense, the National Security Council was formed to provide policy recommendations to the president. The act also established the Central Intelligence Agency to collect and analyze foreign intelligence information and to carry out covert actions believed necessary for American national security. By mid-1948, covert operations were increasing in scope and number, including successful efforts to influence Italian elections.

Although the Truman administration's primary foreign-policy concern was Europe, it could not ignore the rest of the world. In Latin America, the Truman administration rejected the requests of many Latin American nations for a Marshall Plan-style program and encouraged private firms to develop the region through business and trade. To ensure that the Western Hemisphere remained under the American eagle's wing, in 1947, the United States organized the **Rio Pact**. It established the concept of collective security for Latin America and created a regional organization—the **Organization of American States** (OAS)—to coordinate common defense, economic, and social concerns.

In the Middle East, fear of future oil shortages led the United States to promote the expansion of American petroleum interests. In Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iran, the U.S. goal was to replace Britain as the major economic and political influence. At the same time, the United States became a powerful supporter of a new Jewish state. Truman's support for such a nation, to be created in **Palestine**, arose from several considerations—moral, political, and international. The area of Palestine had been administered by the British since the end of World War I and the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, tensions and conflicts increased between the indigenous Arab population, the Palestinians, and an increasing number of Jews, largely immigrants from Europe. As World War II drew to a close, Britain faced growing pressure to create a new Jewish state in Palestine. Truman, for one, asked in August 1945 that at least 100,000 displaced European Jews be allowed to migrate to Palestine. Considering the Nazi terror against Jews, he believed that the Jews should have their own nation—a view strongly supported by a well-organized, pro-Jewish lobbying effort across the United States.

In May 1947, Britain turned the problem over to the United Nations, and the stage was set for the United Nations to divide the region into two nations: one Arab and one Jewish. When the United Nations voted to **partition** Palestine into Arab and Jewish states on May 14, 1948, Truman recognized the nation of Israel within fifteen minutes. War quickly broke out between Israel and the surrounding Arab nations—who refused to recognize the partition. Although outnumbered, the better-equipped Israeli army drove back the invading armies, and in January 1949 a cease-fire was arranged by UN mediator **Ralph Bunche**. When the fighting stopped, Israel had added 50 percent more territory to its emerging nation. More than 700,000 Arabs left Israeli-controlled territory during and after the war, many existing as refugees living in the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt. The majority of Palestinians, bitter at the loss of what they regarded as their homeland, were determined to destroy the Jewish state.

If Americans were pleased with events in Latin America and the Middle East, Asia provided several disappointments. Under American occupation, Japan's government had been reshaped into a democratic system and was placed safely within the American orbit, but success in Japan was offset by diplomatic setbacks in China and Korea. During

**Rio Pact** Alliance that joined Latin American nations, Canada, and the United States in an agreement to prevent Communist inroads and to improve political, social, and economic conditions in Latin America.

### Organization of American States

An international organization created by the Rio Pact; composed of most of the nations of the Americas and deals with the mutual concerns of its members.

**Palestine** British mandate on the Mediterranean after World War I; the UN partitioned the area in 1948 to allow for a Jewish state (Israel) and a Palestinian state, which was never established.

**partition** To divide a country into separate, autonomous nations.

**Ralph Bunche** An African American scholar, teacher, and diplomat. Between 1948 and 1949, as a UN mediator he negotiated a settlement ending the Arab-Israeli War. In 1950, he received the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts.

**Nationalist Chinese government**

The government of Jiang Jieshi, who fought the Communists for control of China in the 1940s; defeated, Jiang and his supporters retreated to Taiwan in 1949, where they set up a separate government.

**NSC Memorandum #68** Report that concluded the Soviets were seeking world domination and recommended large-scale increases in military spending, increased covert operations, reduced domestic programs, and increased taxes.

**National Security Council** Executive agency established in 1947 to coordinate the strategic policies and defense of the United States; it includes the president, vice president, and four cabinet members.

**hydrogen bomb** Nuclear weapon of much greater destructive power than the atomic bomb.

World War II, the **Nationalist Chinese government** of Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) and the Chinese Communists under Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung) had collaborated to fight the Japanese. But when the war ended, old animosities quickly resurfaced, and the truce between the two forces collapsed. By February 1946, civil war had flared in China, and American supporters of Jiang were recommending that the United States increase its economic and military support for the Nationalist government. Truman and Marshall (who was now secretary of state), aware of limited American resources, were of a different opinion. Although they dreaded Communist success in China, they questioned that the corrupt and inefficient Nationalist government under Jiang could ever effectively rule the vast country. Truman and Marshall were willing to continue some political, economic, and military support, but neither wanted to commit American power to an Asian war. Providing more aid would be like “throwing money down a rat hole,” Truman told his cabinet.

Faced with an efficient and popular opponent, unable to mobilize the Chinese people and resources, and denied additional American support, Jiang’s forces steadily lost the civil war. In 1949 his army disintegrated, and the Nationalist government fled to the island of Taiwan. Conservative Democrats and Republicans labeled the rout of Jiang as a humiliating American defeat and complained that the Truman administration was too soft on communism. To quiet critics and to protect Jiang, Truman refused to recognize the People’s Republic of China on the mainland and ordered the U.S. 7th Fleet to the waters near Taiwan.

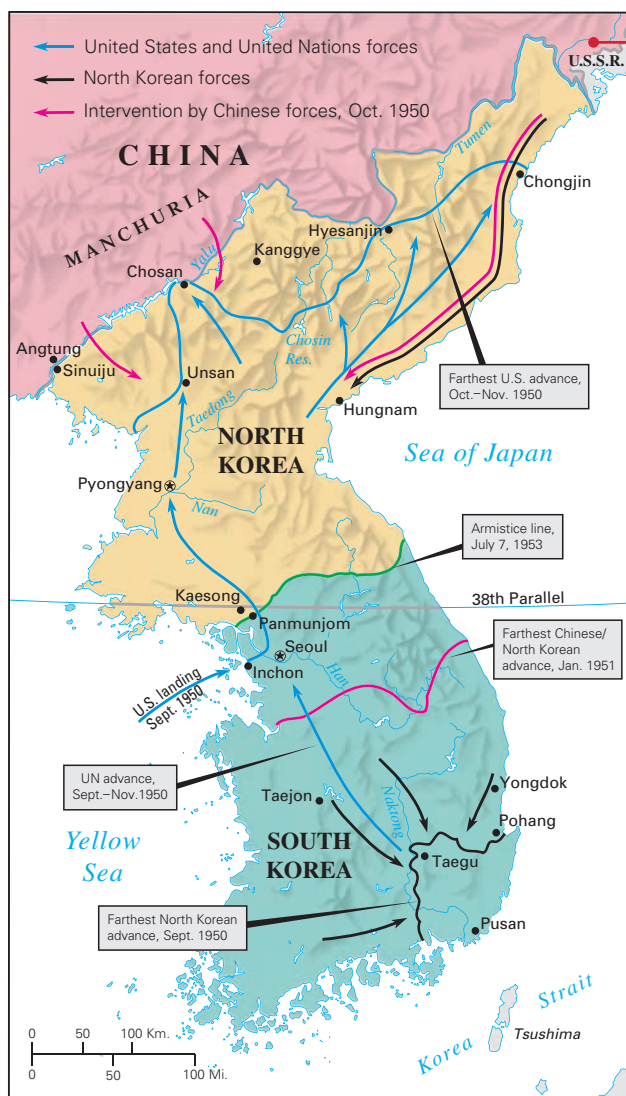
Increasingly, Truman was feeling pressure to expand the containment policy to areas beyond Europe. The pressure intensified in late August 1949, when the Soviets detonated their own atomic bomb, shattering the American nuclear monopoly. A joint Pentagon–State Department committee, headed by Paul Nitze, concluded that the Soviets were driven by “a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own,” whose objective was to dominate the world. The group speculated that the Soviets would be able to launch a nuclear attack on the United States as early as 1954. The committee’s report, **NSC Memorandum #68**, issued by the **National Security Council** (NSC), called for global containment and a massive buildup of American military force. In fact, NSC-68 called for an almost 400 percent increase in military spending for the next fiscal year, which would have raised military expenditures to nearly \$50 billion. Truman studied the report but worried about the impact of such large-scale military production on the manufacture of domestic goods. A separate report concluded that the projected mobilization of industry for the Cold War would reduce automobile construction by nearly 60 percent and cut production of radios and television sets to zero. Truman eventually agreed to a “moderate” \$12.3 billion military budget for 1950 that included building the **hydrogen bomb**. Proponents of NSC-68 won the final argument on June 25, 1950, when North Korean troops stormed across the 38th parallel.

## The Korean War

- ★ **As the North Koreans invaded South Korea, what choices did Truman face, and why did he decide to refer the issue to the United Nations?**
- ★ **What were Truman’s and MacArthur’s goals in Korea? What was the consequence of China’s entry into the war?**

**38th parallel** Negotiated dividing line between North and South Korea; it was the focus of much of the fighting in the Korean War.

When World War II ended, Soviet forces occupied Korea north of the **38th parallel** (see Map 25.2), and American forces remained south of it. The division of Korea was expected to be temporary, but it produced two nations. By mid-1946, an American-supported Republic

**MAP 25.2 The Korean War, 1950–1953**

Seeking to unify Korea, North Korean forces invaded South Korea in 1950. The United States and the United Nations intervened to protect South Korea. After driving North Korean forces northward, Truman sought to unify Korea under South Korea. But as United Nations and South Korean forces pushed toward the Chinese border, Communist China intervened, forcing UN troops to retreat. This map shows the military thrusts and counterthrusts of the Korean War as it stalemated roughly along the 38th parallel.

of Korea (ROK), led by Syngman Rhee, existed in the south, with the Communist-backed Democratic People's Republic of Korea, headed by Kim Il Sung, in the north. Having established two Koreas, in 1949 the Soviet and American forces withdrew, leaving behind two hostile regimes. Both Koreas claimed to be Korea's rightful government and launched raids across the border. The raids accomplished little except to kill more than 100,000 Koreans and to expand each side's military capabilities.

### Halting Communist Aggression

Having received approval from the Soviets, on June 25, 1950, Kim Il Sung launched a full-scale invasion of the south. Overwhelmed, South Korean (ROK) forces rapidly retreated.

Truman concluded that American intervention was needed to save South Korea, but he was fearful that a congressional declaration of war against North Korea might trigger a Chinese and Soviet response. Instead, Truman asked the UN Security Council to intervene. The Security Council complied and called for a cease-fire,

asking member nations to provide assistance to South Korea. As a member of the UN Security Council, the Soviet Union could have blocked these actions with its veto, but at the time of the invasion the Russians were boycotting the council for its refusal to recognize the People's Republic of China.

To blunt the Communist invasion, Truman ordered General Douglas MacArthur, who was named commander of the United Nations forces, to ready American naval and air units for deployment south of the 38th parallel. American forces, officially under United Nations control, arrived in July, but were unable to halt the North Korean advance. By the end of July, North Korean forces occupied most of South Korea. United Nations forces, including nearly 122,000 Americans and the whole South Korean army, held only the southeastern corner of the peninsula. In September the tide turned as seventy thousand American troops landed at Inchon, near Seoul, and UN forces advanced north. The North Koreans fled back across the 38th parallel. Seoul was liberated on September 27. The police action had achieved its purpose: the South Korean government was saved, and the 38th parallel was again a real border.

Now, however, restoring the conditions that had prevailed before the invasion was not enough. The South Korean leadership, MacArthur, Truman, and most Americans wanted to unify the peninsula under South Korean rule. Bending under American pressure, the United Nations on October 7 approved a new goal, to “liberate” North Korea from Communist rule. With North Korean forces in disarray, in mid-October United Nations forces moved northward toward the Korean-Chinese border at the Yalu River. The Chinese threatened intervention if the invaders approached the border. Nevertheless, General MacArthur was supremely confident. Intelligence estimates said that if Chinese forces did cross the border, they would number less than fifty thousand and would easily be defeated. Cautiously, Truman ordered that only South Korean forces should approach the border. Ignoring his commander in chief, MacArthur moved American, British, and Korean forces to within a few miles of the Yalu River. Two days later, nearly 300,000 Chinese soldiers entered the Korean Conflict.

Within three weeks, the North Koreans and Chinese had shoved the UN forces back to the 38th parallel. Truman now abandoned the goal of a unified pro-Western Korea and sought a negotiated settlement, even if it left two Koreas. The decision was not popular. Americans wanted victory. Encouraged by public opinion polls and Republican critics of Truman, MacArthur publicly objected to the limitations his commander-in-chief had placed on him. He put it simply: there was “no substitute for victory.” Already displeased by the general's arrogance, Truman replaced him with General Matthew Ridgeway.

The decision unleashed a storm of protest. Some called for Truman's impeachment, and Congress opened hearings to investigate the conduct of the war. MacArthur testified that victory could be achieved by expanding the war while the administration argued that a wider war might lead to a nuclear world war. In the face-off between MacArthur and Truman there was no winner. Polls showed Truman's public approval rating continuing to fall, reaching a dismal 24 percent by late 1951. At the same time, MacArthur's hopes for a presidential candidacy collapsed because most Americans feared his aggressive policies might indeed result in World War III. By the beginning of 1952, frustrated by the war, the vast majority of Americans was simply tired of the “useless” conflict and wanted it to end.

The Korean front, meanwhile, stabilized along the 38th parallel as four-power peace talks among the United States, South Korea, China, and North Korea began on July 10, 1951. The negotiations did not go smoothly. For two years, as the powers postured and argued about prisoners, cease-fire lines, and a multitude of lesser issues, soldiers fought



and died over scraps of territory. UN casualties exceeded 125,000 during the two years of peace negotiations. When the Eisenhower administration finally concluded the cease-fire on July 26, 1953, the Korean Conflict had cost more than \$20 billion and 33,000 American lives, but it had left South Korea intact.

The “hot war” in Korea had far-reaching military and diplomatic results for the United States. The expansion of military spending envisioned by NSC-68 had proceeded rapidly after the North Korean invasion. In Europe, Truman moved forward with plans to re-arm West Germany and Italy. Throughout Asia and the Pacific, a large American presence was made permanent. In 1951 the United States concluded a settlement with Japan that kept American forces in Japan and Okinawa. At the same time, the United States was increasing its military aid and commitments to Nationalist China and French **Indochina**. The containment policy of George Kennan had been expanded—formally and financially—to cover East Asia and the Pacific.

**Indochina** French colony in Southeast Asia, including present-day Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia; it began fighting for its independence in the mid-twentieth century.

## Postwar Politics

- ★ **In what ways did Truman attempt to maintain and expand the New Deal? How did the fear of communism strengthen conservative opposition to his programs?**
- ★ **Why did Truman win the 1948 election?**

When Roosevelt died, many wondered if Truman would continue the Roosevelt-New Deal approach to domestic policies. Would he work to protect the social and economic gains that labor, women, and minorities had earned during the Depression and World War II? Conservatives and some of Truman’s friends predicted that the new president was “going to be quite a shock to those who followed Roosevelt—that the New Deal is as good as dead.” But Truman had no intention of extinguishing the New Deal.

### Truman and Liberalism

In September 1945, Truman presented to Congress what one Republican critic called an effort to “out-New Deal the New Deal.” Truman set forth an ambitious program designed to ease the transition to a peacetime economy. To prevent inflation and a recession, he wanted Congress to continue wartime economic agencies that would help control wages and prices. To protect wartime gains by minorities, he asked that the Fair Employment Practices Commission be renewed. Furthering the New Deal, he recommended an expansion of Social Security coverage and benefits, an increase in the minimum wage, the development of additional housing programs, and a national health system to ensure medical care for all Americans.

Opposing Truman’s proposals was a conservative coalition of southern Democrats and Republicans in Congress. Since 1937, they had successfully blocked extensions of the New Deal, and they were determined to continue their efforts to contain liberalism. They embarked on a campaign to persuade the American public of the dangers of socialism and communism and of the benefits of a return to business-directed free enterprise. “Public sentiment is everything,” wrote an officer of Standard Oil. “He who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions.” A Truman official sadly agreed: “The consuming fear of communism fostered a widespread belief that change was subversive and that those who supported change were Communists or **fellow-travelers**.” Congress rejected or severely scaled back nearly all of his proposals. The Fair Employment Practices Commission faded away, allowing industries to return to prewar hiring practices that excluded minorities. Congress spurned any idea

**fellow-traveler** Individual who sympathizes with or supports the beliefs of the Communist Party without being a member.

of a national health program. While Congress and Truman disagreed over the nation's domestic agenda, the country experienced economic and social dislocations caused by the conversion to a peacetime economy. Inflation quickly emerged as a principal issue. At the same time, many workers watched their purchasing power fall—some by as much as 30 percent. The economic changes led to a wave of strikes, with nearly 4.5 million workers staging more than five thousand strikes. United Automobile Workers (UAW) strikers wanted a 30 percent increase in wages and a guarantee that car prices would not rise.

Unions like the UAW hoped their strikes would save wages and expand the power of the unions, but the opposite occurred. Congress and state and local governments responded to strikes and agitation with antilabor measures designed to weaken unions and end work stoppages. **Right-to-work laws** banned compulsory union membership and in some cases provided police protection for workers crossing picket lines. In the spring of 1946, Truman joined the attack on strikes, squaring off against the coal miners' and railroad unions. In April 1946, he faced John L. Lewis and 400,000 striking United Mine Workers. Taking drastic action, the president seized the mines and ordered miners back to work. Yet Truman also pressured mine owners to meet most of the union's demands.

Amid strikes, soaring inflation, divisions within Democratic ranks, and widespread dissatisfaction with Truman's leadership—"to err is Truman" was a common quip—Republicans asked the public, "Had enough?" Voters responded affirmatively, in 1946 filling both houses of the Eightieth Congress with more Republicans and anti-New Deal Democrats. Refusing to retreat, Truman opened 1947 by presenting Congress with a re-statement of many of the programs he had offered in 1945. The political battle between the president and Congress fired up again. Congress rejected Truman's proposals, Truman vetoed 250 bills, and Congress overrode twelve of Truman's vetoes. Among the most critical vetoes cast by Truman and overridden by Congress was the **Taft-Hartley Act**. The Taft-Hartley Act, passed in June 1947, was a clear victory for management over labor. It banned the closed shop, prevented industry-wide collective bargaining, and legalized state-sponsored right-to-work laws that hindered union organizing. It also required that union officials sign **affidavits** that they were not Communists.

Truman's veto of Taft-Hartley was an easy political decision, as it cemented organized labor for Truman. In contrast, the issue of civil rights was extremely complex and politically dangerous. Democrats were clearly divided on civil rights. Southern Democrats were opposed to any mention of civil rights, whereas African Americans and liberals, including Eleanor Roosevelt, demanded that Truman "speak" to the issue. Truman was cautious but supportive of civil rights and aware of Soviet criticism of American segregation. Confessing that he did not know how bad conditions were for African Americans, Truman agreed in December 1946 to create a committee on civil rights to examine race relations in the country. The October 1947 report *To Secure These Rights* described the racial inequalities in American society and called on the government to take steps to correct the imbalance. Among its recommendations were the establishment of a permanent commission on civil rights, the enactment of anti-lynching laws, and the abolition of the **poll tax**. The committee also called for integration of the U.S. armed forces and support for integrating housing programs and education. Truman asked Congress in February 1948 to act on the recommendations but provided no direction or legislation. Nor did the White House make any effort to fully integrate the armed forces until black labor leader A. Philip Randolph once again threatened a march on Washington. Faced with the prospect of an embarrassing mass protest only months before the 1948 election, Truman issued an executive order instructing the military to integrate its forces. Despite his caution, Truman had done more in the area of civil rights than any president since

**right-to-work laws** State laws that make it illegal for labor unions and employers to require that all workers be members of a union. Many state laws require that all employees must benefit from contract agreements made between the union and the employer, even if the employee is not a union member.

**Taft-Hartley Act** Law passed by Congress in 1947 banning closed shops, permitting employers to sue unions for broken contracts, and requiring unions to observe a cooling-off period before striking.

**affidavit** A formal, written legal document made under oath; those signing the document state that the facts in the document are true.

**poll tax** A tax imposed by many states that required a fee to be paid as a prerequisite to voting; it was used to exclude the poor, especially minorities, from voting.

Lincoln—a record that ensured African American support for his 1948 bid to be elected president in his own right.

### The 1948 Election

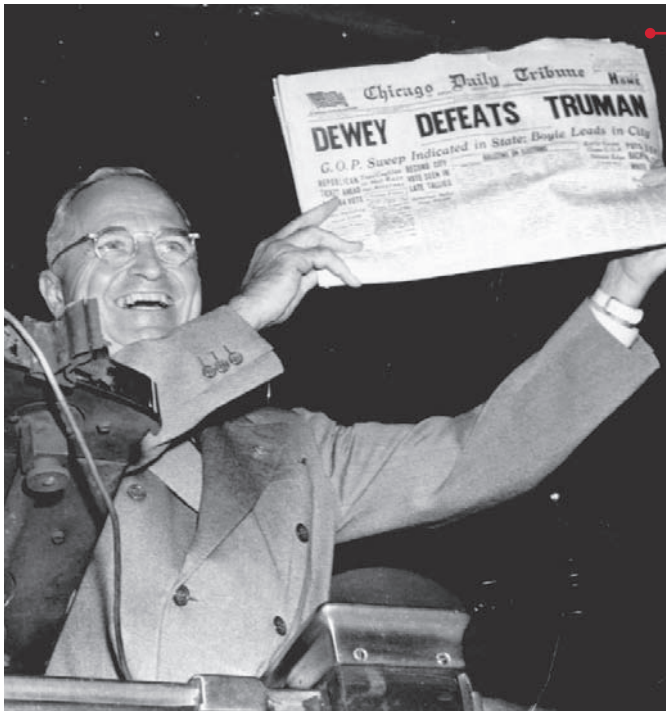
Republicans' hopes were high in 1948. They had done well in congressional elections in 1946 and 1947. To take on Truman they chose New York governor **Thomas E. Dewey**. He had lost to Roosevelt in 1944, but had earned a respectable 46 percent of the popular vote, and Truman was not Roosevelt. The Democrats were also mired in bitter infighting over the direction of domestic policy. Many Democratic liberals and minorities were dissatisfied that Truman had not worked harder to push his New Deal-type programs through Congress. Truman was concerned that some liberals might switch their votes to Henry A. Wallace, the former vice president, who was running as a Progressive Party candidate. Southern Democrats, on the other hand, opposed any efforts to support civil rights and walked out of the convention when a civil rights plank was inserted into the party's platform. Unwilling to support a Republican, they met in Birmingham and organized the States' Rights Democratic Party, commonly known as the **Dixiecrat Party**, nominating South Carolina governor J. Strom Thurmond for president.

With the Democratic Party splintered and public opinion polls showing a large Republican lead, Dewey conducted a low-key campaign almost devoid of issues and contact with the public. In contrast, "Give 'Em Hell" Harry, running for his political life, crossed the nation making hundreds of speeches. He attacked the "do-nothing" Eightieth Congress and its business allies. Touting the Berlin crisis, Truman also emphasized his expertise in foreign policy and his experience in standing up to Stalin.

Confounding the pollsters, Truman defeated Dewey. His margin of victory was the smallest since 1916—slightly over 2 million votes. Nevertheless, Truman's victory was a

**Thomas E. Dewey** New York governor who twice ran unsuccessfully for president as the Republican candidate, the second time against Truman in 1948.

**Dixiecrat Party** Party organized in 1948 by southern delegates who refused to accept the civil rights plank of the Democratic platform; they nominated Strom Thurmond of South Carolina for president.



Many considered Harry S. Truman's 1948 victory over Thomas E. Dewey a major political upset—nearly all of the major polls had named the Republican an easy winner. Here Truman holds up the *Chicago Tribune's* incorrect headline announcing Dewey's triumph. Corbis-Bettmann.

**Fair Deal** President Truman's proposal by which he hoped the Democratic majority would provide an expansion of New Deal programs, including civil rights legislation, a system for national health insurance, and appropriations for education.

triumph for Roosevelt's New Deal coalition. In spite of the Dixiecrat candidate, most southerners did not abandon the Democratic Party. Thurmond carried only four southern states; Wallace carried none. Democrats also won majorities in Congress, and Truman hoped that in 1949 he would succeed with his domestic program, which he called the **Fair Deal**.

## Cold War Politics

★ **What fears and events heightened society's worries about internal subversion, and how did politicians respond to the public's concerns?**

★ **Why and how did Joseph McCarthy become so powerful by 1952?**

**espionage** Usually an organized practice by governments to use spies to gain economic, military, and political information from enemies and rivals.

The development of the Cold War not only altered American foreign policy but also had significant political and social effects. As the Cold War began, fears arose that there were Communists and fellow-travelers throughout the government and society. Although the Soviets already had a well-developed system of **espionage** within U.S. government agencies, including the atomic bomb program, fears of Communist subversives quickly spread across the land. Linking communism and socialism to liberalism and to anyone calling for social change became widely used and effective weapons. Conservatives in Congress used them to resist Truman's efforts to expand the New Deal, whereas others used fears of socialism and communism to combat unionization and to maintain segregation. In 1946, tobacco giant R. J. Reynolds conducted a multimillion-dollar public ad campaign to defeat the CIO's "Operation Dixie" effort to organize southern workers. Unionization was characterized as a step toward socialism. In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a local paper labeled those trying to integrate a public swimming pool "Commies." Across the country, neighborhoods and communities organized "watch groups," which screened books, movies, and public speakers and questioned teachers and public officials, seeking to ban or dismiss those considered suspect.

**House Un-American Activities Committee** Congressional committee, created in 1938, that investigated suspected Communists during the McCarthy era and that Richard Nixon used to advance his career.

### The Red Scare

Responding to increasing Republican accusations that his administration tolerated Communist subversion, including those of the **House Un-American Activities Committee** (HUAC), Truman moved to beef up the existing loyalty program. Nine days after his Truman Doctrine speech in 1947, the president issued Executive Order #9835, establishing the Federal Employee Loyalty Program. The order stated that a federal employee could be fired if "reasonable grounds" existed for believing he or she was disloyal in belief. Attorney General Tom Clark provided a lengthy list of subversive organizations, and government administrators screened their employees for membership. Soon supervisors and workers also began to accuse one another of "un-American" thoughts and activities. Between 1947 and 1951, the government discharged more than three thousand federal employees because of their supposed disloyalty. In almost every case, the accused had no right to confront the accusers or to refute the evidence. Although the Soviets used American citizens to conduct espionage, few of those forced to leave government service were Communists.

Truman's loyalty program intensified, rather than calmed, fears about an "enemy within." Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) director J. Edgar Hoover proclaimed that there was one American Communist for every 1,814 loyal citizens, while Attorney General Clark warned that Communists were everywhere, carrying "the germs of death for



society.” Grabbing headlines in 1947, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) targeted Hollywood. The committee’s goals were to remove people with liberal viewpoints from the entertainment industry, and to ensure that the mass media promoted American capitalism and traditional American values. Just as World War II had required mobilization of the film industry, committee supporters reasoned, the Cold War necessitated that movies continue to promote the “right” images. With much fanfare, HUAC called Hollywood notables to testify about Communist influence in the industry. Many of those called used the opportunity to assert their patriotism. Actor Ronald Reagan, president of the Screen Actors Guild, denounced Communist methods that “sucked” people into carrying out “red policy without knowing what they are doing” and testified that the Conference of Studio Unions was full of Reds.

Not all witnesses were cooperative. Some who were or had been members of the Communist Party, including the **“Hollywood Ten,”** took the Fifth Amendment and lashed out at the activities of the committee. Soon labeled “Fifth Amendment Communists,” the ten were jailed for contempt of Congress and blacklisted by the industry. Eric Johnson, president of the Motion Picture Association, announced that no one would be hired who did not cooperate with the committee. He also stated that Hollywood would produce no more films like *The Grapes of Wrath*, featuring the hardships of poor Americans or “the seamy side of American life.” Moviemakers soon issued a new code—*A Screen Guide for Americans*—that demanded, “Don’t Smear the Free Enterprise System”; “Don’t Deify the Common Man”; “Don’t Show That Poverty Is a Virtue.”

Just before the election of 1948, HUAC zeroed in on spies within the government, bringing forth a number of informants who had once been Soviet agents and were now willing to name other Americans who allegedly had sold out the United States. The most sensational revelation came from one of the editors of *Time*, a repentant ex-Communist named Whittaker Chambers. He accused **Alger Hiss**, a New Deal liberal and one-time State Department official, of being a Communist. At first Hiss denied knowing Chambers, but under interrogation by HUAC members, especially Congressman Richard M. Nixon of California, Hiss admitted an acquaintance with Chambers in the 1930s but denied he was ever a Communist. When Hiss sued Chambers for libel, Chambers escalated the charges. He stated that Hiss had passed State Department secrets to him in the 1930s, and he produced rolls of microfilm that he said Hiss had delivered to him. In a controversial and sensationalized trial, in 1949 Hiss was found guilty of **perjury** (the statute of limitations on espionage had expired) and was sentenced to five years in prison.

As the nation followed the Hiss case, news of the Communist victory in China and the Soviet explosion of an atomic bomb heightened American fears. Many people believed that such Communist successes could have occurred only with help from American traitors. Congressman Harold Velde of Illinois proclaimed, “Our government from the White House down has been sympathetic toward the views of Communists and fellow-travelers, with the result that it has been infiltrated by a network of spies.” Congress responded in 1950 by passing, over Truman’s veto, the **McCarran Internal Security Act**. The law required all Communists to register with the attorney general and made it a crime to conspire to establish a totalitarian government in the United States. The following year the Supreme Court upheld the **Smith Act** (passed in June 1940) in *Dennis et al. v. United States*, ruling that membership in the Communist Party was equivalent to conspiring to overthrow the American government and that no specific act of treason was necessary for conviction.

**Hollywood Ten** Ten screenwriters and producers who stated that the Fifth Amendment gave them the right to refuse to testify before the HUAC in 1947. Found guilty of contempt in 1948, they served from 6 months to a year in prison.

**Alger Hiss** State Department official accused in 1948 of being a Communist spy; he was convicted of perjury and sent to prison.

**perjury** The deliberate giving of false testimony under oath.

**McCarran Internal Security Act** Law passed by Congress in 1950 requiring Communists to register with the U.S. attorney general and making it a crime to conspire to establish a totalitarian government in the United States.

**Smith Act** The Alien Registration Act, passed by Congress in 1940, which made it a crime to advocate or to belong to an organization that advocates the overthrow of the government by force or violence.

# Investigating America

## Walt Disney Testifies Before HUAC, 1947

Walt Disney was a 46-year-old animator and film producer when he was called before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Not yet the creator of a theme park empire, Disney had made propaganda films for the army during the war such as *Der Fuehrer's Face* (which featured Donald Duck mocking Hitler) and *Victory Through Air Power*. But Disney had also experienced labor trouble, and his entire animation staff had gone on strike during the production of *Dumbo*. Disney concluded that Communists were behind the trouble, and in 1947 he identified three men as Marxists. All three denied the allegations, but after the Soviet Union collapsed, Russian archives identified one of them, Herbert Sorrell, as a Soviet spy. The following is from Disney's HUAC testimony.

[Congressman H.A.] Smith: Have you ever made any pictures in your studio that contained propaganda and that were propaganda films?

Disney: Well, during the war we did. We made quite a few—working with different government agencies. We did one for the Treasury on taxes and I did four anti-Hitler films. And I did one on my own for air power.

Smith: From those pictures that you made, have you any opinion as to whether or not the films can be used effectively to disseminate propaganda?

Disney: Yes, I think they proved that. . . .

Smith: Do you have any people in your studio at the present time that you believe are Communist or Fascist, employed there?

Disney: No; at the present time I feel that everybody in my studio is one-hundred-percent American.

Smith: Have you had at any time, in your opinion, in the past, have you at any time in the past had any Communists employed at your studio?

Disney: Yes; in the past I had some people that I definitely feel were Communists.

Smith: As a matter of fact, Mr. Disney, you experienced a strike at your studio, did you not?

Disney: Yes.

Smith: And is it your opinion that that strike was instituted by members of the Communist Party to serve their purposes?

Disney: Well, it proved itself so with time, and I definitely feel it was a Communist group trying to take over my artists and they did take them over. . . .

Smith: Can you name any other individuals that were active at the time of the strike that you believe in your opinion are Communists?

Disney: Well, I feel that there is one artist in my plant, that came in there, he came in about 1938, and he sort of stayed in the background, he wasn't too active, but he was the real brains of this, and I believe he is a Communist. His name is David Hilberman. . . . I looked into his record and I found that, number 1, that he had no religion and, number 2, that he had spent considerable time at the Moscow Art Theatre studying art direction, or something.

Smith: Any others, Mr. Disney?

Disney: Well, I think [Herbert] Sorrell is sure tied up with them. If he isn't a Communist, he sure should be one. . . . In my opinion they are Communists. No one has any way of proving those things. . . .

Smith: What is your personal opinion of the Communist Party, Mr. Disney, as to whether or not it is a political party?

Disney: Well, I don't believe it is a political party. I believe it is an un-American thing. The thing that I resent the most is that they are able to get into these unions, take them over, and represent to the world that a group of people that are in my plant, that I know are good, one-hundred-percent Americans, are trapped by this group, and they are represented to the world as supporting all of those ideologies, and it is not so, and I feel that they really ought to be smoked out and shown up for what they are. . . .

- To what extent did Disney's anger with his cartoonists influence his views on Communism?
- Apart from his firm belief that he was unfairly attacked by organized labor, why might producers like Disney wish to cooperate with Congress?
- Why did Congressman Smith ask if the Communist Party was a legitimate political party? Do you think representatives in Congress truly believed that Hollywood was a threat to the American government, or did they have other reasons for calling directors and famous actors before HUAC?



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

Congressman Velde's observation about spies seemed vindicated in February 1950, when English authorities arrested British scientist Klaus Fuchs for passing technical secrets to the Soviet Union. (A physicist, Fuchs had worked at Los Alamos, New Mexico, on the Manhattan Project.) Fuchs named an American accomplice, Harry Gold, who in turn named David Greenglass. Greenglass then claimed that his sister Ethel and her husband, Julius Rosenberg, were part of the Soviet atomic spy ring. In a 1951 trial, the prosecution alleged that the information obtained and passed to the Soviets by Ethel and Julius Rosenberg was largely responsible for the successful Soviet atomic bomb. The Rosenbergs professed innocence but were convicted of espionage on the basis of Gold's and Greenglass's testimony. (Soviet documents indicate that Julius Rosenberg was engaged in espionage but that Ethel was probably guilty only of being loyal to him. Documents concerning Hiss are inconclusive, continuing a spirited debate about his innocence.)

### Joseph McCarthy and the Politics of Loyalty

Feeding on the furor over the enemy within, Republican senator **Joseph McCarthy** of Wisconsin emerged at the forefront of the anti-Communist movement. He had entered the public arena as a candidate for Congress following World War II.

Running for the Senate in 1946, he invented a glorious war record for himself that included the nickname "Tail-gunner Joe" and several wounds—he even walked with a fake limp—to help himself win the election. In February 1950, he announced to a Republican women's group in Wheeling, West Virginia, that the United States was losing the Cold War because of traitors within the government. He claimed to know of 205 Communists working in the State Department.

His charges were examined by a Senate committee and shown to be at best inaccurate. When the chair of the committee, Democrat Millard Tydings of Maryland, pronounced McCarthy a hoax and a fraud, the Wisconsin senator countered by accusing Tydings of questionable loyalty. During Tydings's 1950 reelection campaign, McCarthy worked for his defeat, spreading false stories and pictures that supposedly showed connections to American Communists, including a faked photograph of the Democrat talking to Earl Browder, head of the American Communist Party. When Tydings lost by forty thousand votes, McCarthy's stature soared. Republicans and conservative Democrats rarely opposed him and frequently supported his allegations. The Senate's most powerful Republican, Robert Taft of Ohio, slapped McCarthy on the back saying, "Keep it up, Joe," and sent him the names of State Department officials who merited investigation.

By 1952, Truman's popularity was almost nonexistent: only 24 percent of those who were asked said they approved of his presidency. The Korean Conflict was stalemated, and Republicans were having a field day attacking "cowardly containment" and calling for victory in Korea. The Fair Deal was dead, and Truman had lost control over domestic policy. Compounding his problems, a probe of organized crime by a congressional committee chaired by Senator Estes Kefauver (D.-Tennessee) had found scandal, corruption, and links to the mob within the government. Presidential aide Harry Vaughan and other administration appointees were accused of accepting gifts and selling their influence.

When Truman lost the opening presidential primary in New Hampshire to Kefauver, he withdrew from the race, leaving the Democrats with no clear choice for a candidate. As in 1948, Republicans looked to the November election with great anticipation. At last, they were sure, voters would elect a Republican president—someone who, in Thomas Dewey's opinion, would "save the country from going to Hades in the handbasket of paternalism-socialism-dictatorship."

**Joseph McCarthy** Republican senator from Wisconsin who in 1950 began a Communist witch-hunt; *McCarthyism* refers to attacks on liberals and others, often based on unsupported assertions and carried out without regard for basic liberties.

## Homecoming and Social Adjustments

- ★ **What social and economic expectations did most Americans have as the Second World War ended?**
- ★ **What was the nature of suburban America?**
- ★ **What adjustments did women and minorities have to make in postwar America?**

Even before the war against Japan was over, Americans were returning home eager to resume normal lives. Organized “Bring Daddy Back” clubs flooded Washington with letters demanding a speedy return of husbands and fathers. Twelve million men and women were still in uniform, and they wanted out. Despite protests from the military and the State Department, and against Truman’s own better judgment, by November 1945, 1.25 million GIs were returning home each month. For Americans entering the postwar world, the homecoming was buoyed with expectations and fraught with anxieties. The United States had won the war, but would the peace last? The nation had experienced dramatic wartime economic prosperity, but remembering the Depression, Americans wondered if the postwar economy would remain strong. Still, most were optimistic that any recession would be short-lived and they would be able to spend savings, find jobs, and enjoy the American dream. “Consumption is the frontier of the future,” chirped one economic forecast.

### Rising Expectations

Owning a home was, for many, the symbol of the American dream. Before 1945 the housing industry had focused on building custom homes and multifamily dwellings. But the postwar demand replaced custom homes with standardized

ones. By mid-1946, people wanted the charming “dream homes” in new planned communities that were advertised in popular magazines. To meet the demand, William Levitt and other developers supplied mass-produced, prefabricated houses—the suburban **tract homes**. Using building techniques developed during the war, timber from his own forests, and nonunion workers, Levitt boasted that he could construct an affordable house on an existing concrete slab in sixteen minutes. Standardized, with few frills, the house was a two-story **Cape Cod** with four and a half rooms. Built on generous 60-by-100-foot lots, complete with a tree or two, Levitt homes cost slightly less than \$8,000 and still provided Levitt with a \$1,000 profit per house. The price was attractive, and hopeful buyers formed long lines as soon as the homes went on sale. The first Levittown sprang up in Hempstead, Long Island, and had more than seventeen thousand homes, seven village greens, fourteen playgrounds, and nine swimming pools. Hundreds of look-alike suburban neighborhoods were soon built across the nation, contributing to a growing migration from rural and urban America to the suburbs.

Suburbs were not for everyone, and widespread discrimination kept some out by design. Whether it was the official policy of developers like Levitt, neighborhood covenants, or lack of home loans, almost every suburb in the nation was predominately white and Christian. Even though the Supreme Court ruled in *Shelly v. Kraemer* (1948) that restrictive housing covenants written to exclude minorities could not be enforced by lower courts, the decision failed to have much impact; neither did the Court’s decision to prevent banks and the FHA from rejecting home loan applications from minorities trying to buy houses in white neighborhoods. Real-estate agents also continued to abide by the Realtors’ Code of Ethics, which called it unethical to permit the “infiltration of inharmonious elements” into a neighborhood. Across the nation, fewer than 5 percent

**tract homes** One of numerous houses of similar design built on small plots of land.

**Cape Cod** A style of two-story house that has a steep roof and a central chimney; it originated in colonial Massachusetts and became popular in suburbs after World War II.

**Shelly v. Kraemer** Supreme Court ruling (1948) that barred lower courts from enforcing restrictive agreements that prevented minorities from living in certain neighborhoods; it had little impact on actual practices.





As World War II ended, Americans flocked to the suburbs, creating a demand for new housing—a demand matched by developers of planned communities like Levittown, Pennsylvania. Developers kept the cost of the homes down using uniformity of style and of prefabricated materials. Van Bucher/Photo Researchers.

of suburban neighborhoods provided nonwhites access to the American dream house. In the San Francisco Bay Area, not even 1 percent of the more than 100,000 homes built between 1945 and 1950 were sold to nonwhites.

For many veterans a cozy home was only part of the postwar dream—so too was going to college. Armed with economic support through the G.I. Bill in September 1946, nearly 1 million veterans enrolled in college. New Jersey's Rutgers University saw its enrollment climb from seven thousand to sixteen thousand. At Lehigh University in Pennsylvania, 940 veteran students outnumbered the 396 "civilians" and refused to don the traditional freshman beanie. Faculty and administrators soon discovered that veterans made exceptional students and rarely needed disciplinary action. Nonveteran students, however, complained that because of the veterans they had to work harder and "slave to keep up." Schools scrambled to respond to the influx of students, not only hiring more faculty and building more facilities but also providing special housing, daycare centers, and expanded health clinics for married students. By the time the G.I. Bill expired in 1952, over 2 million veterans, including 64,000 women, had earned their degrees under its umbrella.

Veterans expected jobs, too, and most figured that wartime workers, especially minorities and women, would relinquish their jobs and return to traditional roles. At first jobs seemed scarce. The cancellation of wartime contracts and the nationwide switch to domestic production resulted in 2.7 million workers being dismissed from their jobs

within a month of Japan's surrender. Fortunately for veterans, the G.I. Bill provided unemployment compensation for a year until a job was found. And within a year, jobs were becoming more and more available. By 1947, 60 million people were working, 7 million more than at the peak of wartime production. But the work force had changed, with noticeably fewer women and minorities as industries and businesses resumed their prewar hiring habits.

### From Industrial Worker to Homemaker

Across the nation in a variety of ways, women were told that they were no longer wanted in the workplace and that they would be most fulfilled by being wives and mothers again.

A *Fortune* poll in the fall of 1945 revealed that 57 percent of women and 63 percent of men believed that married women should not work outside the home. Psychiatrists and marriage counselors argued that men wanted their wives to be feminine and submissive, not their fellow workers. Across the country, industries dismissed women employees or demoted them to clerical and service jobs. In the aircraft industry, women had made up 40 percent of the work force, but by 1948 they numbered 12 percent. Those women remaining in or entering into the work force found work in largely gender-segregated jobs. Rosie the Riveter had become Fran the File Clerk, as wages declined from about \$50 to \$35 a week.

At work or at home, Americans witnessed a renewed social emphasis on femininity, family, and a woman's proper role. Fashion designers, such as Christian Dior in his "New Look," lengthened skirts and accented waists and breasts to emphasize femininity. Marriage was more popular than ever: by 1950, two-thirds of the population was married and having children. Factors contributing to the rush to the altar were fears of "male scarcity" caused by war losses and a new attitude that viewed marriage as the ideal state for young people. Many women's magazines and marriage experts championed the idea that men should marry at around age 20 and women at age 18 or 19. With veterans returning home, with society celebrating family, and with prosperity increasing came the "baby boom" that would last for nearly twenty years. From a Depression level of under 19 births per 1,000 women per year, the birth rate rose to more than 25 births per 1,000 women by 1948.

**baby boom** Sudden increase in the birth rate that occurred in the United States after World War II and lasted until roughly 1964.

Not all women accepted the role of contented, submissive wives and homemakers—the war experience had changed relationships. When one veteran informed his wife that she could no longer handle the finances because doing so was not "woman's work," she indignantly reminded him that she had successfully balanced the checkbook for four years and that his return had not made her suddenly stupid. Reflecting such tensions and too many hasty wartime marriages, the divorce rate jumped dramatically. Twenty-five percent of all wartime marriages were ending in divorce in 1946, and by 1950 over a million GI marriages had dissolved. As the number of female heads of household rose, so also did the poverty and social stigma attached to single parenthood. Following her divorce, one suburban resident recalled that her neighbors "avoided" her and made remarks like "Why don't you get a job instead of taking tax monies?" She also noted that her children were singled out at school because they did not have a father at home.

### Restrained Expectations

Like women, minorities found that "fair employment" vanished as employers favored white males. "Last hired, first fired" reflected job reality, especially in skilled and industrial jobs. Again, the aircraft industry provides an example.

The number of African Americans employed at Lockheed and other aviation companies

dropped from over a million during the war to less than 250,000 five years later. Most of those who remained in the industry were not working on the assembly line but in more menial jobs. Mexican Americans had similar experiences—exiled from the American Dream to unskilled, menial jobs and isolated in the barrios. Contributing to discrimination against Mexican Americans was the increasing number of legal and illegal migrations from South America and Mexico—a result of needs for agricultural workers and the **Immigration and Nationality Act**. The latter allowed unlimited immigration from the Western Hemisphere and continued provisions that exempted agricultural employers from prosecution if they hired illegal workers.

Many minorities saw some positive changes taking place, despite living in a segregated environment. In the South, African Americans increased voter registration, primarily in the Upper South and in urban areas. In several northern cities, the growing political voice of African Americans elected black representatives to local and state office and, in 1945, sent Adam Clayton Powell Jr. to Congress. That same year, gaining more national recognition, Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in professional baseball and two years later joined the Brooklyn Dodgers and won the National League's Rookie of the Year.

Latinos, too, were actively seeking changes. The League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC) worked with the newly formed **American GI Forum** to attack discrimination throughout the West and Southwest. The American GI Forum, organized in Texas in early 1948 by Mexican American veterans, worked to secure for Latino veterans the benefits provided by the G.I. Bill and to develop leadership within the Mexican American population. In California and Texas, LULAC and the American GI Forum successfully used federal courts to attack school systems that segregated Latino from white children. In *Mendez v. Westminster* (1946) and in *Delgado v. Bastrop School District* (1948), federal courts ruled that school systems could not educate Mexican Americans separately from Anglos. Despite these rulings, throughout the Southwest and West, Latino students remained in predominantly “Mexican” schools and classrooms, perpetuating the lack of educational opportunities and contributing to high dropout rates.

For women and minorities, the immediate postwar period saw significant loss of income and status as society expected the “underclass” to return to its prewar existence. But the war had energized those left outside white suburbia and the nation's expanding affluence. Women, African Americans, Hispanics, and other minority groups had their own vision of the American dream, one that included not only growing prosperity but also a full and unfettered role in society and an unmuzzled voice in politics.

#### **Immigration and Nationality Act**

Passed over Truman's veto in 1952, this act unified existing immigration laws; reaffirmed the national quota system; allowed for a token number of Asians to enter the United States; established a preference for skilled workers; and strengthened enforcement procedures. It permitted deportation and denial of entry for ideological reasons.

**American GI Forum** Organization formed in Texas in 1948 by Mexican American veterans to overcome discrimination and provide support for veterans and all Hispanics; it led the court fight to end the segregation of Hispanic children in school systems in the West and Southwest.

#### ***Mendez v. Westminster* and *Delgado v. Bastrop School District***

Two federal court cases that overturned the establishment of separate schools for Mexican American children in California and Texas in 1946 and 1948, respectively.

## Summary

People hoped that the end of World War II would usher in a period of international cooperation and peace. This expectation vanished as the world entered the Cold War, a period of armed and vigilant suspicion. To protect the country and the world from Soviet expansion, the United States asserted a primary economic, political, and military role around the globe. The Truman administration developed a containment policy that was first applied to Western Europe but eventually included Asia as well. By

the end of Truman's presidency, the United States had begun to view its national security in global terms and vowed to use its resources to combat the spread of Communist power.

At home the Cold War had its impact as well, acting to curb the expansion of liberalism. Truman sought to expand on the New Deal but found success difficult. While existing New Deal programs such as Social Security, farm supports, and a minimum wage were extended, a



conservative Congress blocked new programs, including national healthcare. Linking liberal ideas and programs with communism, moderates and conservatives alike promoted their own political, social, and economic interests. They often successfully attacked liberals, unions, and civil rights advocates as too radical and their proposals as smacking of communism. Ultraconservative groups such as the House Un-American Activities Committee and zealous individuals—especially Joseph McCarthy—led the way in promoting a Red Scare that not only attacked liberals in government but also deeply disrupted society.

Most Americans expected to enjoy the fruits of an expanding postwar economy that would bring increased prosperity and more consumer goods. For many the vision of the suburb with its stable family structure and new-model car in every garage, seemed obtainable and

desirable. Women were encouraged to return to “domestic” life and raise a family. Postwar America saw a rise in marriages and births, the start of a baby boom. But alongside these trends were an increasing number of divorces and women dissatisfied with their traditional roles.

Whereas jobs and homeownership multiplied for white males, and white families seemed poised to achieve the American dream, minorities seemed hemmed in, or nudged out, by discrimination that turned back many of the economic and social gains they had made during the war. Although many minorities were ousted from the work force or into lesser jobs and still lived in a socially segregated society, they held their own, more limited hopes for a future that would bring economic and educational improvement as well as full political and civil rights.

## Key Terms

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puppet governments, <i>p.</i> 609	hydrogen bomb, <i>p.</i> 616	perjury, <i>p.</i> 623
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# Quest for Consensus

## 1952–1960

## CHAPTER 26

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Ray Kroc

It was astounding; a restaurant in southern California was ordering more milkshake machines. It had eight. Ray Kroc, who marketed Multimixers, wondered why. He went to see and found a small restaurant named McDonald's with customers flocking to windows to buy hamburgers, shakes, and fries.

The McDonald brothers had taken a typical drive-in restaurant and done something radical. They fired the carhops and opened take-out windows. They drastically reduced the menu and adopted an assembly-line technique that employed twelve men. The burgers were wrapped in paper, drinks were served in paper cups, and the order was put in paper bags. To attract families they removed cigarette machines and jukeboxes and emphasized quick service and cleanliness.

Kroc, who had no restaurant experience, made his choice. The McDonalds gave him the right to **franchise** the restaurant, provided he charge a low franchise fee and accept a service fee of less than 2 percent of the profits. He opened his first McDonald's in 1955 in Des Plaines, Illinois. Others followed, but profits lagged—selling franchises was not making money.

Kroc decided to focus on profits rather than franchise sales. To improve profitability, he used regional suppliers and bought in bulk. To ensure quality, consistency, and recognition, all the restaurants and menus would be the same. The food would be prepared and served the same way. Watching the growth of suburbs and the rise of two-income, working families, he chose McDonald's locations near schools and churches.

It was a successful formula. Within four years, Kroc had franchised 738 McDonald's, and the Golden Arches had become an American icon. They represented hometown America, especially to a platoon of soldiers in Vietnam. Having seen a picture of a Big Mac, they wrote "when we get back to the world," our first act will be "going to McDonald's for a burger and a shake."



### RAY KROC

Having spent most of his life as a salesman, at the age of 52 Kroc chose to enter the restaurant business. In 1955, he purchased the rights to franchise the McDonald's name and system of fast-food production. Before he died in 1984, the "Golden Arches" had become a worldwide recognizable symbol of American culture.

Art Shay/Getty Images.

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### *Politics of Consensus*

- Eisenhower Takes Command
- Dynamic Conservatism
- The Problem with McCarthy

#### *Eisenhower and a Hostile World*

- The New Look
- The Third World
- Turmoil in the Middle East
- A Protective Neighbor
- The New Look in Asia
- The Soviets and Cold War Politics

#### *The Best of Times*

- The Web of Prosperity
- Suburban and Family Culture
- Consumerism
- Another View of Suburbia
- Rejecting Consensus

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Ray Kroc Explains the McDonald's Approach to Business, 1956

- The Trouble with Kids

#### *Outside Suburbia*

- Integrating Schools

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** The Southern Manifesto, 1956

- The Montgomery Bus Boycott

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** The Brown Decision

- Ike and Civil Rights

#### *Summary*

**franchise** Right granted by a company to sell the company's goods and services. The franchisee operates his or her own business and keeps most of the profits; the franchiser receives part of the profit and may establish rules for running the business.

# Chronology

<b>1948</b>	Alfred Kinsey's <i>Sexual Behavior in the Human Male</i>	Baghdad Pact formed
<b>1950</b>	Korean War begins	Geneva Summit
<b>1951</b>	J. D. Salinger's <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> Mattachine Society formed Alan Freed's "Moondog's Rock 'n' Roll Party"	Eisenhower's Open Skies proposal Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott begins
<b>1952</b>	Dwight David Eisenhower elected president Eisenhower visits Korea United States tests hydrogen bomb	<b>1956</b> Federal Highway Act Southern Christian Leadership Conference formed Eisenhower reelected Suez crisis Soviets invade Hungary
<b>1953</b>	Korean armistice at Panmunjom Mohammed Mossadegh overthrown in Iran Joseph Stalin dies Kinsey's <i>Sexual Behavior in the Human Female</i> Termination policy for American Indians implemented Earl Warren appointed chief justice of Supreme Court <i>Father Knows Best</i> debuts on television <i>Playboy</i> begins publication Department of Health, Education and Welfare created	Allen Ginsberg's <i>Howl</i> Elvis Presley records "Heartbreak Hotel"
<b>1954</b>	<i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> Federal budget balanced Army-McCarthy hearings Jacobo Arbenz overthrown in Guatemala Gamal Nasser assumes power in Egypt Battle of Dienbienphu Geneva Agreement (Vietnam) SEATO founded	<b>1957</b> Little Rock crisis Civil Rights Act Eisenhower Doctrine United States joins Baghdad Pact Soviets launch <i>Sputnik I</i> Jack Kerouac's <i>On the Road</i> Nevil Shute's <i>On the Beach</i> Baby boom peaks at 4.3 million births
<b>1955</b>	Montgomery bus boycott Salk vaccine approved for use AFL-CIO merger Warsaw Pact formed	<b>1958</b> Anti-U.S. demonstrations in Latin America United States sends troops to Lebanon National Defense Education Act NASA established Nuclear test moratorium
		<b>1959</b> Fidel Castro takes control in Cuba CENTO formed Alaska and Hawaii become states Nikita Khrushchev visits the United States
		<b>1960</b> Soviets shoot down U-2 and capture pilot Paris Summit European Common Market created OPEC created

Republicans represented change. Most people expected less intervention in domestic affairs and more Cold War successes. Yet, less change took place than expected. Recognizing that most New Deal-style programs already were ingrained in society, Eisenhower knew he could modify but not dismantle them. He was able to cut spending and reduce regulations, but he also expanded government's role into new areas. Eisenhower was constrained by a desire to balance the budget and adopted the New Look in foreign and military policy. It stressed the use of nuclear weapons, alliances, and covert activities while maintaining the strategy of containment.

More than political change, Americans expected to enjoy their lives to the fullest as the country continued a period of sustained economic growth. Unemployment remained low while wages and spending reached new highs. The focus of life centered on the suburban nuclear family: Dad at work, Mom at home nurturing "baby boom" children. Between child and adult, "teenagers" generated their own culture, merging consumerism, conformity, and rebelliousness as reflected in the growing popularity of rock 'n' roll. Optimists projected that most Americans had the chance to share in the American Dream, even those not living in the suburbs.

The reality was different. There were stresses within suburbia while race, gender, poverty, and prejudice kept many from fulfilling their hopes. But change seemed possible as groups formed grassroots organizations to advocate acceptance, equality, and an access to a better life. Throughout the South, African American civil rights movements, supported by Supreme Court decisions, began to batter down the walls of legal segregation. Increasingly, politics and society found it hard to ignore long-standing contradictions in the country's democratic image.

## Politics of Consensus

- ★ **What were the popular images of Eisenhower, and how did they compare with reality?**
- ★ **What were the goals of conservatives and Eisenhower as they sought to roll back the programs of the New Deal?**

It was "time for a change," cried Republicans in 1952. The Democrats, politically wounded by the lingering war in Korea and the soft-on-communism label, would finally lose their twenty-year hold on the White House. Initially, the leading Republican candidate for the presidency was Senator Robert Taft, an ardent opponent of the New Deal and a prewar isolationist. For those reasons, many moderate Republicans turned to General Dwight David Eisenhower. Although politically inexperienced, "Ike" appeared to be the perfect candidate. He was well known, revered as a war hero, and carried the image of an honest man thrust into public service. Skillfully gaining the nomination at the Republican convention, Eisenhower chose Richard M. Nixon of California as his vice-presidential running mate. Nixon was young and had risen rapidly in the party because of his outspoken anticommunism and his aggressive role in the investigation of Alger Hiss. The Democrats nominated Adlai E. Stevenson, a liberal New Dealer and governor of Illinois.

### Eisenhower Takes Command

The Republican campaign took two paths. One concentrated on the popular image of Eisenhower. Republicans introduced "spot commercials" on television and used them to stress Ike's honesty, integrity, and "American-ness." In public, Eisenhower crusaded for high standards and good government and posed as another George

Washington. A war-weary nation applauded his promise to go to Korea “in the cause of peace.” McCarthy, Nixon, and others who brutally attacked the Democrats’ Cold War and New Deal records took the second campaign path. They boasted of “no Communists in the Republican Party,” promised to roll back communism, and vowed to dismantle the New Deal. Stevenson’s effort to “talk sense” to the voters stood little chance.

The campaign’s only tense moment came with an allegation that Nixon had accepted gifts from, and used a secret cash fund provided by, California business friends. To counter the accusations and to keep Eisenhower from dropping him from the ticket, Nixon explained his side of the story on television. In the “Checkers speech,” a teary-eyed Nixon denied the fund existed and claimed that the only gift his family had ever received was a puppy, Checkers. His daughter loved the puppy, Nixon stated, and he would not make her give it back, no matter what it did to his career. It was an overly sentimental speech, but the public and Eisenhower rallied behind Nixon, and the Republicans easily won the election. Eisenhower buried Stevenson in popular (55 percent) and electoral (442 to 89) votes and carried four traditionally Democratic southern states. Ike’s broad political coattails also swept Republican majorities into Congress. Four years later, the 1956 presidential election was a repeat of 1952, with Eisenhower receiving 457 electoral votes and again swamping Stevenson, who carried only seven southern states. But in 1956, the Republican victory was Eisenhower’s alone, as Democrats maintained the majorities in both houses of Congress they had won in the 1954 midterm races.

During both of his administrations, to the public Eisenhower was “Ike,” a warm, friendly, grandfather figure who projected middle-class values. Critics complained that he seemed almost an absentee president, often leaving the government in the hands of Congress and his cabinet while he played golf. But to those who knew him and worked with him, he was far from bumbling or an absentee president. In military fashion, Eisenhower relied on his staff to provide a full discussion of any issue. We had a “good growl,” he would say after especially heated cabinet talks, but he made the final decisions, and he expected them to be carried out.

In this picture, the triumphant Republican nominees for the White House pose with smiles and wives—Pat Nixon and Mamie Eisenhower. Seen as a statesman and not a politician during the campaign, Eisenhower worked hard to ensure his nomination over Taft, and then chose Richard Nixon to balance the ticket because Nixon was a younger man, a westerner, and a conservative. Corbis-Bettmann.





### Dynamic Conservatism

Eisenhower wanted to follow a “middle course” that was “conservative when it comes to money and liberal when it comes to human beings.” He believed that government should be run efficiently, like a successful business, and he staffed the majority of his cabinet with businessmen, most of whom were millionaires. Among the president’s key priorities was to reduce spending and the presence of the federal government. Federal controls over business and the economy would be limited while the authority of the states increased. Yet, like Truman, Eisenhower recognized the politics of the practical and understood that many New Deal agencies and functions could not and should not be attacked. He meant to pick and choose his domestic battles, staying to the right but still in the “vital center.”

Seeking to balance the budget, Eisenhower used a “meat ax” on Truman’s projected budgets. This gave him the means to reduce New Deal programs and to return power to local and state governance. Among those areas he sought to remove from federal authority were energy, agriculture, the environment, and federal trusteeship for Indian reservations. Congress approved—over Democratic opposition—private ownership of nuclear power plants and reduced federal controls. Congress also supported the return of much of the nation’s offshore oil sources to state authority and opened federal lands to lumber and mining companies. Citing costs and expanding opportunities for Native Americans, Congress passed a resolution establishing a termination policy, which began to reduce federal economic support to tribes and to liquidate selected reservations. Before the policy was reversed in the 1960s, sixty-one tribes were involved, with some losing valuable lands and resources. The Klamath tribe in Oregon sold much of its ponderosa pine lands to lumber companies. For many individuals in the affected tribes, the economic gains from such sales proved short-lived, and by the end of the decade conditions for Native Americans had worsened. By 1960 nearly half of all American Indians had abandoned their reservations.

Recognizing political reality, Eisenhower watched Congress increase agricultural subsidies, the minimum wage (to \$1.00 an hour), and Social Security benefits. He admitted that any political party that tried to “abolish Social Security and eliminate labor laws” would never be heard from again. The Democrats’ return to power in Congress in 1954 also added to the president’s willingness to accept and even expand such programs. He left the Tennessee Valley Authority intact and oversaw increased spending for urban housing and liberalized rules for Federal Housing Authority loans. Recognizing the government’s role in public policy, in 1953 Eisenhower created the Department of Health, Education and Welfare—directed by Oveta Culp Hobby, who had commanded the Women’s Army Corps during World War II. Still, Eisenhower’s vision of the government’s public policy role had limits. Some things were best left to the public, states, and communities—such as public health. In 1955, Jonas Salk developed a vaccine for polio, and many called for a nationwide federal program to inoculate children against the disease, which in 1952 had infected 52,000 people, mostly children. Eisenhower, Secretary Hobby, and the American Medical Association, however, rejected such a program, calling it socialism. Many state and local governments did institute vaccination programs, and by the 1960s the number of polio cases had fallen to under one thousand a year.

Although he sought a balanced budget, Eisenhower also committed the nation to significant spending, usually explained to be for economic and security needs. He approved the **Federal Highway Act** (1956) to meet the needs of an automobile-driven nation and to provide the military with a usable nationwide transportation network. After the Soviet Union launched the space satellites *Sputnik I* and *Sputnik II* in 1957, concern

**Federal Highway Act** Law passed by Congress in 1956, appropriating \$32 billion for the construction of interstate highways.

**Sputnik I** The first artificial satellite launched into space, by the Soviet Union in October 1957; a month later, the larger *Sputnik II*, was launched, carrying a dog named Laika.

### National Defense Student Loans

Loans established by the U.S. government in 1958 to encourage the teaching and study of science and modern foreign languages.

### Army-McCarthy hearings

Congressional investigations by Senator Joseph McCarthy televised in 1954; the hearings revealed McCarthy's villainous nature and ended his popularity.

arose that the United States was not keeping up with the Soviets in developing technical expertise. Eisenhower pointed to national security needs as grounds for increased federal spending on education. The result was the National Defense Education Act of 1958, which approved grants to schools that developed strong programs in science and mathematics. The act also provided \$295 million in **National Defense Student Loans** for college students. In 1958 Congress created the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), which immediately made manned flight its major priority.

### The Problem with McCarthy

Although Eisenhower realized that McCarthyism had helped him get elected, he now sought to diminish the influence of Joseph McCarthy, whom he personally disliked and whose activities he deplored. To weaken McCarthy's rhetoric, the administration increased loyalty requirements in 1953 and subsequently dismissed more than two thousand federal employees—none of whom were proven to be Communists, but nearly all of whom were appointed during the Roosevelt and Truman years. With Ike taking action, most Republicans thought McCarthy would end his crusade against Communists. But the senator from Wisconsin relished the spotlight. He criticized the administration's foreign policy as too soft on communism and continued his search for subversives, especially in the State Department. When, in 1954, McCarthy claimed favoritism toward known Communists in the army, anti-McCarthy forces in Congress, quietly supported by Eisenhower, established a committee to examine the senator's claims.

The American Broadcasting Company's telecast of the 1954 **Army-McCarthy hearings** allowed more than 20 million viewers to see McCarthy's ruthless bullying firsthand. Public and congressional opposition to the senator rose, and when the army's lawyer, Joseph Welch, asked the brooding McCarthy, "Have you no sense of decency?" the nation burst into applause. Several months later, with Republicans evenly divided, the Senate voted 67 to 22 to censure McCarthy's "unbecoming conduct." Drinking heavily, shunned by his colleagues, and ignored by the media, McCarthy died in 1957. But for years McCarthyism, refined and tempered, remained a potent political weapon against liberal opponents.

## Eisenhower and a Hostile World

- ★ **What were the weaknesses of "massive retaliation," and how did Eisenhower address them?**
- ★ **What tactics did the Eisenhower administration pursue in the Middle East and Latin America to protect American interests?**

During the 1952 campaign, Eisenhower's popularity in part reflected the widely held view that he and the Republicans would conduct a more forceful foreign policy. Truman's containment was denounced, and Republican spokesmen promised the rollback of communism and the liberation of peoples under Communist control. In a very popular move, Eisenhower promised to go to Korea "in the cause of peace." He went—for three days. Many expected him to find a means to win the conflict, but after visiting the front lines, he was convinced that a negotiated peace was the only solution. The problem was how to persuade the North Koreans and Chinese that such a settlement would be in their best interests.

Eisenhower came to the presidency well qualified to lead American foreign policy. His years in the military and as commander of NATO had made him not only an

internationalist but also a realist, wary of both assertive and simplistic solutions to international problems. Despite the campaign rhetoric of rollback, Eisenhower embraced the principle of containment and sought to modify it to match what he believed to be the nation's capabilities and needs. His new policy was called the **New Look**.

### The New Look

The core of the New Look was technology and nuclear deterrence—an enhanced arsenal of nuclear weapons and delivery systems, and the threat of **massive retaliation** to protect American international interests. In explaining the shift to more atomic weapons, Vice President Nixon stated, “Rather than let the Communists nibble us to death all over the world in little wars, we will rely . . . on massive mobile retaliation.” Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson, noting that the nuclear strategy was cheaper than using conventional forces, quipped that the policy ensured “more bang for the buck.” Demonstrating the country's nuclear might, the United States exploded its first hydrogen bomb in November 1952, expanded its arsenal of strategic nuclear weapons to six thousand, and developed tactical nuclear weapons of a lower destructive power that could be used on the battlefield.

The New Look was sold to the public as more positive than Truman's defensive containment policy, but insiders recognized that it had several flaws. The central problem was where the United States should draw the massive-retaliation line: “What if the enemy calls our bluff? How do you convince the American people and the U.S. Congress to declare war?” asked one planner. The answer was to convince potential aggressors that the United States would strike back, raining nuclear destruction not only on the attackers but also on the Soviets and Chinese, who obviously would be directing any aggression. This policy was called **brinkmanship**, because it required the administration to be willing to take the nation to the brink of war, trusting that the opposition would back down. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and Eisenhower indulged in dramatic speeches explaining that nuclear weapons were as usable as conventional ones. It was necessary “to remove the taboo” from using nuclear weapons, Dulles informed the press.

To prod the North Koreans and Chinese to sign a Korean truce agreement, Eisenhower used aggressive images of liberation and through public and private channels suggested that the United States might use atomic weapons. By July 1953, it seemed the strategy had worked. A truce signed at Panmunjom ended the fighting and brought home almost all the troops but left Korea divided by a **demilitarized zone**. Had the nuclear threat, “atomic diplomacy,” worked? Some thought it had, but others pointed to Stalin's death in March 1953 and the resolution of central issues as more important. Still, Americans praised Eisenhower's new approach.

To strengthen the idea of “going nuclear” and make the possibility of World War III less frightening, the administration introduced efforts related to surviving a nuclear war. Public and private underground **fallout shelters**—well stocked with food, water, and medical supplies—could, it was claimed, provide safety against an attack. A 32-inch-thick slab of concrete, *U.S. News & World Report* related, could protect people from an atomic blast “as close as 1,000 feet away.” Across the nation, civil defense drills were established for factories, offices, and businesses. “Duck-and-cover” drills were held in schools: when their teachers shouted “Drop!” students immediately got into a kneeling or prone position and placed their hands behind their necks.

As with Korea, Eisenhower recognized the limits of American power—areas under Communist control could not be liberated, and a thermonuclear war would yield no winners. Consequently, the administration sought other ways to promote American

**New Look** National security policy under Eisenhower that called for a reduction in the size of the army, development of tactical nuclear weapons, and the buildup of strategic air power employing nuclear weapons.

**massive retaliation** Term that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles used in a 1954 speech, implying that the United States was willing to use nuclear force in response to Communist aggression anywhere.

**brinkmanship** Seeking to win disputes in international politics by creating the impression of willingness to push a highly dangerous situation to the limit.

**demilitarized zone** An area from which military forces, operations, and installations are prohibited.

**fallout shelters** Underground shelter stocked with food and supplies, intended to provide safety in case of atomic attack; *fallout* refers to the irradiated particles falling through the atmosphere after a nuclear attack.

**covert operation** A program or event carried out not openly but in secret.

**bilateral** Involving two parties.

**multilateral** Involving more than two parties.

**Baghdad Pact** A 1955 regional defensive alliance between Turkey and Iraq, soon joined by Great Britain, Pakistan, and Iran; the United States officially joined in mid-1957.

**third world** Third world nations claimed to be independent of either the Western capitalist or Communist bloc. Both sides in the Cold War used a variety of means to include them in their camps.

**Central Intelligence Agency** An agency created in 1947 to gather and evaluate military, political, social, and economic information on foreign nations.

**Mohammed Reza Pahlavi** Iranian ruler who received the hereditary title *shah* from his father in 1941 and with CIA support helped to oust the militant nationalist Mohammed Mossadegh in 1953.

power and influence, including alliances and **covert operations**. Alliances would identify areas protected by the American nuclear umbrella, and they would protect the United States from being drawn into limited “brushfire” wars. When small conflicts erupted, the ground forces of regional allies, perhaps supported with American naval and air strength, would snuff them out.

Mindful of existing tensions in Asia, Eisenhower concluded **bilateral** defense pacts with South Korea (1953) and Taiwan (1955) and a **multilateral** agreement, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO, 1954), that linked the United States, Australia, Thailand, the Philippines, Pakistan, New Zealand, France, and Britain. In the Middle East, the United States officially joined Britain, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, and Iraq in the **Baghdad Pact** in 1957, later called the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) after Iraq withdrew in 1959. In Europe, the United States re-armed West Germany and welcomed it into NATO. In response, Moscow created the Warsaw Pact, in 1955. In all, the Eisenhower administration signed forty-three pacts to help defend regions or individual countries from Communist aggression (see Map 26.1).

### The Third World

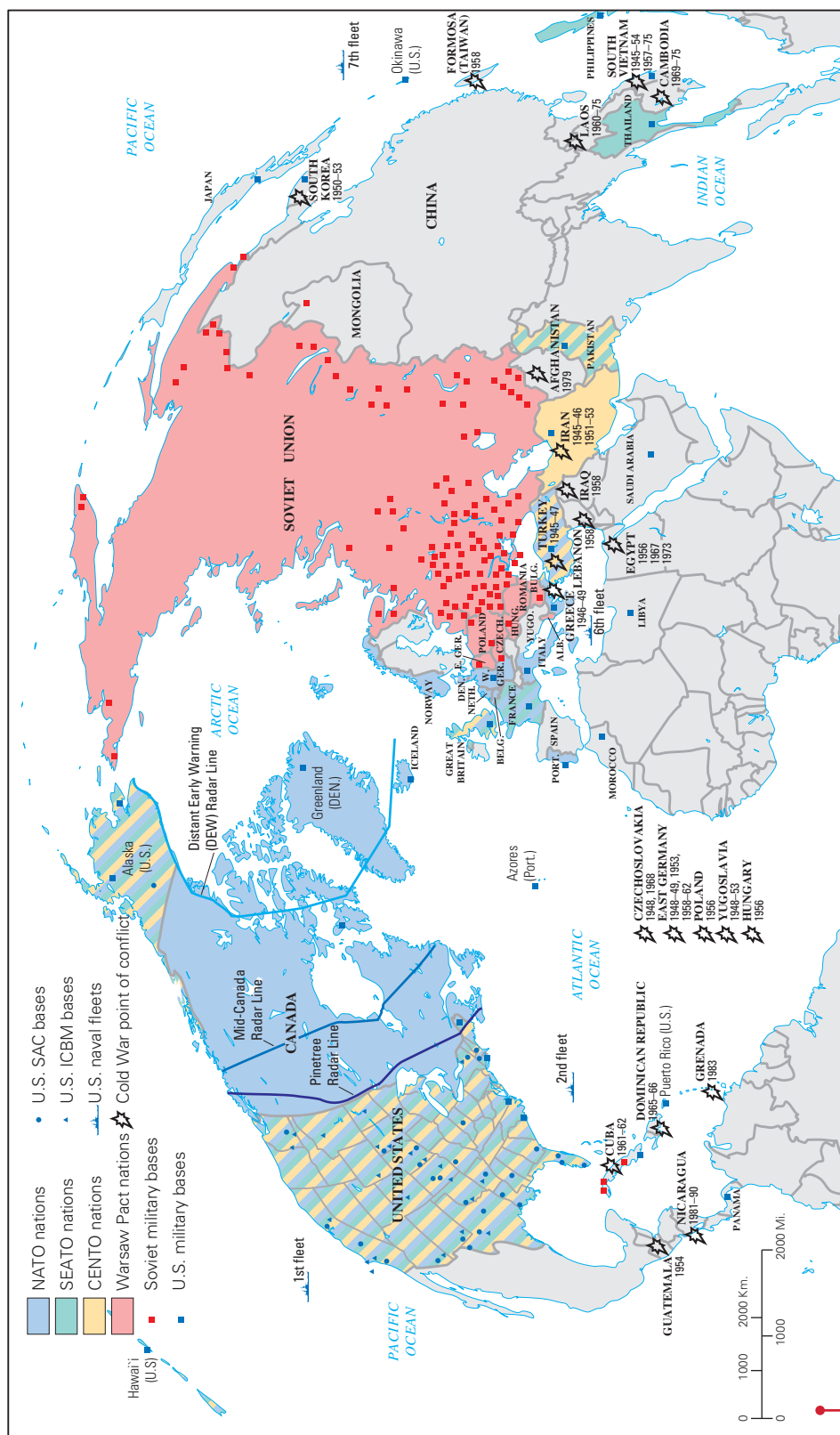
Brinkmanship was also of little use in dealing with Soviet and Chinese efforts to enlist the support of emerging nations. When the United Nations was created at the end of World War II, fifty-one nations signed its charter. Most were located in Europe and the Western Hemisphere. Over the next ten years, twenty-five more nations entered, about a third of them having achieved independence from European nations through revolution and political and social protests. By 1960, thirty-seven new nations existed in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. For many of the emerging nations, independence did not bring peace, prosperity, or stability and the so-called **third world** became part of the Cold War. Both the West and the Communist bloc competed for the “hearts and minds” of the emerging nations. One solution to the problem was to use economic and military aid, political pressure, and the **Central Intelligence Agency** (CIA) to support those governments that were anti-Communist and provided stability, even if that stability was achieved through ruthless and undemocratic means. It seemed a never-ending and largely thankless task. To meet the growing need, the CIA expanded by 500 percent and shifted its resources to covert activities—80 percent by 1957. In its conduct of activities the CIA, headed by Allen Dulles, operated with almost no congressional oversight or restrictions.

### Turmoil in the Middle East

In the Middle East, Arab nationalism, fired by anti-Israeli and anti-Western attitudes, posed a serious threat to American interests. Iran and Egypt offered the greatest challenges. In Iran, Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh had nationalized British-owned oil properties and seemed likely to sell oil to the Soviets. Eisenhower considered him to be “neurotic and periodically unstable,” and gave the CIA the green light to overthrow the Iranian leader and replace him with a pro-Western government. On August 18, 1953, Mossadegh was forced from office and was replaced by **Mohammed Reza Pahlavi**, who awarded the United States 40 percent of Iranian oil production.

Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser, who assumed power in 1954, posed a similar problem. At first the United States supported Nasser, hoping to woo him with loans, cash, arms, and an offer to help build the High Aswan Dam on the Nile. But Nasser rejected the American offers and turned to the Soviets for support. Calling him an “evil influence” in the region, Eisenhower canceled the Aswan Dam project (July 1956). Days





During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union faced each other as enemies. The United States attempted to construct a ring of containment around the Soviet Union and its allies, while the Soviets worked to expand their influence and power. This map shows the nature of this military confrontation—the bases, alliances, and flash points of the Cold War.

later, claiming the need to finance the dam, Nasser nationalized the Anglo-French-owned Suez Canal. Some within the administration suggested that Nasser be assassinated, but Eisenhower rejected that option. Egypt had, he explained, no suitable replacement. He also rejected armed intervention as aggression.

Israel, France, and Britain, however, responded with military action and seized the canal. Furious, Eisenhower joined the Soviets to sponsor a UN General Assembly resolution calling for the removal of foreign troops from Egyptian soil. France, Britain, and Israel withdrew their forces, and Nasser regained control of the canal. Nasser's enhanced prestige and the growth of Soviet influence in the Middle East forced Eisenhower to affirm American interests in the region and to support the regional anti-Soviet alliance: the Baghdad Pact/CENTO. To protect Arab friends from Communist-nationalist revolutions, he asked Congress for permission to commit American forces, if requested, to resist "armed attack from any country controlled by internationalism" (by which Eisenhower meant the forces of communism). Congress agreed in March 1957, establishing the so-called **Eisenhower Doctrine** and providing \$200 million in military and economic aid to the nations of the Middle East.

It did not take long for the Eisenhower Doctrine to be applied. When an internal revolt threatened Jordan's King Hussein in 1957, the White House announced Jordan was "vital" to American interests, moved the U.S. 6th Fleet into the eastern Mediterranean, and supplied more than \$10 million in aid. King Hussein put down the revolt, dismissed parliament and all political parties, and instituted authoritarian rule. A year later, Lebanon's Christian president Camile Chamoun ignored his country's constitution and ran for a second term; opposition leaders—including Muslim nationalistic, anti-West elements—rebelled. Chamoun requested American intervention, and Eisenhower committed nearly fifteen thousand troops to protect the pro-American government. Within three months Washington had overseen the formation of a new government and the troops withdrew without firing a shot.

**Eisenhower Doctrine** Policy formulated by Eisenhower of providing military and economic aid to Arab nations in the Middle East to help defeat Communist-nationalistic rebellions.

### A Protective Neighbor

During the 1952 presidential campaign, Eisenhower charged Truman with following a "Poor Neighbor policy" toward Latin America, allowing the development of economic problems and popular uprisings that had been "skillfully exploited by the Communists." He was most concerned about Guatemala, disapproving of the reformist president, Jacobo Arbenz, who had instituted agrarian reforms by nationalizing thousands of acres of land, much of it owned by the American-based United Fruit Company. In response, a CIA-organized and -supplied rebel army invaded Guatemala on June 18, 1954. Within weeks a new, pro-American government was installed in Guatemala City. But the effort failed to reduce the social and economic inequalities, blunt the cry for revolution, or foster goodwill toward the United States.

Closer to home, a rebellion led by Fidel Castro toppled the Cuban government of Fulgencio Batista, who had controlled the island since the 1940s. The corrupt and dictatorial Batista had become an embarrassment to the United States, and many Americans believed that Castro could be a pro-American reformist leader. By 1959, rebel forces had control of the island, but by midyear many of Castro's economic and social reforms were endangering the American investments and interests that dominated Cuba's economy. Concerned about Castro's political leanings, Washington tried to push Cuba in the right direction by applying economic pressure. In February 1960, Castro reacted to the American arm-twisting by signing an economic pact with the Soviet Union. In response, Eisenhower approved a CIA plan to prepare an attack on the island. Actual implementation of the plot to overthrow the Cuban leader, however, was left to Eisenhower's successor.

### The New Look in Asia

When Eisenhower took office, Asia was the focal point of Cold War tensions. Fighting continued in Korea, and in Indochina the Communist **Viet Minh**, directed by Ho Chi Minh, was fighting a “war of national liberation” against the French. Truman had supported France, and Eisenhower saw no reason to alter American policy. By 1954, the United States had dispatched more than three hundred advisers to Vietnam and was paying nearly 78 percent of the war’s cost as the French military position worsened. Articulating the **domino theory**, Eisenhower warned that if Indochina fell to communism, the loss “of Burma, of Thailand, of the [Malay] Peninsula, and Indonesia” would certainly follow, endangering Australia and New Zealand.

In Vietnam, Viet Minh forces led by General Vo Nguyen Giap encircled the French fortress at Dienbienphu and launched murderous attacks on the beleaguered garrison. Eisenhower transferred forty bombers and detailed two hundred air force mechanics to bolster the French in Vietnam. The French—and some members of the Eisenhower administration—wanted a more direct American role, but Eisenhower believed that “no military victory is possible in that kind of theater” and rejected such options. After a fifty-five-day siege, Dienbienphu fell on May 7, 1954, and Eisenhower was left no option but to try to salvage a partial victory at an international conference in Geneva.

But the West could piece together no victory at Geneva either. The **Geneva Agreement** “temporarily” partitioned Vietnam along the 17th parallel and created the neutral states of Cambodia and Laos. Within two years, the Vietnamese were to hold elections to unify the nation, and were to neither enter into military alliances nor allow foreign bases on their territory. American strategists called the settlement a “disaster,” since Ho Chi Minh was sure to win. Showing its displeasure, the United States refused to sign the agreement. Eisenhower rushed advisers and aid to South Vietnam’s new prime minister, Ngo Dinh Diem. With American blessings, Diem ignored the Geneva-mandated unification elections, quashed his political opposition, and in October 1955 staged a **plebiscite** that created the Republic of Vietnam and elected him president.

### The Soviets and Cold War Politics

Eisenhower’s New Look and containment strategy was based on deterrence and the ability of the United States to strike at the Soviet Union. To ensure that ability, the Eisenhower administration developed a three-way system to attack the Soviet Union and China. Efforts were intensified to develop an intercontinental and intermediate-range ballistic missile system that could be fired from land bases and from submarines. At the same time, the nation’s bomber fleet was improved, introducing the jet-powered B-47. Although deterrence was critical, Eisenhower realized that improving American-Soviet relations was important in reducing the expanding and expensive arms race and limiting points of conflict throughout the world. But could the Soviets be trusted to keep their agreements and work toward peace? Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles had their doubts, but Stalin’s death in 1953 and the growing Soviet nuclear capabilities provided both the opportunity and need to reduce tensions.

The new Soviet leader, Georgy Malenkov, fired the first shot by calling for “peaceful coexistence.” Dulles dismissed the suggestion, but Eisenhower, with an eye on world opinion, called on the Soviets to demonstrate their willingness to cooperate with the West. Malenkov responded by agreeing to consider a form of on-site inspection to verify approved arms reductions. Eisenhower responded by asking the Soviets in December 1953 to join him in the **Atoms for Peace plan** and to work toward universal disarmament.

**Viet Minh** Vietnamese army made up of Communist and other nationalist groups that fought from 1946 to 1954 for independence from French rule.

**domino theory** The idea that if one nation came under Communist control, then neighboring nations would also fall to the Communists.

**Geneva Agreement** Truce signed at Geneva in 1954 by French and Viet Minh representatives, dividing Vietnam along the 17th parallel into the Communist North and the anti-Communist South.

**plebiscite** Special election that allows people to either approve or reject a particular proposal.

**Atoms for Peace plan** Eisenhower’s proposal to the United Nations in 1953 that the United States and other nations cooperate to develop peaceful uses of atomic energy.

**thermonuclear** Relating to the fusion of atomic nuclei at high temperatures, or to weapons based on fusion, such as the hydrogen bomb (as distinct from weapons based on fission).

**Nikita Khrushchev** Soviet leader who denounced Stalin in 1956 and improved the Soviet Union's image abroad; he was deposed in 1964 after six years as premier for his failure to improve the country's economy.

Both countries were testing hydrogen **thermonuclear** bombs hundreds of times more powerful than atomic bombs. And world concern was growing, not only about the threat of nuclear war but about the dangers of radiation from the testing. Throughout 1954, worldwide pressure grew for a summit meeting to deal with the “balance of terror.” In 1955 Eisenhower agreed to a summit meeting in Geneva with the new Soviet leadership team of Nikolai Bulganin and **Nikita Khrushchev**, who had replaced Malenkov. Eisenhower expected no resolution of the two major issues—disarmament and Berlin—and instead saw the meeting as good public relations. He would make a bold disarmament initiative—the Open Skies proposal—that would certainly earn broad international support. Eisenhower asked the Soviets to share information about military installations and to permit aerial reconnaissance to verify the information while work began on general disarmament. The Soviets rejected the proposal, but the meeting generated a “spirit of Geneva” that reduced East-West tensions without appeasing the Communist foe. Besides, Eisenhower knew that the United States would soon have in service a new high-altitude jet plane, the U-2, which it was thought could safely fly above Soviet anti-aircraft missiles while taking close-up photographs of Soviet territory. This was Cold War gamesmanship at its best.

The spirit of Geneva vanished when Soviet forces invaded Hungary in November 1956 to quell an anti-Soviet revolt. Many Americans favored supporting the Hungarian freedom fighters, but facing the Suez crisis and seeing no way to send aid to the Hungarians without risking all-out war, the administration only watched as the Soviets crushed the revolt. Soviet-American relations cooled, and Eisenhower and Khrushchev jostled with each other over nuclear testing and disarmament. First one and then the other, with little belief in success, offered to end nuclear testing and eliminate nuclear weapons if certain provisions were met. The simmering issue of Berlin also aggravated tensions. In 1958, the Soviets suggested that the city of Berlin be unified under East German control. This was unthinkable to Eisenhower. Supported by the British and French, he declared that the Western Allies would remain in West Berlin. Faced with unflinching Western determination, Khrushchev backed down and suggested that he and Eisenhower exchange visits and hold a summit meeting. An agreement followed that saw Khrushchev's twelve-day tour of the United States in September 1959, and a summit in Paris in May of 1960. As the summit began in May 1960, however, the Soviets shot down an American U-2 spy plane over the Soviet Union and captured its pilot. In Paris, Eisenhower took full responsibility but refused to apologize for such flights. Khrushchev withdrew from the summit, and Eisenhower canceled a planned trip to the Soviet Union. Eisenhower returned home a hero, having stood up to the Soviets. But public support was temporary. Soviet advances in missile technology and nuclear weaponry, and a Communist Cuba only 90 miles from Florida, provided the Democrats with strong reasons to claim that the Republicans and Eisenhower had been deficient in meeting Soviet threats. In 1960, turning the Republicans' tactics of 1952 against them, Democrats cheerfully accused their opponents of being too soft on communism.

## The Best of Times

- ★ **Why did Americans embrace suburban culture? What stresses were at work beneath the placid surface of suburbia?**
- ★ **Who were some of the critics of suburban culture, and what were their complaints? Why were rock 'n' roll and rebellious teens seen as threats to social norms?**

According to the middle-class magazine *Reader's Digest*, in 1954 the average American male stood 5 feet 9 inches tall and weighed 158 pounds. He liked brunettes, baseball, bowling, and steak and French fries. In seeking a wife, he could not decide if brains



or beauty was more important, but he definitely wanted a wife who could run a home efficiently. The average female was 5 feet 4 inches tall and weighed 132 pounds. She preferred marriage to career, but she wanted to remove the word *obey* from her marriage vows. Both were enjoying life to the fullest, according to the *Digest*, and buying more of just about everything. The economy appeared to be bursting at the seams, providing jobs, good wages, a multitude of products, and profits.

### The Web of Prosperity

The nation's "easy street" was a product of trends and developments that followed World War II. At the center of the activity were big government, big business, cheap energy, and an expanding population. World War II and the Cold

War had created military-industrial-governmental linkages that primed the economy through government spending, what some have labeled "military **Keynesianism**." National security needs accounted for half of the U.S. budget by 1955, equaling about 17 percent of the gross national product, and exceeded more than the total net incomes of all American corporations. The connection between government and business went beyond spending, however. Government officials and corporate managers moved back and forth in a vast network of jobs and directorships. Few saw any real conflict of interest. Frequently, people from the businesses to be regulated also staffed cabinet positions and regulatory agencies. Secretary of Defense Wilson, who had been the president of General Motors, voiced the common view: "What was good for our country was good for General Motors and vice versa." It was an era of "new economics," in which, according to a 1952 ad in the *New York Times*, industry's "efforts are not in the selfish interest" but "for the good of many . . . the American way."

Expanding prosperity and productivity and the growth of the service sector characterized the work force. Although salaries for industrial workers increased steadily, from about \$55 a week in 1950 to nearly \$80 in 1960, their numbers declined. More and more jobs were created in the public and service sectors, and by 1956 white-collar workers outnumbered blue-collar workers for the first time. Unions responded to these changes and to the accusations made in the late 1940s of being too communistic by altering their goals. Wishing to avoid strikes and confrontation, they focused on negotiating better pensions, cost-of-living raises, and paid vacations for their members while giving up efforts to gain some control over the workplace and production. Despite favorable contracts, however, union membership as a percentage of the work force fell from about 35.5 percent in 1950 to about 31 percent by 1960. Although the AFL and the CIO merged in 1955, they made little effort to organize agricultural workers, the growing number of white-collar workers, or people working in the **Sunbelt**.

### Suburban and Family Culture

The suburban housing boom that began after the war continued throughout the 1950s. New planned communities represented the American dream—a fresh start and a commitment to family, community, and God. "We were thrilled to death,"

recalled one newly arrived suburbanite. "Everyone was arriving with a sense of forward momentum. Everyone was taking courage from the sight of another orange moving van pulling in next door, a family just like us, unloading pole lamps and cribs and Formica dining tables like our own. . . ." Many of the families were moving into a new "**ranch**" or **California-style home**, whose floor plan represented the "modern" lifestyle. Front and center was the new larger family or living room, complete with a television. Near the family room was the centrally located kitchen with its modern appliances that allowed the housewife that extra time to nurture the family and put her imprint on the home and community.

**Keynesianism** Refers to John Maynard Keynes, who in the 1920s and 1930s argued for government intervention in the economy, believing that government expansion and contraction of the money supply could stimulate economic growth.

**Sunbelt** A region stretching from Florida in a westward arc across the South and Southwest.

### **ranch** or **California-style home**

A single-story rectangular or L-shaped house with a low-pitched roof, simple floor plan, and an attached garage.

Throughout the 1950s, a popular image of the American dream was the family enjoying “togetherness” during a family picnic. Bettmann/Corbis.



At the heart of the “ranch” was the American nuclear family. Families were the strength of the nation, and the number of families was growing. As the divorce rate slowed, the numbers of marriages and births climbed, and the baby boom continued, peaking at 4.3 million births in 1957. Popular images of the family focused on the wife managing the house and raising the children, while the husband worked in an office and directed weekend events. For guidance on how to raise babies and children, millions of Americans turned to Dr. Benjamin Spock’s popular book *Baby and Child Care* (1946). A mother’s love and positive parental guidance were keys to healthy and well-adjusted children. Strict rules and corporal punishment were to be avoided. To ensure proper gender identity, boys should participate in sports and outdoor activities, whereas girls should concentrate on their appearance and domestic skills. Toy guns and doctor bags were for boys; dolls, tea sets, and nurse kits were for girls. Conforming was as important for parents as for children. Those unwilling to fulfill those roles, especially women, were suspected of being homosexual, neurotic, emotionally immature, too involved in a career, or simply irresponsible.

Television, too, shaped and defined the American suburban life. Developed in the 1930s, televisions became available to the consumer after World War II ended, and at first they were very expensive. As demand and production increased, prices fell, and more and more people regarded “the box” as a necessity. In 1950 only about 9 percent of homes had a television, but at the end of the decade the percentage had risen to nearly 90 percent.

Every evening, families by the millions watched a variety of popular shows, including domestic situation comedies (“sitcoms”) in which the home was invariably the center of togetherness. As defined in 1954 by *McCall’s* magazine, “togetherness” reflected the popular vision of family life in the suburbs. There, husband and wife shared responsibilities

from housekeeping and shopping to decision making and fulfilling the needs and desires of their children. In popular television shows like *Father Knows Best* (1953), *Leave It to Beaver* (1957), and *The Donna Reed Show* (1958), the ideal middle-class TV families were white and had hardworking, earnest fathers and attractive, savvy mothers who ran the households. Their children, usually numbering between two and four, did well in school, were not overly concerned about the future, and provided the usually humorous dilemmas that Mom's common sense untangled. During the day, **soap operas**, most also set in middle-class settings, revolved around personal problems that eventually were worked out in a manner that affirmed family values. As the number and variety of programs expanded, so too did the audience, and by 1960 most people watched television for five hours a day.

Sunday mornings, however, were reserved for church. "The family that prays together stays together," announced the Advertising Council. Church attendance rose to 59.5 percent in 1953, a historic high, and religious revivals, along with radio and television programs, drew large audiences. Religious leaders were rated as the most important members of society. The growth affected traditional Protestant as well as fundamentalist evangelical denominations. Protestants stressed "you can improve yourself and society," messages, like those of the **Reverend Norman Vincent Peale**. His books and radio and television programs emphasized that Christian positive thinking could overcome fear, make one popular, and improve society. The message of the Evangelists was more conservative and questioned society's growing secularism and emphasized a personal dependence on God's Grace for salvation. Beginning in 1949, Billy Graham emerged as a leading evangelical minister. Thousands packed stadiums to hear his powerful sermons reminding audiences that the end of the world could come at any time and people should prepare by adopting higher commitment to God. Although Peale's and Graham's views on the nature of American society differed, they agreed on the need to promote faith to prevent the spread of communism. In keeping with the spirit of the times, Congress added "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954 and "In God We Trust" to the American currency in 1955.

**soap opera** A daytime serial drama so nicknamed because it was sponsored by cleaning products, aimed at its housewife audience.

**Reverend Norman Vincent Peale** Minister who told his congregations that positive thinking could help them overcome all their troubles in life; his book, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, was an immediate bestseller.

## Consumerism

Another dimension of suburbia was consumerism. Radio and television bombarded their audiences with images not only of the average American but of the products those Americans used. Commercials provided the average television watcher with over five hours a week of ads that enticed viewers to indulge themselves, enjoy life, and own more.

And Americans were in a buying mood, especially the suburbanite. New goods were a sign of progress and a matter of status. Moving into a new housing development involved buying more than a new house: often it required the purchase of a variety of household furnishings and appliances and, of course, a new car. One resident noted, "Our old car just didn't cut it . . . a car was a real status symbol and who didn't want to impress the neighbors?" Those producing the goods responded by emphasizing style and the latest model. The automobile industry was especially effective in upgrading and changing the styles of their cars. Market research showed that it was mostly the middle and upper classes that bought new cars and encouraged the automobile makers to close the gap between luxury and nonluxury cars. Cadillac introduced fins in 1948, and by the mid-1950s nearly every car had fins and dealer showrooms were waging a fin-war.

By 1960, 75 percent of all Americans had at least one car, increasing the pressure on all levels of government to build new roads and highways. Eisenhower's greatest

spending program, the Federal Highway Act of 1956, allocated over \$32 billion to begin a federal interstate highway system. New industries arose to service the needs of the automobile-driving family—motels, amusement parks, drive-in theaters, and fast-food restaurants. Walt Disney opened Disneyland in 1955, in a televised extravaganza, with the intention of providing family entertainment in a sparkling, clean-cut setting that reflected the spirit of America. In a similar vein a few years later, McDonald's changed the nation's eating habits while providing "Mom a Night Off," in a clean and wholesome environment without cigarette machines, jukeboxes, and beer.

Helping to pay for cars, televisions, washing machines, toys, and "Mom's night out" were increasing wages and credit. Why pay cash when consumer credit was available? The Diner's Club credit card made its debut in 1950 and was soon followed by American Express and a host of other plastic cards. Credit purchases leaped from \$8.4 billion in 1946 to more than \$44 billion in 1958.

### Another View of Suburbia

**standard of living** Level of material comfort as measured by the goods, services, and luxuries currently available.

Unlike the wives shown on television, more and more married women were working outside the home even though they had young children. Some desired careers, but the majority worked to safeguard their family's existing **standard of living**. The percentage of middle-class women who worked for wages rose from 7 percent in 1950 to 25 percent in 1960. Most held part-time jobs or salesclerk and clerical positions that paid low wages and provided few benefits. Women represented 46 percent of the banking work force—filling most secretary, teller, and receptionist slots—but held only 15 percent of upper-level positions.

Togetherness and suburban expectations did not make all homemakers happy. A study found that of eighteen household chores, men were willing to do three—lock up at night, do yard work, and make repairs. Other surveys discovered that more than one-fifth of suburban wives were unhappy with their marriages and lives. Many women complained of the drudgery and boredom of housework and the lack of understanding and affection from their husbands. Women were also more sexually active than generally thought, shattering the image of loyal wife and pure mother. Research on women's sexuality conducted by **Alfred Kinsey** and described in his book *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953) indicated that a majority of American women had had sexual intercourse before marriage, and 25 percent were having affairs while married.

**Alfred Kinsey** Biologist whose studies of human sexuality attracted great attention in the 1940s and 1950s, especially for his conclusions on infidelity and homosexuality.

### Rejecting Consensus

Americans seemed to consider sex symbols in the movies and men's magazines as a minor threat to the image of family, community, and nation. Homosexuality, however, was another matter. Many people believed it damaged the moral and social fabric of society. Kinsey's 1948 study of male sexuality shocked readers by claiming that nearly 8 percent of the population lived a gay lifestyle and that homosexuality existed throughout American society. An increasingly open gay subculture that centered around gay bars in every major city seemed to support his findings.

In a postwar society that emphasized the traditional family and feared internal subversion, homosexuals represented a double menace. A Senate investigating committee concluded that because of sexual perversions and lack of moral fiber, one homosexual could "pollute a Government office." Responding to such views, the Eisenhower administration barred homosexuals from most government jobs. Taking their cue from the federal government, state and local authorities intensified their efforts to control homosexuals and, if possible, purge them from society. **Vice squads** made frequent raids on

**vice squads** Police unit charged with the enforcement of laws dealing with vice—that is, immoral practices such as gambling and prostitution.



# Investigating America

## Ray Kroc Explains the McDonald's Approach to Business, 1956

Around the world few symbols are better known than the Golden Arches of McDonald's. Since its humble origins in San Bernardino, California, more than twelve thousand McDonald's restaurants now exist in the United States, and seven thousand in foreign nations. Unlike the restaurant's original menu, shown here, today's McDonald's menus provide a wide variety of choices, from Big Macs to salads to vegetarian burgers in India and Shogun Burgers in Japan.

In 1977, as McDonald's spread across the nation, Ray Kroc wrote his autobiography, *Grinding It Out*. It not only explained his personal long climb to prominence but provided insight into the many innovations that have shaped the fast-food industry and changed America's and the world's eating habits. The following excerpts not only demonstrate some of the techniques McDonald's used but also provide a glimpse of Kroc's enthusiasm for his product.

### McDonald's Menu, 1956

Hamburgers	15 cents
Cheeseburgers	19 cents
Malt Shakes	20 cents
French Fries	10 cents
Orange	10 cents
Root Beer	10 cents
Coke	10 cents
Milk	10 cents
Coffee	10 cents

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- Compare this original McDonald's menu to a menu at today's McDonald's. What do the differences suggest about McDonald's and American eating habits?
- In what ways was McDonald's seeking to lower costs and make its product more competitive? How did Kroc's statement on American capitalism reflect the hopes and values of the 1950s in America?
- Ray Kroc said that a major reason McDonald's was successful was that it took "the hamburger business more seriously than anybody else." How does this excerpt support that point of view?



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**Beats** Group of American writers, poets, and artists in the 1950s, including Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, who rejected traditional middle-class values and championed nonconformity and sexual experimentation.

gay and lesbian bars, and newspapers often listed the names, addresses, and employers of those arrested. In response to the virulent attacks, many took extra efforts to hide their homosexuality, but some organized to confront the offensive. In Los Angeles, Henry Hay formed the Mattachine Society in 1951 to fight for homosexual rights.

Also viewed as extreme were the **Beats**, or “beatniks,” a group of often-controversial artists, poets, and writers. Allen Ginsberg in his poem *Howl* (1956) and Jack Kerouac in his novel *On the Road* (1957) denounced American materialism and sexual repression, and glorified a freer, natural life. In an interview in the New York alternative news-weekly *The Village Voice*, Ginsberg praised the few “hipsters” who were battling “an America gone mad with materialism, a police-state America, a sexless and soulless America.”

Most Americans could justify the suppression of beatniks and homosexuals because they appeared to mock traditional values of family and community. Other critics of American society, however, were more difficult to dismiss. Several respected writers and intellectuals claimed that the suburban and consumer culture was destructive—stifling diversity and individuality in favor of conformity. Mass-produced homes, meals, toys, fashions, and the other trappings of suburban life, they said, created a gray sameness about Americans. William H. Wythe’s controversial *Organization Man* (1956) argued that working as a team had surpassed self-reliance as traits of American workers. He urged readers to resist being packaged like cake mixes and encouraged them to reassert their own identities. Serious literature also highlighted a sense of alienation from the conformist society. Many of Saul Bellow’s works, for example, examined the difficulty of Jewish men fitting into society. A similar theme existed in J. D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), whose hero, Holden Caulfield, is unable to find his place in society and concludes that the major features of American life are all phony.

### The Trouble with Kids

Although a small percentage of the nation’s youth adopted the views of the Beats or turned their backs on middle-class values and consumerism, many parents and adults were concerned about teenagers, their behavior, and juvenile delinquency. Juvenile crime and gangs were not new topics, but for the first time many people worried that these problems were taking hold outside of the city and beyond the urban poor and minorities. To suburban middle-class parents, the violent crime associated with inner-city gangs was not the concern; instead, it was the behavior of their own teens as they seemed to flout traditional values and behavior. At the center of the problem, many believed, was a developing youth culture characterized by the car, rock ‘n’ roll, and disrespect for adults. One study of middle-class delinquency concluded that the automobile not only allowed teens to escape adult controls but also provided “a private lounge for drinking and for petting or sex episodes.” Critics also blamed misbehavior on rock ‘n’ roll, comic books, television, and lack of proper family upbringing. In the film *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), which featured soon-to-be teen idol James Dean, the rebellious characters came from atypical suburban homes where gender roles were reversed. Audiences saw a dominating mother and a father who cooked and assumed many traditional housewifely duties. To the adult audience, the message was clear: an “improper” family environment bred juvenile delinquents.

The problem with kids also seemed wedded to *rock ‘n’ roll*, the term Cleveland disc jockey Alan Freed coined in 1951. Freed had noticed that white teens were buying rhythm and blues (R&B) records popular among African Americans, but he also knew that few white households would listen to a radio program playing “black music.” Freed decided to play the least sexually suggestive of the R&B records and call the music rock ‘n’ roll.

His radio program, *Moondog's Rock 'n' Roll Party*, was a smash hit. Quickly the barriers between “black music” and “white music” began to blur as white singers copied and modified R&B songs to produce **cover records**.

Cover artists like Pat Boone and Georgia Gibbs sold millions of records that avoided suggestive lyrics and were heard on hundreds of radio stations that had refused to play the original versions created by black artists. By mid-decade, African American artists like Chuck Berry, Little Richard, and Ray Charles were successfully “crossing over” and being heard on “white” radio stations. At the same time, white artists, including the 1950's most dynamic star, **Elvis Presley**, were making their own contributions. Beginning with “Heartbreak Hotel” in 1956, Presley recorded fourteen gold records within two years. In concerts, he drove his audiences into frenzies with sexually suggestive movements that earned him the nickname “Elvis the Pelvis.”

**cover records** A new version of a song already recorded by an original artist.

**Elvis Presley** Immensely popular rock 'n' roll musician from a poor white family in Mississippi; many of his songs and concert performances were considered sexually suggestive.

## Outside Suburbia

★ **How did African Americans attack de jure segregation in American society during the 1950s?**

★ **What role did the federal government play in promoting civil rights?**

The media portrait of the average American as a white, middle-class suburbanite excluded a huge part of the population, especially minorities and the poor. Although the percentage of those living below the poverty line—set during the 1950s at \$3,000 a year—was declining, it was still over 22 percent and included large percentages of the elderly, minorities, and women heads of households. Even with Social Security payments, nearly 31 percent of those over 65 lived below the poverty line as 1959 ended, with 8 million receiving less than \$1,000 a year. Throughout rural America, especially among small farmers and farm workers, poverty was common, with most earning \$1,000 below the national average of about \$3,500 (see Map 26.2).

In cities, it was common for nonwhite unemployment to reach 40 percent. At the same time, cities were less able or willing to provide services. Cities lost tax revenues and deteriorated at an accelerating rate as white middle- and working-class families moved into the suburbs and were followed by shopping centers and businesses. When funds were available for urban renewal and development, many city governments, like those in Miami and Los Angeles, used these funds to relocate and isolate minorities in specific neighborhoods away from developing entertainment, administrative, and shopping areas and upscale apartments. Cities also chose to build wider roads connecting the city to the suburbs rather than investing in mass transit within the city. In Los Angeles, freeway interchanges gobbled up 10 percent of the housing space and divided neighborhoods. For nearly all minorities, discrimination and *de facto* segregation put upward mobility and escaping poverty even further out of reach.

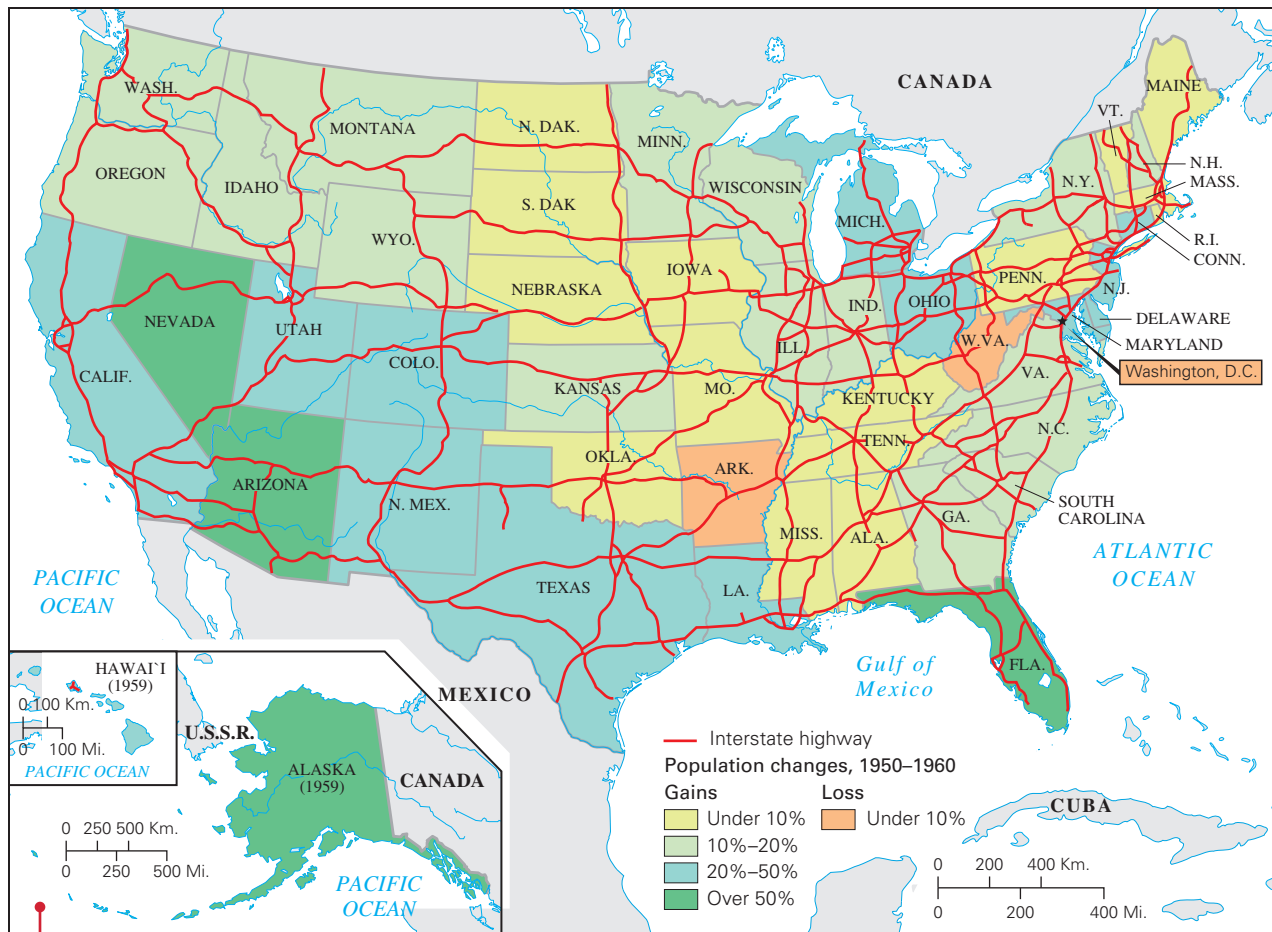
**de facto** Existing in practice, though not officially established by law.

### Integrating Schools

For many African Americans, poverty was just one facet of life. They also faced a legally sanctioned segregated society. Legal, or *de jure*, segregation existed not only in the South but also in the District of Columbia and several western and

midwestern states. Changes had occurred, but most African Americans regarded them as minor victories, indicating no real shift in white America's racial views. By 1952 the NAACP had won cases permitting African American law and graduate students to attend white colleges and universities, even though the separate-but-equal ruling established in 1896 by the Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson* remained intact.

**de jure** According to, or brought about by, law.



**MAP 26.2** Movement across America, 1950–1960

Americans were on the move during the 1950s. White Americans moved to the suburbs, especially in the South and West. Many African Americans left rural areas of the South; others moved against existing patterns of segregation. This map shows the web of interstate highways and population shifts during this period.

**Brown v. Board of Education** Case in 1954 in which the Supreme Court ruled that separate educational facilities for different races were inherently unequal.

**Thurgood Marshall** Civil rights lawyer who argued thirty-two cases before the Supreme Court and won twenty-nine; he became the first African American justice of the Supreme Court in 1967.

**Earl Warren** Chief justice of the Supreme Court from 1953 to 1969, under whom the Court issued decisions protecting civil rights, the rights of criminals, and First Amendment rights.

A step toward more significant change came in 1954 when the Supreme Court considered the case of **Brown v. Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas**. The *Brown* case had started four years earlier, when Oliver Brown sued to allow his daughter to attend a nearby white school. The Kansas courts had rejected his suit, and the NAACP appealed. In addressing the Supreme Court, NAACP lawyer **Thurgood Marshall** argued that the concept of “separate but equal” was inherently self-contradictory. He used statistics to show that black schools were separate and *unequal* in financial resources, quality and number of teachers, and physical and educational resources. Marshall also stressed that segregated educational facilities, even if physically similar, could never yield equal results.

In 1952 a divided Court was unable to make a decision, but two years later the Court heard the case again. Now sitting as chief justice was **Earl Warren**, the Republican former governor of California whom Eisenhower had appointed to the Court in 1953. To the dismay of many who had considered Warren a legal conservative, the chief justice moved the Court away from its longtime preoccupation with economic and regulatory issues and down new judicial paths. The activism of the Supreme Court, rejecting social and



# Investigating America

## The Southern Manifesto, 1956

The Manifesto, excerpted here, was largely the work of South Carolina's Strom Thurmond (who headed the Dixiecrat ticket in 1948) and Georgia's Richard Russell Jr. All but two of the 101 signatories were southern Democrats; both Republicans represented Virginia, whose state assembly had proposed reviving nullification as a response to the Court. North Carolina Senator Samuel Irving, later to win fame as a critic of Nixon during the Watergate crisis, also signed the document. Senate Majority Leader Lyndon B. Johnson and Tennessee's Albert Gore Sr. (the father of the Vice President and 2000 presidential candidate) were among the few southern politicians not to sign the Manifesto.

.....

The increasing gravity of the situation following the decision of the Supreme Court in the so-called segregation cases, and the peculiar stress in sections of the country where this decision has created many difficulties, unknown and unappreciated, perhaps, by many people residing in other parts of the country, have led some Senators and some Members of the House of Representatives to prepare a statement of the position which they have felt and now feel to be imperative. . . .

The unwarranted decision of the Supreme Court in the public school cases is now bearing the fruit always produced when men substitute naked power for established law. . . . The original Constitution does not mention education. Neither does the 14th Amendment nor any other amendment. The debates preceding the submission of the 14th Amendment clearly show that there was no intent that it should affect the system of education maintained by the States. . . .

In the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896 the Supreme Court expressly declared that under the 14th Amendment no person was denied any of his rights if the States provided separate but equal facilities. This decision has been followed in many

other cases. It is notable that the Supreme Court, speaking through Chief Justice Taft, a former President of the United States, unanimously declared in 1927 in *Lum v. Rice* that the "separate but equal" principle is "within the discretion of the State in regulating its public schools and does not conflict with the 14th Amendment."

This interpretation, restated time and again, became a part of the life of the people of many of the States and confirmed their habits, traditions, and way of life. It is founded on elemental humanity and common sense, for parents should not be deprived by Government of the right to direct the lives and education of their own children. . . .

We pledge ourselves to use all lawful means to bring about a reversal of this decision which is contrary to the Constitution and to prevent the use of force in its implementation. In this trying period, as we all seek to right this wrong, we appeal to our people not to be provoked by the agitators and troublemakers invading our States and to scrupulously refrain from disorder and lawless acts.

.....

- To what extent are the arguments posed by the authors contradictory? Why did they refer to "so-called segregation cases" yet refer to the 1896 *Plessy* decision? How is the statement an appeal to Jeffersonian strict construction?
- The authors also insist that separation of the races was a traditional "way of life" in the South. Was that true, and if so, was that relevant to the law? Why do they claim that only outside agitators "invading our States" are causing trouble?

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Congressional Record*, 84th Congress Second Session. Vol. 102, part 4 (Washington, 1956).

political consensus, promoted new visions of society as it deliberated racial issues and individual rights. The *Brown* decision reflected the opinion of a unanimous Court, stating that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." In 1955, in addressing how to implement *Brown*, the Court gave primary responsibility to local school boards. Not expecting integration overnight, the Court ordered school districts to proceed with "all deliberate speed."



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**Southern Manifesto** Statement issued by one hundred southern congressmen in 1954 after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, pledging to oppose desegregation.

Reactions to the case were predictable. African Americans and liberals hailed the decision and hoped that segregated schools would soon be an institution of the past. Southern whites vowed to resist integration by all possible means. Virginia passed a law closing any integrated school. Southern congressional representatives issued the **Southern Manifesto**, in which they proudly pledged to oppose the *Brown* ruling. Eisenhower, who believed the Court had erred, refused to endorse the decision publicly.

While both political parties carefully danced around school integration and other civil rights issues, school districts in Little Rock, Arkansas, moved forward with “all deliberate speed.” Central High School was scheduled to integrate in 1957. Opposing integration were the parents of the school’s students and Governor Orval Faubus, who ordered National Guard troops to surround the school and prevent desegregation. When Elizabeth Eckford, one of the nine integrating students, walked toward Central High, National Guardsmen blocked her path as a hostile mob roared, “Lynch her! Lynch her!” Spat on by the jeering crowd, she retreated to her bus stop. Central High remained segregated.

Three weeks later, on September 20, a federal judge ordered the integration of Central High School. Faubus complied and withdrew the National Guard. But the crisis was not over. Segregationists remained determined to block integration and were waiting for the black students on Monday, September 23. When they discovered that the nine had slipped into the school unnoticed, the mob rushed the police lines and battered the school doors open. Inside the school, Melba Patella Beaus thought, “We were trapped. I’m going to die here, in school.” Hurriedly, the students were loaded into cars and warned to duck their heads. School officials ordered the drivers not to stop. “If you hit somebody, you keep rolling, ’cause [if you stop] the kids are dead.”

Integration had lasted almost three hours and was followed by rioting throughout the city, forcing the mayor to ask for federal troops to restore order. Faced with insurrection, Eisenhower nationalized the Arkansas National Guard and dispatched a thousand troops of the 101st Airborne Division to Little Rock. Speaking to the nation, the president emphasized that he had sent the federal troops not to integrate the schools but to uphold the law and to restore order. The distinction was lost on most white southerners, who fumed as soldiers protected the nine black students for the rest of the school year. Even so, by 1965, less than 2 percent of all southern schools were integrated.

### The Montgomery Bus Boycott

In addition to the Supreme Court’s second *Brown* decision, 1955 witnessed events that focused the nation’s attention on southern opposition to racial equality. The first incident took place when Emmett Till, a teenager from Chicago visiting relatives in Mississippi, was brutally tortured and murdered for speaking to a white woman—saying “Bye, baby”—without her permission. In the trial that followed, the two confessed murderers were acquitted. It was not an unexpected verdict in Mississippi, but it and the brutality of the murder shocked much of the nation.

In Montgomery, Alabama, African Americans were aware of the Till murder but were determined to confront another form of white social control: segregation on the city bus line. The confrontation began almost imperceptibly on December 1, 1955, when **Rosa Parks** refused to give up her seat on the bus so that a white man could sit. At 42, Mrs. Parks earned \$23 a week as a seamstress, and had not boarded the bus with the intention of disobeying the law, although she strongly opposed it. But that afternoon, her fatigue and humiliation were suddenly too much. She refused to move and was arrested.

In response, African American community leaders called for a boycott of the buses to begin on the day of Parks’s court appearance. On December 5, 1955, the night before

**Rosa Parks** Black seamstress who refused to give up her seat to a white man on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955, triggering a bus boycott that stirred the civil rights movement.



# It Matters Today

## THE BROWN DECISION

The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision by the Supreme Court remains a milestone in American history. “It is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity,” the Court wrote, “is a right which must be made available to all in equal terms.” The *Brown* decision raised expectations; it desegregated public schools, but it also fell short of expectations and has not provided effective integration or equality of education. Other cases have since tested the definitions of equality and the methods used to achieve racial diversity. Until the late 1970s, the Court’s decisions upheld the view that race could be used as a determining factor to achieve racial diversity. However, since then several of the Court’s decisions have indicated that the

use of race has discriminated against Caucasians—a reverse discrimination. Is there a way, one justice recently asked, to decide whether the “use of race to achieve diversity” is benign or discriminatory?

- Some argue that the Supreme Court should apply “color-blind” criteria when deciding if institutions and businesses can use race to create racial diversity. How does this view reflect the view of the original *Brown* decision?
- Research the issues behind the December 2006 Supreme Court case involving the Seattle, Washington, and Louisville, Missouri, school districts. Why do some fear that the Court could use this case to overturn the *Brown* opinion?

the boycott was to begin, nearly four thousand people filled and surrounded Holt Street Baptist Church to hear **Martin Luther King Jr.**, the newly selected leader of the boycott movement—now called the Montgomery Improvement Association. The 26-year-old King believed that the church had a social justice mission and that violence and hatred brought only ruin. In shaping that evening’s speech, he wrestled with the problem of how to balance disobedience with peace, confrontation with civility, and rebellion with tradition—and won. His words electrified the crowd: “We are here this evening to say to those who have mistreated us so long that we are tired of being segregated and humiliated, tired of being kicked about by the brutal feet of oppression.” King asked the crowd to boycott the buses, urging his listeners to protest “courageously, and yet with dignity and Christian love,” and when confronted with violence, to “bless them that curse you.”

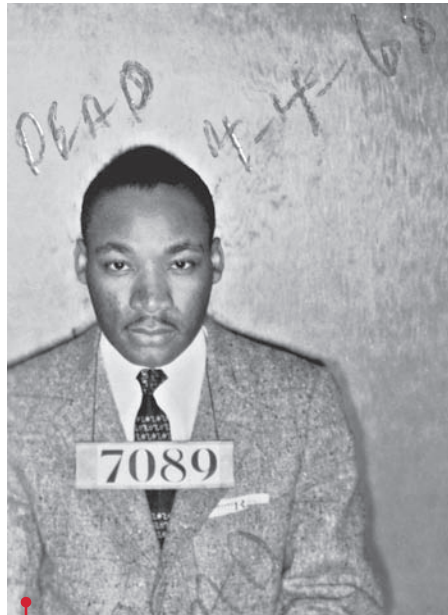
On December 6, Rosa Parks was tried, found guilty, and fined \$10, plus \$4 for court costs. She appealed, and the boycott, 90 percent effective, stretched into days, weeks, and finally months. Police issued basketfuls of traffic tickets to drivers taking part in the car pools that provided transportation for the boycotters. Insurance companies canceled their automobile coverage, and acid was poured on their cars. On January 30, 1956, a stick of dynamite was thrown onto King’s front porch, destroying it and nearly injuring King’s wife. King nevertheless remained calm, reminding supporters to avoid violence and persevere. Finally, as the boycott approached its first anniversary, the Supreme Court ruled that the city’s and bus company’s policy of segregation was unconstitutional. “Praise the Lord. God has spoken from Washington, D.C.,” cried one boycotter.

The Montgomery bus boycott shattered the traditional white view that African Americans accepted segregation, and it marked the beginning of a pattern of nonviolent resistance. King himself was determined to build on the energy generated by the boycott to fight segregation throughout American society. In 1956 he and other black leaders formed a new civil rights organization, the **Southern Christian Leadership Conference**

**Martin Luther King Jr.** Ordained Baptist minister, brilliant orator, and civil rights leader committed to nonviolence; he led many of the important protests of the 1950s and 1960s.

**Southern Christian Leadership Conference** Group formed by Martin Luther King Jr. and others after the Montgomery bus boycott; it became the backbone of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s.





On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks made a fateful choice—she refused to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus. She was arrested and fined \$14 as a result of her decision. Her act of defiance ignited a grassroots effort by African Americans to eliminate discrimination, and with it Martin Luther King Jr., emerged as a national leader for civil rights. These pictures show the Montgomery Police Department's mug shots of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr., following their arrests. "I had no idea history was being made," Parks stated later. "I was just tired of giving in." AP Photo/Montgomery County (Ala.) Sheriff's office (both images).

(SCLC), and across the South thousands of African Americans were ready and eager to take to the streets and to use the federal courts to achieve equality.

### Ike and Civil Rights

**Civil Rights Act of 1957** Law that created the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice; the Commission on Civil Rights primarily investigated restrictions on voting.

As the Montgomery boycott steamrolled into the headlines month after month, from the White House came either silence or carefully selected platitudes. But not all within the administration were so unsympathetic toward civil rights. Attorney General Herbert Brownell drafted the first civil rights legislation since Reconstruction. The **Civil Rights Act of 1957** passed Congress after a year of political maneuvering, having gained the support of Democratic Majority Leader Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas. A moderate law, it provided for the formation of a Commission on Civil Rights and opened the possibility of using federal lawsuits to ensure voter rights. The SCLC had hoped to enroll 3 million new black voters in the South but fell far short of the goal, enrolling only 160,000 between 1958 and 1960. Ella Baker, who headed the underfunded and understaffed effort, faced effective opposition from southern whites and local and state officials. In 1960 Congress passed a voting rights act that offered little help. To remove the barriers to black voting, the act mandated the use of the cumbersome and expensive judiciary system—again placing the burden of forcing change on African Americans. Critics acknowledged that Eisenhower had sent troops to Little Rock and signed two civil rights acts, but they argued that the president had provided little political or moral leadership. If the nation was to commit itself to civil rights, such leadership was imperative.



# Summary

“Had enough?” Republicans asked voters in 1952, offering the choice of a new vision of domestic and foreign policy. Americans answered by electing Eisenhower. Although promising change, Eisenhower in practice chose foreign and domestic policies that continued the basic patterns established by Roosevelt and Truman. Republican beliefs, pervasive anticommunism, and budget concerns allowed reductions in some domestic programs, but public acceptance of existing federal responsibilities prevented any large-scale dismantling of the New Deal. The New Look relied on new tactics, but Cold War foreign policies did not change significantly. Using alliances, military force, nuclear deterrence, and covert activities, Eisenhower continued containment and expanded American influence in southern Asia and the Middle East. Meanwhile, relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated with the launching of *Sputnik*, continuing tension over Berlin, Castro’s victory in Cuba, and the U-2 incident. By the end of the decade, many questioned the effectiveness of the administration, especially the president, in leading the fight against communism and solving what seemed to be a growing number of social and political problems at home.

Reflecting the image of Ike in the White House, the 1950s spawned comforting, if not entirely accurate, images of America centered on affluent suburbs and a growing consumer culture. To be sure, many white working-class and middle-class Americans fulfilled their expectations by moving to the suburbs and living the American dream. Suburbs continued to expand, and a society shaped by cars, expanded purchasing power, and middle-class values seemed to be what America “was about.” Critics of this benign vision stated that such a consensual society bred a social grayness and stifled individualism. Meanwhile, many men, women, and children behaved contrary to the supposed norms of family and suburban culture. Outside the suburbs another America existed, where economic realities, social prejudices, and old-fashioned politics blocked equality and upward mobility. Although declining, poverty persisted, especially in rural America and among minorities living in urban areas. While poverty remained largely ignored, it became increasingly difficult to ignore the actions taken by African Americans to overturn decades of segregation. By the end of the decade, civil rights had emerged as an issue that neither political party nor white, suburban America could avoid.

## Key Terms

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## CHAPTER 27

# Great Promises, Bitter Disappointments 1960–1968

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### *The Politics of Action*

The 1960 Campaign  
The New Frontier  
Kennedy and Civil Rights

#### *Flexible Response*

**IT MATTERS TODAY:** Letter from a  
Birmingham Jail  
Confronting Castro and the  
Soviets  
Vietnam  
Death in Dallas

#### *Defining a New Presidency*

Old and New Agendas  
Implementing the Great Society

#### *New Voices*

Urban Riots and Black Power

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Stokely  
Carmichael Justifies Black Power,  
1966

Rejecting the Feminine Mystique

**INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Establishing  
the President's Commission on  
the Status of Women, 1961

Rejecting Gender Roles  
The Youth Movement  
The Counterculture

#### *Summary*

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)

It was an idea whose time had come. In the summer of 1966, Stokely Carmichael and other leaders of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) were participating in the James Meredith “March Against Fear.” Following a rally, Carmichael was arrested by the Greenwood, Mississippi, police. It was his twenty-seventh arrest. Released, angry, and frustrated, he spoke to a crowd of about three thousand. “The only way we gonna stop them white men from whuppin’ us is to take over,” he roared. “We been saying freedom for six years—and we ain’t got nothing.” Rejecting King’s peaceful approach, he called for more confrontation. “What we gonna start saying now is ‘Black Power.’” The crowd roared back, “Black Power!” “[S]uddenly,” I was a ‘honky’” rather than a comrade, recalled one white civil rights marcher.

Carmichael was born in Trinidad, where blacks held positions of power; he came to the United States and discovered the reverse was true. He became a civil rights activist in high school, joining the Congress of Racial Equality and serving on picket lines. As a college student he was a freedom rider and an organizer of SNCC. By 1966, Carmichael questioned the passive tactics of King and increasingly advocated “the coming together of black people to fight for their liberation by any means possible.” He also assumed control of SNCC and helped reshape it along more militant, Black Nationalist, lines. Whites were purged, nonviolence abandoned, and Black Nationalism and Black Power promoted.

He left SNCC in 1968 and became a symbol for Black militants, speaking out against social, political, and economic repression, American imperialism, and the Vietnam War. Under FBI surveillance and feeling threatened by the government, Carmichael abandoned the United States in 1969 and moved to Guinea, West Africa. There he became deeply involved in African politics, and changed his name to Kwame Ture in honor of two African leaders. He died of cancer in Guinea in November 1998.

#### STOKELY CARMICHAEL

Stokely Carmichael was one of the most influential African American leaders of the 1960s and 1970s. He participated in one of the first freedom rides and was taken into custody, the first of thirty-five arrests for civil rights activism. In 1966 he became nationally recognized as an advocate of “Black Power.” Black Power was, he told a London newspaper, “the coming together of black people to fight for their liberation by any means necessary.”

Marc Vignes/Timepix.



# Chronology

<b>1960</b>	Sit-ins begin SNCC formed Students for a Democratic Society formed <i>Boynton v. Virginia</i> John F. Kennedy elected president		
<b>1961</b>	Peace Corps formed Alliance for Progress Yuri Gagarin orbits the Earth Bay of Pigs invasion Freedom rides begin Vienna summit Berlin Wall erected		
<b>1962</b>	SDS's <i>Port Huron Statement</i> James Meredith enrolls at the University of Mississippi Cuban missile crisis Rachel Carson's <i>Silent Spring</i>		
<b>1963</b>	Report on the status of women Betty Friedan's <i>The Feminine Mystique</i> Equal Pay Act Martin Luther King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" Limited Test Ban Treaty March on Washington 16,000 advisers in Vietnam Diem assassinated		
		<b>1964</b>	Kennedy assassinated; Lyndon Baines Johnson becomes president War on Poverty begins Freedom Summer in Mississippi Civil Rights Act Office of Economic Opportunity created Johnson elected president
		<b>1965</b>	Malcolm X assassinated Selma freedom march Elementary and Secondary Education Act Medicaid and Medicare Voting Rights Act Watts riot Immigration Act
		<b>1966</b>	Black Panther Party formed National Organization for Women founded Stokely Carmichael announces Black Power Cultural Revolution begins in China
		<b>1967</b>	Urban riots peak Six-day Arab-Israeli War
		<b>1968</b>	Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated Soviet Union invades Czechoslovakia
		<b>1969</b>	Woodstock Stonewall Riot Neil Armstrong lands on moon

The 1960s evoke visions of change; of protest marches, demonstrations, and governmental activism. It appeared that new opportunities existed to generate change through individual, group, and governmental action. Kennedy's election provided a symbol of youth and vigor and raised expectations that the activism in the streets would be joined by that of government.

The New Frontier promised prosperity and change. The economy expanded while poverty and discrimination shrank, but strong political opposition in Congress made achieving new domestic goals like civil rights, healthcare, and aid to education nearly impossible. Finding fewer political constraints in foreign policy, Kennedy preferred it. A staunch Cold Warrior, he promised to regain ground lost to communism and chose a new strategy called "flexible response" to confront global communism. He placed new

emphasis on the developing regions of the world and loosened constraints on the military budget. Yet, despite his efforts, the world was not safer or less divided. The erection of the Berlin Wall, the Cuban missile crisis, and events in Vietnam heightened Cold War tensions while stretching American commitments.

Lyndon Johnson inherited Kennedy's agendas and added his own imprint. In the months before the 1964 presidential election, Johnson passed a civil rights bill and presented the nation with proposals for a Great Society. An onslaught of legislation that waged war on poverty and discrimination followed. Great Society measures increased education and welfare programs, expanded voting rights, and created a national system of healthcare for the aged and poor. By mid-decade liberalism was at high tide, and new voices—women, Latinos, and American Indians—were pushing for reform and more equality. But urban riots and more militant voices began to divide and challenge the leadership and assumptions of liberalism.

## The Politics of Action

- ★ **What images did John F. Kennedy and his advisers project, and how did those images contribute to the flavor of the 1960s?**
- ★ **What were the domestic goals of the Kennedy administration? How successful was the president on the home front, and why?**
- ★ **What form of African American activism pushed the civil rights movement forward, and how did Kennedy respond to those efforts?**

Republicans had every reason to worry as the 1960 presidential campaign neared. The last years of the 1950s had not been kind to the Republican Party. Domestically, neither the president nor Republicans nor Congress appeared able to deal with the problems of the country—civil rights agitation, a slowing economy, and a soaring national debt that had reached \$488 billion. The United States also saw few Cold War victories as the Soviets launched *Sputnik* into space and supported Castro in Cuba. Democratic gains in the congressional elections of 1958 signaled that the Democrats were again the majority, if not the dominant, party. Vice President Richard Nixon calculated that for a Republican presidential victory, the “candidate would have to get practically all Republican votes, more than half of the independents—and, in addition the votes of 5 to 6 million Democrats.”

### The 1960 Campaign

On the Democratic side stood John Fitzgerald Kennedy, a youthful, vigorous senator from Massachusetts. Kennedy, a Harvard graduate, came from a wealthy Catholic family. Some worried about his young age (43) and lack of experience.

Others worried about his religion—no Catholic had ever been elected president. To offset these possible liabilities, Kennedy astutely added the politically savvy Senate majority leader Lyndon Johnson of Texas to the ticket, called for a new generation of leadership, and suggested that those who were making religion an issue were bigots. Drawing on the legacy of Franklin Roosevelt, he challenged the nation to enter a **New Frontier** to improve the overall quality of life of all Americans, and to reenergize American foreign policy to stand fast against the Communist threat.

Facing Kennedy was Richard M. Nixon. Trying to distance himself from the image of Eisenhower's elderly leadership, Nixon promised a forceful, energetic presidency and emphasized his executive experience and history of anticommunism. He, too, vowed

**New Frontier** Program for social and educational reform put forward by President John F. Kennedy and largely resisted by Congress.



to improve the quality of life, to support civil rights, and to defeat international communism. Several political commentators called the candidates “two peas in a pod” and speculated that the election would probably hinge on appearances more than on issues.

Trailing in the opinion polls and hoping to give his campaign a boost, Nixon agreed to televised debates with Kennedy. He was proud of his debating skills and thought he could adapt them successfully to radio and television. Kennedy seized the opportunity, recognizing that the candidate who appeared most calm and knowledgeable—more “presidential”—would “win” each debate. Before the camera’s eye, in the war of images, Kennedy appeared fresh and confident, while Nixon, having been ill, appeared tired and haggard. The contrasts were critical. Unable to see Nixon, the radio audience believed he won the debates, but to the 70 million television viewers, the winner was the self-assured and sweat-free Kennedy.

The televised debates helped Kennedy, but victory depended on his ability to hold the Democratic coalition together, maintaining southern Democratic support while wooing African American and liberal voters. The Texan Johnson used his political clout to keep the South largely loyal while Kennedy blasted the lack of Republican leadership on civil rights, and expressed his concern about the arrest of Martin Luther King Jr. for civil rights activities in Atlanta. When Kennedy’s brother Robert used his influence to get King freed, even the staunchest Protestant black ministers, including Martin Luther King Sr., endorsed the Senator from Massachusetts. Every vote was critical. When the ballots were counted, Kennedy had scored the slimmest of victories (see Map 27.1). Nixon carried more states, but Kennedy held a narrow margin over Nixon in popular votes and won the electoral count, 303 to 219.

### The New Frontier

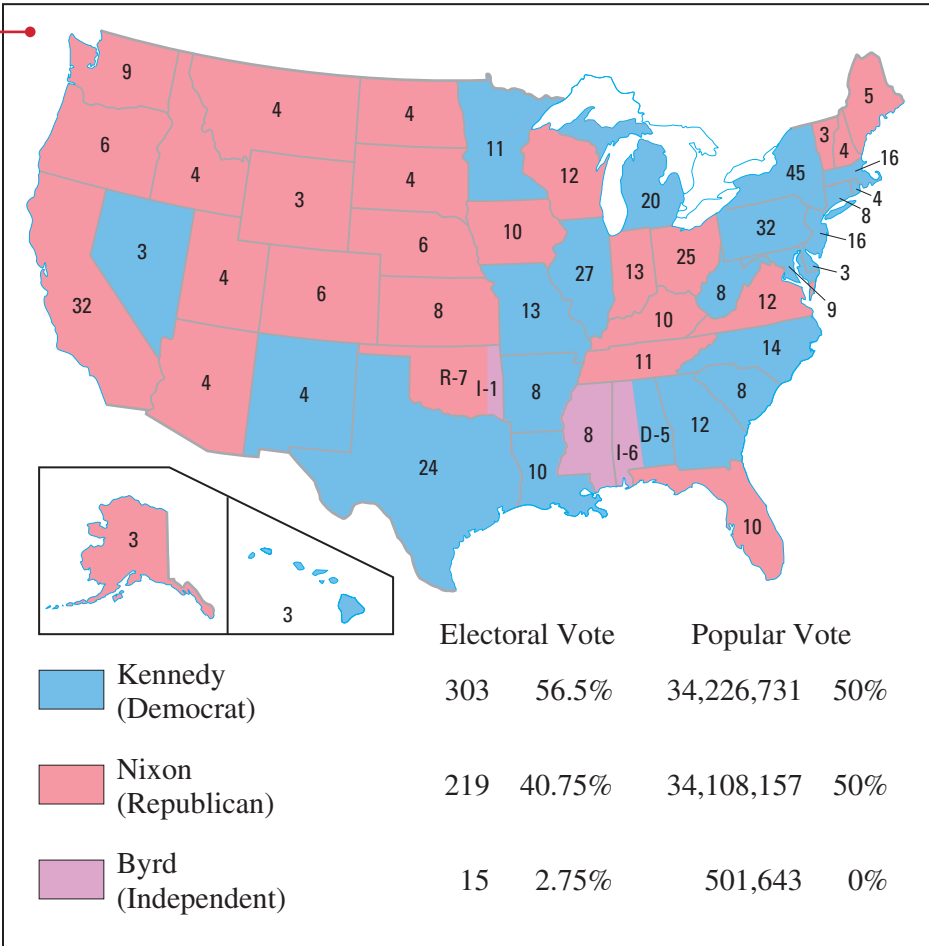
The weather in Washington was frigid when Kennedy gave his inaugural address, but his speech fired the imagination of the nation. He pledged to march against “the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease, and war itself.” He invited all Americans to participate, exhorting them to “ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.” Kennedy tapped into a growing sense that activism and change were to be embraced and not avoided. This optimistic view was a product of the country’s growing affluence and a youthful confidence that science and technology could solve whatever ills faced society. “Science and technology are making the problems of today irrelevant,” stated Adlai Stevenson.

Kennedy, too, believed that most national problems were “technical” and “administrative” and would be solved by experts. In keeping with his view, he selected for his cabinet and advisers those with know-how, people who were willing to take action to get the nation moving again. Kennedy chose Rhodes scholars, successful businessmen, and Harvard professors. The Ford Motor Company president Robert McNamara was tapped for secretary of defense. In a controversial move, Kennedy named his younger brother Robert as attorney general. Many hailed Kennedy’s choices as representing “the best and the brightest.” But not everyone thought so. Referring to the lack of political background among appointees, Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn, a Democrat, remarked that he would “feel a whole lot better . . . if just one of them had run for sheriff once.”

Kennedy and his staff wanted to lead the nation along new paths, but they realized that opposition in Congress would keep legislation within traditional boundaries of the New Deal and the vital center. Consequently, Kennedy decided to focus on legislation that was neither overly liberal nor overly conservative. Like Truman, he asked Congress for a wide range of domestic programs, but he received only a modest, Eisenhower-like

**MAP 27.1 Election of 1960**

Although Richard Nixon won in more states than John F. Kennedy, in the closest presidential election in the twentieth century, Kennedy defeated his Republican opponent by a slim 84 electoral votes and fewer than 119,000 popular votes.



**urban renewal** Effort to revitalize run-down areas of cities by providing federal funding for the construction of apartment houses, office buildings, and public facilities.

**new economics** Planning and shaping the national economy through the use of tax policies and federal spending as recommended by Keynesian economics.

**fiscal policy** The use of government spending to stimulate or slow down the economy.

result. By 1963, Congress had approved small increases in Social Security coverage and benefits and in the minimum wage (to \$1.25 an hour), an extension of unemployment insurance, and a housing and **urban renewal** bill. Attempts to introduce national health coverage, federal aid to education, and civil rights remained bottled up in Congress.

Kennedy had better luck in spurring economic recovery. He turned to the “**new economics**” advocated by Walter Heller, his chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. Heller recommended a more aggressive use of monetary and **fiscal policies** as well as tax cuts to stimulate the economy. In 1962, Kennedy managed to push through Congress a reduction in business taxes. The biggest contribution to the expanding economy, however, was military and Cold War-related spending. In the face of a seemingly more aggressive Soviet Union, Congress raised the defense budget by about 10 percent between 1961 and 1962, funded an expensive space program, and provided millions of dollars for research and development (R&D). By 1965, government-sponsored R&D for a wide variety of potential defense-related products amounted to one-sixth of the federal budget. These developments brought a boom in the economy, which expanded by 13 percent.

Although Eisenhower had created the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), it appeared that the Soviets were still leading the space race. In 1961, the Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin orbited the Earth, whereas the United States’ Mercury

project only managed to lift its astronauts into space for fifteen minutes. Kennedy was determined not to lose the space race and called upon Congress to fund a program for a manned space flight to the moon. In 1969, after the expenditure of nearly \$33 billion, Neil Armstrong became the first human to step on the surface of the moon.

### Kennedy and Civil Rights

Promotion of a robust economy and flights to the moon were only part of the image of the New Frontier. There was a guarded confidence that the new administration would take an active role in promoting civil rights.

Still, most African Americans knew that progress depended on their own actions—that the movement must not wait for or depend on government. Even as Kennedy campaigned, a new wave of black activism swept across the South in the form of sit-ins. The **sit-ins** began when four black freshmen at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College in Greensboro, North Carolina, decided to integrate the public lunch counter at the local F. W. Woolworth store.

On February 1, 1960, they entered the store, sat down at the counter, and ordered a meal. A black waitress told them she could not serve them, but still they sat and waited for service until the store closed. They were not served, but no one tried to remove or arrest them. The next day twenty black A&T students sat at the lunch counter demanding service. The movement quickly spread to more than 140 cities, including some outside the South, in Nevada, Illinois, and Ohio. In some cities, whites resisted violently to protect segregation. Thousands of participants in sit-ins were beaten, blasted with high-pressure fire hoses, and jailed. Most of those taking part were young and initially unorganized, but in April 1960, SCLC official Ella Baker helped form the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee** (SNCC, pronounced “snick”), a new civil rights organization built around the sit-in movement. Although its statement of purpose emphasized **non-violence**, SNCC members were more militant than other civil rights activists. As one stated, “We do not intend to wait placidly for those rights which are already legally and morally ours” (see Map 27.2).

The new administration was not rushing to action on civil rights issues. With southern Democrats entrenched in Congress, Kennedy saw little reason to “raise hell” and waste legislative efforts on civil rights. Instead, he relied on limited executive action. He appointed more African Americans to federal positions than did any previous president, including over forty to major posts, and named NAACP lawyer **Thurgood Marshall** to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the second circuit, although Congress delayed Marshall’s appointment for over a year. But Kennedy also took until November 1962 to fulfill a campaign pledge to sign legislation banning segregation in federal housing.

Seeking to stimulate executive action, James Farmer of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) announced a series of “**freedom rides**” to force integration in southern bus lines and bus stations. In December 1960, the Supreme Court had ruled in *Boynton v. Virginia* that all interstate buses, trains, and terminals were to be desegregated, and Farmer intended to make that decision a reality. The buses of the freedom riders left Washington, D.C., in May 1961, headed toward Alabama and Mississippi. Trouble was anticipated, and in Anniston, Alabama, angry whites attacked the buses, setting them on fire and severely beating several freedom riders. The savagery continued in Birmingham, Alabama, where one freedom rider needed fifty-three stitches to close his head wound. As expected, the violence forced a response by the administration. After a large mob attacked the riders again in Montgomery, Attorney General Robert Kennedy deputized local federal officials as marshals and ordered them to escort the freedom riders to the state line,

**sit-in** The act of occupying the seats or an area of a segregated establishment to protest racial discrimination.

**Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee** Organization formed in 1960 to give young blacks a greater voice in the civil rights movement; it initiated black voter registration drives, sit-ins, and freedom rides.

**nonviolence** The rejection of violence in favor of peaceful tactics as a means of achieving political objectives.

**Thurgood Marshall** African American lawyer who argued the *Brown* case before the Supreme Court; he became the first African American Supreme Court justice.

**freedom rides** An effort by civil rights protesters who, by riding buses throughout the South in 1961, sought to achieve the integration of bus terminals.



**MAP 27.2** The Struggle for Civil Rights, 1960–1968

In the mid-1950s, African Americans confronted the system of prejudice and segregation that existed across the country. This map shows the national scope of the civil rights movement from 1960 to 1968.

**public order laws** Laws passed by many southern communities to discourage civil rights protests by allowing the arrest of anyone suspected of intending to disrupt public order.

**James Meredith** Black student admitted to the University of Mississippi under federal court order in 1962; despite rioting by racist mobs, he finished the year and graduated in 1963.

where Mississippi forces would take over. Battered and bloodied, the riders continued to the state capital, Jackson. There they were peacefully arrested for violating Mississippi's recently passed **public order laws**. The freedom rides ended in September 1961 when the administration declared that the Interstate Commerce Commission would uphold the Supreme Court decision prohibiting segregation. Faced with direct federal involvement, most state and local authorities desegregated bus and train terminals.

Robert Kennedy hoped to use that direct involvement to support the integration of the University of Mississippi by **James Meredith** in September 1962. The attorney general sent a hundred federal marshals to guard Meredith, but thousands of white students and nonstudents attacked Meredith and the marshals. Two people were killed, and 166 marshals were wounded before five thousand army troops arrived and restored order. Protected by federal forces, Meredith finished the year. In May 1963, the University of Mississippi had its first African American graduate.

As Meredith prepared to graduate, Martin Luther King Jr. organized a series of protest marches to overturn segregation in Birmingham. King expected a violent white reaction, which would force federal intervention and raise national awareness and support.



On Good Friday, 1963, King led the first march. He was quickly arrested and, from his cell, wrote a nineteen-page “letter” defending his confrontational tactics, aimed at those who denounced his activism in favor of patience. The “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” called for immediate and continuous peaceful civil disobedience. Freedom was “never given voluntarily by the oppressor,” King asserted, but “must be demanded by the oppressed.” Smuggled out of jail and printed in newspapers across the nation, the letter rallied support for King’s efforts. The marches continued in Birmingham and on May 3, young and old alike filled the city’s streets. Sheriff “Bull” Connor’s police attacked the marchers with dogs and high-pressure fire hoses. Television caught it all, including the arrest of more than thirteen hundred battered and bruised children. Connor’s brutality not only horrified much of the American public but also caused many Birmingham blacks to reject the tactic of nonviolence. The following day, many African Americans fought the police with stones and clubs. Fearing more violence, King and Birmingham’s business element met on May 10, and white business owners agreed to hire black salespeople. Neither the agreement nor King’s pleading, however, halted the violence, and two days later President Kennedy ordered three thousand troops to Birmingham to maintain order and to uphold the integration agreement. “The sound of the explosion in Birmingham,” King observed, “reached all the way to Washington.”

Indeed, Birmingham encouraged Kennedy to fulfill his campaign promise to make civil rights a priority. In June 1963, he announced that America could not be truly free “until all its citizens were free” and sent Congress civil rights legislation that would mandate integration in public places. To pressure Congress to act on the bill, King and other civil rights leaders organized a **March on Washington**. During the August 28 march, King gave an address that electrified the throng. He warned about a “whirlwind of revolt” if black rights were denied. “I have a dream,” he offered, “that even Mississippi could become an oasis of freedom and justice” and that “all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing . . . ‘Free at last! Free at last! Thank God almighty, we are free at last!’” It was a stirring speech, but it did not move Congress to act. The civil rights bill stalled in committee, while in the South whites vowed to maintain segregation, and racial violence continued. In Birmingham, within weeks of King’s speech, a church bombing killed four young black girls attending Sunday school.

**March on Washington** Meeting of a quarter of a million civil rights supporters in Washington in 1963, at which Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech.

## Flexible Response

★ **How did the Cold War shape Kennedy’s foreign policy?**

★ **What challenges did the third world and developing nations provide Kennedy?**

In his inaugural address, President Kennedy concentrated on foreign policy, generating the powerful lines: “We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty.” Advised by his close circle of “action intellectuals,” Kennedy was anxious to meet whatever challenges the United States faced, from the arms race to the space race to winning the allegiance of Third World countries.

To back up his foreign policies, Kennedy instituted a new defense strategy called **flexible response** and significantly expanded military spending to pay for it. Flexible response involved continuing support for NATO and other multilateral alliances, plus further development of nuclear capabilities and intercontinental **ballistic missiles** (ICBMs). Another aspect of flexible response centered on conventional, non-nuclear warfare. With

**flexible response** Kennedy’s strategy of considering a variety of military and nonmilitary options when facing foreign-policy decisions.

**ballistic missiles** Missiles whose path cannot be changed once launched; their range can be from a few miles to intercontinental. In 2003 an estimated thirty-five nations had ballistic missiles.



# It Matters Today

## LETTER FROM A BIRMINGHAM JAIL

In 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. wrote and smuggled out of a Birmingham jail a lengthy letter calling for support for his civil rights struggle. The letter was in response to those, especially individuals within the clergy, who argued that his confrontational approach of disobedience generated too much backlash and that negotiation was a better course. He sought not only to address the issue of disobedience to “unjust laws,” but to point out that he was a centrist in responding to segregation and discrimination. Working from an assumption that “[o]ppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever,” King noted that his path was the only

way out of a “frightening racial nightmare.” He rejected both “the do-nothingism” of those too tired and “drained of self-respect” by racism, and the angry voices of black nationalists, who had “lost faith in America [and] . . . concluded that the white man is an incurable ‘devil.’” He offered the readers choices—choices that are relevant today.

- How does one determine what laws are just and unjust?
- What issues in today’s society and world present choices similar to those that King mentions in the letter? What alternatives really exist?

**Peace Corps** Program established by President Kennedy in 1961 to send young American volunteers to other nations as educators, health workers, and technicians.

increased budgets, each branch of the service sought new weapons and equipment and developed new strategies for deploying them. Of special urgency was how to win the Cold War in the world’s developing and third-world nations. In that volatile arena of political instability, economic inequalities, and social conflicts, the opportunity was ripe for the West and the Communist bloc to expand their influence. To strengthen pro-Western governments and combat revolutionaries, the administration pursued economic strategies that provided direct government aid to “friendly” nations. This effort also included the personal involvement of American volunteers participating in the **Peace Corps**. Beginning in March 1961, more than ten thousand idealistic young Americans enrolled for two years to help win the “hearts and minds” of what Kennedy called “the rising peoples” around the world, staffing schools, building roads, and constructing homes.

### Confronting Castro and the Soviets

**Alliance for Progress** Program proposed by Kennedy in 1961 through which the United States provided aid for social and economic programs in Latin American countries.

Kennedy saw Latin America as an important part of the Cold War struggle for influence in developing nations. Castro’s success in Cuba reinforced the idea that Latin America and the Caribbean were important battlegrounds in the struggle against communism. Seeking a new approach to Latin America, in 1961 Kennedy introduced the **Alliance for Progress**, a foreign-aid package promising more than \$20 billion. In return, Latin American governments were to introduce land and tax reforms and commit themselves to improving education and their people’s standard of living. It was a plan that, Kennedy noted, could “successfully counter the Communists in the Americas.” Results fell short of expectations. The United States granted far less aid than proposed, and Latin American governments implemented few reforms and frequently squandered the aid. Throughout the 1960s in Latin America, the gap between rich and poor widened, and the number of military dictatorships increased.

The Alliance for Progress, however, would not deal with the problem of Castro. Determined to remove the Cuban dictator, Kennedy implemented the Eisenhower administration’s covert plan to topple the Cuban leader. The Central Intelligence Agency’s planning and training of Cuban exiles and mercenaries for an invasion of Cuba had begun in 1960,

and Kennedy gave the green light for an invasion to take place in April. On April 17, 1961, more than fourteen hundred “liberators” landed at the Bahía de Cochinos—the **Bay of Pigs**. Within three days Castro’s forces had captured or killed most of the invaders. Kennedy took responsibility for the fiasco but indicated no regrets for his aggressive policy and vowed to continue the “relentless struggle” against Castro and communism. Responding to Kennedy’s orders to disrupt Cuba, **Operation Mongoose** and other operations sponsored CIA-backed raids that destroyed roads, bridges, factories, and crops, and about thirty attempts to assassinate Castro.

After the Bay of Pigs disaster, in early June 1961, Kennedy met with Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev in Vienna. Both men were eager to show their toughness. Kennedy stressed America’s determination to protect its interests and fulfill its international commitments. The issue of Berlin was especially worrisome because Khrushchev was threatening to sign a peace treaty with East Germany that would give it full control of all four zones of the city.

In August 1961, the Soviets and East Germans suddenly erected a wall between East and West Berlin to choke off the flow of refugees fleeing East Germany and Eastern Europe. Although the Berlin Wall challenged Western ideals of freedom, it did not directly threaten the West’s presence in West Berlin.

Far more serious than the Berlin crisis was the possibility of nuclear confrontation over Cuba in October 1962. On October 14, an American U-2 spy plane flying over the island discovered that medium-range nuclear missile sites were being built there. Launched from Cuba, such missiles would drastically reduce the time for mobilizing a U.S. counterattack on the Soviet Union. Kennedy promptly decided on a showdown with the Soviets and mustered a small crisis staff.

Avoiding open negotiations, the military offered a series of recommendations ranging from a military invasion to a “surgical” air strike to destroy the missiles. These were rejected as too dangerous, possibly inviting a Soviet attack on West Berlin or on American nuclear missile sites in Turkey. President Kennedy, supported by his brother, the attorney general, decided to impose a naval blockade around Cuba until Khrushchev met the U.S. demand to remove the missiles. On Monday, October 22, Kennedy went on television and radio to inform the public of the missile sightings and his decision to quarantine Cuba. As 180 American warships got into position to stop Soviet ships carrying supplies for the missiles, army units converged on Florida. The Strategic Air Command (SAC) kept a fleet of nuclear-armed B-52s in the air at all times. On Wednesday, October 24, confrontation and perhaps war seemed imminent as two Soviet freighters and a Russian submarine approached the quarantine line. Robert Kennedy recalled, “We were on the edge of a precipice with no way off.” Voices around the world echoed his anxiety.

The Soviet vessels, however, stopped short of the blockade. Khrushchev had decided not to test Kennedy’s will. After a series of diplomatic maneuvers, the two sides reached an agreement based on an October 26 message from Khrushchev: If the United States agreed not to invade Cuba, the Soviets would remove their missiles. Khrushchev sent another letter the following day that called for the United States to remove existing American missiles in Turkey. Kennedy ignored the second message, and the Soviets agreed to remove their missiles without the United States publicly linking the agreement to withdrawing missiles in Turkey. Privately, the Soviets told Washington that they expected the United States to remove American missiles in Turkey. The world breathed a collective sigh of relief. Kennedy basked in what many viewed as a victory, but he recognized how near the world had come to nuclear war and concluded that it was time to improve

**Bay of Pigs** Site of a CIA-sponsored 1961 invasion of Cuba by Cuban exiles and mercenaries; the invasion was crushed within three days and embarrassed the United States.

**Operation Mongoose** Mission authorized by President Kennedy in November 1961, and funded with a \$50 million budget, to create conditions for the overthrow of Castro.

Constructed in August 1961, the Berlin Wall sought to isolate West Berlin from East Germany and stood as a brutal symbol of the Cold War. Of the nearly four hundred East Germans who failed in their attempt to cross the wall between 1961 and 1989, over one hundred and seventy died.

AP Photo.



Soviet-American relations. A “hot line” telephone link was established between Moscow and Washington to allow direct talks in case of another East-West crisis.

In a major foreign-policy speech in June 1963, Kennedy suggested an end to the Cold War and offered that the United States, as a first step toward improving relations, would halt its nuclear testing. By July, American-Soviet negotiations had produced the **Limited Test Ban Treaty**, which forbade those who signed to conduct nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in space, and under the seas. Underground testing was still allowed. By October 1963, one hundred nations had signed the treaty, although the two newest atomic powers, France and China, refused to participate and continued to test in the atmosphere.

**Limited Test Ban Treaty** Treaty signed by the United States, the USSR, and nearly one hundred other nations in 1963; it banned nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere, in outer space, and underwater.

**Ngo Dinh Diem** President of South Vietnam (1954–1963) who jailed and tortured opponents; assassinated in a coup in 1963.

**Viet Cong** Vietnamese Communist rebels in South Vietnam.

## Vietnam

South Vietnam represented one of the most challenging issues Kennedy faced. Like Eisenhower, Kennedy saw it as a place where the United States’ flexible response could stem communism and develop a stable, democratic nation. But by 1961, President **Ngo Dinh Diem** was losing control of his nation. South Vietnamese Communist rebels, the **Viet Cong**, controlled a large portion of the countryside, having battled Diem’s troops, the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), to a standstill. Military advisers argued that the use of American troops was necessary to turn the tide. Kennedy was more cautious. “The troops will march in, the bands will play,” he said privately. “Then we will be told we have to send in more troops. It’s like taking a drink. The effect wears off and you have to take another.” The South Vietnamese forces would have



to continue to do the fighting, but the president agreed to send more “advisers.” By November 1963, the United States had sent \$185 million in military aid and had committed sixteen thousand advisers to Vietnam—compared with only a few hundred in 1961.

The Viet Cong was only part of the problem. Diem’s administration was unpopular, out of touch with the people, and unwilling to heed Washington’s pleas for political and social reforms. Some were even concerned that Diem might seek an accord with North Vietnam, and by autumn of 1963, Diem and his inner circle seemed more a liability than an asset. American officials in Saigon secretly informed several Vietnamese generals that Washington would support a change of government. The army acted on November 1, killing Diem and installing a new military government. The change of government, however, brought neither political stability nor improvement in the ARVN’s capacity to fight the Viet Cong.

### Death in Dallas

With his civil rights and tax-cut legislation in limbo in Congress, a growing commitment shackling the country to Vietnam, and the economy languishing, Kennedy watched his popularity rating drop below 60 percent in late 1963. He decided to visit Texas in November to try to heal divisions within the Texas Democratic Party. He was assassinated there on November 22, 1963. The police quickly captured the reputed assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald. Many wondered whether Kennedy’s assassination was the work of Lee Harvey Oswald alone or part of a larger conspiracy. To dispel rumors, the government formed a commission headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren to investigate the assassination. The commission hurriedly examined most, but not all, of the available evidence and announced that Oswald was a psychologically disturbed individual who had acted alone. No other gunmen were involved, nor was there any conspiracy. Although many Americans accepted the conclusions of the Warren Commission, others continued to suggest additional theories about the assassination.

Kennedy’s assassination traumatized the nation. Many people canonized the fallen president as a brilliant, innovative chief executive who combined vitality, youth, and good looks with forceful leadership and good judgment. Lyndon B. Johnson, sworn in as president as he flew back to Washington on the plane carrying Kennedy’s body, did not appear to be cut from the same cloth. Kennedy had attended the best eastern schools and liked to surround himself with intellectuals. Johnson, a product of public schools and a state teachers college, distrusted intellectuals. Raised in the hill country of Texas, his passion was politics. By 1960, his congressional experiences were unrivaled: he had served from 1937 to 1948 in the House of Representatives and from 1949 to 1961 in the Senate, where he had become Senate majority leader. Johnson knew how to wield political power and get things done in Washington.

## Defining a New Presidency

- ★ *In what ways did the legislation associated with Johnson’s Great Society differ from New Deal programs?*
- ★ *How did Johnson’s War on Poverty and Great Society further the civil rights movement?*

President Johnson made those around him aware that he was a liberal. A passionate New Dealer, he told one adviser that Kennedy was “a little too conservative to suit my taste.” Johnson wanted to build a better society, “where progress is the servant of the neediest.” Recognizing the political opening generated by the assassination,

Johnson immediately committed himself to Kennedy's agenda, and in January 1964 he expanded on it by announcing an "unconditional war on poverty."

### Old and New Agendas

Throughout 1964, Johnson transformed Kennedy's quest for action into his own quest for social reform. Wielding the political skill for which he was renowned, he moved Kennedy's tax cut and civil rights bill out of committee and toward pas-

sage. The Keynesian tax cut (the Tax Reduction Act), designed to generate more economic growth, became law in February. The civil rights bill moved more slowly, especially in the Senate, where it faced a stubborn southern filibuster. Johnson traded political favors for Republican backing to silence the fifty-seven-day filibuster, and the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** became law on July 2. The act made it illegal to discriminate for reasons of race, religion, or gender in places and businesses that served the public. Putting force behind the law, Congress established a federal Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) and empowered the executive branch to withhold federal funds from institutions that violated its provisions.

By August 1964, the **War on Poverty** had begun, aimed at benefiting the 20 percent of the population that was classified as poor. It was to be fought on two fronts: expanding economic opportunities and improving the social environment. In August, a major step was taken when the Economic Opportunity Act was passed. It established an Office of Economic Opportunity that would coordinate a variety of programs that Johnson stated would "help more Americans, especially young Americans, to escape from squalor and misery." The cornerstones were education and job training. Programs like the Job Corps, Head Start, and the Work Incentive Program provided new educational and economic opportunities for the disadvantaged. Job Corps branches enrolled unemployed teens and young adults lacking skills, whereas Head Start reached out to pre-kindergarten children to provide disadvantaged preschoolers an opportunity to gain important thinking and social skills. Another program called Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), modeled after the Peace Corps, sent service-minded Americans to help improve life in regions of poverty. Among the most unique and ambitious programs was the Community Action Program (CAP). It allowed disadvantaged community organizations to target local needs by allowing direct access to federal funds.

By the time the 1964 presidential race began, Johnson was confident. He had passed tax cuts, a civil rights bill, and started a war on poverty. Public opinion polls showed significant support for the president in all parts of the nation, except the South.

Facing Johnson and opposing his liberal program was a group of conservatives and ultraconservatives called the **New Right**. Conservatives, intellectually led by William F. Buckley and the *National Review*, cried that liberalism was destroying vital traditional American values of localism, self-help, and individualism. They opposed government activism, the growth of the welfare state, and the decisions of the Warren Court. From the mid-1950s through the 1960s, the Warren Court was at the forefront of liberalism, altering the obligations of the government and expanding the rights of citizens. Its decisions in the 1950s not only contributed to the legal base of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, but had started in *Yates v. the United States* (1957) to reverse earlier decisions about the rights of those accused of crimes. Between 1961 and 1969, the Court issued over two hundred criminal justice decisions that, according to critics, hampered law enforcement. Among the most important were *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963), *Escobedo v. Illinois* (1964), and *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966). In those rulings the Court declared that all defendants have a right to an attorney, even if the state must provide one, and that those arrested

**Civil Rights Act of 1964** Law that barred segregation in public facilities and forbade employers to discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, or national origin.

**War on Poverty** Lyndon Johnson's program to help Americans escape poverty through education, job training, and community development.

**New Right** Conservative movement within the Republican Party that opposed the political and social reforms of the 1960s, demanding less government intervention in the economy and in society, and a return to traditional values.

must be informed of their right to remain silent and to have an attorney present during questioning (the *Miranda* warning).

The New Right also complained that the Court's actions not only undermined the tradition of religion but condoned and promoted immorality. The Court's weakening of "community standards" in favor of broader ones regarding "obscene" and sexually explicit materials in *Jacobellis v. Ohio* (1963) was compounded in the 1964 *Griswold v. Connecticut* decision. In the latter case, the Court attacked the state's responsibility to establish moral standards by overturning Connecticut's laws that forbade the sale of contraceptives, arguing that individuals have a right to privacy that the state cannot abridge.

Leading the Republican assault against the values of liberalism was Senator **Barry Goldwater** of Arizona. Plainspoken and direct, Goldwater had voted against the 1964 Civil Rights Act and was an outspoken opponent of "Big Government" and New Deal-style programs. Riding a wave of conservative and New Right support, Goldwater seized the nomination for the presidency and launched an attack on liberalism and vowed to implement an anti-Communist crusade. When he appeared willing not only to commit American troops in Vietnam but also to use nuclear weapons against Communist nations, including Cuba and North Vietnam, Democrats quickly painted him as a dangerous radical. Johnson meanwhile, promoted his Great Society and promised that "American boys" would not "do the fighting for Asian boys." Johnson won easily in a lopsided election.

**Barry Goldwater** Conservative Republican senator from Arizona who ran unsuccessfully for president in 1964.

### Implementing the Great Society

Not only did Goldwater lose, but so too did many Republicans—moderates and conservatives—as more than forty new Democrats entered Congress. Armed with a seeming mandate for action and reform, Johnson pushed forward legislation to enact his **Great Society**. He told aides that they must hurry before the natural opposition of politics returned. Between 1964 and 1968, more than sixty Great Society programs were put in place. Most sought to provide better economic and social opportunities by removing barriers thrown up by health, education, region, and race.

**Great Society** Social program that Johnson announced in 1964; it included the War on Poverty, protection of civil rights, and funding for education.

One of Johnson's Great Society goals was to further equality for African Americans. Within months of his election, he signed an executive order that, like the old Fair Employment Practices Commission, required government contractors to practice nondiscrimination in hiring and on the job. He also appointed the first African American to the cabinet, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Robert Weaver; the first African American woman to the federal courts, Judge Constance Baker Motley; and the first African American to the Supreme Court, Justice Thurgood Marshall.

A major goal was to expand black voting in the South. For nearly one hundred years, most southern whites had viewed voting as an activity for whites only. Through the poll tax and control of the ballot, southern whites had maintained their political power and a segregated society. The ratification of the Twenty-fourth Amendment (banning the poll tax) in January 1964 was a major step toward dismantling that system, and by mid-1964 plans were underway for black voters to gain access to the ballot. One effort was led by Bob Moses of SNCC, who organized a **Freedom Summer** in Mississippi. Whites and blacks opened "Freedom Schools" to teach literacy and black history, stress black pride and achievements, and help residents register to vote. In Mississippi, as in several other southern states, a voter literacy test required that all questions be answered to the satisfaction of a white registrar. Thus a question calling for "a reasonable interpretation" of an obscure section of the state constitution could be used to block blacks from registering.

**Freedom Summer** Effort by civil rights groups in Mississippi to register black voters and cultivate black pride during the summer of 1964.

In the face of white hostility, voter registration was dangerous work. “You talk about fear,” an organizer told recruits. “It’s like the heat down there, it’s continually oppressive. You think they’re rational. But, you know, you suddenly realize, they want to kill you.” Indeed, from June through August of 1964, Mississippi was rocked by more than thirty-five shooting incidents, and thirty buildings, many of them churches, were bombed. Hundreds of people were beaten and arrested, and three Freedom Summer workers were murdered. But the crusade drew national support and registered nearly sixty thousand new African American voters.

Keeping up the pressure, King announced that a voter registration drive was to take place in Selma, Alabama, where only 2.1 percent of eligible black voters were registered. As expected, the police, led by Sheriff Jim Clark, confronted protesters, arresting nearly two thousand. King then called for a **freedom march** from Selma to Montgomery. On March 7, 1965, as scores of reporters watched, hundreds of freedom marchers faced fifty Alabama state troopers and Clark’s mounted forces at Pettus Bridge. After ordering the marchers to halt and firing tear gas, Clark’s men, brandishing clubs and whips, chased them down. Television coverage of the assault stirred nationwide condemnation of Clark’s tactics and support for King and the marchers. When Alabama’s staunch segregationist governor George Wallace told President Johnson that he could not provide protection for the marchers, Johnson ordered the National Guard, two army battalions, and 250 federal marshals to escort the protesters. The march resumed on March 21 with about 3,200 marchers. When it arrived in Montgomery on March 27, more than 25,000 had joined.

Johnson used the violence in Selma to pressure Congress to pass the **Voting Rights Act** in August 1965. It banned a variety of methods that states had been using to deny blacks the right to vote, including Mississippi’s literacy test, and had immediate effect. Across the South, the percentage of African Americans registered to vote rose an average of 30 percent between 1965 and 1968. In Mississippi, it went from 7 to 59 percent, and in Selma, more than 60 percent of qualified African Americans voted in 1968, stopping Sheriff Clark’s bid for reelection.

But civil rights legislation was only one of many facets of the Great Society. Responding to his own concerns, Johnson also worked to have environmental laws enacted. It was increasingly clear that many of the products developed during the World War II and commonly used by the 1950s, such as plastics, fertilizers, and pesticides, carried with them health problems. Efforts to protect the environment and America’s wilderness had intensified since the Eisenhower administration’s efforts to make it easier for business interests to have access to wilderness areas that contained raw materials like oil, gas, and timber. In the mid-1950s, environmentalists effectively prevented two dams from being built in Dinosaur National Park. Kennedy supported bettering the environment and the idea of preserving more wilderness areas. In 1963, a Clear Air Act was passed, and under Johnson in 1964, the Wilderness Act designated 9 million acres of land that people could only visit. Not only were more and more Americans concerned about saving the wilderness, they were also becoming aware of chemical pollutants that threatened the environment and the health of the nation.

In 1962, biologist Rachel Carson’s book *Silent Spring* alerted readers to the health dangers of the pesticide DDT and helped fuel a growing movement to protect the environment. While a Kennedy-appointed committee supported Carson’s findings, it was not until 1972 that the federal government banned its use. Johnson also supported the growing movement to improve the environment, and wanted to impose national standards to prevent environmental pollution. His proposals met stiff opposition from industry and underwent modifications in Congress. Still, the Water Quality and Air Quality Acts signed by Johnson in October 1965 were a beginning. Over the next three years,

**freedom march** Civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, in March 1965; violence against protesters by local authorities helped galvanize national opinion against segregationists.

**Voting Rights Act** Law passed by Congress in 1965 that outlawed literacy tests and other voting tests and authorized federal supervision of elections in areas where black voting had been restricted.



he would guide through Congress acts that improved water quality, expanded wilderness areas, and removed billboards from federal highways.

At the top of Johnson's priorities, however, were health and education. Above all, he wanted those two "coonskins on the wall." The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965) was the first general educational funding act by the federal government. It granted more than a billion dollars to public and parochial schools for textbooks, library materials, and special education programs. Poor and rural school districts were supposed to receive the highest percentage of federal support. But, as with many Great Society programs, implementation fell short of intention, and much of the money went to affluent suburban school districts. Johnson's biggest "coonskin" was the Medical Care Act (1965), which established **Medicaid** and **Medicare** to help pay healthcare costs for the elderly and individuals on welfare. In 1966 Democrats were calling the Eighty-ninth Congress "the Congress of accomplished hopes." They were overly optimistic. Despite the flood of legislation, most of the Great Society's programs were underfunded and diminishing in popularity. Republicans and conservative Democrats had enough votes in Congress to effectively oppose further "welfare state" proposals. Supporting the opposition was the growing cost and dissatisfaction with the war in Vietnam, a backlash against urban riots and feminist militancy, and an expanding view that the federal government's efforts to wage war on poverty and build a "Great Society" were futile. Still, Johnson's programs had contributed to a near 10 percent decrease in the number of people living in poverty and a one-third drop in infant mortality. For African Americans there were also good statistics: unemployment dropped over four years to 42 percent while average family income rose 53 percent.

**Medicaid** Program of health insurance for the poor established in 1965; it provides states with money to buy healthcare for people on welfare.

**Medicare** Program of health insurance for the elderly and disabled established in 1965; it provides government payment for healthcare supplied by private doctors and hospitals.

## New Voices

- ★ **How do the urban riots and the emergence of the Black Power movement reflect a new agenda for the civil rights movement? In what ways were the voices of Black Power new?**
- ★ **What limitations on equality did women face, and how did they organize to overcome those barriers? What was the critique of American values made by some women and homosexuals?**

By the end of 1965, legislation had ended *de jure* segregation and voting restrictions. Equality, however, depended on more than laws. Neither the Civil Rights Act nor the Voting Rights Act guaranteed justice, removed oppressive poverty, provided jobs, or ensured a higher standard of living. *De facto* discrimination and prejudice remained. African American frustrations—born of raised expectations—erupted as poverty, prejudice, and violence soon changed the nature of civil rights protest and ignited northern cities. During the 1960s, more than a million mostly poor and unskilled African Americans left the South each year. Most sought a better life in northern and western cities, but they mostly found soaring unemployment and cities unable or unwilling to provide adequate social services. Economics, not segregation, was the key issue: By the mid-1960s, the nation's cities were primed for racial trouble. Minor race riots occurred in Harlem and Rochester, New York, during the summer of 1964, but it was the Watts riot and the militant new voices that shook the nation.

### Urban Riots and Black Power

In Los Angeles, African Americans earned more per capita and owned more homes than African Americans in any other American city. Within Los Angeles, most African Americans lived in a 50-square-mile area called **Watts**. To most outside observers, Watts did not look like a ghetto. It was a community of well-maintained,

**Watts** Predominantly black neighborhood of Los Angeles where a race riot in August 1965 did \$45 million in damage and took the lives of twenty-eight blacks.

single-family homes and duplexes. But looks were deceptive. With a population exceeding 250,000, Watts had a population density more than four times higher per block than the rest of the city. Schools were overcrowded, and male unemployment hovered at 34 percent. Patrolling Watts was the nearly all-white L.A. police force, which had a reputation for racism and brutality.

In this climate, on August 11, 1965, what began as a drunk driving arrest became a riot. Stores were looted and set on fire, cars were overturned and set ablaze, firefighters and police were attacked and unable to either put out the flames or restore order. Thirty-six hours passed until sixteen thousand poorly trained and ill-equipped members of the California National Guard, along with police and sheriff's deputies, began to calm the storm. The costs of the Watts riot were high: thirty-four dead, including twenty-eight African Americans, more than nine hundred injured, and \$45 million in property destroyed.

The Watts riot also signaled a change in attitude among African Americans and shattered the complacency of many whites who thought civil rights was just a southern problem. In addition, the riot demonstrated a growing willingness of African Americans to reject nonviolence. Competing with King were new voices like that of Carmichael, who called on blacks to seek power through solidarity, independence, and, if necessary, violence. "I'm not going to beg the white man for anything I deserve," he announced in 1966. "I'm going to take it." SNCC and CORE quickly changed from biracial, nonviolent organizations to **Black Power** resistance movements that stressed Black Nationalism. The insistence on independence from white allies and the violent rhetoric widened the gap between moderates and radicals.

Joining the emergence of Black Power was the growing popularity and visibility of the Nation of Islam, or **Black Muslims**. Founded by Elijah Muhammad in the 1930s, the movement attracted mostly young males and demanded adherence to a strict moral code that prohibited the use of drugs and alcohol. Black Muslims preached black superiority and separatism from an evil white world. By the early 1960s, there were nearly a hundred thousand Black Muslims, including **Malcolm X**, who by 1952 had become one of the Black Muslims' most powerful and respected leaders. A mesmerizing speaker, he rejected integration with a white society that, he said, emasculated blacks by denying them power and personal identity. "Our enemy is the white man!" he roared. But in 1964 he reevaluated his policy. Though still a Black Nationalist, he admitted that to achieve their goals, Black Muslims needed to cooperate with other civil rights groups and with some whites. He broke with Elijah Muhammad, and the defection cost him his life. On February 21, 1965, three Black Muslims assassinated him in Harlem.

Carmichael and Malcolm X represented only two of the strident African American voices advocating direct—and, if necessary, violent—action. In 1966, Huey P. Newton, Eldridge Cleaver, and Bobby Seale organized the **Black Panthers** in Oakland, California. Although they pursued community action, such as developing school lunch programs, they were more noticeable for being well armed and willing to use their weapons. FBI director J. Edgar Hoover called them "the most dangerous . . . of all extremist groups."

Amid the militant black nationalism and calls for self-defense, a growing number of race riots shook more than three hundred cities between 1965 and 1968. In April 1968, a new wave of riots spread across the United States following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. by a white racist. King had worked hard to regain his leadership of the civil rights movement after the Watts riot and the emergence of Black Power. Shifting from legal rights to economic rights, he had become a champion of the black urban **underclass**, criticizing the capitalistic system that relegated millions of people to

**Black Power** Movement begun in 1966 that rejected the nonviolence and coalition-building of traditional civil rights groups and advocated black control of black organizations; this approach was adopted by Latinos (Brown Power) and Native Americans (Red Power).

**Black Muslims** Popular name for the Nation of Islam, an African American religious group founded by Elijah Muhammad that professed Islamic religious beliefs and emphasized black separatism.

**Malcolm X** Black activist who advocated black separatism as a member of the Nation of Islam; in 1963 he converted to orthodox Islam and two years later was assassinated.

**Black Panthers** Black revolutionary party founded in 1966 that endorsed violence as a means of social change, many of its leaders were killed in confrontations with police or imprisoned.

**underclass** The lowest economic class; the term carries the implication that members of this class are so disadvantaged by poverty that they have little or no chance to escape it.

# Investigating America

## Stokely Carmichael Justifies Black Power, 1966

The pivotal catch phrase that redefined race relations in the sixties burst onto the front pages on June 16, 1966, when Stokely Carmichael renewed the call for "Black Power."

The use of the term Black Power conjured up a variety of images, depending on who said it. To many whites the term seemed threatening; to many African Americans it signaled the need to understand the race issue in a different way and to consider new choices. In the speech excerpted below, entitled "Toward Black Liberation," Carmichael defines Black Power and distinguishes its goals from those of other civil rights organizations.

.....

Negroes are defined by two forces, their blackness and their powerlessness. There have been traditionally two communities in America. The White community, which controlled and defined the forms that all institutions within the society would take, and the Negro community, which has been excluded from participation in the power decisions that shaped the society, and has traditionally been dependent upon, and subservient to the White community.

This has not been accidental. . . . This has not been on the level of individual acts of discrimination between individual whites against individual Negroes, but as total acts by the White Community against the Negro community. . . .

Let me give an example of the difference between individual racism and institutionalized racism, and the society's response to both. When . . . White terrorists bomb a Negro Church and kill five children, that is an act of individual racism, widely deplored by . . . society. But when in that same city . . . not five but 500 Negro babies die each year because of a lack of proper food, shelter, and medical facilities . . . that is a function of institutionalized racism. But the society either pretends it doesn't know of this situation, or is incapable of doing anything meaningful about it. And, the resistance to do anything meaningful . . . is . . . a product of . . . forces and special interests in the White community, and the groups

that have . . . resources and power to change that situation benefit, politically and economically, from the existence of that ghetto. . . . The people of the Negro community do not control the resources of that community, its political decisions, its law enforcement, its housing standards, and even the physical ownership of the land, houses and stores lie outside that community. . . .

In recent years the answer to these questions which has been given by the most articulate groups of Negroes and their white allies . . . has been in terms of something called "integration" . . . social justice will be accomplished by "integrating the Negro into the mainstream institutions of the society. . . ."


This concept . . . had to be based on the assumption that there was nothing of value in the Negro community and that little of value could be created among Negroes, so the thing to do was to siphon off the "acceptable" Negroes into the surrounding middle-class white communities. . . . It is true . . . SNCC . . . had a similar orientation. But while it is hardly a concern of a black sharecropper, dishwasher, or welfare recipient whether a certain fifteen-dollar-a-day motel offers accommodations to Negroes, the overt symbols of white superiority . . . had to be destroyed. Now, black people must look beyond these goals, to the issue of collective power.

- .....
- According to Carmichael, how is power shared in the United States, and what steps must the African American population take to gain power?
  - How does Carmichael differentiate personal from institutional racism? How might these two kinds of racism mirror *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination? How do you think Carmichael might, in a few words, define Black Power?

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From "Toward Black Liberation" by Stokely Carmichael. From THE MASSACHUSETTS REVIEW, 7 (Autumn 1966). Reprinted by permission of Massachusetts Review.

poverty. Still an advocate of nonviolence, King called for mass demonstrations to compel economic and social justice. He was in Memphis supporting striking black sanitation workers when, on April 4, 1968, he was killed by James Earl Ray. Spontaneously, African Americans took to the streets in 168 cities, including Washington, D.C.

 See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

The July 1967 riot in Detroit was one of the most costly of the riots of the 1960s in terms of deaths and property damaged. After five days of rioting, forty-three people (thirty-three African Americans) died, approximately one thousand people were injured, seven thousand people were arrested, and property damages were in the range of \$40 million to \$80 million. AP Photo.



From King to Carmichael, African Americans confronted the old order. But they were not alone. The 1960s found many other individuals and groups arguing and protesting for change. Young adults questioned social and cultural values and voiced demands for a more liberated society, one that placed few barriers on individual actions. Women in increasing numbers were seeking to alter the status quo and were rejecting the notion that they were fulfilled by running their homes and serving their families. For some, what began as an effort to gain equality resulted in a larger critique of traditional American views about sexuality and gender.

### Rejecting the Feminine Mystique

The willingness of women to question their popular image was partially a response to the changing reality of society and the workplace. Since the 1950s, more women were entering the work force, graduating from college, getting divorces, and becoming heads of households. Households headed by single women were among the most impoverished group in America. Women complained that gender stereotyping denied them access to better-paying career jobs. The Kennedy administration's 1963 report of the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women confirmed in stark statistics that women constituted a social and economic underclass. They worked for less pay than earned by white males for the same job (on average 40 percent less), were more likely to be fired or laid off, and rarely reached top career positions. It was not solely in the workplace that women faced discrimination. Throughout the country, divorce, credit, and property laws generally favored men, and in several states women were not even allowed to serve on juries. The president's commission provided statistics, but it was **Betty Friedan's** 1963 bestseller *The Feminine Mystique* that many regard as the beginning of the women's

**Betty Friedan** Feminist who wrote *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963 and helped found the National Organization for Women in 1966.



# Investigating America

## Establishing the President's Commission on the Status of Women, 1961

A traditionalist in many ways, John F. Kennedy proposed a Presidential Commission on the Status of Women as a "compromise" measure. The commission could appeal to feminists who were concerned about women's economic status while avoiding alienating the administration's labor base through a potential mention of the Equal Rights Amendment. While running for the presidency in 1960, Kennedy approached Eleanor Roosevelt for political support. Doubting his commitment on the issue, Roosevelt shrewdly bargained her endorsement in exchange for Kennedy's promise to create a Presidential Commission on the Status of Women.

### Executive Order 10980

WHEREAS prejudices and outmoded customs act as barriers to the full realization of women's basic rights which should be respected and fostered as part of our Nation's commitment to human dignity, freedom, and democracy; and

WHEREAS measures that contribute to family security and strengthen home life will advance the general welfare; and

WHEREAS it is in the national interest to promote the economy, security, and national defense through the most efficient and effective utilization of the skills of all persons, and

WHEREAS in every period of national emergency women have served with distinction in widely varied capacities but thereafter have been subject to treatment as a marginal group whose skills have been inadequately utilized; and

WHEREAS women should be assured the opportunity to develop their capacities and fulfill their aspirations on a continuing basis irrespective of national exigencies, and

WHEREAS a Governmental Commission should be charged with the responsibility for developing recommendations for overcoming discriminations in government and private employment on the basis of sex and for developing recommendations for services which will enable women to continue their role as wives and mothers while making a maximum contribution to the world around them:

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States by the Constitution and statutes of the United States, it is ordered as follows. . . . SEC. 201. The Commission shall review progress and make recommendations as needed for constructive action in the following areas: Employment policies and practices, including those on wages, under Federal contracts. Federal social insurance and tax laws as they affect the net earnings and other income of women. Federal and State labor laws dealing with such matters as hours, night work, and wages, to determine whether they are accomplishing the purposes for which they were established and whether they should be adapted to changing technological, economic, and social conditions. Differences in legal treatment of men and women in regard to political and civil rights, property rights, and family relations. New and expanded services that may be required for women as wives, mothers, and workers, including education, counseling, training, home services, and arrangements for care of children during the working day. The employment policies and practices of the Government of the United States, with reference to additional affirmative steps which should be taken through legislation, executive or administrative action to assure nondiscrimination on the basis of sex and to enhance constructive employment opportunities for women.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

- How did the rationale laid out in the lengthy preamble condemn sexism yet promote "traditional" family roles? How might references to "national defense" have been used to defuse criticism of the Commission?
- Why do you think the government took so long to investigate salary inequities that had been common in the workplace even before World War II? In prodding Kennedy into action, Roosevelt was similar to King and other civil rights advocates, who felt the need to push the administration into publicly endorsing their crusades. Why might that have been necessary with even a liberal president?



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

movement. After reviewing the traditional responsibilities of the housewife, Friedan asked: “Is this all?” She concluded it was not enough. Women needed to overcome the “feminine mystique” that promised them fulfillment in the domestic arts. She called on women to set their own goals and seek careers outside the home. Her book, combined with the presidential report, provided new perspectives to women and contributed to a renewed women’s movement.

In 1963, Congress began to address women’s issues when it passed the **Equal Pay Act**. Also engendering more activism was the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act with the inclusion of **Title VII**. The original version of the bill made no mention of discrimination on account of sex, but Representative Martha Griffiths (D.–Michigan) joined with conservative Democrat Howard Smith of Virginia to add the word *sex* to Title VII which, as finally approved, prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, religion, creed, national origin, or sex.

Many people hoped Title VII marked the beginning of a serious effort by government to provide gender equality. But when the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, established in 1964 to support the law, and the Johnson administration showed little interest in dealing with gender discrimination, women formed organizations to promote their interests and to persuade the government to enforce Title VII. The most prominent women’s organization to emerge was the **National Organization for Women (NOW)**, formed in 1966. With Betty Friedan as president, NOW launched an aggressive campaign to draw attention to sex discrimination and redress wrongs. It demanded an Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution to ensure gender equality and pushed for easier access to birth-control devices and the right to have an abortion. NOW membership grew rapidly from about three hundred in 1966 to 175,000 in 1968. But the women’s movement was larger than NOW and represented a variety of voices.

**Equal Pay Act** Forbids employers engaged in commerce or in producing goods for commerce to pay different wages for equal work based on sex. Some employers continued to pay lower wages to women arguing that the jobs were not exactly equal.

**Title VII** Provision of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that guarantees women legal protection against discrimination.

#### National Organization for Women

Women’s rights organization founded in 1966 to fight discrimination against women; to improve opportunities for women; and to fight for equal pay for equal work.

Bella Abzug (1920–1998), an avid supporter of women’s rights, was elected to the House of Representatives in 1970 and a year later co-founded the National Women’s Political Caucus. Keystone/Hulton Archive/Getty Images.



## Rejecting Gender Roles

By the end of the decade, some of those seeking change went beyond economics and politics in their critique of American society, taking aim at existing norms of sex and gender roles.

Radical feminists, for example, called for a redefinition of sexuality and repudiated America's enchantment with family, marriage, and the male-dominated society. "We are exploited as sex objects, breeders, domestic servants and cheap labor," declared the Redstocking Manifesto in 1969. The New York group that issued the manifesto was among the first to use "**consciousness-raising**" groups to educate women about the oppression they faced because of the sex-gender system. Rita Mae Brown went further, leaving the Redstockings in order to advocate lesbian rights. In 1973 she published her first, acclaimed novel, *Rubyfruit Jungle*, which presented lesbianism in a positive light and provided a literary basis for discussion of lesbian life and attitudes.

By the late 1960s, Rita Mae Brown and radical feminists were not the only ones asking society to reconsider its traditional views toward sexuality and gender. Since the 1950s, organizations such as the Daughters of Bilitis and the Mattachine Society had worked quietly to promote new attitudes toward homosexuality and to overturn laws that punished homosexual activities. But most homosexuals remained in the closet, fearful of reprisals by the straight community and its institutions.

The Stonewall Riot in 1969, however, brought increased visibility and renewed activism to the homosexual community. The police raid on the Stonewall Inn in New York City resulted in an unexpected riot as gay patrons fought the police and were joined by other members of the community. A Gay Manifesto called for gays and lesbians to raise their consciousness and rid their minds of "garbage" poured into them by old values. "Liberation . . . is defining for ourselves how and with whom we live. . . . We are only at the beginning."

Success came slowly. Polls indicated that the majority of Americans still considered homosexuality immoral and even a disease. But by the mid-1970s, those polls indicated a shift as a slight majority of Americans opposed job discrimination based on sexual orientation and seemed willing to show more tolerance of gay lifestyles. Responding to gay rights pressure in 1973, the American Psychiatric Association ended its classification of homosexuality as a mental disorder.

## The Youth Movement

Within the civil rights, feminist, and gay rights movements, young college-age adults were among the loudest and most militant calling for change. By 1965, the baby boomers were heading off to college in record numbers. More than 40 per-

cent of the nation's high school graduates were attending college, a leap of 13 percent from 1955 rates. Graduate and professional schools were churning out record numbers of advanced degrees. Although the majority of young adults remained quite traditional, an expanding number began to question the goals of education, the role of the university, and the rights of students. Students complained that education seemed sterile—an assembly line producing standardized products, not a crucible of ideas creating independent, thinking individuals. Many students demanded more concern for the individual, more freedom of expression, and a more flexible curriculum.

Setting their sights beyond the campus community, some activists urged that the campus should be a haven for free thought and a marshaling ground for efforts to change society significantly. A New Left was emerging. At the University of Michigan in 1960, Tom Hayden and Al Haber organized **Students for a Democratic Society** (SDS). SDS members insisted that Americans recognize that their affluent nation was also a

**consciousness-raising** Achieving greater awareness of the nature of political or social issues through group interaction.

## Students for a Democratic Society

Left-wing student organization founded in 1960 to criticize American materialism and work for social justice.

**Port Huron Statement** A 1962 critique of the Cold War and American materialism by SDS; it called for “participatory democracy” and for universities to be centers of free speech and activism.

land of poverty and want, and that business and government chose to ignore social inequalities. In 1962 SDS issued its **Port Huron Statement**, which maintained that the country should reallocate its resources according to social need and strive to build “an environment for people to live in with dignity and creativeness.” Others within the youth movement accused society of being “plastic” in its materialism. Spurning traditional values, they glorified freedom of the spirit and self-knowledge and sought new ways to express their feelings.

Music was one of the most prominent forms of freedom of expression and defiance. Some musicians, like Bob Dylan, challenged society with protest and antiwar songs. Rock ’n’ roll, which took a variety of forms, remained dominant. Performers like The Beatles were among the most popular, sharing the stage with other British imports such as the Rolling Stones, whose behavior and songs depicted a lack of social restraints. Other musicians, like the Grateful Dead and Jimi Hendrix, introduced psychedelic acid rock, which acclaimed an uninhibited drug culture.

### The Counterculture

The use of drugs offered another way to be free of the older generation’s values. For many coming of age in the 1960s, marijuana, or “pot,” was the primary means to get “stoned” or “high.” Marijuana advocates claimed that it was nonad-

dictive and that, unlike the nation’s traditional drug—alcohol—it reduced aggression and heightened perception, reinforcing the counterculture’s ideals of peace, serenity, and self-awareness. A more dangerous and unpredictable drug also became popular with some members of the counterculture: LSD, lysergic acid diethylamide, or “acid,” a hallucinogenic drug that alters perception. Harvard psychology professor **Timothy Leary** argued that by “tripping” on LSD, people could “turn on, tune in, and drop out” of the rat race that was American society. Although most youths did not use drugs, drugs offered some within the counterculture and the nation a new experience that many believed was liberating. Drugs also proved to be destructive and deadly, contributing to the deaths of several counterculture figures, including musicians Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison, and Janis Joplin.

Another realm of traditional American values the counterculture overturned was sex. Some young people appalled their parents and society by questioning, if not rejecting, the values that placed restrictions on sexual activities. Sex was a form of human expression, they argued, and if it felt good, why stifle it? New openness about sexuality and relaxation of the stigma on extramarital sex turned out to be significant legacies of the 1960s. But the philosophy of **free love** also had a negative side as increased sexual activity contributed to a rapid rise in cases of sexually transmitted diseases. The notion of free love also exposed women to increased sexual assault as some men assumed that all “liberated” women desired sexual relations.

Perhaps the most colorful and best-known advocates of the counterculture and its ideals were the “**hippies**.” Seeking a life of peace, love, and self-awareness, hippies tried to distance themselves from traditional society. They flocked in large numbers to northern California, congregating especially in the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood of San Francisco, where they frequently carried drug abuse and free love to excess. Elsewhere, some hippie groups abandoned the “old-fashioned” nuclear family and lived together as extended families on communes. Hippies expressed their nonconformity in their appearance, favoring long, unkempt hair and ratty blue jeans or long, flowered dresses. Although the number of hippie dropouts was small, their style of dress and grooming greatly influenced young Americans.

**Timothy Leary** Harvard professor and counterculture figure who advocated the expansion of consciousness through the use of drugs such as LSD.

**free love** Popular belief among members of the counterculture in the 1960s that sexual activities should be unconstrained.

**hippies** Members of the counterculture in the 1960s who rejected the competitiveness and materialism of American society and searched for peace, love, and autonomy.



The influence of the counterculture peaked, at least in one sense, in the summer of 1969, when an army of teens and young adults converged on **Woodstock**, New York, for the largest free rock concert in history. For three days, through summer rains and deepening mud, more than 400,000 came together in a temporary open-air community, where many of the most popular rock 'n' roll bands performed day and night. Touted as three days of peace and love, sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll, Woodstock symbolized the power of counterculture values to promote cooperation and happiness.

**Woodstock** Free rock concert in Woodstock, New York, in August 1969; it attracted 400,000 people and was remembered as the classic expression of the counterculture.

## Summary

Kennedy's election generated a renewed wave of activism and optimism. Many hoped that the nation's and the world's problems could be solved by combinations of individual, institutional, and governmental actions. The idea of a New Frontier raised the expectations of a nation. Heightened expectations were clearly visible among the African Americans who looked to Kennedy, and later to Johnson, for legislation to end segregation and discrimination. As Kennedy took office, African American leaders launched a series of sit-ins and freedom marches designed to keep the pressure on American society and the government. Kennedy's domestic options, however, were limited by a narrow Democratic margin in Congress, and a comprehensive civil rights bill was not introduced until mid-1963. It was quickly mired in congressional politics, as were several other pieces of Kennedy's domestic agenda, including aid to education and a tax cut. Like Eisenhower, Kennedy had to settle for modest legislative successes that merely expanded existing programs and entitlements (benefits provided to certain groups, such as the elderly, farmers, the disabled, or the poor).

Hampered by congressional opposition, Kennedy favored foreign policy. In implementing flexible response, Kennedy adopted a more comprehensive strategy to confront communism. Confrontations over Berlin and Cuba, escalating arms and space races, and an expanded commitment to Vietnam were accepted as part of the United States' global role and passed intact to Johnson.

As president, Johnson expanded on the slain president's agenda, announcing a War on Poverty and the implementation of a Great Society. Between 1964 and

1966 Johnson pushed through Congress a series of acts that extended New Deal liberalism into new areas of public policy. The 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act reshaped society and politics. Other Great Society legislation tackled poverty and discrimination, expanded educational opportunities, and created a national system of health insurance for the poor and elderly.

The decade's emphasis on activism, the New Frontier, and the Great Society encouraged more Americans to seek equality and raise new agendas. Within the African American movement, more emphasis was centered on economic and social issues. Some African American activists rejected assimilation and expressed more militant demands for basic institutional social and economic changes. Drawing from the civil rights movement, consciousness-raising efforts, and the inclusion of gender in the civil rights act, the decade also saw the reemergence of a women's movement. Many women also began to question the framework of gender roles in a male-dominated society as they sought economic, legal, and social equality. Within the civil rights and feminist movements, much of the activism came from young adults. The nation's youth, too, seemed unwilling to accept the traditional values of society and demanded change.

As the decade drew to a close, some Americans recoiled from the incessant demands for change. Disturbed by race riots and other attacks on the status quo, an increasing number of people were questioning government programs that appeared to favor the poor and minorities at the majority's expense. The result was that a decade that had begun with great promise produced, for many, disappointment and disillusionment.

## Key Terms

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fiscal policies, *p. 660*  
sit-ins, *p. 661*  
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# America Under Stress

## 1967–1976

## CHAPTER 28

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Dolores Huerta

Dolores Huerta, a school teacher in Stockton, California, saw the children of farm workers coming to class without having their basic needs met. Teaching was not enough to help these students, and so she embarked on removing the root of the children's problems: the poverty of the farm worker. In 1955, Huerta joined the Community Service Organization (CSO), an activist organization working to improve the lives of the poor, especially minorities. She left the CSO in 1962 and joined with fellow CSO organizer, César Chávez, to found the National Farm Workers Association. It was a choice that changed Huerta's life, moving her from the sidelines to activism.

As a union organizer, Huerta and her family experienced what “farm worker families go through every day of their lives”—poverty. Over the next forty-five years, she organized workers, led strikes and stood in picket lines, oversaw the grape boycott, negotiated contracts with growers, and lobbied state and federal governments. In the process she was arrested twenty-two times, placed under FBI surveillance because of suspected Communist ties, and suffered a ruptured spleen as a result of a severe beating by a San Francisco police officer.

But, there were victories. Huerta was instrumental in getting the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act (1975) passed, which gave farm workers the right to collectively organize and bargain with employers. In negotiations with growers, she successfully achieved higher wages and improved working conditions—including portable toilets, health coverage, and the restriction of pesticides, especially DDT, which was completely banned in 1974. She remains involved in *La Causa*, working for the rights of Latinos, workers, and women. Her Foundation's Organizing Institute, like the CSO, offers organizational and political training to low-income communities. In July 2006, Huerta was still supporting farm workers and organized a march in Lamont, California, to gain “just wages.”



#### **DOLORS HUERTA**

*Dolores Huerta, along with César Chávez, co-founded the first successful farm workers union in 1961, the United Farm Workers Association.*

UFW Collection, Reuther Library, Wayne State University.

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### ***Johnson and the War***

- Americanization of the Vietnam War
- The Antiwar Movement

#### ***Tet and the 1968 Presidential Campaign***

- The Tet Offensive
- Changing of the Guard
- The Election of 1968

#### ***Defining the American Dream***

- The Emergence of *La Causa*
- Investigating America: César Chávez on Organizing Grape Workers, 1979
- American Indian Activism

#### ***Nixon and the World***

- Vietnamization

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA: Veteran**

- John Kerry's Testimony on Vietnam, 1971
- Modifying the Cold War

#### ***Nixon and the Domestic Agenda***

- Nixon as Pragmatist

#### **IT MATTERS TODAY: Improving the Environment**

- Building the Silent Majority
- An Embattled President
- An Interim President

#### ***Summary***

# Chronology

<b>1962</b>	César Chávez and Dolores Huerta form National Farm Workers Association	<b>1970</b>	U.S. troops invade Cambodia Kent State and Jackson State killings First Earth Day observed Environmental Protection Agency created Clean Air and Water Quality Improvement Act
<b>1963</b>	John F. Kennedy assassinated; Lyndon B. Johnson becomes president	<b>1971</b>	Nixon enacts price and wage controls <i>New York Times</i> publishes Pentagon Papers <i>Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg</i> Twenty-sixth Amendment ratified
<b>1964</b>	Gulf of Tonkin Resolution Johnson elected president	<b>1972</b>	Nixon visits China and Soviet Union Bombing of North Vietnam resumes Watergate break-in Nixon reelected SALT I treaty
<b>1965</b>	U.S. air strikes against North Vietnam begin American combat troops arrive in South Vietnam Anti-Vietnam “teach-ins” begin Dominican Republic intervention National Farm Workers begins strike against grape growers	<b>1973</b>	Vietnam peace settlement “Second Battle of Wounded Knee” Watergate hearings Salvador Allende overthrown in Chile War Powers Act Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns Nixon appoints Representative Gerald R. Ford as vice president Yom Kippur War and Arab oil boycott
<b>1966</b>	<i>Miranda v. Arizona</i>	<b>1974</b>	Nixon resigns; Gerald Ford becomes president Brezhnev-Ford Summit at Vladivostok
<b>1967</b>	Antiwar march on Washington	<b>1975</b>	South Vietnam government falls to North Vietnamese Helsinki Summit
<b>1968</b>	Tet offensive My Lai massacre Johnson withdraws from presidential race Peace talks begin in Paris Robert Kennedy assassinated Mexican American student walkouts American Indian Movement founded Richard Nixon elected president		
<b>1969</b>	Secret bombing of Cambodia Warren Burger appointed chief justice of Supreme Court Nixon Doctrine First American troop withdrawals from Vietnam <i>Alexander v. Holmes</i> American Indians occupy Alcatraz		

The 1960s was a period of activism. Within the government, the Supreme Court led the way, issuing decisions expanding the rights of individuals and limiting the power of the state. Following the patterns set by the civil rights movement, Latinos and American Indians formed organizations to promote their interests. Some considered liberalism triumphant. But by 1966, forces were gathering to reject liberalism and allow Republicans to seize leadership.

While fighting a war on poverty, President Johnson committed American forces in South Vietnam. The goal was to convince North Vietnam that the cost of the war was



too high by implementing a gradual escalation of American forces. The strategy failed. Not only did North Vietnam meet escalation with escalation, but it was the United States that grew war weary.

For many, the election of 1968 was a referendum on the war. But to many others, it was a larger critique of liberal policies. Nixon promised to strengthen the nation by restoring national unity and global prestige and by reasserting traditional values. His call found support from a society fragmented by war, domestic unrest, and a declining economy.

In power, Nixon fostered unity around pragmatic policies while strengthening the Republican political base. His first administration achieved success. He improved relations with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China and began to withdraw American forces from Vietnam. Domestically, his choices showed flexibility, expanding some Great Society programs and following Keynesian guidelines to improve the economy. He implemented a "southern strategy," drawing Southerners to the Party, and was able to appoint more conservative judges in the federal courts, especially the Supreme Court.

Nixon's popularity ensured an easy re-election. But behind the scenes he worked to ruin his political enemies, leading to the Watergate break-in. Watergate produced a bitter harvest: not only the unprecedented resignation of a president but a nationwide wave of disillusionment with politics and government.

Nixon's resignation brought an unelected Gerald Ford to the presidency. Ford tried to heal the nation, but faced an uphill battle against a floundering economy and a politically cynical public. Although he gained few political victories, he secured his party's nomination for the 1976 presidential election.

## Johnson and the War

- ★ **How did foreign-policy decisions made by Kennedy influence Johnson's decisions regarding Latin America and Southeast Asia? In what ways were Johnson's policies different from Kennedy's?**
- ★ **What considerations led Johnson to escalate America's role in Vietnam in 1965? How did the North Vietnamese respond to the escalation?**

Suddenly thrust into the presidency, Lyndon Johnson breathed life into Kennedy's domestic programs and launched the more extensive Great Society. Although Johnson was not as comfortable as Kennedy was in dealing with foreign affairs, he was determined not to stray from past policies or allow further erosion of American power. Two regions of special concern were Latin America and Vietnam, where, like his predecessors, Johnson was determined to prevent further Communist inroads.

In the Western Hemisphere, Castro and his determination to export revolution appeared to be the biggest problem. Johnson continued Kennedy's economic boycott of Cuba and the CIA's efforts to destabilize the Castro regime. But he refocused Kennedy's Alliance for Progress. Stability became more important than reform. This new perspective, labeled the **Mann Doctrine**, resulted in increased amounts of American military equipment and advisers in Latin America to aid various regimes to suppress those disruptive elements they labeled "Communist." In 1965 the new policy led to direct military intervention in the Dominican Republic. There, supporters of deposed, democratically elected president Juan Bosch rebelled against a repressive, pro-American regime. Johnson and his advisers decided that the pro-Bosch coalition was dominated by Communists,

**Mann Doctrine** U.S. policy outlined by Thomas Mann during the Johnson administration that called for stability in Latin America rather than economic and political reform.

asserted the right to protect the Dominican people from an “international conspiracy,” and sent in twenty-two thousand American troops. They restored order; monitored elections that put a pro-American president, Joaquin Balaguer, in power; and left the island in mid-1966. Johnson claimed to have saved the Dominicans from communism, but many Latin Americans saw the American intervention only as an example of Yankee arrogance and the intrusive uses of its power.

### Americanization of the Vietnam War

Kennedy had left Johnson a crisis in Vietnam. The South Vietnamese government remained unstable, its army ineffective, and the Viet Cong, supported by North Vietnam, appeared to be winning the conflict. Without a larger and direct American involvement, Johnson’s advisers saw little hope for improvement. Johnson felt trapped: “I don’t think it is worth fighting for,” he told an adviser, “and I don’t think we can get out.” In formulating policy, Johnson concluded that a gradual escalation of American force against North Vietnam and the Viet Cong would be the most effective. It would pressure the North Vietnamese to halt their support of the Viet Cong while limiting domestic opposition. He also wanted to wait until a Communist action allowed the United States to strike back before asking Congress for permission to use whatever force was necessary to defend South Vietnam.

The chance came in August 1964 off the coast of North Vietnam. Following a covert attack on its territory, North Vietnamese torpedo boats skirmished with the American destroyer *Maddox* in the Gulf of Tonkin on August 2 (see Map 28.1). On August 4, experiencing rough seas and poor visibility, radar operators on the *Maddox* and another destroyer, the *C. Turner Joy*, concluded that the patrol boats were making another attack. Confusion followed. Both ships fired wildly at targets shown only on radar screens. Johnson immediately ordered retaliatory air strikes on North Vietnam and prepared a resolution for Congress. Although within hours he learned that the second incident probably had not occurred, Johnson told the public and Congress that Communist attacks against “peaceful villages” in South Vietnam had been “joined by open aggression on the high seas against the United States of America.” On August 7, Congress approved the **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution**, allowing the United States “to take all necessary measures to repel” attacks against American forces in Vietnam and “to prevent further aggression.” Public opinion polls showed strong support for the president, and only two senators opposed the resolution: Wayne Morse of Oregon and Ernest Gruening of Alaska.

The resolution gave Johnson freedom to take whatever measures he wanted in Vietnam. He decided that air attacks on targets in North Vietnam would happen first, followed by the insertion of American troops. The air offensive, Operation Rolling Thunder, began on March 2, 1965, with the 3rd Marine Division arriving a week later. By July, American planes were flying more than nine hundred missions a week, and a hundred thousand American ground forces had reached Vietnam. Near their bases, American forces patrolled aggressively, searching out the enemy. Johnson’s strategy soon showed its flaws. Instead of reducing its support for the Viet Cong as the United States predicted, North Vietnam escalated as well, committing units of the North Vietnamese army (NVA) to the fight. The U.S. commanding general in Vietnam, **William Westmoreland**, and others now strongly insisted that American forces carry out a larger land offensive and asked for more American soldiers. Reluctantly, Johnson gave the green light. Vietnam had become an American war.

Westmoreland’s plan was to use overwhelming numbers and firepower to destroy the enemy. The first major American offensive was a large-scale sweep of the Ia Drang Valley

**Gulf of Tonkin Resolution** Decree passed by Congress in 1964 authorizing the president to take any measures necessary to repel attacks against U.S. forces in Vietnam.

**William Westmoreland** Commander of all American troops in Vietnam from 1964 to 1968.

in November 1965. Ten miles from the Cambodian border, the Ia Drang Valley contained no villages and was a longtime sanctuary for Communist forces. Airlifted into the valley to search out and destroy the enemy, the American air cavalry soon came under fierce attack from North Vietnamese troops. “There was very vicious fighting,” North Vietnamese commander Nguyen Huu noted. The “soldiers fought valiantly. They had no choice, you were dead if not.” Both sides claimed victory and drew different lessons from the engagement. Examining the losses—305 Americans versus 3,561 Vietnamese—American officials embraced the strategy of search and destroy: the enemy would be ground down. *Time* magazine named Westmoreland “Man of the Year” for 1965. Hanoi concluded that its “peasant army” had withstood America’s best firepower and had fought U.S. troops to a draw. The North Vietnamese were confident: the costs would be great, but they would



Unlike previous wars, Vietnam was a war without fixed frontlines. In this picture, marines work their way through the jungle south of the demilitarized zone (DMZ) trying to cut off North Vietnamese supplies and reinforcements moving into South Vietnam. Larry Burrows/*Time* Magazine/*Time & Life* Pictures/Getty Images.

**Ho Chi Minh Trail** Main infiltration route for North Vietnamese soldiers and supplies into South Vietnam; it ran through Laos and Cambodia.

wear down the Americans. Both sides, believing victory was possible, committed more troops and prepared for a lengthy war.

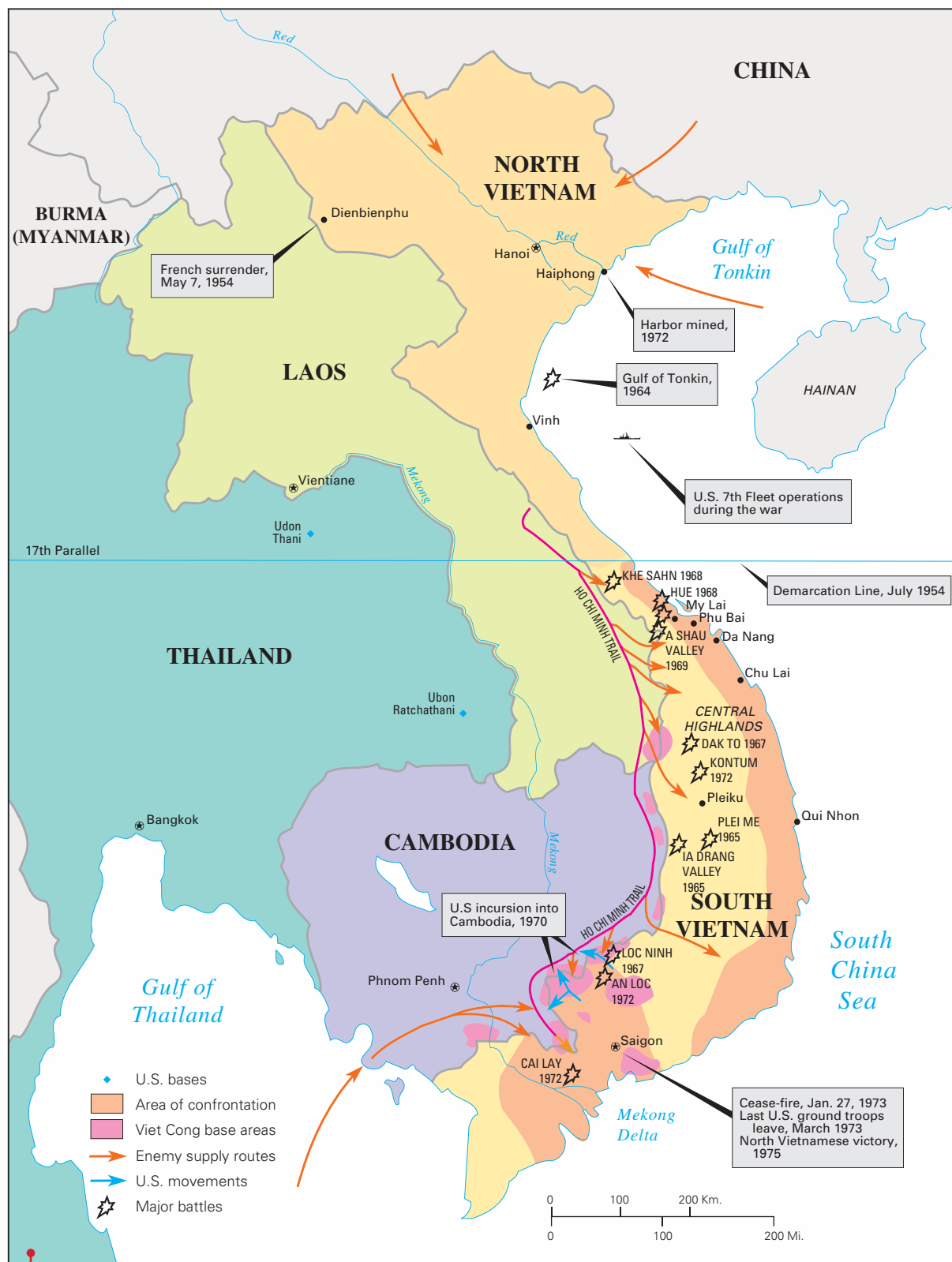
The war escalated in 1966 and 1967. The United States and the North Vietnamese committed more troops, while American aircraft rained more bombs on North Vietnam and supply routes, especially the **Ho Chi Minh Trail** (see Map 28.1). The strategic bombing of North Vietnam produced great results—on paper. Nearly every target in North Vietnam had been demolished by 1968, but the North Vietnamese continued the struggle. China and the Soviet Union increased their support, while much of North Vietnamese industrial production was moved underground. It seemed that the more the United States bombed, the more North Vietnamese determination increased. By mid-1966, it appeared to some in Washington that the war had reached a stalemate, with neither side able to win nor willing to lose. Some speculated that any victory would be a matter of will, and feared that growing opposition to the war in the United States might be a deciding factor.

### The Antiwar Movement

Throughout 1964, support at home for an American role in Vietnam was widespread. Most Americans accepted the domino theory and predictions that horrible reprisals against non-Communists would follow a Communist victory. The escalation of the war in 1965 saw a largely college-based opposition to the war arise—with Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) the prime instigators. The University of Michigan held the first Vietnam “teach-in” to mobilize opposition to American policy on March 24, 1965. In April, SDS organized a protest march of nearly twenty thousand past the White House, and by October its membership had increased 400 percent. That fall, David Miller, a student at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York, became the first protestor to burn his draft card. Those opposing the war fell into two major types who rarely agreed on anything other than that the war should be ended. Pacifists and liberals on the political left opposed the war for moral and ideological reasons. As the American military commitment grew and the military draft claimed more young men, others opposed the war for more pragmatic reasons: the draft, the loss of lives and money, and the inability of the United States either to defeat the enemy or to create a stable, democratic South Vietnam. A University of Michigan student complained that if he were drafted and spent two years in the army, he would lose more than \$16,000 in income. “I know I sound selfish,” he explained, “but . . . I paid \$10,000 to get this education.”

Yet, college students and graduates were not the most likely to be drafted or go to Vietnam. Future Vice President Dick Cheney received five student or family deferments, later saying he had “other priorities in the 1960s than military service.” Far more often, minorities and the poor served in Vietnam, especially in combat roles. African Americans constituted about 12 percent of the U.S. population but in Vietnam they made up nearly 50 percent of frontline units and accounted for about 25 percent of combat deaths. Stokely Carmichael and SNCC had supported SDS actions against the war as early as 1965, but it was Martin Luther King Jr.’s denunciation of the war in 1967 that made international headlines and shook the administration. King called the war immoral and preached that “the Great Society has been shot down on the battlefields of Vietnam.” He stated that it was wrong to send young blacks to defend democracy in Vietnam when they were denied it in Georgia. The New Left joined King in denouncing the war and expanded its critique of liberalism by arguing that it was the United States that was the world aggressor and not nations like North Vietnam.





**MAP 28.1** The Vietnam War, 1954–1975

Following the French defeat at Dienbienphu in 1954, the United States became increasingly committed to defending South Vietnam. This map shows some of the major battle sites of the Vietnam War from 1954 to the fall of Saigon and the defeat of the South Vietnamese government in 1975.

**COINTELPRO** Acronym (COunterINTElligence PROgram) for an FBI program begun in 1956 and continued until 1971 that sought to disrupt, and discredit groups considered to be radical; it targeted antiwar groups during the Vietnam War.

**Operation Chaos** Domestic CIA operation that spied on and disrupted anti-Vietnam War elements; although it is illegal for the CIA to operate within the United States, it collected files on over seven thousand Americans.

**Tet** Vietnam's lunar New Year holiday during which, in 1968, the unsuccessful Communist attack on South Vietnamese cities seriously undermined U.S. support for the war.

Johnson publicly dismissed the New Left and other war critics, labeling King a “crackpot.” But as the antiwar movement grew and public opinion polls registered increasing disapproval of the war effort, the administration responded with more direct action. **COINTELPRO** and **Operation Chaos** were implemented to infiltrate, spy on, discredit, and disrupt antiwar groups. Nevertheless, opposition to the war swelled. A “Stop-the-Draft Week” in October 1967 prompted more than ten thousand demonstrators to block the entrance of an induction center in Oakland, California, while over 200,000 people staged a massive protest march in Washington against “Lyndon’s War.”

The administration itself was torn by increasing disagreement about the course of the war. Hawks supported General Westmoreland’s assertions that the war was being won, that by 1968 half of the enemy’s forces were no longer capable of combat, and that more troops were needed to complete the job. Yet, by late 1967 some of Johnson’s wise men were taking a different view. In November, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara recommended a sharp reduction in the war effort, including a permanent end to the bombing of North Vietnam. Johnson rejected his position, and McNamara left the administration. Still, Johnson decided to consider a “withdrawal strategy” that would reduce American support while the South Vietnamese assumed a larger role. But first it was necessary to commit more troops, intensify the bombing, and put more pressure on the South Vietnamese to make domestic reforms. “The clock is ticking,” he said.

## Tet and the 1968 Presidential Campaign

- ★ **What were the political, social, and military outcomes of the Tet offensive?**
- ★ **What key issues shaped the 1968 campaign? What strategy did Richard Nixon use to win?**

Johnson was correct: the clock was ticking—not only for the United States but also for North Vietnam. As Westmoreland reported success, North Vietnamese leaders were planning an immense campaign to capture South Vietnamese cities during **Tet**, the Vietnamese lunar New Year holiday, a maneuver that would catch American intelligence agencies totally off-guard.

### The Tet Offensive

In January 1968, the Viet Cong struck forty-one cities throughout South Vietnam, including the capital, Saigon. In some of the bloodiest fighting of the war, American and South Vietnamese forces recaptured the lost cities and villages. It took twenty-four days to oust the Viet Cong from the old imperial city of Hue, leaving the city in ruins and costing more than ten thousand civilian, five thousand Communist, 384 South Vietnamese, and 216 American lives.

The Tet offensive was a military defeat for North Vietnam and the Viet Cong. It provoked no popular uprising against the South Vietnamese government, the Communists held no cities or provincial capitals, and they suffered staggering losses. More than forty thousand Viet Cong were killed. Tet was, nevertheless, a “victory” for the North Vietnamese, for it seriously weakened American support for the war. Amid official pronouncements of “victory just around the corner,” Tet destroyed the Johnson administration’s credibility and inflamed a growing antiwar movement. The highly respected CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite had supported the war, but Tet changed his mind. He announced on the air that there would be no victory in Vietnam and that the United States

should make peace. “If I have lost Walter Cronkite, then it’s over. I have lost Mr. Average Citizen,” Johnson lamented.

By March 1968, Johnson and most of his “wise men” had also concluded that the war was not going to be won. The new secretary of defense, Clark Clifford, admitted that four years of “enormous casualties” and “massive destruction from our bombing” had not weakened “the will of the enemy.” The emerging strategy was to place more responsibility on South Vietnam, send fewer troops than Westmoreland had asked for, and seek a diplomatic end to the war.

### Changing of the Guard

Two months after Tet came the first presidential primary in New Hampshire. There, Minnesota senator **Eugene McCarthy** was campaigning primarily on the antiwar issue. At the heart of his New Hampshire effort were hundreds of student volunteers who, deciding to “go clean for Gene,” cut their long hair and shaved their beards. They knocked on doors and distributed bales of flyers and pamphlets touting their candidate and condemning the war. Johnson won, but by only 6 percent of the votes cast. Political commentators promptly called McCarthy the real winner. New York senator **Robert Kennedy**’s announcement of his candidacy and his surging popularity in public opinion polls added to the pressure on Johnson. Quietly, President Johnson decided not to run for a second term.

On March 31, 1968, a haggard-looking President Johnson delivered a major televised speech announcing changes in his Vietnam policy. The United States was going to seek a political settlement through negotiations in Paris with the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese. The escalation of the ground war was over, and the South Vietnamese would take a larger role in the war. The bombing of northern North Vietnam was going to end, and a complete halt of the air war would follow the start of negotiations. At the end of his speech, Johnson calmly made this announcement: “I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as president.” Listeners were shocked. Although he later claimed that his fear of having a heart attack while in office was the primary reason for his decision not to run, nearly everyone agreed that the Vietnam War had ended Johnson’s political career and undermined his Great Society.

**Eugene McCarthy** Senator who opposed the Vietnam War and made an unsuccessful bid for the 1968 Democratic nomination for president.

**Robert Kennedy** Attorney general under his brother John; elected to the Senate in 1964, his campaign for the presidency was gathering momentum when he was assassinated in 1968.

### The Election of 1968

There were now three Democratic candidates. McCarthy campaigned against the war and the “imperial presidency.” Kennedy opposed the war, but not executive and federal power, and he called on the government to better meet the needs of the poor and minorities. Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, running in the shadow of Johnson, stood behind the president’s foreign and domestic programs.

By June, Kennedy was winning the primary race, drawing heavily from minorities and urban Democratic voters. In the critical California primary, Kennedy gained a narrow victory over McCarthy, 46 to 41 percent, but as he left his campaign headquarters, he was shot by Sirhan Sirhan, a Jordanian immigrant. Kennedy died the next day. His death stunned the nation and ensured Humphrey’s nomination. McCarthy continued his campaign but did not generate much support among party regulars. By the time of the national convention in Chicago in August, Humphrey had enough pledged votes to guarantee his nomination.

Nevertheless, the convention was dramatic. Inside and outside the convention center, antiwar and anti-establishment groups demonstrated for McCarthy, peace in Vietnam,

and social justice. Radical factions within the Students for a Democratic Society promised physical confrontation and threatened to contaminate the water supply with drugs. Chicago mayor Richard Daley, determined to maintain order, called in twelve thousand police. By August 24, the second day of the convention, clashes between the police and protesters started and grew more belligerent every day. Protesters threw eggs, bottles, rocks, and balloons filled with water, ink, and urine at the police, who responded with tear gas and nightsticks. On August 28, the police began indiscriminately attacking protesters and bystanders alike as television cameras recorded the scene. Many Americans were disgusted by the chaos in Chicago. The politics of hope that had begun the 1960s was quickly fading. From both the political left and right came criticisms of the social policies of the Great Society and the foreign policies that mired the nation in the war in Vietnam.

**George Wallace** Conservative Alabama governor who opposed desegregation in the 1960s and ran unsuccessfully for the presidency in 1968 and 1972.

Representing growing dissatisfaction with liberal social policies within Democratic ranks, Governor **George Wallace** of Alabama left the Democratic Party and ran for president as the American Independent Party's candidate. He aimed his campaign at southern whites and blue-collar workers, all of whom deplored the "loss" of traditional American values and society. On the campaign trail, Wallace called for victory in Vietnam and took special glee in attacking the counterculture and the "rich-kid" war protesters who avoided serving in Vietnam while the sons of working-class Americans died there. He also opposed federal civil rights and welfare legislation. Two months before the election, Wallace commanded 21 percent of the vote, according to national opinion polls. "On November 5," he confidently predicted, "they're going to find out there are a lot of rednecks in this country."

**Spiro Agnew** Vice president under Richard Nixon; he resigned in 1973 amid charges of illegal financial dealings during his governorship of Maryland.

Richard Nixon was the Republican candidate, having easily won his party's nomination at an orderly convention. He also intended to tap into the country's general dissatisfaction, but without the antagonism of the Wallace campaign. He and **Spiro Agnew**, his vice-presidential running mate, focused the Republican campaign on the need for effective international leadership and law and order at home, while denouncing pot, pornography, protesters, and permissiveness. Nixon announced that he would "end the war and win the peace in Vietnam" but refused to comment further. Nixon won with a comfortable margin in the Electoral College although he received only 43 percent of the popular vote. Conservatives were pleased. Together, Nixon and Wallace attracted almost 56 percent of the popular vote, which conservatives interpreted as wide public support for an end to liberal social programs, a return to traditional values, and a major political realignment that emphasized the suburbs and the Sunbelt.

## Defining the American Dream

- ★ **What problems did Hispanics and American Indians face in American society? How did they organize to bring about change?**
- ★ **How did the federal government respond to the needs of Hispanics and American Indians?**

By 1968, there seemed little agreement on the nature of the American dream and the role of government in helping to achieve that end. On the one hand, the embattled liberals and increasingly militant voices of women, young activists, and minorities called for further promotion of their goals, including the rights of Hispanics and Native Americans. On the other hand, Nixon and his supporters saw a nation led by a Silent Majority composed of largely white, middle- and working-class people who sought peace with honor



in Vietnam and had little sympathy for student activists, antiwar protesters, welfare recipients, and civil rights advocates.

### The Emergence of *La Causa*

From King to Carmichael, African Americans had confronted the old order with increasing militancy. But they were not alone. Like blacks, Hispanics and American Indians remained near society's lowest levels of income and education. As the 1960s progressed, they too organized grassroots movements and confronted the status quo, demanding change. Initially, the Hispanic population was very enthusiastic about Kennedy as he had sought the Hispanic vote with a program called "Viva Kennedy." In power, however, the Kennedy administration did not meet expectations. Few Hispanics were appointed to government positions, and there seemed little interest in listening to Latino voices. Federal agencies appeared to defer those issues to local and state governments, which frequently resisted Mexican American activism. Despite being the largest minority in the western states, they were still, according to one Mexican American leader, the "invisible minority."

Among the most invisible and poorest were those working in the fields. Trapped at the bottom of the occupational ladder, not covered by Social Security or minimum wage and labor laws, unskilled and uneducated farm laborers—nearly one-third of all Mexican Americans—toiled long hours for little wages under often deplorable conditions. In 1962, drawing from a traditional base of farm worker organizations, especially in Texas and California, **César Chávez** and Dolores Huerta created the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) in the fields of central California. The union gained national recognition three years later when it struck against the grape growers. The union demanded a wage of \$1.40 an hour and asked the public to buy only union-picked grapes. After five years, the strike and the nationwide boycott forced most of the major growers to accept unionization and to improve wages and working conditions. Eventually, California and other states passed legislation to recognize farm workers' unions and to improve the wages and conditions of work for field workers, but agricultural workers, especially migrants, remain among the lowest-paid workers in the nation.

Chávez was a central figure in promoting *La Causa* (Spanish for "the cause"), but he was not alone. In Crystal City, Texas, a political "revolution" took place in 1963 when the Mexican American majority toppled the established Anglo political machine and elected an all-Mexican American slate to the city council. Similar activism was taking place elsewhere in the West, representing a growing grassroots militancy among Mexican Americans, especially among young adults, who called themselves **Chicanos**. They stressed pride in their heritage and Latino culture and called for resistance to the dictates of Anglo society. For most Mexican Americans, however, it was education, jobs, and wages—not assimilation or land grievances—that were key issues. They argued that discrimination and segregation still barred their children from a decent education. They demanded that school districts provide better educational opportunities for Hispanics and offer programs that would meet special needs of Hispanic students, including bilingual education. In Los Angeles, Raul Ruiz told Mexican American students: "If you are a student you should be angry! You should demand! You should protest! You should organize for a better education!" He called for students to walk out of their classes if schools did not meet their demands. In 1967, "walkouts" spread in California and Texas.

In November 1968, Mexican American students walked out of the high school in the small South Texas school district of Edcouch-Elsa. The activists demanded dignity, respect, and an end to "blatant discrimination," including corporal punishment—paddling—for

**César Chávez** Labor organizer who in 1962 founded the National Farm Workers Association; Chávez believed in nonviolence and used marches, boycotts, and fasts to put moral and economic pressure on growers.

**Chicano** A man or boy of Mexican descent (feminine: Chicana). Many Mexican Americans used the term during the late 1960s to signify their ethnic identity and pride.

# Investigating America

## César Chávez on Organizing Grape Workers, 1979

Born in Yuma, Arizona, in 1927, César Chávez was a civil rights activist and union leader. In 1952 he accepted a position with the Community Services Organization (CSO), a group dedicated to registering Mexican American workers to vote. Chávez traveled around California, encouraging farm workers to become involved in politics, and within six years he had become the organization's national director. Four years later, in 1962, he co-founded, with Dolores Huerta, the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), which later became the United Farm Workers (UFW). To gain attention for the plight of migrant workers, Chávez often fasted, once for thirty-six days to protest pesticide use. In 1965 Chávez and Huerta called a strike by the NFWA against the grape growers in Delano, California. Chávez and Huerta also organized a nationwide boycott against grapes picked by non-union workers. The strike was settled in 1970, and grape growers began to accept unionization. Excerpted here is Chávez's 1979 testimony to Congress, in which he explained the barriers to organizing rural labor near the Mexican border.

After 3 months of striking . . . we have come to the conclusion very little progress has been made in the last 40 years. . . . In the 1930's when the farm worker tried to organize a strike, they were looked upon [and] treated [as] . . . un-American, as subversive, and as some sort of criminal element. We today are looked upon pretty much the same way.

Just as in the 1930s, when a strike occurred, they were called criminal whether they be in Salinas, Calexico, Monterey County, Imperial County, or in Delano and Bakersfield, Calif. When a union strikes it becomes then not simply a labor-management dispute as you see in other cases, but in our experience it becomes then on one side the workers, [and] on the other side agribusiness and all of the local institutions,

political and social, organize then to break the strike—the police, the sheriffs, the courts, the schools, the boards of supervisors, city councils. . . . The agribusiness industry wields the political power and uses it to break our strikes and destroy the union.

They have two standards of conduct against Mexicans and against unions. As long as we, Mexican farm workers, keep their place and do our work we are tolerated, but if the Mexican worker joins a union, if he stands up for justice and if he dares to strike, then all the local institutions feel duty-bound to defend what they consider to be their ideal of the American way of life. These communities . . . do not know what to do with us and they don't know what to do without us. . . . [F]or all of these 30 years it is apparent that when the farm workers strike and their strike is successful, the employers go to Mexico and have unlimited, unrestricted use of illegal alien strikebreakers to break the strike. . . . I do not remember one single instance in 30 years when the Immigration service has removed strike breakers.

The growers have armed their foremen. They have looked to professional agencies to provide them unlimited numbers of armed guards recruited from the streets, young men who are not trained . . . who are given a gun and a club and a badge . . . and the authority and permission to beat our people up, frighten them . . . and try to break the strike by using this unchecked raw power against our people.

- Why did Chávez believe that civic forces, from local police to school boards, were even more inclined to resist the unionization of rural workers than urban workers? Was he hinting that race and ethnicity played a role here?
- Why did the situation along the border make it especially difficult to organize migrant workers?

César Chávez, Testimony before The Committee on Labor and Human Resources, U.S. Senate, 96th Congress, 1st Session, 1979.



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

speaking Spanish outside Spanish class. The school board blamed “outside agitators” and suspended more than 150 students. But, as in other school districts, the protests brought results. The Edcouch-Elsa school district implemented Mexican American studies and bilingual programs, hired more Mexican American teachers and counselors, and created programs to meet the unique needs of migrant farm worker children, who moved from one school to another during picking season. In 1968, bilingual education in public

schools was mandated in Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The act also provided funds for schools to meet the “special educational needs” of students with limited English-speaking ability.

By the mid-1960s, it was not only in the West that Latinos were becoming more visible. In the urban Northeast, the Puerto Rican population had increased to about a million while economic opportunities declined as manufacturing jobs, especially in the garment industry, relocated to the Sunbelt or overseas. The Puerto Rican Forum attempted to coordinate federal grants and to find jobs, whereas the more militant Young Lords organized younger Puerto Ricans in Chicago and New York with an emphasis on their island culture and Hispanic heritage. “Brown Power” had joined Black Power, soon to be joined by “Red Power.”

### American Indian Activism

American Indians, responding to poverty, federal and state termination policies, and efforts by state government to seize land for development, also organized and asserted their rights with new vigor in the 1960s. In 1961, reservation and non-reservation Indians, including those not officially recognized as tribes, held a national convention in Chicago to discuss problems and consider plans of action. They agreed on a “Declaration of Indian Purpose” that called for a reversal of termination policies along with better education, economic, and health opportunities. “What we ask of America is not charity, not paternalism,” but only that “our situation be recognized and be made a basis . . . of action.” Presidents Kennedy and Johnson had responded positively, ensuring that they benefited from New Frontier and Great Society programs. Johnson, in 1968, declared that Native Americans should have the same “standard of living” as the rest of the nation and signed the Indian Civil Rights Act. It officially ended the termination program and gave more power to tribal organizations.

Kennedy’s and Johnson’s support for an increased standard of living and tribal and individual rights was a good beginning, but many activists wanted to redress old wrongs. In 1969 a group of San Francisco Indian activists, led by **Russell Means**, gained national attention by seizing **Alcatraz Island** and holding it until 1971, when, without bloodshed, federal authorities regained control. Two years later, in a more violent confrontation, **American Indian Movement** (AIM) leaders Means and Dennis Banks led an armed occupation of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, the site of the 1890 massacre of the Lakotas by the army. AIM controlled the town for seventy-one days before surrendering to federal authorities. Two Indians were killed, and over 230 activists arrested, in the “Second Battle of Wounded Knee.”

While President Nixon opposed AIM’s actions at Wounded Knee, he agreed that more needed to be done to improve tribal and individual lives. He doubled funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and sought to promote tribal economies. He supported acts that returned 40 million acres of Alaskan land to Eskimos and other native peoples and applauded the restoration of the Menominees as a tribe after it had been terminated in 1953. In 1974 Congress passed the **Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act**, which gave tribes control and operation of many federal programs on their reservations.

As federal courts asserted Indian treaty rights in the 1970s, an increasing number of tribes found new economic resources in commercial and industrial ventures operated on reservations. Among the most lucrative and controversial were casinos, which started to open in the 1990s. The profits from such enterprises greatly improved the conditions of life of those involved. As Native Americans entered the twenty-first century, they remained

**Russell Means** Indian activist who helped organize the seizures of Alcatraz in 1969 and Wounded Knee in 1973.

**Alcatraz Island** Rocky island, formerly a federal prison, in San Francisco Bay that Native American activists occupied in 1969, demanding that it be made available to them as a cultural center.

### American Indian Movement

Militant Indian movement founded in 1968 that was willing to use confrontation to obtain social justice and Indian treaty rights; organized the seizure of Wounded Knee.

### Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act

Law passed by Congress in 1974 giving Indian tribes control over federal programs on their reservations and increasing their authority in reservation schools.

Oscar Bear Runner was one of two hundred Sioux organized by the American Indian Movement (AIM) who took over Wounded Knee, South Dakota, the site of the 1890 massacre, holding out for seventy-one days against state and federal authorities. The confrontation ended when one protester was killed and the federal government agreed to examine the treaty rights of the Oglala Sioux. Bettmann/Corbis.



among the nation's most impoverished and poorly educated minority (see Map 28.2), but there are reasons for optimism. Disease and mortality rates are declining, and Indian populations are increasing. Tribal and pan-Indian movements have sparked cultural pride and awareness; Indian languages are being revived and taught to the younger generations. "We're a giant that's been asleep because we've been fed through our veins by the federal government," stated a Navajo leader. "But now that's ending, and we're waking up and flexing muscles we never knew we had. And no one knows what we're capable of."

## Nixon and the World

- ★ **How did Richard Nixon plan to achieve an "honorable" peace in Vietnam?**
- ★ **How did Nixon's Cold War policies differ from those favored by earlier administrations?**

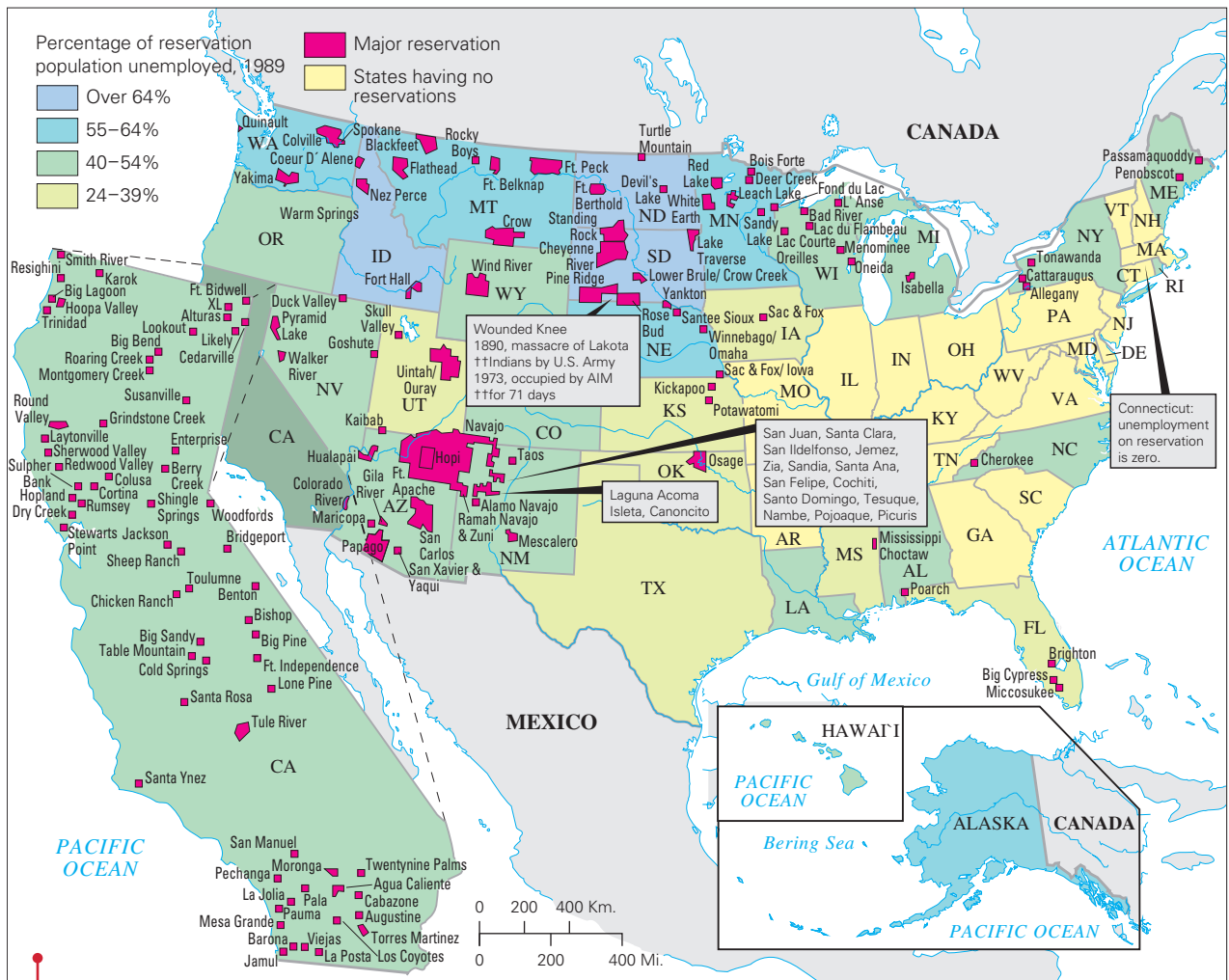
As 1969 started, Nixon was a happy man. He had achieved the dream that had been denied him in 1960. As president, he was determined to be the center of decision making, using a few close and loyal advisers to make policy. For domestic affairs, he relied on John Mitchell, his choice for attorney general, and longtime associates H. R. "Bob" Haldeman and John Ehrlichman. In foreign affairs, he tapped Harvard professor **Henry Kissinger** as his national security adviser, and later made him secretary of state. In both domestic and foreign policy, Nixon presented himself as a sensible statesman who could find new paths of policy that would consolidate his presidency and strengthen the Republican Party. To accomplish this, Nixon had to successfully deal with the war in Vietnam.

**Henry Kissinger** German-born American diplomat who was President Nixon's national security adviser and secretary of state; he helped negotiate the cease-fire in Vietnam.

### Vietnamization

The looming specter of Vietnam influenced nearly all other issues—the budget, public and congressional opinion, foreign policy, and domestic stability—and Nixon needed a solution before he could move ahead on other fronts. No one in the





**MAP 28.2 American Indian Reservations**

In the seventeenth century, American Indians roamed over an estimated 1.9 billion acres, but by 1990 that area had shrunk to about 46 million acres spread across the United States. This area constitutes the federal reservation system. Composing about 1 percent of the population, American Indians are among the most impoverished people in society, facing a life expectancy of about twenty fewer years than that of the average non-Indian American. This map shows the location of most of the federal Indian reservations and highlights the high unemployment found on nearly every reservation. (**Note:** California is enlarged to show the many small reservations located there.)

administration questioned whether American troops would be withdrawn, but there was considerable debate over the exit speed, how to ensure that the government of Nguyen Van Thieu remained intact, and how to maintain America's international credibility. If the United States just left Vietnam, Nixon believed, it would harm American relations with its friends. "A nation cannot remain great, if it betrays its allies and lets down its friends."

The outcome was **Vietnamization**. As American troops left, better-trained and better-equipped South Vietnamese units would assume the bulk of the fighting. Changing the "color of bodies" and bringing American soldiers home, Nixon believed, would rebuild public support and diminish the crowds of protesters. Expanding the theme of limiting

**Vietnamization** U.S. policy of scaling back American involvement in Vietnam and helping Vietnamese forces fight their own war.

**Nixon Doctrine** Nixon's policy of requiring countries threatened by communism to shoulder most of the military burden, with the United States offering mainly political and economic support.

**peace talks** Begun in 1968 under Johnson and continued by Nixon; they produced little agreement until Kissinger and North Vietnamese foreign minister Le Duc Tho worked out a final accord in 1972.

**Pentagon Papers** Classified documents on Vietnam policy leaked by Daniel Ellsberg and printed by the *New York Times* in 1971. The Supreme Court rejected efforts to block the papers' publication.

**My Lai** Site where U.S. infantrymen massacred South Vietnamese villagers in 1968. Of those brought to trial for the atrocity, only Lieutenant William Calley was found guilty of murder.

**fragging** An effort to kill fellow soldiers, frequently officers, by using a grenade. It may have accounted for over a thousand American deaths in Vietnam.

American involvement, in July, Nixon developed the **Nixon Doctrine**: countries warding off communism would have to shoulder most of the military burden, with the United States providing political and economic support and limited naval and air support.

Nixon publicly announced Vietnamization in the spring of 1969, telling the public that twenty-five thousand American soldiers were coming home. At the same time, he convinced much of the media to alter their coverage of the war. ABC's news director instructed his staff to downplay the fighting and emphasize "themes and stories under the general heading: 'We are on our way out of Vietnam.'" By the end of the year, American forces in Vietnam had declined by over 110,000, and public opinion polls indicated support for Nixon's policy.

The other dimensions of Nixon's Vietnam policy, however, were unknown to either the public or the press. Quietly, Kissinger and Nixon began work to improve relations with the Soviets and Chinese and to encourage them to reduce their support for North Vietnam. More significantly, the United States expanded its air war in two directions: targeting enemy bases inside Cambodia and Laos and resuming the bombardment of North Vietnam. The secret attacks on Communist sanctuaries inside Cambodia (Operation Menu) began in March 1969, with air force records being falsified to aid in official denials of stories about any such strikes. The intense air assault was part of a "madman strategy" that Nixon designed to convince the North Vietnamese to negotiate. Nixon said he wanted Hanoi "to believe that I've reached the point where I might do anything to stop the war." The North Vietnamese appeared unconcerned about Nixon's "madness," the increased bombing, or decreasing support from China and the Soviet Union. They believed that victory was only a matter of patiently waiting until America was fed up with the war. Consequently, **peace talks** in Paris produced only bitter feelings. Despite such setbacks, Nixon continued his strategy, and in 1970 ordered American troops to cross the border into Cambodia and destroy Communist bases and supply areas. Nearly eighty thousand American and South Vietnamese troops entered Cambodia and demolished enemy bases and large amounts of supplies. The mission, however, failed to halt the flow of supplies or weaken North Vietnam's resolve.

Although much of the nation embraced Vietnamization, the antiwar movement continued to protest what was now Nixon's war. The invasion of Cambodia refueled antiwar activity across the United States. Demonstrations at Kent State University in Ohio and at Jackson State University in Mississippi resulted in the deaths of six protesters.

Also adding to a broad opposition to the continued American role in Vietnam was the publication of the **Pentagon Papers**, which showed that American administrations from Truman to Nixon had not told the truth about Vietnam, and reports of American atrocities around the village of **My Lai**. In 1968, American units, including a platoon commanded by Lieutenant William Calley, killed over five hundred men, women, and children in and around the village of My Lai. The death toll would have been greater if army helicopter pilot Hugh Thompson and his crew had not rescued eleven civilians about to be killed by American soldiers. Later, an official evaluation stated that some units and officers were "eager participants in the body-count game." The massacre, stories about drug use, **fragging**, and seemingly mindless slaughter strengthened the belief that the war was unraveling the morality of American soldiers. By early 1972, public opinion polls indicated that two-thirds of the American people wanted to get out of Vietnam.

Aware of declining support for the war in the United States and the weakness of South Vietnamese forces, North Vietnam launched its "Easter Offensive" in March 1972. Communist forces advanced toward Saigon, pushing aside South Vietnamese (ARVN) troops. A livid Nixon ordered massive bombing raids against North Vietnam and Communist

# Investigating America

## Veteran John Kerry's Testimony on Vietnam, 1971

By April 1971, a frustrated Senate faced seven legislative proposals relating to the Vietnam War. Senator William Fulbright, a Democrat from Arkansas, chaired the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which began to hear testimony on the course of the conflict. Among those allowed to speak was future Senator John Kerry, a Massachusetts Democrat, who was then a leader of Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW). Kerry was the only representative of VVAW to testify on April 22, but others in VVAW were in the audience and supported his comments, some of which follow, with applause.

.....

**I**n our opinion and from our experience, there is nothing in South Vietnam which could happen that realistically threatens the United States of America. And to attempt to justify the loss of one American life in Vietnam, Cambodia or Laos by linking such loss to the preservation of freedom, which those misfits supposedly abuse, is to us the height of criminal hypocrisy, and it is that kind of hypocrisy which we feel has torn this country apart.

We found that not only was it a civil war, an effort by a people who had for years been seeking their liberation from any colonial influence whatsoever, but also we found that the Vietnamese whom we had enthusiastically molded after our own image were hard put to take up the fight against the threat we were supposedly saving them from. . . .

We rationalized destroying villages in order to save them. We saw America lose her sense of morality as she accepted very coolly a My Lai and refused to give up the image of American soldiers who hand out chocolate bars and chewing gum. We learned the meaning of free fire zones, shooting anything that moves, and we watched while America placed a cheapness on the lives of Orientals. . . .

We are asking Americans to think about that because how do you ask a man to be the last man to die in Vietnam? How do

you ask a man to be the last man to die for a mistake? . . . We are here in Washington to say that the problem of this war is not just a question of war and diplomacy. It is part and parcel of everything that we are trying as human beings to communicate to people in this country—the question of racism which is rampant in the military, and so many other questions such as the use of weapons; the hypocrisy in . . . the use of free fire zones, harassment interdiction fire, search and destroy missions, the bombings, the torture of prisoners, all accepted policy by many units in South Vietnam. That is what we are trying to say. It is part and parcel of everything.

An American Indian friend of mine who lives in the Indian Nation of Alcatraz put it to me very succinctly. He told me how as a boy on an Indian reservation he had watched television and he used to cheer the cowboys when they came in and shot the Indians, and then suddenly one day he stopped in Vietnam and he said, “my God, I am doing to these people the very same thing that was done to my people,” and he stopped. And that is what we are trying to say, that we think this thing has to end.

.....

- In 2004, Senator Robert Dole, a Kansas Republican and veteran of World War II, called upon Senator Kerry to apologize for his testimony, saying, “He wasn’t the only one in Vietnam.” Like Senator Dole, many of the war’s architects had served in World War II. To what extent do you think the more “traditional” conflict of World War II influenced their views on Vietnam?
- In what ways does Kerry’s testimony suggest that this was a very different sort of conflict?
- Why might musician Bruce Springsteen have entitled his 2007 Iraqi War song “Last to Die”?

forces in South Vietnam. By mid-June 1972, American air power had stalled the offensive and enabled ARVN forces to regroup and drive back the North Vietnamese. With their cities under almost continuous air attacks, the North Vietnamese became more flexible in negotiations. By October, with both sides offering concessions, a peace settlement was ready. “Peace is at hand,” Kissinger announced—just in time for the 1972 presidential election.



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However, South Vietnamese president Nguyen Van Thieu rejected the plan. Nixon reluctantly supported Thieu and ordered the Christmas bombing of Hanoi and North Vietnam. One goal was to put additional pressure on Hanoi. Another was to convince Thieu that the United States would use its air power to protect South Vietnam. After eleven days the bombing stopped, and Washington advised Thieu that if he did not accept the next peace settlement, the United States would leave him to fend for himself. On January 27, 1973, Thieu accepted a peace settlement that did not differ significantly from the one offered in October. Nixon and Kissinger proclaimed peace with honor, and Kissinger shared the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize with his North Vietnamese counterpart.

The peace settlement imposed a cease-fire; required the removal of the twenty-four thousand remaining American troops, but not North Vietnamese troops; and promised the return of American prisoners of war. The peace terms permitted the United States to complete its military and political withdrawal, but the pact did little to ensure the continued existence of Thieu's government or of South Vietnam. Everyone expected that the cease-fire would be temporary. When Haldeman asked Kissinger how long the South Vietnamese government could last, Kissinger answered bluntly, "If they're lucky, they can hold out for a year and a half."

As expected, the cease-fire soon collapsed. North Vietnam continued to funnel men and supplies to the south, but substantial American air and naval support for South Vietnam never arrived. Neither Congress nor the public was eager to help Thieu's

As North Vietnamese forces entered Saigon in April 1975, the last American evacuees left by helicopter. Here, they scramble to the roof of the Pittman apartments in Saigon; others left from the roof of the American embassy. Henry Kissinger asked the nation "to put Vietnam behind us."

©Bettmann/Corbis.





government. Instead, Congress cut aid to South Vietnam and in November 1973 passed the **War Powers Act**. The law requires the president to inform Congress within forty-eight hours of the deployment of troops overseas and to withdraw those troops within sixty days if Congress fails to authorize the action. In March 1975, North Vietnam began its final campaign to unify the country. A month later, North Vietnamese troops entered Saigon as a few remaining Americans and some South Vietnamese were evacuated by helicopter—the last ones dramatically from the roof of the American embassy. The Vietnam War ended as it had started, with Vietnamese fighting Vietnamese.

### Modifying the Cold War

Ending the Vietnam War was a political and diplomatic necessity for Nixon and was part of his plan to reshape the Cold War. In his first inaugural address, Nixon urged that an “era of confrontation” give way to an “era of negotiation.” To this end, he pursued **détente**, a policy that reduced tensions with the two Communist superpowers. China, with which the United States had had virtually no diplomatic contact since the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949, was the key to the Nixon-Kissinger strategy. The Soviets and Chinese had engaged in several bloody clashes along their border, and the Chinese feared a broader border war. Wanting American technology and believing that better relations with the United States would help deter Soviet aggression, the Chinese were ready to open diplomatic discussions with Nixon.

Nixon believed that American friendship with the Chinese would encourage the Soviets to improve their relations with the United States, lead to **détente**, and open a great potential market for American producers. Sending a signal to China, Nixon lowered restrictions on trade, and in April 1971 the Chinese responded by inviting an American Ping-Pong team to tour China. A few months later, Kissinger secretly flew to Beijing to meet with Premier Zhou Enlai. Surprising the world, Nixon arrived in Beijing and met with Communist Party chairman Mao Zedong and Zhou in February 1972. The Cold War was thawing a little in the East.

Nixon’s China policy, as hoped, contributed to **détente** with the Soviet Union. In May 1972, Nixon flew to Moscow and met President **Leonid Brezhnev**. The two nations should “live together and work together,” Nixon stated. Needing to reduce military spending, develop the Soviet domestic economy, and increase American trade, Brezhnev agreed. The meeting was a success.

Brezhnev obtained increased trade with the West, including shipments of American grain, and the superpowers announced the **Strategic Arms Limitation agreement** (SALT I), which restricted antimissile sites and established a maximum number of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) for each side. It seemed as if Nixon was reshaping world affairs.

However, in some areas, America’s traditional Cold War stance was unwavering. In Latin America, Nixon followed closely in Johnson’s footsteps, working to isolate Cuba and to prevent any additional Communist-style leaders from gaining power. Borrowing from Eisenhower’s foreign policy, Nixon used covert operations to disrupt the democratically elected socialist-Marxist government of **Salvador Allende** in Chile. For three years the CIA squeezed the Chilean economy “until it screamed,” producing food riots, numerous strikes, and massive inflation. Finally, in September 1973, Chilean armed forces stormed the presidential palace, killing Allende. Kissinger denied any direct American role in the coup and quickly recognized the repressive military government of General Augusto Pinochet, who promptly reinstated a free-market economy.

**War Powers Act** Law passed by Congress in 1973 to prevent the president from involving the United States in war without authorization by Congress.

**détente** Relaxing of tensions between the superpowers in the early 1970s that led to increased diplomatic, commercial, and cultural contact.

**Leonid Brezhnev** Leader of the Soviet Union from 1964 to his death in 1982; he worked to foster **détente** with the United States during the Nixon era.

**Strategic Arms Limitation agreement** Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1972 to limit offensive nuclear weapons and defensive antiballistic missile systems; known as SALT I.

**Salvador Allende** Chilean president who was considered the first democratically elected Marxist to head a government; he was killed in a coup in 1973.

## Nixon and the Domestic Agenda

- ★ **How did Nixon's choices in dealing with welfare reform, the economy, and the environment reflect traditional Republican policies?**
- ★ **How did Nixon expect to create a new conservative base for the Republican Party, and what actions did he take to accomplish that goal?**
- ★ **What actions led to the Watergate investigation and Nixon's resignation?**

In domestic affairs, Nixon also took a complex and pragmatic approach that balanced traditional Republican conservatism with executive activism and an expanded social agenda. He wanted new “game plans.”

### Nixon as Pragmatist

Without fanfare, Nixon's administration adopted a moderately liberal agenda. It increased welfare support and approved legislation that enhanced the regulatory powers of the federal government. Food stamps became more accessible, and Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid payments were increased. In October 1969, Nixon established a new approach to affirmative action with the “Philadelphia Plan,” which required construction unions in that city working under government contracts to hire black apprentices. The following year, the plan became national in scope, involving all government hiring and contracting and setting aside jobs for minorities. Nixon also supported subsidized housing for low- and middle-income families, expanded the Job Corps, and oversaw the formation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

At the same time, Nixon abolished Johnson's Office of Economic Opportunity and sought a way to alter the welfare system with a work and training program. He believed the welfare system robbed people of their self-esteem and punished people for working, contributing to the breakup of nuclear families. The Family Assistance Plan introduced in 1969 sought to replace existing programs and agencies with direct payments, provided the recipient accepted work or job training. It was an innovative plan, but neither conservatives nor liberals adopted the idea, and it was defeated in the Senate in 1969 and again in 1971. Despite those defeats, Nixon believed that the Republican Party could not afford to ignore social needs and public concerns.

The environmental issue was a case in point. When Nixon took office in 1969, the condition of the environment was an increasingly serious public issue. Urban air pollution; an oil slick off Santa Barbara, California; the declaration that Lake Erie was ecologically dead; and growing mountains of garbage everywhere provided graphic reminders of the ecological dangers facing the nation. Environmentalists complained that although Americans constituted less than 6 percent of the world's population, they consumed 40 percent of the globe's resources and created 50 percent of the world's trash. In April 1970, nearly every community in the nation and more than ten thousand schools and two thousand colleges hosted some type of Earth Day activities, emphasizing the need for government action to improve environmental quality.

Nixon was not an environmentalist, but he recognized a new national agenda topic. Seizing the opportunity, two days after Earth Day, he proposed the creation of the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**. Congress joined in, approving five major environmental acts before the year was finished, including the Clean Air Act and the Water Quality Improvement Act. Both acts directed the EPA, which was rapidly growing into

### Environmental Protection

**Agency** Agency created in 1970 to consolidate all major governmental programs to control pollution and protect the environment.



# It Matters Today

## IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT

The formation of the Environmental Protection Agency affirmed the importance of the federal government's role in improving the public's health and protecting the environment. Among its most prominent goals are clean air and water, safe food, and reducing global environmental risks. Central to EPA's activities has been enforcing regulations, such as the clean-air acts, that seek to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other carbon-based pollutants. Although carbon dioxide levels fell between 1970 and 1991, they have steadily increased since, with levels rising almost 20 percent between 1992 and 2004. In 2006 some scientists argued that worldwide carbon dioxide levels are the highest in 650,000 years, lending support to the widely held theory

that they are generating global warming. Some critics have disagreed that global warming poses a danger and maintain that existing environmental regulations are too stringent and hamper economic growth, energy production, and product innovation. Although different administrations have promoted different environmental priorities and policies, no administration can ignore the issue—environmentalism has become a recognized movement and part of American life.

- In what ways do carbon dioxide and other “greenhouse gases” play a role in global warming?
- Who should be responsible for reducing greenhouse gases—the government, industry, or citizens?

the third-largest government agency, to establish standards on the amount of pollutants that business and industry could discharge. Conservatives grumbled that the standards placed too great a burden on business, and liberals objected that the guidelines did not go far enough to protect the environment.

Nixon also proved flexible in economic matters. When he took office, he faced a budget deficit of nearly \$25 billion and a climbing rate of inflation. Nixon cut spending, increased interest rates, and balanced the budget in 1969. But economic recovery failed to follow, and inflation rose as economic growth slowed—giving rise to a new phenomenon called **stagflation**. By 1971, the economy was in its first serious recession since 1958. Unemployment and bankruptcies increased, but inflation still climbed, approaching 5.3 percent. Fearing that economic woes would erode his support, Nixon radically shifted his approach. In April 1971, he asked for increased federal spending to boost recovery and for wage and price controls to stall advancing inflation. Conservatives were shocked and complained bitterly at the betrayal of their values. The public and the economy responded positively, however, as inflation and unemployment declined. At the end of ninety days, Nixon replaced the wage and price freeze with recommended guidelines. Freed from federal restrictions, wages and prices began to climb again.

Nixon's battle with inflation was a losing one, in part because of events over which he had no control. A global drought pushed up farm prices, while Arab nations raised oil prices and limited oil sales in response to the devaluation of the American dollar and continued U.S. support for Israel. After the October 1973 Arab-Israeli **Yom Kippur War**, Arab nations instituted an oil embargo on the United States that, before it was over in 1974, nearly doubled gasoline prices and forced many Americans to wait in long lines to gas up their cars. Increases in food and oil prices pushed the 1974 inflation rate over 10 percent. That same year, 85 percent of those asked said not only that the economy was the nation's most pressing problem but also that they expected the situation to get worse.

**stagflation** Persistent inflation combined with stagnant consumer demand and relatively high unemployment.

**Yom Kippur War** On October 6, 1973, Egypt and Syria suddenly invaded Israel; after initial losses, the Israelis defeated the Arab armies; with U.S. support, a cease-fire was reached on October 22.

**southern strategy** A plan to entice southerners into the Republican Party by appointing white southerners to the Supreme Court and resisting the policy of busing to achieve integration.

### Building the Silent Majority

While Nixon reduced the number of American troops in Vietnam and launched his moderate and pragmatic domestic agenda, he also tried to expand and strengthen a conservative base for the Republican Party. He hoped to shatter the once-solid Democratic South by attracting white Southerners to the Republican Party. The outcome was a “**southern strategy**” that opposed busing to achieve school integration. In response to a 1969 request from Mississippi to postpone court-ordered integration of several school systems, Attorney General John Mitchell petitioned the Supreme Court for a delay. At the same time, the administration lobbied Congress for a revision of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that would have weakened southern compliance.

Neither effort was successful. In October 1969, the Supreme Court unanimously decreed in *Alexander v. Holmes* that it was “the obligation of every school district to terminate dual school systems at once.” The White House suffered another loss in 1971 when the Burger Court reaffirmed the use of busing to achieve integration in a North Carolina case, *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*. The Nixon administration criticized the decisions but agreed to “carry out the law.” By 1973, most African American children in the South were attending integrated public schools. Even though Nixon was unable to slow the process of integration, he won increasing political support among white southerners.

A second part of Nixon’s political strategy was to alter the composition of the Supreme Court by adding conservative justices who would more narrowly interpret the Constitution and move away from the social interventionism of the Warren Court. His chance came in 1969 when Chief Justice Earl Warren retired and Nixon nominated Warren Burger, a respected, conservative federal judge, who was easily confirmed by the Senate. Within months, the forced resignation of liberal justice Abe Fortas gave Nixon a second chance to alter the Court. Merging his desire for a conservative judge with his southern strategy, Nixon chose a South Carolinian for the position. Clement Haynesworth’s support for segregation, however, led to his rejection by the Senate. Angry at the Senate, Nixon next named an even less acceptable candidate, G. Harrold Carswell of Florida, who was even more resoundingly rejected by the Senate. For his third try, Nixon abandoned his southern strategy and chose Harry Blackmun, a conservative from Minnesota. Blackmun was confirmed easily. In 1971 Nixon appointed two more justices, Lewis Powell of Virginia and William Rehnquist of Arizona, creating a more conservative Burger Supreme Court.

### An Embattled President

By the end of Nixon’s first term, Republicans had every reason to gloat. Nearly 60 percent of respondents in national opinion polls said they approved of Nixon’s record. The efforts on behalf of southern whites had ensured growing support in what had once been the solid Democratic South. The law-and-order campaign appealed to so-called Middle America, and protesters and activists were losing strength. The economy, though still a worry, seemed under control: unemployment was dropping and inflation was being held in check. Diplomatically, Nixon had scored major successes: the opening of relations with China, détente with the Soviets, the reduction of American forces in Vietnam, and the possibility of a peace agreement in Paris. Nixon projected that his second term would hold few obstacles.

**George McGovern** South Dakota senator who opposed the Vietnam War and was the unsuccessful Democratic candidate for president in 1972.

The 1972 campaign was marked by a confident Republican Party and the continued disarray of the Democratic Party. Most of the enthusiastic Democrats had migrated to the two wings of the party, led by the liberal **George McGovern** and the conservative George Wallace. Moderate Democrats seemed unable to energize the voters, especially



the new group of first-time voters—those between the ages of 18 and 21. The newest category of voter was a result of the Twenty-sixth Amendment, ratified in 1971, which had lowered the voting age to 18.

Senator McGovern of South Dakota gained the presidential nomination after several bruising primaries and a divided nominating convention. Many Democrats believed he was too liberal and refused to support him. George Wallace—confined to a wheelchair following an assassination attempt that left him paralyzed—again bolted the party to run as a third-party candidate on the American Independent ticket.

Despite almost certain victory, Nixon was convinced that enemies surrounded him: bureaucrats, Democrats, social activists, liberals, most of the press, and even some members of his own staff and party. Repeatedly, he spoke about “screwing” his domestic enemies before they got him. He kept an “enemies list,” used illegal wiretaps and infiltration to spy on suspect organizations and people, and instructed the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service, and other governmental organizations to intimidate and punish his opponents.

As the 1972 campaign began, Nixon and his campaign coordinators longed to humiliate the Democrats. To achieve this, Nixon’s staff and the **Committee to Re-elect the President** (CREEP), directed by **John Mitchell**, stepped outside the normal bounds of election behavior. They created a Special Investigations Unit, known informally as the “Plumbers,” who conducted “dirty tricks” to disrupt the Democrats. They sponsored hecklers to attack Democratic candidates. Seeking inside information on the opposition, CREEP approved a burglary of the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the **Watergate** building in Washington, D.C., to copy documents and tap phones.

On June 17, 1972, a Watergate security guard detected the burglars and notified the police, who arrested five men carrying “bugging” equipment. Soon the burglars were linked to the Plumbers and then to CREEP, although both denied any connection to the burglars. Behind the scene, Mitchell and White House staffers destroyed documents indicating involvement and encouraged the FBI to limit its investigation. “I want you all to stonewall it,” Nixon told John Mitchell. “Cover it up.” The furor passed, and in November, Nixon buried McGovern in an avalanche of electoral votes, winning every state except Massachusetts.

Despite Democrats still holding majorities in Congress, Nixon was overjoyed with the results and claimed a public mandate for his policies. Within the White House, however, there were concerns about the trial of the Watergate burglars. The cover-up was unraveling. Key Republicans were being implicated in the planning of the operation and in paying “hush money” to the burglars. *Washington Post* reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein investigated the suspicious payments and found a path leading to John Mitchell, CREEP, and the White House. To investigate allegations of White House involvement, the Senate convened a special committee to investigate the break-in, chaired by a Democrat, Senator Sam Ervin Jr. of North Carolina. Among those testifying was White House staffer John Dean, who implicated top White House officials, including Nixon, in the cover-up.

Adding to Nixon’s troubles were accusations he had improperly taken tax deductions and that Vice President Agnew was guilty of income-tax evasion and influence peddling. “I am not a crook,” Nixon announced, as both denied any wrongdoing. Nevertheless, Nixon agreed that he had made errors in his income-tax return and that he owed the government an additional half-million dollars. Agnew, certain to be convicted, pleaded no contest to the charges against him and resigned. In October 1973, Nixon named Representative Gerald R. Ford of Michigan to be vice president.

#### **Committee to Re-elect the President**

Nixon’s campaign committee in 1972, which enlisted G. Gordon Liddy and others to spy on the Democrats and break into the offices of the Democratic National Committee.

**John Mitchell** Nixon’s attorney general, who eventually served four years in prison for his part in the Watergate scandal.

**Watergate** Scandal that felled Nixon, named after the building that housed the Democratic National Committee headquarters, where a foiled break-in by CREEP operatives led to Nixon’s criminal role in the cover-up.

**Saturday Night Massacre** On October 20, 1973, Nixon ordered the firing of Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox; rather than carry out Nixon's order, both the U.S. attorney general and deputy attorney general resigned.

**indict** To make a formal charge of wrongdoing against a person or party.

**Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries** Economic alliance of oil-producing countries, mostly Arab, formed in 1960; in 1973 it placed an embargo on the sale of oil to countries allied with Israel.

Just as Ford assumed office, the cover-up rapidly disintegrated. The revelation that Nixon had secretly recorded meetings in the Oval Office raised demands for the release of the tapes. Responding to public pressure, Nixon appointed Archibald Cox, a Harvard law professor, as special Justice Department prosecutor to investigate Watergate, promising full cooperation. But when Cox demanded the Oval Office tapes, Nixon ordered him fired. Following the October 20, 1973, “**Saturday Night Massacre**,” Nixon’s popularity shrank to 30 percent, and calls for his resignation or impeachment intensified.

In March 1974, the grand jury investigating the Watergate break-in **indicted** Mitchell, Haldeman, and Ehrlichman and named Nixon as an “unindicted co-conspirator.” Nixon, under tremendous pressure, released transcripts of selected tapes. The outcome was devastating. The transcripts contradicted some official testimony, and Nixon’s apparent callousness, lack of decency, and profane language shocked the nation. By the end of July, the House Judiciary Committee had charged Nixon with three impeachable crimes: obstructing justice, abuse of power, and defying subpoenas. Nixon’s remaining support evaporated, and once-loyal Republicans told him that he could either resign or face impeachment. He resigned on August 9, 1974, making Gerald Ford an unelected president. Eventually, twenty-nine people connected to the White House were convicted of crimes related to Watergate and the 1972 campaign. Ex-president Nixon was spared from any further legal actions by a presidential pardon granted by Ford.

### An Interim President

Most Americans saw Gerald Ford as an honest man, a good administrator, a compassionate person to heal a nation, but as only an interim president. Ford’s most immediate issue was the sluggish economy, and his approach was the traditional Republican one: cutting business taxes and federal spending while raising interest rates. Democrats rejected the formula and instead introduced legislation to create jobs and to increase spending for social and educational programs. Ford vetoed the bills and conducted a public opinion campaign to mobilize support for his program. The result was a political stalemate. In two years, Ford successfully blocked thirty-seven bills but never generated enough public support to advance his own programs. At the same time, the economy continued to worsen. Oil prices rose 350 percent after the **Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries** (OPEC) placed an embargo on the sale of oil to the United States to try to modify American support to Israel during the Yom Kippur War.

In his foreign policy, Ford relied heavily on Henry Kissinger, who was now national security adviser and secretary of state. Kissinger played a key role in negotiating a cease-fire to the Yom Kippur War and continued to work for a reduction of tensions in the Middle East. Shuttling between Israel and Egypt and Israel and Syria, Kissinger brokered a peace agreement that removed Israeli forces from Egyptian territory (January 1974) and Syria (May 1974). His efforts paid off in September 1975, when Israel and Egypt signed a pact whereby Israeli troops withdrew from some occupied areas and Egypt resigned from the anti-Israeli-Arab coalition. An added benefit of the agreement was that it convinced OPEC to increase oil production and lower prices. Other foreign-policy efforts, however, produced few positive results, in part due to opposition from the right and the left in Congress.

Ford’s efforts to maintain economic and military support for South Vietnam also met with congressional opposition and delays, and when Saigon fell to Communist forces in April 1975, Ford blamed Congress for the defeat. On the Russian front, trying to maintain the Nixon-Kissinger effort to arrive at détente with Moscow, he met with Soviet premier Brezhnev at Vladivostok in Siberia, and in Helsinki, Finland. At the summits

he made progress toward strategic arms limitation and improved East-West relations but received little credit at home. In Congress and within his own party, Ford's actions drew fire from those who wanted a tougher, more traditional Cold War policy toward the Soviet Union.

Among the most forceful Republican critics was presidential hopeful Ronald Reagan. Embarrassing a sitting president, Reagan sought the Republican nomination in 1976 and won several primaries in the West and South. The ex-governor of California represented the conservative wing of the party and attacked the Ford-Kissinger policy of détente as well as Ford's political ineffectiveness. Ford managed to eke out a victory at the convention, embracing a conservative agenda that called for smaller government and tougher policies toward communism, but few expected the interim president to win the election.

## Summary

President Johnson chose to continue Kennedy's foreign policies, expanding commitments to oppose communism around the world. In South Vietnam this decision resulted in the implementation of a series of planned escalations that Americanized the war. The expectation that American military superiority would defeat Ho Chi Minh's Communists proved disastrous. As the United States escalated its efforts, North Vietnamese forces kept pace and showed no slackening of resolve or resources. Within the United States, however, as the American commitment grew, a significant antiwar movement developed. The combination of the Tet offensive and presidential politics cost Johnson his presidency, divided the Democratic Party, and compounded the divisions in American society.

But more than the debate over the war divided the nation. By 1968, the country was aflame with riots in urban centers, and an increasing number of groups were seeking better social, economic, and political choices. Hispanics and Native Americans joined their voices with other groups to call for a more recognition of their needs and looked to the federal government for support. Those

advocating social reforms, however, faced a resurgence of conservatism that helped elect Nixon. Hoping to find a strategy for withdrawing from Vietnam, Nixon implemented a policy of Vietnamization. He also wanted to restructure international relations by working to improve relations with the Soviet Union and China.

At home, Nixon charted a pragmatic course, switching between maintaining government activism and reducing the power of government. Politically, he pursued policies that attempted to cement the Sunbelt and the South to the Republican Party, including a southern strategy that curtailed federal support for civil rights.

Despite Nixon's domestic and foreign-policy successes, however, his desire to crush his enemies led to the Watergate scandal and his downfall. Facing impeachment, the president resigned. President Ford tried to restore confidence in government but faced too many obstacles to be successful. As the nation approached the 1976 bicentennial election, many wondered if the optimism that began the 1960s would ever return. The nation seemed mired in a slowing economy and a public cynicism toward government and politics generated by Vietnam and Watergate.

### Key Terms

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Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, *p. 684*

William Westmoreland, *p. 684*

Ho Chi Minh Trail, *p. 686*

COINTELPRO, *p. 688*

Operation Chaos, *p. 688*

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# Facing Limits

## 1976–1992

## CHAPTER 29

### INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Franklin Chang-Díaz

Twenty-one years separated the young child looking into space from a mango tree and the young man who looked down toward Latin America from space. Franklin Chang-Díaz's wish had come true—he was an astronaut. It was January 1986, and he was on board the space shuttle *Columbia*, chasing Halley's Comet.

Like other children, Franklin had dreamed of exploring space. Fulfilling his dream was impossible in Costa Rica, so he left home for the United States in 1968, moved in with relatives, and enrolled in high school. With support from teachers, Chang-Díaz received a scholarship to attend the University of Connecticut in the fall of 1969. He majored in engineering and graduated in 1973. To improve his chances of joining the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), he entered the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1977 he received a doctorate in physics and immediately applied to the astronaut program. "All of a sudden the space program was so close, I felt I could touch it." But his application was rejected.

Two years later, Franklin, now a naturalized U.S. citizen, applied again. This time he was selected—he was one of four thousand applicants for nineteen open slots. He was officially an astronaut by 1981, but disappointment followed. NASA found duties for him other than going into space. Finally, his dream came true as he boarded the space shuttle *Columbia* for a six-day flight.

Chang-Díaz made six additional flights, logging more than 1,601 hours in space, including 19 hours and 31 minutes in three spacewalks. Once asked about his journey from Costa Rica to Houston, he replied: "I'm just having the time of my life. This is what I planned for all my life and I'm really enjoying it, and to me, I guess I feel I have the best of both worlds because I also continue my research, and so I am able to be a scientist at the same time that I am also an astronaut, and that is to me the perfect combination."



### FRANKLIN CHANG-DÍAZ

Franklin Chang-Díaz was born in Costa Rica, and grew up wanting to travel into space. To fulfill his dream, he immigrated to the United States to continue his education. Eventually he received a Ph.D. degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and became a scientist-astronaut. NASA.

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

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#### **IT MATTERS TODAY:** Islamic

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A Kinder, Gentler Nation

#### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:** Pat

Buchanan's "Culture War" Speech, 1992

#### *Summary*

# Chronology

<b>1976</b>	Jimmy Carter elected president	<b>1984</b>	Withdrawal of U.S. forces from Lebanon
<b>1977</b>	Department of Energy created Panama Canal treaties SALT I treaty expires		Boland Amendment Reagan reelected <i>Newsweek's</i> "Year of the Yuppie"
<b>1978</b>	Camp David Accords	<b>1985</b>	Mikhail Gorbachev assumes power in Soviet Union Secret arms sales to Iran to obtain funds for the Contras Gorbachev-Reagan summit in Geneva
<b>1979</b>	Revolution in Iran topples shah Ayatollah Khomeini assumes power in Iran United States recognizes People's Republic of China Nuclear accident at Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty signed in Washington, D.C. SALT II treaty signed in Vienna Hostages seized in Iran Soviet Union invades Afghanistan	<b>1986</b>	U.S. bombing raid on Libya Gorbachev-Reagan summit in Reykjavik, Iceland
<b>1980</b>	Carter applies sanctions against Soviet Union SALT II treaty withdrawn from Senate Carter Doctrine Iran-Iraq War begins Ronald Reagan elected president	<b>1987</b>	Iran-Contra hearings Stock market crash Intermediate Nuclear Force Treaty
<b>1981</b>	Iran releases American hostages Economic Recovery Tax Act	<b>1988</b>	George Bush elected president
<b>1982</b>	United States sends marines to Beirut	<b>1989</b>	Chinese government represses democracy movement in Tiananmen Square Berlin Wall pulled down Gorbachev-Bush summit on Malta United States invades Panama
<b>1983</b>	Congress funds Strategic Defense Initiative Marine barracks in Beirut destroyed United States invades Grenada	<b>1990</b>	Recession begins Free elections in Nicaragua Clean Air Act Iraq invades Kuwait
		<b>1991</b>	Breakup of the Soviet Union Gorbachev resigns First Iraqi War

As the nation celebrated its two-hundredth birthday in 1976, television showed clips of proud moments in American history. Franklin Chang-Diaz was full of optimism, but many were not. A sluggish economy, increasing intolerance, and rising unemployment seemed to be making the American dream more elusive. To many the country had reached its limits, even the Democratic presidential candidate James Earl Carter admitted that government could not solve every problem.

In office, Carter seemed unable to solve any problems. He failed to lead the Democratic Congress, to reverse the slowing economy, or to match liberal expectations on social issues. To many Americans, his efforts to refocus American foreign policy also failed, with the Iranians making a mockery of American power and prestige.

A hopeful nation chose Ronald Reagan president in 1980. Like Franklin Roosevelt, Reagan promised changes that would restore American power and prosperity. His policies implemented a conservative agenda that replaced liberal economic and social policies and aggressively restored a Cold War foreign and military policy. They worked. The economy revitalized, and Reagan's foreign policy, supporters argued, restored American power and leadership and ultimately triumphed over the Soviet Union.

Not all agreed with his choices. Critics charged his policies benefited the wealthy, created a culture of greed, and abandoned support for minorities and the poor. Others pointed to a massive national debt, growing trade deficits, and the decline of an industrial base as serious economic problems.

In 1988, Americans chose to continue the Reagan approach by electing George Bush. He promised experienced leadership, more concern for minorities and the poor, and continued American strength abroad. Taking office as the Soviet Union collapsed, Bush charted a foreign policy in a new international setting. He cautiously focused on supporting democratic change in Eastern Europe and Central America. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, he organized an international coalition, committed American forces, and liberated Kuwait. However, his success in foreign policy was not matched at home, where he was unable to halt a deteriorating economy or match the expectations of either liberals or conservatives. Still, as Bush prepared for reelection, he was confident that his foreign-policy successes would carry him to victory.

## The Carter Presidency

- ★ **What new directions in foreign policy did Carter take, and how did his policies toward Central America reflect that direction?**
- ★ **What successes and failures did Carter experience in dealing with the Middle East?**

In 1976 the United States celebrated the two-hundredth anniversary of its independence. Amid the festivities and praise for its institutions and accomplishments, however, lurked a deepening sense of cynicism, uneasiness, and uncertainty. The turmoil of the 1960s, Vietnam, and Watergate had shaken the nation's belief in government's ability to solve problems. President Ford's efforts to restore faith in government had not succeeded, as indicated by responses to a 1975 survey: most people said they believed that politicians consistently lied to them. Other surveys found that the same lack of faith had spread to other institutions. The public's lack of trust and confidence was heightened by a slowing economy that raised concerns about the future. For the first time since the Depression, many parents worried that their children would not enjoy a higher standard of living. The optimism that had characterized the 1960s had faded into frustration and apathy.

Nor did the political forecast look especially promising as the two presidential contenders began their race for the White House. Polls showed that people liked Gerald Ford but considered him ineffective, while his Democratic opponent, James Earl Carter, boasted about his lack of political experience—aside from being a one-time governor of Georgia. Carter's nonpolitical, folksy background was refreshing, but some wondered whether he had the experience to lead Congress and the nation. Both men appeared full of good intentions, but neither ignited the nation politically. The presidential contest between Ford and Carter lacked drama. The result was a very close election. Ford won more states than Carter but lost the electoral count by 56 votes. Reflecting the political apathy of the nation, only 54.4 percent of eligible voters cast their ballots. One Californian

explained that he had not voted because he did not want “to force a second-class decision on my neighbors.”

Carter arrived in the nation’s capital in January 1977 brimming with enthusiasm and stressing that he was free of Washington politics and the lures of special interests. On Inauguration Day he led the people from Capitol Hill to the White House by walking rather than riding in a limousine. He pledged honesty and hard work, and he was anxious to get started.

### New Directions in Foreign Policy

In international relations, Carter thought American foreign policy needed to be redirected. It was too European and Cold War-oriented, shaped too much by an “inordinate fear of communism.” He sought a more open and moral diplomacy that would pay greater attention to the economic and social problems of the non-European world, including abuses of **human rights**.

Latin America and, specifically, Panama seemed a good place to set the new tone. For years negotiations to return control of the Panama Canal to the Panamanians had stalled because of American opposition. Carter was determined to find an agreement—and within a year two treaties were complete. Carter was pleased, although almost 80 percent of the American public was not. Opponents believed that the American-built and American-run canal should remain under American control. But against bipartisan opposition, the Senate approved the treaties returning the canal zone and giving control of the canal to the Panamanians in 1999.

Carter also wanted to place an emphasis on the issue of human rights, despite those who warned that letting human rights drive American policy might undermine pro-American governments, especially in developing countries, and jeopardize improving relations with the Soviets and Chinese. Nonetheless, Carter went forward, reducing or halting military and economic aid to Chile and Nicaragua. In Nicaragua, Carter’s actions contributed to the ouster of Anastasio Somoza, who had ruled the nation with an iron hand for years, by the largely Marxist **Sandinista Liberation Front**, led by Daniel Ortega.

Carter’s criticism of Soviet and Eastern European violations of human rights led to a cooling of relations with the Soviets that threatened the continuation of détente and efforts at arms limitations. Yet the talks continued, and despite chilly relations and difficult discussions, the two superpowers agreed to place some limits on their number of long-range missiles, bombers, and nuclear warheads. Carter and Leonid Brezhnev signed the second **Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty** (SALT II) during their Vienna summit in June 1979. But hopes that the Senate would approve the treaty faded quickly when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. Calling the Soviet incursion the “gravest threat to peace since 1945,” Carter withdrew the treaty from consideration, imposed **economic sanctions** on the Soviet Union, and boycotted the 1980 Olympic Games held in Moscow. He also provided financial aid and C.I.A. training to the **mujahedeen**, who were fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan (some of whom later worked with the terrorist group al-Qaeda), and announced the “**Carter Doctrine**.” Any nation that attempted to take control of the **Persian Gulf**, Carter stated, would “be repelled by any means necessary, including the use of force.”

### Middle Eastern Crises

Carter credited the Canal treaty to his ability to take a new approach to an old issue. He believed that such a tactic would also move Israel and its Arab neighbors toward a peace settlement (see Map 29.1). He invited Egyptian President Anwar

**human rights** Basic rights and freedoms to which all human beings are entitled, such as the right to life and liberty, to freedom of thought and expression, and to equality before the law.

#### Sandinista Liberation Front

Leftist guerrilla movement that overthrew Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua in 1979 and established a revolutionary government under Daniel Ortega.

#### Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty

1979 U.S.-Soviet agreement (SALT II) to limit each country’s number of strategic missiles carrying nuclear warheads; Congress never approved the treaty.

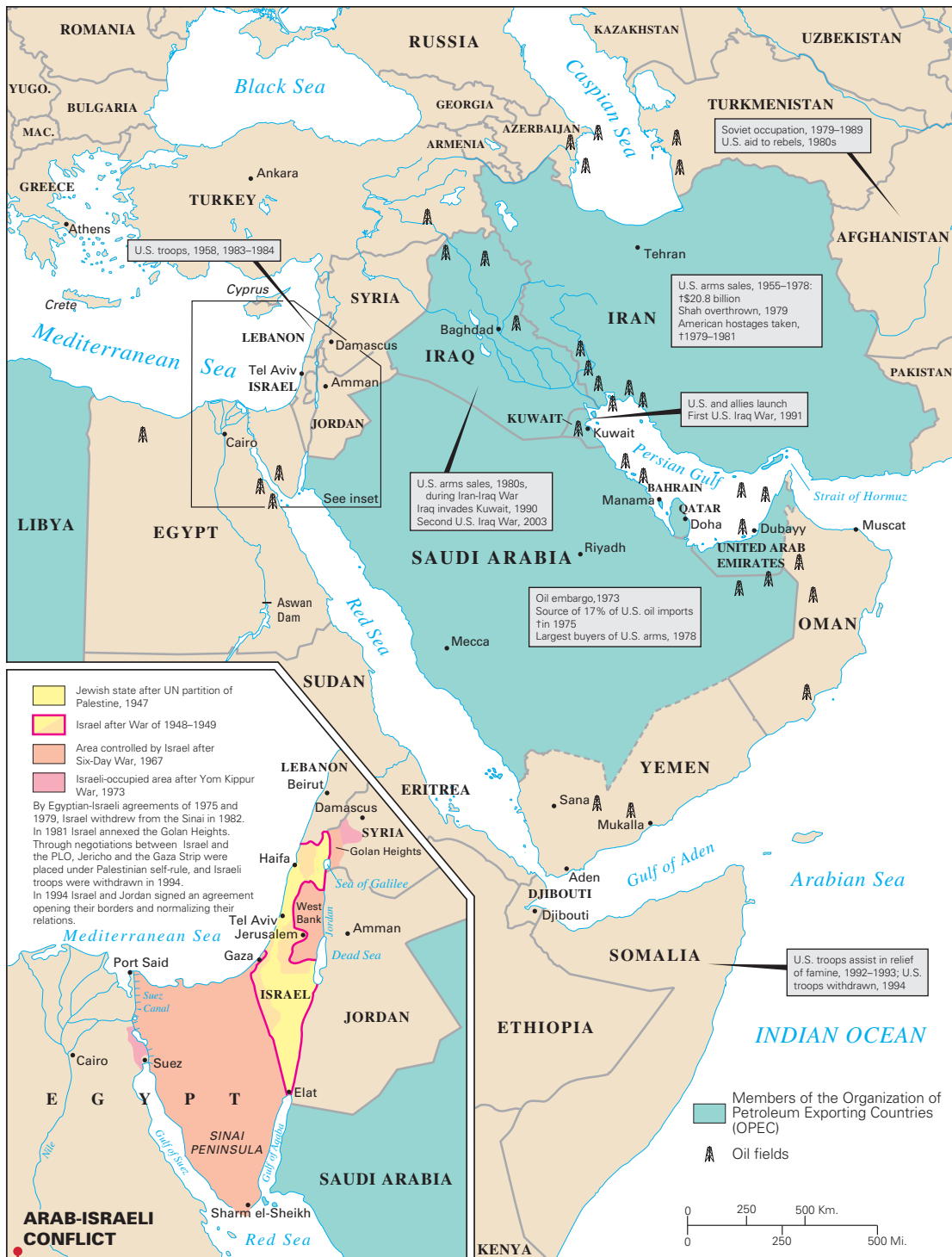
**economic sanctions** Trade restrictions imposed on a country that has violated international law.

**mujahedeen** Arabic for “struggler,” or people involved in Jihad. Afghan resistance group supplied with arms by the United States to assist in its fight against the Soviets following their 1979 invasion of Afghanistan.

**Carter Doctrine** Carter’s announced policy that the United States would use force to repel any nation that attempted to take control of the Persian Gulf.

**Persian Gulf** Arm of the Arabian Sea with the ports of several major oil-producing Arab countries crucial to the flow of oil from the Middle East to the rest of the world.





**MAP 29.1** The Middle East

Since 1946, the United States has tried to balance strong support for Israel with its need for oil from the Arab states. To support U.S. interests in this volatile region, the United States has funneled in large amounts of financial and military aid and used force to shape regional governments. Agreements signed in Washington in 1993 and 1994 between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and between Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan reduced tensions in the area.

**Camp David Accords** Treaty, signed at Camp David in 1978, under which Israel returned territory captured from Egypt and Egypt recognized Israel as a nation.

**Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini** Religious leader of Iran's Shiite Muslims; the Shiites toppled the shah in 1979, and the ayatollah established a new constitution that gave him supreme power.

**Cyrus Vance** Carter's secretary of state, who wanted the United States to defend human rights and promote economic development of lesser developed nations.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski** Carter's national security adviser, who favored confronting the Soviet Union with firmness.

Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin for talks at the presidential retreat at Camp David in Maryland. Surprisingly, both accepted.

At the meeting in September 1978, Carter shuttled between the two leaders, smoothing relations and stressing his personal commitment to both nations. The outcome was a set of carefully crafted agreements by which Egypt recognized Israel's right to exist and Israel returned the Israeli-occupied Sinai Peninsula to Egypt. It took several months to finalize the **Camp David Accords**, but on March 26, 1979, Carter watched Begin and Sadat sign the first peace treaty between an Arab state and Israel. Although the treaty was a major diplomatic achievement for Carter, Arab leaders and most of the Arab world condemned it.

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and Carter's announcement of the Carter Doctrine were responses to more than just events in Afghanistan. Both the Americans and the Soviets were reacting to the revolution in Iran, which had toppled the pro-American ruler, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, in early 1979. The shah, restored to power by the United States in 1953, was America's staunchest ally in the Persian Gulf region. But his despotic rule had generated widespread opposition led by Iran's religious leaders, especially the **Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini**, who assumed power and established an Islamic fundamentalist state.

With Iran's anti-Western revolutionary government calling the United States the main source of evil in the world, Carter cut off economic and military aid, ordered Americans home, and reduced the embassy staff in Tehran. On October 22, the exiled shah, dying of cancer, entered a New York hospital to receive treatment. Iran warned of reprisals, and on November 4 an angry mob stormed the American embassy in Tehran and abducted the remaining staff. The sixty-six American hostages were paraded through the streets and subjected to numerous abuses as the Iranians demanded the return of the shah for trial. The press quickly dubbed the crisis "America Held Hostage," and television accounts flooded American homes.

Carter's foreign-policy advisers, Secretary of State **Cyrus Vance** and National Security Adviser **Zbigniew Brzezinski**, offered conflicting options. Brzezinski wanted to use military force to free the hostages. Vance argued for negotiation, hoping that Iranian moderates would find a way to release the captives. Carter opted for negotiations and gained the release of thirteen hostages, mostly women and African Americans. As further discussions failed, American frustration and anger grew. Carter ordered a military rescue

One of President Carter's greatest triumphs was the signing of the 1978 peace accords between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Sadat and Begin received the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts. AFP/Getty Images.





# It Matters Today

## ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM

When the shah of Iran was overthrown, most Americans were introduced to Islamic fundamentalism for the first time. With the seizure of American hostages in Iran and proclamations that the United States represented the “Great Satan,” it appeared to many in the United States that Islamic fundamentalism was anti-American, antidemocratic, and militant, advocating violence, even the use of terrorism, to accomplish its goals. Since 1979, that belief has been hardened by terrorist attacks against the United States, including those against the World Trade Center. Some argue that fundamentalists’ “objective is nothing less than the total destruction of the West” and there can be “no peaceful coexistence.” Others respond that the extremists within the

Islamic fundamentalist movement are a small minority and that most Muslims are neither antidemocratic nor anti-Western. Whether benign or hostile, it is clear that Islamic fundamentalism has become a powerful force in international politics.

- More Americans than ever before have negative views toward Islam and believe that it promotes violence. Are these views based on Americans’ perceptions of fundamentalism or their perceptions of Islam?
- Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the United States. Should schools and institutions recognize Muslim religious holidays and dress codes?

mission. It was a disaster. After three helicopters went down in a violent dust storm in Iran, Carter scrapped the mission.

Diplomatic efforts through the Canadians and the Algerians eventually resulted in an agreement in late 1980 to release the hostages. By that time the shah had died of cancer, and Iran was at war against Iraq and needed the assets that Carter had frozen. In a personal insult to Carter, Iran released the hostages on January 20, 1981, the day he left the presidency, ending 444 days of captivity.

### Domestic Priorities

Domestically, Carter faced two significant problems: the declining economy and a resurgent Congress anxious to exert leadership. Compounding the problems, the “outsider”

Carter frequently ignored Congress and its leaders. Relations with Democrats in Congress quickly deteriorated. “I don’t see this Congress rolling over and playing dead,” announced one Democratic leader. “Carter is going to set up his priorities and we are going to set up ours.” Dealing with the economy was one issue in dispute. In the third year of what some have called the “Great Stagflation,” Carter adopted several approaches that some called more Republican than Democratic. He raised interest rates, cut taxes, and trimmed federal spending, especially for social programs. When he proposed only a 20-cent raise in the minimum wage, Democrats in Congress rebelled and pushed through a 95-cent increase.

A more important part of Carter’s economic plan was to reduce the nation’s dependence on foreign sources of oil. The nation imported about 60 percent of its oil, and Carter argued that solving the **energy crisis** was the “moral equivalent of war” and offered the only road to economic recovery. He eventually offered Congress 113 energy proposals, including the creation of a cabinet-level Department of Energy, support for research and development of fuels other than oil, and special regulations and taxes to prevent the energy industry from reaping excess profits. He also asked individuals to reduce their energy consumption by wearing sweaters, using public transportation, and lowering their thermostats in winter.

**energy crisis** Vulnerability to dwindling oil supplies, wasteful energy consumption, and potential embargoes by oil-producing countries.

**Alternative fuels** Sources of energy other than coal, oil, and natural gas, such as solar, geothermal, hydroelectric, and nuclear energy.

**Three Mile Island** Nuclear power plant near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; an accident at the plant in 1979 led to a release of radioactive gases and almost caused a meltdown.

**meltdown** Severe overheating of a nuclear reactor core, resulting in the melting of the core and the escape of life-threatening radiation.

Few liked Carter's solutions. Almost everyone, including industry and Congress, favored increasing the production of domestic gas and oil. Buoyed by the potential of new oil fields in Alaska, Congress found it easy to dismiss most of Carter's recommendations. Only fragments of his plan were passed in 1977, including the formation of the Department of Energy, a few incentives for conservation, and deregulation of the natural-gas industry. When the Iranian government pushed up oil prices after 1978, Congress agreed to approve funds for **alternative fuels** (including nuclear energy) and an excess-profits tax on the oil and gas industry.

Nuclear power was an alternative source that advocates argued would be the most successful in reducing dependence on gas and oil. It was cheap and environmentally safe, and they called for funds to build new and larger facilities. Opponents replied that nuclear energy was expensive and potentially dangerous. Clinching the critics' case, on March 28, 1979, a serious accident at a nuclear power plant at **Three Mile Island** in central Pennsylvania released a cloud of radioactive gas and nearly caused a **meltdown**. It took two weeks to shut down the reactor, and more than a hundred thousand people were evacuated from the surrounding area. Suddenly, nuclear power became a less attractive energy source, as more than thirty energy companies canceled their nuclear energy projects. The nation remained dependent on natural gas, oil, and coal for most of its energy.

Despite Carter's efforts to improve the economy, stagflation continued. By 1980 inflation stood at 14 percent—the highest rate since 1947—while unemployment rose to nearly 7.6 percent. Many Democrats, especially liberals, denounced Carter's lack of leadership. He admitted he had not provided enough leadership, but he also blamed many of the nation's woes on the public's unwillingness to sacrifice. The public, in turn, gave Carter only a 19 percent approval rating. Republicans were hopeful that Carter's low popularity would translate into a Republican victory.

## A Society in Transition

- ★ **What changes were taking place in the American economy during the 1970s, and what was their impact on American families and communities?**
- ★ **Why did women, minorities, and liberals criticize Carter's social policies?**

More than a leadership deficit, however, caused Carter's political problems. He and the American people were caught in a changing economy and society. The period from the end of World War II to the 1970s had been the longest era of consistent economic growth in the history of the United States. Despite occasional recessions and setbacks, the gross national product and productivity rose at a rate slightly higher than 2.5 percent. In personal terms, it meant that wages, the standard of living, and homeownership all increased. A college education for their children seemed possible for nearly all Americans who held a steady job. But during the 1970s, the economy grew at a slower rate, dipping to slightly over 1 percent, while the cost of living increased over 200 percent. In personal terms, this meant higher prices, fewer jobs, and less optimism.

**globalization** The process of opening national borders to the free flow of trade, capital, ideas and information, and people.

### Economic Slowdown

The problems with the economy varied, but many were the product of a shift in the economic base from manufacturing to service industries and what was being called **globalization**, a changing world and American economy over which there seemed to be little control. Economically, the changes had started in the late 1960s with the expanding economies of West Germany, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan cutting into



American domestic and foreign markets—reducing American profits and prosperity. In the new global economy, many American industries were unable to match the production costs, retail prices, or quality of goods produced overseas. The United States produced nearly two-thirds of the world's steel in 1946, but as Carter took office, it made only 15 percent. Aggravating the situation, the high oil prices set by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) added to inflation and unemployment and threatened the nation's industrial base, which depended on inexpensive fuels. Consequently, many of the nation's primary industries (iron and steel, rubber, automobiles and their parts, clothing, coal), especially those located in the Great Lakes region, cut back production, laid off workers, and closed plants.

Adjusting to globalization and what some called the **postindustrial economy**, corporations devised new strategies for survival and profitability. One tactic refocused resources. Many corporations rid themselves of less profitable manufacturing operations and invested more heavily in service industries. General Electric, one of the largest American manufacturing firms, implemented these strategies during the 1970s and 1980s. The company sold off most of its manufacturing divisions and moved its resources into the service sector by buying the entertainment giant RCA as well as a number of investment and insurance firms.

At the same time, many companies shifted their production sites to locales where operating costs were lower and closed less productive plants. Some companies kept their plants in the United States, moving their factories to southern and western states, but an increasing number moved their operations overseas, where expenses were even lower than in the Sunbelt. A so-called **Rust Belt** formed in the Northeast out of what had been the vibrant industrial center of the United States. From 1969 to 1981, for example, Philadelphia lost 42 percent of its factory jobs and 14 percent of its population, and its crime rate jumped by nearly 200 percent. Japanese goods, once the joke of international commerce, were gobbling up the electronics market, and more-gas-efficient Japanese automobiles were cutting deeply into the American automobile market. Many of those facilities that did not close or move overseas cut production costs by becoming more automated.

As the higher-paying manufacturing jobs declined, the number of service jobs—which paid about one-third less and used more part-time help—increased. McDonald's became one of the largest employers in the nation. The changes were felt everywhere. Lakewood, California, which had seen great economic success in the three decades after World War II, underwent significant economic decline as stores like Walmart replaced higher-end department stores like Macy's. By the 1980s, wages fell as jobs in defense-related and other nearby industries disappeared.

**postindustrial economy** An economy whose base is no longer driven by manufacturing but by service and information industries.

**Rust Belt** Industrialized Middle Atlantic and Great Lakes region whose old factories are barely profitable or have closed.

### Social Divisions

The social and political problems of a disillusioned and diverse society matched the problems of the changing economic structure. The late 1960s and 1970s saw a blunting of New Deal–Great Society liberalism. Nixon's election, in part, was a political reaction to the protests and policies of the Kennedy and Johnson eras. Nixon had left the scene, but the political successes of conservatives demonstrated that many Americans, especially working- and middle-class whites, thought that too many governmental programs did not solve problems and frequently favored minorities over the majority. In part, Carter agreed. "Government cannot eliminate poverty or provide a bountiful economy," he stated, "or save our cities or cure literacy." Liberalism, he argued, had its limits. Liberal Democratic critics disagreed and thought that Carter unwisely had put the brakes on needed social programs, harming minority and women's

**affirmative action** Policy that seeks to redress discrimination through active measures to ensure equal opportunity, especially in education and employment.

**Alan Bakke** White applicant who filed a lawsuit claiming he was denied admittance to medical school because school policy set aside admission slots for less-qualified minorities; the Supreme Court agreed in 1978.

**Justice Department** Part of the executive branch that has responsibility to enforce the law, defend the interests of the United States according to the law, and ensure fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans.

**brief** A summary or statement of a legal position or argument.

**Equal Rights Amendment** Proposed constitutional amendment giving women equal rights under the law; approved by Congress in 1972, it failed to gain ratification by the required thirty-eight states.

**Phyllis Schlafly** Leader of the movement to defeat the ERA; she believed that the amendment threatened the domestic role of women.

**Roe v. Wade** Supreme Court ruling (1973) that women have an unrestricted right to choose an abortion during the first three months of pregnancy.

**Right to Life movement** Anti-abortion movement that favors a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion; also called the pro-life movement.

opportunities. It appeared that minority social needs were being sacrificed for the name of fiscal necessity.

Another concern worrying liberals and minorities was the growing campaign against **affirmative action**, and the anti-affirmative-action *Bakke* case, which had made its way to the Supreme Court. **Alan Bakke** was suing the University of California at Davis Medical School for “reverse discrimination.” Since the mid-1960s, many businesses and colleges had established affirmative action slots for minorities in an effort to provide more opportunities. But as the economy slowed, a growing number of middle-class and blue-collar whites believed that these programs limited their own job and educational opportunities and constituted preferential treatment for minorities. Bakke claimed that he had been denied admission because he was white, and that in his place the medical school had accepted less qualified black students. Supporters of affirmative action pleaded with Carter to back the university. The **Justice Department** eventually petitioned the Court to uphold affirmative action, but in 1978, despite the Justice Department’s **brief**, the Supreme Court, in a 5 to 4 decision, found in Bakke’s favor and ruled that the university should admit him to the medical school.

Women also found Carter’s support for their interests uneven. They applauded his support for extending the time needed to ratify the **Equal Rights Amendment** (ERA), but many thought he could have done more to see it ratified. In 1972, Congress had proposed the amendment and sent it to the states for ratification. Thirty-eight states needed to approve the amendment to make it law, and in two years thirty-three states had approved it. But opposition stiffened under the leadership of conservative **Phyllis Schlafly**. Schlafly organized a “Stop-ERA” movement that claimed the amendment diminished the rights and status of women and altered the “role of the American woman as wife and mother.” Amid growing debate on women’s rights and issues, Carter and Congress approved an extension of the ratification deadline from 1979 to 1982. In the final count, however, the amendment fell three states short of the required thirty-eight states.

Equal Rights Amendment Proposed constitutional amendment giving women equal rights under the law. Congress approved it in 1972, but it failed to achieve ratification by the required thirty-eight states.

Part of the opposition to the ERA became tied to the abortion issue as it burst on the American scene in 1973 when, by a 5 to 2 decision, the Supreme Court in **Roe v. Wade** invalidated a Texas law that prevented abortion. Justice Harry Blackmun, writing for the majority, held that “the right to privacy” gave women the freedom to choose to have an abortion during the first three months of pregnancy. The controversial ruling struck down laws in forty-six states that had made abortions nearly impossible to obtain except in cases of rape or to save the life of the mother. As the number of legal abortions rose from about 750,000 in 1973 to nearly a million and a half by 1980, so too did opposition.

Although most public opinion polls indicated that a majority of Americans favored giving women the right to choose an abortion, at least under some circumstances, Catholics, Mormons, some Orthodox Jews, and many Protestant churches worked with conservative groups to organize a “Right to Life” campaign to oppose abortion rights on moral and legal grounds. The **Right to Life movement** easily merged with those opposed to the ERA and a general conservative critique of American society and liberalism. Responding to conservative and anti-abortion pressure, Congress in 1976 passed the Hyde Amendment, which prohibited the use of federal Medicaid funds to pay for abortions. In 1980 the Supreme Court upheld Hyde in *Harris v. McRae*. Feminists lobbied

Carter to oppose the Hyde Amendment, and when he refused, some argued that they should support anyone but Carter in the forthcoming 1980 election.

### New Immigrants

As American society became less tolerant and government less supportive of social programs, a new wave of immigrants started to arrive in the United States. The 1965 Immigration Act ended the national quota system for immigration and opened access to the United States from areas other than Europe. The **1990 Immigration Act** furthered the flow of immigrants by raising to nearly 700,000 the number who could come to the United States each year. After 1960, when three of every four immigrants had come from Europe, increasing numbers arrived from Mexico, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia. Within two decades, more than half of all immigrants arrived from Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. In the border city of Laredo, Texas, the Latino population exceeded 95 percent, compared with 63 percent in Miami, Florida, and 40 percent in Los Angeles.

They came to the United States mostly for the traditional reasons: jobs and security. As one immigrant stated simply: “It was better in America.” Many immigrants were uneducated and unskilled, especially those who were refugees or from Latin America. But because immigration law favored professionals, many others were highly educated and skilled. Whether skilled or not, new immigrants fit nicely into the structure of the postindustrial economy. Those with few skills found jobs in the service and agriculture sectors, whereas the skilled newcomers filled the ranks of professionals and technicians.

Changes in immigration laws also allowed the Asian population to grow rapidly. In 1960, half a million Asians came to the United States, twenty years later the number had risen to more than 2.5 million, and by 2000, Asian immigrants became the second-largest immigration group—5 million—surpassing those arriving from Europe. Most came as families and clustered in ethnic communities in major urban areas, especially along the Pacific Coast. Those who were well educated and had marketable skills found economic success as medical professionals, engineers, and owners of small businesses. Many others, however, particularly those from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia who came as refugees, arrived with few possessions and little education or skills. Mired in poverty, they had difficulty assimilating into American society and frequently faced intolerance and hostility.

If some Americans regarded Asians as a “model minority,” the opposite was true of those from Latin America and the Caribbean. Coming as both legal and illegal immigrants, Hispanics represented the largest number of the new immigrants. Like Franklin Chang-Diaz, most came for new and better opportunities while speaking little or no English. Chang-Diaz fulfilled his dream of becoming an astronaut, but for most Hispanic immigrants the outcome was vastly different. Arriving with few skills and little education, most had to take one or more low-paying jobs just to survive. Even with two jobs, stated one Mexican American activist, the social and economic “ladder isn’t there” for most Latino immigrants.

Illegal immigration, primarily from Mexico, added to the growing hostility toward Hispanics and calls for immigration limits. Attempting to stem the flood of “illegals” into the United States, Congress passed the **Immigration Reform and Control Act** in 1986. It provided amnesty to illegal aliens who had been in the United States before 1982 and made them eligible for citizenship. It also provided criminal punishment for those who hired illegal aliens and strengthened controls to prevent illegal entry. The

**1990 Immigration Act** Reformed the Immigration Act of 1965; it increased immigrants allowed annually into the United States to around 700,000, giving preference to skilled workers and those with family already living in the country.

**Immigration Reform and Control Act** Law passed by Congress in 1986 that prohibits the hiring of illegal aliens; it offered amnesty and legal residence to any who could prove that they entered the country before January 1, 1982.

# Investigating America

## Diameng Pa Tells His Story, 1997

Increasing numbers of Asians and Latin Americans continued to migrate to the United States through the 1990s. Amid growing calls for limitations on immigration, a Senate subcommittee heard testimony on Ellis Island, New York, from those supporting the idea that America should remain a nation of immigrants. Among those speaking before the Senate Judicial Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration were New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani and New York governor George Pataki, both of whom pointed out that their families, too, were once immigrants. On August 11, 1997, Cambodian refugee Diameng Pa, a Virginia high school senior, described before the subcommittee the hope and opportunity afforded him as an immigrant in America.

.....

America should continue to be a nation of immigrants. This institution is hope for those still seeking a new beginning similar to the one I received. I was born in Batdambang, Cambodia, on November 23, 1978 . . . a rural village . . . several miles from the Thai border. . . . This period produced a Cambodian Communist faction known as the Khmer Rouge, who killed more than 400,000 Cambodians and forced many more to flee. . . .

To acquire a better life for their family, my parents fled to a refugee camp in Thailand, fortunately able . . . then to escape to the United States. . . . By coming to the United States of America, we were traveling to a land that was foreign to us and whose language we did not speak. However, . . . it is a land of opportunity.

My family initially settled in a minority neighborhood of South Arlington, Virginia, not far from Strayer College where my father, Mong Pa, pursued a degree in business administration. However, unfortunately, he abandoned his goals to support the family. My father would also mention the importance of education and its correlation with success. Though quite young, I realized that my father sacrificed his opportunity to pursue his business degree so that the family

was financially stable. He encouraged me to reach out and to appreciate one of the many precious gifts that America offered—formal education.

Two years after I started school, I settled into the language thanks to my teachers and the miracle of TV. I remember adopting a few phrases here and there and soon enough I became accustomed to the English language and American culture. Bugs Bunny's "What's up, Doc" was my most favorite phrase during that time. . . .

I accelerated in my studies and took the most demanding courses possible . . . I developed an interest in science activities.

As a sophomore at Wakefield High School I was privileged to be the first student in Wakefield history to attend the international Science and Engineer Fair in . . . Canada and to win second place in the category of environmental science.

As an immigrant, valedictorian of my senior class and now a proud American citizen, I realize that becoming an American took time. I feel that pursuing a dream takes dedication and will to strive and succeed. Only in America are you given this generous privilege. A world-renowned . . . researcher by the name of David Da-i Ho states, "Success is a result of immigrant drive. People get in this new world, they want to carve out their place in it. . . . You always retain a bit of underdog mentality. And if they work assiduously and lie low long enough, even underdogs will have their day."

.....

- In what ways were Diameng Pa's experiences and goals similar to those of Franklin Chang-Diaz? What key obstacle did both Pa and Chang-Diaz have to overcome, and what was the role of education in their lives?
- Do you agree with the statement that immigrants are underdogs and have a special drive to succeed? Why or why not? In your opinion, are the success stories of Pa and Chang-Diaz proof that America is a land of opportunity, or are these two immigrants exceptions to the rule?



crackdown did not work: the flow of immigrants entering the country illegally was unaffected. As the 1990s began, demands for immigration restrictions increased—in one poll, 69 percent of those asked believed there were too many Latinos in the country.

## Resurgent Conservatism

- ★ **What issues and forces contributed to the emergence of the New Right? How did the New Right shape American politics?**
- ★ **What is “Reaganomics,” and what were the consequences of Reagan’s economic policies?**

Traditional liberals criticized Carter for his lack of activism and continued to espouse government programs as a means to promote social equality and **cultural pluralism**. But a growing number of people were arguing against government activism. “Liberalism is no longer the answer—it is the problem,” insisted Ronald Reagan. Many, like Reagan, argued that government was inefficient and that liberal programs made victims of middle-class Americans who worked hard, saved their money, and believed in strong, traditional family values. The activism of the 1960s, they believed, had made the nation a collection of interest groups clamoring for rights and power and had produced a loss of national identity and a moral breakdown. Conservatives argued that liberal views threatened “to destroy everything that is good and moral here in America.” By the mid-1970s, many conservatives had grouped around the New Right.

**cultural pluralism** The coexistence of many cultures, without any one culture dominating; it seeks to reduce racial and other forms of discrimination.

### The New Right

The New Right emerged as a coalition of conservative grassroots movements contributing their support and money to those Republicans who espoused their values. Economically and politically, it embraced a retreat from government activism and a reduction of taxes. By 1979, lowering taxes had become a hot national issue. Throughout the 1970s, Americans were aware that they were paying more taxes than ever. Social Security taxes to pay for entitlements, now including Medicare, grew by 30 percent. At the same time, because of inflation and “**bracket creep**,” income taxes rose by about 20 percent. In addition, state and local taxes kept going up. Responding to the tax avalanche, Californians led a tax revolt in 1978. Using a referendum to bypass the legislature, California voters passed **Proposition 13**, which placed limits on property taxes and state spending. Recognizing the importance of the movement, a Carter aide confided: It “isn’t just a tax revolt, it is a revolution against government.”

Reducing taxes was a broad-based issue, but the New Right’s passion came from rejecting “liberal” moral and social values that, among other things, advocated abortion and condoned homosexuality. The nation’s schools, the New Right charged, had retreated from teaching a positive work ethic and moral habits and needed to return to the basics: reading, writing, arithmetic, and traditional values. To mobilize support, the New Right pioneered the effective political use of **direct mail** aimed at specific segments of the population.

Highly visible among New Right groups were evangelical Christian sects, many of whose ministers were **televangelists**—preachers who used radio and television to spread the gospel. Receiving donations that exceeded a billion dollars a year, they did not hesitate to mix religion and politics. Jerry Falwell’s **Moral Majority** promoted New Right views on more than five hundred television and radio stations. Reaching millions of

**bracket creep** Inflation of salaries, pushing individuals into higher tax brackets.

**Proposition 13** Measure adopted by referendum in California in 1978 cutting local property taxes by more than 50 percent.

**direct mail** Advertising or promotional matter mailed directly to potential customers or audiences chosen because they are likely to respond favorably.

**televangelists** Protestant evangelist ministers who conduct televised worship services; many used their broadcasts as a forum to promote conservative values.

**Moral Majority** Conservative antiliberal religious organization led by televangelist Jerry Falwell; it had an active political lobby in the 1980s.

Americans, Falwell called on listeners to wage political war against government officials whose views on the Bible, homosexuality, prayer in school, abortion, and communism were too liberal. Falwell told his religious colleagues to get people “saved, baptized, and registered.”

The conservative resurgence aided Ronald Reagan more than any other Republican candidate. He promised to restore America by reducing government involvement and freeing American ingenuity and competitiveness, and he embraced the social positions of the New Right. A vote for Reagan, his supporters claimed, would restore American pride, power, and traditions. Carter, according to Republicans, had failed to free the hostages, and he had failed to restore the nation’s economy. Reagan, who claimed to be a “citizen politician,” quipped: “A recession is when your neighbor loses his job. A depression is when you lose yours. A recovery is when Jimmy Carter loses his.” Except for the size of Reagan’s majority and how many Republicans his **political coattails** would carry into office, the outcome of the election of 1980 was never in doubt. When the voting ended, Reagan had 51 percent of the popular vote and an impressive 91 percent of the electoral count. Republicans held their majority in the Senate and substantially narrowed the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives. Many political observers believed the election of 1980 was the beginning of a new conservative era.

**political coattails** Term referring to the ability of a strong candidate to attract voters to other office seekers from the same political party.

### Reaganism

Reagan brought to the White House two distinct advantages lacked by Nixon, Ford, and Carter: he had a clear and simple vision of the type of America he wanted, and he possessed the ability to convey that image to the American public. Called

the “Great Communicator” by the press, Reagan expertly presented images and visions, setting the grand agenda, but left to his cabinet and executive staff the fine-tuning and implementation of programs and legislation. Reagan rode to the presidency on a wide domestic platform promising not just prosperity and less government but also morality, tapping the New Right’s political strength on issues of family and gender. In office, however, he virtually ignored the New Right’s social agenda and concentrated on the economy and foreign policy. The administration’s plan to improve the economy was simple: cut the number and cost of social programs, increase military spending, and reduce taxes and government restrictions.

Much of the administration’s formula for restoring economic vitality rested on improving productivity and reducing inflation. To combat inflation, the Federal Reserve (“the Fed”) kept interest rates high—spiking at 18 percent, the highest in the twentieth century. While the Fed squeezed inflation, Reagan introduced **supply-side economics**, intending to reduce federal regulations, taxes, and social programs. The 1981 **Economic Recovery Tax Act** lowered income taxes and most business taxes by an average of 25 percent. Supported by conservative Democrats in the House, Reagan raised military spending and slashed \$25 billion from federal spending on social programs. Among the programs affected were food stamps, **Aid to Families with Dependent Children**, and assistance with jobs and housing. Yet, despite these efforts, the cost of social programs continued to rise, largely because of increases in entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare, which were politically untouchable.

Another aim of **Reaganomics** was deregulation—freeing businesses and corporations from restrictive federal regulations. Appointees to regulatory agencies were selected because of their support for deregulation and for business generally. Among the areas affected by deregulation were banking, communications, and oil. But the impact of Reaganomics was most visible in environmental regulation. The Environmental Protection Agency

**supply-side economics** Theory that reducing taxes on the wealthy and increasing the money available for investment will stimulate the economy and eventually benefit everyone.

**Economic Recovery Tax Act** Law passed by Congress in 1981 that cut income taxes over three years by 25 percent across the board and lowered the rate for the highest bracket from 78 percent to 28 percent.

**Aid to Families with Dependent Children** A program created by the Social Security Act of 1935; it provided states with matching federal funds and became one of the states’ main welfare programs.

**Reaganomics** Economic beliefs and policies of the Reagan administration, including the belief that tax cuts for the wealthy and deregulation of industry benefit the economy.

relaxed enforcement of federal guidelines for reducing air and water pollution and cleaning up toxic-waste sites. And Secretary of the Interior James Watt sought to open federally owned and controlled land, coastal waters, and wetlands to mining, lumber, oil, and gas companies—a policy strongly advocated by many in the West, where a “**sagebrush rebellion**” had been contesting federal control and regulation of land and natural resources.

Reagan’s economic policies were not immediately effective. Indeed, it appeared that the economy had gotten worse, as unemployment climbed to over 12 percent, the **trade deficit** soared, and bankruptcies for small businesses and farmers increased. Also growing at an alarming rate was the **federal deficit**, pushed by declining tax revenues and increases in military spending. Reagan called for patience, assuring the public that his economic programs eventually would work.

As Reagan predicted, in 1983 the recession ended, although deficits remained at record levels. Contributing to the recovery were lower interest rates and oil prices. Inflation dropped to 4 percent, and unemployment fell to 7.5 percent. Reagan’s economic policies and his support of a positive business culture now received widespread praise. Corporate leaders cheered reduced government controls, relaxed antimonopoly policy, and increased defense spending. The deregulation of financial institutions spurred investment and speculation, which drove the stock market upward—the Great Bull Market. “I think we hit the jackpot,” Reagan announced when he signed the Garn-St. Germain Act in 1982, which deregulated the **savings and loan industry**. Deregulation allowed savings and loan institutions (S&Ls) to make loans for all types of investment rather than just single-family homes, providing a new source of capital for the construction of office buildings, shopping malls, and industrial parks.

The change in antimonopoly policy made mergers easier. Since the New Deal, justice departments and courts had generally hampered mergers of companies in the same or related fields. But in the 1980s a new approach allowed such mergers, provided they did not obstruct eventual competition. Within three years, twenty-one mergers had been completed, each worth over \$1 billion. Business opportunities also multiplied as technological developments opened new fields, especially in communications and electronics. Advances in miniaturization, satellite transmissions, videocassette recorders (VCRs), and computers touched almost every American—and provided new avenues of wealth. With Apple and IBM leading the way, office and personal computers restructured the process of handling information and communications, spawning a new wave of “tech” companies and a new crop of millionaires such as Bill Gates. Gates dropped out of Harvard to develop software for IBM’s entry into the new field of personal computers and became America’s youngest billionaire and founder of Microsoft.

Some called the 1980s the “Me Decade,” in which acquiring money and state-of-the-art, high-tech gadgetry mattered very much and led to self-satisfaction. Everyone, it seemed, relished their walkmans, videos, computers, fax machines, and mobile phones. In 1974 only 46 percent of college freshmen and high school seniors listed being “financially successful” as the first priority in their lives. Twelve years later, in 1986, 73 percent of college freshmen considered being “very well off financially” as their number one priority. Income-conscious college graduates hoping to become highly paid, aggressive professionals eagerly applied to law, business, and other postgraduate schools. Consequently, the number of doctors, lawyers, and those with Masters of Business Administration (MBA) swelled, whereas in the business world, many executive salaries broke \$40 million. Some lamented the loss of the activism of the 1960s, but many agreed with *Newsweek* when it declared 1984 the “Year of the **Yuppie**”—the young, upwardly mobile urban professional who was on the leading edge of the new economic vitality.

**Sagebrush rebellion** A 1980s political movement in western states opposing federal regulations governing land use and natural resources, seeking state jurisdiction instead.

**trade deficit** Amount by which the value of a nation’s imports exceeds the value of its exports.

**federal deficit** The total amount of debt owed by the national government during a fiscal year.

**savings and loan industry** Financial institutions (S&Ls) founded to provide home mortgage loans; deregulation under Reagan allowed them to speculate in risky ventures, causing many to fail.

**Yuppie** Young urban professional with a high-paying job and a materialistic lifestyle.

**national debt** The total amount of money owed by the United States to domestic and foreign creditors.

Not everyone applauded the new economy. Some warned of serious weaknesses—federal revenues had shrunk while spending continued to expand, creating an alarming **national debt**. Critics also pointed out that the economic boom was selective. Regionally, the West Coast and Sunbelt did well, but the Northeast—the Rust Belt—still rusted, and the farm belt experienced farm foreclosures at levels near that of the Great Depression. Socially, the gap between rich and poor widened as the percentage of the nation's wealth held by the top 10 percent of American families climbed from 67 to 73 percent between 1980 and 1988. At the same time, many American workers found their wages and employment opportunities declining; thus the number of people living below the poverty line of \$9,885 increased. Across the country, the number of homeless increased, placing more pressure on social programs that found their budgets being reduced.

By the end of Reagan's second term, the economy began to slow and expose important weaknesses. The federal deficit reached \$1,065 billion a year, adding to a national debt that stood at nearly \$3 trillion, requiring an annual interest payment of \$200 million. The savings and loan industry was tottering on the verge of a collapse resulting from aggressive investment and loan policies allowed by deregulation. In 1988, the Lincoln Savings and Loan in California disclosed that it had lost more than \$2.6 billion of depositors' money. Although the federal government provided more than \$500 billion to cover the S&L losses, many now questioned the reality of Reaganomics, the administration's concern for the less privileged, and the ethics of many within the administration—over a hundred members of the administration were found guilty of unethical or illegal behavior. Throughout it all, Reagan remained untouched and popular with the public, causing some to refer to him as the “Teflon president.”

### A Second Term

The recession ended just in time for Reagan's second quest for the presidency. Republicans faced the 1984 election with great anticipation. Using the theme “Morning in America,” Reagan's reelection campaign projected continued economic growth and affirmed his commitment to a strong America abroad. Democrats nominated a traditional liberal, Walter Mondale, who selected Representative Geraldine Ferraro of New York as his running mate. Immediately, Republicans tagged liberalism, and Mondale, with the label “tax and spend.” When Mondale did call for expanded social programs and higher taxes to address deficits, Republican correctly predicted a landslide. Reagan won an overwhelming victory, taking 59 percent of the popular vote and carrying every state except Mondale's Minnesota.

## Asserting World Power

- ★ **What did the Reagan administration view as the main source of trouble in world affairs?**
- ★ **How did Reagan shift U.S.-Soviet policy during his second term? What role did Gorbachev play in promoting change in the Soviet Union?**

Reagan's victories in 1980 and 1984 resulted not only from the popularity of his domestic agenda but also from public support for his views on the role of the United States in world affairs. Throughout the 1980 presidential campaign, the Republicans had hammered at Carter's ineffective foreign policy and at slipping American prestige in the world. Reagan promised to restore American power and influence. With little experience in foreign affairs, Reagan set the broad patterns of American policy but left the specifics



to his foreign-policy staff, especially CIA director William Casey and Secretary of State George Shultz.

### Cold War Renewed

At the center of Reagan's view of the world were two threats: the Soviet Union and nuclear war. The Soviet Union, he stated, constituted an "evil empire" and was the "focus of evil in the modern world." He believed that America's grand role

was to defend the world from the Soviets and communism and that large increases in the military budget were necessary to close the "window of vulnerability" that opened when the Soviets pulled ahead in the arms race during Carter's years.

Congress promptly funded Reagan's military budget, which added more than \$100 billion a year in appropriations. By 1985, a million dollars was being spent on weapons every minute, and much of that money was flowing into the Sunbelt. Seeking a method to move from "assured destruction" to "assured survival," Reagan had asked Congress in 1983 to fund a controversial system of defense against Soviet missiles: the **Strategic Defense Initiative** (SDI). Between 1983 and 1989, Congress provided more than \$17 billion for SDI research amid complaints that the project was conceptually and technologically flawed. Critics pointed out that even if the system worked and was 95 percent effective, the 5 percent of Soviet warheads that would hit the United States would still destroy the nation, if not civilization.

Reagan was also determined to roll back communism, especially in the Third World. He pronounced the Reagan Doctrine, which promised economic and military aid, including covert operations funded by the CIA, to those fighting Communist tyranny. The United States initiated or increased support and funding for "freedom fighters" opposing communism in Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia, and several Central American countries. In the Caribbean, Reagan went further and approved a military strike against the island nation of **Grenada**. There, it was argued, a Marxist government posed a direct threat to nearly five hundred American students attending medical school on the island, and a potential threat because it was accepting Cuban help in building an extended airport runway, which Reagan feared might serve as a staging area for enemy aircraft. On October 25, 1983, more than two thousand American soldiers brushed aside minimal opposition, brought home the American students, and installed a pro-American government on the island.

The administration basked in the light of public approval, but some were concerned about American policies in Central America (see Map 29.2). They worried about the disturbing reports of human rights violations by "death squads" linked to the Salvadoran military and feared that Central America might become another Vietnam, with American troops following the aid and advisers already being sent. Concern turned to opposition when the press uncovered large-scale American covert aid to the **Contras**, including the CIA's mining of Nicaraguan harbors in 1984. That same year, Congress passed the **Boland Amendment**, which limited aid to the Contras only for humanitarian assistance. Reagan and CIA director William Casey sought ways to continue to arm the Contras without Congress's knowledge. One complicated scheme involved secretly selling arms to the Iranians and then using the money to fund the Contras.

As news of this Iran-Contra Affair came out, it became clear that the administration had violated the Boland Amendment. Responding to a growing public outcry, Reagan appointed a special investigative commission, and Congress began its own investigation. By mid-1987, both agreed that members of the CIA and the National Security Council (NSC) had acted without the knowledge or approval of Congress and had lied to

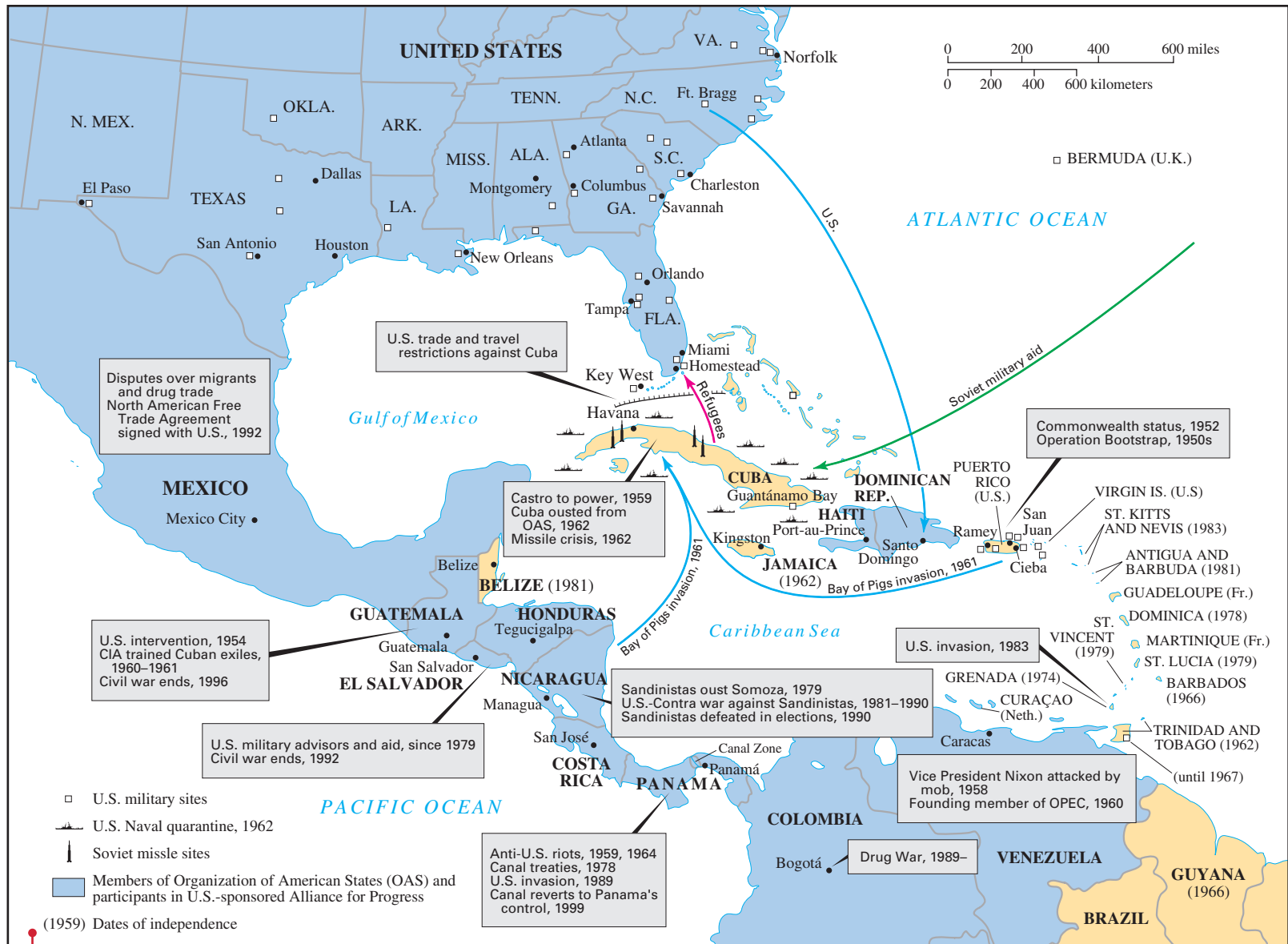
### Strategic Defense Initiative

Research program to create an effective laser-based defense against nuclear missile attack.

**Grenada** Country in the West Indies that achieved independence from Britain in 1974 and was invaded briefly by U.S. forces in 1983.

**Contras** Nicaraguan rebels, many of them former followers of Somoza, fighting to overthrow the leftist Sandinista government.

**Boland Amendment** 1984 motion that barred the CIA from using funds to directly or indirectly aid the Nicaraguan Contras.



**MAP 29.2** The United States and Central America and the Caribbean

Geographical proximity, important economic ties, security needs, and the drug trade continue to make Central America and the Caribbean a critical region for American interests. This map shows some of the American economic, military, and political actions taken in the region since the end of World War II.

Congress to hide their operation. Eventually, fourteen people were charged with crimes, and eleven—including several top-level advisers to Reagan—were convicted and sentenced to prison terms. Investigators found no proof of Reagan’s direct involvement in the undercover arrangement but concluded that he had set the stage for others’ illegal activities by encouraging and, in general terms, ordering support for the Contras. The Iran-Contra investigations showed a president out of touch with what was happening, and for once the image of Reagan was tarnished.

## Terrorism

Outside of the Cold War framework, Reagan faced a new and more complicated enemy—terrorism. Initially, terrorism was connected to the struggle between Israel and the **Palestine Liberation Organization** (PLO) and its Arab supporters. By the late 1970s, pro-Palestinian and other groups were involved in terrorism throughout the Mediterranean region. Terrorists kidnapped and killed Americans and Europeans, hijacked planes and ships, and attacked airports and other public places. American officials became a direct target in April 1983 when Muslim terrorists attacked the American embassy in Beirut, killing sixty-three people. Six months later, a suicide driver rammed a truck filled with explosives into the U.S. marine barracks at the Beirut airport, killing 241 marines who were part of a United Nations peacekeeping force. Two miles away another suicide attack killed fifty French troops, who also were part of a peacekeeping effort.

Reagan vehemently denounced the terrorist attacks but the only solution he found was to remove American troops from Lebanon in January 1984. The administration found a more satisfying response to terrorism two years later when it bombed targets in Libya. Intelligence sources had linked Libya and its leader **Muammar Qaddafi** to a bombing in West Berlin that killed an American soldier. After the bombs fell on Libya, Reagan declared to terrorists, “You can run but you can’t hide.” Undeterred, terrorists continued their activities.

**Palestine Liberation Organization** A Palestinian political and military organization, originally dedicated to opposing the state of Israel through terrorism and other means.

**Muammar Qaddafi** Political leader in Libya who seized power in a 1969 military coup and imposed a socialist regime and Islamic orthodoxy.

## Reagan and Gorbachev

Until 1985, Reagan’s foreign policy had focused on combating the power of the Soviet Union around the globe. Then, unexpectedly, the president executed a reversal of policy toward Moscow. He called for the resumption of arms limitation talks and invited the Soviet leader, **Mikhail Gorbachev**, to the United States. Gorbachev was different from previous Soviet leaders. He was younger and committed to changing the Soviet Union. With his policy of **perestroika** (“restructuring”), he wanted to breathe new life into an economy that was stagnating under the weight of military spending and state planning. And under his new policy of **glasnost** (“openness”), he instituted reforms that provided more political and civil rights to the Soviet people. To demonstrate to the West that he was a new type of Soviet leader, Gorbachev unilaterally stopped nuclear testing and deployment of missiles in Eastern Europe. By the time he was forced from office in 1991, Gorbachev had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in ending the Cold War, and the first McDonald’s had opened in Moscow.

In 1985, Gorbachev declined Reagan’s invitation to visit the United States but agreed to a summit meeting in Geneva. The two leaders at first jostled with each other. Reagan condemned the Soviets for human rights abuses, their involvement in Afghanistan, and their aid to Communist factions fighting in Angola and Ethiopia. Gorbachev attacked the proposed development of SDI. But both were concerned over the possibility of nuclear war, and slowly they gained a respect and fondness for each other. Soviet-American negotiations on arms limitations continued with new optimism. A year later, in October 1986, the two

**Mikhail Gorbachev** Soviet leader who assumed power in 1985 and introduced political and economic reforms and then found himself presiding over the breakup of the Soviet Union.

**perestroika** Organizational restructuring of the Soviet economy and bureaucracy that began in the mid-1980s.

**glasnost** Official policy of the Soviet government under Gorbachev emphasizing freedom of thought and candid discussion of social problems.

**Intermediate Nuclear Force Treaty**

Treaty in 1987 that provided for the destruction of all U.S. and Soviet medium-range nuclear missiles and for verification with on-site inspections.

leaders met again in Reykjavik, Iceland, to discuss reductions of strategic weapons. They reached no accord but agreed to keep working on arms limitations. In December 1987, a breakthrough occurred. During a Washington summit, Reagan and Gorbachev signed the **Intermediate Nuclear Force Treaty**, which removed both nations' intermediate-range missiles from Europe. Assessing the changes in Russia and Soviet policy, Secretary Shultz noted that the Cold War “was all over but the shouting.”

## In Reagan's Shadow

★ **What new foreign-policy choices did the United States face as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union?**

★ **How did Reagan's domestic policies affect expectations and outcomes for the Bush administration?**

By 1988, the Reagan presidency was coming to an end, and as Nancy Reagan said of 1987, “It’s not been a great year.” Despite the apparent thaw in the Cold War, for the first time in the Reagan administration a combination of events had dented the image of Reagan and Republican leadership. The stock market collapse in October 1987 and the Iran-Contra revelations created the impression that the administration was not in control of events or of itself and that the president had little grasp of what was happening. Still, most Republicans believed that their conservative revolution was still strong, that they would defeat the Democrats and continue to strengthen the nation.

### Bush Assumes Office

Republicans passed the torch to Vice President George Bush, although some worried that he was not conservative enough to push the New Right's social agenda. Nonetheless, Bush had been the loyal vice president and had served the party faithfully, holding important posts under Presidents Nixon and Ford. He also served as ambassador to the United Nations, chairman of the Republican National Committee, ambassador to China, and director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Several Democrats eagerly contended to confront Bush, whose popularity seemed a faint shadow of Reagan's. Eventually, Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts gained the Democratic nomination.

The 1988 campaign was dull. Both candidates lacked flair, and neither was able to energize the voters. Both avoided most social and international issues, while claiming that they were the best suited to fight crime and drugs. Although both vowed not to raise taxes, Bush's promise, “Read my lips . . . no new taxes,” was best received. To motivate voters, the candidates relied on television and negative campaigning, which aimed at discrediting the opponent rather than addressing issues and policies. Republican ads were more effective and, combined with falling unemployment and inflation rates, contributed to Bush's easy victory. With 79.2 percent of the electoral vote and 54 percent of the popular vote, he became the first sitting vice president to be elected president since Martin Van Buren in 1836. Although Bush trounced Dukakis, the victory was not as sweet as Bush had hoped. Democrats controlled the House and the Senate.

### Bush and a New International Order

Bush's own preferences and international events dictated that foreign affairs would consume most of his attention. The world was changing rapidly, and Bush considered the management of international relations to be one of his strengths. Unlike



Reagan, he focused on specific policies. Among the immediate problems were those resulting from Gorbachev's reforms, which had produced significant political and economic changes throughout the Communist world. His withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan and Eastern Europe, combined with his announcement that the Soviets would not intervene to prevent political change in Eastern Europe, unleashed a series of events that undermined Communist systems in operation since the end of World War II.

By 1989, Poland had a new constitution, a free-market economy, and a non-Communist government; the **Berlin Wall** was torn down; and Gorbachev and Bush, meeting on the island of Malta in the Mediterranean Sea, had declared that the Cold War was over. A year later, Germany had been unified and the Baltic states—Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania—had declared their independence from the Soviet Union. Gorbachev's policies that permitted Eastern Europe to break free also caused the republics of the Soviet Union to demand greater autonomy and even independence. In August 1991, the failure of Communist hard-liners to topple Gorbachev only accelerated the republics' movement toward independence. In December, Gorbachev resigned, and the Soviet Union ceased to exist. In its place was the **Commonwealth of Independent States** (CIS), a weak federation led by **Boris Yeltsin**, the president of the Russian Republic.

The forces that promoted change in the Soviet bloc were alive throughout the globe. In Central America, Bush backed away from Reagan's approach and reduced military assistance, pushed for political negotiations, and backed the **Contadora Plan** to bring peace in Nicaragua. These actions contributed to the Contras' halting military activities and the Ortega government's accepting free elections—which it lost. In neighboring El Salvador, American-supported peace negotiations also ended the civil war. Bush's actions were more direct in Panama. Once praised by Bush and Reagan, Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega had become more dictatorial and an embarrassment to Washington. He was implicated in the torture and murder of political opponents and in facilitating shipments of drugs to the United States. Bush ordered American troops into Panama to

**Berlin Wall** Barrier that the Communist East German government built in 1961 to divide East and West Berlin, torn down in November 1989 as the Cold War was ending.

**Commonwealth of Independent States** Weak federation of the former Soviet republics; it replaced the Soviet Union in 1992 and soon gave way to total independence of the member countries.

**Boris Yeltsin** Russian parliamentary leader who was elected president of the new Russian Republic in 1991 and expanded democratic and economic reforms.

**Contadora Plan** Pact signed by the presidents of five Central American nations in 1987 calling for a cease-fire in conflicts in the region and for democratic reforms.



With the collapse of the Soviet Union and Communism across Eastern Europe, the symbol of the iron curtain and the Cold War came tumbling down in Berlin. Jubilant Berliners sit atop the Berlin Wall, which had divided the city from 1962 to November 1989. AP Photo/Lionel Cironneau.

arrest Noriega on drug-related charges, and within seventy-two hours, the dictator was in custody. American casualties were light, but more than three thousand Panamanians, almost all civilians, died. A Miami court later found Noriega guilty and sentenced him to prison in 1992. Panama, however, remained a major drug-smuggling route into the United States.

In South Africa, the one-time apartheid government freed opposition leader Nelson Mandela after twenty-seven years in prison, and in a 1992 election white voters officially ended apartheid and moved to allow non-whites to vote. The movement toward democracy, however, failed in China. There university students led a series of demonstrations in 1989 demanding democracy and economic and governmental reform. In Beijing thousands of student protesters filled the massive expanse of Tiananmen Square, only to be attacked by Chinese troops who killed hundreds of protesters as the world watched on television. Bush condemned Beijing for its actions but refused to take harsher actions, arguing that they would further isolate its leadership and make it even more brutal.

### Protecting American Interests Abroad

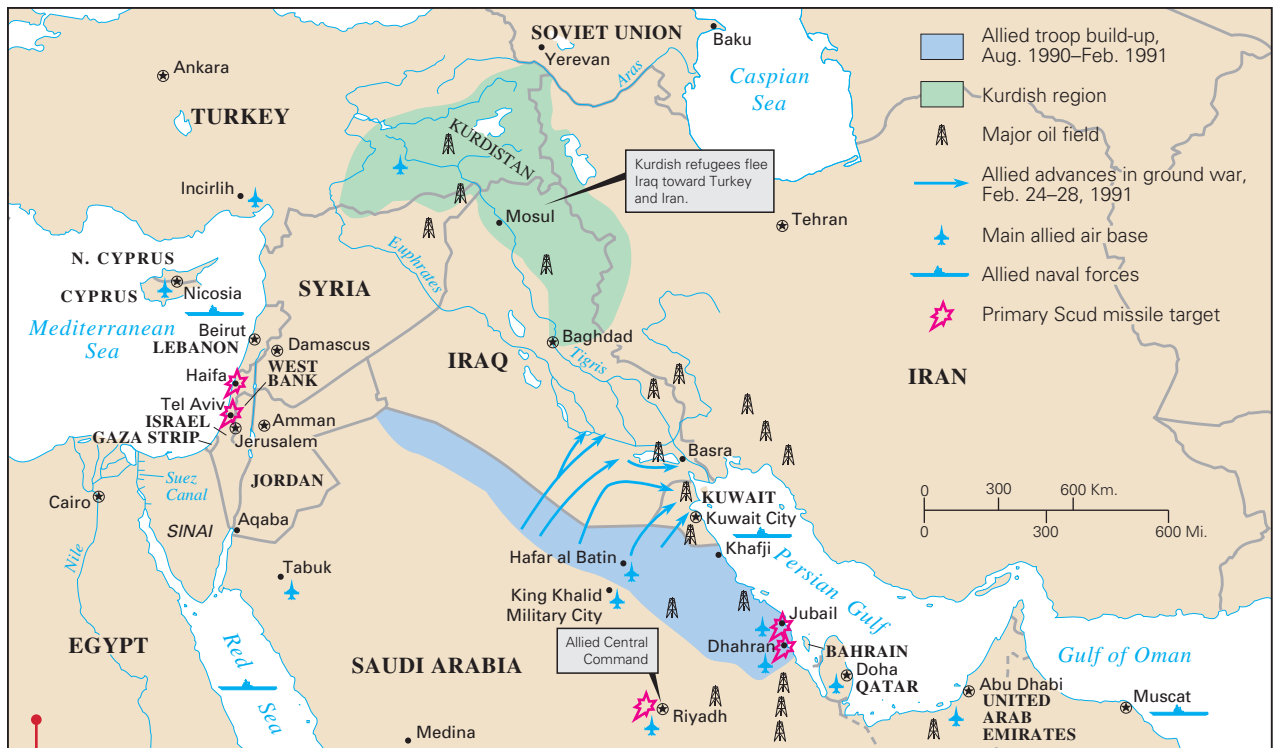
Promoting democracy and free trade were still clearly in the interests of the United States, but with the collapse of the Soviet Union, many wondered what goals and interests would now shape American foreign and military policies. Some called for a “peace dividend,” asking that the United States reduce its global role and the military’s budget. Bush resisted these suggestions and warned that the world was still a dangerous place. Continued tensions in the Middle East and elsewhere and the ever-present threat of nuclear weapons each demanded a strong, activist U.S. foreign policy. His position seemed proven in the fall of 1990, when Iraq’s Saddam Hussein invaded the oil-rich sheikdom of Kuwait and overran the country. Many worried that Hussein intended to dominate the Persian Gulf and thus gain control over the flow of more than 40 percent of the world’s oil supply.

Within hours of the invasion, Bush warned, “This will not stand,” and he organized a United Nations response. A multinational force of more than 700,000, including 500,000 Americans, went to Saudi Arabia in Operation Desert Shield to protect Saudi borders and oil sources and to pressure Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. Nearly 80 percent of the American public supported protecting Saudi Arabia, but most wanted to avoid war by using economic and diplomatic sanctions to force Iraq to leave Kuwait. Bush thought otherwise. He worked with other coalition nations to set a deadline for Iraqi withdrawal. If Iraq still occupied Kuwait by January 15, 1991, the allies would use force.

Eighteen hours after the deadline expired, with Iraq making no move to pull out, aircraft of the UN coalition began devastating attacks on Iraqi positions in Kuwait and on Iraq itself. American public support immediately rallied behind the **Persian Gulf War** (see Map 29.3). The war’s ground offensive against Iraq, called Operation Desert Storm by U.S. forces, started the night of February 23. Within a hundred hours, coalition forces liberated Kuwait, where thousands of demoralized Iraqi soldiers, many of whom had gone without food and water for days, surrendered to advancing coalition forces. Estimates of Iraqi losses ranged from 70,000 to 115,000 killed. The United States lost fewer than 150. President Bush’s popularity momentarily soared above 90 percent. Some, less euphoric, speculated that the offensive had ended too soon and should have continued until all, or nearly all, of the Iraqi army had been destroyed and Hussein ousted from power.

By the summer of 1991, the United States could claim victory in two wars—the one against Iraq and the Cold War—and was clearly the diplomatic and military leader of the

**Persian Gulf War** War in the Persian Gulf region in 1991, triggered by Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait; a U.S.-led coalition defeated Iraqi forces and freed Kuwait.



**MAP 29.3** The Gulf War

On August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, threatening Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf region. In response, the United States and other nations formed an international coalition to restore Kuwait's independence. In January 1991, the coalition forces of Operation Desert Storm began to attack the forces of Saddam Hussein. The outcome was the destruction of most of the Iraqi army and Kuwait's liberation, but Saddam Hussein maintained control of Iraq.

world. Riding a wave of popularity and foreign-policy successes, the White House looked hopefully toward the forthcoming presidential campaign.

### A Kinder, Gentler Nation

Bush entered the White House in 1989 promising a “kinder, gentler nation,” an administration concerned about the nation’s social problems. But his administration made no move to improve America’s society or economy. The goal was not “to remake society” but to manage the presidency, avoid “stupid mistakes,” and “see that government doesn’t get in the way.” More government and more money were not always the best solutions to the country’s ills, Bush frequently reminded his listeners. The message echoed Reagan’s, but Bush was not as effective a communicator—he liked talking to people over the phone rather than face-to-face. Without Reagan’s stage presence, Bush seemed to lack vision.

By mid-1990, America was in a recession. The causes were complex, reflecting higher oil prices, globalization, and the restructuring of much of the American economy. With growing competition from foreign companies, the trade deficit increased, while the American economy slowed as the trend for businesses to consolidate, outsource, or relocate continued. In human terms, between 1990 and 1993 more than 1.9 million people lost their jobs, and 63 percent of American corporations cut their staffs. Families

In Operation Desert Shield, regarded by many as George Bush's most successful action as president, United Nations forces led by the United States successfully pushed back Iraqi forces and liberated Kuwait. AP Photo/Dieter Endlicher.



watched as average levels of income dropped below 1980 levels, to \$37,300 from a 1980 high of \$38,900. Consumers—caught amid rising unemployment, falling wages, and nagging inflation—saw their savings shrink, and their confidence in the economy followed suit. “I don’t see the United States regaining a substantial percentage of the jobs lost for five to ten years,” said one chief executive.

To some Republican and Democratic critics, Bush’s commitment to reducing barriers to trade, especially for Mexico, Canada, and Japan, and his inability to control federal spending and reduce the deficit had only hurt the economy. Adding to the political fallout was Bush’s position on taxes. In 1990, he alienated both sides of Congress by raising taxes to try and control the federal debt—which continued to grow. As the recession continued, Democrats called for and passed tax cuts for the middle class, which met with the president’s veto. By 1992, amid political gridlock, Bush faced his lowest approval rating ever in public opinion polls, around 40 percent, and the election loomed.

As the two major political parties readied themselves for the 1992 presidential election, Republicans hoped the alignment of voters that had elected Reagan and Bush would continue to reject liberal activism and big government in favor of conservative values. The party platform forcefully attacked permissiveness in American society, opposed abortion and alternative lifestyles, advocated less government, and stressed the “traditional American values” that emphasized family and religion. Conservative journalist and political commentator Pat Buchanan roused the convention by calling for a “**cultural war**” for “the soul of the nation.” Confident in their agenda, conservatives rallied around the president. Bush accepted the social agenda but preferred to emphasize his experience and to bask in the afterglow of Operation Desert Storm and the fall of communism. Looking forward, he called for tax cuts and reduced government spending to stimulate the economy. Republicans expected Bush to win easily.

Many prominent Democrats agreed with the Republican assessment, leaving the door open for Governor William Jefferson (Bill) Clinton of Arkansas, a 46-year-old baby boomer who easily won the nomination. In his campaign, Clinton and his young team of political advisers focused on a different vision of American society. As expected they continued to support an activist government to deal with nation’s problems, but they avoided “cultural war” slogans, and instead targeted the slowing economy’s impact on society. James Carvell, Clinton’s chief political adviser, tacked reminders over his own desk reading, “It’s the Economy, Stupid.”

**cultural war** A belief that the nation is divided over liberal and conservative values and that moral issues are an important part of the political debate.



# Investigating America

## Pat Buchanan's "Culture War" Speech, 1992

Believing that President George Bush paid little more than lip service to the New Right's social agenda, Pat Buchanan, a prominent political commentator and former advisor to Presidents Nixon and Reagan, launched a conservative protest campaign during the 1992 Republican primaries. Before the election season was over, Buchanan won more than 3 million Republican votes, which earned him a prime-time slot for his speech at the Republican National Convention. The speech, excerpted below, was immediately dubbed the "culture war" speech.

Well, we took the long way home, but we finally got here. . . . Like many of you last month, I watched [the Democratic National Convention] that giant masquerade ball at Madison Square Garden—where 20,000 radicals and liberals came dressed up as moderates and centrists—in the greatest single exhibition of cross-dressing in American political history. . . .

The malcontents of Madison Square Garden notwithstanding, the 1980s were not terrible years. They were great years. You know it. I know it. And the only people who don't know it are the carping critics who sat on the sidelines of history, jeering at one of the great statesmen of modern time. . . .

The presidency is also America's bully pulpit, what Mr. Truman called, "preeminently a place of moral leadership." George Bush is a defender of right-to-life, and lifelong champion of the Judeo-Christian values and beliefs upon which this nation was built.

The agenda Clinton and Clinton would impose on America—abortion on demand, a litmus test for the Supreme Court, homosexual rights, discrimination against religious schools, women in combat—that's change, all right. But it is not the kind of change America wants. It is not the kind of change America needs. And it is not the kind of change we can tolerate in a nation that we still call God's country. . . .

Yes, we disagreed with President Bush, but we stand with him for freedom to choose religious schools, and we stand with him against the amoral idea that gay and lesbian couples should have the same standing in law as married men and women.

We stand with President Bush for right-to-life, and for voluntary prayer in the public schools, and against putting American women in combat. And we stand with President Bush in favor of the right of small towns and communities to control the raw sewage of pornography that pollutes our popular culture. . . . My friends, this election is about much more than who gets what. It is about who we are. It is about what we believe. It is about what we stand for as Americans. There is a religious war going on in our country for the soul of America. It is a cultural war, as critical to the kind of nation we will one day be as was the Cold War itself. And in that struggle for the soul of America, Clinton & Clinton are on the other side, and George Bush is on our side. And so, we have to come home, and stand beside him. . . . We must take back our cities, and take back our culture, and take back our country.

- George Bush hoped to coast to reelection on his victory in the Persian Gulf War and was surprised to be challenged for the nomination within his own party. To what extent does this speech suggest a divided mind within the Republican coalition?
- What issues did Buchanan regard as truly critical, and how did they differ from those discussed by the president? *Newsweek* magazine called the Republican convention "an orgy of hatred and fear." Why did President Bush later claim that this speech actually hurt his chances of reelection?



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

# Summary

The years between Carter's inauguration and Bush's farewell were a time of changing expectations based in part on the health of the American economy. The economic growth that had characterized the postwar period was slowing, making the American dream harder and harder to attain. During Carter's presidency the nation seemed beset by blows to its domestic prosperity and international status. Carter appeared unable to lead Congress and unsure of the government's ability to solve the country's social and economic problems. In his foreign policy, Carter de-emphasized Cold War relationships and gave more attention to human rights and third world problems. Many believed the result was a weakening of America's international status, exemplified by the hostage crisis in Iran.

Reagan rejected Carter's notion that the nation was being held in check by some ill-defined limits. Instead, he argued that the only constraint on American greatness was government's excessive regulation and interference in society. He promised to reassert American power and renew the offensive in the Cold War. It was a popular message and contributed to a conservative resurgence that elevated Reagan to the presidency. As president, Reagan

fulfilled many conservative expectations by reducing support for some social programs, easing and eliminating some government regulations, and exerting American power around the world—altering the structure of Soviet-American relations. Supporters claimed that the outcome of Reagan's choices was a prosperous nation that faced few constraints. They applauded Reagan's assessment that his administration had chosen to “change a nation, and instead . . . changed a world.”

Bush inherited the expectations that the Reagan administration had generated. But, unlike Reagan, he could not project an image of strong and visionary leadership. Finding fewer political obstacles in conducting foreign policy, Bush directed most of his attention to world affairs. As the Soviet Union and communism in Eastern Europe collapsed, Bush gained public approval for his foreign policies, also demonstrating American strength and resolve in Panama and the Persian Gulf. His foreign-policy successes, however, only highlighted his weakness in domestic economic policy as the nation found itself mired in a nagging recession that sapped the public's confidence in Republican leadership and the economy.

## Key Terms

human rights, *p. 710*

Sandinista Liberation Front, *p. 710*

Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, *p. 710*

economic sanctions, *p. 710*

mujahedeen, *p. 710*

Carter Doctrine, *p. 710*

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# CHAPTER 30

# Entering a New Century 1992–2009

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

### **Old Visions and New Realities**

The Shifting Economy  
Women and Family Values

### **The Clinton Years**

Clinton and Congress  
Judicial Restraint and the  
Rehnquist Court  
Clinton's Comeback  
A Revitalized Economy  
Clinton's Second Term  
Clinton's Foreign Policy

### **IT MATTERS TODAY: The Impeachment Process**

### **The Testing of President Bush**

The 2000 Election  
Establishing the Bush Agenda  
Charting New Foreign Policies  
An Assault Against a Nation

### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA:**

Colin Powell Makes a Case for  
War, 2003  
A Series of Political Races

### **INVESTIGATING AMERICA: President Barack Obama's Inaugural Address, 2009**

### **Summary**

## **INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: Colin Powell**

The story of Army General Colin Powell is an American success story. The son of Jamaican immigrants, he was commissioned a U.S. Army second lieutenant in 1958 and reached the rank of general in 1979. As George H.W. Bush's Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Powell directed Operation Desert Storm and the liberation of Kuwait. When Powell retired in 1991, many public opinion polls found him the "most trusted man" in the country.

Entering private life, Powell was recruited by both Democrats and Republicans. He chose the Republican Party, serving as foreign policy adviser to presidential candidate George W. Bush. A victorious Bush rewarded Powell with the position of secretary of state; with this appointment, Powell became the first African American to hold this high-ranking cabinet post, and he focused on promoting democratic institutions, especially in the Middle East. Indeed, he provided a moderate voice until the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

After the attacks, those advocating a more aggressive and extensive war on terrorism, including the ouster of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, put increasing pressure on Powell to support their views. For several months Powell resisted the view that Saddam was connected to Al Qaeda or that he represented an immediate threat to the United States. Then, in February 2003, he agreed to address the United Nations supporting the administration's position. There, Powell skillfully argued for armed intervention against Saddam Hussein. He said that "there was no doubt" that Iraq was constructing weapons of mass destruction and seeking means to construct nuclear weapons. Powell's speech convinced many to support the use of force to remove Saddam. The path was clear for the second Gulf War.

In January 2007, admitting that his UN speech, in which administration speechwriters used erroneous data, was a "blot" on his reputation, Powell resigned as secretary of state. Asked about his role in justifying the war, Powell responded:

### **COLIN POWELL**

Colin Powell was commissioned through the Reserve Officer Training Corp program at City College, New York, in 1958. He remained in the Army for thirty-five years, reaching the rank of four-star General in 1989. That same year, Powell was named the first African American to serve as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Following his retirement, President George W. Bush named him secretary of state in 2001. After resigning in 2005, Powell returned to civilian life.

Kevin Larkin/AFP/Getty Images.





“I’m the one who presented it on behalf of the United States to the world, and [it] will always be a part of my record. It was painful. It’s painful now.” During the 2008 presidential contest, Powell endorsed Democratic candidate Barack Obama.

The 1990s and the beginning of the twenty-first century found a nation divided and unsure of the future. The country was moving into a post-industrial period in which globalization, service jobs, and information-based technology reshaped the economy and society. Rural northern and northeastern industrial states continued to lose population while the Sunbelt and suburbs grew.

The year 2000 saw no lessening of divisions as Republican George W. Bush edged to victory over Al Gore in an election decided by the Supreme Court. Bush’s effort to implement his domestic policy, however, was overwhelmed on September 11, 2001, when terrorists crashed airliners into New York’s World Trade Center and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

The nation united behind Bush, who declared a global war on terrorism that included invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Both appeared easy victories when the Taliban regime collapsed in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein fled Baghdad. Replacing the two regimes with stable and democratic governments, however, proved illusive. By the time of Bush’s reelection, the Taliban was conducting a guerrilla war against the Afghanistan government, and Iraq was on the brink of a civil war.

## Old Visions and New Realities

- ★ **What changes took place in the American economy during the 1990s? How did the slowing economy affect people’s lives and expectations?**
- ★ **What debates surrounded issues faced by women and minorities, and what were the political implications?**

As the 1992 presidential race progressed, both parties campaigned over well-worn paths. Republicans attacked the government activism of the “tax and spend” Democrats and called for a strengthening of family values. Clinton focused on the economy, raising the issue of economic fairness. Reaganomics had benefited the upper class and polarized the nation, but Clinton’s election, supporters said, would allow for the restoration of economic and social opportunities. Although both parties stressed their traditional slogans, significant changes were taking place in the economy that opened doors to new opportunities for some and closed the door for others.

### The Shifting Economy

While Republicans and Democrats honed their political messages about who could best solve America’s problems, many people grew ever more concerned over their economic future.

The conventional vision of an American economy resting on industrial growth and robust sales of U.S. goods in foreign markets was giving way to a new reality. The post-industrial economy was replacing the nation’s manufacturing firms with service and technology companies as the driving economic force. Compounding the shift to a new economy was the impact of globalization. As the economy changed, so too did many of the nation’s social and economic underpinnings.

# Chronology

<b>1992</b>	U.S. troops sent to Somalia Bill Clinton elected president Bosnia crisis begins	Office of Homeland Security established U.S. launches operation against Al Qaeda and the Taliban government of Afghanistan
<b>1993</b>	Congress ratifies North American Free Trade Agreement Clinton introduces national healthcare package	Economy in a recession USA Patriot Act
<b>1994</b>	Withdrawal of U.S. troops from Somalia U.S. troops sent to Haiti “Contract with America”	<b>2002</b> Taliban regime collapses and is replaced by interim government
<b>1995</b>	Bombing of Oklahoma City federal building Dayton Agreement	<b>2003</b> U.S. invades Iraq, removes Saddam Hussein regime Massachusetts Supreme Court permits same-sex marriage
<b>1996</b>	Welfare reform passed Clinton reelected Clinton proposes balanced budget	<b>2004</b> U.S. turns over authority to interim Iraqi government George W. Bush reelected
<b>1998</b>	House of Representatives votes to impeach Clinton Terrorists attack U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania	<b>2005</b> Iraq holds elections Hurricane Katrina strikes Gulf Coast Saddam Hussein trial begins
<b>1999</b>	Senate votes not to remove Clinton from office Columbine High School shooting	<b>2006</b> Democrats regain majorities in Congress Saddam Hussein executed
<b>2000</b>	Terrorists attack U.S.S. <i>Cole</i> George W. Bush elected president	<b>2007</b> Nancy Pelosi becomes first woman Speaker of the House
<b>2001</b>	Bush’s tax cut bill passed Terrorists associated with Al Qaeda attack World Trade towers and Pentagon	<b>2008</b> Barack Obama elected president

**North American Free Trade Agreement** Agreement (NAFTA) approved by the Senate in 1993 that eliminated most tariffs and other trade barriers between the United States, Mexico, and Canada.

**cultural imperialism** Expanding acceptance, adoption, and usage around the world of American ideals, products, values, and culture; use of the Internet and the continued popularity of American food, movies, and music contribute to its spread.

Advocates of globalization believed it would reduce world poverty, promote the spread of knowledge, improve international understanding, and provide solutions to problems like world hunger and environmental threats. Central to globalization was the reduction of trade barriers and the establishment of regional free-trade areas, such as the **North American Free Trade Agreement** (NAFTA) with Mexico, the United States, and Canada. Negotiated by Bush in 1992, the agreement faced stiff opposition in Congress that prevented ratifying the treaty until November 1993.

Those opposing NAFTA, like many opponents of globalization, argued that in practice its consequences were negative. Some were convinced that it primarily benefited those corporations that relocated to less developed nations where wages were low and laws to protect the environment and workers’ rights were absent. Passage of NAFTA, opponents claimed, would weaken the manufacturing sector and cost the American worker jobs. Others emphasized that globalization encouraged the exploitation of workers, harmed the environment, and expanded American **cultural imperialism**. This message

was central when environmentalist, human rights, and antiglobalization organizations staged protests of meetings of the **G-8 nations** and the **World Trade Organization** (WTO). In 1999, fifty thousand such protesters descended on Seattle, Washington, to carry out a massive demonstration against the WTO. But demonstrations were not limited to meetings of world leaders. Opponents saw the spread of American products and businesses as contributing to a cultural conformity that displaced traditional foods and cultures, local production, independent thinking, and alternative political ideologies.

Many of those classified as technical or professional workers were part of the fastest-growing segment of the economy: the **information technology** industries associated with computers and global networking. Almost overnight, companies associated with computer technology, software, and the Internet proliferated and saw the value of their stocks skyrocket—pushing the stock market and the **Nasdaq** index, which tracks the stock of many of the new high-tech companies, to record highs. Suddenly, the ranks of the rich included large numbers of new millionaires—“dot-com millionaires”—men and women who owned or invested in businesses focused on the exchange of services, information, and goods over the Internet. Northern California’s Silicon Valley, a center for the microprocessing industry, boasted the greatest concentration of new wealth in the nation.

The changes in the economy provided new opportunities for some but also added to the growing disparities in income. The rich were getting richer while the poor became poorer. Between 1979 and 1995, the wealthiest 20 percent of the population increased their wealth by 26 percent, while the poorest 20 percent became 9 percent poorer. Put in more dramatic terms, by 1996 many company executives received 209 times more income than earned by a factory worker. At the same time, the middle class saw incomes barely holding steady while they faced rising medical and fuel costs.

Adding to the concern of middle- and working-class families were fears that the Social Security system would not provide for an adequate retirement. As baby boomers were getting older and approaching retirement age, fewer and fewer younger workers were paying into the Social Security system. Many worried that without a major overhaul, both Social Security and Medicare would go broke as early as 2040—just as the last of the boomer generation begins to benefit from them. Even more worrisome, medical costs were among the fastest rising in the country. In 1989, federal healthcare costs amounted to about \$48.4 billion, or nearly 12 percent of the federal budget, but by 1998 the percentage had soared to 40 percent.

Concerns about retirement were not in the minds of the more than 15 percent of the population who lived below the official poverty line of \$14,335 (for a family of four) in 1995. Among the poorest were those living in the inner cities. They included minorities, immigrants, those with little education and few skills, and single female heads of households. Nationally, by 1993, over 30 percent of single women lived in poverty, contributing to an alarming increase in the percentage of children living in poverty—26.3 percent. Lack of skills was a general cause for the poverty, forcing people into service industry jobs in which wages were low and benefits scarce. But, especially for women, there were other reasons: more children were being born to unwed mothers, more marriages were ending in divorce, and less money was being paid in alimony and child support.

Another problem, faced not only by those living in poverty, was that women still encountered inequalities in position and pay. In many companies, women were not promoted to management positions or paid the same as men for comparable jobs. Failing to resolve such inequalities, women brought class-action lawsuits against a variety of companies for sex discrimination, including the Publix chain of supermarkets and Wal-Mart.

**G-8 nations** The leading industrial nations (Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the United States), which meet periodically to deal with major economic and political problems facing their countries and the international community.

**World Trade Organization** Geneva-based organization (WTO) that oversees world trading systems; founded in 1995 by 135 countries.

**information technology** A broad range of businesses concerned with managing and processing information, especially with the use of computers and other forms of telecommunications.

**Nasdaq** A stock exchange, launched in 1971, that focuses on companies in technological fields; *Nasdaq* stands for National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotation.

### Women and Family Values

**glass ceiling** An intangible barrier within the hierarchy of a company that prevents women or minorities from rising to upper-level positions.

**sexual harassment** Unwanted sexual advances, sexually derogatory remarks, gender-related discrimination, or the existence of a sexually hostile work environment.

**Violence Against Women Act** Law passed in 1994 that provided federal funds to prevent violence against women, to aid victims, and to punish those convicted of attacks on women.

**Columbine High School** Located in Littleton, Colorado, this was the sight of one of the most violent school shootings, when two students entered the lunchroom with a variety of weapons and homemade bombs. They killed 1 teacher and 12 students, and injured 12 others before they committed suicide.

The feminization of poverty, however, was only one aspect of the woman's experience throughout the 1990s and into the twenty-first century. By the turn of the century more women than men were graduating from high school and enrolling in college, and many were continuing on to professional and graduate programs. More than three-fourths of all women worked outside of the home, especially in the lower-paying service industries where wages and opportunities frequently did not match those available to men. But at the same time, 30 percent of working women held managerial and executive positions, although many bumped into the “**glass ceiling**,” which kept them out of the highest positions. **Sexual harassment** continued to be a problem, with 42 percent of women in 1991 having experienced it. Responding to what the National Organization for Women claimed was a cultural norm, the courts began to hear and define its legal dimensions. In 1993 the Supreme Court decided in *Harris v. Forklift Systems* that sexual harassment involved not only “verbal and physical conduct” but also the creation of a “hostile environment.” The following year, Congress passed the **Violence Against Women Act**. The act, part of a larger anticrime bill, provided funds and federal support for efforts to more harshly punish sexual violence and other attacks on women and to provide resources to aid victims and prevent future attacks.

Abortion remained one of the most divisive issues. Since *Roe v. Wade* (1973), pro-choice supporters had worried that the growing power of the New Right and an increasingly conservative Supreme Court might restrict access to abortions. In 1992, the Supreme Court's decision in *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey* confirmed a woman's right to have an abortion. But it offset that affirmation with the condition that, in some cases, the state could modify that right. Advocates of a “woman's right to choose” also worried about the violent tactics that some opponents were adopting.

While feminists listed their accomplishments on behalf of women, their critics remained focused on the “threats” to the family and the need for a moral society. They argued that even “mommy-friendly” workplaces were not a replacement for full-time mothers and an environment that respected moral values. Echoing the concerns of many in the public, they pressed for more controls to ban pornography and to limit the amount of sex and violence in the media. Violence seemed to be everywhere, including in video games. A 1997 study indicated that 44 percent of all network programming had violent content, 73 percent of which went unpunished in the story line. The impact of a climate of sex and violence, some believed, was especially detrimental to children and contributed to increasingly violent incidents involving children, such as the April 1999 shooting at **Columbine High School** in Colorado.

## The Clinton Years

- ★ **How did President Clinton redefine himself politically during his two terms? What was the effect on his administration of an improving economy?**
- ★ **What did the Contract with America represent, and in what ways did the decisions of the Rehnquist Court support its agenda?**

As the 1992 presidential campaign progressed, Republicans focused more on personal issues than did Clinton. George Bush had served gallantly in World War II, whereas Clinton had opposed the war in Vietnam. The public perceived that Bush had experience and family values, whereas Clinton had a reputation as a womanizer. Clinton ignored most of the attacks on his character and focused on the economy and the need to revitalize the



nation. In typical Democratic fashion, he promised welfare reform, support of minority goals, a national healthcare system, and a smaller federal deficit. In February, a new contender entered the battle when **H. Ross Perot** launched his campaign as a third-party candidate. Perot's message was simple: politicians had messed up the nation, and control had to be returned to the people.

The campaign culminated in the third televised debate, watched by an estimated 88 million people. Both Bush and Perot gained in the polls following the head-to-head encounters, but they could not overtake the front-running Clinton. In a three-way race, Clinton earned 43 percent of the popular vote, compared with Bush's 37 percent and Perot's 19 percent. Clinton swept to victory with 370 votes in the Electoral College, 100 more than he needed to win. Although Democrats still held the majority in Congress, Republicans had gained nine seats in the House of Representatives. In both parties, a record number of women and minorities were elected to Congress.

### Clinton and Congress

Clinton relished being president and set an ambitious agenda. "I want to get something done," he told a press conference. He dove into producing an economic recovery plan, welfare reform, and a national healthcare system. In February 1993

he signed into law the Family and Medical Leave Act, which had previously been vetoed by Bush, and asked Congress to lift the ban against homosexuals in the military. Although public opinion polls showed that many Americans tolerated homosexuality as a lifestyle, there seemed much less support for broad antidiscriminatory laws that favored gay rights. The proposal met immediate and irresistible opposition from both political parties, the military, and the public. Faced with such opposition, Clinton retreated and accepted a compromise. The armed forces were not to ask recruits about sexual preferences, and gays and lesbians in the service were expected to refrain from homosexual activities. It was a system that did not work and failed to please either side of the debate.

Outside of the military, by the end of 2003, gay-rights activists could count some major victories as fourteen states and the District of Columbia and over 140 cities and counties had passed legislation banning employment discrimination based on sexual orientation. The Supreme Court, in *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), declared sodomy laws unconstitutional. On a related issue, Clinton and Congress supported more funds to fight the AIDS epidemic. AIDS, or **acquired immune deficiency syndrome**, began to be noticed in American cities in the early 1980s. Because the disease infected mostly gay men and drug users, and seemed confined to the inner cities, official and public response was at first largely apathetic. Linking AIDS to the "morality battle," some, like Pat Buchanan, even suggested that those with the disease were being punished for their unnatural perversions.

Responding to conservative pressure, the Reagan administration did little to fight AIDS. However, as the number of victims climbed and the disease spread to the heterosexual population, the public's fear of AIDS grew rapidly, and in the 1990s, federal support became available for education and prevention programs and research. By the mid-1990s, AIDS had claimed more than 280,000 American lives and had infected 20 million people worldwide, especially in Africa. At the same time, significant advances were being made in research toward controlling AIDS. Combinations of drugs seemed to have a positive effect in slowing the advance and death rate of the disease, but their experimental nature and high costs severely limited their availability.

The AIDS crisis dramatized Americans' uneven access to healthcare. Studies showed that large segments of the population, especially the working poor who did not qualify for

**H. Ross Perot** Texas billionaire who used large amounts of his own money to run as an Independent candidate for president in 1992 and created the Reform Party for his 1996 bid for the presidency.

**acquired immune deficiency syndrome** Gradual and eventual fatal breakdown of the immune system caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV); HIV/AIDS is transmitted by the exchange of body fluids through such means as sexual intercourse or needle sharing.

### General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

GATT, first signed in 1947, to encourage free trade between member states by regulating and reducing tariffs and resolving trade disputes. More than 110 countries are members.

**Whitewater** A scandal involving a failed real-estate development in Arkansas in which the Clintons had invested.

**Contract with America** 1994 pledge in which some three hundred Republican candidates for the House promised to reduce the scope of federal government and to balance the budget by 2002.

**Judicial restraint** Refraining from using the courts to implement social change, instead deferring to the states and the consensus of the people.

Medicaid, were virtually unprotected should disease or serious injury occur. During the campaign, Clinton had made a national healthcare system a priority of his administration. Soon after assuming office, he announced a task force, chaired by First Lady Hillary Clinton, to draft legislation. In September 1993, President Clinton asked Congress to write a “new chapter in the American story” and pass an extremely complicated plan. Republicans attacked the bill with gusto, claiming it affirmed that Clinton was an advocate of big government and big spending, and announcing that healthcare was too important an issue to leave to the federal government. After a year of public and congressional hearings and debate, President Clinton admitted defeat and abandoned the effort.

Clinton also struggled with Congress over his economic programs. Having made the economy the focal point of his campaign, he considered balancing the budget and reducing the deficit a primary priority. One step was to increase international trade by selectively lowering trade barriers. Clinton continued initiatives started by Bush and pushed for congressional approval of NAFTA and the **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade** (GATT). He faced the same opponents, especially organized labor. Unable to convince many Democrats to support the agreements, Clinton was forced to rely on Republican votes for their passage.

While Republicans supported NAFTA, they staunchly opposed most of Clinton’s budget and economic recovery plan. Based on his conviction that reducing the deficit was necessary to end the recession and promote future growth, Clinton raised taxes on the wealthiest Americans—those making over \$180,000 a year—and expanded tax credits for low-income families. He also made major cuts throughout the budget, especially in defense spending. Republicans denounced the budget as a typical liberal Democratic “tax and spend” measure that would create a “job-killing recession.” With Vice President Albert Gore casting the tie-breaking vote in the Senate, the Clinton budget passed without the votes of any Republican senators.

The fights over the budget, healthcare, and gays in the military—combined with allegations of wrongdoing by the Clintons in the **Whitewater** land-investment scheme and Clinton’s womanizing—had by the end of 1993 eroded the president’s popularity. Republicans, led by Newt Gingrich, a conservative representative from Georgia, seized the opportunity to regain the political initiative and drafted a political agenda called the “**Contract with America**.” It called for reduced federal spending (especially for welfare), a balanced budget by 2002, and support for family values. The public responded by electing nine new Republican senators and fifty-two new Republican representatives in 1994. With a majority in both houses of Congress for the first time in forty years, Republicans voted Gingrich their new Speaker of the House.

### Judicial Restraint and the Rehnquist Court

Republican hopes for reconstructing government rested in part with the Supreme Court under Chief Justice William Rehnquist. Beginning with the Nixon administration, Republican presidents had made an effort, not always successful, to appoint Supreme Court justices who rejected the social and political activism of the Warren Court. They believed that since the New Deal, the Court had worked to strengthen the power of the federal government over areas that had traditionally been reserved for state and local controls. To reverse this trend, conservatives and most Republicans called for a Court that practiced **judicial restraint**, restricting federal authority and returning executive power to individuals and state and local governments. Using those criteria, Presidents Reagan and Bush had appointed six justices to the Court, constituting a narrow, but not always stable, conservative majority. By 1992, the Rehnquist Court had

modified many of the principles behind the Warren Court's decisions promoting forced desegregation and affirmative action. The Reagan and Bush administrations echoed increasing popular opposition to **affirmative action**, saying that it undermined freedom of action and merit-based achievement. Reflecting that view, in 1989 and 1995, the Supreme Court ruled that state and local government affirmative action guidelines that set aside jobs and contracts for minorities were unconstitutional. The Court's 1995 decision matched public opinion polls: 77 percent of those surveyed, including 66 percent of African Americans, believed that affirmative action discriminated against whites. By 1999 California, Washington, and Florida had passed legislation forbidding special consideration for race or gender in state hiring and admissions to state colleges and universities.

**affirmative action** Policy that seeks to redress past discrimination through active measures to ensure equal opportunity, especially in education and employment.

### Clinton's Comeback

The 1994 election results were a blow to Democrats and to Clinton. Assured of their mandate, Republicans assumed the political offensive, seeing no need to compromise with the White House. Wanting to roll back social programs, they focused on balancing the budget. "You cannot sustain the old welfare state" with a balanced budget, Gingrich proclaimed. Immediately, Republicans began work on an economic plan that would slash government spending on education, welfare, Medicare, Medicaid, and the environment while reducing taxes—especially for the more affluent.

Clinton responded by emphasizing his fiscally conservative centrist position, calling it the "dynamic center." In the "battle of the budget," Clinton agreed that balancing the budget was the first priority and made additional spending cuts. But he also sought to draw a distinction between himself and Republicans, saying that Gingrich Republicans were too extreme in their cuts. As president, Clinton vowed, it was necessary to protect spending for education, Medicare, Social Security, and the environment.

As Clinton reaffirmed his centrist position, an act of domestic terrorism offered an opportunity for him to reassert his presidential leadership. On April 19, 1995, Americans were stunned when an explosion destroyed the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people, nineteen of them children. Many initially concluded that the powerful bomb was the work of Islamic terrorists, but it soon became clear that it was the work of Timothy McVeigh, an American extremist who believed that the federal government was a threat to the freedom of the American people. His heinous crime seemed to symbolize the depth of division and the dangers of extremism in the nation. Clinton asked that people reject extremism and stressed national unity. Public opinion polls again gave the president positive numbers.

Continuing his emphasis on centrism, Clinton, in a series of "common ground" speeches, supported what many saw as generally Republican goals. He committed himself to passing anticrime legislation, finding methods to limit sex and violence on television, reforming welfare, and fixing affirmative action. The battle over welfare reform was one example of Clinton's successful strategy. Critics of the Republican plan questioned whether the private sector would be able to hire all those shaved from the welfare rolls. Conservatives argued that welfare programs created a class of welfare-dependent people, "welfare mothers" with little integrity and no work ethic who represented "spiritual and moral poverty." Clinton and other Democrats denounced such statements as mean-spirited and blind to the reality of those on welfare—especially regarding the number of children. They argued that to replace relief with jobs, it was vital to increase funds for job training, educational programs, and daycare. By the fall of 1995, when the battle over the 1995–1996 budget began in earnest, Clinton had successfully portrayed many aspects of the Republican's program as too extreme.

On April 19, 1995, a terrorist truck bomb exploded in front of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people. Here, a fireman carries the lifeless body of one of the nineteen children who lost their lives in a daycare center housed in the building. Copyright © 1995, Charles H. Porter IV.



As promised, the Republican Congressional budget slashed spending for many social programs. Clinton rejected it and sent it back to Congress. Overconfident, Republicans in turn refused to pass a temporary measure to keep the government operating if the president did not accept their budget. Unmoved, and with no operating funds, Clinton shut down all nonessential functions of the government—first, for six days in November, then for a twenty-one-day standoff lasting from December 16 to January 6, 1996, after which Congress and the president compromised. Clinton accepted some Republican cuts, including those on housing and the arts, whereas Congressional Republicans accepted most of the president's requests, including those for education, Medicare, and Medicaid. Most of the nation blamed Gingrich and his followers for the budget impasse and the government shutdown.

### **A Revitalized Economy**

The economy had started to climb out of the recession as Clinton took office. It would continue to improve for almost a decade before slowing again in 2001—one of the longest periods of sustained economic growth in the nation's history.

The revitalized economy was in large part the product of the transition to an information and service economy and the result of technological innovations, especially in communications, biology, and medicine. American leadership in the computer software, microprocessing, and telecommunications industries, plus growth in the retail markets at home and overseas, sparked the economic boom.



Beginning in 1992, the economy grew at about 3 percent per year, the strongest showing since World War II. The rapid growth of technology stocks spurred the stock market to new heights. **Standard and Poor's 500** (the S&P 500) averaged unprecedented increases of 33 percent per year between 1994 and 1998. Stories about individual investors becoming overnight millionaires by investing in Internet-connected stocks, the “dot-coms,” convinced many to invest. In 1999 the number of Americans participating in the stock market reached 43 percent, whereas in 1965 only about 10 percent of the public owned stock.

Along with the surging stock market came increasing prosperity and wages and falling unemployment and inflation rates. In 1996, national prosperity matched that of the peak year of 1989 and continued upward as take-home pay mushroomed. Average wages for men grew at about 4 percent beginning in 1997, with low-income workers' incomes growing by 6 percent between 1993 and 1998. The median household income in 2000 was \$42,151, with Hispanic and black incomes reaching new highs. Unemployment shrank throughout the 1990s, declining to only 4.1 percent in 1999, the lowest figure since 1968. Minority unemployment rates also recorded new lows—7.2 percent for Hispanics and 8.9 percent for African Americans. With more jobs and higher wages, the number of Americans living in poverty (incomes below \$17,029 for a family of four) fell to 11.8 percent, the lowest rate since 1979, although African American and Hispanic poverty rates still averaged above 20 percent.

**Standard and Poor's 500** An index of five hundred widely held stocks.

### Clinton's Second Term

Despite the improving economy and Clinton's shrewd shift to the center, Republicans were confident that they could regain the presidency in the 1996 election. Conservative Republicans dominated the convention. Once again declaring a “cultural war,” they nominated conservative Senator Robert Dole. Public opinion polls, however, showed it was the economy that most Americans focused on, and on that subject over 60 percent gave Clinton good marks, even though 54 percent thought he was not necessarily “honest” or “trustworthy.” Facing Clinton's popularity and economic prosperity, Dole's campaign lacked energy from the start. In an election marked by low voter turnout, Clinton became the first Democratic president to be reelected since Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1997, however, many Republicans seized on an opportunity to discredit and weaken Clinton politically by attacking a sexual affair the president had with a White House intern, Monica Lewinsky, between 1995 and 1997. At first Clinton denied the allegations, drawing heavy doses of public and Republican skepticism and an investigation headed by Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr that confirmed the affair. Faced with proof, Clinton admitted in mid-1997 that he had had “inappropriate relations” with Lewinsky and that he had “misled” the public.

Clinton's opponents pressed for impeachment, whereas his supporters argued that the affair was a private matter that in no way obstructed his running of the government. Public opinion polls confirmed that a majority of Americans agreed and continued to give Clinton high marks as president, even as they gave him low marks for integrity. Undeterred by the polls, Republicans in the House of Representatives—in a purely partisan vote—agreed in December 1997 to ask for impeachment. Believing that while the sexual indiscretions were minor, the lies were major, they cited two offenses: perjury and obstruction of justice. Clinton was the second president to face trial in the Senate (the first was Andrew Johnson, in 1868), which with a two-thirds vote could remove him from office.

The Republicans had a 55-to-45 majority in the Senate, but it was not enough to ensure Clinton's removal from office. The trial consumed five weeks, and to many it seemed to confirm that Republicans were more interested in destroying Clinton politically than in governing. On February 19, 1998, the Senate voted against removing Clinton from office. On the issue of perjury, ten Republicans voted with the Democrats to defeat the charge, 55 to 44. The vote on obstruction of justice was closer, 50 to 50, but nowhere near a two-thirds majority. Following the Senate's decision, Clinton expressed his sorrow for the burden he had placed on the nation.

### Clinton's Foreign Policy

In foreign policy, Clinton proceeded cautiously and followed the general outline set by President Bush to promote democracy and expand trade. In addition to overseeing passage of the NAFTA and GATT agreements, he worked to improve trade with China and Japan. To promote global economic stability, the Clinton administration provided loans and encouraged the **International Monetary Fund** to support the economies of several countries, including Mexico, Russia, and Indonesia, by providing loans.

Clinton helped restore democracy in Haiti, where in 1991 a military coup ousted the democratically elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. After diplomacy and economic pressures failed, Clinton obtained UN support for an invasion to restore democracy to the island nation. Under this threat, the junta opened discussions in October 1994 that restored Aristide and allowed free elections.

Clinton also inherited two highly controversial foreign-policy commitments from Bush. One was in the East African nation of Somalia; the other dealt with Bosnia, once part of Yugoslavia. U.S. troops had intervened in Somalia in 1992 as part of a UN undertaking to provide humanitarian aid and to keep the peace between factions in a civil war. In October 1993, eighteen American soldiers were ambushed and killed. Seeing little direct American interest in Somalia and responding to public outrage and congressional pressure, Clinton withdrew American forces in April 1994.

In the Balkan nation of Bosnia, Clinton faced a similar problem: how to justify and use American forces in a region where few Americans believed the United States had a direct interest. After Yugoslavia's Communist regime collapsed in 1991, ethnic separatist movements in Slovenia, Croatia, and Macedonia won independence from Serb control. But in Bosnia-Herzegovina, those seeking independence could not dislodge Serb forces, who began a campaign of "**ethnic cleansing**" to remove the Muslim population. By 1995, the conflict still raged, with more than 200,000 people dead and nearly 2 million homeless. The Clinton administration agreed to allow American forces to participate in a UN campaign to establish and protect "safe areas" for refugees displaced by the fighting, and in the fall of 1995, the United States sponsored talks among the warring elements—Serbs, Muslim Bosnians, and Croats. The resulting **Dayton Agreement** partitioned the country into a Bosnian-Croat federation and a Serb republic, and called for UN forces, including twenty thousand Americans, to police the peace. By the summer of 1996, when most American forces were withdrawn, much had been accomplished to rebuild the shattered region. Although Clinton assured Americans that efforts in Bosnia had been successful, in December 1997 he announced that a continued American presence in that nation was necessary to maintain stability.

By 1999, Clinton believed he had moved well toward fulfilling his broad foreign-policy goals of promoting peace, democracy, and economic globalization. In the effort to make the world safer, he continued the previous administration's support for

**International Monetary Fund** An agency of the United Nations established in 1945 to help promote the health of the world economy; it seeks to expand international trade by stabilizing exchange rates between international currencies; it also provides temporary loans for nations unable to maintain their balance of trade.

**ethnic cleansing** An effort to eradicate an ethnic or religious group from a country or region, often through mass killings.

**Dayton Agreement** Agreement signed in Dayton, Ohio, in November 1995 by the three rival ethnic groups in Bosnia that pledged to end the four-year-old civil war there.



# It Matters Today

## THE IMPEACHMENT PROCESS

The Senate's decision not to remove Clinton from office reaffirmed the principle that the process of impeachment and removal of a president, or any government official, should not rest on political passions. In writing the Constitution, the drafters in Article II, Section 4, stated: "The President . . . and all civil Officials of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors." Although the Constitution does not provide a definition of "high Crimes and Misdemeanors," Congress historically has required a high

standard of guilt, preventing the process from being used as a political weapon by a congressional majority.

- Presidents Andrew Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Bill Clinton all faced the prospect of being removed from office. Examine these three cases and determine which were politically motivated. Explain your reasoning.
- In each case, did the president's actions match the definition of "high Crimes and Misdemeanors"? Explain why or why not.

international efforts to curb biological and chemical weapons. And in 1997, with the help of key Republican leaders, Clinton pushed through the Senate a Chemical Weapons Convention treaty that provided stronger sanctions against countries continuing to maintain and develop chemical weapons. The following year, however, Clinton failed to obtain Senate approval for his decision to commit the United States to the **Kyoto Protocol** to reduce global air pollution.

**Kyoto Protocol** Drafted by the United Nations in 1997 were a set of international agreements in which participating nations agreed to reduce their emissions rates of carbon dioxide and other industrial-produced gases that are linked to global climate change; the United States was to reduce its emissions 7 percent by 2012.

## The Testing of President Bush

- ★ To what degree did Bush and Gore represent the political centers of their respective parties? How did their solutions to America's problems differ?
- ★ How did the events of September 11, 2001, affect politics, the public, and foreign policy?

Americans welcomed the twenty-first century with celebrations and optimism. With the economy growing and providing more jobs and prosperity, Clinton was more popular than ever, with a 63 percent approval rating in the polls. It was an upbeat president who, on January 27, 2000, presented his State of the Union address: "We have restored the vital center, replacing outdated ideologies with a new vision anchored in basic enduring values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community for all Americans." He called for improving Social Security, healthcare, and the quality of education. It seemed an agenda that Vice President Gore could expand on in his campaign for the presidency. Gore occupied the Democratic center: he saw a major role for government in solving national problems, and he advocated selected tax cuts.

### The 2000 Election

Normally, under the circumstances present in 2000, Republicans would not have had great expectations of successfully challenging the vice president. But 2000 was hardly an ordinary year, and many Republicans believed that Gore was vulnerable exactly *because* he was the vice president. They focused their campaign not only on

cutting taxes and the dangers of big government and “tax-and-spend” Democrats but also on the Clinton-Gore connection and the need to restore integrity to the White House.

Leading the Republican hopefuls was George W. Bush, governor of Texas and son of the former president, who quickly outdistanced his rivals and won the nomination. Running for the presidency, Bush announced a policy of “compassionate conservatism” that avoided the militancy of the cultural war and stressed the use of private sector initiatives to improve education, Social Security, and healthcare. At the heart of this campaign, however, was a promise to reduce taxes and restore dignity to the White House.

The campaign generated a lot of spending but little excitement. On the issues, the candidates’ differences were largely matters of “how to” reflecting party ideologies. To improve education, Bush supported state initiatives and more stringent testing, whereas Gore wanted federal funds to hire more teachers and repair school facilities. On how to spend the budget surplus, Bush advocated a tax cut to give money back to the people. Gore called the tax cut dangerous and unfair—it favored the rich, he insisted—and said he would use the surplus to reduce the national debt and fund government programs.

Nationally, the two candidates ran a dead heat, but the geography of support told a different story—of a confrontation between two Americas. Bush ran strong in the less populated states. Gore’s strength was in urban areas (he received over 70 percent of the vote in large metropolitan areas) and in the Northeast and Pacific Coast. Bush was particularly popular with white males, who voted for him by a margin of 50 percent to 30 percent. Gore, as expected, did exceedingly well among minorities, with Bush receiving fewer African American votes than any Republican candidate since 1960. On election day Gore received a minuscule majority of votes—half a million more out of the 10.5 million votes cast—but Bush won the Electoral College vote with 271 votes to 267, one vote more than necessary to win.

Before the final votes were in, the nation’s attention was centered on the results in Florida, whose twenty-five electoral votes gave Bush the victory. Because of Bush’s narrow margin of less than one thousand popular votes in the state, Florida law required a recount. As the recount proceeded, Gore supporters claimed that voting irregularities had occurred and asked the Florida Supreme Court to set aside certification of the vote until hand counts were completed in several largely Democratic counties. When the court agreed, Bush supporters protested that Gore was trying to “steal” the election by including in the count votes that had not been clearly marked or punched through the ballot. To halt the hand recount and certify existing totals that made Bush the victor, Bush supporters filed suit in federal court. A month after the election, the federal district court set aside the Florida Supreme Court’s decision. The existing count would be certified. But the legal struggle was not finished, and there was the issue of which court—the federal district court or the Florida Supreme Court—should decide the outcome. The question of jurisdiction was heard by a special session of the U.S. Supreme Court. On December 4, the justices decided, 5 to 4, in favor of accepting the existing count and allowing Florida officials to certify that Bush had won Florida’s electoral votes and the presidential election. Gore conceded, and an hour later President-elect Bush stated, “Whether you voted for me or not, I will do my best to serve your interest, and I will work to earn your respect.”

### **Establishing the Bush Agenda**

George Walker Bush entered the presidency with the flimsiest national support, but was determined to implement his campaign promises as if he had received a clear mandate from the voters. In establishing his program, Bush expected to be



able to work with a Republican majority in the House of Representatives and a 50–50 tie in the Senate (which, if necessary, could be broken by the vote of the vice president). Conservatives were anxious to shape the nation's new path. Among the highest priorities were tax cuts and education reform, two issues that had some degree of bipartisan support. Bush's tax cut called for reducing the federal government's revenue by \$1.6 trillion over a six-year period. Such a reduction, most Republicans reasoned, would limit government spending and stimulate the economy, which they feared was slipping into a recession.

Democrats rejected the projected tax cut, arguing that it was too large and favored the rich. But several Democrats found it difficult to oppose a tax cut in a period of government surplus, and voted with the Republicans to approve a slightly smaller \$1.35 trillion tax cut in June. Bush had succeeded in making good on one of his key campaign promises. Next, Bush pushed forward on his education bill. Many Republicans sought a major shakeup in the structure of education, supporting a voucher system by which people could take their children out of “failing” public schools and enroll them in private and alternative schools, with some form of financial support from local, state, or federal education funds. Democrats wanted more federal spending for additional teachers and improved schools. As the debate on education intensified, Vermont Senator James Jeffords shocked and angered his party by leaving the Republican fold and becoming an Independent. His switch gave the Democrats a one-vote majority in the Senate and, equally important, leadership in the Senate and all its committees. Congressional gridlock followed. Caught in the gridlock were proposals for education, campaign financing reform, energy, and healthcare.

### Charting New Foreign Policies

As with domestic policy, the Bush administration had fundamental differences with Clinton's foreign policy. Many Republicans believed that Clinton had been too cautious and too interested in international cooperation, which had weakened the nation's power and failed to promote national interests. Bush meant to reverse the direction. Upon taking office, he assumed a cooler attitude toward Russia and rejected Clinton's policies on **global warming** and international controls on biological and chemical weapons. In rejecting provisions of the Kyoto Protocol that called for a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions, Bush stated, “We will not do anything that harms our economy.” But there was some dissention among those charged with making foreign policy. Many observers believed that Bush's appointment of Colin Powell represented realization of the need for multilateralism and international cooperation, but that his would be a lonely voice compared to the more unilateral approach favored by National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and Vice President Dick Cheney.

Because the world was too dangerous to rely on others to protect the United States and its interests, the Bush administration believed that multilateralism, past agreements, and treaty obligations were less important than a strong and determined America promoting its own interests. Following such logic, Bush broke off discussions regarding nuclear nonproliferation and decided to reenergize the antiballistic missile defense system. Many, including the Russians, believed that Bush's decision violated a 1972 antiballistic missile pact with the Soviet Union (SALT I), thereby destabilizing the international system of arms reduction and control and possibly starting a new arms race with Russia and China.

**global warming** The gradual warming to the surface of the Earth; most scientists argue that over the past 20 years the Earth's temperature has risen at a more rapid rate because of industrial emission of gases that trap heat; the consequence of continued emissions, they argue, could be major ecological changes.

### An Assault Against a Nation

It was an event that no one thought possible. On the morning of September 11, 2001, the world changed for the United States as four hijacked airplanes became flying bombs aimed at symbols of American financial and military power. At 8:48 A.M., a group of five terrorists led by Mohammed Atta crashed American Airlines Flight 11 into the North Tower of the World Trade Center. As New York fire and police departments responded to the disaster, a second airliner struck the South Tower of the World Trade Center at 9:06 A.M. The second crash confirmed that the United States was under attack. The extent of the planned attack was further dramatized thirty-nine minutes later when a third hijacked plane slammed into the Pentagon, just outside Washington, D.C., at 9:45 A.M. A fourth plane, United Airlines Flight 93, was seized by four hijackers and altered course toward the nation's capital. Passengers on the flight, having learned about the three other hijackings by cell phone, attempted to regain control of the aircraft. A heroic struggle ensued, ending in the crash of the plane southeast of Pittsburgh, short of its targeted destination.

In New York City, the tragedy was soon magnified when the twin towers of the World Trade Center, the tallest structures in the city, collapsed, engulfing and killing thousands, including many of the firefighters and policemen who had rushed to the scene and entered the towers to provide help. Over three thousand people died that morning, and Americans began to realize that the United States had entered a new kind of war.

President Bush, speaking to a stunned nation, declared that Americans had witnessed “evil, the very worst of human nature” and vowed to track down those responsible and bring them to justice. Patriotism and support for the president swept across the country, American flags flew from homes and car antennas, and President Bush's approval rating soared to over 86 percent.

Both Democrats and Republicans set aside the battles over education, Social Security, missile defense, and the budget. “The political war will cease,” said Democrat John Breaux of Louisiana. “The war we have now is against terrorism.” Congress quickly appropriated \$40 billion for disaster relief and support for the effort to fight terrorism. Within days, the horrifying events were linked to **Al Qaeda**, a worldwide Islamic militant organization led by **Osama bin Laden**. The son of a wealthy Saudi Arabian family, bin Laden had fought against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. After the Gulf War, he was angered by American forces remaining in his homeland and dedicated himself to conducting a war of terror against the United States. He and Al Qaeda were linked to several terrorist attacks on the United States, including the 1993 attempt to car-bomb the World Trade Center. President Clinton had ordered missile strikes against bin Laden and his training camps in Afghanistan. The attacks destroyed the camps but did not deter bin Laden or terrorism. Threats and rumors of schemes to attack American targets had continued, and in October 2000 terrorists associated with bin Laden damaged the American destroyer U.S.S. *Cole* while it was at anchor in a Yemen port. Seventeen sailors died, and over thirty were injured. But those actions were small compared to what Al Qaeda planned. Unknown to American intelligence, in 1999 a group of terrorists led by Mohammed Atta were formulating the attack of September 11, 2001.

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, it appeared that America's sense of safety had been lost and was being replaced with feelings of vulnerability and fear. Sales of guns, gas masks, and biological warfare detection kits increased. Assaults and threats against Arab Americans and those who looked Middle Eastern occurred. The Justice Department, in the eleven months following 9/11, arrested over 1,200 immigrants, mostly from Arab nations. Defending the action, Attorney General Ashcroft stated: “Taking suspected

**Al Qaeda** Terrorist network that organizes the activities of militant Islamic groups seeking to establish a global fundamentalist Islamic order; has organized terrorist attacks on Americans at home and abroad.

**Osama bin Laden** Muslim fundamentalist whose Islamic militant organization, Al Qaeda, has organized terrorist attacks on Americans at home and abroad, including those against the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998.

terrorists in violation of the law off the streets and keeping them locked up is our clear strategy to prevent terrorism within our borders.”

Inside the White House, some were calling for an immediate military response against bin Laden and other supporters of terrorism throughout the Middle East, especially in Afghanistan and Iraq. Secretary of State Powell led another faction, urging the president to move more slowly and build an international coalition based on evidence of bin Laden’s role in the September 11 attacks. “We can’t solve everything with one blow,” stated a White House supporter of Powell’s position.

President Bush took both paths. He began planning for a major strike to remove the **Taliban** government in Afghanistan, which was protecting Osama bin Laden, and to capture the terrorist leader. At the same time, he worked to form a global coalition that would take action against terrorists in their own countries and would accept, if not support, an American military retaliation. The effort to build a global coalition against terrorism was extremely successful, with nearly every nation agreeing to cooperate in rooting out terrorism at home. As expected, however, fewer nations agreed to participate in the military dimension of a war on terrorism. Without hesitation, British Prime Minister Tony Blair offered direct military support to attack terrorist targets, noting that more than two hundred British citizens had been killed in the attack on the World Trade Center. France, Germany, Australia, and Canada also agreed to supply some type of military support.

On October 7, 2001, the United States and Britain launched bombing and missile attacks on selected targets in Afghanistan. On the ground, American military and Special Forces units provided support to anti-Taliban groups, especially the Northern Alliance, which held a section of northeast Afghanistan. By mid-November the major cities of Mazar-i-Sharif and Kabul were under Northern Alliance control, and the Taliban government had collapsed. By January 2002 a new interim government for Afghanistan had been established, hundreds of Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters had been captured, but Osama bin Laden and other members of Al Qaeda and the Taliban had successfully fled into the mountains on the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan (see Map 30.1). Despite U.S. success in Afghanistan, Bush reminded Americans that the war against terrorism had just begun and that it would be lengthy, multifaceted, and not limited to actions in Afghanistan. Focusing on what he termed an “axis of evil,” Bush referred to Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as nations that were threats to world peace.

To protect the nation, he asked for large increases in security spending for the military and for homeland defense. He admitted that such spending would result in a deficit but declined to reverse his earlier tax cuts. He also created a new cabinet position of Director of Homeland Security, whose function would be to coordinate and direct various governmental agencies in preventing further acts of terrorism against the United States. The administration’s efforts to deter and apprehend terrorists were improved on October 26, 2001, when Congress passed the **USA Patriot Act**. The Patriot Act provided law-enforcement agencies wider discretion in dealing with those suspected of terrorism; loosened restrictions on wiretaps, monitoring the Internet, and searches; and allowed the Attorney General’s Office to detain and deport noncitizens thought to be a security risk. The passage of the act and the decision to try noncitizens accused of terrorism in military courts caused some to protest that the new rules were a threat to civil liberties and unconstitutional. Those against the act pointed to cases of Arab Americans being targeted because of public anxiety and not solid evidence. To those most involved in shaping the response to the threat of terrorism, it was clear that the United States needed to implement a new aspect of national security policy—the **preemptive strike**. In

**Taliban** An organization of Muslim fundamentalists that gained control over Afghanistan in 1996, after the Soviets withdrew, and established a strict Islamic government.

**USA Patriot Act** (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) Legislation passed by Congress in 2001 that reduced constraints on the Justice Department and other law-enforcement agencies in dealing with individuals having suspected links to terrorism.

**preemptive strike** Policy adopted by the Bush administration allowing the United States to use force against suspected threats before an attack occurs.

**MAP 30.1 Afghanistan**

Not long after 9/11, the Bush administration was able to link the attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center to the terrorist organization Al Qaeda. When Taliban leaders refused to turn over bin Laden and other Al Qaeda leaders, the United States and its allies joined with anti-Taliban forces in a military action in Afghanistan. By the end of December 2001, the Taliban government and Al Qaeda forces had collapsed, although leaders of both organizations eluded capture.



the war on terrorism, the nation could not wait until an attack came; it must take positive steps to halt such attacks before they occurred. The administration determined that Saddam Hussein's Iraq was an appropriate target for such a strike.

The reasons for the focus on Iraq and Saddam Hussein were varied. Saddam was unfinished business, left over from the war to liberate Kuwait. He was a dictator who had used chemical and biological weapons against his enemies, including citizens of his own country. By March 2002, a consensus was developing within the administration that Saddam had or would soon have **weapons of mass destruction**, that he represented a direct threat to American interests in the Middle East, and that he had links to Al Qaeda.

**weapons of mass destruction**

Nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons that have the potential to injure or kill large numbers of people—civilian as well as military.



# Investigating America

## Colin Powell Makes a Case for War, 2003

On February 5, 2003, Secretary of State Colin Powell spoke to the UN Security Council, making a case for military action against Iraq's Saddam Hussein. Prior to this speech, he had resisted supporting military action, and he knew that the evidence he was presenting was contested by some State Department and intelligence analysts. But it was his duty, as Cheney told him to "go up there and sell it"—and he did. Many considered his speech, excerpted here, the most influential argument for the invasion of Iraq.

.....  
I cannot tell you everything that we know. But what I can share with you, when combined with what all of us have learned over the years, is deeply troubling. . . . Iraq's weapons of mass destruction pose [a danger] to the world. Let me . . . describe why they are real and present dangers to the region and to the world.

There can be no doubt that Saddam Hussein has biological weapons and the capability to rapidly produce more, many more. And he has the ability to dispense these lethal poisons and diseases in ways that can cause massive death and destruction. If biological weapons seem too terrible to contemplate, chemical weapons are equally chilling. . . .

We have no indication that Saddam Hussein has ever abandoned his nuclear weapons program. . . . Saddam Hussein is determined to get his hands on a nuclear bomb.

But [there is a] . . . potentially much more sinister nexus between Iraq and the Al Qaida terrorist network, a nexus that combines classic terrorist organizations and modern methods of murder. Iraqi officials deny accusations of ties with Al Qaida. These denials are simply not credible. . . .

I am not comforted by this . . . thought. Ambition and hatred are enough to bring Iraq and Al Qaida together, enough so Al Qaida could learn how to build more sophisticated bombs and learn how to forge documents, and enough so that Al Qaida could turn to Iraq for help in acquiring expertise on weapons of mass destruction.

As I said at the outset, none of this should come as a surprise to any of us. . . . Saddam was a supporter of terrorism long before these terrorist networks had a name. And this support continues. . . . The combination is lethal. When we confront a regime that harbors ambitions for regional domination, hides weapons of mass destruction and provides haven and active support for terrorists, we are not confronting the past, we are confronting the present. And unless we act, we are confronting an even more frightening future.

The United States will not and cannot run that risk to the American people. Leaving Saddam Hussein in possession of weapons of mass destruction for a few more months or years is not an option, not in a post-September 11th world.

- .....
- What was the effect of Powell referring to information that he could not fully explain? How did it strengthen his argument? What weapons of mass destruction did Powell allege that Saddam possessed or sought to possess?
  - What benefits did Powell suggest Al Qaeda and Saddam's secular regime would gain from their partnership?
  - How did his mentioning the "post-September 11 world" suggest a course of action to be taken by the United States and its supporters?

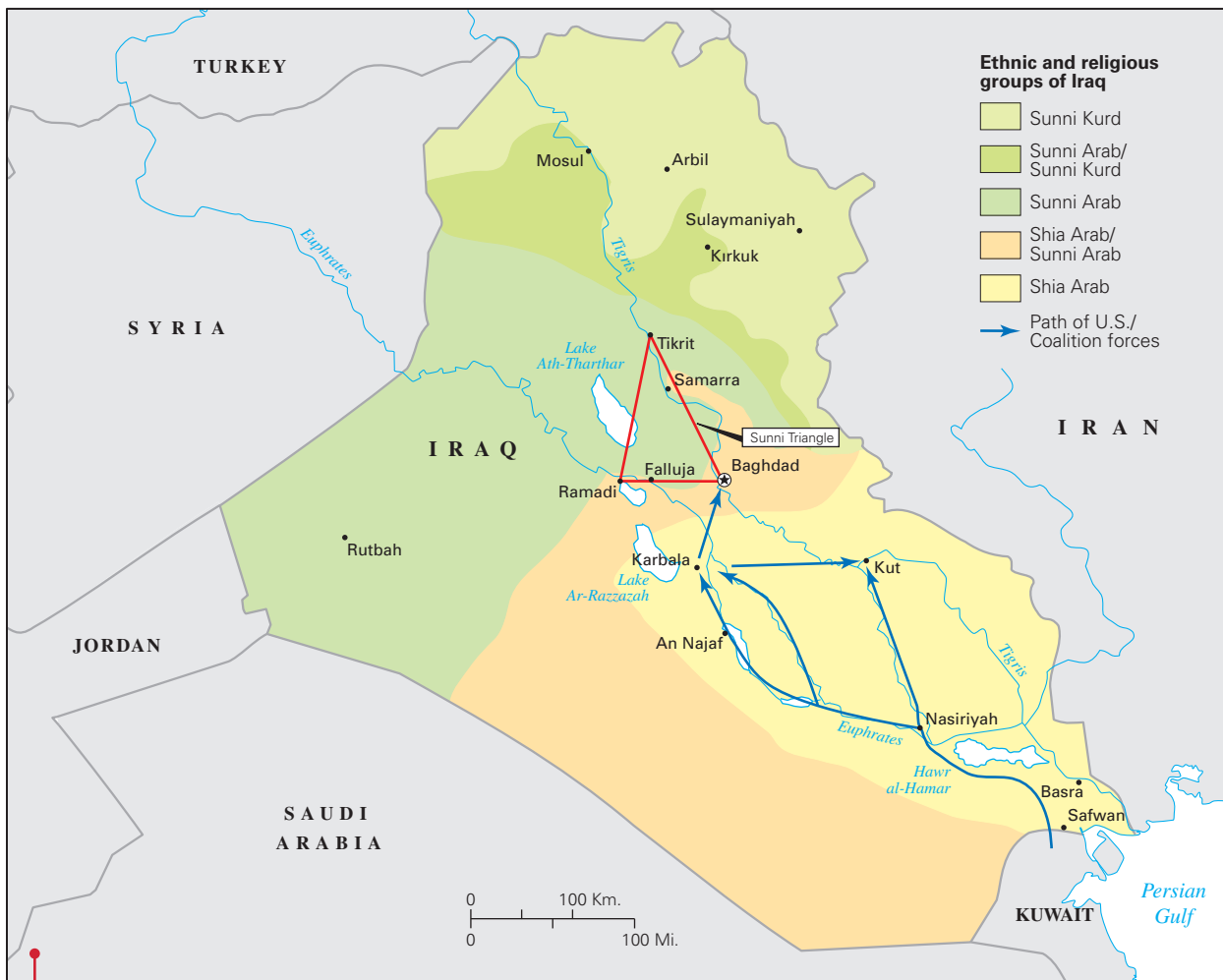
Many within the administration also believed that the United States should use force, if necessary, to remove Saddam from power, and steps were being implemented to build up American military capabilities in the Persian Gulf region. Those advocating the use of force, however, were faced with opposition from Secretary of State Powell and most of the international community, who favored diplomacy, the tightening of United Nations economic sanctions, and the reestablishment of UN weapons inspectors in Iraq to determine if Saddam did indeed have weapons of mass destruction.

Pressured by the UN and Bush's threat to use force, Saddam promised cooperation and agreed to allow the weapons inspectors back into Iraq. Little cooperation was forthcoming, and the weapons inspectors found nothing, but they could not rule out that



See our interactive eBook for map and primary source activities.

Iraq did not have such weapons. Claiming that American and British intelligence sources proved the weapons did exist, the Bush administration argued that it was fruitless to continue diplomacy and that the UN must demand that Iraq comply immediately, allowing full access to arms inspection teams and revealing the existence of any weapons. Speaking just before the first anniversary of 9/11, Vice President Cheney warned that “time is not on our side.” He stated that Iraq was reviving its “nuclear weapons program” and that it “directly threatened the United States.” Condoleezza Rice said that although the status of Saddam Hussein’s nuclear weapons project was not known, “We don’t want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.” Based on the administration’s statements, a majority of the public and Congress agreed that Iraq was a real threat and part of the terrorist war against the United States. In October 2002, stressing the threat of weapons of mass destruction, Bush obtained a congressional resolution permitting the use of force against Iraq (see Map 30.2).



**MAP 30.2** Second Iraq War

Saddam Hussein’s regime collapsed within weeks of the beginning of the invasion north along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Although the official hostilities ended, insurgents continued to resist the American occupation and the control of the interim Iraqi government, especially in the Sunni Triangle.

By March 2003, American troop strength in the Persian Gulf reached about 250,000 and Bush was tired of playing “patty-cake” with the United Nations and Iraq. He gave Saddam Hussein notice to leave the country within forty-eight hours or face a military onslaught that would “shock and awe” those who witnessed it. Even before the forty-eight hours were up, on March 20, 2003, Bush launched an attack on Baghdad designed to kill Saddam and members of his government. It failed but was followed by the general offensive against the Saddam regime. Following an aerial barrage, a land offensive began advancing up the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers toward Baghdad, meeting only moderate resistance from Iraqi units. On April 9, Baghdad was in American hands. Saddam and his government fled into hiding. The official war ended without finding any weapons of mass destruction; nonetheless, public opinion polls found that an overwhelming number of Americans considered the war a success and approved of Bush as president. But, hostilities were not over, and the battle to remake Iraq proved more difficult than toppling Saddam Hussein.

It quickly became apparent that American planners and forces were not well prepared for the duties of occupation. There were not enough soldiers and insufficient planning. Damage to the Iraqi infrastructure caused by the war, **saboteurs**, and looters was extensive and not easily or quickly fixed. Although most Iraqis thanked the United States for Saddam’s removal—he was captured on December 14, 2003, and taken into custody—they quickly grew impatient and angry with the occupation. They criticized the slowness in restoring electricity, water, and other necessities and, importantly, the lack of security. Many disagreed with the U.S.-selected interim government and called for the formation of an Islamic-based government and state.

Insurgency grew, and as the war wore on, support for it began to erode at home, and it became increasingly clear that the reasons given to justify the war were invalid.

**saboteurs** Individuals who damage property or interfere with procedures to obstruct productivity and normal functions.



The September 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center by terrorists who hijacked civilian airliners and used them as missiles against the twin towers and the Pentagon left the nation stunned, angry, and determined to bring those who had orchestrated the attack to justice. Robert Clark/Aurora.

Saddam had no weapons of mass destruction—neither chemical nor nuclear. Further, a special investigation of the terrorist attacks on 9/11 indicated that they might have been prevented had authorities placed a higher priority on terrorism, and that there were no connections between Iraq and Al Qaeda.

### A Series of Political Races

With growing questions about the justification and conduct of the war, Bush ran for re-election. Like his father, George W. Bush maintained a positive public approval rate for his actions in fighting terrorism; and he also faced a worsening economic condition as employment continued to fall, almost as fast as the deficit grew. The parallel encouraged several Democrats to run for the presidency. Democrats focused on the economy and Bush's Iraqi policy. Eventually, the more politically experienced and better-funded Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts pulled ahead of his primary opponents and won the Democratic presidential nomination.

As the campaign progressed, Kerry moved from focusing on the economy to criticizing the war in Iraq. Politicians and the public increasingly questioned the cause and conduct of the president's Iraqi policies, especially his rationale for going to war. Several Republican and Democratic congressmen said they would not have voted for war and would have supported further UN efforts if they had known the truth about Saddam Hussein's weapons program. Bush responded to the growing criticism of his decision to go to war by insisting that weapons of mass destruction would be found and by emphasizing that Iraq had the potential to develop such weapons and had connections with Al Qaeda. Bush argued that the removal of the dictator Saddam Hussein was worth the war and to question it was unpatriotic and played into the hands of the terrorists.

Republicans also were able to energize the cultural war of previous campaigns, using the issue of gay marriage. In November 2003, the Massachusetts Supreme Court had ruled that banning same-sex marriage violated the state's constitution and stated that the state legislature had 180 days to act on the Court's decision. The following April, the Massachusetts legislature approved a constitutional amendment that would permit same-sex civil unions but defined marriage as a union only between a man and a woman. Because the amendment could not be ratified until 2006, Massachusetts became the first state to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Gay and lesbian couples rushed to get married. The response across the nation was generally negative, with thirty-five states hurrying to strengthen legislation or to pass amendments to their constitutions that would prevent same-sex marriage. In most states, laws against same-sex marriage already existed, based on the 1996 federal **Defense of Marriage Act**, which bans federal recognition of same-sex marriages and allows states to ignore such marriages performed in other states. In addition, many opponents of same-sex marriage believed that **civil unions**, allowing legal, medical, and financial benefits to same-sex partners, should also be banned. In February 2004, Bush endorsed the idea of a constitutional amendment that would restrict marriage to two people of the opposite sex. Although public opinion polls indicated that among most Americans the gay and lesbian marriage issue held little priority, it mobilized important votes for Bush in several critical states.

On November 2, 2004, more Americans voted than ever before and re-elected George W. Bush with 51 percent of the vote. Bush had effectively mobilized his party's loyalists and won most of the battleground states, but to the surprise of most observers, a majority of those supporting Bush stated that moral issues and family values were critical reasons for voting. Supporting this observation, in Ohio—which was critical to the president's reelection—and ten other states, voters affirmed their support for constitutional amendments to state constitutions prohibiting same-sex marriages and unions.

**Defense of Marriage Act** 1996 law that defines marriage as between a man and a woman for the purpose of federal law, and prevents states, counties, or cities from being forced to accept any other definition of marriage.

**civil unions** Term for a civil status similar to marriage and provides homosexual couples access to the benefits enjoyed by married heterosexuals.



With larger Republican majorities in the House of Representatives and the Senate, President Bush was eager to spend his “political capital” to implement domestic goals that would promote an “ownership society,” putting more control in the hands of individuals. But the drive collapsed within months as Americans resisted Bush’s efforts to privatize Social Security, grew weary with the war in Iraq, and disapproved of his response to the disaster caused by a category-four hurricane, Katrina.

On August 29, 2005, Katrina struck and battered New Orleans, and the levees protecting the below-sea-level city from the waters of Lake Pontchartrain broke. Flood waters poured into New Orleans, submerging some sectors of the city. Despite calls from the mayor to evacuate the city, many of its residents found themselves taking refuge in the Superdome, the downtown convention center. Its facilities were quickly overwhelmed by the number of people fleeing the disaster. Television crews broadcast the events worldwide, while President Bush was surprisingly quiet on the trouble in New Orleans. The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) appeared to ignore the stricken city and brushed off the magnitude of the crisis. Bush finally acted on September 1, ordering in more troops to aid in the evacuation and to police the city and called upon FEMA to intensify its efforts in the region, but it was too little and too late. Two weeks later Bush assumed full responsibility for the shortcomings of the federal government to deal with the emergency. Congress appropriated \$62 billion for relief and aid in rebuilding the city, but argued that it was necessary to trim other programs to make up for the extra spending.

Katrina was a turning point for the Bush administration. An increasing number of people began to question the administration’s response to terrorism and its policies and actions in Iraq. Between Bush’s re-election and the beginning of 2006, his popularity dropped to under 50 percent. It now appeared evident that the administration had not only oversold the dangers posed by Saddam Hussein and Iraq, but had taken steps to isolate and discredit those questioning their actions—including Secretary of State Powell. Nor was the war in Iraq going well. Despite the successful drafting of an Iraqi constitution, the secular violence in Iraq between religious factions escalated into a civil war. Death tolls for both Americans and Iraqis soared—over 3,000 American soldiers had died since the occupation started. For Iraqis, exact numbers are unknown, but estimates range from over half a million to less than 100,000.

The 2006 Congressional elections saw all 435 House seats and 33 Senate seats up for grabs. Democrats held it was time for change and called for a “New Direction for America” and focused on six issues, including honest and open government, protecting Social Security, and implementing a new policy toward Iraq. But for most Americans, including the candidates, the war in Iraq was the defining issue. Democrats held that the course of the war needed to be changed and American troops brought home as soon as possible. They stressed that Bush and his advisers had lied about the reasons for going to war and had failed to implement a coherent policy to bring stability and security to Iraq. As a result, the Democrats took the majority in the House of Representatives, 233–202 seats, and in the Senate with a smaller 51 to 49 majority. Most saw the results as devastating for the Republican Party and a message to the administration to change its Iraq policy and consider a timeline for the withdrawal of American forces. With their majority confirmed, Democrats selected the first woman to be Speaker of the House, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi from California. Upon taking office, she noted that her appointment was a “a historic moment,” that women had waited [for] more than 200 years.” While she promised working toward a policy of partnership, she also made it clear that the Democratic agenda would be significantly different from that of Bush.

In the Congressional elections of 2006, Democrats regained control of both houses of Congress. Nancy Pelosi (D.–California) became the first woman Speaker of the House of Representatives. In this picture, she is accompanied by her grandchildren on the podium of the House. Associated Press.



With the battle lines drawn over the war in Iraq, the 2008 presidential campaign started a year and a half before the election. The initial leading Democratic candidates were Senators Hillary Clinton of New York and Barack Obama of Illinois. After a hard-fought primary season, Obama captured the nomination and selected Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware as his running mate. Arizona Senator John McCain easily won the Republican nomination. In an attempt to appeal to the Democratic women who had supported Hillary Clinton, he chose Alaska Governor Sarah Palin as his running mate, only the second time a major party had chosen a woman for the second spot.

At the age of 72, McCain was more than three decades older than the Illinois senator, and the campaign quickly became one of “experience” versus “change.” Although the war in Iraq remained an issue with voters, polls indicated that the declining economy was the most important issue facing the country. When the stock market plummeted in September, McCain announced he planned to suspend his campaign and would not attend the first scheduled debate with Obama. He then reversed that decision within days, allowing his critics to portray him as erratic and indecisive. Although Palin initially energized her party’s conservative base, her performance in several interviews raised questions about her competence and ability to assume the presidency if necessary.

The outcome proved to be a decisive victory for Obama and the Democrats. Obama captured 365 electoral votes to McCain’s 173. Despite fears that many Americans would not vote for an African American candidate, Obama became the first Democrat to carry Virginia since Lyndon Johnson and the first to win more than 50 percent of the vote since Jimmy Carter. The Democrats picked up eight more seats in the Senate and twenty-one more in the House. But with the nation fighting two wars and the economy suffering its most severe downturn since the Great Depression, few Americans watching President Obama’s historic inaugural on January 20, 2009, expected the road ahead to be an easy one. But the future is for history to decide.

# Investigating America

## President Obama's Inaugural Address, 2009

On Tuesday, January 20, 2009, Barack Obama took the oath of office as the nation's forty-fourth president. Obama, the son of a Kenyan father and a mother from Wichita, Kansas, was born and raised in Hawaii before attending Columbia University and Harvard University Law School. After teaching at the University of Chicago Law School, Obama served as a member of the Illinois State Senate, and in 2004 he won election to the United States Senate, where he served until becoming president. In his inaugural address, excerpted here, the new president sought to rally a nation weary of war and facing tough economic times.

.....  
**M**y fellow citizens: I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you have bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors. I thank President Bush for his service to our nation, as well as the generosity and cooperation he has shown throughout this transition. . . .

That we are in the midst of crisis is now well understood. Our nation is at war, against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred. Our economy is badly weakened, a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some, but also our collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the nation for a new age. . . . Our health care is too costly; our schools fail too many; and each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet. . . . Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America — they will be met. On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord. . . .

The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness. . . .

[I]t has been the risk-takers, the doers, the makers of things—some celebrated but more often men and women obscure in their labor, who have carried us up the long, rugged path towards prosperity and freedom.

For us, they packed up their few worldly possessions and traveled across oceans in search of a new life. For us, they toiled in sweatshops and settled the West; endured the lash of the whip and

plowed the hard earth. For us, they fought and died, in places like Concord and Gettysburg; Normandy and Khe Sanh. Time and again these men and women struggled and sacrificed and worked till their hands were raw so that we might live a better life. They saw America as bigger than the sum of our individual ambitions; greater than all the differences of birth or wealth or faction.

Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America. For everywhere we look, there is work to be done. . . . We will build the roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together. We will restore science to its rightful place, and wield technology's wonders to raise health care's quality and lower its cost. do. . . .

As for our common defense, we reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals. Our founding fathers ... faced with perils we can scarcely imagine, drafted a charter to assure the rule of law and the rights of man, a charter expanded by the blood of generations. Those ideals still light the world, and we will not give them up for expedience's sake. And so to all the other peoples and governments who are watching today, from the grandest capitals to the small village where my father was born: know that America is a friend of each nation and every man, woman, and child who seeks a future of peace and dignity, and that we are ready to lead once more. Recall that earlier generations faced down fascism and communism not just with missiles and tanks, but with sturdy alliances and enduring convictions. They understood that our power alone cannot protect us, nor does it entitle us to do as we please. Instead, they knew that our power grows through its prudent use; our security emanates from the justness of our cause, the force of our example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint. . . .

- .....
- To what extent can one find echoes of other inaugural addresses, especially those by John Kennedy and Franklin Roosevelt, in this speech?
  - The new president graciously thanked his predecessor for past service, but how does this speech imply that previous policies will be altered or ended? How does Obama use history to rally his tired country? And how do some of the historical images remind the listener of Obama's own ancestry?



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## Summary

Clinton's chief political adviser, James Carville, said during the 1992 election that the central issue was the economy, and he was right. Throughout the 1990s, it was the economy that shaped political and social issues. At the beginning of the decade, a shifting and slowing economy provided new opportunities and old challenges; it underlined divisions within the nation, contributing to what some called an hourglass-shaped society. Those at the top of society continued to prosper, while others, including the middle class, worried about their own and their children's future. In urban areas, changes in the economy, continuing poverty, and reduced social services created a volatile and dangerous environment. The debate over the causes and cures of social problems continued to divide liberals and conservatives, and provided the framework for political debate.

The 1992 presidential election, however, was more about economics than social values as people voted their pocketbooks. It was the economy that helped to elect Clinton, and it was the economy that helped to reelect him and that saved him from being removed from office following his impeachment. Between the two elections, Clinton faced a Republican-controlled Congress that announced a Contract with America—its conservative legislative agenda. Clinton, however, moved toward the political center while painting Republicans as extremists. After facing down Republicans over the budget, Clinton shifted again and adopted aspects of the Republican Party's plans for the budget and welfare reform. The political momentum Clinton gained in the 1996 election was soon lost, however, when he became entangled in the Monica Lewinsky scandal. In a partisan debate, the House of Representatives voted to impeach the president, but he survived the Senate trial, remaining in office. Throughout it all, to the amazement of many, he stayed popular with the public. Contributing to Clinton's popularity and high approval ratings was a booming economy that restored prosperity, reduced poverty, and resulted in a balanced budget and a smaller national debt.

The 2000 presidential election between Gore and Bush was too close to call and finally decided by the Supreme Court awarding Florida's electoral votes to Bush. President Bush began by implementing a tax cut and educational reform, but before he could push other

agenda items, the nation was overwhelmed by the events of 9/11.

On September 11, 2001, terrorists affiliated with Osama bin Laden attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, killing over three thousand people. The nation was under siege, and the Bush administration responded by establishing an Office of Homeland Security to secure Americans from further terrorist attacks at home, and a global coalition to fight terrorist organizations abroad. In October 2001 the United States joined forces with others, including anti-Taliban elements in Afghanistan, to conduct a successful war that brought down the Taliban government and much of the Al Qaeda organization—although Osama bin Laden himself remained at large.

As the war in Afghanistan ended, the Bush administration focused on Saddam Hussein and Iraq. Claiming that the dictator possessed weapons of mass destruction and was linked to Al Qaeda, the United States moved to oust Saddam from power. In March 2003, having moved a quarter of a million American troops to the Persian Gulf region, Bush gave the order to invade Iraq. The second Iraq war lasted less than three weeks. Saddam Hussein's government was toppled. However, the effort to transform Iraq into a stable, Western-style democracy and society met with growing opposition from Saddam supporters and a variety of anti-American elements, several important Islamic religious leaders, and the Iraqi public. American soldiers and Iraqis came under attack from insurgents, and as the violence continued and American casualties increased, some Americans began to question Bush's justifications for the war and the conduct of the war.

Growing dissatisfaction with Bush's Iraqi policy paralleled an increasing frustration with the president's handling of the economy. Although the recession had ended, there was little real economic growth, and many Americans watched as their jobs were shipped to foreign countries. Both of these developments caused John Kerry and Democrats to hope that history would repeat itself and that George Walker Bush would follow in the one-term footsteps of his father. In November, Democrats not only lost their wish as Bush received 51 percent of the vote but watched as Republicans gained seats in the House and Senate. Speaking of a political mandate, Bush



found his hopes of implementing a conservative agenda, which included changing Social Security, falling apart as an increasing number of Americans, including some Republicans, rejected the course of the war in Iraq. By the congressional elections of 2006, many were calling

the escalating violence in Iraq a civil war and calling for a change of policy. With the election of 2008, a war-weary public, increasingly worried about a declining economy, handed more seats to the Democrats and overwhelmingly voted to place Barack Obama in the White House.

## Key Terms

North American Free Trade Agreement,  
*p. 736*

cultural imperialism, *p. 736*

G-8 nations, *p. 737*

World Trade Organization, *p. 737*

information technology, *p. 737*

Nasdaq, *p. 737*

glass ceiling, *p. 738*

sexual harassment, *p. 738*

Violence Against Women Act, *p. 738*

Columbine High School, *p. 738*

H. Ross Perot, *p. 739*

acquired immune deficiency syndrome,  
*p. 739*

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade,  
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Whitewater, *p. 740*

Contract with America, *p. 740*

judicial restraint, *p. 740*

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Standard and Poor's 500, *p. 743*

International Monetary Fund, *p. 744*

ethnic cleansing, *p. 744*

Dayton Agreement, *p. 744*

Kyoto Protocol, *p. 745*

global warming, *p. 747*

Al Qaeda, *p. 748*

Osama bin Laden, *p. 748*

Taliban, *p. 749*

USA Patriot Act, *p. 749*

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weapons of mass destruction, *p. 750*

saboteurs, *p. 753*

Defense of Marriage Act, *p. 754*

civil unions, *p. 754*



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# Suggested Readings

## CHAPTER 1

### Making a “New” World, to 1588

Marvin B. Becker. *Civility and Society in Western Europe, 1300–1600* (1988).

A brief but comprehensive look at social conditions in Europe during the period leading up to and out of the exploration of the New World.

Alfred W. Crosby. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (1972).

The landmark book that brought the Columbian impact into focus for the first time. Parts of the book are technical, but the explanations are clear and exciting.

Alvin M. Josephy. *America in 1492: The World of the Indian Peoples before the Arrival of Columbus* (1992).

An overview of American civilizations prior to Columbus’s and subsequent European intrusions. Nicely written, comprehensive, and engaging.

Roland Oliver and J. D. Fage. *A Short History of Africa* (1988).  
The most concise and understandably written comprehensive history of Africa available.

## CHAPTER 2

### A Continent on the Move, 1400–1725

Peter N. Moogk. *La Nouvelle France: The Making of French Canada—A Cultural History* (2000).

An excellent overview of French activities in Canada during the colonial era.

Oliver A. Rink. *Holland on the Hudson: An Economic and Social History of Dutch New York* (1986).

A comprehensive overview of Dutch colonial activities in New Netherland with an emphasis on both the activities of the Dutch West India Company and private traders in creating the culture of Dutch New York.

Daniel H. Usner, Jr. *Indians, Settlers, and Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley before 1783* (1992).

A highly acclaimed study of the complex world of colonial Louisiana.

David Weber. *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (1992).  
A broad synthesis of the history of New Spain by the foremost scholar in the field.

## CHAPTER 3

### Founding the English Colonies in the Eighteenth Century, 1585–1732

Philip Barbour. *Pocahontas and Her World* (1970).

A factual account of the life of an American Indian princess celebrated in folklore.

David Cressy. *Coming Over: Migration and Communication between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (1987).

An excellent introduction to the transatlantic community of England and the colonial world.

John Demos. *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (1970).

A beautifully written and very engaging portrait of family and community life in Plymouth Plantations.

James Horn. *Adapting to a New World: English Society in the Seventeenth Century Chesapeake* (1996).

An examination of the mix of traditional and innovative characteristics of this early colonial society.

Mary Beth Norton. *In the Devil’s Snare* (2003).

This book places the events of 1692 in the context of European imperial rivalries, especially the intense struggles between England and France for control of North America.

## CHAPTER 4

### The English Colonies in the Eighteenth Century, 1689–1763

Bernard Bailyn. *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution* (1986).

A survey of the character of, and motives for, emigration from the British Isles to America during the eighteenth century.

Ira Berlin. *Generations of Captivity: A History of African American Slaves* (2004).

An examination of the variety and complexities of slavery as an experience and as a legal and economic institution.

Patricia Bonomi. *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America* (1986).

Bonomi examines the role of religion in colonial society, with special emphasis on the Great Awakening.

Richard Hofstadter. *America at 1750: A Social Portrait* (1971).

This highly accessible work includes chapters on indentured servitude, the slave trade, the middle-class world of the colonies, the Great Awakening, and population growth and immigration pattern.

Jane T. Merritt. *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700–1763* (2003).

Merritt takes a close look at the interaction between Indians and colonists in the backcountry of Pennsylvania and narrates the growing tensions between settlers and Native Americans.

Betty Wood. *The Origins of American Slavery* (1998).

This is a brief but excellent look at the use of enslaved labor in the West Indies and in the English mainland colonies and at the laws that arose to institutionalize slavery.

**CHAPTER 5****Deciding Where Loyalties Lie, 1763–1776**

Carol Berkin. *Revolutionary Mothers: Women in the Struggle for America's Independence* (2005).

This book recounts the role of colonial women—European, African American, and Indian—in the years before and during the American Revolution.

Colin G. Calloway. *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (1995).

A well-written account of the variety of Indian experiences during the American revolutionary era.

Edward Countryman. *The American Revolution* (1985).

An excellent narrative of the causes and consequences of the Revolutionary War.

David Hackett Fischer. *Paul Revere's Ride* (1994).

This lively account details the circumstances and background of the efforts to rouse the countryside in response to the march of British troops toward Lexington.

Woody Holton. *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (1999).

Holton provides a new interpretation of the factors that went into transforming wealthy planters into revolutionaries.

*Liberty!* PBS series on the American Revolution.

Using the actual words of revolutionaries, loyalists, and British political leaders, this six-hour series follows events from the Stamp Act to the Constitution.

Pauline Maier. *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence* (1998).

This path-breaking book points out that the ideas expressed in the Declaration of Independence were widely accepted by Americans, and proclaimed in state declarations of independence before Jefferson set them down in July 1776.

Edmund Morgan. *Benjamin Franklin* (2002).

A distinguished historian of colonial America draws a compelling portrait of Benjamin Franklin, following the printer-writer-scientist-diplomat through major crises and turning points in his life and the life of his country.

**CHAPTER 6****Recreating America: Independence and a New Nation, 1775–1783**

Sylvia Frey. *Water From a Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (1991).

This scholar of African American religion and culture examines the experiences of African Americans during the Revolution and the repression that followed in the Southern states that continued to rely on slave labor.

Joseph Plumb Martin. *Ordinary Courage: The Revolutionary War Adventures of Joseph Plumb Martin*, ed. James Kirby Martin (1993).

The military experiences of a Massachusetts soldier who served with the Continental Army during the American Revolution.

Charles Royster. *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775–1783* (1996).

Royster's in-depth account of military life during the Revolution provides insights into both the American character and the changing understanding of the political ideals of the war among the common soldiers.

Alfred Young. *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (2000).

Young looks at the memories of an aging shoemaker who witnessed the Boston Tea Party. These memories reveal the meaning of the Revolution to ordinary Americans.

**CHAPTER 7****Competing Visions of the Virtuous Republic, 1770–1796**

Carol Berkin. *A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution* (2002).

A highly readable account of the crises that led to the constitutional convention and the men who created a new national government.

Lyman Butterfield, et al., eds. *The Book of Abigail and John: Selected Letters of the Adams Family, 1762–1784* (1975).

The editors of the Adams Papers have collected part of the extensive correspondence between John and Abigail Adams during the critical decades of the independence movement.

Saul Cornell. *The Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788–1828* (1999).

A perceptive analysis of the ideology of dissent and its legacy in American political life.

Joseph Ellis. *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation* (2002).

An award-winning study of the most notable leaders of the American Revolution, and an examination of their political ideas and actions.

Thomas P. Slaughter. *The Whiskey Rebellion* (1986).

A vivid account of the major challenge to the Washington government.

Gordon Wood. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787* (1998)

An award winning examination of the ideals and political principles that form the basis of the American republic.

**CHAPTER 8****The Early Republic, 1796–1804**

Stephen E. Ambrose. *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (1996).

A critically acclaimed and highly readable narrative exploring the relationship between Jefferson and Lewis and their efforts to acquire and explore Louisiana.

Alexander DeConde. *This Affair of Louisiana* (1976).

Dated, but still the best overview of the diplomacy surrounding the Louisiana Purchase.

Joseph J. Ellis. *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson* (1996).

Winner of the National Book Award, this biography focuses on Jefferson's personality seeking to expose his inner character; highly readable.

Joanne B. Freeman. *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (2001).

Jeffrey L. Pasley. "The Tyranny of Printers": *Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (2001).

Taken together, these two groundbreaking studies of political culture in the Early Republic bring a whole set of new perspectives to the topic. Freeman concentrates on honor as a political force, while Pasley illustrates the power of an increasingly self-conscious press in shaping the political landscape.

David McCullough. *John Adams* (2001).

A highly acclaimed and extremely readable biography of one of America's true founding fathers.

James Ronda. *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians* (1984).

A bold retelling of the expedition's story, showcasing the Indian role in both Lewis and Clark's and the nation's successful expansion into the Louisiana Territory and beyond.

## CHAPTER 9 Increasing Conflict and War, 1805–1815

Gregory E. Dowd. *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745–1815* (1992).

Hailed by many as one of the best works on Native American history, this well-written study covers the efforts by Indians to unite in defense of their lands and heritages, culminating in the struggles during the War of 1812.

R. David Edmunds. *The Shawnee Prophet* (1983); *Tecumseh and the Quest for Indian Leadership* (1984).

Each of these biographies is a masterpiece, but taken together, they present the most complete recounting of the lives and accomplishments of these two fascinating Shawnee brothers and their historical world.

John Denis Haeger. *John Jacob Astor: Business and Finance in the Early Republic* (1991).

William E. Foley and C. David Rice. *The First Chouteaus: River Barons of Early St. Louis* (1983).

Taken together, these two books provide a comprehensive overview of the fur trade during its early years, showcasing the importance of business tycoons like Astor and the Chouteaus and demystifying this huge business enterprise.

Donald Hickey. *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (1989).

Arguably the best single-volume history of the war, encyclopedic in content, but so colorfully written that it will hold anyone's attention.

Robert A. Rutland. *Madison's Alternatives: The Jeffersonian Republicans and the Coming of War, 1805–1812* (1975).

An interesting review of the events leading up to the outbreak of war in 1812 and the various alternatives Jefferson and Madison had to choose from in facing the evolving diplomatic and political crises.

## CHAPTER 10 The Rise of a New Nation, 1815–1836

George Dangerfield. *The Era of Good Feelings* (1952).

An older book, but so well written and informative that it deserves its status as a classic. All students will enjoy this grand overview.

Angie Debo. *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes* (1940; reprint, 1972).

A classic work by one of America's most talented and sensitive historical writers, a truly engaging history of this tragic sequence of events.

Richard E. Ellis. *The Union at Risk: Jacksonian Democracy, States' Rights, and the Nullification Crisis* (1987).

An invigorating reconsideration of the Nullification Crisis set in context with the other problems that beset the Jackson administration, suggesting how close the nation came to civil war in the 1830s.

Charles G. Sellers. *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846* (1991).

A far-reaching reassessment of economics and politics during this period focusing on the rise of the market economy and the responses, both positive and negative, that led to the rise of Jacksonian democracy.

George Rogers Taylor. *The Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860* (1951).

The only comprehensive treatment of changes in transportation during the antebellum period and their economic impact. Nicely written.

John William Ward. *Andrew Jackson: Symbol for an Age* (1955).

More a study of American culture during the age of Jackson than a biography of the man himself, Ward seeks to explain Old Hickory's status as a living myth during his own time and as a continuing monument in American history.

## CHAPTER 11 The Great Transformation: Growth and Expansion, 1828–1848

Ira Berlin. *Slaves Without Masters* (1975).

A masterful study of a forgotten population: free African Americans in the Old South. Lively and informative.

Ray Allen Billington. *America's Frontier Heritage* (1966).

Patricia Nelson Limerick. *The Legacy of Conquest* (1988).

Two classics in the field of American western history; Billington represents the classic Turnerian perspective while Limerick gives voice to the anti-Turnerian "New Western History."

Stuart M. Blumin. *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760–1900* (1989).

Considered by many to be the most comprehensive overview of the emergence of the middle class in America during the nineteenth century.

Bill Cecil-Fronsman. *Common Whites: Class and Culture in Antebellum North Carolina* (1992).



A pioneering effort to describe the culture, lifestyle, and political economy shared by the antebellum South's majority population: nonslaveholding whites. Though confined in geographical scope, the study is suggestive of conditions that may have prevailed throughout the region.

Thomas Dublin. *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826–1860* (1979).

An interesting look at the way in which the nature of work changed and the sorts of changes that were brought to one manufacturing community.

Elizabeth Fox-Genovese. *Within the Plantation Household* (1988).

A look at the lives of black and white women in the antebellum South. This study is quite long, but is well written and very informative.

Isabel Lehuu. *Carnival on the Page: Popular Print Media in Antebellum America* (2000).

An overview of the explosion in print media during the early nineteenth century and its role in shaping national culture.

Donald W. Meinig. *Imperial Texas* (1969).

A fascinating look at Texas history by a leading historical geographer.

Christopher L. Miller. *Prophetic Worlds* (2003).

This new edition includes commentary that helps to define the debates that this book has sparked about the history of the Pacific Northwest during the pioneer era.

Kenneth N. Owens, ed. *Riches for All: The California Gold Rush and the World* (2002).

A collection of essays by leading scholars about the California Gold Rush and its impact on both national and international life.

Wallace E. Stegner. *The Gathering of Zion* (1964).

A masterfully written history of the Mormon Trail by one of the West's leading literary figures.

John David Unruh. *The Plains Across* (1979).

Arguably the best one-volume account of the overland passage to Oregon. The many pages melt as the author captures the reader in the adventure of the Oregon Trail.

## CHAPTER 12

### Responses to the Great Transformation, 1828–1848

Eugene D. Genovese. *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (1979).

Although it focuses somewhat narrowly on confrontation, as opposed to more subtle forms of resistance, this study traces the emergence of African American political organization from its roots in antebellum slave revolts.

Karen Haltunen. *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830–1870* (1982).

A wonderfully well-researched study of an emerging class defining and shaping itself in the evolving world of early nineteenth-century urban space.

Thomas R. Hietala. *Manifest Design* (1985).

An interesting and well-written interpretation of the Mexican War and the events leading up to it.

Edward Pessen. *Most Uncommon Jacksonians: The Radical Leaders of the Early Labor Movement* (1967).

A look at early labor movements and reform by one of America's leading radical scholars.

Ronald G. Walters. *American Reformers, 1815–1860* (1978).

The best overview of the reform movements and key personalities who guided them during this difficult period in American history.

Susan Zaeske. *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery, and Women's Political Identity* (2003).

A fascinating study of how participation in reform campaigns helped lead early nineteenth-century women into a new sense of political identity.

## CHAPTER 13

### Sectional Conflict and Shattered Union, 1848–1860

Don E. Fehrenbacher. *Prelude to Greatness* (1962).

A well-written and interesting account of Lincoln's early career.

Don E. Fehrenbacher. *Slavery, Law, and Politics: The Dred Scott Case in Historical Perspective* (1981).

An excellent interpretive account of this landmark antebellum legal decision, placing it firmly into historical context.

William E. Gienapp, et al. *Essays in American Antebellum Politics, 1840–1860* (1982).

A collection of essays by the rising generation of new political scholars. Exciting and challenging reading.

Michael F. Holt. *The Political Crisis of the 1850s* (1978).

Arguably the best single-volume discussion of the political problems besetting the nation during this critical decade.

Stephen B. Oates. *To Purge This Land with Blood* (1984).

The best biography to date on John Brown, focusing on his role in the emerging sectional crisis during the 1850s.

David Potter. *The Impending Crisis, 1848–1861* (1976).

An extremely long and detailed work but beautifully written and informative.

James Rawley. *Race and Politics: "Bleeding Kansas" and the Coming of the Civil War* (1969).

An interesting look at the conflicts in Kansas, centering upon racial attitudes in the West. Insightful and captivating reading.

Harriet Beecher Stowe. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852; reprint, 1982).

This edition includes notes and chronology by noted social historian Kathryn Kish Sklar, making it especially informative.

## CHAPTER 14 A Violent Choice: Civil War, 1861–1865

Bruce Catton. *This Hallowed Ground: The Story of the Union Side of the Civil War* (1956).

Catton is probably the best in the huge company of popular writers on the Civil War. This is his most comprehensive single-volume work. More detailed but still very interesting titles by Catton include *Glory Road: The Bloody Route from Fredericksburg to Gettysburg* (1952), *Mr. Lincoln's Army* (1962), *A Stillness at Appomattox* (1953), and *Grant Moves South* (1960).

Paul D. Escott. *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism* (1978).

An excellent overview of internal political problems in the Confederacy by a leading Civil War historian.

Ann Giesberg. *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S. Sanitary Commission and Women's Politics in Transition* (2000).

A study of how women's activism in forming the sanitary movement during the Civil War recast their view of themselves as political figures and helped shape an emerging women's movement.

Alvin M. Josephy. *The Civil War in the American West* (1991).

A former editor for *American Heritage*, Josephy writes an interesting and readable story about this little-known chapter in Civil War history.

William Marvel. *The Alabama & the Kearsarge: The Sailor's Civil War* (1996).

Military and social historians have compared this new study favorably with *The Life of Billy Yank* (1952) and *The Life of Johnny Reb* (1943), Bell Irvin Willey's classic studies of life for the common soldier, calling it an insightful narrative of the Civil War experience for the common sailor.

James McPherson. *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (1988).

Hailed by many as the best single-volume history of the Civil War era; comprehensive and very well written.

Emory M. Thomas. *The Confederate Nation* (1979).

A classic history of the Confederacy by an excellent southern historian.

Garry Wills. *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America* (1992).

A prize-winning look at Lincoln's rhetoric and the ways in which his speeches, especially his Gettysburg Address, recast American ideas about equality, freedom, and democracy. Exquisitely written by a master biographer.

## CHAPTER 15 Reconstruction: High Hopes and Shattered Dreams, 1865–1877

W. E. B. Du Bois. *Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860–1880* (1935; reprint edns., 1998, 2007).

Written more than seventy years ago, Du Bois's classic book is still useful for information and insights. Recent editions usually include useful introductions that place Du Bois's work into the context of work by subsequent historians.

Carol Faulkner. *Women's Radical Reconstruction: The Freedmen's Aid Movement* (2004).

A new study of the role of women in the Freedmen's Bureau and in federal Reconstruction policy more generally.

Eric Foner. *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (1988; reprint, 2002).

A thorough treatment, incorporating insights from many historians who have written on the subject during the fifty years preceding its publication.

Leon F. Litwack. *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (1979).

Litwack focuses on the experience of the freed people.

William S. McFeely. *Frederick Douglass* (1991).

A highly readable biography of the most prominent black political leader of the nineteenth century.

Michael Perman. *Emancipation and Reconstruction*, 2nd ed. (2003).

A good, short and well written introduction to the topic.

Hans L. Trefousse. *Thaddeus Stevens: Nineteenth-Century Egalitarian* (1997).

A recent study of perhaps the most important leader of the Radical Republicans.

C. Vann Woodward. *Reunion and Reaction: The Compromise of 1877 and the End of Reconstruction*, rev. ed. (1956; reprint, 2001).

The classic account of the Compromise of 1877 with an afterward by William S. McFeely.

## CHAPTER 16 An Industrial Order Emerges, 1865–1880

Edward L. Ayers. *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (1992, 2007).

A comprehensive survey of developments in the South.

Robert V. Bruce. *1877: Year of Violence* (1959, 1989).

The classic account of the 1877 railroad strike.

Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., with Takashi Hikino. *Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism* (1990, 2004).

Alfred Chandler's writings changed historians' thinking about the emergence of industrial capitalism in the United States; this is one of his key works.

Melvyn Dubofsky. *Industrialism and the American Worker, 1865–1920*, 3rd ed. (1996).

A brief introduction to the topic, organized chronologically.

Ari Hoogenboom. *Rutherford B. Hayes: Warrior and President* (1995).

An excellent biography that also includes important information on the politics of the era.

William S. McFeely. *Grant: A Biography* (1981, 2002).

The standard biography of Grant, including his troubled presidency.

David Montgomery. *Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles* (1979).

A classic work for understanding craft unions and labor more generally.

David Nasaw. *Andrew Carnegie* (2006).

A recent and highly readable reconsideration of Carnegie's career.

Glenn Porter. *The Rise of Big Business, 1860–1910*, 3rd ed. (2006).

A brief and well-written introduction, surveying the role of the railroads, vertical and horizontal integration, and the merger movement.

Frank Roney. *Frank Roney: Irish Rebel and California Labor Leader, an Autobiography*, edited by Ira B. Cross (1931).

Roney's life as an iron molder and labor leader, in his own words.

## CHAPTER 17

### Becoming an Urban Industrial Society, 1880–1890

Ron Chernow. *The House of Morgan: An American Banking Dynasty and the Rise of Modern Finance* (1990, 2001).

An award-winning account of Morgan's bank and Morgan's role in the emergence of finance capitalism.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Titan: The Life of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.* (1998, 2004).

Well written and engaging, based on extensive research in Rockefeller family papers.

Robert W. Cherny. *American Politics in the Gilded Age, 1868–1900* (1997).

A brief survey of the politics of this period.

Leon Fink. *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics* (1983).

One of the best overall treatments of the Knights of Labor.

John Higham. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925* (1965, 1983).

This classic book first defined the contours of American nativism and still provides an excellent introduction to the subject.

Jill Jonnes. *Empires of Light: Edison, Tesla, Westinghouse, and the Race to Electrify the World* (2003).

A recent and popular account of the battles over DC and AC current, and of the larger corporate and financial economy within which the key figures worked.

Alan M. Kraut. *The Huddled Masses: The Immigrant in American Society, 1880–1921*, 2nd ed. (2001).

A helpful introduction to immigration, especially the so-called new immigration.

Rebecca J. Mead. *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868–1914* (2004).

A recent study of the woman suffrage movement in the West.

Raymond A. Mohl. *The New City: Urban America in the Industrial Age, 1860–1920* (1985).

An excellent introduction to nearly all aspects of the growth of the cities.

Mark Wahlgren Summers. *Party Games: Getting, Keeping, and Using Power in Gilded Age Politics* (2004).

A fascinating account of political parties during the late 19th century.

## CHAPTER 18

### Conflict and Change in the West, 1865–1902

Yong Chen. *Chinese San Francisco, 1850–1943: A Trans-Pacific Community* (2000).

A well-researched study of the largest Chinatown and its relations with China.

Juan Gómez-Quiñones. *Roots of Chicano Politics, 1600–1940* (1994).

The political history of Mexican Americans from the first Spanish settlements in the Southwest up to the eve of World War II.

Norris Hundley, Jr. *The Great Thirst: Californians and Water, 1770s–1990s* (1992).

Among the best of recent studies surveying the role of water in the West.

Patricia Nelson Limerick. *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (1987).

A major criticism of the Turner thesis, posing an alternative framework for viewing western history.

Glenda Riley. *A Place to Grow: Women in the American West* (1992).

A short and well-written survey of the subject, by the leading historian on the topic.

Philip Weeks. *Farewell, My Nation: The American Indian and the United States in the Nineteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (2000).

An excellent overview of the experience of Native Americans when they confronted the expansion of U.S. settlement west of the Missouri River.

Richard White. *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A History of the American West* (1991).

Like Limerick, White seeks to reconsider the history of the West, from the first European contact to the late 1980s.

**CHAPTER 19****Economic Crash and Political Upheaval, 1890–1900**

Jane Addams. *Twenty Years at Hull House* (1910, reprint, 1999, 2006).

Nothing conveys the complex world of Hull House and the striking personality of Jane Addams as well as her own account. It is available online. The recent editions have useful introductions by current historians who help to establish the context. The original is available online.

Robert L. Beisner. *From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865–1900*, 2nd ed. (1986).

A concise introduction to American foreign relations in this period, challenging some of LaFeber's conclusions.

Robert W. Cherny. *A Righteous Cause: The Life of William Jennings Bryan* (1985, 1994).

Includes a survey of the politics of the 1890s, especially the election of 1896.

Lewis Gould. *The Presidency of William McKinley* (1980).

A major contribution to historians' understanding of McKinley's presidency, including the war with Spain and the acquisition of the Philippines.

Louis R. Harlan. *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1856–1901* (1975).

The standard biography of Washington, which includes a good account of the racial situation in the South in the 1890s.

Walter LaFeber. *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860–1898* (1963).

A classic account, the first to emphasize the notion of a commercial empire.

Robert C. McMath, Jr. *American Populism: A Social History, 1877–1898* (1993).

A good, succinct introduction to Populism.

David Silbey. *A War of Frontier and Empire: The Philippine-American War, 1899–1902* (2007).

The most recent treatment of the U.S. conquest of the Philippines.

Kathryn Kish Sklar. *Florence Kelley and the Nation's Work: The Rise of Women's Political Culture, 1830–1900* (1995).

Much more than the biography of Florence Kelley, who for a time worked at Hull House, this book explores the larger topic of women and politics in the late nineteenth century.

**CHAPTER 20****The Progressive Era, 1900–1917**

Kathleen Dalton. *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life* (2002).

Probably the best one-volume biography of the dominant figure of the age, who continues to fascinate both historians and the public more generally.

K. Austin Kerr. *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League* (1985).

A well-written treatment of the organization that formed the prototype for many organized interest groups.

Lester D. Langley. *The Banana Wars: United States' Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898–1934*, 2nd ed. (2001).

A sprightly and succinct account of the role of the United States in the Caribbean and Central America.

David Levering Lewis. *W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868–1919* (1993).

A powerful biography of Du Bois that delivers on its promise to present the “biography of a race” during the Progressive Era.

David G. McCullough. *The Path between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870–1914* (1977).

Perhaps the most lively and engrossing coverage of this subject.

Theodore Roosevelt. *An Autobiography* (1913; abridged ed. reprint, 1958).

Roosevelt's account of his actions sometimes needs to be taken with a grain of salt but nevertheless provides insight into Roosevelt the person. Available online.

Upton Sinclair. *The Jungle: The Uncensored Original Edition*, ed. by Kathleen De Grave and Earl Lee (1905, 2003).

This socialist novel about workers in Chicago's packing houses is a classic example of muckraking; this edition includes the full, unexpurgated version that was originally published in serial form in a muckraking journal. The shorter version is available online in several places.

Shelton Stromquist. *Reinventing “The People”: The Progressive Movement, the Class Problem, and the Origins of Modern Liberalism* (2006).

A leading historian provides an interpretation of progressivism with a focus on labor history.

**CHAPTER 21****The United States in a World at War, 1913–1920**

Kendrick A. Clements, Eric A. Cheezum. *Woodrow Wilson* (2003).

The best current one-volume treatment of Wilson's presidency.

Alfred W. Crosby. *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918* (2003).

A thorough study of the great flu epidemic of 1918 that killed 600,000 Americans.

David P. Kilroy. *For Race and Country: The Life and Career of Colonel Charles Young* (2003).

A carefully researched and well-written biography of Young, putting his struggles for racial equality into the context of the times.

Sinclair Lewis. *Main Street* (1920; reprint, 1999, 2003).

An absorbing novel about a woman's dissatisfaction with her life and her decision to work in Washington during the war. The recent reprints include useful introductions



that help to understand the context. The original is available online.

Erich Maria Remarque. *All Quiet on the Western Front*, trans. A. W. Wheen (1930; reprint, 2005).

The classic and moving novel about World War I, seen through German eyes. Recent reprints include an introduction that helps to understand the context.

Richard Slotkin. *Lost Battalions: The Great War and the Crisis of American Nationality* (2005).

The wartime experiences of two New York state units, one of African Americans and the other largely of European immigrants.

Barbara W. Tuchman. *The Guns of August* (1962; reprint, 2004).

A popular and engaging account of the outbreak of the war, focusing on events in Europe.

Robert Zieger. *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience* (2001).

An excellent and recent overview of the U.S. during World War I.

## CHAPTER 22 Prosperity Decade, 1920–1928

Frederick Lewis Allen. *Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the 1920s* (1931, 2000).

An anecdote-filled account that brings the decade to life.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar with Raymond Obstfeld. *On the Shoulders of Giants: My Journey through the Harlem Renaissance* (2007).

The former basketball superstar considers the long-term influence of the Harlem Renaissance, including its influence on his life and on basketball.

Lynn Dumenil. *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s* (1995).

A good examination of changing social and cultural patterns in the 1920s.

Robert H. Ferrell. *The Presidency of Calvin Coolidge* (1998).

Ferrell brings to life the national politics of the 1920s.

F. Scott Fitzgerald. *The Great Gatsby* (1925).

The most famous fictional portrayal of the fast cars, pleasure seeking, and empty lives of the wealthy in the early 1920s. Available online.

*The Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz*. Five compact disks (1987).

An outstanding collection that reflects the development of American jazz, with annotations and biographies of performers.

David Stenn. *Clara Bow: Runnin' Wild* (1990).

The best and most carefully researched of the biographies of Bow.

Jules Tygiel. *The Great Los Angeles Swindle: Oil, Stocks, and Scandal During the Roaring Twenties* (1996).

An engagingly written account of Los Angeles in the 1920s.

## CHAPTER 23 The Great Depression and the New Deal, 1929–1939

Michael A. Bernstein. *The Great Depression* (1987).

A detailed economic examination of the causes and effects of the Depression, with American manufacturing as a primary focus.

Julia Kirk Blackwelder. *Women of the Depression: Caste and Culture in San Antonio, 1929–1939* (1984).

A tightly focused study on Mexican American, African American, and Anglo women in the world of San Antonio during the Depression.

Lizabeth Cohen. *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919–1939* (1990).

A detailed examination of the inclusion of African American and immigrant workers in the CIO and in New Deal politics.

David Kennedy. *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929–1945* (1999).

A well-written and researched comprehensive examination of a period that shaped recent American history.

Maury Klein. *Rainbow's End: The Crash of 1929* (2001).

A compelling account of the stock market crash set within the framework of the many social, political, cultural, and economic events that surrounded it.

Robert McElvaine. *The Great Depression: America, 1929–1941* (1984).

An excellent overview of the origins of and responses to the Depression.

George McJimsey. *The Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt* (2000).

A brief and positive account of Roosevelt's struggles to combat the Depression and the Second World War, contains a well-presented annotated bibliography.

Amity Shaes. *The Forgotten Man: A New History of the Great Depression* (2007)

Develops the view that governmental actions contributed to the severity and length of the Great Depression.

Patricia Sullivan. *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era* (1996)

A positive view on the ways in which New Deal actions led to the shift in the African American vote from the Republican to the Democratic Party.

Studs Terkel. *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression* (1970).

A classic example of how oral histories can provide the human dimension to history.

Susan Ware. *Holding Their Own: American Women in the 1930s* (1982).

An examination of the impact of the Depression on the lives and lifestyles of women.

Joan Hoff Wilson. *Herbert Hoover: Forgotten Progressive* (1970).

A positive evaluation of the life of Herbert Hoover that stresses his accomplishments as well as his limitations.

## CHAPTER 24

### America's Rise to World Leadership, 1929–1945

Robert Dallek. *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932–1945* (1979).

An excellent, balanced study of Franklin Roosevelt's foreign policy.

Justus D. Doenecke. *Storm on the Horizon: The Challenge to American Intervention, 1939–1941* (2001).

Well-documented and -written examination of American isolationists prior to Pearl Harbor that shows the complexity of the movement and the issues.

Sherna B. Gluck. *Rosie the Riveter Revisited: Women, the War, and Social Change* (1987).

An important work examining the changes that took place among women in society during the war.

John Keegan. *The Second World War* (1990).

An excellent one-volume work that summarizes the military and diplomatic aspects of World War II.

William O'Neill. *A Democracy at War: America's Fight at Home and Abroad in World War II* (1993).

A good introduction to American society and politics during the war as well as an excellent view of the military campaigns against the Axis powers.

Ronald Spector. *Eagle Against the Sun* (1988).

One of the best-written general accounts of the war in the Pacific.

Ronald Takiaki. *Double Victory* (2002).

A wide-ranging look at American minorities' contribution to the war effort at home and abroad. Clearly demonstrates how these efforts set the foundation for the civil rights movements that followed.

David Wyman. *The Abandonment of the Jews* (1985).

A balanced account of the Holocaust.

## CHAPTER 25

### Truman and Cold War America, 1945–1952

Paul Boyer. *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (1985).

A useful analysis of the impact of atomic energy and the atomic bomb on American society, from advertising to mock "atomic air bomb drills."

Jim Cullen. *The American Dream: A Short History of an Idea that Shaped a Nation* (2003)

An introductory view of the multi-nature of the American Dream from colonial America with an emphasis on the postwar period.

John Gaddis. *The Cold War: A New History* (2005)

A concise, thoughtful analysis of the events, ideology, and people that characterized the Cold War from 1945 to 1991.

Max Hastings. *The Korean War* (1987).

A short, well-written study of the military dimension of the Korean War.

Marc Trachtenberg. *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlements, 1945–1963* (1999).

A well-researched study of the politics and issues that surrounded the origins of the Cold War from a multinational perspective.

David McCullough. *Truman* (1992).

A highly acclaimed biography of Truman.

Ted Morgan. *Reds: McCarthyism in the Twentieth-century America* (2003).

An overview of the anti-communism in the United States that places McCarthy as part of a wide-spread movement based of growing fears of Soviet Communism and an uncertainty about the postwar world.

James Patterson. *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945–1974* (1996).

A general, readable view of American society and politics in the postwar period.

Jules Tygiel. *Baseball's Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy* (1983).

Reflections on the life experiences and decisions that brought Jackie Robinson to break the color barrier in professional baseball.

Stephen J. Whitfield. *The Culture of the Cold War* (1991).

A critical account of the impact of the Cold War on the United States that argues that a consensus that equated "Americanism" with militant anticommunism dominated American life.

## CHAPTER 26

### Quest for Consensus, 1952–1960

Stephen E. Ambrose. *Eisenhower: The President* (1984).

A generally positive and well-balanced biography of Eisenhower as president by one of the most respected historians of the Eisenhower period.

Michael Bertrand. *Race, Rock, and Elvis* (2000).

Provides a view of how Elvis and his music not only shaped American music but altered views about class, race, and gender.

Taylor Branch. *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954–1963* (1988).

An interesting and useful description of the development of the civil rights movement that focuses on the role of Martin Luther King Jr.

Elizabeth Cohen. *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (2003).

An important study of the connections between business, politics, and culture that have shaped American society following World War II to the mid-1960s.

Robert A. Devine. *Eisenhower and the Cold War* (1981).

A solid and brief account of Eisenhower's foreign policy, especially toward the Soviet Union.

David Halberstam. *The Fifties* (1993).

A positive interpretive view of the 1950s by a well-known journalist and author, especially recommended for its description of famous and not-so-famous people.

Peter Hahn. *Caught in the Middle East: U.S. Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1945–1961* (2006).

An excellent examination of the United States special relationship with Israel and the differences in approaches between Truman and Eisenhower.

Eugenia Kaledin. *Mothers and More: American Women in the 1950s* (1984).

A thoughtful look at the role of American women in society during the 1950s.

Joanne J. Meyerowitz, ed. *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945–1960* (1994).

An excellent collection of essays that explore the variety of views on women's roles in American culture, society, and politics.

Mark Newman. *The Civil Rights Movement* (2004).

A concise introduction to the civil rights movement with an emphasis on the activities of local communities and women.

James Patterson. *Brown v. Board of Education: A Civil Rights Milestone and Its Troubled Legacy* (2001).

A timely study of the events and decisions that led to the *Brown* case as well as an examination of the role the *Brown* decision has had on American politics, society, and race relations.

## CHAPTER 27 Great Promises, Bitter Disappointments, 1960–1968

Peter Braunstein and Michael Doyle, eds. *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s* (2001).

A wide range of essays that provide useful evaluations on the many aspects of the counterculture.

Irving Bernstein. *Promises Kept: John F. Kennedy's New Frontier* (1991).

A brief and balanced account of Kennedy's presidency that presents a favorable report of the accomplishments and legacy of the New Frontier.

Michael Beschloss. *The Crisis Years: Kennedy and Khrushchev, 1960–1963* (1991).

A strong narrative account of the Cold War during the Kennedy administration and the personal duel between the leaders of the two superpowers.

Clayborne Carson. *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (1981).

A useful study that uses the development of SNCC to examine the changing patterns of the civil rights movement and the emergence of black nationalism.

Margaret Cruikshank. *The Gay and Lesbian Liberation Movement* (1992).

Provides a good introduction and insight into the gay and lesbian movement.

Robert Dallek. *Flawed Giant: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1960–1973* (1998).

An important biography that focuses on politics and foreign policy.

Sidney M. Milkis and Jerome M. Mileur. *The Great Society and the High Tide of Liberalism* (2005).

An excellent series of essays that examines Great Society liberalism and legislation.

David Horowitz. *Betty Friedan and the Making of the Feminist Movement* (1998).

Uses the central figure of the women's movement to examine the beginnings and development of the movement.

Michael Kazin and Maurice Isserman. *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (2000).

The social and cultural currents of the 1960s are skillfully woven into an overall picture of American society.

Jeffrey Ogbar. *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity* (2005).

A well-written study of the varieties of the Black Power movement and the development of an American consciousness.

## CHAPTER 28 America Under Stress, 1967–1976

Stephen Ambrose. *Nixon: The Triumph of a Politician, 1962–1972* (1989).

An excellent examination of Nixon and his politics—the second volume of Ambrose's three-volume biography.

Larry Berman. *No Peace, No Honor: Nixon, Kissinger, and Betrayal in Vietnam* (2001).

A critical view of Vietnamization and the politics of ending the American presence in Vietnam.

Edward Berkowitz. *Something Happened: A Political and Cultural Overview of the Seventies* (2006).

An introduction to the seventies that shows that it was a period of activism with significant debate over the limits of the economy, culture, and foreign policy.

Philip Caputo. *Rumor of War* (1986).

The author's account of his own changing perspectives on the war in Vietnam. Caputo served as a young marine officer in Vietnam and later covered the final days in Saigon as a journalist. His views frequently reflected those of the American public.

Ian F. Haney Lopez. *Racism on Trial: The Chicano Fight for Justice* (2003).

An interesting use of two trials to examine the development of Chicano identity and the idea of race and violence.

Burton Kaufman. *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr.* (1993).

A well-balanced account and analysis of Carter's presidency and the changing political values of the 1970s.

Stanley Kutler. *The Wars of Watergate* (1990) and *Abuse of Power: The New Nixon Tapes* (1997).

The former work details the events surrounding the Watergate break-in and the hearings that led to Nixon's resignation. The latter provides transcripts of selected Nixon tapes.

Joanne Nagel. *American Indian Ethnic Revival: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (1996).

A thorough analysis of the Red Power movement and how it helped to shape cultural and political change.

David F. Schmitz. *The Tet Offensive: Politics, War, and Public Opinion* (2005).

An outstanding examination of the Tet offense and its ramifications on American policymakers and politics.

Marylin Young. *The Vietnam Wars, 1945–1990* (1991).

A brief, well-written and a carefully documented history of Vietnam's struggle for nationhood with a focus on American policy toward Vietnam since near the end of WWII.

## CHAPTER 29 Facing Limits, 1976–1992

A. J. Bacevich, et al. *The Gulf Conflict of 1991 Reconsidered* (2003).

A collection of essays that provide both insight and an excellent overview of the Gulf War.

Douglas Brinkley. *The Reagan Diaries* (2007).

An interesting personal view of Reagan's view of the events that shaped his administration and world affairs.

Roger Daniels. *Coming to America* (1990).

A solid analysis of the new immigrants seeking a place in American society; especially effective on Asian immigration.

Michael Duffy and Don Goodgame. *Marching in Place: The Status Quo Presidency of George Bush* (1992).

An insightful but critical analysis of the Bush presidency.

John L. Gaddis. *The United States and the End of the Cold War* (1992).

An excellent narrative of events in the Soviet Union and the United States that led to the end of the Cold War, as well as a useful analysis of the problems facing the United States in the post-Cold War world.

David J. Garrow. *Liberty and Sexuality: The Right to Privacy and the Making of Roe v. Wade* (1994).

An in-depth and scholarly account of the origins and impact of *Roe v. Wade* and the legal and political issues dealing with privacy, gender, and abortion.

Lisa McGirr. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (2001).

A study of how the ideology and issues of the New Right found fertile soil within the American middle suburban class.

Michael Schaller. *Reckoning with Reagan* (1992).

A brief but scholarly analysis of the Reagan administration and the society and values that supported the Reagan revolution.

Bruce Schulman. *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (2001).

A readable and comprehensive overview of the central issues that defined the decade.

Studs Terkel. *The Great Divide* (1988).

An interesting and informative collection of oral interviews that provide a personal glimpse of changes recently taking place in American society.

## CHAPTER 30 Entering a New Century, 1992–2007

Michael Bernstein and David A. Adler, eds. *Understanding American Economic Decline* (1994).

A collection of essays by economists and knowledgeable observers who analyze the slowing down of the American economy and its impact.

Douglas Brinkley. *The Great Deluge: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast* (2007).

A narrative account of one of the greatest natural disasters to occur in the United States.

Zbigniew Brzezinski. *The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership* (2004).

A penetrating analysis of American post-911 foreign policies by an ex-insider.

Congressional Quarterly's *Research Reports*.

A valuable monthly resource for information and views on issues facing the United States and the world.

Anthony Giddens. *Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our World* (2002).

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David Halberstam. *War in Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals* (2001).

An understandable account of American foreign policy and policymakers coming to dealing with a post-Cold War world where the major issues are terrorism, genocide, and nation-building.

Ernest May, ed. *The 9/11 Commission Report with Related Documents* (2007).

Provides a usable background to the events preceding and after the 9/11 terrorist attacks that provides useable documents to examine the issues.

James MacGregor Burns and Georgia J. Sorenson. *Dead Center: Clinton-Gore Leadership and the Perils of Moderation* (1999).

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An informative collection of essays that place the attacks of September 11 in historical and political context.

Andrea K. Talentino. *Military Intervention after the Cold War: The Evolution of Theory and Practice* (2005).

An interesting view that connects post-Cold War interventions to globalization that utilizes examples of interventions in Somalia, Haiti, and Kosovo.

Bob Woodward. *Plan of Attack* (2004).

Based on interviews, an account of the internal decisions the Bush administration made that led to the decision to go to war with Iraq.

# Documents

## *Declaration of Independence in Congress, July 4, 1776*

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining, in the mean time, exposed to all the dangers of invasions from without and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by

our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond seas, to be tried for pretended offenses;

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies;

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments;

For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burned our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrection among us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury.

A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in our attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity; and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

JOHN HANCOCK *and fifty-five others*

# Constitution of the United States of America and Amendments\*

## PREAMBLE

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

## ARTICLE I

**Section 1** All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

**Section 2** The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the people of the several States, and the electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature.

No person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the age of twenty-five years, and been seven years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their re-spective numbers, *which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons.* The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such manner as they shall by law direct. The number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty thousand, but each State shall have at least one Representative; *and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to choose three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.*

When vacancies happen in the representation from any State, the Executive authority thereof shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other officers; and shall have the sole power of impeachment.

**Section 3** The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the legislature thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote.

*Immediately after they shall be assembled in consequence of the first election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three classes. The seats of the Senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the second year, of the second class at the expiration of the fourth year, and of the third class at the expiration of the sixth year, so that one-third may be chosen every second year; and if vacancies happen by resignation or otherwise, during the recess of the legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary appointments until the next meeting of the legislature, which shall then fill such vacancies.*

No person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the age of thirty years, and been nine years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice-President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall choose their other officers, and also a President *pro tempore*, in the absence of the Vice-President, or when he shall exercise the office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole power to try all impeachments. When sitting for that purpose, they shall be on oath or affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: and no person shall be convicted with-out the concurrence of two-thirds of the members present.

Judgment in cases of impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from the office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust or profit under the United States: but the party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to indictment, trial, judgment and punishment, according to law.

**Section 4** The times, places and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives shall be

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\* Passages no longer in effect are printed in italic type.



prescribed in each State by the legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting *shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.*

**Section 5** Each house shall be the judge of the elections, returns and qualifications of its own members, and a majority of each shall constitute a quorum to do business; but a smaller number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the attendance of absent members, in such manner, and under such penalties, as each house may provide.

Each house may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and with the concurrence of two-thirds, expel a member.

Each house shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such parts as may in their judgment require secrecy; and the yeas and nays of the members of either house on any question shall, at the desire of one-fifth of those present, be entered on the journal.

Neither house, during the session of Congress, shall, without the consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which the two houses shall be sitting.

**Section 6** The Senators and Representatives shall receive a compensation for their services, to be ascertained by law and paid out of the treasury of the United States. They shall in all cases except treason, felony and breach of the peace, be privileged from arrest during their attendance at the session of their respective houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any speech or debate in either house, they shall not be questioned in any other place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil office under the authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the emoluments whereof shall have been increased, during such time; and no person holding any office under the United States shall be a member of either house during his continuance in office.

**Section 7** All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments as on other bills.

Every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a

law, be presented to the President of the United States; if he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it with objections to that house in which it originated, who shall enter the objections at large on their journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such reconsideration two-thirds of that house shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and, if approved by two-thirds of that house, it shall become a law. But in all such cases the votes of both houses shall be determined by yeas and nays, and the names of the persons voting for and against the bill shall be entered on the journal of each house respectively. If any bill shall not be returned by the President within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law, in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their adjournment prevent its return, in which case it shall not be a law.

Every order, resolution, or vote to which the concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the same shall take effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two-thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the rules and limitations prescribed in the case of a bill.

**Section 8** The Congress shall have power

To lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes;

To establish an uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the standard of weights and measures;

To provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States;

To establish post offices and post roads;

To promote the progress of science and useful arts by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries;

To constitute tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court;

To define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas and offenses against the law of nations;

To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water;

To raise and support armies, but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years;

To provide and maintain a navy;

To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces;

To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively the appointment of the officers, and the authority of training the militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever, over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular States, and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of government of the United States, and to exercise like authority over all places purchased by the consent of the legislature of the State, in which the same shall be, for erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dockyards, and other needful buildings; — and

To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

*Section 9 The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year 1808; but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding \$10 for each person.*

The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it.

No bill of attainder or ex post facto law shall be passed.

No capitation, or other direct, tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No tax or duty shall be laid on articles exported from any State.

No preference shall be given by any regulation of commerce or revenue to the ports of one State over those of another; nor shall vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay duties in another.

No money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law; and a regular statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.

No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States: and no person holding any office of profit or trust under them, shall, without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign state.

*Section 10* No State shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confederation; grant letters of marque and reprisal; coin money; emit bills of credit; make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts; pass any bill of attainder, ex post facto law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts, or grant any title of nobility.

No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any imposts or duties on imports or exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection laws: and the net produce of all duties and imposts, laid by any State on imports or exports, shall be for the use of the treasury of the United States; and all such laws shall be subject to the revision and control of the Congress.

No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any duty of tonnage, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, enter into any agreement or compact with another State, or with a foreign power, or engage in war, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay.

## ARTICLE II

*Section 1* The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and, together with the Vice-President, chosen for the same term, be elected as follows:

Each State shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors, equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress; but no Senator or Representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States, shall be appointed an elector.

*The electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by ballot for two persons, of whom one at least shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a list of all the persons voted for, and of the number of votes for each; which list they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates, and the votes shall then be counted. The person having the greatest number of votes shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such majority, and have an equal number of votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by ballot one of them for President; and if no person have a majority, then from the five highest on the list said house shall in like manner choose the President. But in choosing the President the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all the States shall be necessary to a choice. In every case, after the choice of the President, the person having the greatest number of votes of the electors shall be the Vice-President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal votes, the Senate shall choose from them by ballot the Vice-President.*

The Congress may determine the time of choosing the electors and the day on which they shall give their votes; which day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No person except a natural-born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.

In cases of the removal of the President from office or of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office, the same shall devolve on the Vice-President, and the Congress may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation, or inability, both of the President and Vice-President, declaring what officer shall then act as President, and such officer shall act accordingly, until the disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated times, receive for his services a compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that period any other emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the execution of his office, he shall take the following oath or affirmation:—"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of the

President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

**Section 2** The President shall be commander in chief of the army and navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several States, when called into the actual service of the United States; he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices, and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment.

He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law: but Congress may by law vest the appointment of such inferior officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments.

The President shall have power to fill up all vacancies that may happen during the recess of the Senate, by granting commissions which shall expire at the end of their next session.

**Section 3** He shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both houses, or either of them, and in case of disagreement between them, with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper; he shall receive ambassadors and other public ministers; he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed, and shall commission all the officers of the United States.

**Section 4** The President, Vice-President and all civil officers of the United States shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and on conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

## ARTICLE III

**Section 1** The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The judges, both of the Supreme and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behavior, and shall, at stated times, receive for their services a compensation

which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.

**Section 2** The judicial power shall extend to all cases, in law and equity, arising under this Constitution, the laws of the United States, and treaties made, or which shall be made, under their authority;—to all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls;—to all cases of admiralty and maritime jurisdiction;—to controversies to which the United States shall be a party;—to controversies between two or more States;—*between a State and citizens of another State*;—between citizens of different States;—between citizens of the same State claiming lands under grants of different States, and between a State, or the citizens thereof, and foreign states, citizens or subjects.

In all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a State shall be party, the Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction. In all the other cases before mentioned, the Supreme Court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, with such exceptions, and under such regulations, as the Congress shall make.

The trial of all crimes, except in cases of impeachment, shall be by jury; and such trial shall be held in the State where said crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the trial shall be at such place or places as the Congress may by law have directed.

**Section 3** Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort. No person shall be convicted of treason unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act, or on confession in open court.

The Congress shall have power to declare the punishment of treason, but no attainder of treason shall work corruption of blood, or forfeiture except during the life of the person attainted.

## ARTICLE IV

**Section 1** Full faith and credit shall be given in each State to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general laws prescribe the manner in which such acts, records, and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof.

**Section 2** The citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States.

A person charged in any State with treason, felony, or other crime, who shall flee from justice, and be found in another

State, shall on demand of the executive authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having jurisdiction of the crime.

*No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.*

**Section 3** New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the junction of two or more States, or parts of States, without the consent of the legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

**Section 4** The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence.

## ARTICLE V

The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the several States, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States, or by conventions in three-fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; provided *that no amendments which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article*; and that no State, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.

## ARTICLE VI

All debts contracted and engagements entered into, before the adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation.

This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the



United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the members of the several State legislatures, and all executive and judicial officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by oath or affirmation to support this Constitution; but no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.

## *Amendments to the Constitution\**

### AMENDMENT I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

### AMENDMENT II

A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

### AMENDMENT III

No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

### AMENDMENT IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

### AMENDMENT V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb;

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\* The first ten Amendments (the Bill of Rights) were adopted in 1791.

### ARTICLE VII

The ratification of the conventions of nine States shall be sufficient for the establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the same.

Done in Convention by the unanimous consent of the States present, the seventeenth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven and of the Independence of the United States of America the twelfth. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names.

GEORGE WASHINGTON *and thirty-seven others*

nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

### AMENDMENT VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

### AMENDMENT VII

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

### AMENDMENT VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

### AMENDMENT IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

### AMENDMENT X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

## AMENDMENT XI

*[Adopted 1798]*

The judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by citizens of another State, or by citizens or subjects of any foreign state.

## AMENDMENT XII

*[Adopted 1804]*

The electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate;—the President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted;—the person having the greatest number of votes for President shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all the States shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.

The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

## AMENDMENT XIII

*[Adopted 1865]*

**Section 1** Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

**Section 2** Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## AMENDMENT XIV

*[Adopted 1868]*

**Section 1** All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

**Section 2** Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of Electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

**Section 3** No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or Elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. Congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of each house, remove such disability.

**Section 4** The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing

insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations, and claims shall be held illegal and void.

**Section 5** The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

## AMENDMENT XV

*[Adopted 1870]*

**Section 1** The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

**Section 2** The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## AMENDMENT XVI

*[Adopted 1913]*

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

## AMENDMENT XVII

*[Adopted 1913]*

**Section 1** The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of [voters for] the most numerous branch of the State legislatures.

**Section 2** When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of such State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: Provided, that the Legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the Legislature may direct.

**Section 3** This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

## AMENDMENT XVIII

*[Adopted 1919; Repealed 1933]*

**Section 1** After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of

intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof, for beverage purposes, is hereby prohibited.

**Section 2** The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

**Section 3** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided by the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission thereof to the States by the Congress.

## AMENDMENT XIX

*[Adopted 1920]*

**Section 1** The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

**Section 2** The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## AMENDMENT XX

*[Adopted 1933]*

**Section 1** The terms of the President and Vice-President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3rd day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

**Section 2** The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3rd day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

**Section 3** If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President-elect shall have died, the Vice-President-elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President-elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice-President-elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President-elect nor a Vice-President-elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such persons shall act accordingly until a President or Vice-President shall have qualified.

**Section 4** The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom

the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice-President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

**Section 5** Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.

**Section 6** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the Legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

## AMENDMENT XXI

*[Adopted 1933]*

**Section 1** The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

**Section 2** The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or Possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

**Section 3** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of submission thereof to the States by the Congress.

## AMENDMENT XXII

*[Adopted 1951]*

**Section 1** No person shall be elected to the office of President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of President more than once. But this article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

**Section 2** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.

## AMENDMENT XXIII

*[Adopted 1961]*

**Section 1** The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct:

A number of electors of President and Vice-President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered for the purposes of the election of President and Vice-President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

**Section 2** The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## AMENDMENT XXIV

*[Adopted 1964]*

**Section 1** The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice-President, for electors for President or Vice-President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

**Section 2** The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## AMENDMENT XXV

*[Adopted 1967]*

**Section 1** In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice-President shall become President.

**Section 2** Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice-President, the President shall nominate a Vice-President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

**Section 3** Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice-President as Acting President.

**Section 4** Whenever the Vice-President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments



or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice-President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice-President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department[s] or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after

Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice-President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

#### AMENDMENT XXVI

*[Adopted 1971]*

**Section 1** The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

**Section 2** The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

#### AMENDMENT XXVII

*[Adopted 1992]*

No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

# Presidential Elections

Year	Number of States	Candidates	Parties	Popular Vote	% of Popular Vote	Electoral Vote	% Voter Participation <sup>a</sup>
<b>1789</b>	11	<b>George Washington</b>	No party			69	
		John Adams	designations			34	
		Other candidates				35	
<b>1792</b>	15	<b>George Washington</b>	No party			132	
		John Adams	designations			77	
		George Clinton				50	
		Other candidates				5	
<b>1796</b>	16	<b>John Adams</b>	Federalist			71	
		Thomas Jefferson	Democratic-Republican			68	
		Thomas Pinckney	Federalist			59	
		Aaron Burr	Democratic-Republican			30	
		Other candidates				48	
<b>1800</b>	16	<b>Thomas Jefferson</b>	Democratic-Republican			73	
		Aaron Burr	Democratic-Republican			73	
		John Adams	Federalist			65	
		Charles C. Pinckney	Federalist			64	
		John Jay	Federalist			1	
<b>1804</b>	17	<b>Thomas Jefferson</b>	Democratic-Republican			162	
		Charles C. Pinckney	Federalist			14	
<b>1808</b>	17	<b>James Madison</b>	Democratic-Republican			122	
		Charles C. Pinckney	Federalist			47	
		George Clinton	Democratic-Republican			6	
<b>1812</b>	18	<b>James Madison</b>	Democratic-Republican			128	
		DeWitt Clinton	Federalist			89	
<b>1816</b>	19	<b>James Monroe</b>	Democratic-Republican			183	
		Rufus King	Federalist			34	
<b>1820</b>	24	<b>James Monroe</b>	Democratic-Republican			231	
		John Quincy Adams	Independent-Republican			1	
<b>1824</b>	24	<b>John Quincy Adams</b>	Democratic-Republican	108,740	30.5	84	26.9
		Andrew Jackson	Democratic-Republican	153,544	43.1	99	
		Henry Clay	Democratic-Republican	47,136	13.2	37	
		William H. Crawford	Democratic-Republican	46,618	13.1	41	
<b>1828</b>	24	<b>Andrew Jackson</b>	Democratic	647,286	56.0	178	57.6
		John Quincy Adams	National Republican	508,064	44.0	83	

Year	Number of States	Candidates	Parties	Popular Vote	% of Popular Vote	Electoral Vote	% Voter Participation <sup>a</sup>
<b>1832</b>	24	<b>Andrew Jackson</b>	Democratic	688,242	54.5	219	55.4
		Henry Clay	National Republican	473,462	37.5	49	
		William Wirt	Anti-Masonic		8.0	7	
		John Floyd	Democratic	101,051		11	
<b>1836</b>	26	<b>Martin Van Buren</b>	Democratic	765,483	50.9	170	57.8
		William H. Harrison	Whig			73	
		Hugh L. White	Whig			26	
		Daniel Webster	Whig	739,795	49.1	14	
		W. P. Mangum	Whig			11	
<b>1840</b>	26	<b>William H. Harrison</b>	Whig	1,274,624	53.1	234	80.2
		Martin Van Buren	Democratic	1,127,781	46.9	60	
<b>1844</b>	26	<b>James K. Polk</b>	Democratic	1,338,464	49.6	170	78.9
		Henry Clay	Whig	1,300,097	48.1	105	
		James G. Birney	Liberty	62,300	2.3		
<b>1848</b>	30	<b>Zachary Taylor</b>	Whig	1,360,967	47.4	163	72.7
		Lewis Cass	Democratic	1,222,342	42.5	127	
		Martin Van Buren	Free-Soil	291,263	10.1		
<b>1852</b>	31	<b>Franklin Pierce</b>	Democratic	1,601,117	50.9	254	69.6
		Winfield Scott	Whig	1,385,453	44.1	42	
		John P. Hale	Free-Soil	155,825	5.0		
<b>1856</b>	31	<b>James Buchanan</b>	Democratic	1,832,955	45.3	174	78.9
		John C. Frémont	Republican	1,339,932	33.1	114	
		Millard Fillmore	American	871,731	21.6	8	
<b>1860</b>	33	<b>Abraham Lincoln</b>	Republican	1,865,593	39.8	180	81.2
		Stephen A. Douglas	Democratic	1,382,713	29.5	12	
		John C. Breckinridge	Democratic	848,356	18.1	72	
		John Bell	Constitutional Union	592,906	12.6	39	
<b>1864</b>	36	<b>Abraham Lincoln</b>	Republican	2,206,938	55.0	212	73.8
		George B. McClellan	Democratic	1,803,787	45.0	21	
<b>1868</b>	37	<b>Ulysses S. Grant</b>	Republican	3,013,421	52.7	214	78.1
		Horatio Seymour	Democratic	2,706,829	47.3	80	
<b>1872</b>	37	<b>Ulysses S. Grant</b>	Republican	3,596,745	55.6	286	71.3
		Horace Greeley	Democratic	2,843,446	43.9	<sup>b</sup>	
<b>1876</b>	38	<b>Rutherford B. Hayes</b>	Republican	4,036,572	48.0	185	81.8
		Samuel J. Tilden	Democratic	4,284,020	51.0	184	
<b>1880</b>	38	<b>James A. Garfield</b>	Republican	4,453,295	48.5	214	79.4
		Winfield S. Hancock	Democratic	4,414,082	48.1	155	
		James B. Weaver	Greenback-Labor	308,578	3.4		
<b>1884</b>	38	<b>Grover Cleveland</b>	Democratic	4,879,507	48.5	219	77.5
		James G. Blaine	Republican	4,850,293	48.2	182	
		Benjamin F. Butler	Greenback-Labor	175,370	1.8		
		John P. St. John	Prohibition	150,369	1.5		

Year	Number of States	Candidates	Parties	Popular Vote	% of Popular Vote	Electoral Vote	% Voter Participation <sup>a</sup>
<b>1888</b>	38	<b>Benjamin Harrison</b>	Republican	5,477,129	47.9	233	79.3
		Grover Cleveland	Democratic	5,537,857	48.6	168	
		Clinton B. Fisk	Prohibition	249,506	2.2		
		Anson J. Streeter	Union Labor	146,935	1.3		
<b>1892</b>	44	<b>Grover Cleveland</b>	Democratic	5,555,426	46.1	277	74.7
		Benjamin Harrison	Republican	5,182,690	43.0	145	
		James B. Weaver	People's	1,029,846	8.5	22	
		John Bidwell	Prohibition	264,133	2.2		
<b>1896</b>	45	<b>William McKinley</b>	Republican	7,102,246	51.1	271	79.3
		William J. Bryan	Democratic	6,492,559	47.7	176	
<b>1900</b>	45	<b>William McKinley</b>	Republican	7,218,491	51.7	292	73.2
		William J. Bryan	Democratic; Populist	6,356,734	45.5	155	
		John C. Wooley	Prohibition	208,914	1.5		
<b>1904</b>	45	<b>Theodore Roosevelt</b>	Republican	7,628,461	57.4	336	65.2
		Alton B. Parker	Democratic	5,084,223	37.6	140	
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist	402,283	3.0		
		Silas C. Swallow	Prohibition	258,536	1.9		
<b>1908</b>	46	<b>William H. Taft</b>	Republican	7,675,320	51.6	321	65.4
		William J. Bryan	Democratic	6,412,294	43.1	162	
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist	420,793	2.8		
		Eugene W. Chafin	Prohibition	253,840	1.7		
<b>1912</b>	48	<b>Woodrow Wilson</b>	Democratic	6,296,547	41.9	435	58.8
		Theodore Roosevelt	Progressive	4,118,571	27.4	88	
		William H. Taft	Republican	3,486,720	23.2	8	
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist	900,672	6.0		
		Eugene W. Chafin	Prohibition	206,275	1.4		
<b>1916</b>	48	<b>Woodrow Wilson</b>	Democratic	9,127,695	49.4	277	61.6
		Charles E. Hughes	Republican	8,533,507	46.2	254	
		A. L. Benson	Socialist	585,113	3.2		
		J. Frank Hanly	Prohibition	220,506	1.2		
<b>1920</b>	48	<b>Warren G. Harding</b>	Republican	16,143,407	60.4	404	49.2
		James M. Cox	Democratic	9,130,328	34.2	127	
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist	919,799	3.4		
		P. P. Christensen	Farmer-Labor	265,411	1.0		
<b>1924</b>	48	<b>Calvin Coolidge</b>	Republican	15,718,211	54.0	382	48.9
		John W. Davis	Democratic	8,385,283	28.8	136	
		Robert M. La Follette	Progressive	4,831,289	16.6	13	
<b>1928</b>	48	<b>Herbert C. Hoover</b>	Republican	21,391,993	58.2	444	56.9
		Alfred E. Smith	Democratic	15,016,169	40.9	87	
<b>1932</b>	48	<b>Franklin D. Roosevelt</b>	Democratic	22,809,638	57.4	472	56.9
		Herbert C. Hoover	Republican	15,758,901	39.7	59	
		Norman Thomas	Socialist	881,951	2.2		



Year	Number of States	Candidates	Parties	Popular Vote	% of Popular Vote	Electoral Vote	% Voter Participation <sup>a</sup>
<b>1936</b>	48	<b>Franklin D. Roosevelt</b>	Democratic	27,752,869	60.8	523	61.0
		Alfred M. Landon	Republican	16,674,665	36.5	8	
		William Lemke	Union	882,479	1.9		
<b>1940</b>	48	<b>Franklin D. Roosevelt</b>	Democratic	27,307,819	54.8	449	62.5
		Wendell L. Wilkie	Republican	22,321,018	44.8	82	
<b>1944</b>	48	<b>Franklin D. Roosevelt</b>	Democratic	25,606,585	53.5	432	55.9
		Thomas E. Dewey	Republican	22,014,745	46.0	99	
<b>1948</b>	48	<b>Harry S Truman</b>	Democratic	24,179,345	49.6	303	53.0
		Thomas E. Dewey	Republican	21,991,291	45.1	189	
		J. Strom Thurmond	States' Rights	1,176,125	2.4	39	
		Henry A. Wallace	Progressive	1,157,326	2.4		
<b>1952</b>	48	<b>Dwight D. Eisenhower</b>	Republican	33,936,234	55.1	442	63.3
		Adlai E. Stevenson	Democratic	27,314,992	44.4	89	
<b>1956</b>	48	<b>Dwight D. Eisenhower</b>	Republican	35,590,472	57.6	457	60.6
		Adlai E. Stevenson	Democratic	26,022,752	42.1	73	
<b>1960</b>	50	<b>John F. Kennedy</b>	Democratic	34,226,731	49.7	303	62.8
		Richard M. Nixon	Republican	34,108,157	49.5	219	
<b>1964</b>	50	<b>Lyndon B. Johnson</b>	Democratic	43,129,566	61.1	486	61.7
		Barry M. Goldwater	Republican	27,178,188	38.5	52	
<b>1968</b>	50	<b>Richard M. Nixon</b>	Republican	31,785,480	43.4	301	60.6
		Hubert H. Humphrey	Democratic	31,275,166	42.7	191	
		George C. Wallace	American Independent	9,906,473	13.5	46	
<b>1972</b>	50	<b>Richard M. Nixon</b>	Republican	47,169,911	60.7	520	55.2
		George S. McGovern	Democratic	29,170,383	37.5	17	
		John G. Schmitz	American	1,099,482	1.4		
<b>1976</b>	50	<b>Jimmy Carter</b>	Democratic	40,830,763	50.1	297	53.5
		Gerald R. Ford	Republican	39,147,793	48.0	240	
<b>1980</b>	50	<b>Ronald Reagan</b>	Republican	43,899,248	50.8	489	52.6
		Jimmy Carter	Democratic	35,481,432	41.0	49	
		John B. Anderson	Independent	5,719,437	6.6	0	
		Ed Clark	Libertarian	920,859	1.1	0	
<b>1984</b>	50	<b>Ronald Reagan</b>	Republican	54,455,075	58.8	525	53.1
		Walter Mondale	Democratic	37,577,185	40.6	13	
<b>1988</b>	50	<b>George Bush</b>	Republican	48,901,046	53.4	426	50.2
		Michael Dukakis	Democratic	41,809,030	45.6	111 <sup>c</sup>	
<b>1992</b>	50	<b>Bill Clinton</b>	Democratic	44,908,233	43.0	370	55.0
		George Bush	Republican	39,102,282	37.4	168	
		Ross Perot	Independent	19,741,048	18.9	0	
<b>1996</b>	50	<b>Bill Clinton</b>	Democratic	47,401,054	49.2	379	49.0
		Robert Dole	Republican	39,197,350	40.7	159	
		Ross Perot	Independent	8,085,285	8.4	0	
		Ralph Nader	Green	684,871	0.7	0	

Year	Number of States	Candidates	Parties	Popular Vote	% of Popular Vote	Electoral Vote	% Voter Participation <sup>a</sup>
<b>2000</b>	50	<b>George W. Bush</b>	Republican	50,456,169	47.88	271	50.7
		Albert Gore, Jr.	Democratic	50,996,116	48.39	267	
		Ralph Nader	Green	2,783,728	2.72	0	
<b>2004</b>	50	<b>George W. Bush</b>	Republican	62,040,610	51.0	286	60.7
		John F. Kerry	Democratic	59,028,109	48.0	252	
		Ralph Nader	Independent	463,653	1.0	0	
<b>2008</b>	50	<b>Barack Obama</b>	Democratic	69,498,215	52.9	365	63
		John McCain	Republican	59,948,240	45.7	173	

Candidates receiving less than 1 percent of the popular vote have been omitted. Thus the percentage of popular vote given for any election year may not total 100 percent.

Before the passage of the Twelfth Amendment in 1804, the Electoral College voted for two presidential candidates; the runner-up became vice president.

Before 1824, most presidential electors were chosen by state legislatures, not by popular vote.

<sup>a</sup>Percent of voting-age population casting ballots (eligible voters).

<sup>b</sup>Greeley died shortly after the election; the electors supporting him then divided their votes among minor candidates.

<sup>c</sup>One elector from West Virginia cast her Electoral College presidential ballot for Lloyd Bentsen, the Democratic Party's vice-presidential candidate.

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