

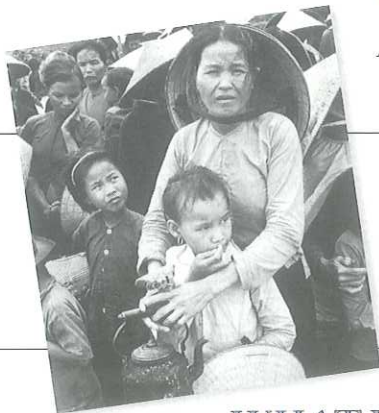


## SHAKEN TO THE ROOTS

1965–1980



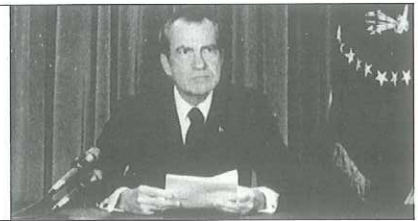
**HOW DID** the national consensus of the 1950s and early 1960s unravel?



**WHAT CHALLENGES** did American cities face in the late 1960s and 1970s?

**WHY DID** America's view of the war in Vietnam change in 1968?

**WHAT WAS** the legacy of Richard Nixon's presidency?

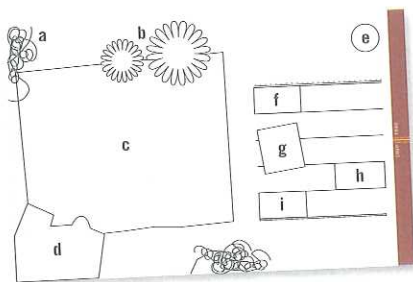


**HOW WAS** Jimmy Carter's idealism a frustration to his success as president?



## IMAGE KEY

for pages 760-761



- a. Damaged cassette tape evocative of the Watergate scandal.
- b. Daisies represent the "Flower Power" mindset.
- c. A weeping young woman kneels beside the body of a protester during the 1970 riots at Kent State University in Ohio.
- d. Caesar Chávez.
- e. Anti war peace button.
- f. Crowds gather to hear Martin Luther King, Jr. speak.
- g. Vietnamese refugees.
- h. President Nixon announces he will resign effective noon Friday in this Thursday, August 8, 1974 file photo shown during a broadcast from the Oval Room of the White House.
- i. Egyptian president Anwar el-Sadat, US President Jimmy Carter, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin share a three-way handshake after signing an Arab-Israeli peace treaty on March 26, 1979. The three leaders agreed on the terms of the treaty at Camp David in September 1978.

Contact light! O.K., engine stop. . . Houston, Tranquility Base here.  
The Eagle has landed! . . .

We opened the hatch and Neil, with me as navigator, began backing out of the tiny opening [in the Lunar Module Eagle]. It seemed like a small eternity before I heard Neil say, "That's one small step for man. . . one giant leap for mankind." In less than fifteen minutes I was backing awkwardly out of the hatch and onto the surface to join Neil, who, in the tradition of all tourists, had his camera ready to photograph my arrival.

I took off jogging to test my maneuverability. The exercise gave me an odd sensation and looked even more odd when I later saw the films of it. With bulky suits on, we seemed to be moving in slow motion. . . At one point, I remarked that the surface was "Beautiful, beautiful. Magnificent desolation." I was struck by the contrast between the starkness of the shadows and the desert-like barrenness of the rest of the surface. It ranged from dusty gray to light tan and was unchanging except for one startling sight: our LM sitting there with its black, silver and bright yellow-orange thermal coating shining brightly in the otherwise colorless landscape.

During a pause in experiments, Neil suggested we proceed with the flag. . . To our dismay the staff of the pole wouldn't go far enough into the lunar surface. . . I dreaded the possibility of the American flag collapsing into the lunar dust in front of the television camera.

Edgar Cortright, ed., *Apollo Expeditions to the Moon* (Washington: NASA SP 350, 1975).

**BUZZ ALDRIN AND NEIL ARMSTRONG**, on July 20, 1969, completed the longest journey that any person had yet taken. Landing the Apollo 11 lunar module on the moon climaxed a five-day trip across the quarter million miles separating the earth from the moon. Six and a half hours after the landing, Armstrong and Aldrin were the first humans to walk on the moon's surface.

The Apollo 11 expedition combined science and Cold War politics. The American flag waving on the lunar surface was a symbol of victory in one phase of the space race between the United States and Soviet Union. NASA had been working since 1961 to meet John F. Kennedy's goal of a manned trip to the moon before the end of the decade. After Apollo II, American astronauts made five more trips to the moon between 1969 and 1972, which helped to restore the nation's standing as the world's scientific and technological leader.

Despite Apollo's success, however, the United States was increasingly shaken in the later 1960s and 1970s. The failure to win an easy victory in Vietnam eroded the nation's confidence and fueled bitter divisions. Most Americans had agreed about the goals of the Cold War, the benefits of economic growth, and the value of equal opportunity. Stalemate in Southeast Asia, political changes in third world countries, and an oil supply crisis in the 1970s challenged U.S. influence in the world. Frustrated with slow progress toward racial equality, many minority Americans advocated separation rather than integration, helping to plunge the nation's cities into crisis, while other Americans began to draw back from some of the objectives of racial integration.



Political scandals, summarized in three syllables as “Watergate,” undercut faith in government. Fifteen years of turmoil forced a grudging recognition of limits to American military power, economic capacity, governmental prerogatives, and even the ideal of a single American dream.

## THE END OF CONSENSUS

**P**leiku is a town in Vietnam 240 miles north of Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City). In 1965, Pleiku was the site of a South Vietnamese army headquarters and American military base. At 2 A.M. on February 7, Viet Cong attacked the U.S. base, killing eight Americans and wounding a hundred. The national security adviser, McGeorge Bundy, in Saigon on a fact-finding visit; Ambassador Maxwell Taylor; and General William Westmoreland, the commander of U.S. forces South Vietnam recommended a retaliatory air strike against North Vietnam. President Johnson concurred, and navy bombers roared off aircraft carriers. A month later, Johnson ordered a full-scale air offensive.

The attack at Pleiku triggered plans that were waiting to be put into effect since the Gulf of Tonkin resolution the previous summer. The official reason for the bombing was to pressure North Vietnam to negotiate an end to the war. As the South Vietnamese government lost control of the countryside, air strikes on North Vietnam looked like an easy way to redress the balance. In the back of President Johnson’s mind were the need to prove his toughness and the mistaken assumption that China was aggressively backing North Vietnam.

The air strikes pushed the United States over the line from propping up the South Vietnamese government to leading the war effort. A president who desperately wanted a way out of Southeast Asia kept adding American forces. The war in Vietnam would distract the United States from the goals of the Great Society, drive Johnson from office, set back progress toward global stability, and divide the American people.

### DEEPER INTO VIETNAM

Advisers persuaded Lyndon Johnson that controlled military escalation—a middle course between withdrawal and all-out war—could secure Vietnam (see Map 29–1). They failed to understand the extent of popular opposition to the official government in Saigon and the willingness of North Vietnam to sacrifice to achieve national unity.

The air war required ground troops to protect bases in South Vietnam. Marines landed on March 8. More bombs, a pause, an offer of massive U.S. aid—nothing brought North Vietnam to the negotiating table. Johnson dribbled in new forces and expanded their mission from base security to combat. On July 28, he finally gave General William Westmoreland, the commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, doubled draft calls and an increase in U.S. combat troops from 75,000 to 275,000 by 1966.

Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara was clear about the change: “We have relied on South Vietnam to carry the brunt. Now we would be responsible for a satisfactory military outcome.” American forces in South Vietnam reached their maximum of 543,000 in August 1969. In all, more than 2 million Americans served in Vietnam.

The U.S. strategy on the ground was **search and destroy**. As conceived by Westmoreland, it used sophisticated surveillance and heavily armed patrols to locate enemy detachments, which could then be destroyed by air strikes, artillery, and reinforcements carried in by helicopter.

HOW DID the national consensus of the 1950s and early 1960s unravel?

WHERE TO LEARN MORE



Vietnam Veterans Memorial,  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.nps.gov/vive/](http://www.nps.gov/vive/)

**search and destroy** U.S. military tactic in South Vietnam, using small detachments to locate enemy units and then massive air, artillery, and ground forces to destroy them.

# MAP EXPLORATION

To explore an interactive version of this map, go to <http://www.prenhall.com/goldfield2/map29.1>



MAP 29-1

**The War in Vietnam** The United States attacked North Vietnam with air strikes but confined large-scale ground operations to South Vietnam and Cambodia. In South Vietnam, U.S. forces faced both North Vietnamese army units and Viet Cong rebels, all of whom received supplies by way of the so-called Ho Chi Minh Trail, named for the leader of North Vietnam. The coordinated attacks on cities and towns throughout South Vietnam during the Tet Offensive in 1968 surprised the United States.

WHAT WERE the shortcomings of American military strategy in Vietnam?



## CHRONOLOGY

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>1962</b> Rachel Carson publishes <i>Silent Spring</i><br/>Port Huron Statement launches Students for a Democratic Society.</p>  | <p>Operatives for Nixon's reelection campaign break into Democratic headquarters in the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C.</p>  |
| <p><b>1965</b> Congress approves Wilderness Act.<br/>Malcolm X is assassinated. Residents of Watts neighborhood in Los Angeles riot.</p>  | <p><b>1973</b> Paris accords end direct U.S. involvement in South Vietnamese war.<br/>United States moves to all-volunteer armed forces.<br/>Watergate burglars are convicted.<br/>Senate Watergate hearings reveal the existence of taped White House conversations.<br/>Spiro Agnew resigns as vice president, is replaced by Gerald Ford.<br/>Arab states impose an oil embargo after the third Arab-Israeli War.</p> |
| <p><b>1967</b> African Americans riot in Detroit and Newark.</p>  | <p><b>1974</b> Nixon resigns as president, is succeeded by Gerald Ford.</p>  |
| <p><b>1968</b> Viet Cong launches Tet Offensive.<br/>James Earl Ray kills Martin Luther King Jr.<br/>Lyndon Johnson declines to run for reelection.<br/>SDS disrupts Columbia University.<br/>Sirhan Sirhan kills Robert Kennedy.<br/>Peace talks start between the United States and North Vietnam.<br/>Police riot against antiwar protesters during the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.<br/>Richard Nixon is elected president.</p> | <p><b>1975</b> Communists triumph in South Vietnam.<br/>United States, USSR, and European nations sign the Helsinki Accords.</p>   |
| <p><b>1969</b> Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walk on the moon.</p>   | <p><b>1976</b> Jimmy Carter defeats Gerald Ford for the presidency.</p>  |
| <p><b>1970</b> United States invades Cambodia.<br/><br/>National Guard units kill students at Kent State and Jackson State Universities.<br/><br/>Earth Day is celebrated.<br/>Environmental Protection Agency is created.</p>  | <p><b>1978</b> Carter brings the leaders of Egypt and Israel to Camp David for peace talks.</p>  |
| <p><b>1971</b> <i>New York Times</i> publishes the secret "Pentagon Papers."<br/>President Nixon freezes wages and prices.<br/>"Plumbers" unit is established in the White House.</p>   | <p><b>1979</b> SALT II agreement is signed but not ratified.<br/>OPEC raises oil prices.<br/>Three Mile Island nuclear plant comes close to disaster.<br/>Iranian militants take U.S. embassy hostages.</p>  |
| <p><b>1972</b> Nixon visits China.<br/>United States and Soviet Union adopt SALT I.</p>   | <p><b>1980</b> Iranian hostage rescue fails.<br/>Soviet troops enter Afghanistan.<br/>Ronald Reagan defeats Jimmy Carter for the presidency.</p>   |

However, most opponents were South Vietnamese guerrillas forcing the United States to make repeated sweeps through farms and villages. The enemy were difficult for Americans to recognize among farmers and workers, making South Vietnamese society itself the target. Massive American firepower killed thousands of Vietnamese and made millions refugees.

Pilots dropped tons of bombs on the "Ho Chi Minh Trail," a network of supply routes from North Vietnam to South Vietnam through the mountains of neighboring Laos. Despite the bombing, thousands of workers converted rough paths into roads that were repaired as soon as they were damaged. Air assault on North Vietnam itself remained "diplomatic," intended to force North Vietnam to stop intervening in the South Vietnamese civil war. Since Ho Chi Minh considered North and South to be one country, the American goal was unacceptable. Attacking North Vietnam's poorly developed economy, the United States soon ran out of targets.

### VOICES OF DISSENT

At home, protest against the war quickly mounted. In the 1950s, McCarthyism had intimidated dissenters on the left. Now antiwar activists and college students challenged the "Cold Warriors."



## QUICK REVIEW

**Opposition to the War**

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

“Realists,” such as Senator William Fulbright, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, argued that the war was a dangerous distraction from the country’s vital interests in regions such as Europe, and a waste of American lives and resources. More radical critics saw the roots of the war in basic flaws in the American character and system. Some called it an example of economic imperialism that revealed the power of multinational corporations to control American foreign policy. A generation later, some of the same criticisms would reappear in arguments against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the World Trade Organization.

In 1966 and 1967, antiwar activity accelerated into direct confrontation. Protesters blocked munitions trains. Peace organizations sent representatives to North Vietnam to explore possible solutions. Religious groups condemned the war.

Much of the anger was directed against the military draft administration, the **Selective Service System**. Draft deferral criteria favored the middle class and helped make Vietnam a working-class conflict. Full-time college enrollment was grounds for a deferment; so was the right diagnosis from the right doctor. As a result, enlistees and draftees tended to be small-town or innercity working-class youths. They were also young. In World War II, the average GI had been in his mid-twenties. The typical soldier in Vietnam was 19 or 20. Women who served as military nurses tended to come from the same background. The resentment the draft created eroded the alliance between working-class Americans and the Democratic party.

Military service also deepened the racial gap. In 1965 African Americans made up 11 percent of the nation’s population but were 24 percent of the soldiers killed in Vietnam. This disparity forced the Defense Department to revise its combat assignments. Martin Luther King Jr. joined the protest in 1967. King called the war a moral disaster and a new form of colonialism whose costs weighed most heavily on the poor.

As protests mounted, draft resistance provided a direct avenue to attack the war. Young men burned their draft cards, fled to Canada, or applied for conscientious objector status on moral or religious grounds. A few were jailed for refusing to cooperate in any way with the Selective Service System. And a handful of activists invaded draft-board offices and tried to destroy files. By 1969, over half the men drafted in California were refusing to show up, and thousands were prosecuted for draft evasion.

The popular media portrayed the conflicting visions of the war. While antiwar songs climbed the charts, an aging John Wayne portrayed a heroic American soldier saving South Vietnam in the movie *The Green Berets*, and country singer Merle Travis spoke for many small-town Americans who supported the war in “Okie from Muskogee” (where they didn’t burn draft cards).

## NEW LEFT AND COMMUNITY ACTIVISM

The antiwar movement was part of a growing grass-roots activism that took much of its tone from the university-based **Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)**. The group was important for its ideas, not its size. Its Port Huron Statement, adopted in 1962, called for grass-roots action and “participatory democracy.” SDS tried to harness youthful disillusionment about consumerism, racism, and imperialism. It thought of itself as a “New Left” that was free from the doctrinal squabbles that hampered the old left of the 1930s and 1940s.

Many of the original SDS leaders were also participants in the civil-rights movement. The same was true of Mario Savio, founder of the **Free Speech Movement (FSM)** at the University of California at Berkeley in 1964. Savio hoped to build a

**Selective Service System** Federal agency that coordinated military conscription before and during the Vietnam War.

**Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)** The leading student organization of the New Left of the early and mid-1960s.

**Free Speech Movement (FSM)** Student movement at the University of California, Berkeley, formed in 1964 to protest limitations on political activities on campus.



multi-issue “community of protest” around the idea of “a free university in a free society.” FSM protests climaxed with a December sit-in that led to 773 arrests and stirred protest on other campuses.

What SDS wanted to do with its grass-roots organizing resembled the federal community-action programs associated with the war on poverty. The **Model Cities Program** (1966) invited residents of poor neighborhoods to write their own plans for using federal funds to improve local housing, education, health services, and job opportunities. Model Cities assemblies challenged the racial bias in programs like urban renewal and helped train community leaders.

The lessons of grass-roots reform strengthened democracy from the bottom up. Activists staffed food cooperatives, free clinics, women’s health groups, and drug counseling centers. Community-based organization was a key element in self-help efforts by African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos. Neighborhood associations and community-development corporations that provided affordable housing and jobs extended the “backyard revolution” into the 1980s and beyond. Social conservatives, such as antiabortionists, used the same techniques on behalf of their own agendas.

## THE FEMINIST CRITIQUE

A revived feminism was another result of the ferment of the 1960s. Important steps in this revival included the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women in 1961; the addition of gender as one of the categories protected by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (see Chapter 28); and creation of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966.

Mainstream feminism targeted unequal opportunity in the job market. College-educated baby boomers encountered “glass ceilings” and job discrimination, in which companies hired less qualified men who “needed the job” rather than more qualified women who supposedly did not. Throughout the mid-1960s and 1970s, activists battled to open job categories to women, who proved that they could indeed use tools or pick stocks on Wall Street. They also battled for equal pay for everyone with equal qualifications and responsibilities.

Changes in sexual behavior paralleled efforts to equalize treatment in the workplace. More reliable methods of contraception, especially birth-control pills introduced in the early 1960s, gave women greater control over childbearing. A new sexual revolution eroded the double standard that expected chastity of women but tolerated promiscuity among men. One consequence was a singles culture that accepted sexual activity between unmarried men and women.

Women’s liberation took off as a social and political movement in 1970 and 1971 as influential books probed the roots of inequality between men’s and women’s opportunities. Women shared their stories and ideas in small “consciousness-raising” sessions. Within a few years, millions of women had recognized events and patterns in their lives as discrimination based on gender. The feminist movement, and specific policy measures related to it, put equal rights



**Antiwar protests** were simultaneously symbolic and disruptive. Some activists dumped jars of animal blood over draft-board records. Others tried to block munitions trains. In October 1967, a hundred thousand people marched on the Pentagon and surrounded it with the light of burning draft cards. Some in front stuck flowers in the rifle barrels of the soldiers ringing the building; others kicked and spat. The troops and police cleared the grounds with tear gas and clubs.

Corbis-Bettman



29-4

National Organization for Women, Statement of Purpose (1966)

**Model Cities Program** Effort to target federal funds to upgrade public services and economic opportunity in specifically defined urban neighborhoods between 1966 and 1974.



A hippie gestures the peace sign while standing in a meadow.

Getty Images, Inc.—Taxi

### QUICK REVIEW

#### Hippies

- ◆ Millions of young people expressed their alienation from mainstream American society.
- ◆ Youth culture contained a smaller, more intense, counterculture.
- ◆ A minority of hippies devoted themselves to social and political change.

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

and the fight against sexism (a word no one knew before 1965) on the national agenda and changed how Americans thought about the relationships between men and women. Feminists highlighted rape as a crime of violence and called attention to the burdens the legal system placed on rape victims. In the 1980s and 1990s, they also challenged sexual harassment in the workplace, gradually refining the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

## YOUTH CULTURE AND COUNTERCULTURE

Millions of young people in the second half of the 1960s expressed their alienation from American society by sampling drugs or chasing the rainbow of a youth culture. Some just smoked marijuana, grew long hair, and listened to psychedelic rock. Others plunged into ways of life that scorned their middle-class backgrounds. The middle aged and middle class ignored the differences and dubbed the rebellious young “hippies.” A high point of the youth culture was the 1969 Woodstock rock festival in New York State, a weekend of “sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll” for 400,000 young people.

But within the youth culture was a smaller and more intense **counterculture** that added Eastern religion, social radicalism, and evangelistic belief in the drug LSD. The Harvard professor Timothy Leary and the writer Aldous Huxley claimed that hallucinogenic or psychedelic drugs, such as mescaline and LSD, would swing open the “doors of perception.” Rock lyrics began to reflect the drug culture, and young people talked about Leary’s advice to “tune in, turn on, and drop out.” The mecca of the dropouts was San Francisco’s Haight-Ashbury district, but hippie neighborhoods sprang up around university campuses across the country.

The cultural rebels of the late 1950s and early 1960s had been trying to combine personal freedom with new social arrangements. Many hippies were more interested in drugs than with politics or poetry. Serious exploration of societal alternatives was left for the minority who devoted themselves to the political work of the New Left, communal living, women’s liberation, and other movements.

## SOUNDS OF CHANGE

The youth culture was shaped by films and philosophers, by pot and poets, but above all by music. Many changes in American society are mirrored in the abrupt shift from the complacent rock-and-roll of the early 1960s to the more provocative albums of mid-decade: Bob Dylan’s *Highway 61 Revisited* (1965), the Beatles’ *Rubber Soul* (1965) and *Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967), the Jefferson Airplane’s *Surrealistic Pillow* (1967). Musicians were increasingly self-conscious of themselves as artists and social critics.

At the start of the decade, the African-American roots of rock-and-roll were unmistakable, but there was no social agenda. Elvis Presley and the Everly Brothers kept the messages personal. Music that criticized American society initially found a much smaller audience through the folk-music revival. Folk singers, such as Pete Seeger and Joan Baez, drew on black music, white country music, and old labor-organizing songs to keep alive dissenting voices.

Then, in an artistic revolution, the doors opened to a new kind of rock music. The Beatles’ immense popularity opened the way for such hard-edged British bands as the Rolling Stones and The Who to introduce social criticism and class consciousness into rock lyrics. San Francisco’s new psychedelic-rock scene included performers such as the Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead, Buffalo Springfield and Janis Joplin.

Bob Dylan transformed the music scene. His music was musically exciting and socially critical in a way that expressed much of the discontent of American young





people. Dylan paved the way for later singers like Bruce Springsteen and Kurt Cobain.

The transformation of rock in the mid-1960s invited far more explicit treatment of sex and illegal drugs than was previously accepted in pop music. Jim Morrison and The Doors, Lou Reed and the Velvet Underground, and Jimi Hendrix exploded onto the scene in 1967. Their driving rhythms and sexually aggressive stage personalities blended the tensions of big cities with influences from white rock and roll and black rhythm and blues. By 1972, both Morrison and Hendrix were dead of hard living and drug abuse. Meanwhile, *Rolling Stone* magazine had published its first issue in November 1967, giving the new sounds a forum for serious analysis.

### COMMUNES AND CULTS

Thousands of Americans in the late 1960s and 1970s formed “intentional communities” or “communes.” Their members usually tried to combine individual freedom and spontaneity with cooperative living. Rural communes usually located on marginal land too poor to support commercial farming; members pored over *The Whole Earth Catalog* (1968) to figure out how to live on the land. Members of urban communes occupied large old houses and tried to pursue experiments in socialism, environmentalism, or feminism.

Communes were artificial families, financed by inheritances, food stamps, and handicraft sales, and they suffered from the same inequality between men and women that was fueling the feminist revolt. Like natural families, they were emotional hothouses; most collapsed because their members had incompatible goals.

Far more organized were exotic religious communities. Following an American tradition, they have offered tightly knit group membership and absolute answers to basic questions of human life. One of the most successful has been the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity (Unification Church), which Sun Myung Moon brought from Korea to the United States in 1973. Converts (“Moonies”) have never numbered more than a few tens of thousands, but Moon amassed a huge fortune and dabbled in conservative politics.

Americans usually hear about cults only if they clash with authorities or end in disaster. Most tragic was the case of Jim Jones, who founded the People’s Temple in California on a program of social justice but became dictatorial and abusive. He moved nearly a thousand followers to Guyana in South America and violently resisted efforts to penetrate his walls of secrecy. An investigation of abuses within the colony led to the murder of Congressman Leo Ryan and mass suicide by nine hundred of Jones’s followers, who drank cyanide-laced punch on November 18, 1978.

### CITIES UNDER STRESS

In the confident years after World War II, big cities had an upbeat image. The typical movie with a New York setting opened with a shot of the towering Manhattan skyline and plunged into the bustling business or theater districts. By the 1970s, however, slums and squalid back streets dominated popular imagery.

The message in films and on television was that cities had become places of random and frequent violence.



**At the Newport** (Rhode Island) Jazz Festival in 1963, Joan Baez and Bob Dylan performed as folksingers who worked in the tradition of protest songs. Two years later in Newport, Dylan shocked the popular music world by replacing his acoustic instrument with an amplified guitar and backup and jump-starting a fruitful blending of folk, country, and rock music into radical new sounds.

AP/Wide World Photos

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#### WHAT CHALLENGES

did American cities face in the late 1960s and 1970s?

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## DIAGNOSING AN URBAN CRISIS

Central cities had a special burden in caring for the domestic poor. Baltimore had 27 percent of the Maryland population in 1970 but 66 percent of the state's welfare recipients. Boston had 14 percent of the Massachusetts population but 32 percent of the welfare clients. Impoverished, and often fragmented, families needed schools to serve as social-work agencies as well as educational institutions. Poor people with no other access to health care treated city hospital emergency rooms as the family doctor.

Many urban problems were associated with the “second ghettos” created by the migration of 2.5 million African Americans from Southern farms to Northern and Western cities in the 1950s and 1960s. At the start of World War II, black Americans had been much more rural than white Americans. By 1970, they were more urban. One-third of all African Americans lived in the twelve largest cities, crowding into ghetto neighborhoods.

Postwar black migrants found systems of race relations that limited their access to decent housing, to the best schools, and to many unionized jobs. Many black families also had to face industrial layoffs and plant closures in the 1970s and 1980s. Already unneeded in the South because of the mechanization of agriculture, the migrants found themselves equally unwanted in the industrial North, caught in decaying neighborhoods and victimized by crime.

Because ghettos grew block by block, middle-class black families had to pioneer as intruders into white neighborhoods and then see ghetto problems crowd in behind them. Their children faced the seductions of the street, which became increasingly violent with the spread of handguns and illegal drugs.

Central cities faced additional financial problems unrelated to poverty and race. Much of their infrastructure was 50 to 100 years old by the 1960s and 1970s, and it was wearing out. This decay of urban utility and transportation systems was a by-product of market forces and public policy. Private developers often borrowed money saved through Northeastern bank accounts, insurance policies, and pension funds to finance new construction in the suburbs. The defense budget pumped tax dollars from the old industrial cities into the South and West.

High local taxes in older cities was one result, for the American system of local government demands that cities and the poor help themselves. By the early 1970s, the average resident of a central city paid roughly twice the state and local taxes per \$1,000 of income as the average suburbanite. As Mayor Moon Landreau of New Orleans commented, “We’ve taxed everything that moves and everything that stands still; and if anything moves again, we tax that, too.”

## RACIAL RIOTING

African Americans and Hispanics who rioted in city streets in the mid-1960s were fed up with lack of job opportunities, and with substandard housing and crime in their neighborhoods. Prominent black writers, such as James Baldwin in *The Fire Next Time* (1963), had warned of mounting anger. Suddenly the fires were real. Before they subsided, the riots scarred most big cities and killed two hundred people, most of them African Americans.

The explosion of the Watts neighborhood in Los Angeles fixed the danger of racial unrest in the public mind. Trouble started on August 11, 1965, when a white highway-patrol officer arrested a young African American for drunken driving. Loud complaints drew a crowd, and the arrival of Los Angeles police turned the bystanders into an angry mob that attacked passing cars. Rioting, looting, and arson spread through Watts until the National Guard occupied the neighborhood on August 14 and 15.

### QUICK REVIEW

#### Urban Problems

- ◆ Minorities and the poor were concentrated in urban centers.
- ◆ Postwar black migrants to the north found themselves with limited access to better houses, schools, and jobs.
- ◆ Cities faced decaying infrastructure and high taxes.



28–2

Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton, from *Black Power* (1968)



The outburst frightened white Americans. In most previous race riots, whites had used violence to keep blacks “in their place.” In Watts, blacks were the instigators. The primary targets were the police and ghetto businesses that had reputations for exploiting their customers. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders concluded in 1968 that most property damage was the “result of deliberate attacks on white-owned businesses characterized in the Negro community as unfair or disrespectful.” In short, the riots were protests about the problems of ghetto life.

After Watts, Americans expected “long hot summers” and got them. Scores of cities suffered riots in 1966, including one by Puerto Ricans in Chicago that protested the same problems blacks faced. In 1967, the worst violence was in Newark, New Jersey, and in Detroit, where forty-three deaths and blocks of blazing buildings stunned television viewers.

Few politicians wanted to admit that African Americans and Hispanics had serious grievances. Their impulse was to blame riffraff and outside agitators—“lawbreakers and mad dogs,” to quote California Governor Ronald Reagan. This theory was wrong. Almost all participants were younger neighborhood residents who were representative of the African-American population. Their violence came from the frustration of rising expectations. Despite the political gains of the civil rights movement, unemployment remained high, and the police treated all black people as potential criminals. The urban riots were political actions to force the problems of African Americans onto the national agenda.

## MINORITY SEPARATISM

Minority separatism tapped the same anger. The phrase “**Black Power**” challenged the central goal of the civil rights movement, which sought full participation in American life. The term came from frustrated SNCC leader Stokely Carmichael in 1966: “We’ve been saying freedom for six years—and we ain’t got nothing. What we’re going to start saying now is ‘Black Power’!”

Black power translated many ways—control of one’s own community through the voting machine, celebration of the African-American heritage, creation of a parallel society that shunned white institutions. At the personal level, it was a synonym for black pride.

Black Power also meant increased interest in the **Nation of Islam**, or Black Muslims, who combined a version of Islam with radical separatism. It was strongest in Northern cities, where it offered an alternative to the life of the ghetto streets.

In the early 1960s, Malcolm X emerged as a leading Black Muslim. Growing up as Malcolm Little, he was a streetwise criminal until he converted to the Nation of Islam in prison. After his release, Malcolm preached that blacks should stop letting whites set the terms by which they judged their appearance, communities, and accomplishments. He emphasized the African cultural heritage and economic self-help and proclaimed himself an extremist for black rights. Rivals within the movement assassinated him in February 1965, but his ideas lived on in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

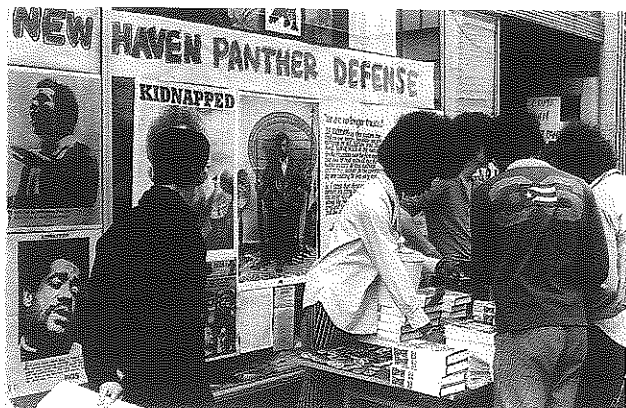
The **Black Panthers** pursued similar goals. Bobby Seale and Huey Newton saw African-American ghettos as internal colonies in need of self-determination. They created the Panthers in 1966 and recruited Eldridge Cleaver as the group’s chief publicist.

The Panthers shadowed police patrols to prevent mistreatment of African Americans and carried weapons into the California State Legislature in May 1967 to protest gun control. They also promoted community-based self-help efforts, and ran political candidates. Unlike the rioters in Watts, the Panthers

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

**Nation of Islam** Religious movement among black Americans that emphasizes self-sufficiency, self-help, and separation from white society.

**Black Panthers** Political and social movement among black Americans, founded in Oakland, California, in 1966 and emphasizing black economic and political power.



Some members of the Black Panther party raised funds to pay for the legal fees of those arrested and charged with various offenses, such as Bobby Seale and Ericka Huggins. The Panthers advocated a radical economic, social, and educational agenda that made the group the target of a determined campaign of suppression by the police and the FBI.

Magnum Photos Inc.

had a political program, if not the ability to carry it through. The movement was shaken when Newton was convicted of manslaughter for killing a police officer, Cleaver fled to Algeria, and a police raid killed Chicago Panther leader Fred Hampton.

Latinos in the Southwest developed a their own “Brown Power” movement in the late 1960s, but the best-known Hispanic activism combined social protest with the crusading spirit of earlier labor union organizing campaigns. César Chávez organized the multiracial United Farm Workers (UFW) among Mexican-American agricultural workers in California in 1965. UFW demands included better wages and safer working conditions. Because farm workers were not covered by the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, the issue was whether farm owners would recognize the union as a bargaining agent and sign a contract. Chávez supplemented work stoppages with national boycotts against table grapes, lettuce, and brands of wine, making *la huelga* (“the strike”) into *la causa* for urban liberals. Although the UFW had only limited success, Chávez’s toughness and self-sacrifice gave both Chicanos and the country a new hero.

Latino political activism had strong appeal for young people. Many rejected assimilation and began to talk about *la raza* (“the people”), whose language and heritage descended from centuries of Mexican history. “Chicano” itself was a slang term with insulting overtones that was now adopted as a badge of pride and cultural identity.

Native Americans also fought both for equal access to American society and to preserve cultural traditions through tribal institutions. Some Native American used media-oriented protest, such as seizing the abandoned Alcatraz Island (1969–1971) to assist “Red Power.” Indians in Minneapolis created the **American Indian Movement (AIM)** in 1968 to increase economic opportunity, stop police mistreatment and to assert their distinctiveness within American society.

Black Power, Brown Power, and Red Power were all efforts by minorities to define themselves through their own heritage, not simply by looking in the mirror of white society. They thus questioned the American assumption that everyone wanted to be part of the same homogeneous society.

### SUBURBAN INDEPENDENCE: THE OUTER CITY

The 1970 census found more people living in the suburban counties of metropolitan areas (37 percent) than in central cities (31 percent) or in small towns and rural areas (31 percent). By the late 1960s, these suburbs were becoming “outer cities,” whose inhabitants had little need for the old central city and felt no personal connection to, or responsibility for, old city neighborhoods. For them, suburban malls and shopping strips were the new American Main Street and suburban communities the new Middle America.

Suburbs captured most new jobs, leaving the urban poor with fewer opportunities for employment. In the fifteen largest metropolitan areas, the number of central city jobs fell by 800,000 in the 1960s, while the number of suburban jobs rose by 3.2 million. The shift from rail to air for business travel accentuated suburban job growth. Sales representatives and executives could arrive at airports

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



on the edge of town, and transact business without ever going downtown. Around many cities, suburban retailing, employment, and services fused into so-called “edge cities.” Suburban rings also gained a growing share of public facilities including colleges and major league sports franchises.

Suburban political power grew along with economic clout. In 1962, the Supreme Court in the case of *Baker v. Carr* overturned laws that treated counties or other political subdivisions as the units to be represented in state legislatures. The Court said that legislative seats should be apportioned on the basis of population. This principle of “one person, one vote” broke the stranglehold of rural counties on state governments, but the big beneficiaries were fast-growing suburbs. By 1975, suburbanites held the largest block of seats in the House of Representatives—131 suburban districts, 130 rural, 102 central city, and 72 mixed.

School integration controversies in the 1970s reinforced a tendency for suburbanites to separate themselves from city problems. In *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* (1971), the U.S. Supreme Court held that cross-town busing was an acceptable solution to the *de facto* segregation that resulted from residential patterns within a single school district. When school officials around the country failed to achieve racial balance, federal judges ordered their own busing plans. Some white people resented the practice and for many Americans, the image of busing for racial integration was fixed in 1975, when white citizens in Boston resisted busing black students to largely white high schools. The goal of equal opportunity clashed with equally strong values of neighborhood, community, and ethnic solidarity.

Because the Supreme Court also ruled that busing programs normally stopped at school-district boundaries, suburbs with independent districts escaped school integration. One result was to make busing self-defeating, for it caused white families to move out of the integrating school district or place their children in private academies. Busing also caused suburbanites to defend their political independence fiercely. In Denver, for example, a by-product of court-ordered busing included incorporation or expansion of several large suburbs and a state constitutional amendment that blocked further expansion of the city boundaries (and thus of the Denver school district).

*Baker v. Carr* U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1962 that allowed federal courts to review the appointment of state legislative districts and established the principle that such districts should have roughly equal populations (“one person, one vote”).

*Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1971 that upheld cross-city busing to achieve the racial integration of public schools.

## THE YEAR OF THE GUN, 1968

**I**n 1968, mainstream Americans turned against the war in Vietnam, student protest and youth counter-culture turned ugly, and political consensus shattered.

### THE TET OFFENSIVE

The longer the Vietnam War continued and the less interest that China or the Soviet Union showed in it, the less valid the conflict seemed to the American people. It looked more and more like a war for pride, not national security.

At the end of 1967, U.S. officials were overconfidently predicting victory. They also fell for a North Vietnamese feint by committing U.S. forces to the defense of Khe Sanh, a strongpoint near the North-South border. The defense was a tactical success for the United States but thinned its forces elsewhere in South Vietnam. Then, at the beginning of Tet, the Vietnamese New Year on January 30, 1968, the Viet Cong attacked cities across South Vietnam. In the capital, Saigon, they even hit the U.S. embassy. U.S. and South Vietnamese troops repulsed the

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WHY DID America's view of the war in Vietnam change in 1968?

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attacks, but the offensive was a psychological blow that convinced the American public that the war was quicksand.

Images from Vietnam went direct to the evening television news; it was a “living room war.” A handful of images stayed in people’s memories—a Buddhist monk burning himself to death in protest; a child with flesh peeled off by napalm; a South Vietnamese official executing a captive on the streets of Saigon.

In the wake of the Tet crisis, General Westmoreland’s request for 200,000 more troops forced a political and military reevaluation. Clark Clifford, the new secretary of defense, as well as twenty “wise men”—the big names of the Cold War—told the president that the war was unwinnable. The best option was disengagement.

### LBJ’s EXIT

Minnesota’s liberal Senator Eugene McCarthy had decided to challenge Johnson in the presidential primaries. Because he controlled the party organizations in two-thirds of the states, Johnson ignored the first primary in New Hampshire. Enthusiastic college students staffed McCarthy’s campaign. McCarthy won a startling 42 percent of the popular vote and twenty of twenty-four delegates in the March 16 election. The vote proved that the political middle ground would no longer hold.

By showing Johnson’s vulnerability, New Hampshire also drew Robert Kennedy into the race. Younger brother of the former president, Kennedy inspired both fervent loyalty and strong distaste. In the 1950s, he had worked for Senator Joe McCarthy and had been a reluctant supporter of civil rights during his brother’s administration. More than other mainstream politicians of the 1960s, however, he touched the hearts of Hispanic and African-American voters as well as the white working class.

Facing political challenges and an unraveling war, on March 31, 1968, Johnson announced a halt to most bombing of North Vietnam, opening the door for negotiations. He then astounded the country by withdrawing from the presidential race. As he told an aide, the war made him feel like a hitchhiker in a hailstorm: “I can’t run, I can’t hide, and I can’t make it stop.” Hoping to save his domestic program, he served out his term with few friends and little credit for his accomplishments.

### RED SPRING

In the months that followed the Tet crisis, grass-roots rebellion shook the Soviet grip on eastern Europe. University students in Poland protested the stifling of political discussion. Alexander Dubček, the new leader of the Czech Communist party, brought together students and the middle class around reforms that caused people to talk about “Prague Spring”—a blossoming of democracy inside the iron curtain. In August, the Soviets sent in their tanks to crush the reforms and bring Czechoslovakia back into line.

Students protested across Europe. In Paris, student demonstrations against the Vietnam War turned into attacks on the university system and the French government. Students fought police in the Paris streets in the first days of May. Radical industrial workers called a general strike. The government nearly toppled.

At Columbia University in New York, African-American students and its SDS chapter had several grievances. One was the university’s cooperation with the Pentagon-funded Institute for Defense Analysis. Another was its plan to build a gymnasium on park land that might better serve the residents of Harlem. Some students



WHERE TO LEARN MORE

★ Lyndon B. Johnson National  
Historic Park, Johnson City, Texas  
[www.nps.gov/lypo/](http://www.nps.gov/lypo/)

### QUICK REVIEW

#### Student Protests in the Spring of 1968

- ◆ University students and members of the middle-class in Poland and Czechoslovakia sought reforms.
- ◆ Students across Europe protested the war in Vietnam.
- ◆ Students at Columbia University occupied five buildings.



wanted changes in university policy, others a confrontation that would recruit new radicals. They occupied five university buildings, including the library and the president's office, for a week in April until police evicted them. The "battle of Morningside Heights" (the location of Columbia) gave Americans a glimpse of the gap that divided radicalized students from national institutions.

## VIOLENCE AND POLITICS

On April 4, 1968, ex-convict James Earl Ray shot and killed Martin Luther King Jr. as he stood on the balcony of a Memphis motel. King's death triggered a climactic round of violence in black ghettos. Fires devastated the West Side of Chicago and downtown Washington, D.C. The army guarded the steps of the Capitol, ready to protect Congress from its fellow citizens.

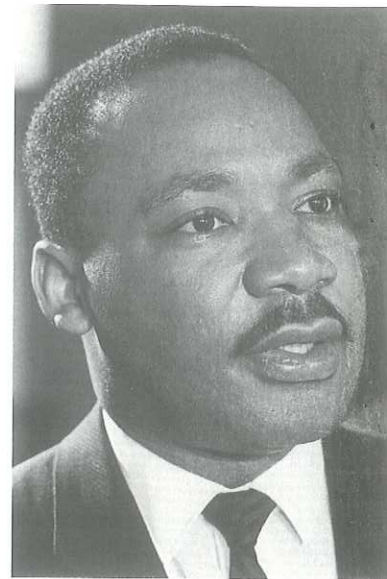
The shock of King's death was still fresh when another political assassination stunned the nation. On June 5, Robert Kennedy won California's primary election. He was still behind Vice President Hubert Humphrey in the delegate count but coming on strong. As Kennedy walked out of the ballroom at his headquarters in the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, a Jordanian immigrant named Sirhan Sirhan put a bullet in his brain.

Kennedy's death ensured the Democratic nomination for Humphrey, a liberal who had loyally supported Johnson's war policy. After his nomination, Humphrey faced Republican Richard Nixon and Independent George Wallace. Nixon positioned himself as the candidate of the political middle and claimed he had a secret plan for winning the war. Wallace appealed to white Southerners and working-class Northerners who feared black militancy and hated "the ivory-tower folks with pointed heads."

Both got great help from the Democratic Convention, held in Chicago on August 26–29. While Democrats feuded among themselves, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley and his police department monitored antiwar protesters. Leaders of the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam were experienced peace activists—people who had long fought against nuclear weapons in the 1950s and the Vietnam War. They wanted to embarrass the Johnson-Humphrey administration by marching to the convention hall on nomination night. Mixed in were the **Yippies**. The term supposedly stood for Youth International Party. The Yippies planned to attract young people to Chicago with a promise of street theater, media events, and confrontation that would puncture the pretensions of the power structure.

On August 28, the same night that Democratic delegates were nominating Humphrey, protesters and Yippies had congregated in Grant Park, across Michigan Avenue from downtown hotels. Undisciplined police waded into the crowds with clubs and tear gas. Young people fought back with rocks and bottles. Television caught the hours of violence that ended when the National Guard separated police from demonstrators. On the convention floor, Senator Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut decried "Gestapo tactics" on the streets of Chicago. Mayor Daley shouted back obscenities. For Humphrey, the convention was a catastrophe, alienating liberal Democrats.

Election day gave Wallace 13.5 percent of the popular vote, Humphrey 42.7 percent of the popular vote and 191 electoral votes, and Nixon 43.4 percent of the popular vote and 301 electoral votes. The national media saw Wallace in terms of bigotry and backlash against civil rights. But many of Wallace's northern backers were unhappy with both parties.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Corbis/Bettmann

## QUICK REVIEW

### The 1968 Democratic Convention

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



WHAT WAS the legacy of Richard Nixon's presidency?

#### QUICK REVIEW

##### The Nixon Doctrine

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

**Nixon Doctrine** President Nixon's new American policy (1969) toward Asia in which the United States would honor treaty commitments but would gradually disengage and expect Asian nations to handle military defense on their own.

## NIXON AND WATERGATE

The new president was an unlikely politician. After losing a 1962 race for governor of California, he announced that he was quitting politics and that the press would no longer have Dick Nixon “to kick around.” In 1968, he skillfully sold a “new Nixon” to the media. Seven years later, the press was his undoing as it uncovered the Watergate scandal.

### GETTING OUT OF VIETNAM, 1969–1973

Nixon had no secret plan to end the war. Protests culminated in 1969 with the Vietnam Moratorium on October 15, when 2 million protesters joined rallies across the country. Disaffection also mounted in Vietnam. Nurses found their idealism strained as they treated young men maimed in thousands of nasty skirmishes in the jungles and mountains. Racial tensions sapped morale on the front lines. Troops lost discipline, took drugs, and hunkered down waiting for their tours of duty to end. Soldiers “fraggged” (killed) their own gung-ho or racist officers, and the high command had to adapt its code of justice to keep an army on the job.

Nixon and Vice President Spiro Agnew responded by trying to isolate the antiwar opposition, but Nixon also reduced the role of U.S. ground forces. He claimed that his policies represented “the great silent majority of my fellow Americans.” Agnew blamed bad morale on journalists and intellectuals—on “nattering nabobs of negativism” and “an effete corps of impudent snobs.”

The New Left had already split into factions. About a hundred angry SDS members declared themselves the Weather Underground in 1969, taking their name from a Bob Dylan lyric. They tried to disrupt Chicago and Washington with window-smashing “days of rage.” Three Weatherpeople blew themselves up with a homemade bomb in New York in 1970. Others bombed a University of Wisconsin building and killed a student.

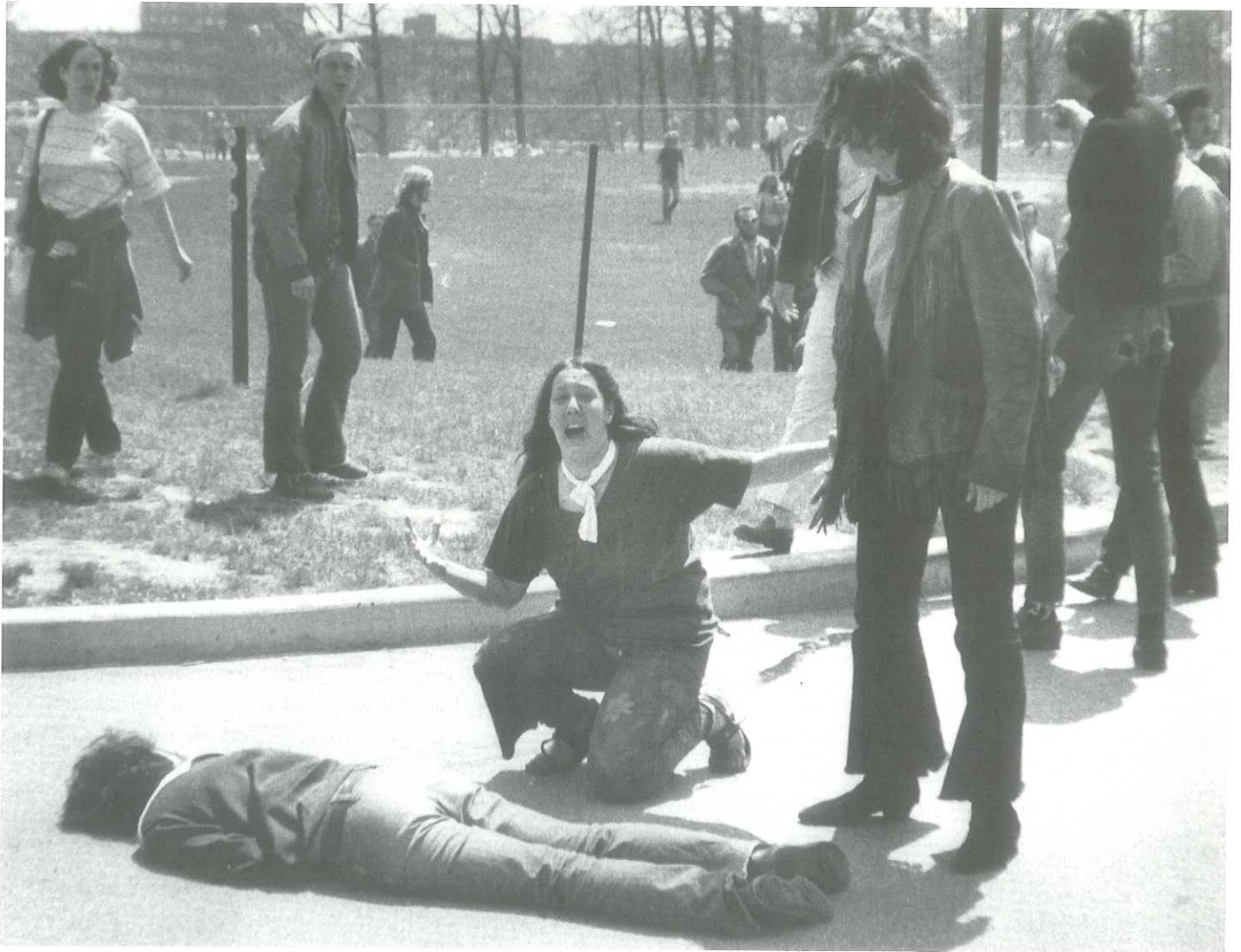
Nixon's secretary of defense, Melvin Laird, responded to the antiwar sentiment with “Vietnamization,” withdrawing U.S. troops as fast as possible without undermining the South Vietnamese government. In July 1969, the president announced the “**Nixon Doctrine**.” The policy substituted weapons and money for men. Americans rearmed and expanded the South Vietnamese army and surreptitiously bombed Communist bases in neutral Cambodia.

The secret war against Cambodia culminated on April 30, 1970 with an invasion. Americans who had hoped that the war was fading away were outraged. Students shut down hundreds of colleges. At Kent State University in Ohio, the National Guard was called in to maintain order. On May 4, one unit fired on a group of non-threatening students and killed four of them. At Jackson State University in Mississippi, two students were also killed when troops fired on their dormitory.

The Cambodian “incursion” extended the military stalemate in Vietnam to United States policy. In December 1970, Congress repealed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and prohibited use of U.S. ground troops outside South Vietnam. Cambodia, however, was already devastated. The U.S. invasion had opened the way for the bloodthirsty Khmer Rouge, who killed millions of Cambodians in the name of working-class revolution. Only ninety thousand U.S. ground troops were still in Vietnam by early 1972. A final air offensive in December smashed much of Hanoi into rubble and helped force four and a half years of peace talks to a conclusion.

The cease-fire began on January 27, 1973. The United States promised not to increase its military aid to South Vietnam. Immediately after coming to terms with North Vietnam, Nixon suspended the draft in favor of an all-volunteer military.





## NIXON AND THE WIDER WORLD

To his credit, Richard Nixon took American foreign policy in new directions even while he was struggling to escape from Vietnam and Cambodia. He hoped to distract the American people from frustration in Southeast Asia with more important accomplishments elsewhere.

Nixon's first foreign policy success was a gift from Kennedy and Johnson. NASA had been working since 1961 to meet Kennedy's goal of a manned trip to the moon before the end of the decade. On July 20, 1969 the lunar lander *Eagle* detached from the command module circling the moon and landed on the level plain known as the Sea of Tranquility. Six hours later, Armstrong was the first human to walk on the moon.

For Nixon and Henry Kissinger, his national security adviser (and later secretary of state), foreign policy was about the balance of world economic and military power and securing the most advantageous agreements, alliances, and military positions. In particular, they hoped to trade improved relations with China and the USSR for help in settling the Vietnam War.

China was increasingly isolated within the Communist world. In 1969, it almost went to war with the USSR. Nixon was eager to take advantage of Chinese-Soviet tension. In April 1971 secret talks led to an easing of the American trade

The shootings at Kent State University in May 1970 reflected the deep divisions in American society created by the Vietnam War, including those between antiwar college students and those serving in the armed forces.

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WHERE TO LEARN MORE



Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace, Yorba Linda, California  
[www.nixonfoundation.org/index.shtml](http://www.nixonfoundation.org/index.shtml)



WHERE TO LEARN MORE

★ Titan Missile Museum,  
Green Valley, Arizona  
[www.pimaair.org/titan\\_0.1.htm](http://www.pimaair.org/titan_0.1.htm)

embargo begun in 1950 and a tour of China by a U.S. table tennis team. Kissinger then arranged for Nixon's startling visit to Mao Zedong in Beijing in February 1972.

Playing the "China card" helped improve relations with the Soviet Union. The Soviets needed increased trade with the United States and a counterweight to China, the United States was looking for help in getting out of Vietnam, and both countries wanted to limit nuclear armaments. Protracted negotiations led to arms agreements known as **SALT**—the **Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty**—that Nixon signed in Moscow in May 1972. The agreements blocked creation of extensive antiballistic missiles (ABM) systems but failed to limit bombers, cruise missiles, or multiple independently targeted warheads on single missiles.

Diplomats used the French word *détente*, meaning easing of tension, to describe the new U.S. relations with China and the Soviet Union. It facilitated travel between the United States and China. It allowed U.S. farmers to sell wheat to the Soviets. More broadly, *détente* implied that the United States and China recognized mutual interests in Asia and that the United States acknowledged the Soviet Union as an equal in world affairs.

### COURTING MIDDLE AMERICA

Nixon designed domestic policy to help him win reelection. His goal was to solidify his "Middle American" support; the strategy targeted the suburbs and the South. The Nixon White House preferred not to deal with troubled big cities. Spokesmen announced that the "urban crisis" was over and then dismantled the urban initiatives of Johnson's Great Society. Instead, Nixon tilted federal assistance to the suburbs. The centerpiece of his **New Federalism** was General Revenue Sharing (1972). By 1980, it had transferred more than \$18 billion from the federal treasury to the states and more than \$36 billion to local governments. Revenue sharing grants supplemented the general funds of every full-service government, whether a city of 2 million or a suburban town of five hundred.

Nixon pursued the southern strategy through Supreme Court nominations of Southerners Clement Haynsworth of Florida and G. Harrold Carswell of Alabama. Although the Senate rejected both as unqualified, the nominations nonetheless gave Nixon a reputation as a champion of the white South. He hoped to move cautiously in enforcing school desegregation, but a task force led by Secretary of Labor George Shultz crafted an approach that allowed substantial desegregation.

### OIL, OPEC, AND STAGFLATION

More troublesome was inflation, one of Lyndon Johnson's unpleasant legacies. One of the causes was LBJ's decision to fight in Vietnam without tax increases until 1968. An income tax cut in 1969, supported by both parties, made the situation worse. Inflation eroded the value of savings and pensions. It also made U.S. goods too expensive for foreign buyers and generated a trade deficit.

After the 1972 election, inflation came roaring back. The main cause was sharp increases in the cost of energy. Angry at American support for Israel in the Arab-Israeli War of October 1973, Arab nations imposed an embargo on oil exports that lasted from October 1973 to March 1974. Gasoline and heating oil became scarce and expensive. The shortages eased when the embargo ended, but the **Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** had challenged the ability of the industrial nations to dictate world economic policy.

Americans switched off unused lights, turned down thermostats, and put on sweaters. Congress required states to enforce a highway speed limit of 55 miles

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

**détente** (French for "easing of tension") Used to describe the new U.S. relations with China and the Soviet Union in 1972.

**New Federalism** President Richard Nixon's policy to shift responsibilities of government programs from the federal level to the states.

**Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** Cartel of oil-producing nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America that gained substantial power over the world economy in the mid-to late-1970s by controlling the production and price of oil.



per hour to get federal highway funds and enacted the first fuel economy standards for automobiles. More efficient imports captured a third of the U.S. car market by 1980.

After thirty years at the top, the United States could no longer dominate the world economy by itself. Germany and Japan now had economies as modern as that of the United States. In 1971, stagflation was the new term to describe the painful combination of inflation, high unemployment, and flat economic growth that matched no one's economic theory but everyone's daily experience.

## AMERICANS AS ENVIRONMENTALISTS

In the turbulent 1970s, resource conservation grew into a multifaceted environmental movement. Environmentalism dealt with serious problems. It was broad enough for both scientific experts and activists, for both Republican Richard Nixon and Democrat Jimmy Carter.

After the booming 1950s, Americans had started to pay attention to the damage that advanced technologies and industrial production did to natural systems. Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962 described the side effects of DDT and other pesticides on animal life. In her imagined future, spring was silent because all the birds had died of pesticide poisoning. Meanwhile, an offshore oil well polluted the beaches of Santa Barbara, California, in 1969. Fire danced across the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland when industrial discharges ignited.

On April 22, children in ten thousand schools and 20 million other people took part in Earth Day, an occasion first conceived by Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson. Earth Day gained a grass-roots following in towns and cities across the country.

The mainstream media discovered the ravaged planet; so did a politically savvy president. Nixon had already signed the National Environmental Policy Act on January 1, 1970, and later in the year created the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** to enforce environmental laws. The rest of the Nixon years brought legislation on clean air, clear water, pesticides, hazardous chemicals, and endangered species that made environmental management and protection part of governmental routine.

Americans began to realize that low-income and minority communities had more than their share of environmental problems. Residents near the Love Canal in Buffalo, New York, discovered in 1978 that an entire neighborhood was built on land contaminated by decades of chemical dumping. Activists sought to understand the health effects and force compensation, paving the way for the **Superfund** cleanup legislation. (See American View, "Grassroots Community action.") African Americans often lived downstream and downwind of heavily polluting industries. Landfills and waste disposal sites were frequently located near minority neighborhoods. Efforts to fight environmental racism became important in many minority communities.

## FROM DIRTY TRICKS TO WATERGATE

Subordinates learned during his first administration that Richard Nixon would condone dishonest actions—"dirty tricks"—if they stood to improve his political position. In 1972 and 1973, dirty tricks grew from a scandal into a constitutional crisis when Nixon abused the power of his office to cover up wrongdoing and hinder criminal investigations.

The chain of events that undermined Nixon's presidency started with the **Pentagon Papers**. In his last year as secretary of defense, Robert McNamara had

### QUICK REVIEW

#### Environmentalism

- ◆ In the 1970s resource conservation grew into an environmental movement.
- ◆ Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1970.
- ◆ Low-income and minority communities had a disproportionate share of environmental problems.

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

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



## ◆ AMERICAN VIEWS ◆

### GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY ACTION

**I**n the 1950s, a major chemical company closed a waste dump in Niagara Falls, New York. The site, known as Love Canal, was soon surrounded by a park, school, and hundreds of modest homes. Residents put up with noxious odors and seepage of chemical wastes until 1978, when they learned that the State Health Department was concerned about the health effects on small children and pregnant women. Over the next two years, residents battled state and federal bureaucracies and reluctant politicians for accurate information about the risks they faced and then for financial assistance to move from the area (often their homes represented their only savings). In October, 1980, President Carter signed a bill to move all families permanently from the Love Canal area.

One of the leaders of the grassroots movement was housewife Lois Gibbs. The following excerpts from her story show her increasing sophistication as a community activist, starting by ringing doorbells in 1978 and ending with national television exposure in 1980. Although the Love Canal case itself was unusual, community based organizations in all parts of the country learned the tactics of effective action in the 1960s and 1970s.

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WHAT PUBLIC programs in the 1960s and 1970s gave citizens experience in grassroots action? How might the Internet change the tactics of community organizing?

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#### Knocking on Doors

I decided to go door-to-door with a petition. It seemed like a good idea to start near the school, to talk to the mothers nearest it. I had already heard that a lot of the residents near the school had been upset about the chemicals for the past couple of years. I thought they might help me. I had never done anything like this. . . . I was afraid a lot of doors would be slammed in my face, that people would think I was some crazy fanatic. But I decided to do it anyway. . . . and knocked on my first door. There was no answer. I just stood there, not knowing what to do. It was an usually warm June day and I was perspiring. I thought: What am I doing here? I must be crazy. People are going to think I am. Go home, you fool! And that's just what I did.

It was one of those times when I had to sit down and face myself. I was afraid of making a fool of myself, I had scared myself, and I had gone home. When I got there, I sat at the kitchen table with my petition in my hand, thinking. Wait. What if people do slam doors in your face? People may think you're crazy. But what's more important—what people think or your child's health? Either you're going to do something or

commissioned a report on America's road to Vietnam. The documents showed that the country's leaders had planned to expand the war even while they claimed to be looking for a way out. In June 1971, one of the contributors to the report, Daniel Ellsberg, leaked it to the *New York Times*. Its publication infuriated Nixon.

In response, the White House compiled a list of journalists and politicians who opposed Nixon. As White House staffer John Dean put it, the president's men could then "use the available federal machinery [Internal Revenue Service, FBI] to screw our political enemies." Former CIA employees E. Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy became the chief "plumbers," as the group was known because its job was to prevent leaks of information. The plumbers cooked up schemes to embarrass political opponents and ransacked the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist.

Early in 1972, Hunt went to work for CREEP—the Committee to Re-Elect the President—while Liddy took another position on the presidential staff. CREEP had already raised millions from corporations and was hatching plans to undermine Democrats with rumors and pranks. Then, on June 17, 1972, five inept burglars hired with CREEP funds were caught breaking into the Democratic National Committee office in Washington's **Watergate** apartment building. Nixon initiated

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



you're going to have to admit you're a coward and not do it. . . .

The next day, I went out on my own street to talk to people, I knew. It was a little easier to be brave with them. If I could convince people I knew—friends—maybe it would be less difficult to convince others. . . . I went to the back door, as I always did when I visited a neighbor. Each house took about twenty or twenty-five minutes. . . .

### Phil Donahue and Political Action

The *Phil Donahue Show* called. They wanted us to appear on their June 18 show. The reaction in the office was different this time, compared to the show in October 1978. In October, everyone was excited. "Phil Donahue—wow!" Now, residents reacted differently. "Donahue. That's great press. Now we'll get the politicians to move!" . . . Now our people looked at the show as a tool to use in pushing the government to relocate us permanently. By this time we understood how politicians react to public pressure, how to play the political game. We eagerly agreed to go, and found forty other residents to go with us. . . .

[After arriving in Chicago] We then planned how we would handle the *Phil Donahue Show*. . . . We had to

get the real issues across. Each resident was assigned an issue. One told of the chromosome tests. Another was to concentrate on her multiple miscarriages. Another was to ask for telegrams from across the country to the White House in support of permanent relocation. I coached them to get their point in, no matter the question asked. For example, if Donahue asked what you thought of the mayor, and your assignment was to discuss miscarriages, you should answer: "I don't like the mayor because I have had three miscarriages and other health problems, and he won't help us." Or; "My family is sick, and the mayor won't help us. That's why we need people to send telegrams to the White House for permanent relocation." . . . The residents were great! Each and every one followed through with our plan.

In July, I went on a speaking tour of California arranged by Jane Fonda and Tom Hayden. I visited many sites with problems similar to ours. I was able to give advice, based on our experiences. I told the leaders of each community that it wasn't hopeless that they could win. "Stick with it. We are!"

Source: Lois Marie Gibbs, as told to Murray Levine, *Love Canal: My Story* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982), pp. 12–13, 161–64.

a coverup. On June 23, he ordered his assistant H. R. Haldeman to warn the FBI off the case with the excuse that national security was involved. Nixon compounded this obstruction of justice by arranging a \$400,000 bribe to keep the burglars quiet. The coverup worked in the short run.

Nixon's opponent in the 1972 election was South Dakota Senator George McGovern, an impassioned opponent of the Vietnam War. McGovern was honest, intelligent, and well to the left on issues like the defense budget and legalization of marijuana. He did not appeal to the white Southerners and blue-collar Northerners. An assassination attempt that took George Wallace out of national politics also helped Nixon win in a landslide.

The coverup began to come apart with the trial of the Watergate burglars in January 1973. Federal Judge John Sirica used the threat of heavy sentences to pressure one burglar into a statement that implied that higher-ups had been involved. Meanwhile, the *Washington Post* was linking Nixon's people to dirty tricks and illegal campaign contributions. The White House scrambled to find a defensible story. Nixon now began to coach people on what they should tell investigators, claimed his staff had lied to him, and tried to set up John Dean to take the fall.



In the late spring and early summer, attention shifted to the televised hearings of the Senate's Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities. Its chair was Sam Ervin of North Carolina. A parade of White House and party officials described their own pieces in the affair, often accusing each other and revealing the plumbers and the enemies list. The real questions, it became obvious, were what the president knew and when he knew it. It seemed to be John Dean's word against Richard Nixon's.

A bombshell turned the scandal into a constitutional crisis. A mid-level staffer told the committee that Nixon made tape recordings of his White House conversations. Both the Senate and the Watergate special prosecutor, Archibald Cox, subpoenaed the tapes. Nixon refused to give them up. In late October, after he failed to cut a satisfactory deal, he fired his attorney general and the special prosecutor. Many Americans thought that these actions proved that Nixon had something to hide. In April 1974, he finally issued *edited* transcripts of the tapes, with foul language deleted and key passages missing. Finally, on July 24, 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that Nixon had to deliver sixty-four tapes to the new special prosecutor.

In Congress, Republicans joined Democrats in voting three articles of impeachment: for hindering the criminal investigation of the Watergate breakin, for abusing the power of the presidency by using federal agencies to deprive citizens of their rights, and for ignoring the committee's subpoena for the tapes. Before the full House could vote on the articles of impeachment, Nixon delivered the tapes containing direct evidence that he had participated in the coverup on June 23, 1972, and had been lying ever since. On August 8 he announced his resignation, effective the next day.

Watergate was two separate but related stories. On one level, it was about individuals, Nixon and his cronies who wanted to win so badly they repeatedly broke the law. Nixon paid for his overreaching ambition with the end of his political career; more than twenty others paid with jail terms.

On another level, the crisis was a lesson about the Constitution. The separation of powers allowed Congress and the courts to rein in a president who had spun out of control.

### THE FORD FOOTNOTE

Gerald Ford was the first president who had been elected neither president nor vice president. Ford was Nixon's appointee to replace Spiro Agnew, who resigned and pleaded no contest to charges of bribery and income tax evasion in 1973. On September 8, Ford pardoned Richard Nixon for "any and all crimes" committed while president. Since Nixon had not yet been indicted, the pardon saved him from future prosecution. He also offered clemency to thousands of draft resisters.

Détente continued. American diplomats joined the Soviet Union and thirty other European nations in the capital of Finland to sign the **Helsinki Accords**, which called for increased commerce between the Eastern and Western blocs and human rights guarantees. They also legitimized the national boundaries that had been set in eastern Europe in 1945.

At home the economy slid into recession; unemployment climbed above 10 percent; inflation diminished the value of savings and wages.

Ford was the Republican presidential candidate in the 1976 election. His Democratic opponent was a political enigma. James Earl Carter Jr. had been a navy officer, a farmer, and governor of Georgia. Carter and other new style Southern politicians left race-baiting behind to talk like modern New Dealers. He appealed to Democrats as someone who could reassemble LBJ's political coalition and return the South to the Democratic party. In his successful campaign, Carter presented himself as an alternative to party hacks and Washington insiders.

**Helsinki Accords** Agreement in 1975 among NATO and Warsaw Pact members that recognized European national boundaries as set after World War II and included guarantees of human rights.



## JIMMY CARTER: IDEALISM AND FRUSTRATION IN THE WHITE HOUSE

**A**s an outsider in Washington's political establishment, Carter had one great advantage: freedom from the narrow mind-set of experts who talk only to each other. However, he lacked both the knowledge of key political players and the experience to resolve legislative gridlock.

### CARTER, ENERGY, AND THE ECONOMY

Carter was refreshingly low-key. After his inauguration, he walked from the Capitol to the White House as Jefferson had. He signed official documents "Jimmy." He tended to tell the public what he thought rather than what pollsters said the people wanted to hear.

Carter's approach to politics reflected his training as an engineer. He was analytical, logical, and given to breaking a problem into its component parts. He filled his cabinet with experts rather than political operators. He didn't seem to understand the basic rules of Washington politics. For example, he and his cabinet officers developed policies and made appointments without consulting key congressional committee chairs.

The biggest domestic problem remained the economy, which slid into another recession in 1978. Another jump in petroleum prices helped make 1979 and 1980 the worst years for inflation in the postwar era. Carter himself was a fiscal conservative whose impulse was to cut federal spending. This worsened unemployment and alienated liberal Democrats, who wanted to revive the Great Society.

### CLOSED FACTORIES AND FAILING FARMS

Ford and Carter both faced massive problems of economic transition that undercut their efforts to devise effective government programs.

Industrial decay stalked such "gritty cities" as Allentown, Pennsylvania; Trenton, New Jersey; and Gary, Indiana. Communities whose workers had made products in high volume for mass markets found that technological revolutions made them obsolete. Critics renamed the old manufacturing region of the Northeast and Midwest the Rustbelt in honor of its abandoned factories.

Plant closures were only one facet of business efforts to increase productivity by substituting machinery for employees. Between 1947 and 1977, American steelmakers doubled output while cutting their work force from 600,000 to 400,000. Lumber companies used economic recession in the early 1980s to automate mills and rehired only a fraction of their workers when the economy picked up. High interest rates in the early 1980s, the result of a ballooning federal deficit (see Chapter 30), attracted foreign investors and strengthened the dollar.

Carter simultaneously proposed a comprehensive energy policy. He asked Americans to make energy conservation the moral equivalent of war—to accept individual sacrifices for the common good. Congress created the Department of Energy but refused to raise taxes on oil and natural gas to reduce consumption. However, the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (1978) did encourage alternative energy sources to replace foreign petroleum. Big oil companies poured billions of dollars into western Colorado to squeeze a petroleum substitute from shale. Solar energy research prospered. Breezy western hillsides sprouted "wind farms" to wring electricity out of the air.

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HOW WAS Jimmy Carter's idealism a frustration to his success as president?

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29-3  
Jimmy Carter, The "Malaise"  
Speech (1979)



However, antinuclear activism blocked one obvious alternative to fossil fuels. In the late 1970s, activists staged sit-ins at the construction sites of nuclear plants. A near-meltdown at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant in Pennsylvania in March 1979 stalemated efforts to expand nuclear power capacity.

When the OPEC price hikes undermined the inflation-fighting effort in the summer of 1979, Carter proposed new steps to solve the energy crisis. A cabinet reshuffle a few days later was supposed to show that he was firmly in charge, but instead conveyed the message that he was erratic. By 1979, opinion leaders had decided that Carter was not capable of leading the nation and then interpreted every action as confirming that belief.

### BUILDING A COOPERATIVE WORLD

Despite troubles on the home front, Carter's first two years brought foreign policy success that reflected a new vision of a multilateral world. He appointed Andrew Young—a fellow Georgian with long experience in the civil rights movement—as ambassador to the United Nations, where he worked effectively to build bridges to third-world nations.

Carter's moral convictions were responsible for a new concern with human rights around the globe. He criticized the Soviet Union for preventing free speech and denying its citizens the right to emigrate, angering Soviet leaders, who didn't expect the human rights clauses of the Helsinki Accords to be taken seriously. Carter also withheld economic aid from South Africa, Guatemala, Chile, and Nicaragua, which had long records of human rights abuses. In Nicaragua, the change in policy helped left-wing Sandinista rebels topple the Somoza dictatorship.

The triumph of the new foreign policy was the **Camp David Agreement** between Egypt and Israel. Carter risked his reputation and credibility in September 1978 to bring Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin together at Camp David, the presidential retreat. A formal treaty signed in Washington on March 26, 1979 normalized relations between Israel and its most powerful neighbor and led to Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula.

### NEW CRISES ABROAD

The Soviets ignored the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Accords. Soviet advisers or Cuban troops intervened in African civil wars. At home, Cold Warriors who had never accepted détente found it easier to attack Carter than Nixon.

Carter inherited negotiations for SALT II—a strategic arms limitation treaty that would have reduced both the American and Soviet nuclear arsenals—from the Ford administration. SALT II met stiff resistance in the Senate. Opponents claimed it would create a “window of vulnerability” in the 1980s that would invite the Soviets to launch a nuclear first strike. Carter tried to counter criticism by stepping up defense spending, starting a buildup that would accelerate under Ronald Reagan.

Hopes for SALT II vanished on January 3, 1980, when Soviet troops entered Afghanistan. Muslim tribespeople unhappy with modernization had attacked Afghanistan's pro-Communist government, which invited Soviet intervention. The situation resembled the American involvement in South Vietnam. In the end, it took the Soviets a decade to find a way out.

The final blow to Carter's foreign policy came in Iran. Since 1953, the United States had strongly backed Iran's monarch, the Shah. The Shah modernized

**Camp David Agreement** Agreement to reduce points of conflict between Israel and Egypt, hammered out in 1977 with the help of U.S. President Jimmy Carter.





Iran's economy but jailed political opponents. U.S. aid and oil revenues helped him build a vast army, but the Iranian middle class despised his authoritarianism, and Muslim fundamentalists opposed modernization. Revolution toppled the Shah at the start of 1979.

The upheaval installed a nominally democratic government, but the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, a Muslim cleric who hated the United States, exercised real power. Throughout 1979, Iran grew increasingly anti-American. After the United States allowed the exiled Shah to seek medical treatment in New York, a mob stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran on November 4, 1979, and took more than sixty Americans hostage. They demanded that Carter surrender the Shah.

Television brought pictures of blindfolded hostages and anti-American mobs burning effigies of Uncle Sam and wrapping American flags around garbage. The administration tried economic pressure and diplomacy, but Khomeini had no desire for accommodation. When Iran announced in April 1980 that the hostages would remain in the hands of the militants rather than be transferred to the government, Carter ordered an airborne rescue. The attempt misfired when three of eight helicopters malfunctioned and one crashed in the Iranian desert. The fiasco added to the national embarrassment. The United States and Iran finally reached agreement on the eve of the 1980 election. The hostages gained their freedom after 444 days at the moment Ronald Reagan took office as the new president.

The hostage crisis consumed Jimmy Carter the way that Vietnam had consumed Lyndon Johnson. It gripped the public and stalemated other issues. For weeks, Carter's tragedy was that "his" Iranian crisis was the fruit of policies hatched by the Eisenhower administration and pursued by every president since then, all of whom overlooked the Shah's despotic government because of his firm anti-Communism.

After thirty years in which the United States had viewed the entire world as a Cold War battlefield, Carter was willing to accept the developing world on its own terms. His human rights efforts showed that evangelical religious convictions could be tied to progressive aims. Iranian rage at past policies of the sort Carter hoped to change destroyed his ability to direct a new course.

## CONCLUSION

A period of remarkable prosperity ended in 1974. Long lines at gas stations suggested that prosperity was fragile. Cities and regions began to feel the costs of obsolete industries. Environmental damage caused many Americans to reconsider the goal of economic expansion.

American withdrawal from Vietnam in 1973 and the collapse of the South Vietnamese government in 1975 were defeats; the United States ended up with little to show for a long and painful war. SALT I stabilized the arms race, but it also recognized that the Soviet Union was an equal. The American nuclear arsenal might help deter a third world war, but it could not prevent the seizure of hostages in Iran.

The nation finished the 1970s more egalitarian than it had been in the early 1960s but also more divided. More citizens had the opportunity to advance economically and to seek political power, but there were deepening fissures between social liberals and cultural conservatives, old and new views about roles for women, rich and poor, white and black people.



## SUMMARY

**The End of Consensus** The failure to win an easy victory in Vietnam eroded the nation's confidence and fueled bitter division about the nation's goals. Operation Rolling Thunder in the air and search and destroy missions on the ground were not "winning" the war; protest against the war at home quickly followed America's decision to use combat forces. The tone of the debate over Vietnam turned nastier, much of the anger directed at the draft. The antiwar movement reflected a growing grass-roots activism on college campuses, among women, and the Woodstock generation counterculture.

**Cities Under Stress** Exploding metropolitan areas needed money for streets, schools, and sewers. Many urban problems were associated with the creation of "second ghettos" due to immigration in the 1950s and 1960s. A series of riots scarred most big cities during the 1960s; the riots were protests about the problems of ghetto life but were often blamed on "outsiders." Minority separatism tapped into the same anger that caused the riots. The Black Power movement, Hispanic activism in the Southwest, and the American Indian Movement all questioned the American assumption that everyone wanted to be a part of the same homogeneous society, a society increasingly becoming "suburbanized."

**The Year of the Gun, 1968** 1968 was a watershed year that forced American society to rethink the role of government. Mainstream Americans began questioning the war in Vietnam after the Tet Offensive; President Johnson was advised that the war was unwinnable on acceptable terms. Facing political challenges, Johnson announced a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam and his withdrawal from the presidential race. The assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy and the riots at the Democratic National Convention captured America's attention. Richard Nixon captured the presidency in 1968 with a secret plan to end the war and an appeal to middle America.

**Nixon and Watergate** President Nixon had no plan to end the Vietnam War and antiwar sentiment grew; while the Nixon Doctrine and "Vietnamization" made it appear the United States was withdrawing from Southeast Asia, the bombing of Cambodia intensified. The 1973 ceasefire confirmed American withdrawal from Vietnam; in 1975 South Vietnam collapsed. To his credit, Nixon took American foreign policy in new directions, improving relations with the Soviet Union and China, and the administration passed numerous laws relating to environmental issues. Nixon abused the power of his office in the Watergate scandal and resigned before he could be impeached; Gerald Ford, who had been appointed vice president, succeeded him.

**Jimmy Carter: Idealism and Frustration in the White House** Washington outsider Jimmy Carter's major domestic challenge was the economy. A recession, an energy crisis, the deindustrialization of America, and the transformation of the family farm to agribusiness challenged the president upon his election. Carter's moral convictions brought attention to human rights issues abroad. The signing of the Camp David Agreement between Egypt and Israel was a high point; hopes for reducing nuclear arsenals ended when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. The Iranian hostage crisis consumed the Carter administration and helped contribute to Ronald Reagan's 1980 victory.



## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did the United States fail in Vietnam? What factors limited President Johnson's freedom of action there?
2. How did racial relations change between 1965 and 1970?
3. Why was 1968 a pivotal year for American politics and society?
4. What were the implications of détente? How and why did U.S. influence over the rest of the world change during the 1970s?
5. How did the backgrounds of Presidents Johnson, Nixon, and Carter shape their successes and failures as national leaders?
6. Why was the "space race" important for the United States?

## KEY TERMS

**American Indian Movement (AIM)**  
(p. 772)

*Baker v. Carr* (p. 773)

**Black Panthers** (p. 771)

**Black Power** (p. 771)

**Camp David Agreement** (p. 784)

**Counterculture** (p. 768)

*Détente* (p. 778)

**Environmental Protection Agency**  
(p. 779)

**Free Speech Movement (FSM)**  
(p. 776)

**Helsinki Accords** (p. 782)

**Model Cities Program**  
(p. 767)

**Nation of Islam** (p. 771)

**New Federalism** (p. 778)

**Nixon Doctrine** (p. 776)

**Organization of Petroleum Exporting  
Countries (OPEC)** (p. 778)

**Pentagon Papers** (p. 779)

**SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation  
Treaty)** (p. 778)

**Search and destroy** (p. 763)

**Selective Service System** (p. 766)

**Students for a Democratic Society  
(SDS)** (p. 766)

*Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board  
of Education* (p. 773)

**Watergate** (p. 780)

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

- 📍 **Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park, Johnson City, Texas.** Johnson's ranch, southwest of Austin, gives visitors a feeling for the open landscape in which Johnson spent his early years. [www.nps.gov/lypo/](http://www.nps.gov/lypo/)
- 📍 **Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, D.C.** A simple wall engraved with the names of the nation's Vietnam War dead is testimony to one of the nation's most divisive wars. [www.nps.gov/vive/](http://www.nps.gov/vive/)
- 📍 **Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace, Yorba Linda, California.** Exhibits trace Nixon's political career and related world events with a sympathetic interpretation. [www.nixonfoundation.org/index.shtml](http://www.nixonfoundation.org/index.shtml)
- 📍 **Titan Missile Museum, Green Valley, Arizona.** The Green Valley complex near Tucson held eighteen Titan missiles. They were deactivated after SALT I, and the complex is now open to visitors. [www.pimaair.org/titan\\_01.htm](http://www.pimaair.org/titan_01.htm)

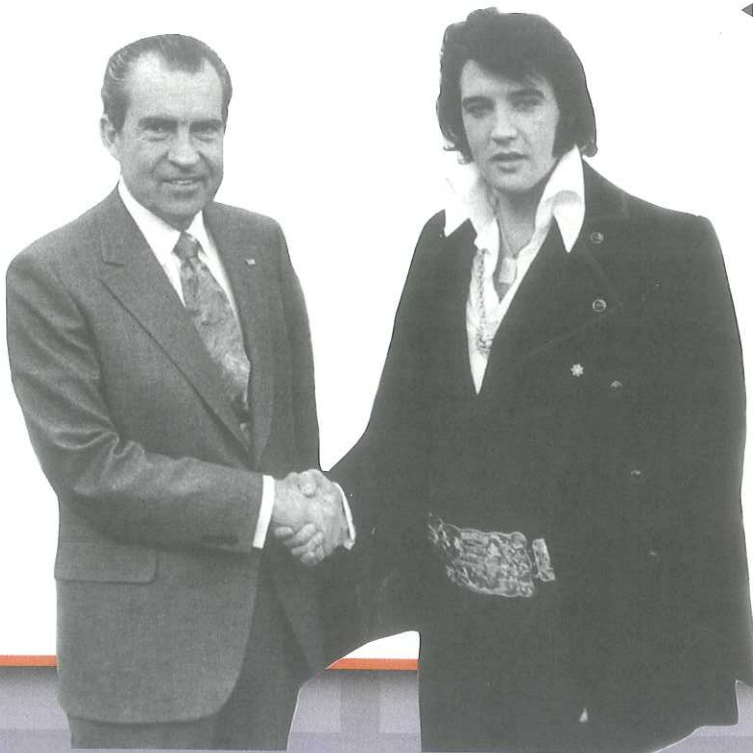


For additional study resources for this chapter, go to:  
[www.prenhall.com/goldfield/chapter29](http://www.prenhall.com/goldfield/chapter29)

## Iconic Images of the Vietnam Era

**PRESIDENTS HAVE** their picture taken shaking hands with visitors countless times. Usually they are of interest only to the visitors. What do you think made the photograph of President Nixon with Elvis Presley of interest to so many? During the late 1960s and early 1970s violence at home and overseas was distressingly commonplace. What do you think made the photographs of Mary Vecchio and Kim Phuk so memorable?

**T**elevision famously brought the Vietnam War “into the living room.” Nonetheless some of the most memorable images of the era were photographs. What is it about particular images that turn them into iconic representations of a moment of history? Pictured here are three such photographs. The first shows Richard Nixon and Elvis Presley in the Oval Office. Fifteen years earlier, Presley had scandalized the “older generation” with his uninhibited gyrations. Nixon, then and later, always campaigned for “family values.” Next is a photograph of a student reacting to the killing of a classmate on May 4, 1970 at Kent State University in Ohio. The preceding week Nixon had ordered U.S. troops into Cambodia to destroy North Vietnamese supply routes and command centers. Campuses across the country erupted and in Ohio, the governor called in the National Guard to quell the demonstrations at Kent State. Guard soldiers fired on the students, killing the young man shown this photograph. The third photograph shows the impact on an American napalm attack upon the children of a South Vietnamese village.



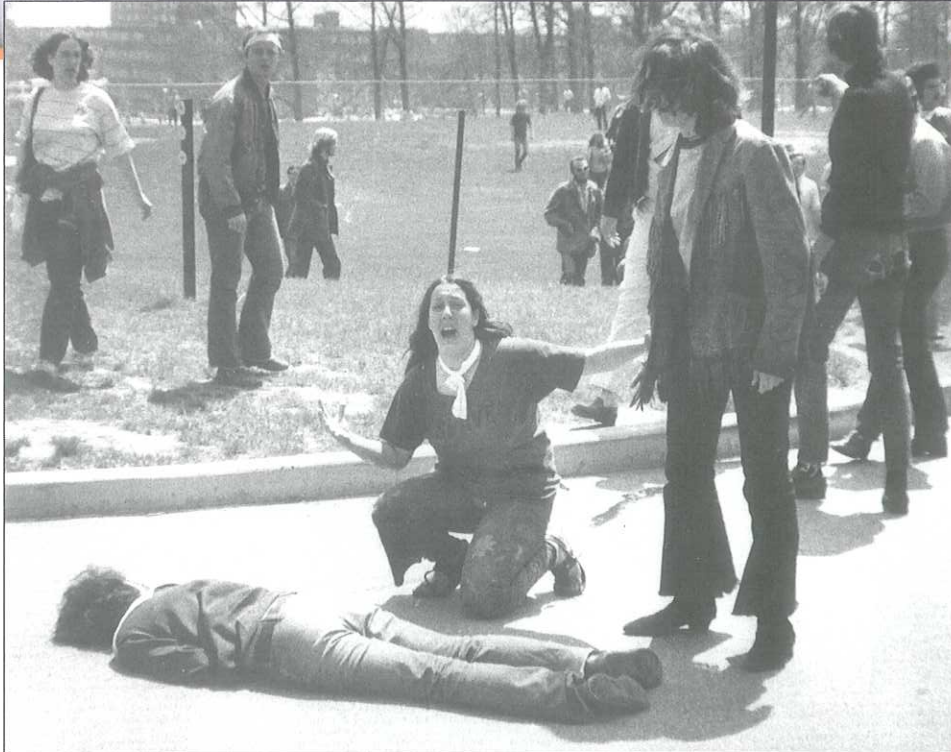
◀ This is the single most requested item in the National Archives which contain, among other national treasures, originals of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. President Nixon and

Elvis Presley met at the singer's request.

He had volunteered to work in the administration's anti-drug crusade. The president, looking for a way to reach out to young people, readily

agreed. He appointed Presley a “deputy” in the anti-drug war.

Presley was, at the time, addicted to a variety of uppers, downers, and other medications.

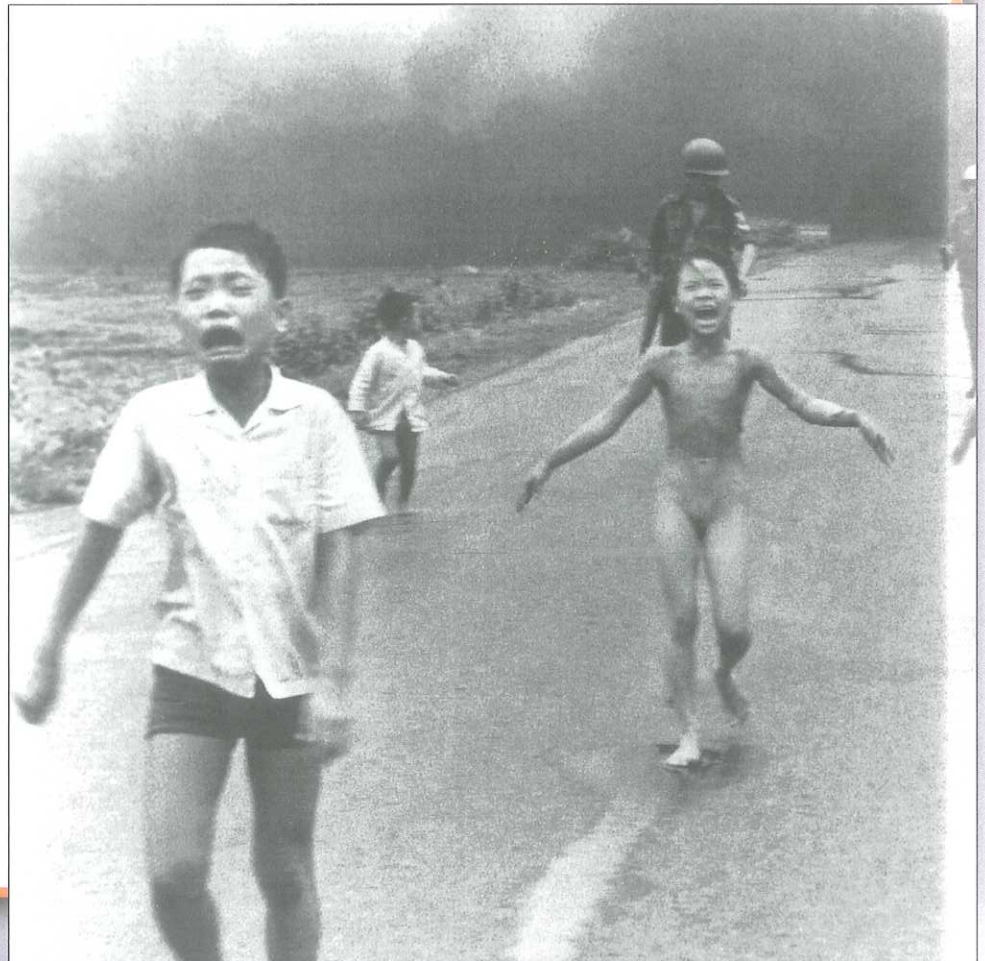


◀ **Mary Vecchio reacting to the death of fellow student Jeff Miller.** John Filo, a Kent State student and photographer for the yearbook, won a Pulitzer Prize for the picture. It appeared on the cover of *Newsweek* magazine with the caption “Nixon’s Home Front.”

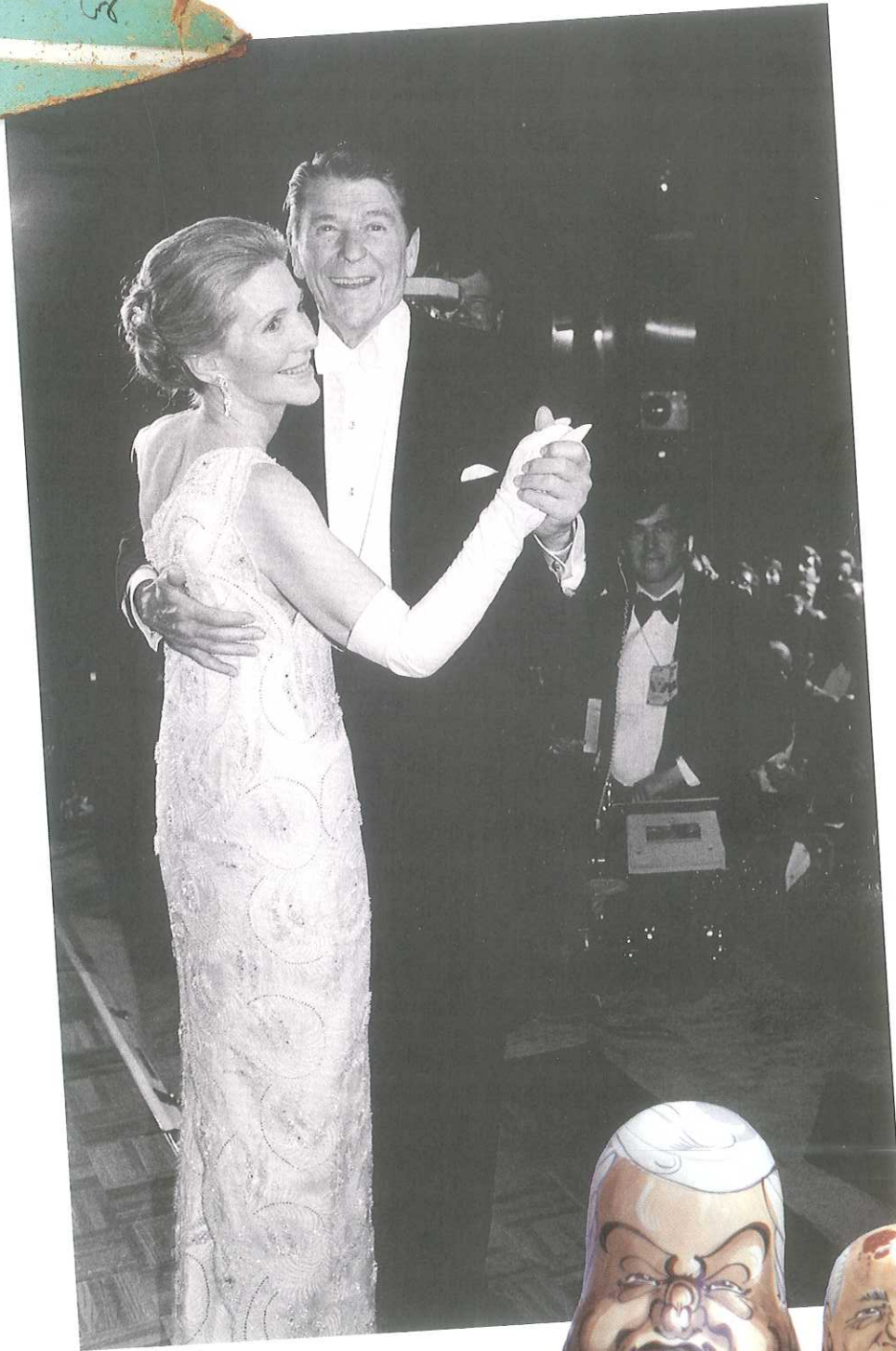
© John Paul Filo/Getty Images - Hulton Archive

**This Pulitzer Prize-winning photo-▶** graph of 9-year-old Kim Phuc, center, running after an aerial napalm attack on her village in 1972 was taken by Associated Press photographer Nick Ut (Cong Ut). Kim suffered burns over 65% of her body. She survived and is now a peace activist.

AP/Wide World Photos



*"All the men are gone in our family," Mom was actually saying for the Khmer Rouge spies to hear. "They are only girls. Don't kill them. We are the only members left of the family" . . . We were lying to them about our identity. It was a horrible game.*



Washington, D.C.: President and Mrs. Ronald Reagan dance early January 21, 1981 at the Smithsonian Museum of American History, the last stop on a tour of inaugural balls. Mrs. Reagan wore a one-shoulder white satin sheath gown by James Galanos to the fetes.

