

# *American History: Chapter 29*

Civil Rights, Vietnam, And The Ordeal Of Liberalism

# Expanding the Liberal State

- Election of 1960:
  - Kennedy (D) v. Nixon (R)
  - TV played an important role
  - Kennedy won in a close election
- **New Frontier** – urban renewal, civil rights, health care
- **LBJ's "Great Society"**
  - Focused on domestic programs including civil rights, poverty, and education
  - Built on ideas and programs laid forth from The New Deal

# Expanding the Liberal State

- War on Poverty:
  - Office of Economic Opportunity:
    - Administered money to various programs and areas of the country, particularly lower-income areas
- **Medicare:**
  - Medical assistance and insurance for elderly Americans
- **Medicaid:**
  - Health care for lower income families and individuals
- **Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**
  - Cabinet position created during LBJ's administration
  - Focused on urban development and renewal

# Expanding the Liberal State

- Immigration Act of 1965:
  - Eliminated quotas from 1920s
- Impact of the Great Society?
  - Several programs are still around today
  - Poverty was reduced in the 1960s
  - Vietnam and the Great Society competed with each other for government funds

# The Battle For Racial Equality

- **Greensboro, North Carolina Sit-in**, February 1, 1960
  - 4 black students sat at a segregated counter of a Woolworth's
  - Inspired sit-ins across the country
- Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)
  - **"Freedom riders"** wanted to challenge segregation on interstate buses in the South
- James Meredith:
  - 28 year old black Air Force Veteran registered at University of Mississippi
  - Kennedy ordered 30,000 troops to restore order
- Eugene "Bull" Connor:
  - Used fire hoses and dogs to break up protests
- **"Letter from a Birmingham Jail"**
  - Drew on Thoreau's and Gandhi's ideas of civil disobedience

# The Battle For Racial Equality

- Governor George Wallace
  - Vowed to avoid desegregation at the University of Alabama
- Kennedy realized he could no longer negotiate the issue of civil rights
- August 28, 1963:
  - “I have a dream” speech
- **Civil Rights Act of 1964:**
  - Guaranteed equal access to public accommodations
  - Government could cut off funds where discrimination occurred
- **Voting Rights Act of 1965:**
  - Federal government could register voters
  - Eliminated literacy tests for voting
- 24<sup>th</sup> Amendment:
  - Eliminated poll taxes

# The Battle For Racial Equality

- De Jure Discrimination:
  - Discrimination by laws
- De Facto Discrimination:
  - Discrimination by custom and tradition
- Watts Riots (1965):
  - 6 day riot in August; 34 people died; other racial riots occurred in other cities
- **“Black Power”**:
  - Movement “away from interracial cooperation and toward increased awareness of racial distinctiveness.”
  - Inspired by Marcus Garvey from the 1920s
- Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)
  - Later, under the leadership of Stokely Carmichael, SNCC focused on black power
- **Black Panthers (1966)**:
  - Huey Newton and Bobby Seale
  - Advocated the arming of blacks against white police
- Malcolm X:
  - Advocated “black revolution” and black separatism
  - Appealed to frustrated African Americans
  - Assassinated in February, 1965

# “Flexible Response” and The Cold War

- “Flexible Response”
  - Developed a plan to find new ways of combating the Cold War
  - Covert operations
  - Green Berets developed under JFK
- Alliance for Progress:
  - \$ billions were pledged to improve the economy in Latin America
- Peace Corps: Created in 1961
  - Young Americans that would serve 24 months over seas
    - Doctors, teachers, etc.
    - Focused on social and economic development
  - Hoped to improve countries and resist communism
- **Bay of Pigs Invasion**
  - Cuban exiles (trained by US) would invade Cuba
  - April, 1961 the invasion takes place
    - US does not directly get involved
    - The invasion is a HUGE failure
  - Impact:
    - Cuba and USSR worry about future invasions



# “Flexible Response” and The Cold War

- Berlin Wall:
  - Between 1949 and 1961, over 2.5 million East Germans fled Soviet-controlled East Germany through West Berlin
  - August 13, 1961, Soviets began construction of the Berlin Wall
- Cuban Missile Crisis
  - On October 14, US surveillance discover missiles with nuclear capabilities in Cuba
    - Could destroy most of the US
  - JFK quarantined Cuba
    - Would not allow other Soviet ships in
  - Eventually, the Soviet Union withdrew missiles
    - US promised not to attack Cuba
    - US would withdraw missiles from Turkey
  - Impact?
    - “hot line” established

# The Agony of Vietnam

- **Dien Bien Phu Falls (1954):**
  - France withdrew from French Indochina (Vietnam)
  - US presence in Vietnam increases
- North Vietnam = Communist
- South Vietnam = Noncommunist
  - Divided at the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel
- **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution**
  - American ships were supposedly attacked
  - Provided a “blank check” to Johnson in Vietnam
  - Increase in presidential powers during war

# The Traumas of 1968

- **Tet Offensive:**
  - Attack by North Vietnam during the Vietnamese New Year
  - Led to an increase of opposition to the US in the war
- Johnson declares he won't run for re-election in 1968:
- 2 assassinations:
  - April 4 – Martin Luther King Jr.
    - Riots broke out throughout the country
  - June 6 – Robert Kennedy
- The Democratic Convention of 1968:
  - Protests over the Vietnam war
  - Police and demonstrators clashed
- The Election of 1968
  - George Wallace – 3<sup>rd</sup> party candidate:
    - Ran on a segregation, anti-Great Society, and anti-protesting platform
  - Richard Nixon campaigned on “Peace with honor”
  - Nixon defeated Hubert Humphrey, 301 - 191