



An Outline of American History
Public Affairs Section
Stockholm Sweden

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United States Information Agency May 1994

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CHAPTER ONE: EARLY AMERICA

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"Heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation." John Smith, 1607

THE FIRST AMERICANS

At the height of the Ice Age, between 34,000 and 30,000 B.C., much of the world's water was contained in vast continental ice sheets. As a result, the Bering Sea was hundreds of meters below its current level, and a land bridge, known as Beringia, emerged between Asia and North America. At its peak, Beringia is thought to have been some 1,500 kilometers wide. A moist and treeless tundra, it was covered with grasses and plant life, attracting the large animals that early humans hunted for their survival. The first people to reach North America almost certainly did so without knowing they had crossed into a new continent. They would have been following game, as their ancestors had for thousands of years, along the Siberian coast and then across the land bridge.

Once in Alaska, it would take these first North Americans thousands of years more to work their way through the openings in great glaciers south to what is now the United States. Evidence of early life in North America continues to be found. Little of it, however, can be reliably dated before 12,000 B.C.; a recent discovery of a hunting lookout in northern Alaska, for example, may date from almost that time. So too may the finely crafted spear points and items found near Clovis, New Mexico.

Similar artifacts have been found at sites throughout North and South America, indicating that life was probably already well established in much of the Western Hemisphere by some time prior to 10,000 B.C.

Around that time the mammoth began to die out and the bison took its place as a principal source of food and hides for these early North Americans. Over time, as more and more species of large game vanished -- whether from overhunting or natural causes -- plants, berries and seeds became an increasingly important part of the early American diet. Gradually, foraging and the first attempts at primitive agriculture appeared. Indians in what is now central Mexico led the way, cultivating corn, squash and beans, perhaps as early as 8,000 B.C. Slowly, this knowledge spread northward.

By 3,000 B.C., a primitive type of corn was being grown in the river valleys of New Mexico and Arizona. Then the first signs of irrigation began to appear, and by 300 B.C., signs of early village life.

By the first centuries A.D., the Hohokum were living in settlements near what is now Phoenix, Arizona, where they built ball courts and pyramid-like mounds reminiscent of those found in Mexico, as well as a canal and irrigation system.

MOUND BUILDERS AND PUEBLOS

The first Indian group to build mounds in what is now the United States are often called the Adenans. They began constructing earthen burial sites and fortifications around 600 B.C. Some mounds from that era are in the shape of birds or serpents, and probably served religious purposes not yet fully understood.

The Adenans appear to have been absorbed or displaced by various groups collectively known as Hopewellians. One of the most important centers of their culture was found in southern Ohio, where the remains of several thousand of these mounds still remain. Believed to be great traders, the Hopewellians used and exchanged tools and materials across a wide region of hundreds of kilometers.

By around 500 A.D., the Hopewellians, too, disappeared, gradually giving way to a broad group of tribes generally known as the Mississippians or Temple Mound culture. One city, Cahokia, just east of St. Louis, Missouri, is thought to have had a population of about 20,000 at its peak in the early 12th century. At the center of the city stood a huge earthen mound, flatted at the top, which was 30 meters high and 37 hectares at the base. Eighty other mounds have been found nearby.

Cities such as Cahokia depended on a combination of hunting, foraging, trading and agriculture for their food and supplies. Influenced by the thriving societies to the south, they evolved into complex hierarchical societies which took slaves and practiced human sacrifice.

In what is now the southwest United States, the Anasazi, ancestors of the modern Hopi Indians, began building stone and adobe pueblos around the year 900. These unique and amazing apartment-like structures were often built along cliff faces; the most famous, the "cliff palace" of Mesa Verde, Colorado, had over 200 rooms. Another site, the Pueblo Bonito ruins along New Mexico's Chaco River, once contained more than 800 rooms.

Perhaps the most affluent of the pre-Columbian American Indians lived in the Pacific northwest, where the natural abundance of fish and raw materials made food supplies plentiful and permanent villages possible as early as 1,000 B.C. The opulence of their "potlatch" gatherings remains a standard for extravagance and festivity probably unmatched in early American history.

NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURES

The America that greeted the first Europeans was, thus, far from an empty wilderness. It is now thought that as many people lived in the Western Hemisphere as in Western Europe at that time -- about 40 million.

Estimates of the number of Native Americans living in what is now the United States at the onset of European colonization range from two to 18 million, with most historians tending toward the lower figure. What is certain is the devastating effect that European disease had on the indigenous population practically from the time of initial contact. Smallpox, in particular, ravaged whole communities and is thought to have been a much more direct cause of the precipitous decline in Indian population in the 1600s than the numerous wars and skirmishes with European settlers.

Indian customs and culture at the time were extraordinarily diverse, as could be expected, given the expanse of the land and the many different environments to which they had adapted. Some generalizations, however, are possible. Most tribes, particularly in the wooded eastern region and the Midwest, combined aspects of hunting, gathering and the cultivation of maize and other products for their food supplies. In many cases, the women were responsible for farming and the distribution of food, while the men hunted and participated in war.

By all accounts, Indian society in North America was closely tied to the land. Identification with nature and the elements was integral to religious beliefs. Indian life was essentially clan-oriented and communal, with children allowed more freedom and tolerance than was the European custom of the day. Although some North American tribes developed a type of hieroglyphics to preserve certain texts, Indian culture was primarily oral, with a high value placed on the recounting of tales and dreams. Clearly, there was a good deal of trade among various groups and strong evidence exists that neighboring tribes maintained extensive and formal relations -- both friendly and hostile.

THE FIRST EUROPEANS

The first Europeans to arrive in North America -- at least the first for whom there is solid evidence -- were Norse, traveling west from Greenland, where Erik the Red had founded a settlement around the year 985. In 1001 his son Leif is thought to have explored the northeast coast of what is now Canada and spent at least one winter there.

While Norse sagas suggest that Viking sailors explored the Atlantic coast of North America down as far as the Bahamas, such claims remain unproven. In 1963, however, the ruins of some Norse houses dating from that era were discovered at L'Anse-aux-Meadows in northern Newfoundland, thus supporting at least some of the claims the Norse sagas make.

In 1497, just five years after Christopher Columbus landed in the Caribbean looking for a western route to Asia, a Venetian sailor named John Cabot arrived in Newfoundland on a mission for the British king. Although fairly quickly forgotten, Cabot's journey was later to provide the basis for British claims to North America. It also opened the way to the rich fishing grounds off George's Banks, to which European fishermen, particularly the Portuguese, were soon making regular visits.

Columbus, of course, never saw the mainland United States, but the first explorations of the continental United States were launched from the Spanish possessions that he helped establish. The first of these took place in 1513 when a group of men under Juan Ponce de Leon landed on the Florida coast near the present city of St. Augustine.

With the conquest of Mexico in 1522, the Spanish further solidified their position in the Western Hemisphere. The ensuing discoveries added to Europe's knowledge of what was now named America -- after the Italian Amerigo Vespucci, who wrote a widely popular account of his voyages to a "New World." By 1529 reliable maps of the Atlantic coastline from Labrador to Tierra del Fuego had been drawn up, although it would take more than another century before hope of discovering a "Northwest Passage" to Asia would be completely abandoned.

Among the most significant early Spanish explorations was that of Hernando De Soto, a veteran conquistador who had accompanied Francisco Pizarro during the conquest of Peru. Leaving Havana in 1539, De Soto's expedition landed in Florida and ranged through the southeastern United States as far as the Mississippi River in search of riches.

Another Spaniard, Francisco Coronado, set out from Mexico in 1540 in search of the mythical Seven Cities of Cibola. Coronado's travels took him to the Grand Canyon and Kansas, but failed to reveal the gold or treasure his men sought. However, Coronado's party did leave the peoples of the region a remarkable, if unintended gift: enough horses escaped from his party to transform life on the Great Plains. Within a few generations, the Plains Indians had become masters of horsemanship, greatly expanding the range and scope of their activities.

While the Spanish were pushing up from the south, the northern portion of the present-day United States was slowly being revealed through the journeys of men such as Giovanni da Verrazano. A Florentine who sailed for the French, Verrazano made landfall in North Carolina in 1524, then sailed north along the Atlantic coast past what is now New York harbor.

A decade later, the Frenchman Jacques Cartier set sail with the hope -- like the other Europeans before him -- of finding a sea passage to Asia. Cartier's expeditions along the St. Lawrence River laid the foundations for the French claims to North America, which were to last until 1763.

Following the collapse of their first Quebec colony in the 1540s, French Huguenots attempted to settle the northern coast of Florida two decades later. The Spanish, viewing the French as a threat to their trade route along the Gulf Stream, destroyed the colony in 1565. Ironically, the leader of the Spanish forces, Pedro Menendez, would soon establish a town not far away -- St. Augustine. It was the first permanent European settlement in what would become the United States.

The great wealth which poured into Spain from the colonies in Mexico, the Caribbean and Peru provoked great interest on the part of the other European powers. With time, emerging maritime nations such as England, drawn in part by Francis Drake's successful raids on Spanish treasure ships, began to take interest in the New World.

In 1578 Humphrey Gilbert, the author of a treatise on the search for the Northwest Passage, received a patent from Queen Elizabeth to colonize the "heathen and barbarous landes" in the New World which other European nations had not yet claimed. It would be five years before his efforts could begin. When he was lost at sea, his half-brother, Walter Raleigh, took up the mission. In 1585 Raleigh established the first British colony in North America, on Roanoke Island off the coast of North Carolina. It was later abandoned, and a second effort two years later also proved a failure. It would be 20 years before the British would try again.

This time -- at Jamestown in 1607 -- the colony would succeed, and North America would enter a new era.

EARLY SETTLEMENTS

The early 1600s saw the beginning of a great tide of emigration from Europe to North America. Spanning more than three centuries, this movement grew from a trickle of a few hundred English colonists to a flood of millions of newcomers. Impelled by powerful and diverse motivations, they built a new civilization on the northern part of the continent. The first English immigrants to what is now the United States crossed the Atlantic long after thriving Spanish colonies had been established in Mexico, the West Indies and South America. Like all early travelers to the New World, they came in small, overcrowded ships. During their six- to 12-week voyages, they lived on meager rations. Many died of disease; ships were often battered by storms and some were lost at sea.

Most European emigrants left their homelands to escape political oppression, to seek the freedom to practice their religion, or for adventure and opportunities denied them at home. Between 1620 and 1635, economic difficulties swept England. Many people could not find work. Even skilled artisans could earn little more than a bare living. Poor crop yields added to the distress. In addition, the Industrial Revolution had created a burgeoning textile industry, which demanded an ever-increasing supply of wool to keep the looms running. Landlords enclosed farmlands and evicted the peasants in favor of sheep cultivation. Colonial expansion became an outlet for this displaced peasant population.

The colonists' first glimpse of the new land was a vista of dense woods. The settlers might not have survived had it not been for the help of friendly Indians, who taught them how to grow native plants -- pumpkin, squash, beans and corn. In addition, the vast, virgin forests, extending nearly 2,100 kilometers along the Eastern seaboard, proved a rich source of game and firewood. They also provided abundant raw materials used to build houses, furniture, ships and profitable cargoes for export.

Although the new continent was remarkably endowed by nature, trade with Europe was vital for articles the settlers could not produce. The coast served the immigrants well. The whole length of shore provided innumerable inlets and harbors. Only two areas -- North Carolina and southern New Jersey -- lacked harbors for ocean-going vessels.

Majestic rivers -- the Kennebec, Hudson, Delaware, Susquehanna, Potomac and numerous others -- linked lands between the coast and the Appalachian Mountains with the sea. Only one river, however, the St. Lawrence -- dominated by the French in Canada -- offered a water passage to the Great Lakes and into the heart of the continent. Dense forests, the resistance of some Indian tribes and the formidable barrier of the Appalachian Mountains discouraged settlement beyond the coastal plain. Only trappers and traders ventured into the wilderness. For the first hundred years the colonists built their settlements compactly along the coast.

Political considerations influenced many people to move to America. In the 1630s, arbitrary rule by England's Charles I gave impetus to the migration to the New World. The subsequent revolt and triumph of Charles' opponents under Oliver Cromwell in the 1640s led many cavaliers -- "king's men" -- to cast their lot in Virginia. In the German-speaking regions of Europe, the oppressive policies of various petty princes -- particularly with regard to religion -- and the devastation caused by a long series of wars helped swell the movement to America in the late 17th and 18th centuries.

The coming of colonists in the 17th century entailed careful planning and management, as well as considerable expense and risk. Settlers had to be transported nearly 5,000 kilometers across the sea. They needed utensils, clothing, seed, tools, building materials, livestock, arms and ammunition. In contrast to the colonization policies of other countries and other periods, the emigration from England was not directly sponsored by the government but by private groups of individuals whose chief motive was profit.

JAMESTOWN

The first of the British colonies to take hold in North America was Jamestown. On the basis of a charter which King James I granted to the Virginia (or London) Company, a group of about 100 men set out for the Chesapeake Bay in 1607. Seeking to avoid conflict with the Spanish, they chose a site about 60 kilometers up the James River from the bay.

Made up of townsmen and adventurers more interested in finding gold than farming, the group was unequipped by temperament or ability to embark upon a completely new life in the wilderness. Among them, Captain John Smith emerged as the dominant figure. Despite quarrels, starvation and Indian attacks, his ability to enforce discipline held the little colony together through its first year.

In 1609 Smith returned to England, and in his absence, the colony descended into anarchy. During the winter of 1609-1610, the majority of the colonists succumbed to disease. Only 60 of the original 300 settlers were still alive by May 1610. That same year, the town of Henrico (now Richmond) was established farther up the James River.

It was not long, however, before a development occurred that revolutionized Virginia's economy. In 1612 John Rolfe began cross-breeding imported tobacco seed from the West Indies with native plants and produced a new variety that was pleasing to European taste. The first shipment of this tobacco reached London in 1614. Within a decade it had become Virginia's chief source of revenue.

Prosperity did not come quickly, however, and the death rate from disease and Indian attacks remained extraordinarily high. Between 1607 and 1624 approximately 14,000 people migrated to the colony, yet only 1,132 were living there in 1624. On recommendation of a royal commission, the king dissolved the Virginia Company, and made it a royal colony that year.

MASSACHUSETTS

During the religious upheavals of the 16th century, a body of men and women called Puritans sought to reform the Established Church of England from within. Essentially, they demanded that the rituals and structures associated with Roman Catholicism be replaced by simpler Protestant forms of faith and worship. Their reformist ideas, by destroying the unity of the state church, threatened to divide the people and to undermine royal authority. In 1607 a small group of Separatists -- a radical sect of Puritans who did not believe the Established Church could ever be reformed -- departed for Leyden, Holland, where the Dutch granted them asylum. However, the Calvinist Dutch restricted them mainly to low-paid laboring jobs. Some members of the congregation grew dissatisfied with this discrimination and resolved to emigrate to the New World.

In 1620, a group of Leyden Puritans secured a land patent from the Virginia Company, and a group of 101 men, women and children set out for Virginia on board the Mayflower. A storm sent them far north and they landed in New England on Cape Cod. Believing themselves outside the jurisdiction of any organized government, the men drafted a formal agreement to abide by "just and equal laws" drafted by leaders of their own choosing. This was the Mayflower Compact.

In December the Mayflower reached Plymouth harbor; the Pilgrims began to build their settlement during the winter. Nearly half the colonists died of exposure and disease, but neighboring Wampanoag Indians provided information that would sustain them: how to grow maize. By the next fall, the Pilgrims had a plentiful crop of corn, and a growing trade based on furs and lumber.

A new wave of immigrants arrived on the shores of Massachusetts Bay in 1630 bearing a grant from King Charles I to establish a colony. Many of them were Puritans whose religious practices were increasingly prohibited in England. Their leader, John Winthrop, openly set out to create a "city upon a hill" in the New World. By this he meant a place where Puritans would live in strict accordance with their religious beliefs.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony was to play a significant role in the development of the entire New England region, in part because Winthrop and his Puritan colleagues were able to bring their charter with them. Thus the authority for the colony's government resided in Massachusetts, not in England.

Under the charter's provisions, power rested with the General Court, which was made up of "freemen" required to be members of the Puritan Church. This guaranteed that the Puritans would be the dominant political as well as religious force in the colony. It was the General Court which elected the governor. For most of the next generation, this would be John Winthrop. The rigid orthodoxy of the Puritan rule was not to everyone's liking. One of the first to challenge the General Court openly was a young clergyman named Roger Williams, who objected to the colony's seizure of Indian lands and its relations with the Church of England.

Banished from Massachusetts Bay, he purchased land from the Narragansett Indians in what is now Providence, Rhode Island, in 1636. There he set up the first American colony where complete separation of church and state as well as freedom of religion was practiced. So-called heretics like Williams were not the only ones who left Massachusetts. Orthodox Puritans, seeking better lands and opportunities, soon began leaving Massachusetts Bay Colony. News of the fertility of the Connecticut River Valley, for instance, attracted the interest of farmers having a difficult time with poor land. By the early 1630s, many were ready to brave the danger of Indian attack to obtain level ground and deep, rich soil. These new communities often eliminated church membership as a prerequisite for voting, thereby extending the franchise to ever larger numbers of men. At the same time, other settlements began cropping up along the New Hampshire and Maine coasts, as more and more immigrants sought the land and liberty the New World seemed to offer.

NEW NETHERLAND AND MARYLAND

Hired by the Dutch East India Company, Henry Hudson in 1609 explored the area around what is now New York City and the river that bears his name, to a point probably north of Albany, New York. Subsequent Dutch voyages laid the basis for their claims and early settlements in the area.

Like the French to the north, the first interest of the Dutch was the fur trade. To this end, the Dutch cultivated close relations with the Five Nations of the Iroquois who were the key to the heartland from which the furs came. In 1617 Dutch settlers built a fort at the junction of the Hudson and the Mohawk Rivers, where Albany now stands.

Settlement on the island of Manhattan began in the early 1620s. In 1624, the island was purchased from local Indians for the reported price of \$24. It was promptly renamed New Amsterdam.

In order to attract settlers to the Hudson River region, the Dutch encouraged a type of feudal aristocracy, known as the "patroon" system. The first of these huge estates were established in 1630 along the Hudson River.

Under the patroon system, any stockholder, or patroon, who could bring 50 adults to his estate over a four-year period was given a 25-kilometer river-front plot, exclusive fishing and hunting privileges, and civil and criminal jurisdiction over his lands. In turn, he provided livestock, tools and buildings. The tenants paid the patroon rent and gave him first option on surplus crops. Further to the south, a Swedish trading company with ties to the Dutch attempted to set up its first settlement along the Delaware River three years later. Without the resources to consolidate its position, New Sweden was gradually absorbed into New Netherland, and later, Pennsylvania and Delaware.

In 1632 the Calvert family obtained a charter for land north of the Potomac River from King Charles I in what became known as Maryland. As the charter did not expressly prohibit the establishment of non-Protestant churches, the family encouraged fellow Catholics to settle there. Maryland's first town, St. Mary's, was established in 1634 near where the Potomac River flows into the Chesapeake Bay.

While establishing a refuge for Catholics who were facing increasing persecution in Anglican England, the Calverts were also interested in creating profitable estates. To this end, and to avoid trouble with the British government, they also encouraged Protestant immigration.

The royal charter granted to the Calvert family had a mixture of feudal and modern elements. On the one hand they had the power to create manorial estates. On the other, they could only make laws with the consent of freemen (property holders). They found that in order to attract settlers -- and make a profit from their holdings -- they had to offer people farms, not just tenancy on the manorial estates. The number of independent farms grew in consequence, and their owners demanded a voice in the affairs of the colony. Maryland's first legislature met in 1635.

COLONIAL-INDIAN RELATIONS

By 1640 the British had solid colonies established along the New England coast and the Chesapeake Bay. In between were the Dutch and the tiny Swedish community. To the west were the original Americans, the Indians.

Sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile, the Eastern tribes were no longer strangers to the Europeans. Although Native Americans benefitted from access to new technology and trade, the disease and thirst for land which the early settlers also brought posed a serious challenge to the Indian's long-established way of life.

At first, trade with the European settlers brought advantages: knives, axes, weapons, cooking utensils, fish hooks and a host of other goods. Those Indians who traded initially had significant advantage over rivals who did not. In response to European demand, tribes such as the Iroquois began to devote more attention to fur trapping during the 17th century. Furs and pelts provided tribes the means to purchase colonial goods until late into the 18th century.

Early colonial-Indian relations were an uneasy mix of cooperation and conflict. On the one hand, there were the exemplary relations which prevailed during the first half century of Pennsylvania's existence. On the other were a long series of setbacks, skirmishes and wars, which almost invariably resulted in an Indian defeat and further loss of land.

The first of the important Indian uprisings occurred in Virginia in 1622, when some 347 whites were killed, including a number of missionaries who had just recently come to Jamestown. The Pequot War followed in 1637, as local tribes tried to prevent settlement of the Connecticut River region.

In 1675 Phillip, the son of the chief who had made the original peace with the Pilgrims in 1621, attempted to unite the tribes of southern New England against further European encroachment of their lands. In the struggle, however, Phillip lost his life and many Indians were sold into servitude. Almost 5,000 kilometers to the west, the Pueblo Indians rose up against the Spanish missionaries five years later in the area around Taos, New Mexico. For the next dozen years the Pueblo controlled their former land again, only to see the Spanish retake it. Some 60 years later, another Indian revolt took place when the Pima Indians clashed with the Spanish in what is now Arizona.

The steady influx of settlers into the backwoods regions of the Eastern colonies disrupted Indian life. As more and more game was killed off, tribes were faced with the difficult choice of going hungry, going to war, or moving and coming into conflict with other tribes to the west.

The Iroquois, who inhabited the area below Lakes Ontario and Erie in northern New York and Pennsylvania, were more successful in resisting European advances. In 1570 five tribes joined to form the most democratic nation of its time, the "Ho-De-No-Sau-Nee," or League of the Iroquois. The League was run by a council made up of 50 representatives from each of the five member tribes. The council dealt with matters common to all the tribes, but it had no say in how the free and equal tribes ran their day-to-day affairs. No tribe was allowed to make war by itself. The council passed laws to deal with crimes such as murder. The League was a strong power in the 1600s and 1700s. It traded furs with the British and sided with them against the French in the war for the dominance of America between 1754 and 1763. The British might not have won that war without the support of the League of the Iroquois.

The League stayed strong until the American Revolution. Then, for the first time, the council could not reach a unanimous decision on whom to support. Member tribes made their own decisions, some fighting with the British, some with the colonists, some remaining neutral. As a result, everyone fought against the Iroquois. Their losses were great and the League never recovered.

SECOND GENERATION OF BRITISH COLONIES

The religious and civil conflict in England in the mid-17th century limited immigration, as well as the attention the mother country paid the fledgling American colonies.

In part to provide for the defense measures England was neglecting, the Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut and New Haven colonies formed the New England Confederation in 1643. It was the European colonists' first attempt at regional unity.

The early history of the British settlers reveals a good deal of contention--religious and political--as groups vied for power and position among themselves and their neighbors. Maryland, in particular, suffered from the bitter religious rivalries which afflicted England during the era of Oliver Cromwell. One of the casualties was the state's Toleration Act, which was revoked in the 1650s. It was soon reinstated, however, along with the religious freedom it guaranteed.

In 1675 Bacon's Rebellion, the first significant revolt against royal authority, broke out in the colonies. The original spark was a clash between Virginia frontiersmen and the Susquehannock Indians, but it soon pitted the common farmer against the wealth and privilege of the large planters and Virginia's governor, William Berkeley.

The small farmers, embittered by low tobacco prices and hard living conditions, rallied around Nathaniel Bacon, a recent arrival from England. Berkeley refused to grant Bacon a commission to conduct Indian raids, but he did agree to call new elections to the House of Burgesses, which had remained unchanged since 1661.

Defying Berkeley's orders, Bacon led an attack against the friendly Ocaneechee tribe, nearly wiping them out. Returning to Jamestown in September 1676, he burned it, forcing Berkeley to flee. Most of the state was now under Bacon's control. His victory was short lived, however; he died of a fever the following month. Without Bacon, the rebellion soon lost its vitality. Berkeley re-established his authority and hanged 23 of Bacon's followers.

With the restoration of King Charles II in 1660, the British once again turned their attentions to North America. Within a brief span, the first European settlements were established in the Carolinas and the Dutch driven out of New Netherland. New proprietary colonies were established in New York, New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania. The Dutch settlements had, as a general matter, been ruled by autocratic governors appointed in Europe. Over the years, the local population had become estranged from them. As a result, when the British colonists began encroaching on Dutch lands in Long Island and Manhattan, the unpopular governor was unable to rally the population to their defense. New Netherland fell in 1664. The terms of the capitulation, however, were mild: the Dutch settlers were able to retain their property and worship as they pleased.

As early as the 1650s, the Ablemarle Sound region off the coast of what is now northern North Carolina was inhabited by settlers trickling down from Virginia. The first proprietary governor arrived in 1664. A remote area even today, Ablemarle's first town was not established until the arrival of a group of French Huguenots in 1704.

In 1670 the first settlers, drawn from New England and the Caribbean island of Barbados, arrived in what is now Charleston, South Carolina. An elaborate system of government, to which the British philosopher John Locke contributed, was prepared for the new colony. One of its prominent features was a failed attempt to create a hereditary nobility. One of the colony's least appealing aspects was the early trade in Indian slaves. Within time, however, timber, rice and indigo gave the colony a worthier economic base.

Massachusetts Bay was not the only colony driven by religious motives. In 1681 William Penn, a wealthy Quaker and friend of Charles II, received a large tract of land west of the Delaware River, which became known as Pennsylvania. To help populate it, Penn actively recruited a host of religious dissenters from England and the continent -- Quakers, Mennonites, Amish, Moravians and Baptists.

When Penn arrived the following year, there were already Dutch, Swedish and English settlers living along the Delaware River. It was there he founded Philadelphia, the "City of Brotherly Love."

In keeping with his faith, Penn was motivated by a sense of equality not often found in other American colonies at the time. Thus, women in Pennsylvania had rights long before they did in other parts of America. Penn and his deputies also paid considerable attention to the colony's relations with the Delaware Indians, ensuring that they were paid for any land the Europeans settled on.

Georgia was settled in 1732, the last of the 13 colonies to be established. Lying close to, if not actually inside the boundaries of Spanish Florida, the region was viewed as a buffer against Spanish incursion. But it had another unique quality: the man charged with Georgia's fortifications, General James Oglethorpe, was a reformer who deliberately set out to create a refuge where the poor and former prisoners would be given new opportunities.

SETTLERS, SLAVES AND SERVANTS

Men and women with little active interest in a new life in America were often induced to make the move to the New World by the skillful persuasion of promoters. William Penn, for example, publicized the opportunities awaiting newcomers to the Pennsylvania colony. Judges and prison authorities offered convicts a chance to migrate to colonies like Georgia instead of serving prison sentences.

But few colonists could finance the cost of passage for themselves and their families to make a start in the new land. In some cases, ships' captains received large rewards from the sale of service contracts for poor migrants, called indentured servants, and every method from extravagant promises to actual kidnapping was used to take on as many passengers as their vessels could hold.

In other cases, the expenses of transportation and maintenance were paid by colonizing agencies like the Virginia or Massachusetts Bay Companies. In return, indentured servants agreed to work for the agencies as contract laborers, usually for four to seven years. Free at the end of this term, they would be given "freedom dues," sometimes including a small tract of land. It has been estimated that half the settlers living in the colonies south of New England came to America under this system. Although most of them fulfilled their obligations faithfully, some ran away from their employers. Nevertheless, many of them were eventually able to secure land and set up homesteads, either in the colonies in which they had originally settled or in neighboring ones. No social stigma was attached to a family that had its beginning in America under this semi-bondage. Every colony had its share of leaders who were former indentured servants.

There was one very important exception to this pattern: African slaves. The first blacks were brought to Virginia in 1619, just 12 years after the founding of Jamestown. Initially, many were regarded as indentured servants who could earn their freedom. By the 1660s, however, as the demand for plantation labor in the Southern colonies grew, the institution of slavery began to harden around them, and Africans were brought to America in shackles for a lifetime of involuntary servitude.

SIDE BAR: THE ENDURING MYSTERY OF THE ANASAZI

Time-worn pueblos and dramatic "cliff towns," set amid the stark, rugged mesas and canyons of Colorado and New Mexico, mark the settlements of some of the earliest inhabitants of North America, the Anasazi (a Navajo word meaning "ancient ones").

By 500 A.D. the Anasazi had established some of the first identifiable villages in the American Southwest, where they hunted and grew crops of corn, squash and beans. The Anasazi flourished over the centuries, developing sophisticated dams and irrigation systems; creating a masterful, distinctive pottery tradition; and carving intricate, multi-room dwellings into the sheer sides of cliffs that remain among the most striking archaeological sites in the United States today. Yet by the year 1300, they had abandoned their settlements, leaving their pottery, implements, even clothing -- as though they intended to return -- and seemingly disappeared into history. Their homeland remained empty of human beings for more than a century -- until the arrival of new tribes, such as the Navajo and the Ute, followed by the Spanish and other European settlers.

The story of the Anasazi is tied inextricably to the beautiful but harsh environment in which they chose to live. Early settlements, consisting of simple pithouses scooped out of the ground, evolved into sunken kivas that served as meeting and religious sites. Later generations developed the masonry techniques for building square, stone pueblos. But the most dramatic change in Anasazi living -- for reasons that are still unclear -- was the move to the cliff sides below the flat-topped mesas, where the Anasazi carved their amazing, multilevel dwellings.

The Anasazi lived in a communal society that evolved very slowly over the centuries. They traded with other peoples in the region, but signs of warfare are few and isolated. And although the Anasazi certainly had religious and other leaders, as well as skilled artisans, social or class distinctions were virtually nonexistent.

Religious and social motives undoubtedly played a part in the building of the cliff communities and their final abandonment. But the struggle to raise food in an increasingly difficult environment was probably the paramount factor. As populations grew, farmers planted larger areas on the mesas, causing some communities to farm marginal lands, while others left the mesa tops for the cliffs. But the Anasazi couldn't halt the steady loss of the land's fertility from constant use, nor withstand the region's cyclical droughts. Analysis of tree rings, for example, shows that a final drought lasting 23 years, from 1276 to 1299, finally forced the last groups of Anasazi to leave permanently. Although the Anasazi dispersed from their ancestral homeland, they did not disappear. Their legacy remains in the remarkable archaeological record that they left behind, and in the Hopi, Zuni and other Pueblo peoples who are their descendants.



An Outline of American History

Public Affairs Section
Stockholm Sweden

CHAPTER TWO: THE COLONIAL PERIOD

United States Information Agency May 1994

"What then is the American, this new man?" Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, 1782

NEW PEOPLES

Most settlers who came to America in the 17th century were English, but there were also Dutch, Swedes and Germans in the middle region, a few French Huguenots in South Carolina and elsewhere, slaves from Africa, primarily in the South, and a scattering of Spaniards, Italians and Portuguese throughout the colonies.

After 1680 England ceased to be the chief source of immigration. Thousands of refugees fled continental Europe to escape the path of war. Many left their homelands to avoid the poverty induced by government oppression and absentee-landlordism.

By 1690 the American population had risen to a quarter of a million. From then on, it doubled every 25 years until, in 1775, it numbered more than 2.5 million.

Although a family could move from Massachusetts to Virginia or from South Carolina to Pennsylvania, without major readjustment, distinctions between individual colonies were marked. They were even more so between the three regional groupings of colonies

NEW ENGLAND

New England in the northeast has generally thin, stony soil, relatively little level land, and long winters, making it difficult to make a living from farming. Turning to other pursuits, the New Englanders harnessed water power and established grain mills and sawmills. Good stands of timber encouraged shipbuilding. Excellent harbors promoted trade, and the sea became a source of great wealth. In Massachusetts, the cod industry alone quickly furnished a basis for prosperity.

With the bulk of the early settlers living in villages and towns around the harbors, many New Englanders carried on some kind of trade or business. Common pastureland and woodlots served the needs of townspeople, who worked small farms nearby. Compactness made possible the village school, the village church and the village or town hall, where citizens met to discuss matters of common interest.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony continued to expand its commerce. From the middle of the 17th century onward it grew prosperous, and Boston became one of America's greatest ports.

Oak timber for ships' hulls, tall pines for spars and masts, and pitch for the seams of ships came from the Northeastern forests. Building their own vessels and sailing them to ports all over the world, the shipmasters of Massachusetts Bay laid the foundation for a trade that was to grow steadily in importance. By the end of the colonial period, one-third of all vessels under the British flag were built in New England. Fish, ship's stores and wooden ware swelled the exports.

New England shippers soon discovered, too, that rum and slaves were profitable commodities. One of the most enterprising -- if unsavory -- trading practices of the time was the so-called "triangular trade." Merchants and shippers would purchase slaves off the coast of Africa for New England rum, then sell the slaves in the West Indies where they would buy molasses to bring home for sale to the local rum producers.

THE MIDDLE COLONIES

Society in the middle colonies was far more varied, cosmopolitan and tolerant than in New England. In many ways, Pennsylvania and Delaware owed their initial success to William Penn.

Under his guidance, Pennsylvania functioned smoothly and grew rapidly. By 1685 its population was almost 9,000. The heart of the colony was Philadelphia, a city soon to be known for its broad, tree-shaded streets, substantial brick and stone houses, and busy docks. By the end of the colonial period, nearly a century later, 30,000 people lived there, representing many languages, creeds and trades. Their talent for successful business enterprise made the city one of the thriving centers of colonial America.

Though the Quakers dominated in Philadelphia, elsewhere in Pennsylvania others were well represented. Germans became the colony's most skillful farmers. Important, too, were cottage industries such as weaving, shoemaking, cabinetmaking and other crafts.

Pennsylvania was also the principal gateway into the New World for the Scots-Irish, who moved into the colony in the early 18th century. "Bold and indigent strangers," as one Pennsylvania official called them, they hated the English and were suspicious of all government. The Scots-Irish tended to settle in the back country, where they cleared land and lived by hunting and subsistence farming.

As mixed as the people were in Pennsylvania, New York best illustrated the polyglot nature of America. By 1646 the population along the Hudson River included Dutch, French, Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, English, Scots, Irish, Germans, Poles, Bohemians, Portuguese and Italians -- the forerunners of millions to come.

The Dutch continued to exercise an important social and economic influence on the New York region long after the fall of New Netherland and their integration into the British colonial system. Their sharp-stepped, gable roofs became a permanent part of the city's architecture, and their merchants gave Manhattan much of its original bustling, commercial atmosphere.

THE SOUTHERN COLONIES

In contrast to New England and the middle colonies were the predominantly rural southern settlements: Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, and Georgia.

By the late 17th century, Virginia's and Maryland's economic and social structure rested on the great planters and the yeoman farmers. The planters of the tidewater region, supported by slave labor, held most of the political power and the best land. They built great houses, adopted an aristocratic way of life and kept in touch as best they could with the world of culture overseas.

At the same time, yeoman farmers, who worked smaller tracts of land, sat in popular assemblies and found their way into political office. Their outspoken independence was a constant warning to the oligarchy of planters not to encroach too far upon the rights of free men.

Charleston, South Carolina, became the leading port and trading center of the South. There the settlers quickly learned to combine agriculture and commerce, and the marketplace became a major source of prosperity. Dense forests also brought revenue: lumber, tar and resin from the longleaf pine provided some of the best shipbuilding materials in the world. Not bound to a single crop as was Virginia, North and South Carolina also produced and exported rice and indigo, a blue dye obtained from native plants, which was used in coloring fabric. By 1750 more than 100,000 people lived in the two colonies of North and South Carolina.

In the southern-most colonies, as everywhere else, population growth in the back country had special significance. German immigrants and Scots-Irish, unwilling to live in the original tidewater settlements where English influence was strong, pushed inland. Those who could not secure fertile land along the coast, or who had exhausted the lands they held, found the hills farther west a bountiful refuge. Although their hardships were enormous, restless settlers kept coming, and by the 1730s they were pouring into the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Soon the interior was dotted with farms.

Living on the edge of the Indian country, frontier families built cabins, cleared tracts in the wilderness and cultivated maize and wheat. The men wore leather made from the skin of deer or sheep, known as buckskin; the women wore garments of cloth they spun at home. Their food consisted of venison, wild turkey and fish. They had their own amusements -- great barbecues, dances, housewarmings for newly married couples, shooting matches and contests for making quilted blankets. Quilts remain an American tradition today.

SOCIETY, SCHOOLS AND CULTURE

A significant factor deterring the emergence of a powerful aristocratic or gentry class in the colonies was the fact that anyone in an established colony could choose to find a new home on the frontier. Thus, time after time, dominant tidewater figures were obliged, by the threat of a mass exodus to the frontier, to liberalize political policies, land-grant requirements and religious practices. This movement into the foothills was of tremendous import for the future of America.

Of equal significance for the future were the foundations of American education and culture established during the colonial period. Harvard College was founded in 1636 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Near the end of the century, the College of William and Mary was established in Virginia. A few years later, the Collegiate School of Connecticut, later to become Yale College, was chartered. But even more noteworthy was the growth of a school system maintained by governmental authority. The Puritan emphasis on reading directly from the Scriptures underscored the importance of literacy.

In 1647 the Massachusetts Bay Colony enacted the "ye olde deluder Satan" Act, requiring every town having more than 50 families to establish a grammar school (a Latin school to prepare students for college). Shortly thereafter, all the other New England colonies, except Rhode Island, followed its example.

The first immigrants in New England brought their own little libraries and continued to import books from London. And as early as the 1680s, Boston booksellers were doing a thriving business in works of classical literature, history, politics, philosophy, science, theology and belles-lettres. In 1639 the first printing press in the English colonies and the second in North America was installed at Harvard College.

The first school in Pennsylvania was begun in 1683. It taught reading, writing and keeping of accounts. Thereafter, in some fashion, every Quaker community provided for the elementary teaching of its children. More advanced training -- in classical languages, history and literature -- was offered at the Friends Public School, which still operates in Philadelphia as the William Penn Charter School. The school was free to the poor, but parents who could were required to pay tuition.

In Philadelphia, numerous private schools with no religious affiliation taught languages, mathematics and natural science; there were also night schools for adults. Women were not entirely overlooked, but their educational opportunities were limited to training in activities that could be conducted in the home. Private teachers instructed the daughters of prosperous Philadelphians in French, music, dancing, painting, singing, grammar and sometimes even bookkeeping.

In the 18th century, the intellectual and cultural development of Pennsylvania reflected, in large measure, the vigorous personalities of two men: James Logan and Benjamin Franklin. Logan was secretary of the colony, and it was in his fine library that young Franklin found the latest scientific works. In 1745 Logan erected a building for his collection and bequeathed both building and books to the city.

Franklin contributed even more to the intellectual activity of Philadelphia. He formed a debating club that became the embryo of the American Philosophical Society. His endeavors also led to the founding of a public academy that later developed into the University of Pennsylvania. He was a prime mover in the establishment of a subscription library, which he called "the mother of all North American subscription libraries."

In the Southern colonies, wealthy planters and merchants imported private tutors from Ireland or Scotland to teach their children. Others sent their children to school in England. Having these other opportunities, the upper classes in the Tidewater were not interested in supporting public education. In addition, the diffusion of farms and plantations made the formation of community schools difficult. There were a few endowed free schools in Virginia; the Syms School was founded in 1647 and the Eaton School emerged in 1659.

The desire for learning did not stop at the borders of established communities, however. On the frontier, the Scots-Irish, though living in primitive cabins, were firm devotees of scholarship, and they made great efforts to attract learned ministers to their settlements.

Literary production in the colonies was largely confined to New England. Here attention concentrated on religious subjects. Sermons were the most common products of the press. A famous Puritan minister, the Reverend Cotton Mather, wrote some 400 works. His masterpiece, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, presented the pageant of New England's history. But the most popular single work of the day was the Reverend Michael Wigglesworth's long poem, "The Day of Doom," which described the last judgment in terrifying terms.

In 1704 Cambridge, Massachusetts, launched the colonies' first successful newspaper. By 1745 there were 22 newspapers being published throughout the colonies.

In New York, an important step in establishing the principle of freedom of the press took place with the case of Johann Peter Zenger, whose *New York Weekly Journal* begun in 1733, represented the opposition to the government. After two years of publication, the colonial governor could no longer tolerate Zenger's satirical barbs, and had him thrown into prison on a charge of seditious libel. Zenger continued to edit his paper from jail during his nine-month trial, which excited intense interest throughout the colonies. Andrew Hamilton, the prominent lawyer who defended Zenger, argued that the charges printed by Zenger were true and hence not libelous. The jury returned a verdict of not guilty, and Zenger went free.

The prosperity of the towns, which prompted fears that the devil was luring society into pursuit of worldly gain, produced a religious reaction in the 1730s that came to be known as the Great Awakening. Its inspiration came from two sources: George Whitefield, a Wesleyan revivalist who arrived from England in 1739, and Jonathan Edwards, who originally served in the Congregational Church in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Whitefield began a religious revival in Philadelphia and then moved on to New England. He enthralled audiences of up to 20,000 people at a time with histrionic displays, gestures and emotional oratory. Religious turmoil swept throughout New England and the middle colonies as ministers left established churches to preach the revival.

Among those influenced by Whitefield was Edwards, and the Great Awakening reached its culmination in 1741 with his sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Edwards did not engage in theatrics, but delivered his sermons in a quiet, thoughtful manner. He stressed that the established churches sought to deprive Christianity of its emotional content. His magnum opus, *Of Freedom of Will* (1754), attempted to reconcile Calvinism with the Enlightenment.

The Great Awakening gave rise to evangelical denominations and the spirit of revivalism, which continue to play significant roles in American religious and cultural life. It weakened the status of the established clergy and provoked believers to rely on their own conscience. Perhaps most important, it led to the proliferation of sects and denominations, which in turn encouraged general acceptance of the principle of religious toleration.

EMERGENCE OF COLONIAL GOVERNMENT

In all phases of colonial development, a striking feature was the lack of controlling influence by the English government. All colonies except Georgia emerged as companies of shareholders, or as feudal proprietorships stemming from charters granted by the Crown. The fact that the king had transferred his immediate sovereignty over the New World settlements to stock companies and proprietors did not, of course, mean that the colonists in America were necessarily free of outside control. Under the terms of the Virginia Company charter, for example, full governmental authority was vested in the company itself. Nevertheless, the crown expected that the company would be resident in England. Inhabitants of Virginia, then, would have no more voice in their government than if the king himself had retained absolute rule.

For their part, the colonies had never thought of themselves as subservient. Rather, they considered themselves chiefly as commonwealths or states, much like England itself, having only a loose association with the authorities in London. In one way or another, exclusive rule from the outside withered away. The colonists -- inheritors of the traditions of the Englishman's long struggle for political liberty -- incorporated concepts of freedom into Virginia's first charter. It provided that English colonists were to exercise all liberties, franchises and immunities "as if they had been abiding and born within this our Realm of England." They were, then, to enjoy the benefits of the Magna Carta and the common law. In 1618 the Virginia Company issued instructions to its appointed governor providing that free inhabitants of the plantations should elect representatives to join with the governor and an appointive council in passing ordinances for the welfare of the colony.

These measures proved to be some of the most far-reaching in the entire colonial period. From then on, it was generally accepted that the colonists had a right to participate in their own government. In most instances, the king, in making future grants, provided in the charter that the free men of the colony should have a voice in legislation affecting them. Thus, charters awarded to the Calverts in Maryland, William Penn in Pennsylvania, the proprietors in North and South Carolina and the proprietors in New Jersey specified that legislation should be enacted with "the consent of the freemen."

In New England, for many years, there was even more complete self-government than in the other colonies. Aboard the Mayflower, the Pilgrims adopted an instrument for government called the "Mayflower Compact," to "combine ourselves together into a civil body politic for our better ordering and preservation...and by virtue hereof [to] enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices...as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony...."

Although there was no legal basis for the Pilgrims to establish a system of self-government, the action was not contested and, under the compact, the Plymouth settlers were able for many years to conduct their own affairs without outside interference.

A similar situation developed in the Massachusetts Bay Company, which had been given the right to govern itself. Thus, full authority rested in the hands of persons residing in the colony. At first, the dozen or so original members of the company who had come to America attempted to rule autocratically. But the other colonists soon demanded a voice in public affairs and indicated that refusal would lead to a mass migration.

Faced with this threat, the company members yielded, and control of the government passed to elected representatives. Subsequently, other New England colonies -- such as Connecticut and Rhode Island -- also succeeded in becoming self-governing simply by asserting that they were beyond any governmental authority, and then setting up their own political system modeled after that of the Pilgrims at Plymouth.

In only two cases was the self-government provision omitted. These were New York, which was granted to Charles II's brother, the Duke of York (later to become King James II); and Georgia, which was granted to a group of "trustees." In both instances the provisions for governance were short-lived, for the colonists demanded legislative representation so insistently that the authorities soon yielded.

Eventually most colonies became royal colonies, but in the mid-17th century, the English were too distracted by the Civil War (1642-1649) and Oliver Cromwell's Puritan Commonwealth and Protectorate to pursue an effective colonial policy. After the restoration of Charles II and the Stuart dynasty in 1660, England had more opportunity to attend to colonial administration. Even then, however, it was inefficient and lacked a coherent plan, and the colonies were left largely to their own devices.

The remoteness afforded by a vast ocean also made control of the colonies difficult. Added to this was the character of life itself in early America. From countries limited in space and dotted with populous towns, the settlers had come to a land of seemingly unending reach. On such a continent, natural conditions promoted a tough individualism, as people became used to making their own decisions. Government penetrated the back country only slowly, and conditions of anarchy often prevailed on the frontier.

Yet, the assumption of self-government in the colonies did not go entirely unchallenged. In the 1670s, the Lords of Trade and Plantations, a royal committee established to enforce the mercantile system on the colonies, moved to annul the Massachusetts Bay charter, because the colony was resisting the government's economic policy. James II in 1685 approved a proposal to create a Dominion of New England and place colonies south through New Jersey under its jurisdiction, thereby tightening the Crown's control over the whole region. A royal governor, Sir Edmund Andros, levied taxes by executive order, implemented a number of other harsh measures and jailed those who resisted.

When news of the Glorious Revolution (1688-1689) that deposed James II reached Boston, the population rebelled and imprisoned Andros. Under a new charter, Massachusetts and Plymouth were united for the first time in 1691 as the royal colony of Massachusetts Bay. The other colonies that had come under the Dominion of New England quickly reinstalled their previous governments.

The Glorious Revolution had other positive effects on the colonies. The Bill of Rights and Toleration Act of 1689 affirmed freedom of worship for Christians and enforced limits on the Crown. Equally important, John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government* (1690) set forth a theory of government based not on divine right but on contract, and contended that the people, endowed with natural rights of life, liberty and property, had the right to rebel when governments violated these natural rights.

Colonial politics in the early 18th century resembled English politics in the 17th. The Glorious Revolution affirmed the supremacy of Parliament, but colonial governors sought to exercise powers in the colonies that the king had lost in England. The colonial assemblies, aware of events in England, attempted to assert their "rights" and "liberties." By the early 18th century, the colonial legislatures held two significant powers similar to those held by the English Parliament: the right to vote on taxes and expenditures, and the right to initiate legislation rather than merely act on proposals of the governor.

The legislatures used these rights to check the power of royal governors and to pass other measures to expand their power and influence. The recurring clashes between governor and assembly worked increasingly to awaken the colonists to the divergence between American and English interests. In many cases, the royal authorities did not understand the importance of what the colonial assemblies were doing and simply neglected them. However, these acts established precedents and principles and eventually became part of the "constitution" of the colonies.

In this way, the colonial legislatures established the right of self-government. In time, the center of colonial administration shifted from London to the provincial capitals.

THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR

France and Britain engaged in a succession of wars in Europe and the Caribbean at several intervals in the 18th century. Though Britain secured certain advantages from them -- primarily in the sugar-rich islands of the Caribbean -- the struggles were generally indecisive, and France remained in a powerful position in North America at the beginning of the Seven Years War in 1754.

By that time France had established a strong relationship with a number of Indian tribes in Canada and along the Great Lakes, taken possession of the Mississippi River and, by establishing a line of forts and trading posts, marked out a great crescent-shaped empire stretching from Quebec to New Orleans. Thus, the British were confined to the narrow belt east of the Appalachian Mountains. The French threatened not only the British Empire but the American colonists themselves, for in holding the Mississippi Valley, France could limit their westward expansion.

An armed clash took place in 1754 at Fort Duquesne, the site where Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is now located, between a band of French regulars and Virginia militiamen under the command of 22-year-old George Washington, a Virginia planter and surveyor.

In London, the Board of Trade attempted to deal with the conflict by calling a meeting of representatives from New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and the New England colonies. From June 19 to July 10, the Albany Congress, as it came to be known, met with the Iroquois at Albany, New York, in order to improve relations with them and secure their loyalty to the British.

The delegates also declared a union of the American colonies "absolutely necessary for their preservation," and adopted the Albany Plan of Union. Drafted by Benjamin Franklin, the plan provided that a president appointed by the king act with a grand council of delegates chosen by the assemblies, with each colony to be represented in proportion to its financial contributions to the general treasury. This organ would have charge of defense, Indian relations, and trade and settlement of the west, as well as having the power to levy taxes. But none of the colonies accepted Franklin's plan, for none wished to surrender either the power of taxation or control over the development of the western lands to a central authority.

England's superior strategic position and her competent leadership ultimately brought victory in the Seven Years' War, only a modest portion of which was fought in the Western Hemisphere.

In the Peace of Paris, signed in 1763, France relinquished all of Canada, the Great Lakes and the upper Mississippi Valley to the British. The dream of a French empire in North America was over. Having triumphed over France, Britain was now compelled to face a problem that it had hitherto neglected -- the governance of its empire. It was essential that London organize its now vast possessions to facilitate defense, reconcile the divergent interests of different areas and peoples, and distribute more evenly the cost of imperial administration.

In North America alone, British territories had more than doubled. To the narrow strip along the Atlantic coast had been added the vast expanse of Canada and the territory between the Mississippi River and the Allegheny Mountains, an empire in itself. A population that had been predominantly Protestant and English now included French-speaking Catholics from Quebec, and large numbers of partly Christianized Indians. Defense and administration of the new territories, as well as of the old, would require huge sums of money and increased personnel. The old colonial system was obviously inadequate to these tasks.

SIDEBAR: THE WITCHES OF SALEM

In 1692 a group of adolescent girls in Salem Village, Massachusetts, became subject to strange fits after hearing tales told by a West Indian slave. When they were questioned, they accused several women of being witches who were tormenting them. The townspeople were appalled but not surprised: belief in witchcraft was widespread throughout 17th-century America and Europe.

What happened next -- although an isolated event in American history -- provides a vivid window into the social and psychological world of Puritan New England. Town officials convened a court to hear the charges of witchcraft, and swiftly convicted and executed a tavernkeeper, Bridget Bishop. Within a month, five other women had been convicted and hanged.

Nevertheless, the hysteria grew, in large measure because the court permitted witnesses to testify that they had seen the accused as spirits or in visions. By its very nature, such "spectral evidence" was especially dangerous, because it could be neither verified nor subject to objective examination. By the fall of 1692, more than 20 victims, including several men, had been executed, and more than 100 others were in jail -- among them some of the town's most prominent citizens. But now the hysteria threatened to spread beyond Salem, and ministers throughout the colony called for an end to the trials. The governor of the colony agreed and dismissed the court. Those still in jail were later acquitted or given reprieves.

The Salem witch trials have long fascinated Americans. On a psychological level, most historians agree that Salem Village in 1692 was seized by a kind of public hysteria, fueled by a genuine belief in the existence of witchcraft. They point out that, while some of the girls may have been acting, many responsible adults became caught up in the frenzy as well.

But even more revealing is a closer analysis of the identities of the accused and the accusers. Salem Village, like much of colonial New England at that time, was undergoing an economic and political transition from a largely agrarian, Puritan-dominated community to a more commercial, secular society. Many of the accusers were representatives of a traditional way of life tied to farming and the church, whereas a number of the accused witches were members of the rising commercial class of small shopkeepers and tradesmen.

Salem's obscure struggle for social and political power between older traditional groups and a newer commercial class was one repeated in communities throughout American history . But it took a bizarre and deadly detour when its citizens were swept up by the conviction that the devil was loose in their homes.

The Salem witch trials also serve as a dramatic parable of the deadly consequences of making sensational, but false, charges. Indeed, a frequent term in political debate for making false accusations against a large number of people is "*witch hunt*."



An Outline of American History

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CHAPTER THREE: THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE

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"The revolution was effected before the war commenced. The revolution was in the hearts and minds of the people." Former President John Adams, 1818

Although some believe that the history of the American Revolution began long before the first shots were fired in 1775, England and America did not begin an overt parting of the ways until 1763, more than a century and a half after the founding of the first permanent settlement at Jamestown, Virginia. The colonies had grown vastly in economic strength and cultural attainment, and virtually all had long years of self-government behind them. In the 1760s their combined population exceeded 1,500,000--a sixfold increase since 1700.

A NEW COLONIAL SYSTEM

In the aftermath of the French and Indian War, Britain needed a new imperial design, but the situation in America was anything but favorable to change. Long accustomed to a large measure of independence, the colonies were demanding more, not less, freedom, particularly now that the French menace had been eliminated. To put a new system into effect, and to tighten control, Parliament had to contend with colonists trained in self-government and impatient with interference.

One of the first things that British attempted was the organization of the interior. The conquest of Canada and of the

Ohio Valley necessitated policies that would not alienate the French and Indian inhabitants. But here the Crown came into conflict with the interests of the colonies. Fast increasing in population, and needing more land for settlement, various colonies claimed the right to extend their boundaries as far west as the Mississippi River.

The British government, fearing that settlers migrating into the new lands would provoke a series of Indian wars, believed that the lands should be opened to colonists on a more gradual basis. Restricting movement was also a way of ensuring royal control over existing settlements before allowing the formation of new ones. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 reserved all the western territory between the Alleghenies, Florida, the Mississippi River and Quebec for use by Native Americans. Thus the Crown attempted to sweep away every western land claim of the 13 colonies and to stop westward expansion. Though never effectively enforced, this measure, in the eyes of the colonists, constituted a high-handed disregard of their most elementary right to occupy and settle western lands.

More serious in its repercussions was the new financial policy of the British government, which needed more money to support its growing empire. Unless the taxpayer in England was to supply all money for the colonies' defense, revenues would have to be extracted from the colonists through a stronger central administration, which would come at the expense of colonial self-government.

The first step in inaugurating the new system was the replacement of the Molasses Act of 1733, which placed a prohibitive duty, or tax, on the import of rum and molasses from non-English areas, with the Sugar Act of 1764. This act forbade the importation of foreign rum; put a modest duty on molasses from all sources and levied duties on wines, silks, coffee and a number of other luxury items. The hope was that lowering the duty on molasses would reduce the temptation to smuggle it from the Dutch and French West Indies for processing in the rum distilleries of New England.

To enforce the Sugar Act, customs officials were ordered to show more energy and effectiveness. British warships in American waters were instructed to seize smugglers, and "writs of assistance," or warrants, authorized the king's officers to search suspected premises.

Both the duty imposed by the Sugar Act and the measures to enforce it caused consternation among New England merchants. They contended that payment of even the small duty imposed would be ruinous to their businesses. Merchants, legislatures and town meetings protested the law, and colonial lawyers found in the preamble of the Sugar Act the first intimation of "taxation without representation," the slogan that was to draw many to the American cause against the mother country.

Later in 1764, Parliament enacted a Currency Act "to prevent paper bills of credit hereafter issued in any of His Majesty's colonies from being made legal tender." Since the colonies were a deficit trade area and were constantly short of hard currency, this measure added a serious burden to the colonial economy. Equally objectionable from the colonial viewpoint was the Quartering Act, passed in 1765, which required colonies to provide royal troops with provisions and barracks.

STAMP ACT

The last of the measures inaugurating the new colonial system sparked the greatest organized resistance. Known as the "Stamp Act," it provided that revenue stamps be affixed to all newspapers, broadsides, pamphlets, licenses, leases or other legal documents, the revenue (collected by American customs agents) to be used for "defending, protecting and securing" the colonies.

The Stamp Act bore equally on people who did any kind of business. Thus it aroused the hostility of the most powerful and articulate groups in the American population: journalists, lawyers, clergymen, merchants and businessmen, North and South, East and West. Soon leading merchants organized for resistance and formed non-importation associations.

Trade with the mother country fell off sharply in the summer of 1765, as prominent men organized themselves into the "Sons of Liberty"--secret organizations formed to protest the Stamp Act, often through violent means. From Massachusetts to South Carolina, the act was nullified, and mobs, forcing luckless customs agents to resign their offices, destroyed the hated stamps.

Spurred by delegate Patrick Henry, the Virginia House of Burgesses passed a set of resolutions in May denouncing taxation without representation as a threat to colonial liberties. The House of Burgesses declared that Virginians had the rights of Englishmen, and hence could be taxed only by their own representatives. On June 8, the Massachusetts Assembly invited all the colonies to appoint delegates to the so-called Stamp Act Congress in New York, held in October 1765, to consider appeals for relief from the king and Parliament. Twenty-seven representatives from nine colonies seized the opportunity to mobilize colonial opinion against parliamentary interference in American affairs. After much debate, the congress adopted a set of resolutions asserting that "no taxes ever have been or can be constitutionally imposed on them, but by their respective legislatures," and that the Stamp Act had a "manifest tendency to subvert the rights and liberties of the colonists."

TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION

The issue thus drawn centered on the question of representation. From the colonies' point of view, it was impossible to consider themselves represented in Parliament unless they actually elected members to the House of Commons. But this idea conflicted with the English principle of "virtual representation," according to which each member of Parliament represented the interests of the whole country, even the empire, despite the fact that his electoral base consisted of only a tiny minority of property owners from a given district. The rest of the community was seen to be "represented" on the ground that all inhabitants shared the same interests as the property owners who elected members of Parliament.

Most British officials held that Parliament was an imperial body representing and exercising the same authority over the colonies as over the homeland. The American leaders argued that no "imperial" Parliament existed; their only legal relations were with the Crown. It was the king who had agreed to establish colonies beyond the sea and the king who provided them with governments.

They argued that the king was equally a king of England and a king of the colonies, but they insisted that the English Parliament had no more right to pass laws for the colonies than any colonial legislature had the right to pass laws for England.

The British Parliament was unwilling to accept the colonial contentions. British merchants, however, feeling the effects of the American boycott, threw their weight behind a repeal movement, and in 1766 Parliament yielded, repealing the Stamp Act and modifying the Sugar Act. However, to mollify the supporters of central control over the colonies, Parliament followed these actions with passage of the Declaratory Act. This act asserted the authority of Parliament to make laws binding the colonies "in all cases whatsoever."

TOWNSHEND ACTS

The year 1767 brought another series of measures that stirred anew all the elements of discord. Charles Townshend, British chancellor of the exchequer, was called upon to draft a new fiscal program. Intent upon reducing British taxes by making more efficient the collection of duties levied on American trade, he tightened customs administration, at the same time sponsoring duties on colonial imports of paper, glass, lead and tea exported from Britain to the colonies. The so-called Townshend Acts were based on the premise that taxes imposed on goods imported by the colonies were legal while internal taxes (like the Stamp Act) were not.

The Townshend Acts were designed to raise revenue to be used in part to support colonial governors, judges, customs officers and the British army in America. In response, Philadelphia lawyer John Dickinson, in *Letters of a Pennsylvania Farmer*, argued that Parliament had the right to control imperial commerce but did not have the right to tax the colonies, whether the duties were external or internal.

The agitation following enactment of the Townshend duties was less violent than that stirred by the Stamp Act, but it was nevertheless strong, particularly in the cities of the Eastern seaboard. Merchants once again resorted to non-importation agreements, and people made do with local products. Colonists, for example, dressed in homespun clothing and found substitutes for tea. They used homemade paper and their houses went unpainted. In Boston, enforcement of the new regulations provoked violence. When customs officials sought to collect duties, they were set upon by the populace and roughly handled. For this infraction, two British regiments were dispatched to protect the customs commissioners.

The presence of British troops in Boston was a standing invitation to disorder. On March 5, 1770, antagonism between citizens and British soldiers again flared into violence. What began as a harmless snowballing of British soldiers degenerated into a mob attack. Someone gave the order to fire. When the smoke had cleared, three Bostonians lay dead in the snow. Dubbed the "Boston Massacre," the incident was dramatically pictured as proof of British heartlessness and tyranny.

Faced with such opposition, Parliament in 1770 opted for a strategic retreat and repealed all the Townshend duties except that on tea, which was a luxury item in the colonies, imbibed only by a very small minority. To most, the action of Parliament signified that the colonists had won a major concession, and the campaign against England was largely dropped. A colonial embargo on "English tea" continued but was not too scrupulously observed. Prosperity was increasing and most colonial leaders were willing to let the future take care of itself.

SAMUEL ADAMS

During a three-year interval of calm, a relatively small number of radicals strove energetically to keep the controversy alive, however. They contended that payment of the tax constituted an acceptance of the principle that Parliament had the right to rule over the colonies. They feared that at any time in the future, the principle of parliamentary rule might be applied with devastating effect on all colonial liberties.

The radicals' most effective leader was Samuel Adams of Massachusetts, who toiled tirelessly for a single end: independence. From the time he graduated from Harvard College in 1740, Adams was a public servant in some capacity--inspector of chimneys, tax-collector and moderator of town meetings. A consistent failure in business, he was shrewd and able in politics, with the New England town meeting his theater of action.

Adams's goals were to free people from their awe of social and political superiors, make them aware of their own power and importance and thus arouse them to action. Toward these objectives, he published articles in newspapers and made speeches in town meetings, instigating resolutions that appealed to the colonists' democratic impulses.

In 1772 he induced the Boston town meeting to select a "Committee of Correspondence" to state the rights and grievances of the colonists. The committee opposed a British decision to pay the salaries of judges from customs revenues; it feared that the judges would no longer be dependent on the legislature for their incomes and thus no longer accountable to it--thereby leading to the emergence of "a despotic form of government." The committee communicated with other towns on this matter and requested them to draft replies. Committees were set up in virtually all the colonies, and out of them grew a base of effective revolutionary organizations. Still, Adams did not have enough fuel to set a fire.

BOSTON "TEA PARTY"

In 1773, however, Britain furnished Adams and his allies with an incendiary issue. The powerful East India Company, finding itself in critical financial straits, appealed to the British government, which granted it a monopoly on all tea exported to the colonies. The government also permitted the East India Company to supply retailers directly, bypassing colonial wholesalers who had previously sold it. After 1770, such a flourishing illegal trade existed that most of the tea consumed in America was of foreign origin and imported, illegally, duty-free. By selling its tea through its own agents at a price well under the customary one, the East India Company made smuggling unprofitable and threatened to eliminate the independent colonial merchants at the same time. Aroused not only by the loss of the tea trade but also by the monopolistic practice involved, colonial traders joined the radicals agitating for independence.

In ports up and down the Atlantic coast, agents of the East India Company were forced to resign, and new shipments of tea were either returned to England or warehoused. In Boston, however, the agents defied the colonists and, with the support of the royal governor, made preparations to land incoming cargoes regardless of opposition. On the night of December 16, 1773, a band of men disguised as Mohawk Indians and led by Samuel Adams boarded three British ships lying at anchor and dumped their tea cargo into Boston harbor. They took this step because they feared that if the tea were landed, colonists would actually comply with the tax and purchase the tea. Adams and his band of radicals doubted their countrymen's commitment to principle.

A crisis now confronted Britain. The East India Company had carried out a parliamentary statute, and if the destruction of the tea went unpunished, Parliament would admit to the world that it had no control over the colonies. Official opinion in Britain almost unanimously condemned the Boston Tea Party as an act of vandalism and advocated legal measures to bring the insurgent colonists into line.

THE COERCIVE ACTS

Parliament responded with new laws that the colonists called the "Coercive or Intolerable Acts." The first, the Boston Port Bill, closed the port of Boston until the tea was paid for--an action that threatened the very life of the city, for to prevent Boston from having access to the sea meant economic disaster. Other enactments restricted local authority and banned most town meetings held without the governor's consent. A Quartering Act required local authorities to find suitable quarters for British troops, in private homes if necessary. Instead of subduing and isolating Massachusetts as Parliament intended, these acts rallied its sister colonies to its aid.

The Quebec Act, passed at nearly the same time, extended the boundaries of the province of Quebec and guaranteed the right of the French inhabitants to enjoy religious freedom and their own legal customs. The colonists opposed this act because, by disregarding old charter claims to western lands, it threatened to hem them in to the North and Northwest by a Roman Catholic-dominated province. Though the Quebec Act had not been passed as a punitive measure, it was classed by the Americans with the Coercive Acts, and all became known as the "Five Intolerable Acts."

At the suggestion of the Virginia House of Burgesses, colonial representatives met in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774, "to consult upon the present unhappy state of the Colonies." Delegates to this meeting, known as the First Continental Congress, were chosen by provincial congresses or popular conventions. Every colony except Georgia sent at least one delegate, and the total number of 55 was large enough for diversity of opinion, but small enough for genuine debate and effective action.

The division of opinion in the colonies posed a genuine dilemma for the delegates. They would have to give an appearance of firm unanimity to induce the British government to make concessions and, at the same time, they would have to avoid any show of radicalism or spirit of independence that would alarm more moderate Americans. A cautious keynote speech, followed by a "resolve" that no obedience was due the Coercive Acts, ended with adoption of a set of resolutions, among them, the right of the colonists to "life, liberty and property," and the right of provincial legislatures to set "all cases of taxation and internal polity."

The most important action taken by the Congress, however, was the formation of a "Continental Association," which provided for the renewal of the trade boycott and for a system of committees to inspect customs entries, publish the names of merchants who violated the agreements, confiscate their imports, and encourage frugality, economy and industry.

The Association immediately assumed the leadership in the colonies, spurring new local organizations to end what remained of royal authority. Led by the pro-independence leaders, they drew their support not only from the less well-to-do, but from many members of the professional class, especially lawyers, most of the planters of the Southern colonies and a number of merchants. They intimidated the hesitant into joining the popular movement and punished the hostile. They began the collection of military supplies and the mobilization of troops. And they fanned public opinion into revolutionary ardor.

Many Americans, opposed to British encroachment on American rights, nonetheless favored discussion and compromise as the proper solution. This group included Crown-appointed officers, many Quakers and members of other religious sects opposed to the use of violence, many merchants--especially from the middle colonies--and some discontented farmers and frontiersmen from Southern colonies.

The king might well have effected an alliance with these large numbers of moderates and, by timely concessions, so strengthened their position that the revolutionaries would have found it difficult to proceed with hostilities. But George III had no intention of making concessions. In September 1774, scorning a petition by Philadelphia Quakers, he wrote, "The die is now cast, the Colonies must either submit or triumph." This action isolated the Loyalists who were appalled and frightened by the course of events following the Coercive Acts.

THE REVOLUTION BEGINS

General Thomas Gage, an amiable English gentleman with an American-born wife, commanded the garrison at Boston, where political activity had almost wholly replaced trade. Gage's main duty in the colonies had been to enforce the Coercive Acts. When news reached him that the Massachusetts colonists were collecting powder and military stores at the town of Concord, 32 kilometers away, Gage sent a strong detail from the garrison to confiscate these munitions.

After a night of marching, the British troops reached the village of Lexington on April 19, 1775, and saw a grim band of 70 Minutemen--so named because they were said to be ready to fight in a minute--through the early morning mist. The Minutemen intended only a silent protest, but Major John Pitcairn, the leader of the British troops, yelled, "Disperse, you damned rebels! You dogs, run!" The leader of the Minutemen, Captain John Parker, told his troops not to fire unless fired at first. The Americans were withdrawing when someone fired a shot, which led the British troops to fire at the Minutemen. The British then charged with bayonets, leaving eight dead and 10 wounded. It was, in the often quoted phrase of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "the shot heard 'round the world."

Then the British pushed on to Concord. The Americans had taken away most of the munitions, but the British destroyed whatever was left. In the meantime, American forces in the countryside mobilized, moved toward Concord and inflicted casualties on the British, who began the long return to Boston. All along the road, however, behind stone walls, hillocks and houses, militiamen from "every Middlesex village and farm" made targets of the bright red coats of the British soldiers. By the time the weary soldiers stumbled into Boston, they suffered more than 250 killed and wounded. The Americans lost 93 men.

While the alarms of Lexington and Concord were still resounding, the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on May 10, 1775. By May 15, the Congress voted to go to war, inducting the colonial militias into continental service and appointing Colonel George Washington of Virginia as commander-in-chief of the American forces. In the meantime, the Americans would suffer high casualties at Bunker Hill just outside Boston.

Congress also ordered American expeditions to march northward into Canada by fall. Although the Americans later captured Montreal, they failed in a winter assault on Quebec, and eventually retreated to New York.

Despite the outbreak of armed conflict, the idea of complete separation from England was still repugnant to some members of the Continental Congress. In July, John Dickinson had drafted a resolution, known as the Olive Branch Petition, begging the king to prevent further hostile actions until some sort of agreement could be worked out. The petition fell on deaf ears, however, and King George III issued a proclamation on August 23, 1775, declaring the colonies to be in a state of rebellion.

Britain had expected the Southern colonies to remain loyal, in part because of their reliance on slavery. Many in the Southern colonies feared that a rebellion against the mother country would also trigger a slave uprising against the planters. In November 1775, in fact, Lord Dunmore, the governor of Virginia, offered freedom to all slaves who would fight for the British. However, Dunmore's proclamation had the effect of driving to the rebel side many Virginians who would otherwise have remained Loyalist. The governor of North Carolina, Josiah Martin, also urged North Carolinians to remain loyal to the Crown. When 1,500 men answered Martin's call, they were defeated by revolutionary armies before British troops could arrive to help. British warships continued down the coast to Charleston, South Carolina, and opened fire on the city in early June 1776. But South Carolinians had time to prepare, and repulsed the British by the end of the month. They would not return South for more than two years.

COMMON SENSE AND INDEPENDENCE

In January 1776, Thomas Paine, a political theorist and writer who had come to America from England in 1774, published a 50-page pamphlet, *Common Sense*. Within three months, 100,000 copies of the pamphlet were sold. Paine attacked the idea of hereditary monarchy, declaring that one honest man was worth more to society than "all the crowned ruffians that ever lived." He presented the alternatives--continued submission to a tyrannical king and an outworn government, or liberty and happiness as a self-sufficient, independent republic. Circulated throughout the colonies, *Common Sense* helped to crystallize the desire for separation. There still remained the task, however, of gaining each colony's approval of a formal declaration. On May 10, 1776--one year to the day since the Second Continental Congress had first met--a resolution was adopted calling for separation. Now only a formal declaration was needed. On June 7, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia introduced a resolution declaring "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states...." Immediately, a committee of five, headed by Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, was appointed to prepare a formal declaration.

Largely Jefferson's work, the Declaration of Independence, adopted July 4, 1776, not only announced the birth of a new nation, but also set forth a philosophy of human freedom that would become a dynamic force throughout the entire world. The Declaration draws upon French and English Enlightenment political philosophy, but one influence in particular stands out: John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government*. Locke took conceptions of the traditional rights of Englishmen and universalized them into the natural rights of all humankind. The Declaration's familiar opening passage echoes Locke's social-contract theory of government:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new Government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness." In the Declaration, Jefferson linked Locke's principles directly to the situation in the colonies. To fight for American independence was to fight for a government based on popular consent in place of a government by a king who had "combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws...." Only a government based on popular consent could secure natural rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Thus, to fight for American independence was to fight on behalf of one's own natural rights.

DEFEATS AND VICTORIES

Although the Americans suffered severe setbacks for months after independence was declared, their tenacity and perseverance eventually paid off. During August 1776, in the Battle of Long Island in New York, Washington's position became untenable, and he executed a masterly retreat in small boats from Brooklyn to the Manhattan shore. British General William Howe twice hesitated and allowed the Americans to escape. By November, however, Howe had captured Fort Mifflin on the Delaware River. New York City would remain under British control until the end of the war. By December, Washington's forces were nearing collapse, as supplies and promised aid failed to materialize. But Howe again missed his chance to crush the Americans by deciding to wait until spring to resume fighting. In the meantime, Washington crossed the Delaware River, north of Trenton, New Jersey. In the early morning hours of December 19, his troops surprised the garrison at Trenton, taking more than 900 prisoners. A week later, on January 3, 1777, Washington attacked the British at Princeton, regaining most of the territory formally occupied by the British. The victories at Trenton and Princeton revived flagging American spirits.

In 1777 Howe defeated the American army at Brandywine in Pennsylvania and occupied Philadelphia, forcing the Continental Congress to flee. Washington had to endure the bitterly cold winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, lacking adequate food, clothing and supplies. The American troops suffered less because of shortages of these items than because farmers and merchants preferred exchanging their goods for British gold and silver rather than for paper money issued by the Continental Congress and the states.

Valley Forge was the lowest ebb for Washington's Continental Army, but 1777 proved to be the turning point in the war. In late 1776, British General John Burgoyne devised a plan to invade New York and New England via Lake Champlain and the Hudson River. Unfortunately, he had too much heavy equipment to negotiate the wooded and marshy terrain. At Oriskany, New York, a band of Loyalists and Indians under Burgoyne's command ran into a mobile and seasoned American force. At Bennington, Vermont, more of Burgoyne's forces, seeking much-needed supplies, encountered American troops. The ensuing battle delayed Burgoyne's army long enough to enable Washington to send reinforcements from the lower Hudson River near Albany, New York. By the time Burgoyne resumed his advance, the Americans were waiting for him. Led by Benedict Arnold--who would later betray the Americans at West Point, New York--the Americans twice repulsed the British. Burgoyne fell back to Saratoga, New York, where American forces under General Horatio Gates surrounded the British troops. On October 17, 1777, Burgoyne surrendered his entire army. The British lost six generals, 300 other officers and 5,500 enlisted personnel.

FRANCO-AMERICAN ALLIANCE

In France, enthusiasm for the American cause was high: the French intellectual world was itself in revolt against feudalism and privilege. However, the Crown lent its support to the colonies for geopolitical rather than ideological reasons: the French government had been eager for reprisal against Britain ever since France's defeat in 1763. To further the American cause, Benjamin Franklin was sent to Paris in 1776. His wit, guile and intellect soon made their presence felt in the French capital, and played a major role in winning French assistance.

France began providing aid to the colonies in May 1776, when it sent 14 ships with war supplies to America. In fact, most of the gun powder used by the American armies came from France. After Britain's defeat at Saratoga, France saw an opportunity to seriously weaken its ancient enemy and restore the balance of power that had been upset by the Seven Years' War (the French and Indian War). On February 6, 1778, America and France signed a Treaty of Amity and Commerce, in which France recognized America and offered trade concessions. They also signed a Treaty of Alliance, which stipulated that if France entered the war, neither country would lay down its arms until America won its independence, that neither would conclude peace with Britain without the consent of the other, and that each guaranteed the other's possessions in America. This was the only bilateral defense treaty signed by the United States or its predecessors until 1949.

The Franco-American alliance soon broadened the conflict. In June 1778 British ships fired on French vessels, and the two countries went to war. In 1779 Spain, hoping to reacquire territories taken by Britain in the Seven Years' War, entered the conflict on the side of France, but not as an ally of the Americans. In 1780 Britain declared war on the Dutch, who had continued to trade with the Americans. The combination of these European powers, with France in the lead, was a far greater threat to Britain than the American colonies standing alone.

THE BRITISH MOVE SOUTH

With the French now involved, the British stepped up their efforts in the southern colonies since they felt that most Southerners were Loyalists. A campaign began in late 1778, with the capture of Savannah, Georgia. Shortly thereafter, British troops drove toward Charleston, South Carolina, the principal Southern port. The British also brought naval and amphibious forces into play there, and they managed to bottle up American forces on the Charleston peninsula. On May 12 General Benjamin Lincoln surrendered the city and its 5,000 troops, the greatest American defeat of the war.

But the reversal in fortune only emboldened the American rebels. Soon, South Carolinians began roaming the countryside, attacking British supply lines. By July, American General Horatio Gates, who had assembled a replacement force of untrained militiamen, rushed to Camden, South Carolina, to confront British forces led by General Charles Cornwallis. But the untrained soldiers of Gates's army panicked and ran when confronted by the British regulars. Cornwallis's troops met the Americans several more times, but the most significant battle took place at Cowpens, South Carolina, in early 1781, where the Americans soundly defeated the British. After an exhausting, but unproductive chase through North Carolina, Cornwallis set his sights on Virginia.

VICTORY AND INDEPENDENCE

In July 1780 France's Louis XVI had sent to America an expeditionary force of 6,000 men under the Comte Jean de Rochambeau. In addition, the French fleet harassed British shipping and prevented reinforcement and resupply of British forces in Virginia by a British fleet sailing from New York City. French and American armies and navies, totaling 18,000 men, parried with Cornwallis all through the summer and into the fall. Finally, on October 19, 1781, after being trapped at Yorktown near the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, Cornwallis surrendered his army of 8,000 British soldiers.

Although Cornwallis's defeat did not immediately end the war--which would drag on inconclusively for almost two more years--a new British government decided to pursue peace negotiations in Paris in early 1782, with the American side represented by Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and John Jay. On April 15, 1783, Congress approved the final treaty, and Great Britain and its former colonies signed it on September 3. Known as the Treaty of Paris, the peace settlement acknowledged the independence, freedom and sovereignty of the 13 former colonies, now states, to which Great Britain granted the territory west to the Mississippi River, north to Canada and south to Florida, which was returned to Spain. The fledgling colonies that Richard Henry Lee had spoken of more than seven years before, had finally become "free and independent states." The task of knitting together a nation yet remained.

SIDE BAR: LOYALISTS DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Americans today think of the War for Independence as a revolution, but in important respects it was also a civil war. American Loyalists, or "Tories" as their opponents called them, opposed the Revolution, and many took up arms against the rebels. Estimates of the number of Loyalists range as high as 500,000, or 20 percent of the white population of the colonies.

What motivated the Loyalists? Most educated Americans, whether Loyalist or Revolutionary, accepted John Locke's theory of natural rights and limited government. Thus, the Loyalists, like the rebels, criticized such British actions as the Stamp Act and the Coercive Acts. Loyalists wanted to pursue peaceful forms of protest because they believed that violence would give rise to mob rule or tyranny. They also believed that independence would mean the loss of economic benefits derived from membership in the British mercantile system.

Loyalists came from all walks of life. The majority were small farmers, artisans and shopkeepers. Not surprisingly, most British officials remained loyal to the Crown. Wealthy merchants tended to remain loyal, as did Anglican ministers, especially in Puritan New England. Loyalists also included some blacks (to whom the British promised freedom), Indians, indentured servants and some German immigrants, who supported the Crown mainly because George III was of German origin.

The number of Loyalists in each colony varied. Recent estimates suggest that half the population of New York was Loyalist; it had an aristocratic culture and was occupied throughout the Revolution by the British. In the Carolinas, back-country farmers were Loyalist, whereas the Tidewater planters tended to support the Revolution.

During the Revolution, most Loyalists suffered little from their views. However, a minority, about 19,000 Loyalists, armed and supplied by the British, fought in the conflict.

The Paris Peace Treaty required Congress to restore property confiscated from Loyalists. The heirs of William Penn in Pennsylvania, for example, and those of George Calvert in Maryland received generous settlements. In the Carolinas, where enmity between rebels and Loyalists was especially strong, few of the latter regained their property. In New York and the Carolinas, the confiscations from Loyalists resulted in something of a social revolution as large estates were parceled out to yeoman farmers.

About 100,000 Loyalists left the country, including William Franklin, the son of Benjamin, and John Singleton Copley, the greatest American painter of the period. Most settled in Canada. Some eventually returned, although several state governments excluded the Loyalists from holding public office. In the decades after the Revolution, Americans preferred to forget about the Loyalists. Apart from Copley, the Loyalists became nonpersons in American history. .

An Outline of American History

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CHAPTER FOUR: THE FORMATION OF A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

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"Every man and every body of men on earth, possess the right of self-government." Thomas Jefferson, 1790

STATE CONSTITUTIONS

The success of the Revolution gave Americans the opportunity to give legal form to their ideals as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, and to remedy some of their grievances through state constitutions. As early as May 10, 1776, Congress had passed a resolution advising the colonies to form new governments "such as shall best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents." Some of them had already done so, and within a year after the Declaration of Independence, all but three had drawn up constitutions. The new constitutions showed the impact of democratic ideas. None made any drastic break with the past, since all were built on the solid foundation of colonial experience and English practice. But each was also animated by the spirit of republicanism, an ideal that had long been praised by Enlightenment philosophers.

Naturally, the first objective of the framers of the state constitutions was to secure those "unalienable rights" whose violation had caused the former colonies to repudiate their connection with Britain. Thus, each constitution began with a declaration or bill of rights. Virginia's, which served as a model for all the others, included a declaration of principles, such as popular sovereignty, rotation in office, freedom of elections and an enumeration of fundamental liberties: moderate bail and humane punishment, speedy trial by jury, freedom of the press and of conscience, and the right of the majority to reform or alter the government.

Other states enlarged the list of liberties to guarantee freedom of speech, of assembly and of petition, and frequently included such provisions as the right to bear arms, to a writ of habeas corpus, to inviolability of domicile and to equal protection under the law. Moreover, all the constitutions paid allegiance to the three-branch structure of government -- executive, legislative and judiciary -- each checked and balanced by the others.

Pennsylvania's constitution was the most radical. In that state, Philadelphia artisans, Scots-Irish frontiersmen and German-speaking farmers had taken control. The provincial congress adopted a constitution that permitted every male taxpayer and his sons to vote, required rotation in office (no one could serve as a representative more than four years out of every seven) and set up a single-chamber legislature.

The state constitutions had some glaring limitations, particularly by more recent standards. Constitutions established to guarantee people their natural rights did not secure for everyone the most fundamental natural right -- equality. The colonies south of Pennsylvania excluded their slave populations from their inalienable rights as human beings. Women had no political rights. No state went so far as to permit universal male suffrage, and even in those states that permitted all taxpayers to vote (Delaware, North Carolina and Georgia, in addition to Pennsylvania), office-holders were required to own a certain amount of property.

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

The struggle with England had done much to change colonial attitudes. Local assemblies had rejected the Albany Plan of Union in 1754, refusing to surrender even the smallest part of their autonomy to any other body, even one they themselves had elected. But in the course of the Revolution, mutual aid had proved effective, and the fear of relinquishing individual authority had lessened to a large degree.

John Dickinson produced the "Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union" in 1776. The Continental Congress adopted them in November 1777, and they went into effect in 1781, having been ratified by all the states. The governmental framework established by the Articles had many weaknesses. The national government lacked the authority to set up tariffs when necessary, to regulate commerce and to levy taxes. It lacked sole control of international relations: a number of states had begun their own negotiations with foreign countries. Nine states had organized their own armies, and several had their own navies. There was a curious hodgepodge of coins and a bewildering variety of state and national paper bills, all fast depreciating in value.

Economic difficulties after the war prompted calls for change. The end of the war had a severe effect on merchants who supplied the armies of both sides and who had lost the advantages deriving from participation in the British mercantile system. The states gave preference to American goods in their tariff policies, but these tariffs were inconsistent, leading to the demand for a stronger central government to implement a uniform policy.

Farmers probably suffered the most from economic difficulties following the Revolution. The supply of farm produce exceeded demand, and unrest centered chiefly among farmer-debtors who wanted strong remedies to avoid foreclosure on their property and imprisonment for debt. Courts were clogged with suits for debt. All through the summer of 1786, popular conventions and informal gatherings in several states demanded reform in the state administrations.

In the autumn of 1786, mobs of farmers in Massachusetts under the leadership of a former army captain, Daniel Shays, began forcibly to prevent the county courts from sitting and passing further judgments for debt, pending the next state election. In January 1787 a ragtag army of 1,200 farmers moved toward the federal arsenal at Springfield. The rebels, armed chiefly with staves and pitchforks, were repulsed by a small state militia force; General Benjamin Lincoln then arrived with reinforcements from Boston and routed the remaining Shaysites, whose leader escaped to Vermont. The government captured 14 rebels and sentenced them to death, but ultimately pardoned some and let the others off with short prison terms. After the defeat of the rebellion, a newly elected legislature, whose majority sympathized with the rebels, met some of their demands for debt relief.

THE PROBLEM OF EXPANSION

With the end of the Revolution, the United States again had to face the old unsolved Western question -- the problem of expansion, with its complications of land, fur trade, Indians, settlement and local government. Lured by the richest land yet found in the country, pioneers poured over the Appalachian Mountains and beyond. By 1775 the far-flung outposts scattered along the waterways had tens of thousands of settlers. Separated by mountain ranges and hundreds of kilometers from the centers of political authority in the East, the inhabitants established their own governments. Settlers from all the tidewater states pressed on into the fertile river valleys, hardwood forests and rolling prairies of the interior. By 1790 the population of the trans-Appalachian region numbered well over 120,000.

Before the war, several colonies had laid extensive and often overlapping claims to land beyond the Appalachians. To those without such claims this rich territorial prize seemed unfairly apportioned. Maryland, speaking for the latter group, introduced a resolution that the western lands be considered common property to be parceled by the Congress into free and independent governments. This idea was not received enthusiastically.

Nonetheless, in 1780 New York led the way by ceding its claims to the United States. In 1784 Virginia, which held the grandest claims, relinquished all land north of the Ohio River. Other states ceded their claims, and it became apparent that Congress would come into possession of all the lands north of the Ohio River and west of the Allegheny Mountains. This common possession of millions of hectares was the most tangible evidence yet of nationality and unity, and gave a certain substance to the idea of national sovereignty. At the same time, these vast territories were a problem that required solution.

The Articles of Confederation offered an answer. Under the Articles, a system of limited self-government (set forth in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787) provided for the organization of the Northwest Territory, initially as a single district, ruled by a governor and judges appointed by the Congress. When this territory had 5,000 free male inhabitants of voting age, it was to be entitled to a legislature of two chambers, itself electing the lower house. In addition, it could at that time send a non-voting delegate to Congress.

No more than five nor fewer than three states were to be formed out of this territory, and whenever any one of them had 60,000 free inhabitants, it was to be admitted to the Union "on an equal footing with the original states in all respects." The Ordinance guaranteed civil rights and liberties, encouraged education and guaranteed that "there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory."

The new policy repudiated the time-honored concept that colonies existed for the benefit of the mother country and were politically subordinate and socially inferior. That doctrine was replaced by the principle that colonies are but the extension of the nation and are entitled, not as a privilege but as a right, to all the benefits of equality. These enlightened provisions of the Northwest Ordinance formed the basis for America's public land policy.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

George Washington wrote of the period between the Treaty of Paris and the writing of the Constitution that the states were united only by a "rope of sand." Disputes between Maryland and Virginia over navigation on the Potomac River led to a conference of representatives of five states at Annapolis, Maryland, in 1786. One of the delegates, Alexander Hamilton, convinced his colleagues that commerce was too much bound up with other political and economic questions, and that the situation was too serious to be dealt with by so unrepresentative a body.

He advocated calling upon all the states to appoint representatives for a meeting to be held the following spring in Philadelphia. The Continental Congress was at first indignant over this bold step, but its protests were cut short by the news that Virginia had elected George Washington a delegate. During the next fall and winter, elections were held in all states but Rhode Island.

It was a gathering of notables that assembled at the Federal Convention in the Philadelphia State House in May 1787. The state legislatures sent leaders with experience in colonial and state governments, in Congress, on the bench and in the army. George Washington, regarded as the country's outstanding citizen because of his integrity and his military leadership during the Revolution, was chosen as presiding officer.

Prominent among the more active members were two Pennsylvanians: Gouverneur Morris, who clearly saw the need for national government, and James Wilson, who labored indefatigably for the national idea. Also elected by Pennsylvania was Benjamin Franklin, nearing the end of an extraordinary career of public service and scientific achievement. From Virginia came James Madison, a practical young statesman, a thorough student of politics and history and, according to a colleague, "from a spirit of industry and application...the best-informed man on any point in debate." Madison today is recognized as the "Father of the Constitution."

Massachusetts sent Rufus King and Elbridge Gerry, young men of ability and experience. Roger Sherman, shoemaker turned judge, was one of the representatives from Connecticut. From New York came Alexander Hamilton, who had proposed the meeting. Absent from the Convention were Thomas Jefferson, who was serving in France as minister, and John Adams, serving in the same capacity in Great Britain. Youth predominated among the 55 delegates -- the average age was 42.

The Convention had been authorized merely to draft amendments to the Articles of Confederation but, as Madison later wrote, the delegates, "with a manly confidence in their country," simply threw the Articles aside and went ahead with the building of a wholly new form of government.

They recognized that the paramount need was to reconcile two different powers -- the power of local control, which was already being exercised by the 13 semi-independent states, and the power of a central government. They adopted the principle that the functions and powers of the national government, being new, general and inclusive, had to be carefully defined and stated, while all other functions and powers were to be understood as belonging to the states. But realizing that the central government had to have real power, the delegates also generally accepted the fact that the government should be authorized -- among other things -- to coin money, to regulate commerce, to declare war and to make peace.

DEBATE AND COMPROMISE

The 18th-century statesmen who met in Philadelphia were adherents of Montesquieu's concept of the balance of power in politics. This principle was supported by colonial experience and strengthened by the writings of John Locke, with which most of the delegates were familiar. These influences led to the conviction that three equal and coordinate branches of government should be established. Legislative, executive and judicial powers were to be so harmoniously balanced that no one could ever gain control. The delegates agreed that the legislative branch, like the colonial legislatures and the British Parliament, should consist of two houses.

On these points there was unanimity within the assembly. But sharp differences arose as to the method of achieving them. Representatives of the small states -- New Jersey, for instance -- objected to changes that would reduce their influence in the national government by basing representation upon population rather than upon statehood, as was the case under the Articles of Confederation.

On the other hand, representatives of large states, like Virginia, argued for proportionate representation. This debate threatened to go on endlessly until Roger Sherman came forward with arguments for representation in proportion to the population of the states in one house of Congress, the House of Representatives, and equal representation in the other, the Senate.

The alignment of large against small states then dissolved. But almost every succeeding question raised new problems, to be resolved only by new compromises. Northerners wanted slaves counted when determining each state's tax share, but not in determining the number of seats a state would have in the House of Representatives. According to a compromise reached with little dissent, the House of Representatives would be apportioned according to the number of free inhabitants plus three-fifths of the slaves.

Certain members, such as Sherman and Elbridge Gerry, still smarting from the Shays Rebellion, feared that the mass of people lacked sufficient wisdom to govern themselves and thus wished no branch of the federal government to be elected directly by the people. Others thought the national government should be given as broad a popular base as possible. Some delegates wished to exclude the growing West from the opportunity of statehood; others championed the equality principle established in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

There was no serious difference on such national economic questions as paper money, laws concerning contract obligations or the role of women, who were excluded from politics. But there was a need for balancing sectional economic interests; for settling arguments as to the powers, term and selection of the chief executive; and for solving problems involving the tenure of judges and the kind of courts to be established.

Laboring through a hot Philadelphia summer, the Convention finally achieved a draft incorporating in a brief document the organization of the most complex government yet devised -- a government supreme within a clearly defined and limited sphere. In conferring powers, the Convention gave the federal government full power to levy taxes, borrow money, establish uniform duties and excise taxes, coin money, fix weights and measures, grant patents and copyrights, set up post offices, and build post roads. The national government also had the power to raise and maintain an army and navy, and to regulate interstate commerce. It was given the management of Indian affairs, foreign policy and war. It could pass laws for naturalizing foreigners and controlling public lands, and it could admit new states on a basis of absolute equality with the old. The power to pass all necessary and proper laws for executing these clearly defined powers rendered the federal government able to meet the needs of later generations and of a greatly expanded body politic.

The principle of separation of powers had already been given a fair trial in most state constitutions and had proved sound. Accordingly, the Convention set up a governmental system with separate legislative, executive and judiciary branches -- each checked by the others. Thus congressional enactments were not to become law until approved by the president. And the president was to submit the most important of his appointments and all his treaties to the Senate for confirmation. The president, in turn, could be impeached and removed by Congress. The judiciary was to hear all cases arising under federal laws and the Constitution; in effect, the courts were empowered to interpret both the fundamental and the statute law. But members of the judiciary, appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate, could also be impeached by Congress.

To protect the Constitution from hasty alteration, Article V stipulated that amendments to the Constitution be proposed either by two-thirds of both houses of Congress or by two-thirds of the states, meeting in convention. The proposals were to be ratified by one of two methods: either by the legislatures of three-fourths of the states, or by convention in three-fourths of the states, with the Congress proposing the method to be used.

Finally, the Convention faced the most important problem of all: how should the powers given to the new government be enforced? Under the Articles of Confederation, the national government had possessed -- on paper -- significant powers, which, in practice, had come to naught, for the states paid no attention to them. What was to save the new government from the same fate?

At the outset, most delegates furnished a single answer -- the use of force. But it was quickly seen that the application of force upon the states would destroy the Union. The decision was that the government should not act upon the states but upon the people within the states, and should legislate for and upon all the individual residents of the country. As the keystone of the Constitution, the Convention adopted two brief but highly significant statements:

Congress shall have power...to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the...powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States....(Article I, Section 7)

This Constitution and the laws of the United States, which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any thing in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding. (Article VI)

Thus the laws of the United States became enforceable in its own national courts, through its own judges and marshals, as well as in the state courts through the state judges and state law officers.

Debate continues to this day about the motives of those who wrote the Constitution. In 1913 Charles Beard, in *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution*, argued that the Founding Fathers stood to gain economic advantages from the stability imposed by a powerful and authoritative national government because they held large amounts of depreciated government securities. However, James Madison, principal drafter of the constitution, held no bonds, while some opponents of the Constitution held large amounts of bonds and securities. Economic interests influenced the course of the debate, but so did state, sectional and ideological interests. Equally important was the idealism of the framers. Products of the Enlightenment, the Founding Fathers designed a government that, they believed, would promote individual liberty and public virtue. The ideals embodied in the U.S. Constitution are an essential element of the American national identity.

RATIFICATION AND THE BILL OF RIGHTS

On September 17, 1787, after 16 weeks of deliberation, the finished Constitution was signed by 39 of the 42 delegates present. Franklin, pointing to the half-sun painted in brilliant gold on the back of Washington's chair, said:

I have often in the course of the session...looked at that [chair] behind the president, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting; but now, at length, I have the happiness to know that it is a rising, and not a setting, sun.

The Convention was over; the members "adjourned to the City Tavern, dined together, and took a cordial leave of each other." Yet a crucial part of the struggle for a more perfect union was yet to be faced. The consent of popularly elected state conventions was still required before the document could become effective.

The Convention had decided that the Constitution would take effect upon ratification by conventions in nine of the 13 states. By June 1788 the required nine states ratified the Constitution, but the large states of Virginia and New York had not. Most people felt that without the support of these two states, the Constitution would never be honored. To many, the document seemed full of dangers: would not the strong central government that it established tyrannize them, oppress them with heavy taxes and drag them into wars?

Differing views on these questions brought into existence two parties, the Federalists, who favored a strong central government, and the Antifederalists, who preferred a loose association of separate states. Impassioned arguments on both sides were voiced by the press, the legislatures and the state conventions.

In Virginia, the Antifederalists attacked the proposed new government by challenging the opening phrase of the Constitution: "We the People of the United States." Without using the individual state names in the Constitution, the delegates argued, the states would not retain their separate rights or powers. Virginia Antifederalists were led by Patrick Henry, who became the chief spokesman for back-country farmers who feared the powers of the new central government. Wavering delegates were persuaded by a proposal that the Virginia convention recommend a bill of rights, and Antifederalists joined with the Federalists to ratify the Constitution on June 25.

In New York, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and James Madison pushed for the ratification of the Constitution in a series of essays known as *The Federalist Papers*. The essays, published in New York newspapers, provided a now-classic argument for a central federal government, with separate executive, legislative and judicial branches that checked and balanced one another. With *The Federalist Papers* influencing the New York delegates, the Constitution was ratified on July 26.

Antipathy toward a strong central government was only one concern among those opposed to the Constitution; of equal concern to many was the fear that the Constitution did not protect individual rights and freedoms sufficiently. Virginian George Mason, author of Virginia's 1776 Declaration of Rights, was one of three delegates to the Constitutional Convention who refused to sign the final document because it did not enumerate individual rights. Together with Patrick Henry, he campaigned vigorously against ratification of the Constitution by Virginia. Indeed, five states, including Massachusetts, ratified the Constitution on the condition that such amendments be added immediately.

When the first Congress convened in New York City in September 1789, the calls for amendments protecting individual rights were virtually unanimous. Congress quickly adopted 12 such amendments; by December 1791, enough states had ratified 10 amendments to make them part of the Constitution. Collectively, they are known as the Bill of Rights. Among their provisions: freedom of speech, press, religion, and the right to assemble peacefully, protest and demand changes (First Amendment); protection against unreasonable searches, seizures of property and arrest (Fourth Amendment); due process of law in all criminal cases (Fifth Amendment); right to a fair and speedy trial (Sixth Amendment); protection against cruel and unusual punishment (Eighth Amendment); and provision that the people retain additional rights not listed in the Constitution (Ninth Amendment).

Since the adoption of the Bill of Rights, only 16 more amendments have been added to the Constitution. Although a number of the subsequent amendments revised the federal government's structure and operations, most followed the precedent established by the Bill of Rights and expanded individual rights and freedoms.

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON

One of the last acts of the Congress of the Confederation was to arrange for the first presidential election, setting March 4, 1789, as the date that the new government would come into being. One name was on everyone's lips for the new chief of state -- George Washington -- and he was unanimously chosen president on April 30, 1789. In words spoken by every president since, Washington pledged to execute the duties of the presidency faithfully and, to the best of his ability, to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

When Washington took office, the new Constitution enjoyed neither tradition nor the full backing of organized public opinion. Moreover, the new government had to create its own machinery. No taxes were forthcoming. Until a judiciary could be established, laws could not be enforced. The Army was small. The Navy had ceased to exist.

Congress quickly created the departments of State and Treasury, with Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton as their respective secretaries. Simultaneously, the Congress established the federal judiciary, establishing not only a Supreme Court, with one chief justice and five associate justices, but also three circuit courts and 13 district courts. Both a secretary of war and an attorney general were also appointed. And since Washington generally preferred to make decisions only after consulting those men whose judgment he valued, the American presidential Cabinet came into existence, consisting of the heads of all the departments that Congress might create.

Meanwhile, the country was growing steadily and immigration from Europe was increasing. Americans were moving westward: New Englanders and Pennsylvanians into Ohio; Virginians and Carolinians into Kentucky and Tennessee. Good farms were to be had for small sums; labor was in strong demand. The rich valley stretches of upper New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia soon became great wheat-growing areas.

Although many items were still homemade, the Industrial Revolution was dawning in America. Massachusetts and Rhode Island were laying the foundation of important textile industries; Connecticut was beginning to turn out tinware and clocks; New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania were producing paper, glass and iron. Shipping had grown to such an extent that on the seas the United States was second only to Britain. Even before 1790, American ships were traveling to China to sell furs and bring back tea, spices and silk.

At this critical juncture in the country's growth, Washington's wise leadership was crucial. He organized a national government, developed policies for settlement of territories previously held by Britain and Spain, stabilized the northwestern frontier and oversaw the admission of three new states: Vermont (1791), Kentucky (1792) and Tennessee (1796). Finally, in his Farewell Address, Washington warned the nation to "steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world." This advice influenced American attitudes toward the rest of the world for generations to come.

HAMILTON VS. JEFFERSON

The conflict that took shape in the 1790s between the Federalists and the Antifederalists exercised a profound impact on American history. The Federalists, led by Alexander Hamilton, who had married into the wealthy Schuyler family, represented the urban mercantile interests of the seaports; the Antifederalists, led by Thomas Jefferson, spoke for the rural and southern interests. The debate between the two concerned the power of the central government versus that of the states, with the Federalists favoring the former and the Antifederalists advocating states' rights.

Hamilton sought a strong central government acting in the interests of commerce and industry. He brought to public life a love of efficiency, order and organization. In response to the call of the House of Representatives for a plan for the "adequate support of public credit," he laid down and supported principles not only of the public economy, but of effective government.

Hamilton pointed out that America must have credit for industrial development, commercial activity and the operations of government. It must also have the complete faith and support of the people. There were many who wished to repudiate the national debt or pay only part of it. Hamilton, however insisted upon full payment and also upon a plan by which the federal government took over the unpaid debts of the states incurred during the Revolution.

Hamilton also devised a Bank of the United States, with the right to establish branches in different parts of the country. He sponsored a national mint, and argued in favor of tariffs, using a version of an "infant industry" argument: that temporary protection of new firms can help foster the development of competitive national industries. These measures -- placing the credit of the federal government on a firm foundation and giving it all the revenues it needed -- encouraged commerce and industry, and created a solid phalanx of businessmen who stood firmly behind the national government.

Jefferson advocated a decentralized agrarian republic. He recognized the value of a strong central government in foreign relations, but he did not want it strong in other respects. Hamilton's great aim was more efficient organization, whereas Jefferson once said "I am not a friend to a very energetic government." Hamilton feared anarchy and thought in terms of order; Jefferson feared tyranny and thought in terms of freedom.

The United States needed both influences. It was the country's good fortune that it had both men and could, in time, fuse and reconcile their philosophies. One clash between them, which occurred shortly after Jefferson took office as secretary of state, led to a new and profoundly important interpretation of the Constitution. When Hamilton introduced his bill to establish a national bank, Jefferson objected. Speaking for those who believed in states' rights, Jefferson argued that the Constitution expressly enumerates all the powers belonging to the federal government and reserves all other powers to the states. Nowhere was it empowered to set up a bank.

Hamilton contended that because of the mass of necessary detail, a vast body of powers had to be implied by general clauses, and one of these authorized Congress to "make all laws which shall be necessary and proper" for carrying out other powers specifically granted. The Constitution authorized the national government to levy and collect taxes, pay debts and borrow money. A national bank would materially help in performing these functions efficiently. Congress, therefore, was entitled, under its implied powers, to create such a bank. Washington and the Congress accepted Hamilton's view -- and an important precedent for an expansive interpretation of the federal government's authority.

CITIZEN GENET AND FOREIGN POLICY

Although one of the first tasks of the new government was to strengthen the domestic economy and make the nation financially secure, the United States could not ignore foreign affairs. The cornerstones of Washington's foreign policy were to preserve peace, to give the country time to recover from its wounds and to permit the slow work of national integration to continue. Events in Europe threatened these goals. Many Americans were watching the French Revolution with keen interest and sympathy, and in April 1793, news came that made this conflict an issue in American politics. France had declared war on Great Britain and Spain, and a new French envoy, Edmond Charles Genet -- known as Citizen Genet -- was coming to the United States.

After the execution of King Louis XVI in January 1793, Britain, Spain and Holland had become involved in war with France. According to the Franco-American Treaty of Alliance of 1778, the United States and France were perpetual allies, and America was obliged to help France defend the West Indies. However, the United States, militarily and economically a very weak country, was in no position to become involved in another war with major European powers. On April 22, 1793, Washington effectively abrogated the terms of the 1778 treaty that made American independence possible by proclaiming the United States to be "friendly and impartial toward the belligerent powers." When Genet arrived, he was cheered by many citizens, but treated with cool formality by the government. Angered, he violated a promise not to outfit a captured British ship as a privateer. Genet then threatened to take his cause directly to the American people, over the head of the government. Shortly afterward, the United States requested his recall by the French government.

The Genet incident strained American relations with France at a time when relations with Great Britain were far from satisfactory. British troops still occupied forts in the West, property carried off by British soldiers during the Revolution had not been restored or paid for, and the British navy was seizing American ships bound for French ports. To settle these matters, Washington sent John Jay, first chief justice of the Supreme Court, to London as a special envoy, where he negotiated a treaty securing withdrawal of British soldiers from western forts and London's promise to pay damages for Britain's seizure of ships and cargoes in 1793 and 1794. Reflecting the weakness of the U.S. position, the treaty placed severe limitations on American trade with the West Indies and said nothing about either the seizure of American ships in the future, or "impressment" -- the forcing of American sailors into British naval service. Jay also accepted the British view that naval stores and war materiel were contraband which could not be conveyed to enemy ports by neutral ships.

Jay's Treaty touched off a stormy disagreement over foreign policy between the Antifederalists, now called Republicans, and the Federalists. The Federalists favored a pro-British policy because the commercial interests they represented profited from trade with Britain. By contrast, the Republicans favored France, in large measure for ideological reasons, and regarded the Jay Treaty as too favorable to Britain. After long debate, however, the Senate ratified the treaty.

ADAMS AND JEFFERSON

Washington retired in 1797, firmly declining to serve for more than eight years as the nation's head. His vice president, John Adams of Massachusetts, was elected the new president. Even before he entered the presidency, Adams had quarreled with Alexander Hamilton -- and thus was handicapped by a divided party.

These domestic difficulties were compounded by international complications: France, angered by Jay's recent treaty with Britain, used the British argument that food supplies, naval stores and war materiel bound for enemy ports were subject to seizure by the French navy. By 1797 France had seized 300 American ships and had broken off diplomatic relations with the United States.

When Adams sent three other commissioners to Paris to negotiate, agents of Foreign Minister Charles Maurice de Talleyrand (whom Adams labeled X, Y and Z in his report to Congress) informed the Americans that negotiations could only begin if the United States loaned France \$12 million and bribed officials of the French government. American hostility to France rose to an excited pitch. The so-called XYZ Affair led to the enlistment of troops and the strengthening of the fledgling U.S. Navy.

In 1799, after a series of sea battles with the French, war seemed inevitable. In this crisis, Adams thrust aside the guidance of Hamilton, who wanted war, and sent three new commissioners to France. Napoleon, who had just come to power, received them cordially, and the danger of conflict subsided with the negotiation of the Convention of 1800, which formally released the United States from its 1778 defense alliance with France. However, reflecting American weakness, France refused to pay \$20 million in compensation for American ships taken by the French navy.

Hostility to France led Congress to pass the Alien and Sedition Acts, which had severe repercussions for American civil liberties. The Naturalization Act, which changed the requirement for citizenship from five to 14 years, was targeted at Irish and French immigrants suspected of supporting the Republicans. The Alien Act, operative for two years only, gave the president the power to expel or imprison aliens in time of war. The Sedition Act proscribed writing, speaking or publishing anything of "a false, scandalous and malicious" nature against the president or Congress. The few convictions won under the Sedition Act only created martyrs to the cause of civil liberties and aroused support for the Republicans.

The acts met with resistance. Jefferson and Madison sponsored the passage of the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions by the legislatures of the two states in November and December 1798. According to the resolutions, states could "interpose" their views on federal actions and "nullify" them. The doctrine of nullification would be used later for the Southern states' defense of their interests vis-a-vis the North on the question of the tariff, and, more ominously, slavery.

By 1800 the American people were ready for a change. Under Washington and Adams, the Federalists had established a strong government, but sometimes failing to honor the principle that the American government must be responsive to the will of the people, they had followed policies that alienated large groups. For example, in 1798 they had enacted a tax on houses, land and slaves, affecting every property owner in the country.

Jefferson had steadily gathered behind him a great mass of small farmers, shopkeepers and other workers, and they asserted themselves in the election of 1800. Jefferson enjoyed extraordinary favor because of his appeal to American idealism. In his inaugural address, the first such speech in the new capital of Washington, D.C., he promised "a wise and frugal government" to preserve order among the inhabitants but would "leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry, and improvement."

Jefferson's mere presence in The White House encouraged democratic procedures. He taught his subordinates to regard themselves merely as trustees of the people. He encouraged agriculture and westward expansion. Believing America to be a haven for the oppressed, he urged a liberal naturalization law. By the end of his second term, his far-sighted secretary of the treasury, Albert Gallatin, had reduced the national debt to less than \$560 million. As a wave of Jeffersonian fervor swept the nation, state after state abolished property qualifications for the ballot and passed more humane laws for debtors and criminals.

LOUISIANA AND BRITAIN

One of Jefferson's acts doubled the area of the country. At the end of the Seven Years' War, France had ceded to Spain the territory west of the Mississippi River, with the port of New Orleans near its mouth -- a port indispensable for the shipment of American products from the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. Shortly after Jefferson became president, Napoleon forced a weak Spanish government to cede the great tract called Louisiana back to France. The move filled Americans with apprehension and indignation. Napoleon's plans for a huge colonial empire just west of the United States threatened the trading rights and the safety of all American interior settlements. Jefferson asserted that if France took possession of Louisiana, "from that moment we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation." Napoleon, knowing that another war with Great Britain was impending, resolved to fill his treasury and put Louisiana beyond the reach of the British by selling it to the United States. This put Jefferson in a constitutional quandary: the Constitution gave no office the power to purchase territory.

At first Jefferson wanted to amend the Constitution, but his advisers told him that delay might lead Napoleon to change his mind -- and that the power to purchase territory was inherent in the power to make treaties. Jefferson relented, saying that "the good sense of our country will correct the evil of loose construction when it shall produce ill effects."

For \$15 million, the United States obtained the "Louisiana Purchase" in 1803. It contained more than 2,600,000 square kilometers as well as the port of New Orleans. The nation had gained a sweep of rich plains, mountains, forests and river systems that within 80 years would become the nation's heartland -- and one of the world's great granaries.

As Jefferson began his second term in 1805, he declared American neutrality during the struggle between Great Britain and France. Although both sides sought to restrict neutral shipping to the other, British control of the seas made its interdiction and seizure much more serious than any actions by Napoleonic France.

By 1807 the British had built their navy to more than 700 warships manned by nearly 150,000 sailors and marines. The massive force controlled the sea lanes: blockading French ports, protecting British commerce and maintaining the crucial links to Britain's colonies. Yet the men of the British fleet lived under such harsh conditions that it was impossible to obtain crews by free enlistment. Many sailors deserted and found refuge on U.S. vessels. In these circumstances, British officers regarded it as their right to search American ships and take off British subjects, to the great humiliation of the Americans. Moreover, British officers frequently impressed American seamen into their service.

When Jefferson issued a proclamation ordering British warships to leave U.S. territorial waters, the British reacted by impressing more sailors. Jefferson decided to rely on economic pressure to force the British to back down. In December 1807 Congress passed the Embargo Act, forbidding all foreign commerce. Ironically, the Republicans, the champions of limited government, had passed a law that vastly increased the powers of the national government. In a single year American exports fell to one-fifth of their former volume. Shipping interests were almost ruined by the measure, and discontent rose in New England and New York. Agricultural interests found that they too were suffering heavily, for prices dropped drastically when the Southern and Western farmers could not export their surplus grain, cotton, meat and tobacco.

The hope that the embargo would starve Great Britain into a change of policy failed. As the grumbling at home increased, Jefferson turned to a milder measure, which conciliated domestic shipping interests. In early 1809 he signed the Non-Intercourse Act permitting commerce with all countries except Britain or France and their dependencies.

James Madison succeeded Jefferson as president in 1809. Relations with Great Britain grew worse, and the two countries moved rapidly toward war. The president laid before Congress a detailed report, showing several thousand instances in which the British had impressed American citizens. In addition, northwestern settlers had suffered from attacks by Indians whom they believed had been incited by British agents in Canada. This led many Americans to favor conquest of Canada. Success in such an endeavor would eliminate British influence among the Indians and open up new lands for colonization. The desire to conquer Canada, coupled with deep resentment over impressment of sailors, generated war fervor, and in 1812 the United States declared war on Britain.

WAR OF 1812

As the country prepared for yet another war with Britain, the United States suffered from internal divisions. While the South and West favored war, New York and New England opposed it because it interfered with their commerce. The declaration of war had been made with military preparations still far from complete. There were fewer than 7,000 regular soldiers, distributed in widely scattered posts along the coast, near the Canadian border and in the remote interior. These soldiers were to be supported by the undisciplined militia of the states.

Hostilities between the two countries began with an invasion of Canada, which, if properly timed and executed, would have brought united action against Montreal. But the entire campaign miscarried and ended with the British occupation of Detroit. The U.S. Navy, however, scored successes and restored confidence. In addition, American privateers, swarming the Atlantic, captured 500 British vessels during the fall and winter months of 1812 and 1813.

The campaign of 1813 centered on Lake Erie. General William Henry Harrison -- who would later become president -- led an army of militia, volunteers and regulars from Kentucky with the object of reconquering Detroit. On September 12, while he was still in upper Ohio, news reached him that Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry had annihilated the British fleet on Lake Erie. Harrison occupied Detroit and pushed into Canada, defeating the fleeing British and their Indian allies on the Thames River. The entire region now came under American control.

Another decisive turn in the war occurred a year later when Commodore Thomas Macdonough won a point-blank gun duel with a British flotilla on Lake Champlain in upper New York. Deprived of naval support, a British invasion force of 10,000 men retreated to Canada. At about the same time, the British fleet was harassing the Eastern seaboard with orders to "destroy and lay waste." On the night of August 24, 1814, an expeditionary force burst into Washington, D.C., home of the federal government, and left it in flames. President James Madison fled to Virginia.

As the war continued, British and American negotiators each demanded concessions from the other. The British envoys decided to concede, however, when they learned of Macdonough's victory on Lake Champlain. Urged by the Duke of Wellington to reach a settlement, and faced with the depletion of the British treasury due in large part to the heavy costs of the Napoleonic Wars, the negotiators for Great Britain accepted the Treaty of Ghent in December 1814. It provided for the cessation of hostilities, the restoration of conquests and a commission to settle boundary disputes. Unaware that a peace treaty had been signed, the two sides continued fighting in New Orleans, Louisiana. Led by General Andrew Jackson, the Americans scored the greatest land victory of the war.

While the British and Americans were negotiating a settlement, Federalist delegates selected by the legislatures of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont and New Hampshire gathered in Hartford, Connecticut, in a meeting that symbolized opposition to "Mr. Madison's war." New England had managed to trade with the enemy throughout the conflict, and some areas actually prospered from this commerce. Nevertheless, the Federalists claimed that the war was ruining the economy. Some delegates to the convention advocated secession from the Union, but the majority agreed on a series of constitutional amendments to limit Republican influence, including prohibiting embargoes lasting more than 60 days and forbidding successive presidents from the same state. By the time messengers from the Hartford Convention reached Washington, D.C., however, they found the war had ended. The Hartford Convention stamped the Federalists with a stigma of disloyalty from which they never recovered.

SIDEBAR: THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING

By the end of the 18th century, many educated Americans no longer professed traditional Christian beliefs. In reaction to the secularism of the age, a religious revival spread westward in the first half of the 19th century.

This second great religious revival in American history consisted of several kinds of activity, distinguished by locale and expression of religious commitment. In New England, the renewed interest in religion inspired a wave of social activism. In western New York, the spirit of revival encouraged the emergence of new denominations. In the Appalachian region of Kentucky and Tennessee, the revival strengthened the Methodists and the Baptists, and spawned a new form of religious expression -- the camp meeting.

In contrast to the Great Awakening of the 1730s, the revivals in the East were notable for the absence of hysteria and open emotion. Rather, unbelievers were awed by the "respectful silence" of those bearing witness to their faith.

The evangelical enthusiasm in New England gave rise to interdenominational missionary societies, formed to evangelize the West. Members of these societies not only acted as apostles for the faith, but as educators, civic leaders and exponents of Eastern, urban culture. Publication and education societies promoted Christian education; most notable among them was the American Bible Society, founded in 1816. Social activism inspired by the revival gave rise to abolition groups and the Society for the Promotion of Temperance, as well as to efforts to reform prisons and care for the handicapped and mentally ill.

The revival in western New York was largely the work of Charles Gradison Finney, a lawyer from Adams, New York. The area from Lake Ontario to the Adirondack Mountains had been the scene of so many religious revivals in the past that it was known as the "Burned-Over District." In 1821 Finney experienced something of a religious epiphany and set out to preach the Gospel in western New York.

His revivals were characterized by careful planning, showmanship and advertising. Finney preached in the Burned-Over District throughout the 1820s and the early 1830s, before moving to Ohio in 1835 to take a chair in theology at Oberlin College. He subsequently became president of Oberlin.

Two other important religious denominations in America -- the Mormons and the Seventh Day Adventists also got their start in the Burned-Over District.

In the Appalachian region, the revival took on characteristics similar to the Great Awakening of the previous century. But here, the center of the revival was the camp meeting -- defined as a "religious service of several days' length, for a group that was obliged to take shelter on the spot because of the distance from home." Pioneers in thinly populated areas looked to the camp meeting as a refuge from the lonely life on the frontier. The sheer exhilaration of participating in a religious revival with hundreds and perhaps thousands of people inspired the dancing, shouting and singing associated with these events.

The first camp meeting took place in July 1800 at Gasper River Church in southwestern Kentucky. A much larger one was held at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, in August 1801, where between 10,000 and 25,000 people attended, and Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist ministers participated. It was this event that stamped the organized revival as the major mode of church expansion for denominations such as the Methodists and Baptists.

The great revival quickly spread throughout Kentucky, Tennessee and southern Ohio, with the Methodists and the Baptists its prime beneficiaries. Each denomination had assets that allowed it to thrive on the frontier. The Methodists had a very efficient organization that depended on ministers -- known as circuit riders -- who sought out people in remote frontier locations. The circuit riders came from among the common people, which helped them establish a rapport with the frontier families they hoped to convert.

The Baptists had no formal church organization. Their farmer-preachers were people who received "the call" from God, studied the Bible and founded a church, which then ordained them. Other candidates for the ministry emerged from these churches, and they helped the Baptist Church to establish a presence farther into the wilderness. Using such methods, the Baptists became dominant throughout the border states and most of the South.

The Second Great Awakening exercised a profound impact on American history. The numerical strength of the Baptists and Methodists rose relative to that of the denominations dominant in the colonial period--the Anglicans, Presbyterians and Congregationalists. Among the latter, efforts to apply Christian teaching to the resolution of social problems presaged the Social Gospel of the late 19th century. America was becoming a more diverse nation in the early to mid-19th century, and the growing differences within American Protestantism reflected and contributed to this diversity.

An Outline of American History

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CHAPTER FIVE: WESTWARD EXPANSION AND REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

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"GO WEST, YOUNG MAN, AND GROW UP WITH THE COUNTRY," John Soule, 1851

The War of 1812 was, in a sense, a second war of independence, for before that time the United States had not been accorded equality in the family of nations. With its conclusion, many of the serious difficulties that the young republic had faced since the Revolution now disappeared. National union under the Constitution brought a balance between liberty and order. With a low national debt and a continent awaiting exploration, the prospect of peace, prosperity and social progress opened before the nation.

BUILDING UNITY

Commerce was cementing national unity. The privations of war convinced many of the importance of protecting the manufacturers of America until they could stand alone against foreign competition. Economic independence, many argued, was as essential as political independence. To foster self-sufficiency, congressional leaders Henry Clay of Kentucky and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina urged a policy of protectionism -- imposition of restrictions on imported goods to foster the development of American industry.

The time was propitious for raising the customs tariff. The shepherds of Vermont and Ohio wanted protection against an influx of English wool. In Kentucky, a new industry of weaving local hemp into cotton bagging was threatened by the Scottish bagging industry. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, already a flourishing center of iron smelting, was eager to challenge British and Swedish iron suppliers. The tariff enacted in 1816 imposed duties high enough to give manufacturers real protection. In addition, Westerners advocated a national system of roads and canals to link them with Eastern cities and ports, and to open frontier lands for settlement. However, they were unsuccessful in pressing their demands for a federal role in internal improvement because of opposition from New England and the South. Roads and canals remained the province of the states until the passage of the Federal Highways Act of 1916.

The position of the federal government at this time was greatly strengthened by several Supreme Court decisions. A committed Federalist, John Marshall of Virginia, became chief justice in 1801 and held office until his death in 1835. The court -- weak before his administration -- was transformed into a powerful tribunal, occupying a position co-equal to the Congress and the president. In a succession of historic decisions, Marshall never deviated from one cardinal principle: upholding the sovereignty of the Constitution.

Marshall was the first in a long line of Supreme Court justices whose decisions have molded the meaning and application of the Constitution. When he finished his long service, the court had decided nearly 50 cases clearly involving constitutional issues. In one of Marshall's most famous opinions -- *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) -- he decisively established the right of the Supreme Court to review the constitutionality of any law of Congress or of a state legislature. In *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), which dealt with the old question of the implied powers of the government under the Constitution, he stood boldly in defense of the Hamiltonian theory that the Constitution by implication gives the government powers beyond those expressly stated.

EXTENSION OF SLAVERY

Slavery, which had up to now received little public attention, began to assume much greater importance as a national issue. In the early years of the republic, when the Northern states were providing for immediate or gradual emancipation of the slaves, many leaders had supposed that slavery would die out. In 1786 George Washington wrote that he devoutly wished some plan might be adopted "by which slavery may be abolished by slow, sure and imperceptible degrees." Jefferson, Madison and Monroe, all Virginians, and other leading Southern statesmen, made similar statements. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 had banned slavery in the Northwest Territory. As late as 1808, when the international slave trade was abolished, there were many Southerners who thought that slavery would soon end. The expectation proved false, for during the next generation, the South became solidly united behind the institution of slavery as new economic factors made slavery far more profitable than it had been before 1790.

Chief among these was the rise of a great cotton-growing industry in the South, stimulated by the introduction of new types of cotton and by Eli Whitney's invention in 1793 of the cotton gin, which separated the seeds from cotton. At the same time, the Industrial Revolution, which made textile manufacturing a large-scale operation, vastly increased the demand for raw cotton. And the opening of new lands in the West after 1812 greatly extended the area available for cotton cultivation. Cotton culture moved rapidly from the Tidewater states on the East coast through much of the lower South to the delta region of the Mississippi and eventually to Texas.

Sugarcane, another labor-intensive crop, also contributed to slavery's extension in the South. The rich, hot lands of southeastern Louisiana proved ideal for growing sugarcane profitably. By 1830 the state was supplying the nation with about half its sugar supply. Finally, tobacco growers moved westward, taking slavery with them.

As the free society of the North and the slave society of the South spread westward, it seemed politically expedient to maintain a rough equality among the new states carved out of western territories. In 1818, when Illinois was admitted to the Union, 10 states permitted slavery and 11 states prohibited it; but balance was restored after Alabama was admitted as a slave state. Population was growing faster in the North, which permitted Northern states to have a clear majority in the House of Representatives. However, equality between the North and the South was maintained in the Senate.

In 1819 Missouri, which had 10,000 slaves, applied to enter the Union. Northerners rallied to oppose Missouri's entry except as a free state, and a storm of protest swept the country. For a time Congress was deadlocked, but Henry Clay arranged the so-called Missouri Compromise: Missouri was admitted as a slave state at the same time Maine came in as a free state. In addition, Congress banned slavery from the territory acquired by the Louisiana Purchase north of Missouri's southern boundary. At the time, this provision appeared to be a victory for the Southern states because it was thought unlikely that this "Great American Desert" would ever be settled. The controversy was temporarily resolved, but Thomas Jefferson wrote to a friend that "this momentous question like a firebell in the night awakened me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the Union."

LATIN AMERICA AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE

During the opening decades of the 19th century, Central and South America turned to revolution. The idea of liberty had stirred the people of Latin America from the time the English colonies gained their freedom. Napoleon's conquest of Spain in 1808 provided the signal for Latin Americans to rise in revolt. By 1822, ably led by Simon Bolivar, Francisco Miranda, Jose de San Martin and Miguel Hidalgo, all of Hispanic America -- from Argentina and Chile in the south to Mexico and California in the north -- had won independence from the mother country.

The people of the United States took a deep interest in what seemed a repetition of their own experience in breaking away from European rule. The Latin American independence movements confirmed their own belief in self-government. In 1822 President James Monroe, under powerful public pressure, received authority to recognize the new countries of Latin America -- including the former Portuguese colony of Brazil -- and soon exchanged ministers with them. This recognition confirmed their status as genuinely independent countries, entirely separated from their former European connections.

At just this point, Russia, Prussia and Austria formed an association called the Holy Alliance to protect themselves against revolution. By intervening in countries where popular movements threatened monarchies, the Alliance -- joined at times by France -- hoped to prevent the spread of revolution into its dominions. This policy was the antithesis of the American principle of self-determination.

As long as the Holy Alliance confined its activities to the Old World, it aroused no anxiety in the United States. But when the Alliance announced its intention of restoring its former colonies to Spain, Americans became very concerned. For its part, Britain resolved to prevent Spain from restoring its empire because trade with Latin America was too important to British commercial interests. London urged the extension of Anglo-American guarantees to Latin America, but Secretary of State John Quincy Adams convinced Monroe to act unilaterally: "It would be more candid, as well as more dignified, to avow our principles explicitly to Russia and France, than to come in as a cock-boat in the wake of the British man-of-war." In December 1823, with the knowledge that the British navy would defend Latin America from the Holy Alliance and France, President Monroe took the occasion of his annual message to Congress to pronounce what would become known as the Monroe Doctrine -- the refusal to tolerate any further extension of European domination in the Americas:

The American continents...are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers.

We should consider any attempt on their part to extend their [political] system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety.

With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have...acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.

The Monroe Doctrine expressed a spirit of solidarity with the newly independent republics of Latin America. These nations in turn recognized their political affinity with the United States by basing their new constitutions, in many instances, on the North American model.

FACTIONALISM AND POLITICAL PARTIES

Domestically, the presidency of Monroe (1817-1825) was termed the "era of good feelings." In one sense, this term disguised a period of vigorous factional and regional conflict; on the other hand, the phrase acknowledged the political triumph of the Republican Party over the Federalist Party, which collapsed as a national force.

The decline of the Federalists brought disarray to the system of choosing presidents. At the time, state legislatures could nominate candidates. In 1824 Tennessee and Pennsylvania chose Andrew Jackson, with South Carolina Senator John C. Calhoun as his running mate. Kentucky selected Speaker of the House Henry Clay; Massachusetts, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams; and a congressional caucus, Treasury Secretary William Crawford.

Personality and sectional allegiance played important roles in determining the outcome of the election. Adams won the electoral votes from New England and most of New York; Clay won Kentucky, Ohio and Missouri; Jackson won the Southeast, Illinois, Indiana, the Carolinas, Pennsylvania, Maryland and New Jersey; and Crawford won Virginia, Georgia and Delaware. No candidate gained a majority in the Electoral College, so, according to the provisions of the Constitution, the election was thrown into the House of Representatives, where Clay was the most influential figure. He supported Adams, who gained the presidency.

During Adams's administration, new party alignments appeared. Adams's followers took the name of "National Republicans," later to be changed to "Whigs." Though he governed honestly and efficiently, Adams was not a popular president, and his administration was marked with frustrations. Adams failed in his effort to institute a national system of roads and canals. His years in office appeared to be one long campaign for reelection, and his coldly intellectual temperament did not win friends. Jackson, by contrast, had enormous popular appeal, especially among his followers in the newly named Democratic Party that emerged from the Republican Party, with its roots dating back to presidents Jefferson, Madison and Monroe. In the election of 1828, Jackson defeated Adams by an overwhelming electoral majority.

Jackson -- Tennessee politician, Indian fighter and hero of the Battle of New Orleans during the War of 1812 -- drew his support from the small farmers of the West, and the workers, artisans and small merchants of the East, who sought to use their vote to resist the rising commercial and manufacturing interests associated with the Industrial Revolution.

The election of 1828 was a significant benchmark in the trend toward broader voter participation. Vermont had universal male suffrage from its entry into the Union and Tennessee permitted suffrage for the vast majority of taxpayers. New Jersey, Maryland and South Carolina all abolished property and tax-paying requirements between 1807 and 1810. States entering the Union after 1815 either had universal white male suffrage or a low taxpaying requirement. From 1815 to 1821, Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York abolished all property requirements. In 1824 members of the Electoral College were still selected by six state legislatures. By 1828 presidential electors were chosen by popular vote in every state but Delaware and South Carolina. Nothing dramatized this democratic sentiment more than the election of the flamboyant Andrew Jackson.

NULLIFICATION CRISIS

Toward the end of his first term in office, Jackson was forced to confront the state of South Carolina on the issue of the protective tariff. Business and farming interests in the state had hoped that Jackson would use his presidential power to modify tariff laws they had long opposed. In their view, all the benefits of protection were going to Northern manufacturers, and while the country as a whole grew richer, South Carolina grew poorer, with its planters bearing the burden of higher prices.

The protective tariff passed by Congress and signed into law by Jackson in 1832 was milder than that of 1828, but it further embittered many in the state. In response, a number of South Carolina citizens endorsed the states' rights principle of "nullification," which was enunciated by John C. Calhoun, Jackson's vice president until 1832, in his *South Carolina Exposition and Protest* (1828). South Carolina dealt with the tariff by adopting the Ordinance of Nullification, which declared both the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 null and void within state borders. The legislature also passed laws to enforce the ordinance, including authorization for raising a military force and appropriations for arms.

Nullification was only the most recent in a series of state challenges to the authority of the federal government. There had been a continuing contest between the states and the national government over the power of the latter, and over the loyalty of the citizenry, almost since the founding of the republic. The Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions of 1798, for example, had defied the Alien and Sedition Acts, and in the Hartford Convention, New England voiced its opposition to President Madison and the war against the British.

In response to South Carolina's threat, Jackson sent seven small naval vessels and a man-of-war to Charleston in November 1832. On December 10, he issued a resounding proclamation against the nullifiers. South Carolina, the president declared, stood on "the brink of insurrection and treason," and he appealed to the people of the state to reassert their allegiance to that Union for which their ancestors had fought.

When the question of tariff duties again came before Congress, it soon became clear that only one man, Senator Henry Clay, the great advocate of protection (and a political rival of Jackson), could pilot a compromise measure through Congress. Clay's tariff bill -- quickly passed in 1833 -- specified that all duties in excess of 20 percent of the value of the goods imported were to be reduced by easy stages, so that by 1842, the duties on all articles would reach the level of the moderate tariff of 1816.

Nullification leaders in South Carolina had expected the support of other Southern states, but without exception, the rest of the South declared South Carolina's course unwise and unconstitutional. Eventually, South Carolina rescinded its action. Both sides, nevertheless, claimed victory. Jackson had committed the federal government to the principle of Union supremacy. But South Carolina, by its show of resistance, had obtained many of the demands it sought, and had demonstrated that a single state could force its will on Congress.

BATTLE OF THE BANK

Even before the nullification issue had been settled, another controversy occurred that challenged Jackson's leadership. It concerned the rechartering of the second Bank of the United States. The first bank had been established in 1791, under Alexander Hamilton's guidance, and had been chartered for a 20-year period. Though the government held some of its stock, it was not a government bank; rather, the bank was a private corporation with profits passing to its stockholders. It had been designed to stabilize the currency and stimulate trade; but it was resented by Westerners and working people who believed, along with Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, that it was a "monster" granting special favors to a few powerful men. When its charter expired in 1811, it was not renewed.

For the next few years, the banking business was in the hands of state-chartered banks, which issued currency in excessive amounts, creating great confusion and fueling inflation. It became increasingly clear that state banks could not provide the country with a uniform currency, and in 1816 a second Bank of the United States, similar to the first, was again chartered for 20 years.

From its inception, the second Bank was unpopular in the newer states and territories, and with less prosperous people everywhere. Opponents claimed the bank possessed a virtual monopoly over the country's credit and currency, and reiterated that it represented the interests of the wealthy few. On the whole, the bank was well managed and rendered valuable service; but Jackson, elected as a popular champion against it, vetoed a bill to recharter the bank. In his message to Congress, he denounced monopoly and special privilege, saying that "our rich men have not been content with equal protection and equal benefits, but have besought us to make them richer by act of Congress." The effort to override the veto failed.

In the election campaign that followed, the bank question caused a fundamental division between the merchant, manufacturing and financial interests (generally creditors who favored tight money and high interest rates), and the laboring and agrarian elements, who were often in debt to banks and therefore favored an increased money supply and lower interest rates. The outcome was an enthusiastic endorsement of "Jacksonism." Jackson saw his reelection in 1832 as a popular mandate to crush the bank irrevocably -- and found a ready-made weapon in a provision of the bank's charter authorizing removal of public funds. In September 1833 he ordered that no more government money be deposited in the bank, and that the money already in its custody be gradually withdrawn in the ordinary course of meeting the expenses of government. Carefully selected state banks, stringently restricted, were provided as a substitute. For the next generation the United States would get by on a relatively unregulated state banking system, which helped fuel westward expansion through cheap credit but kept the nation vulnerable to periodic panics. It wasn't until the Civil War that the United States chartered a national banking system.

WHIGS, DEMOCRATS AND "KNOW-NOTHINGS"

Because Jackson's political opponents had no hope of success so long as they remained at cross purposes, they attempted to bring all the dissatisfied elements together into a common party called the Whigs. Although they organized soon after the election campaign of 1832, it was more than a decade before they reconciled their differences and were able to draw up a platform. Largely through the magnetism of Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, the Whigs' most brilliant statesmen, the party solidified its membership. But in the 1836 election, the Whigs were still too divided to unite behind a single man or upon a common platform. New York's Martin Van Buren, Jackson's vice president, won the contest.

An economic depression and the larger-than-life personality of his predecessor obscured Van Buren's merits. His public acts aroused no enthusiasm, for he lacked the compelling qualities of leadership and the dramatic flair that had attended Jackson's every move. The election of 1840 found the country afflicted with hard times and low wages -- and the Democrats on the defensive.

The Whig candidate for president was William Henry Harrison of Ohio, vastly popular as a hero of Indian conflicts as well as the War of 1812. He was regarded, like Jackson, as a representative of the democratic West. His vice presidential candidate was John Tyler -- a Virginian whose views on states' rights and a low tariff were popular in the South. Harrison won a sweeping victory.

Within a month of his inauguration, however, the 68-year-old Harrison died, and Tyler became president. Tyler's beliefs differed sharply from those of Clay and Webster, still the most influential men in the country. Before Tyler's term was over, these differences led to an open break between the president and the party that had elected him.

Americans, however, found themselves divided in more complex ways than simple partisan conflicts between Whigs and Democrats. For example, the large number of Catholic immigrants in the first half of the 19th century, primarily Irish and German, triggered a backlash among native-born Protestant Americans.

Immigrants brought more than strange new customs and religious practices to American shores. They competed with the native-born for jobs in cities along the Eastern seaboard. Moreover, political changes in the 1820s and 1830s increased the political clout of the foreign born. During those two decades, state constitutions were revised to permit universal white-male suffrage. This led to the end of rule by patrician politicians, who blamed the immigrants for their fall from power. Finally, the Catholic Church's failure to support the temperance movement gave rise to charges that Rome was trying to subvert the United States through alcohol.

The most important of the nativist organizations that sprang up in this period was a secret society, the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner, founded in 1849. When its members refused to identify themselves, they were swiftly labeled the "Know-Nothings." In 1853 the Know-Nothings in New York City organized a Grand Council, which devised a new constitution to centralize control over the state organizations.

Among the chief aims of the Know-Nothings were an extension in the period required for naturalization from five to 21 years, and the exclusion of the foreign-born and Catholics from public office. In 1855 the organization managed to win control of legislatures in New York and Massachusetts; by 1855, about 90 U.S. congressmen were linked to the party.

Disagreements over the slavery issue prevented the party from playing a role in national politics. The Know-Nothings of the South supported slavery while Northern members opposed it. At a convention in 1856 to nominate candidates for president and vice president, 42 Northern delegates walked out when a motion to support the Missouri Compromise was ignored, and the party died as a national force.

STIRRINGS OF REFORM

The democratic upheaval in politics exemplified by Jackson's election was merely one phase of the long American quest for greater rights and opportunities for all citizens. Another was the beginning of labor organization. In 1835 labor forces in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, succeeded in reducing the old "dark-to-dark" workday to a 10-hour day. New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Ohio and the new state of California, admitted to the Union in 1850, undertook similar reforms.

The spread of suffrage had already led to a new concept of education, for clear-sighted statesmen everywhere perceived the threat to universal suffrage from an untutored, illiterate electorate. These men -- DeWitt Clinton in New York, Abraham Lincoln in Illinois and Horace Mann in Massachusetts -- were now supported by organized labor, whose leaders demanded free, tax-supported schools open to all children. Gradually, in one state after another, legislation was enacted to provide for such free instruction. The public school system became common throughout the northern part of the country. In other parts of the country, however, the battle for public education continued for years.

Another influential social movement that emerged during this period was the opposition to the sale and use of alcohol, or the temperance movement. It stemmed from a variety of concerns and motives: religious beliefs, the effect of alcohol on the work force, and the violence and suffering women and children experienced at the hands of heavy drinkers. In 1826 Boston ministers organized the Society for the Promotion of Temperance. Seven years later, in Philadelphia, the Society convened a national convention, which formed the American Temperance Union. The Union called for the renunciation of all alcoholic beverages, and pressed state legislatures to ban their production and sale. Thirteen states had done so by 1855, although the laws were subsequently challenged in court. They survived only in northern New England, but between 1830 and 1860 the temperance movement reduced Americans' per capita consumption of alcohol.

Other reformers addressed the problems of prisons and care for the insane. Efforts were made to turn prisons, which stressed punishment, into penitentiaries, where the guilty would undergo rehabilitation. In Massachusetts, Dorothea Dix led a struggle to improve conditions for insane persons, who were kept confined in wretched almshouses and prisons. After winning improvements in Massachusetts, she took her campaign to the South, where nine states established hospitals for the insane between 1845 and 1852.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Such social reforms brought many women to a realization of their own unequal position in society. From colonial times, unmarried women had enjoyed many of the same legal rights as men, although custom required that they marry early. With matrimony, women virtually lost their separate identities in the eyes of the law. Women were not permitted to vote and their education in the 17th and 18th centuries was limited largely to reading, writing, music, dancing and needlework.

The awakening of women began with the visit to America of Frances Wright, a Scottish lecturer and journalist, who publicly promoted women's rights throughout the United States during the 1820s. At a time when women were often forbidden to speak in public places, Wright not only spoke out, but shocked audiences by her views advocating the rights of women to seek information on birth control and divorce.

By the 1840s a group of American women emerged who would forge the first women's rights movement. Foremost in this distinguished group was Elizabeth Cady Stanton. In 1848 Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, another women's rights advocate, organized a women's rights convention -- the first in the history of the world -- at Seneca Falls, New York. Delegates drew up a declaration demanding equality with men before the law, the right to vote, and equal opportunities in education and employment.

That same year, Ernestine Rose, a Polish immigrant, was instrumental in getting a law passed in the state of New York that allowed married women to keep their property in their own name. Among the first laws in the nation of this kind, the Married Women's Property Act, encouraged other state legislatures to enact similar laws.

In 1869 Rose helped Elizabeth Cady Stanton and another leading women's rights activist, Susan B. Anthony, to found the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA), which advocated a constitutional amendment for women's right to the vote. These two would become the women's movement's most outspoken advocates. Describing their partnership, Cady Stanton would say, "I forged the thunderbolts and she fired them."

WESTWARD

The frontier did much to shape American life. Conditions along the entire Atlantic seaboard stimulated migration to the newer regions. From New England, where the soil was incapable of producing high yields of grain, came a steady stream of men and women who left their coastal farms and villages to take advantage of the rich interior land of the continent. In the backcountry settlements of the Carolinas and Virginia, people handicapped by the lack of roads and canals giving access to coastal markets, and suffering from the political dominance of the Tidewater planters, also moved westward. By 1800 the Mississippi and Ohio River valleys were becoming a great frontier region. "Hi-o, away we go, floating down the river on the O-hi-o," became the song of thousands of migrants.

The westward flow of population in the early 19th century led to the division of old territories and the drawing of new boundaries. As new states were admitted, the political map stabilized east of the Mississippi River. From 1816 to 1821, six states were created -- Indiana, Illinois and Maine (which were free states), and Mississippi, Alabama and Missouri (slave states). The first frontier had been tied closely to Europe, the second to the coastal settlements, but the Mississippi Valley was independent and its people looked west rather than east.

Frontier settlers were a varied group. One English traveler described them as "a daring, hardy race of men, who live in miserable cabins.... They are unpolished but hospitable, kind to strangers, honest and trustworthy. They raise a little Indian corn, pumpkins, hogs and sometimes have a cow or two.... But the rifle is their principal means of support." Dexterous with the axe, snare and fishing line, these men blazed the trails, built the first log cabins and confronted Native American tribes, whose land they occupied.

As more and more settlers penetrated the wilderness, many became farmers as well as hunters. A comfortable log house with glass windows, a chimney and partitioned rooms replaced the cabin; the well replaced the spring. Industrious settlers would rapidly clear their land of timber, burning the wood for potash and letting the stumps decay. They grew their own grain, vegetables and fruit; ranged the woods for deer, wild turkeys and honey; fished the nearby streams; looked after cattle and hogs. Land speculators bought large tracts of the cheap land and, if land values rose, sold their holdings and moved still farther west, making way for others.

Doctors, lawyers, storekeepers, editors, preachers, mechanics and politicians soon followed the farmers. The farmers were the sturdy base, however. Where they settled, they intended to stay and hoped their children would remain after them. They built large barns and brick or frame houses. They brought improved livestock, plowed the land skillfully and sowed productive seed. Some erected flour mills, sawmills and distilleries. They laid out good highways, built churches and schools. Incredible transformations were accomplished in a few years. In 1830, for example, Chicago, Illinois, was merely an unpromising trading village with a fort; but long before some of its original settlers had died, it had become one of the largest and richest cities in the nation.

Farms were easy to acquire. Government land after 1820 could be bought for \$1.25 for about half a hectare, and after the 1862 Homestead Act, could be claimed by merely occupying and improving it. In addition, tools for working the land were easily available. It was a time when, in a phrase written by John Soule and popularized by journalist Horace Greeley, young men could "go west and grow with the country."

Except for a migration into Mexican-owned Texas, the westward march of the agricultural frontier did not pass Missouri until after 1840. In 1819, in return for assuming the claims of American citizens to the amount of \$5 million, the United States obtained from Spain both Florida and Spain's rights to the Oregon country in the Far West. In the meantime, the Far West had become a field of great activity in the fur trade, which was to have significance far beyond the value of the skins. As in the first days of French exploration in the Mississippi Valley, the trader was a pathfinder for the settlers beyond the Mississippi. The French and Scots-Irish trappers, exploring the great rivers and their tributaries and discovering all the passes of the Rocky and Sierra Mountains, made possible the overland migration of the 1840s and the later occupation of the interior of the nation.

Overall, the growth of the nation was enormous: population grew from 7.25 million to more than 23 million from 1812 to 1852, and the land available for settlement increased by almost the size of Europe -- from 4.4 million to 7.8 million square kilometers. Still unresolved, however, were the basic conflicts rooted in sectional differences which, by the decade of the 1860s, would explode into civil war. Inevitably, too, this westward expansion brought settlers into conflict with the original inhabitants of the land: the Indians.

In the first part of the 19th century, the most prominent figure associated with these conflicts was Andrew Jackson, the first "Westerner" to occupy the White House. In the midst of the War of 1812, Jackson, then in charge of the Tennessee militia, was sent into southern Alabama, where he ruthlessly put down an uprising of Creek Indians. The Creeks soon ceded two-thirds of their land to the United States. Jackson later routed bands of Seminole Indians from their sanctuaries in Spanish-owned Florida.

In the 1820s, President Monroe's secretary of war, John C. Calhoun, pursued a policy of removing the remaining tribes from the old Southwest and resettling them beyond the Mississippi. Jackson continued this policy as president.

In 1830 Congress passed the Indian Removal Act, providing funds to transport the eastern tribes beyond the Mississippi. In 1834 a special Indian territory was set up in what is now Oklahoma. In all, the tribes signed 94 treaties during Jackson's two terms, ceding millions of hectares to the federal government and removing dozens of tribes from their ancestral homelands.

Perhaps the most egregious chapter in this unfortunate history concerned the Cherokees, whose lands in western North Carolina and Georgia had been guaranteed by treaty since 1791. Among the most progressive of the eastern tribes, the Cherokees' fate was sealed when gold was discovered on their land in 1829. Even a favorable ruling from the Supreme Court proved little help. With the acquiescence of the Jackson administration, the Cherokees were forced to make the long and cruel trek to Oklahoma in 1835. Many died of disease and privation in what became known as the "Trail of Tears."

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SIDEBAR: SENECA FALLS

The early feminist, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, found an ally in Lucretia Mott, an ardent abolitionist, when the two met in 1840 at an anti-slavery conference in London. Once the conference began, it was apparent to the two women that female delegates were not welcome. Barred from speaking and appearing on the convention floor, Cady Stanton and Mott protested by leaving the convention hall, taking other female delegates with them. It was then that Cady Stanton proposed to Mott a women's rights convention that would address the social, civil and religious rights of women. The convention would be put on hold until eight years later, when the two organized the first women's rights convention, held in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848.

At that meeting, Cady Stanton presented a "Declaration of Sentiments," based on the Declaration of Independence, and listing 18 grievances against male suppression of women. Among them: married women had no right to their children if they left an abusive husband or sought a divorce. If a woman was granted a divorce, there was no way for her to make a professional living unless she chose to write or teach. A woman could not testify against her husband in court. Married women who worked in factories were not entitled to keep their earnings, but had to turn them over to their husbands. When a woman married, any property that she had held as a single woman automatically became part of her husband's estate. Single women who owned property were taxed without the right to vote for the lawmakers imposing the taxes -- one of the very reasons why the American colonies had broken away from Great Britain.

Convention attendees passed the resolutions unanimously with the exception of the one for women's suffrage. Only after an impassioned speech in favor of women's right to vote by Frederick Douglass, the black abolitionist, did the resolution pass. Still, the majority of those in attendance could not accept the thought of women voting.

At Seneca Falls, Cady Stanton gained national prominence as an eloquent writer and speaker for women's rights. Years later, she declared that she had realized early on that without the right to vote, women would never achieve their goal of becoming equal with men. Taking the abolitionist reformer William Lloyd Garrison as her model, she saw that the key to success in any endeavor lay in changing public opinion, and not in party action. By awakening women to the injustices under which they labored, Seneca Falls became the catalyst for future change. Soon other women's rights conventions were held, and other women would come to the forefront of the movement for political and social equality.

An Outline of American History

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CHAPTER SIX: SECTIONAL CONFLICT

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"A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF CANNOT STAND. I BELIEVE THIS GOVERNMENT CANNOT ENDURE PERMANENTLY HALF-SLAVE AND HALF-FREE."

Abraham Lincoln, 1858

By the mid-19th century, the United States began to attract a steady stream of foreign visitors. As one historian has noted: "What had been a somewhat obscure, occasionally romanticized backwater of colonial exploitation became, virtually overnight, a phenomenon to be investigated, a political and moral experiment to be judged."

TWO AMERICAS

No visitor to the United States left a more enduring record of his travels and observations than the French writer and political theorist Alexis de Tocqueville, whose *Democracy in America*, first published in 1835, remains one of the most trenchant and insightful analyses of American social and political practices. Tocqueville was far too shrewd an observer to be uncritical about the United States, but his verdict was fundamentally positive. "The government of democracy brings the notion of political rights to the level of the humblest citizens," he wrote, "just as the dissemination of wealth brings the notion of property within the reach of all the members of the community." Nonetheless, Tocqueville was only one of the first of a long line of thinkers to worry whether such rough equality could survive in the face of a growing factory system that threatened to create divisions between industrial workers and a new business elite.

Other travelers marveled at the growth and vitality of the country, where they could see "everywhere the most unequivocal proofs of prosperity and rapid progress in agriculture, commerce and great public works." But such optimistic views of the American experiment were by no means universal. One skeptic was English novelist Charles Dickens, who first visited the United States in 1841-42. "This is not the Republic I came to see," he wrote in a letter. "This is not the Republic of my imagination.... The more I think of its youth and strength, the poorer and more trifling in a thousand respects, it appears in my eyes. In everything of which it has made a boast -- excepting its education of the people, and its care for poor children -- it sinks immeasurably below the level I had placed it upon."

Dickens was not alone. America in the 19th century, as throughout its history, generated expectations and passions that often did not agree with a reality that was both more mundane and more complex. Already, its size and diversity defied easy generalization and invited contradiction: America was both a freedom-loving and slave-holding society, a nation of expansive and primitive frontiers as well as cities of growing commerce and industrialization.

LANDS OF PROMISE

By 1850 the national territory stretched over forest, plain and mountain. Within these far-flung limits dwelt 23 million people in a union comprising 31 states. In the East, industry boomed. In the Midwest and the South, agriculture flourished. After 1849 the gold mines of California poured a golden stream into the channels of trade.

New England and the Middle Atlantic states were the main centers of manufacturing, commerce and finance. Principal products of these areas were textiles, lumber, clothing, machinery, leather and woolen goods. At the same time, shipping had reached the height of its prosperity, and vessels flying the American flag plied the oceans, distributing wares of all nations.

The South, from the Atlantic to the Mississippi River and beyond, was a relatively compact political unit featuring an economy centered on agriculture. Tobacco was important to the economies of Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina. In South Carolina, rice was an abundant crop, and the climate and soil of Louisiana encouraged the cultivation of sugar. But cotton eventually became the dominant crop and the one with which the South was identified. By 1850 the American South grew more than 80 percent of the world's cotton. Slaves were used to cultivate all these crops, though cotton most of all.

The Midwest, with its boundless prairies and swiftly growing population, flourished. Europe and the older settled parts of America demanded its wheat and meat products. The introduction of labor-saving implements--notably the McCormick reaper -- made possible an unparalleled increase in farm production. The nation's wheat crops meanwhile swelled from some 35 million hectoliters in 1850 to nearly 61 million in 1860, more than half being grown in the Midwest.

An important stimulus to western prosperity was the great improvement in transportation facilities; from 1850 to 1857 the Appalachian Mountain barrier was pierced by five railway trunk lines linking the Midwest and the East. These links established the economic interests that undergirded the political alliance of the Union from 1861 to 1865. In the expansion of the railway network, the South at first had much less part. It was not until the late 1850s that a continuous line ran through the mountains connecting the lower Mississippi River with the southern Atlantic seaboard.

SLAVERY AND SECTIONALISM

One issue, however, exacerbated the regional and economic differences between North and South: slavery. Resenting the large profits amassed by Northern businessmen from marketing the cotton crop, Southerners attributed the backwardness of their own section to Northern aggrandizement. Northerners, on the other hand, declared that slavery -- the "peculiar institution," which the South regarded as essential to its economy -- was wholly responsible for the region's relative backwardness.

As far back as 1830, sectional lines had been steadily hardening on the slavery question. In the North, abolitionist feeling grew more and more powerful, abetted by a free-soil movement vigorously opposed to the extension of slavery into the Western regions not yet organized as states. To Southerners of 1850, slavery was a condition for which they felt no more responsible than for their English speech or their representative institutions. In some seaboard areas, slavery by 1850 was well over 200 years old; it was an integral part of the basic economy of the region.

Only a minority of Southern whites owned slaves. In 1860 there were a total of 46,274 planters throughout the slave-holding states, with a planter defined as someone who owned at least 20 slaves. More than half of all slaves worked on plantations. Some of the yeoman farmers, 70 percent of whom held less than 40 hectares, had a handful of slaves, but most had none. The "poor whites" lived on the lowest rung of Southern society and held no slaves. It is easy to understand the interest of the planters in slave holding -- they owned most of the slaves. But the yeomen and poor whites supported the institution of slavery as well. They feared that if freed, blacks would compete with them for land. Equally important, the presence of slaves raised the standing of the yeomen and the poor whites on the social scale; they would not willingly relinquish this status.

As they fought the weight of Northern opinion, political leaders of the South, the professional classes and most of the clergy now no longer apologized for slavery but championed it. Southern publicists insisted, for example, that the relationship between capital and labor was more humane under the slavery system than under the wage system of the North.

Before 1830 the old patriarchal system of plantation government, with its personal supervision of the slaves by their masters, was still characteristic. Gradually, however, with the introduction of large-scale cotton production in the lower South, the master gradually ceased to exercise close personal supervision over his slaves, and employed professional overseers whose tenure depended upon their ability to exact from slaves a maximum amount of work.

Slavery was inherently a system of brutality and coercion in which beatings and the breakup of families through the sale of individuals were commonplace. In the end, however, the most trenchant criticism of slavery was not the behavior of individual masters and overseers toward the slaves, but slavery's fundamental violation of every human being's inalienable right to be free.

THE ABOLITIONISTS

In national politics, Southerners chiefly sought protection and enlargement of the interests represented by the cotton-slavery system. Expansion was considered a necessity because the wastefulness of cultivating a single crop, cotton, rapidly exhausted the soil, increasing the need for new fertile lands. Moreover, the South believed it needed new territory for additional slave states to offset the admission of new free states. Antislavery Northerners saw in the Southern view a conspiracy for proslavery aggrandizement, and in the 1830s their opposition became fierce.

An earlier antislavery movement, an offshoot of the American Revolution, had won its last victory in 1808 when Congress abolished the slave trade with Africa. Thereafter, opposition was largely by the Quakers, who kept up a mild but ineffectual protest, while the cotton gin and westward expansion into the Mississippi delta region were creating an increasing demand for slaves.

The abolitionist movement that emerged in the early 1830s was combative, uncompromising and insistent upon an immediate end to slavery. This approach found a leader in William Lloyd Garrison, a young man from Massachusetts, who combined the heroism of a martyr with the crusading zeal of a demagogue. On January 1, 1831, Garrison produced the first issue of his newspaper, *The Liberator*, which bore the announcement: "I shall strenuously contend for the immediate enfranchisement of our slave population.... On this subject I do not wish to think, or speak, or write with moderation.... I am in earnest -- I will not equivocate -- I will not excuse -- I will not retreat a single inch AND I WILL BE HEARD."

Garrison's sensational methods awakened Northerners to the evil in an institution many had long come to regard as unchangeable. He sought to hold up to public gaze the most repulsive aspects of slavery and to castigate slave holders as torturers and traffickers in human life. He recognized no rights of the masters, acknowledged no compromise, tolerated no delay. Other abolitionists, unwilling to subscribe to his law-defying tactics, held that reform should be accomplished by legal and peaceful means. Garrison was joined by another powerful voice, that of Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave who galvanized Northern audiences as a spokesman for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, and later as the eloquent editor of the abolitionist weekly newspaper, *Northern Star*.

One phase of the antislavery movement involved helping slaves escape to safe refuges in the North or over the border into Canada. Known as the "Underground Railroad," an elaborate network of secret routes was firmly established in the 1830s in all parts of the North, with its most successful operation being in the old Northwest Territory. In Ohio alone, it is estimated that from 1830 to 1860 no fewer than 40,000 fugitive slaves were helped to freedom. The number of local antislavery societies increased at such a rate that by 1840 there were about 2,000 with a membership of perhaps 200,000.

Despite the efforts of active abolitionists to make slavery a question of conscience, most Northerners held themselves aloof from the antislavery movement or actively opposed it. In 1837, for example, a mob attacked and killed the antislavery editor Elijah P. Lovejoy in Alton, Illinois. But certain Southern actions allowed the abolitionists to link the slavery issue with the cause of civil liberties for whites. In 1835 an angry mob destroyed abolitionist literature in the Charleston, South Carolina, post office. When the postmaster stated he would not enforce delivery of abolitionist material, bitter debates ensued in Congress. In addition, abolitionists decided to flood Congress with petitions calling for a ban on slavery in the District of Columbia. In 1836 the House voted to table such petitions automatically, thus effectively killing them. Former President John Quincy Adams, elected to the House of Representatives in 1830, fought this so-called "gag rule" as a violation of the First Amendment. The House repealed the gag rule in 1844.

TEXAS AND WAR WITH MEXICO

Throughout the 1820s, Americans settled in the vast territory of Texas, often with land grants from the Mexican government. Their numbers soon alarmed the authorities, however, who prohibited further immigration in 1830. In 1834 General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna established a dictatorship in Mexico, and the following year Texans revolted. Santa Anna defeated the American rebels at the celebrated siege of the Alamo in early 1836, but Texans under Sam Houston destroyed the Mexican army and captured Santa Anna a month later at the Battle of San Jacinto, ensuring Texan independence. For almost a decade, Texas remained an independent republic, becoming the 28th state in 1845.

Although Mexico broke relations with the United States over the issue of Texas statehood, the most contentious issue was the new state's border: Texas claimed the Rio Grande River; Mexico argued that the border stood far to the north along the Nueces River. Meanwhile, settlers were flooding into the territories of New Mexico and California at a time when many Americans claimed that the United States had a "manifest destiny" to expand westward to the Pacific Ocean.

U.S. attempts to buy the New Mexico and California territories failed, and after a clash of Mexican and U.S. troops along the Rio Grande, the United States declared war in 1846. U.S. forces occupied the territory of New Mexico, then supported the revolt of settlers in California. A U.S. force under Zachary Taylor invaded Mexico, winning victories at Monterey and Buena Vista, but failing to bring Mexico to the negotiating table. In March 1847, U.S. forces commanded by Winfield Scott landed near Vera Cruz on Mexico's east coast, and after a series of heavy engagements, entered Mexico City. Nevertheless, it was only after the resignation of Santa Anna that the United States was able to negotiate the Treaty of Guadalupe Hildago in which Mexico ceded the Southwest region and California for \$15 million.

The war proved to be a training ground for American officers who would later fight on both sides in the Civil War. It was also a politically divisive war in which antislavery Whigs criticized the Democratic administration of James K. Polk for expansionism.

With the conclusion of the Mexican War, the United States gained a vast new territory of 1.36 million square kilometers encompassing the present-day states of Arizona, Nevada, California, Utah and parts of New Mexico, Colorado and Wyoming. But it was also a poisoned acquisition because it revived the most explosive question in American politics of the time: would the new territories be slave or free?

THE COMPROMISE OF 1850

Until 1845, it had seemed likely that slavery would be confined to the areas where it already existed. It had been given limits by the Missouri Compromise in 1820 and had no opportunity to overstep them. The new territories made renewed expansion of slavery a real likelihood.

Many Northerners believed that if not allowed to spread, slavery would ultimately decline and die. To justify their opposition to adding new slave states, they pointed to the statements of Washington and Jefferson, and to the Ordinance of 1787, which forbade the extension of slavery into the Northwest. Texas, which already permitted slavery, naturally entered the Union as a slave state. But California, New Mexico and Utah did not have slavery, and when the United States prepared to take over these areas in 1846, there were conflicting suggestions on what to do with them.

Extremists in the South urged that all the lands acquired from Mexico be thrown open to slave holders. Antislavery Northerners, on the other hand, demanded that all the new regions be closed to slavery. One group of moderates suggested that the Missouri Compromise line be extended to the Pacific with free states north of it and slave states to the south. Another group proposed that the question be left to "popular sovereignty," that is, the government should permit settlers to enter the new territory with or without slaves as they pleased and, when the time came to organize the region into states, the people themselves should determine the question.

Southern opinion held that all the territories had the right to sanction slavery. The North asserted that no territories had the right. In 1848 nearly 300,000 men voted for the candidates of a Free Soil Party, who declared that the best policy was "to limit, localize and discourage slavery."

The Midwestern and border state regions -- Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri -- were even more divided, however, with many favoring popular sovereignty as a compromise.

In January 1848 the discovery of gold in California precipitated a headlong rush of more than 80,000 settlers for the single year 1849. California became a crucial question, for clearly Congress had to determine the status of this new region before an organized government could be established. The hopes of the nation rested with Senator Henry Clay, who twice before in times of crisis had come forward with compromise arrangements. Now once again he halted a dangerous sectional quarrel with a complicated and carefully balanced plan.

His compromise (as subsequently modified in Congress) contained a number of key provisions: that California be admitted as a state with a free-soil (slavery-prohibited) constitution; that the remainder of the new annexation be divided into the two territories of New Mexico and Utah and organized without mention of slavery; that the claims of Texas to a portion of New Mexico be satisfied by a payment of \$10 million; that more effective machinery be established for catching runaway slaves and returning them to their masters; and that the buying and selling of slaves (but not slavery) be abolished in the District of Columbia. These measures -- known in American history as the Compromise of 1850 -- were passed, and the country breathed a sigh of relief.

For three years, the compromise seemed to settle nearly all differences. Beneath the surface, however, tension grew. The new Fugitive Slave Law deeply offended many Northerners, who refused to have any part in catching slaves. Moreover, many Northerners continued to help fugitives escape, and made the Underground Railroad more efficient and more daring than it had been before.

A DIVIDED NATION

Politically, the 1850s can be characterized as a decade of failure in which the nation's leaders were unable to resolve, or even contain, the divisive issue of slavery. In 1852, for example, Harriet Beecher Stowe published *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a novel provoked by the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law. When Stowe began writing her book, she thought of it as only a minor sketch, but it widened in scope as the work progressed. Immediately upon its publication, it caused a sensation. More than 300,000 copies were sold the first year, and presses ran day and night to keep up with the demand.

Although sentimental and full of stereotypes, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* portrayed with undeniable force the cruelty of slavery and the fundamental conflict between free and slave societies. The rising generation of voters in the North was deeply stirred by the work. It inspired widespread enthusiasm for the antislavery cause, appealing as it did to basic human emotions -- indignation at injustice and pity for the helpless individuals exposed to ruthless exploitation.

In 1854 the old issue of slavery in the territories was renewed and the quarrel became more bitter. The region that now comprises Kansas and Nebraska was being rapidly settled, increasing pressure for the establishment of territorial, and eventually, state governments.

Under terms of the Missouri Compromise of 1820, the entire region was closed to slavery. The Compromise of 1850, however, inadvertently reopened the question. Dominant slave-holding elements in Missouri, objected to letting Kansas become a free territory, for their state would then have three free-soil neighbors (Illinois, Iowa and Kansas). They feared the prospect of their state being forced to become a free state as well. For a time, Missourians in Congress, backed by Southerners, blocked all efforts to organize the region.

At this point, Stephen A. Douglas, the Democratic senior senator from Illinois, stirred up a storm by proposing a bill, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which enraged all free-soil supporters. Douglas argued that the Compromise of 1850, which left Utah and New Mexico free to resolve the slavery issue for themselves, superseded the Missouri Compromise. His plan called for two territories, Kansas and Nebraska, and permitted settlers to carry slaves into them. The inhabitants themselves were to determine whether they should enter the Union as free or slave states.

Northerners accused Douglas of currying favor with the South in order to gain the presidency in 1856. Angry debates marked the progress of the bill. The free-soil press violently denounced it. Northern clergymen assailed it. Businessmen who had hitherto befriended the South suddenly turned about-face. Yet in May 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act passed the Senate amid the boom of cannon fired by Southern enthusiasts.

When Douglas subsequently visited Chicago to speak in his own defense, the ships in the harbor lowered their flags to half-mast, the church bells tolled for an hour and a crowd of 10,000 hooted so loudly that he could not make himself heard.

The immediate results of Douglas's ill-starred measure were momentous. The Whig Party, which had straddled the question of slavery expansion, sank to its death, and in its stead a powerful new organization arose, the Republican Party, whose primary demand was that slavery be excluded from all the territories. In 1856, it nominated John Fremont, whose expeditions into the Far West had won him renown. Although Fremont lost the election, the new Republican Party swept a great part of the North. Such free-soil leaders as Salmon P. Chase and William Seward exerted greater influence than ever. Along with them appeared a tall, lanky Illinois attorney, Abraham Lincoln.

The flow of both Southern slave holders and antislavery families into Kansas resulted in armed conflict, and soon the territory was being called "bleeding Kansas." Other events brought the nation still closer to upheaval: notably, the Supreme Court's infamous 1857 decision concerning Dred Scott.

Scott was a Missouri slave who, some 20 years earlier, had been taken by his master to live in Illinois and the Wisconsin Territory, where slavery had been banned by the Northwest Ordinance. Returning to Missouri and becoming discontented with his life there, Scott sued for liberation on the ground of his residence on free soil. The Supreme Court -- dominated by Southerners -- decided that Scott lacked standing in court because he was not a citizen; that the laws of a free state (Illinois) had no effect on his status because he was the resident of a slave state (Missouri); and that slave holders had the right to take their "property" anywhere in the federal territories and that Congress could not restrict the expansion of slavery. The Court's decision thus invalidated the whole set of comprise measures by which Congress for a generation had tried to settle the slavery issue.

The Dred Scott decision stirred fierce resentment throughout the North. Never before had the Court been so bitterly condemned. For Southern Democrats, the decision was a great victory, since it gave judicial sanction to their justification of slavery throughout the territories.

LINCOLN, DOUGLAS AND BROWN

Abraham Lincoln had long regarded slavery as an evil. In a speech in Peoria, Illinois, in 1854, he declared that all national legislation should be framed on the principle that slavery was to be restricted and eventually abolished. He contended also that the principle of popular sovereignty was false, for slavery in the western territories was the concern not only of the local inhabitants but of the United States as a whole. This speech made him widely known throughout the growing West.

In 1858 Lincoln opposed Stephen A. Douglas for election to the U.S. Senate from Illinois. In the first paragraph of his opening campaign speech, on June 17, Lincoln struck the keynote of American history for the seven years to follow:

A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved -- I do not expect the house to fall -- but I do expect it will cease to be divided.

Lincoln and Douglas engaged in a series of seven debates in the ensuing months of 1858. Senator Douglas, known as the "Little Giant," had an enviable reputation as an orator, but he met his match in Lincoln, who eloquently challenged the concept of popular sovereignty as defined by Douglas and his allies. In the end, Douglas won the election by a small margin, but Lincoln had achieved stature as a national figure.

Sectional strife was growing ever more acute. On the night of October 16, 1859, John Brown, an antislavery fanatic who had captured and killed five proslavery settlers in Kansas three years before, led a band of followers in an attack on the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry in what is now the state of West Virginia. Brown's goal was to use the weapons seized to lead a slave uprising. After two days of fighting, Brown and his surviving men were taken prisoner by a force of U.S. marines commanded by Colonel Robert E. Lee.

Alarm ran through the nation. For many Southerners, Brown's attempt confirmed their worst fears. Antislavery zealots, on the other hand, hailed Brown as a martyr to a great cause.

Most Northerners repudiated his deed, seeing in it an assault on law and order. Brown was tried for conspiracy, treason and murder, and on December 2, 1859, he was hanged. To the end, he believed he had been an instrument in the hand of God.

SECESSION AND CIVIL WAR

In the presidential election of 1860 the Republican Party nominated Abraham Lincoln as its candidate. Party spirit soared as leaders declared that slavery could spread no farther. The party also promised a tariff for the protection of industry and pledged the enactment of a law granting free homesteads to settlers who would help in the opening of the West. The Democrats were not united. Southerners split from the party and nominated Vice President John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky for president. Stephen A. Douglas was the nominee of northern Democrats. Diehard Whigs from the border states, formed into the Constitutional Union Party, nominated John C. Bell of Tennessee.

Lincoln and Douglas competed in the North, and Breckenridge and Bell in the South. Lincoln won only 39 percent of the popular vote, but had a clear majority of 180 electoral votes, carrying all 18 free states. Bell won Tennessee, Kentucky and Virginia; Breckenridge took the other slave states except for Missouri, which was won by Douglas. Despite his poor electoral showing, Douglas trailed only Lincoln in the popular vote.

Lincoln's election made South Carolina's secession from the Union a foregone conclusion. The state had long been waiting for an event that would unite the South against the antislavery forces. Once the election returns were certain, a special South Carolina convention declared "that the Union now subsisting between South Carolina and other states under the name of the 'United States of America' is hereby dissolved." By February 1, 1861, six more Southern states had seceded. On February 7, the seven states adopted a provisional constitution for the Confederate States of America. The remaining southern states as yet remained in the Union.

Less than a month later, on March 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln was sworn in as president of the United States. In his inaugural address, he refused to recognize the secession, considering it "legally void." His speech closed with a plea for restoration of the bonds of union. But the South turned deaf ears, and on April 12, guns opened fire on the federal troops stationed at Fort Sumter in the Charleston, South Carolina, harbor. A war had begun in which more Americans would die than in any other conflict before or since.

In the seven states that had seceded, the people responded promptly to the appeal of the new president of the Confederate States of America, Jefferson Davis. Both sides now tensely awaited the action of the slave states that thus far had remained loyal. In response to the shelling of Fort Sumter, Virginia seceded on April 17, and Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina followed quickly. No state left the Union with greater reluctance than Virginia. Her statesmen had a leading part in the winning of the Revolution and the framing of the Constitution, and she had provided the nation with five presidents. With Virginia went Colonel Robert E. Lee, who declined the command of the Union Army out of loyalty to his state. Between the enlarged Confederacy and the free-soil North lay the border states, of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri which, despite some sympathies with the South, remained loyal to the Union.

Each side entered the war with high hopes for an early victory. In material resources the North enjoyed a decided advantage. Twenty-three states with a population of 22 million were arrayed against 11 states inhabited by 9 million. The industrial superiority of the North exceeded even its preponderance in population, providing it with abundant facilities for manufacturing arms and ammunition, clothing and other supplies. Similarly, the network of railways in the North enhanced federal military prospects.

The South had certain advantages as well. The most important was geography; the South was fighting a defensive war on its own territory. The South also had a stronger military tradition, and hence the region initially boasted the more experienced military leaders.

WESTERN ADVANCE, EASTERN STALEMATE

The first large battle of the war, at Bull Run, Virginia, (also known as First Manassas) near Washington, stripped away any illusions that victory would be quick or easy. It also established a pattern, at least in the eastern United States, of bloody Southern victories, but victories that never translated into a decisive military advantage. For the first years, the South would often win the battle, but not the war.

In contrast to its military failures in the East, Union forces were able to secure battlefield victories and slow strategic success at sea and in the West. Most of the Navy, at the war's beginning, was in Union hands, but it was scattered and weak. Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles took prompt measures to strengthen it. Lincoln then proclaimed a blockade of the Southern coasts. Although the effect of the blockade was negligible at first, by 1863 it almost completely prevented shipments of cotton to Europe and the importation of munitions, clothing and the medical supplies the South sorely needed.

Meanwhile, a brilliant naval commander, David Farragut, conducted two remarkable operations. In one, he took a Union fleet into the mouth of the Mississippi River, where he forced the surrender of the largest city in the South, New Orleans, Louisiana. In another, he made his way past the fortified entrance of Mobile Bay, Alabama, captured a Confederate ironclad vessel and sealed up the port.

In the Mississippi Valley, the Union forces won an almost uninterrupted series of victories. They began by breaking a long Confederate line in Tennessee, thus making it possible to occupy almost all the western part of the state. When the important Mississippi River port of Memphis was taken, Union troops advanced some 320 kilometers into the heart of the Confederacy. With the tenacious General Ulysses S. Grant in command, Union forces withstood a sudden Confederate counterattack at Shiloh, on the bluffs overlooking the Tennessee River, holding their ground stubbornly until reinforcements arrived to repulse the Confederates. Those killed and wounded at Shiloh numbered more than 10,000 on each side, a casualty rate that Americans had never before experienced. But it was only the beginning of the carnage.

In Virginia, by contrast, Union troops continued to meet one defeat after another. In a succession of bloody attempts to capture Richmond, the Confederate capital, Union forces were repeatedly thrown back. The Confederates had two great advantages: strong defense positions afforded by numerous streams cutting the road between Washington and Richmond; and two generals, Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. ("Stonewall") Jackson, both of whom far surpassed in ability the early Union commanders. In 1862 the Union commander, George McClellan, made a slow, excessively cautious attempt to seize Richmond. But in the Seven Days' Battles between June 25 and July 1, the Union troops were driven steadily backward, both sides suffering terrible losses.

After another Confederate victory at the Second Battle of Bull Run (or Second Manassas), Lee crossed the Potomac River and invaded Maryland. McClellan again responded tentatively, despite learning that Lee had split his army and was heavily outnumbered. The Union and Confederate Armies met at Antietam Creek, near Sharpsburg, Maryland, on September 17, 1862, in the bloodiest single day of the war: more than 4,000 died on both sides and 18,000 were wounded. Despite his numerical advantage, however, McClellan failed to break Lee's lines or press the attack, and Lee was able to retreat across the Potomac with his army intact. As a result, Lincoln fired McClellan.

Although Antietam was inconclusive in military terms, its consequences were nonetheless momentous. Great Britain and France, both on the verge of recognizing the Confederacy, delayed their decision, and the South never received the diplomatic recognition and economic aid from Europe that it desperately sought.

Antietam also gave Lincoln the opening he needed to issue the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, which declared that as of January 1, 1863, all slaves in states rebelling against the Union were free. In practical terms, the Proclamation had little immediate impact; it freed slaves only in the Confederate states, while leaving slavery intact in the border states. Politically, however, it meant that in addition to preserving the Union, the abolition of slavery was now a declared objective of the Union war effort.

The final Emancipation Proclamation, issued January 1, 1863, also authorized the recruitment of blacks into the Union Army, which abolitionist leaders such as Frederick Douglass had been urging since the beginning of armed conflict. In fact, Union forces already had been sheltering escaped slaves as "contraband of war," but following the Emancipation Proclamation, the Union Army recruited and trained regiments of black soldiers that fought with distinction in battles from Virginia to the Mississippi. About 178,000 African Americans served in the United States Colored Troops, and 29,500 blacks served in the Union Navy.

Despite the political gains represented by the Emancipation Proclamation, however, the North's military prospects in the East remained bleak as Lee's Army of Northern Virginia continued to maul the Union Army of the Potomac, first at Fredericksburg, Virginia, in December 1862 and then at Chancellorsville in May 1863.

But Chancellorsville, although one of Lee's most brilliant military victories, was also one of his most costly with the death of his most valued lieutenant, General Stonewall Jackson, who was mistakenly shot by his own men.

GETTYSBURG TO APPOMATTOX

Yet none of the Confederate victories was decisive. The federal government simply mustered new armies and tried again. Believing that the North's crushing defeat at Chancellorsville gave him his chance, Lee struck northward into Pennsylvania, in July 1863, almost reaching the state capital at Harrisburg. A strong Union force intercepted Lee's march at Gettysburg, where, in a titanic three-day battle -- the largest of the Civil War -- the Confederates made a valiant effort to break the Union lines. They failed, and Lee's veterans, after crippling losses, fell back to the Potomac.

More than 3,000 Union soldiers and almost 4,000 Confederates died at Gettysburg; wounded and missing totaled more than 20,000 on each side. On November 19, 1863, Lincoln dedicated a new national cemetery at Gettysburg with perhaps the most famous address in U.S. history. He concluded his brief remarks with these words:

"...we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." On the Mississippi, Union control was blocked at Vicksburg, where the Confederates had strongly fortified themselves on bluffs too high for naval attack. By early 1863 Grant began to move below and around Vicksburg, subjecting the position to a six-week siege. On July 4, he captured the town, together with the strongest Confederate Army in the West. The river was now entirely in Union hands. The Confederacy was broken in two, and it became almost impossible to bring supplies from Texas and Arkansas.

The Northern victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg in July 1863 marked the turning point of the war, although the bloodshed continued unabated for more than a year-and-a-half.

Lincoln brought Grant east and made him commander-in-chief of all Union forces. In May 1864 Grant advanced deep into Virginia and met Lee's Confederate Army in the three-day Battle of the Wilderness. Losses on both sides were heavy, but unlike other Union commanders, Grant refused to retreat. Instead, he attempted to outflank Lee, stretching the Confederate lines and pounding away with artillery and infantry attacks. "I propose to fight it out along this line if it takes all summer," the Union commander said at Spotsylvania, during five days of bloody trench warfare that largely characterized fighting on the eastern front for almost a year.

In the West, Union forces gained control of Tennessee in the fall of 1863 with victories at Chattanooga and nearby Lookout Mountain, opening the way for General William T. Sherman to invade Georgia. Sherman outmaneuvered several smaller Confederate armies, occupied the state capital of Atlanta, then marched to the Atlantic coast, systematically destroying railroads, factories, warehouses and other facilities in his path. His men, cut off from their normal supply lines, ravaged the countryside for food. From the coast, Sherman marched northward, and by February 1865, he had taken Charleston, South Carolina, where the first shots of the Civil War had been fired. Sherman, more than any other Union general, understood that destroying the will and morale of the South was as important as defeating its armies.

Grant, meanwhile, lay siege to Petersburg, Virginia, for nine months, before Lee, in March 1865, abandoned both Petersburg and the Confederate capital of Richmond in an attempt to retreat south. But it was too late, and on April 9, 1865, surrounded by huge Union armies, Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Courthouse. Although scattered fighting continued elsewhere for several months, the Civil War was over.

The terms of surrender at Appomattox were magnanimous, and on his return from his meeting with Lee, Grant quieted the noisy demonstrations of his soldiers by reminding them: "The rebels are our countrymen again." The war for Southern independence had become the "lost cause," whose hero, Robert E. Lee, had won wide admiration through the brilliance of his leadership and his greatness in defeat.

WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE

For the North, the war produced a still greater hero in Abraham Lincoln -- a man eager, above all else, to weld the Union together again, not by force and repression but by warmth and generosity. In 1864 he had been elected for a second term as president, defeating as his Democratic opponent, George McClellan, the general whom Lincoln had dismissed after Antietam.

Lincoln's second inaugural address closed with these words:

"...With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan...to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Three weeks later, two days after Lee's surrender, Lincoln delivered his last public address, in which he unfolded a generous reconstruction policy.

On April 14, the president held what was to be his last Cabinet meeting. That evening -- with his wife and a young couple who were his guests -- he attended a performance at Ford's Theater. There, as he sat in the presidential box, he was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth, a Virginia actor embittered by the South's defeat. Booth was killed in a shootout some days later in a barn in the Virginia countryside. His accomplices were captured and later executed.

Lincoln died in a downstairs bedroom of a house across the street from Ford's on the morning of April 15. Wrote poet James Russell Lowell:

Never before that startled April morning did such multitudes of men shed tears for the death of one they had never seen, as if with him a friendly presence had been taken from their lives, leaving them colder and darker. Never was funeral panegyric so eloquent as the silent look of sympathy which strangers exchanged when, they met that day. Their common manhood had lost a kinsman.

The first great task confronting the victorious North -- now under the leadership of Lincoln's vice president, Andrew Johnson, a Southerner who remained loyal to the Union -- was to determine the status of the states that had seceded. Lincoln had already set the stage. In his view, the people of the Southern states had never legally seceded; they had been misled by some disloyal citizens into a defiance of federal authority. And since the war was the act of individuals, the federal government would have to deal with these individuals and not with the states. Thus, in 1863 Lincoln proclaimed that if in any state 10 percent of the voters of record in 1860 would form a government loyal to the U.S. Constitution and would acknowledge obedience to the laws of the Congress and the proclamations of the president, he would recognize the government so created as the state's legal government.

Congress rejected this plan and challenged Lincoln's right to deal with the matter without consultation. Some members of Congress advocated severe punishment for all the seceded states. Yet even before the war was wholly over, new governments had been set up in Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas and Louisiana.

To deal with one of its major concerns -- the condition of former slaves -- Congress, in March 1865, established the Freedmen's Bureau to act as guardian over African Americans and guide them toward self-support. And in December of that year, Congress ratified the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which abolished slavery.

Throughout the summer of 1865 Johnson proceeded to carry out Lincoln's reconstruction program, with minor modifications. By presidential proclamation he appointed a governor for each of the former Confederate states and freely restored political rights to large numbers of Southern citizens through use of presidential pardons.

In due time conventions were held in each of the former Confederate states to repeal the ordinances of secession, repudiate the war debt, and draft new state constitutions. Eventually a native Unionist became governor in each state with authority to convoke a convention of loyal voters. Johnson called upon each convention to invalidate the secession, abolish slavery, repudiate all debts that went to aid the Confederacy and ratify the 13th Amendment. By the end of 1865, this process, with a few exceptions, was completed.

RADICAL RECONSTRUCTION

Both Lincoln and Johnson had foreseen that the Congress would have the right to deny Southern legislators seats in the U.S. Senate or House of Representatives, under the clause of the Constitution that says "Each house shall be the judge of the...qualifications of its own members." This came to pass when, under the leadership of Thaddeus Stevens, those congressmen (called "Radical Republicans") who sought to punish the South refused to seat its elected senators and representatives. Then, within the next few months, the Congress proceeded to work out a plan for the reconstruction of the South quite different from the one Lincoln had started and Johnson had continued.

Wide public support gradually developed for those members of Congress who believed that blacks should be given full citizenship. By July 1866, Congress had passed a civil rights bill and set up a new Freedmen's Bureau -- both designed to prevent racial discrimination by Southern legislatures. Following this, the Congress passed a 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which states that "All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the states in which they reside," thus repudiating the Dred Scott ruling which had denied slaves their right of citizenship.

All the Southern state legislatures, with the exception of Tennessee, refused to ratify the amendment, some voting against it unanimously. In addition, in the aftermath of the war, Southern state legislatures passed black codes, which aimed to reimpose bondage on the freedmen. The codes differed from state to state, but some provisions were common. Blacks were required to enter into annual labor contracts, with penalties imposed in case of violation; dependent children were subject to compulsory apprenticeship and corporal punishments by masters; and vagrants could be sold into private service if they could not pay severe fines.

In response, certain groups in the North advocated intervention to protect the rights of blacks in the South. In the Reconstruction Act of March 1867, Congress, ignoring the governments that had been established in the Southern states, divided the South into five districts and placed them under military rule. Escape from permanent military government was open to those states that established civil governments, took an oath of allegiance, ratified the 14th Amendment and adopted black suffrage.

The amendment was ratified in 1868. The 15th Amendment, passed by Congress the following year and ratified in 1870 by state legislatures, provided that "The rights of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude."

The Radical Republicans in Congress were infuriated by President Johnson's vetoes (even though they were overridden) of legislation protecting newly freed blacks and punishing former Confederate leaders by depriving them of the right to hold office. Congressional antipathy to Johnson was so great that for the first time in American history, impeachment proceedings were instituted to remove the president from office.

Johnson's main offense was his opposition to punitive congressional policies and the violent language he used in criticizing them. The most serious legal charge his enemies could level against him was that despite the Tenure of Office Act (which required Senate approval for the removal of any officeholder the Senate had previously confirmed), he had removed from his Cabinet the secretary of war, a staunch supporter of the Congress. When the impeachment trial was held in the Senate, it was proved that Johnson was technically within his rights in removing the Cabinet member. Even more important, it was pointed out that a dangerous precedent would be set if the Congress were to remove a president because he disagreed with the majority of its members. The attempted impeachment failed by a narrow margin, and Johnson continued in office until his term expired.

Under the Military Reconstruction Act, Congress, by June 1868, had readmitted Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia, Alabama and Florida, to the Union. In many of these seven reconstructed states, the majority of the governors, representatives and senators were Northern men -- so-called "carpetbaggers" -- who had gone South after the war to make their political fortunes, often in alliance with newly freed African Americans. In the legislatures of Louisiana and South Carolina, African Americans actually gained a majority of the seats. The last three Southern states -- Mississippi, Texas and Virginia -- finally accepted congressional terms and were readmitted to the Union in 1870.

Many Southern whites, their political and social dominance threatened, turned to illegal means to prevent blacks from gaining equality. Violence against blacks became more and more frequent. In 1870 increasing disorder led to the passage of an Enforcement Act severely punishing those who attempted to deprive the black freedmen of their civil rights.

THE END OF RECONSTRUCTION

As time passed, it became more and more obvious that the problems of the South were not being solved by harsh laws and continuing rancor against former Confederates. In May 1872, Congress passed a general Amnesty Act, restoring full political rights to all but about 500 Confederate sympathizers.

Gradually Southern states began electing members of the Democratic Party into office, ousting so-called carpetbagger governments and intimidating blacks from voting or attempting to hold public office. By 1876 the Republicans remained in power in only three Southern states. As part of the bargaining that resolved the disputed presidential elections that year in favor of Rutherford B. Hayes, the Republicans promised to end Radical Reconstruction, thereby leaving most of the South in the hands of the Democratic Party. In 1877 Hayes withdrew the remaining government troops, tacitly abandoning federal responsibility for enforcing blacks' civil rights.

The South was still a region devastated by war, burdened by debt caused by misgovernment, and demoralized by a decade of racial warfare. Unfortunately, the pendulum of national racial policy swung from one extreme to the other. Whereas formerly it had supported harsh penalties against Southern white leaders, it now tolerated new and humiliating kinds of discrimination against blacks. The last quarter of the 19th century saw a profusion of "Jim Crow" laws in Southern states that segregated public schools, forbade or limited black access to many public facilities, such as parks, restaurants and hotels, and denied most blacks the right to vote by imposing poll taxes and arbitrary literacy tests.

In contrast with the moral clarity and high drama of the Civil War, historians have tended to judge Reconstruction harshly, as a murky period of political conflict, corruption and regression. Slaves were granted their freedom, but not equality. The North completely failed to address the economic needs of the freedmen. Efforts such as the Freedmen's Bureau proved inadequate to the desperate needs of former slaves for institutions that could provide them with political and economic opportunity, or simply protect them from violence and intimidation. Indeed, federal Army officers and agents of the Freedmen's Bureau were often racists themselves. Blacks were dependent on these Northern whites to protect them from white Southerners, who, united into organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, intimidated blacks and prevented them from exercising their rights. Without economic resources of their own, many Southern blacks were forced to become tenant farmers on land owned by their former masters, caught in a cycle of poverty that would continue well into the 20th century.

Reconstruction-era governments did make genuine gains in rebuilding Southern states devastated by the war, and in expanding public services, notably in establishing tax-supported, free public schools for blacks and whites. However, recalcitrant Southerners seized upon instances of corruption (hardly unique to the South in this era) and exploited them to bring down radical regimes. The failure of Reconstruction meant that the struggle of African Americans for equality and freedom was deferred until the 20th century -- when it would become a national, and not a Southern issue.

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SIDEBAR: PEACE DEMOCRATS, COPPERHEADS AND DRAFT RIOTS

Throughout his presidency, Abraham Lincoln faced serious opposition to his political and wartime policies. Even in the North, the Civil War was so divisive and consumed so many lives and resources that it could hardly have been otherwise.

Opposition to Lincoln naturally coalesced in the Democratic Party, whose candidate, Stephen Douglas, had won 44 percent of the free states' popular vote in the 1860 election.

The strength of the opposition generally rose and fell in proportion to the North's effectiveness on the battlefield. The first manifestation of dissatisfaction with the war effort -- and by extension Lincoln -- came not from the Democrats, however, but from the Congress, which formed the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War in December 1861 to investigate the poor Union showing at Bull Run and Ball's Bluff. Dominated by radical Republicans, the Joint Committee pushed the Lincoln administration toward a more aggressive engagement of the war, as well as toward emancipation.

As might be expected from the party of "popular sovereignty," some Democrats believed that full-scale war to reinstate the Union was unjustified. This group came to be known as the Peace Democrats. Their more extreme elements were called "Copperheads."

Whether of the "war" or "peace" faction, few Democrats believed the emancipation of the slaves was worth shedding Northern blood. Indeed, opposition to emancipation had long been party policy. In 1862, for example, virtually every Democrat in Congress voted against eliminating slavery in the District of Columbia and prohibiting it in the territories.

Much of the opposition to emancipation came from the working poor, particularly Irish and German Catholic immigrants, who feared a massive migration of newly freed blacks to the North. Spurred by such sentiments, race riots erupted in several Northern cities in 1862.

With the Emancipation Proclamation of January 1863, Lincoln clearly added the abolition of slavery to his war aims. This was far from universally accepted in the North. In both Indiana and Illinois, for example, the state legislatures passed laws calling for peace with the Confederacy and retraction of the "wicked, inhuman and unholy" proclamation.

The North's difficulties in prosecuting the war led Lincoln, in September 1862, to suspend the writ of habeas corpus and impose martial law on those who interfered with recruitment or gave aid and comfort to the rebels. This breach of civil law, although constitutionally justified during times of crisis, gave the Democrats another opportunity to criticize Lincoln. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton enforced martial law vigorously, and many thousands -- most of them Southern sympathizers or Democrats -- were arrested.

The Union's need for manpower led to the first compulsory draft in U.S. history. Enacted in 1863 to "encourage" enlistment, the draft further alienated many. Opposition was particularly strong among the Copperheads of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Wisconsin, where federal troops had to be called out to enforce compliance with it.

It must be noted that a man who was drafted could buy his way out for \$300, about the equivalent of an unskilled laborer's annual income at that time. This feature added to the impression -- strongly held in parts of the Confederacy as well -- that this was a "rich man's war and a poor man's fight."

The most significant resistance to the draft took place in New York City in the summer of 1863. A Democratic Party stronghold, New York had already seen several draft officials killed that year. In July a group of blacks were brought into the city, under police protection, to replace striking Irish longshoremen. At the same time, officials held a lottery drawing for the unpopular draft. The conjunction of the two events led to a four-day riot in which a number of black neighborhoods, draft offices and Protestant churches were destroyed and at least 105 people killed. It was not until several Union regiments arrived from Gettysburg that order could be restored.

The most celebrated civil case of the Civil War also took place that year. It concerned Clement Vallandigham, an aspiring Democratic candidate for the governorship of Ohio. Apparently seeking to bolster his candidacy, Vallandigham defied a local military ban against "treasonous activities" and attacked Lincoln's policies, calling for negotiations to end the war and terming it "a war for the freedom of the blacks and the enslavement of the whites." Union soldiers subsequently broke into his house and arrested him.

The legality of Vallandigham's arrest was immediately challenged by the Democrats and, indeed, some Republicans as well. Lincoln's response was to have him sent behind Confederate lines, where Vallandigham won the nomination. Making his way to Canada, he then carried out a boisterous, but unsuccessful, campaign.

Despite the Union victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg in 1863, Democratic "peace" candidates continued to play on the nation's misfortunes and racial sensitivities. Indeed, the mood of the North was such that Lincoln was convinced he would lose his re-election bid in November 1864.

The Democratic candidate for president that year was General George McClellan, the man Lincoln had removed as commander of the Army of the Potomac two years earlier. McClellan's vice presidential candidate was a close ally of Vallandigham. Despite the hopes of the Democrats, however, McClellan refused to embrace the party's goal of negotiating an end to the war. Nonetheless, with victory at last within sight, Lincoln easily defeated McClellan in November, capturing every Northern state except New Jersey and Delaware.



An Outline of American History

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CHAPTER SEVEN: GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

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"Upon the sacredness of property, civilization itself depends." Andrew Carnegie, 1889

Between two great wars -- the Civil War and the First World War -- the United States of America came of age. In a period of less than 50 years it was transformed from a rural republic to an urban state. The frontier vanished. Great factories and steel mills, transcontinental railroad lines, flourishing cities and vast agricultural holdings marked the land. With this economic growth and affluence came corresponding problems. Nationwide, businesses came to dominate whole industries, either independently or in combination with others. Working conditions were often poor. Cities grew so quickly they could not properly house or govern their growing populations.

TECHNOLOGY AND CHANGE

"The Civil War," says one writer, "cut a wide gash through the history of the country; it dramatized in a stroke the changes that had begun to take place during the preceding 20 or 30 years...." War needs had enormously stimulated manufacturing, speeding an economic process based on the exploitation of iron, steam and electric power, as well as the forward march of science and invention. In the years before 1860, 36,000 patents were granted; in the next 30 years, 440,000 patents were issued, and in the first quarter of the 20th century, the number reached nearly a million.

As early as 1844, Samuel F. B. Morse had perfected electrical telegraphy, and soon afterward distant parts of the continent were linked by a network of poles and wires. In 1876 Alexander Graham Bell exhibited a telephone instrument and, within half a century, 16 million telephones would quicken the social and economic life of the nation. The growth of business was speeded by the invention of the typewriter in 1867, the adding machine in 1888 and the cash register in 1897. The linotype composing machine, invented in 1886, and rotary press and paper-folding machinery made it possible to print 240,000 eight-page newspapers in an hour. Thomas Edison's incandescent lamp eventually lit millions of homes. The talking machine, or phonograph, too, was perfected by Edison, who, in conjunction with George Eastman, also helped develop the motion picture. These and many other applications of science and ingenuity resulted in a new level of productivity in almost every field.

Concurrently, the nation's basic industry -- iron and steel -- was forging ahead, protected by a high tariff. Previously concentrated in the Eastern states, the iron industry moved westward as geologists discovered new ore deposits, notably the great Mesabi iron range at the head of Lake Superior, which became one of the largest ore producers in the world. The ore lay on the surface of the ground and was easy and cheap to mine. Remarkably free of chemical impurities, it could be processed into steel of superior quality at about one-tenth the previously prevailing cost.

CARNEGIE AND THE ERA OF STEEL

Andrew Carnegie was largely responsible for the great advances in steel production. Carnegie, who came to America from Scotland as a child of 12, progressed from bobbin boy in a cotton factory to a job in a telegraph office, then to one on the Pennsylvania Railroad. Before he was 30 years old he had made shrewd and farsighted investments, which by 1865 were concentrated in iron. Within a few years, he had organized or had stock in companies making iron bridges, rails and locomotives. Ten years later, the steel mill he built on the Monongahela River in Pennsylvania was the largest in the country.

Carnegie acquired commanding control not only of new mills, but also of coke and coal properties, iron ore from Lake Superior, a fleet of steamers on the Great Lakes, a port town on Lake Erie and a connecting railroad. His business, allied with a dozen others, could command favorable terms from railroads and shipping lines. Nothing comparable in industrial growth had ever been seen in America before.

Though Carnegie long dominated the industry, he never achieved a complete monopoly over the natural resources, transportation and industrial plants involved in the making of steel. In the 1890s, new companies challenged his preeminence, and at first, stung by competition, Carnegie threatened to build an even more powerful business complex. But now, a tired old man, he was persuaded to merge his holdings with an organization that eventually would embrace most of the important iron and steel properties in the nation.

CORPORATIONS AND CITIES

The United States Steel Corporation, which resulted from this merger in 1901, illustrated a process under way for 30 years: the combination of independent industrial enterprises into federated or centralized companies. Begun during the Civil War, the trend gathered momentum after the 1870s, as businessmen began to fear that overproduction would lead to declining prices and falling profits. They realized that if they could control both production and markets, they could bring competing firms into a single organization. The "corporation" and the "trust" were developed to achieve these ends.

Corporations, making available a deep reservoir of capital and giving business enterprises permanent life and continuity of control, attracted investors both by the anticipated profits and by the limited liability in case of business failure. In turn, the trusts, were in effect combinations of corporations whereby the stockholders of each placed stocks in the hands of trustees. Such trusts made possible large-scale combinations, centralized control and administration, and the pooling of patents. Their larger capital resources provided power to expand, to compete with foreign business organizations, and to drive hard bargains with labor, which was beginning to organize effectively. They could also exact favorable terms from railroads and exercise influence in politics.

The Standard Oil Company, founded by John D. Rockefeller, was one of the earliest and strongest corporations, and was followed rapidly by other combinations -- in cottonseed oil, lead, sugar, tobacco and rubber. Soon aggressive individual businessmen began to mark out industrial domains for themselves. Four great meat packers, chief among them Philip Armour and Gustavus Swift, established a beef trust. Cyrus McCormick achieved preeminence in the reaper business. A 1904 survey showed that more than 5,000 previously independent concerns had been consolidated into some 300 industrial trusts.

The trend toward amalgamation was manifest in other fields, particularly in transportation and communications. Western Union, earliest of the large communications combinations, was followed by the Bell Telephone System and eventually by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. In the 1860s, Cornelius Vanderbilt consolidated some 13 separate railroads into a single line connecting New York City and Buffalo, about 800 kilometers away. During the next decade he acquired lines to Chicago, Illinois, and Detroit, Michigan -- and the New York Central Railroad System came into being. Other consolidations were already under way, and soon the major railroads of the nation were organized into trunk lines and systems directed by a handful of men.

In this new industrial order, the city was the nerve center, bringing to a focus all the nation's dynamic economic forces: vast accumulations of capital, business and financial institutions, spreading railroad yards, smoky factories, and armies of manual and clerical workers. Villages, attracting people from the countryside and from lands across the sea, grew into towns and towns into cities almost overnight. In 1830 only one of every 15 persons lived in communities of 8,000 or more; in 1860 the ratio was nearly one in every six; and in 1890 three in every 10. No single city had as many as a million inhabitants in 1860; but 30 years later New York had a million and a half, and Chicago, Illinois, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, each had over a million. In these three decades, Philadelphia and Baltimore, Maryland, doubled in population, Kansas City, Missouri, and Detroit, Michigan, grew fourfold, Cleveland, Ohio, sixfold, Chicago tenfold. Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Omaha, Nebraska, and many communities like them -- hamlets when the Civil War began -- increased 50 times or more in population.

RAILROADS, REGULATIONS AND THE TARIFF

Railroads became increasingly important to the expanding nation, and unfair railroad practices proliferated. Rail lines extended cheaper rates to large shippers by rebating a portion of the charge, operated to the disadvantage of small shippers. Also, some railroads charged arbitrarily higher rates to some shippers than to others between certain points, regardless of distance.

Moreover, while competition held down freight charges between cities with several rail connections, rates were excessive between points served by only one line. Thus it cost less to ship goods 1,280 kilometers from Chicago to New York than to places a few hundred kilometers from Chicago. And by joint action to avoid competition -- pooling -- rival companies divided the freight business according to a prearranged scheme that placed the total earnings in a common fund for distribution.

Popular resentment at these practices stimulated state efforts at regulation. These had some effect, but the problem was national in character and demanded congressional action.

In 1887 President Grover Cleveland signed the Interstate Commerce Act, which forbade excessive charges, pools, rebates and rate discrimination, and created an Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to guard against violations of the act. In the first decades of its existence, however, the railroads used conservative Supreme Court decisions to thwart virtually all the ICC's efforts at regulation and rate reductions.

Cleveland was also active in combating the high tariff, which, adopted originally as an emergency war measure, had come to be accepted as permanent national policy under the Republican presidents who dominated the politics of the era. Cleveland, a Democrat, regarded excessive tariffs as responsible in large measure for a burdensome increase in the cost of living and for the rapid development of trusts. After many years, during which the tariff had not been a political issue, the Democrats in 1880 demanded a "tariff for revenue only," and soon the clamor for reform became insistent. In his annual message to Congress in 1887, Cleveland, despite warnings to avoid the explosive subject, startled the nation by denouncing the extremes to which the principle of protecting American industry from foreign competition had been pushed.

The tariff became the main issue of the presidential election campaign in 1888, and Republican candidate Benjamin Harrison, a defender of protectionism, won in a close race. The Harrison administration, fulfilling its campaign promises, passed in 1890 the McKinley tariff bill, a measure designed to protect established industries as well as to foster so-called "infant industries." The new tariff's generally high rates contributed to high retail prices, triggering widespread dissatisfaction.

During this period, public antipathy toward the trusts increased. The nation's gigantic corporations, subjected to bitter attack through the 1880s by such reformers as Henry George and Edward Bellamy, became a hotly debated political issue. To break the monopolies, the Sherman Antitrust Act, passed in 1890, forbade all combinations in restraint of interstate trade and provided several methods of enforcement with severe penalties. Couched in vague generalities, the law itself accomplished little immediately after its passage. But a decade later, in the administration of Theodore Roosevelt, its effective application earned the president the nickname of "trust-buster."

REVOLUTION IN AGRICULTURE

Despite the great gains in industry, agriculture remained the nation's basic occupation. The revolution in agriculture -- paralleling that in manufacturing after the Civil War -- involved a shift from hand labor to machine farming, and from subsistence to commercial agriculture. Between 1860 and 1910, the number of farms in the United States tripled, increasing from 2 million to 6 million, while the area farmed more than doubled from 160 million to 352 million hectares.

Between 1860 and 1890, the production of such basic commodities as wheat, corn and cotton outstripped all previous figures in the United States. In the same period, the nation's population more than doubled, with largest growth in the cities. But the American farmer grew enough grain and cotton, raised enough beef and pork, and clipped enough wool not only to supply American workers and their families but also to create ever-increasing surpluses.

Several factors accounted for this extraordinary achievement. One was the expansion into the West. Another was the application of machinery to farming. The farmer of 1800, using a hand sickle, could hope to cut 20 percent of a hectare of wheat a day. With the cradle, 30 years later, he might cut 80 percent of a hectare daily. In 1840 Cyrus McCormick performed a miracle by cutting from two to two-and-a-half hectares a day with the reaper, the curious machine he had been developing for nearly 10 years. Foreseeing the demand, he headed west to the young prairie town of Chicago, where he set up a factory -- and by 1860 sold a quarter of a million reapers.

Other farm machines were developed in rapid succession: the automatic wire binder, the threshing machine and the reaper-thresher or combine. Mechanical planters, cutters, huskers and shellers appeared, as did cream separators, manure spreaders, potato planters, hay driers, poultry incubators and a hundred other inventions.

Scarcely less important than machinery in the agricultural revolution was science. In 1862 the Morrill Land Grant College Act allotted public land to each state for the establishment of agricultural and industrial colleges. These were to serve both as educational institutions and as centers for research in scientific farming. Congress subsequently appropriated funds for the creation of agricultural experiment stations throughout the country and also granted funds directly to the Department of Agriculture for research purposes. By the beginning of the new century, scientists throughout the United States were at work on a wide variety of agricultural projects. Ironically, the federal policy that enabled farmers to increase yields ultimately generated vast supplies which drove market prices down -- and disheartened farmers.

One of these scientists, Mark Carleton, traveled for the Department of Agriculture to Russia. There he found and exported to his homeland the rust- and drought-resistant winter wheat that now accounts for more than half the United States wheat crop. Another scientist, Marion Dorset, conquered the dreaded hog cholera, while still another, George Mohler, helped prevent hoof-and-mouth disease. From North Africa, one researcher brought back Kaffir corn; from Turkestan, another imported the yellow-flowering alfalfa. Luther Burbank, in California, produced scores of new fruits and vegetables; in Wisconsin, Stephen Babcock devised a test for determining the butterfat content of milk; at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, the African-American scientist George Washington Carver found hundreds of new uses for the peanut, sweet potato and soybean.

THE DIVIDED SOUTH

In the 1880s, the South pushed hard to attract industry. Large inducements were offered to investors to develop the steel, lumber, tobacco and textile industries. Yet in 1900 the South's percentage of the nation's industrial base remained about the same size as it had been in 1860. Moreover, the price of this drive for industrialization was high: disease and child labor proliferated in Southern mill towns. Thirty years after the Civil War, the South remained largely poor, overwhelmingly agrarian and economically dependent. Its society enforced a rigid social segregation of blacks from whites, and tolerated recurrent racial violence.

Intransigent white Southerners, who resisted Reconstruction through their positions in the national government in Washington, found ways to assert state control to maintain white dominance. Several Supreme Court decisions bolstered the views of these Southerners, beginning in the 1870s, by upholding traditional conservative views of the appropriate balance between national and state power.

In 1873 the Supreme Court found that the Fourteenth Amendment (citizenship rights not to be abridged) conferred no new privileges or immunities to protect African Americans from state power. In 1883, furthermore, it ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment did not prevent individuals, as opposed to states, from practicing discrimination. And in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) the Court found that "separate but equal" public accommodations for African Americans, such as trains and restaurants, did not violate their rights.

Soon the principle of segregation by race extended into every area of Southern life, from railroads to restaurants, hotels, hospitals and schools. Moreover, any area of life that was not segregated by law was segregated by custom and practice. Faced with pervasive discrimination, many African Americans supported the program of Booker T. Washington, the most prominent black leader of the late 19th and early 20th century, who counseled them to focus on modest economic goals and to accept temporary social discrimination. Others, led by the African-American intellectual W.E.B. DuBois, wanted to challenge segregation through political action. But, with the complicity of two major parties, calls for racial justice attracted little support, and segregationist laws remained common in the South well into the second half of the 20th century.

THE LAST FRONTIER

In 1865 the frontier line generally followed the western limits of the states bordering the Mississippi River, bulging outward to include the eastern sections of Kansas and Nebraska. Beyond this thin edge of pioneer farms lay the prairie and sagebrush lands that stretched to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Then, for nearly 1,600 kilometers, loomed the huge bulk of mountain ranges, many rich in silver, gold and other metals. On the far side, plains and deserts stretched to the wooded coastal ranges and the Pacific Ocean. Apart from the settled districts in California and scattered outposts, the vast inland region was populated by Native Americans: among them the Great Plains tribes -- Sioux and Blackfoot, Pawnee and Cheyenne -- and the Indian cultures of the Southwest, including Apache, Navajo and Hopi.

A mere quarter-century later, virtually all this country had been carved into states and territories. Miners had ranged over the whole of the mountain country, tunneling into the earth, establishing little communities in Nevada, Montana and Colorado. Cattle ranchers, taking advantage of the enormous grasslands, had laid claim to the huge expanse stretching from Texas to the upper Missouri River. Sheep herders had found their way to the valleys and mountain slopes. Farmers sank their plows into the plains and valleys and closed the gap between the East and West. By 1890 the frontier had disappeared.

Settlement was spurred by the Homestead Act of 1862, which granted free farms of 64 hectares to citizens who would occupy and improve the land. Unfortunately for the would-be farmers, the land itself was suited more for cattle ranching than farming, and by 1880 nearly 22,400,000 hectares of "free" land was in the hands of cattlemen or the railroads.

In 1862 Congress also voted a charter to the Union Pacific Railroad, which pushed westward from Council Bluffs, Iowa, using mostly the labor of ex-soldiers and Irish immigrants. At the same time, the Central Pacific Railroad began to build eastward from Sacramento, California, relying heavily on Chinese immigrant labor. The whole country was stirred as the two lines steadily approached each other, finally meeting on May 10, 1869, at Promontory Point in Utah. The months of laborious travel hitherto separating the two oceans was now cut to about six days. The continental rail network grew steadily, and by 1884 four great lines linked the central Mississippi Valley area with the Pacific.

The first great rush of population to the Far West was drawn to the mountainous regions, where gold was found in California in 1848, in Colorado and Nevada 10 years later, in Montana and Wyoming in the 1860s, and in the Black Hills of the Dakota country in the 1870s. Miners opened up the country, established communities, and laid the foundations for more permanent settlements. Yet even while digging in the hills, some settlers perceived the region's farming and stock-raising possibilities. Eventually, though a few communities continued to be devoted almost exclusively to mining, the real wealth of Montana, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho and California proved to be in the grass and soil.

Cattle-raising, long an important industry in Texas, flourished after the Civil War, when enterprising men began to drive their Texas longhorn cattle north across the open public land. Feeding as they went, the cattle arrived at railway shipping points in Kansas, larger and fatter than when they started. Soon this "long drive" became a regular event, and, for hundreds of kilometers, trails were dotted with herds of cattle moving northward. Cattle-raising spread into the trans-Missouri region, and immense ranches appeared in Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakota territory. Western cities flourished as centers for the slaughter and dressing of meat.

Ranching introduced a colorful mode of existence with the picturesque cowboy as its central figure. Although the reality of cowboy life, with its low pay and grueling work, was far from romantic, its mythological hold on the American imagination has remained strong, from the "dime" novels of the 1870s to the films of John Wayne and Clint Eastwood in the late 20th century.

Altogether, between 1866 and 1888, some six million head of cattle were driven up from Texas to winter on the high plains of Colorado, Wyoming and Montana. The cattle boom reached its height in 1885, when the range became too heavily pastured to support the long drive, and was beginning to be crisscrossed by railroads. Not far behind the rancher creaked the covered wagons of the farmers bringing their families, their draft horses, cows and pigs. Under the Homestead Act they staked their claims and fenced them with a new invention, barbed wire. Ranchers were ousted from lands they had roamed without legal title. Soon the romantic "Wild West" had ceased to be.

THE PLIGHT OF THE INDIANS

As in the East, expansion into the plains and mountains by miners, ranchers and settlers led to increasing conflicts with the Indians of the West. Many tribes of Native Americans -- from the Utes of the Great Basin to the Nez Percés of Idaho -- fought the whites at one time or another. But the Sioux of the Northern Plains and the Apache of the Southwest provided the most significant opposition to frontier advance. Led by such resourceful leaders as Red Cloud and Crazy Horse, the Sioux were particularly skilled at high-speed mounted warfare. The Apaches were equally adept and highly elusive, fighting in their environs of desert and canyons.

Conflicts with the Plains Indians began with a Sioux massacre of whites in 1862 and continued through the Civil War. In 1876 the last serious Sioux war erupted, when the Dakota gold rush penetrated the Black Hills. The Army was supposed to keep miners off Sioux hunting grounds, but little was done to protect Indian lands. Yet when ordered to take action against bands of Sioux hunting on the range according to their treaty rights, the Army moved vigorously.

In 1876, after several indecisive encounters, General George Custer found the main encampment of Sioux and their allies on the Little Big Horn River. Custer and his men -- who were separated from their main detachment -- were completely annihilated. Later, in 1890, a ghost dance ritual on the Northern Sioux reservation at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, led to an uprising and a last, tragic encounter that ended in the death of hundreds of Sioux men, women and children.

Long before this, however, the way of life of the Plains Indians had been destroyed by the slaughter of the buffalo, almost exterminated in the decade after 1870 by indiscriminate hunting. Meanwhile, the Apache wars in the Southwest dragged on until Geronimo, the last important chief, was captured in 1885.

Government policy ever since the Monroe administration had been to move the Indians beyond the reach of the white frontier. But inevitably the reservations had become smaller and more crowded, and many began to protest the government's treatment of Native Americans. Helen Hunt Jackson, for example, an Easterner living in the West, wrote a book, *A Century of Dishonor* (1881), which dramatized the Indians' plight and struck a chord in the nation's conscience. Most reformers believed the Indian should be assimilated into the dominant culture. The federal government even set up a school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in an attempt to impose white values and beliefs on Indian youths. (It was at this school that Native American Jim Thorpe, often considered the best athlete the U.S. has produced, gained fame in the early 20th century.)

In 1887 the Dawes Act reversed U.S. Indian policy, permitting the president to divide up tribal land and parcel out 65 hectares of land to each head of a family. Such allotments were to be held in trust by the government for 25 years, after which time the owner won full title and citizenship. Lands not thus distributed, however, were offered for sale to settlers. This policy, however well-intentioned, proved disastrous, since it allowed more plundering of Indian lands. Moreover, its assault on the communal organization of tribes caused further disruption of traditional culture. In 1934 U.S. policy was reversed again by the Indian Reorganization Act, which attempted to protect tribal and communal life on the reservations.

AMBIVALENT EMPIRE

The last decades of the 19th century were a period of imperial expansion for the United States, as it extended its influence, and at times its domain, over widely scattered areas in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and into Central America. The United States took a different course than its European rivals, however, because of its own history of struggle against European empires and its unique democratic development.

The sources of American expansionism in the late 19th century were varied. Internationally, it was a period of imperialist frenzy, as European powers raced to carve up Africa and competed for influence and trade in Asia -- along with a new rival, Japan. Many Americans, including such influential figures as Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge and Elihu Root, felt that to safeguard its own interests, the United States had to stake out spheres of economic influence as well. That view was seconded by a powerful naval lobby, which called for an expanded fleet and network of overseas ports as essential to the economic and political security of the nation. More generally, the doctrine of "manifest destiny," first used to justify America's continental expansion, was now revived to assert that the United States had a right and duty to extend its influence and civilization in the Western Hemisphere and the Caribbean, as well as across the Pacific.

At the same time, the voices of anti-imperialism from diverse coalitions of Northern Democrats and reform-minded Republicans remained loud and constant. As a result, the acquisition of an American empire was piecemeal and ambivalent, and colonial administrations were often more concerned with trade and economic issues than political control.

America's first venture beyond her continental borders was the purchase of Alaska -- sparsely populated by Inuit and other native peoples -- from Russia in 1867. Most Americans were either indifferent to or indignant at this action by Secretary of State William Seward, and Alaska was widely referred to as "Seward's Folly" and "Seward's Icebox." But 30 years later, when gold was discovered on Alaska's Klondike River, thousands of Americans headed north, and many of them settled in Alaska permanently. When Alaska became the 49th state in 1959, it replaced Texas as the largest state in the Union.

The Spanish-American War, which was fought in 1898, marked a turning point in American history. Within a few years after the war ended, the United States was exercising control or influence over islands in the Caribbean Sea, the mid-Pacific and close to the Asian mainland.

By the 1890s, Cuba and Puerto Rico were the only remnants of Spain's once vast empire in the New World, while the Philippine Islands comprised the core of Spanish power in the Pacific. The outbreak of war had three principal sources: popular hostility to autocratic Spanish rule; American sympathy with demands for independence; and a new spirit of national assertiveness in the United States, stimulated in part by a "jingoistic" or nationalistic and sensationalist press.

In 1895 Cuba's growing wrath against the tyranny of the mother country burst into a war of independence. The United States watched the course of the uprising with mounting concern. Most Americans were sympathetic with the Cubans, but President Cleveland was determined to preserve neutrality. Three years later, however, during the McKinley administration, the U.S. warship *Maine* was destroyed while lying at anchor in Havana harbor, under circumstances that are still unclear. More than 250 men were killed, and an outburst of indignation, intensified by sensationalized press coverage, swept across the country. Although for a time McKinley tried to preserve the peace, within a few months, believing delay futile, he recommended armed intervention.

The war with Spain was swift and decisive. During the four months it lasted, not a single American reverse of any importance occurred. A week after the declaration of war, Commodore George Dewey, then at Hong Kong, proceeded with his squadron of six vessels to the Philippines. His orders were to prevent the Spanish fleet based there from operating in American waters. He caught the entire Spanish fleet at anchor and destroyed it without losing an American life.

Meanwhile, in Cuba, troops landed near Santiago, where, after winning a rapid series of engagements, they fired on the port. Four armored Spanish cruisers steamed out of Santiago Bay and a few hours later were reduced to ruined hulks.

From Boston to San Francisco, whistles blew and flags waved when word came that Santiago had fallen. Newspapers dispatched correspondents to Cuba and the Philippines, who trumpeted the renown of the nation's new heroes. Chief among them were George Dewey of Manila fame and Theodore Roosevelt, who resigned as assistant secretary of the navy to lead the "Rough Riders," a volunteer regiment he recruited for service in Cuba. Spain soon sued for peace, and in the treaty signed on December 10, 1898, transferred Cuba to the United States for temporary occupation preliminary to the island's independence. In addition, Spain ceded Puerto Rico and Guam in lieu of war indemnity, and the Philippines on payment of \$20 million.

Having overseas possessions was a new experience for the United States. Consequently, the new territories were encouraged to move toward democratic self-government, a political system with which none of them had any previous experience.

Nevertheless, the United States found itself in a familiar colonial role when it suppressed an armed independence movement in the Philippines in the first decade of its occupation. The Philippines gained the right to elect both houses of its legislature in 1916, and in 1936 a largely autonomous Philippine Commonwealth was established. In 1946, after World War II, the islands attained full independence.

American involvement in the Pacific area was not limited to the Philippines, however. The year of the Spanish-American War also saw the beginning of a new relationship with the Hawaiian Islands. Earlier contact with Hawaii had been mainly through missionaries and casual traders. After 1865, however, Americans began to develop the islands' resources -- chiefly sugar cane and pineapples. When the royal government announced its intention to end foreign influence in 1893, American businessmen joined with influential Hawaiians to install a new government, which then asked to be annexed to the United States.

Widespread protests in the United States against the use of American soldiers and the idea of colonial rule persuaded President Grover Cleveland and Congress to reject annexation at first. But, responding to the surge of nationalism generated by the Spanish-American War, Congress voted overwhelmingly in July 1898 to annex the islands, thus also acquiring an important naval base at Pearl Harbor. In 1959 Hawaii became the 50th state in the Union.

Cuba acquired nominal independence when American troops departed in 1902. But the United States retained the right to intervene to preserve civil order, which it did on three occasions before renouncing that right in 1934. Even with full Cuban independence, however, American economic and political influence remained strong until 1959, when Fidel Castro overthrew the government in power, establishing a Marxist regime with close ties to the Soviet Union.

Puerto Rico, the island lying east of Cuba, followed an apprenticeship similar to that of Cuba and the Philippines. In 1917 the U.S. Congress granted Puerto Ricans the right to elect all of their legislators. But the same law created a different path for the island, making it officially a U.S. territory and, more importantly, giving its people American citizenship. In 1950 Congress granted Puerto Rico complete freedom to decide its future. In the referendum of 1952, the citizens voted to reject either statehood or total independence, and chose instead a commonwealth status. Large numbers of Puerto Ricans have settled on the mainland, to which they have free access and where they acquire all the political and civil rights of any other citizen of the United States.

THE CANAL AND THE AMERICAS

The war with Spain revived American interest in building a canal across the isthmus of Panama, uniting the two great oceans. The usefulness of such a canal for sea trade had long been recognized by the major commercial nations of the world; indeed the French had begun digging one in the late 19th century only to abandon their efforts due to the difficulties involved. Now that the United States was a power in both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean, it saw the military necessity of a canal to provide, when needed, speedier transfer of warships from one ocean to the other.

At the turn of the century, what is now Panama was a northern province of Colombia. When the Colombian legislature in 1903 refused to ratify a draft treaty giving the United States the right to build and manage a canal, a group of impatient Panamanians, with the support of U.S. Marines, rose in rebellion and declared Panama's independence from Colombia. The breakaway country was immediately recognized by President Theodore Roosevelt. Under the terms of the treaty signed in November of that year, Panama granted the United States a perpetual lease to a 16-kilometer-wide strip of land between the Atlantic and the Pacific, in return for \$10 million and a yearly fee of \$250,000. Colombia later received \$25 million as partial compensation. (Under the Panama Canal treaty negotiated by the two countries 75 years later, the Canal will revert to Panamanian sovereignty by the year 2000.)

The completion of the Canal in 1914 was a major triumph of engineering directed by Colonel George W. Goethals, while the conquest of malaria and yellow fever in a tropical jungle proved to be an outstanding achievement of preventive medicine.

Elsewhere in Latin America, the United States fell into a pattern of fitful intervention. Between 1900 and 1920, for example, the United States intervened in six Western Hemispheric nations, establishing protectorates in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and periodically stationing U.S. Marines in Nicaragua. In 1867 the United States pressured the French into removing troops supporting the Emperor Maximilian in Mexico. Half a century later, however, as part of an ill-starred campaign to influence the Mexican revolution, the United States found itself sending an army of 11,000 troops into the northern part of the country in a futile effort to capture the elusive rebel and outlaw Francisco "Pancho" Villa.

At the same time, the United States also played an important role in establishing an institutional basis for cooperation among the nations of the Americas. In 1889 Secretary of State James G. Blaine proposed that the 21 independent nations of the Western Hemisphere join in an organization dedicated to the peaceful settlement of disputes and to closer economic bonds. Emerging from the first Pan-American conference in 1890 was a permanent body known in its early years as the Pan-American Union and today as the Organization of American States (OAS).

Moreover, the later administrations of Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt repudiated the right of U.S. intervention in Latin America. In particular, the Roosevelt Good Neighbor Policy of the 1930s, though by no means ending tensions between the United States and Latin America, helped dissipate much of the ill-will engendered by earlier U.S. intervention and unilateral actions.

UNITED STATES AND ASIA

Newly established in the Philippines and firmly entrenched in Hawaii, the United States at the turn of the century, had high hopes of a vigorous trade with China. Since China's defeat by Japan (1894-1895), however, various European nations had acquired naval bases, leased territories and established spheres of influence. They had also secured monopolistic trade rights as well as exclusive concessions for investing in railway construction and mining development.

In its own earlier diplomatic relations with Asia, the American government had always insisted upon equality of commercial privileges for all nations. However, idealism in American foreign policy was at odds with the desire to compete with Europe's imperial powers in the Far East. In September 1899 Secretary of State John Hay addressed a note to the powers concerned, resulting in the doctrine of the "Open Door" for all nations in China -- that is, equality of trading opportunities (including equal tariffs, harbor duties and railway rates) in the areas they controlled. Despite its idealistic component, the "Open Door," in essence, became a diplomatic maneuver to gain the advantages of a colony without the necessity of wresting one from the Chinese.

With the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, the Chinese struck out against the foreigners. In June, insurgents seized Peiping (Beijing) and attacked the foreign legations there. Hay promptly announced to the European powers and Japan that the United States would oppose any disturbance of Chinese territorial or administrative rights or of the Open Door policy. Once the rebellion was quelled, it required all Hay's skill to carry out the American program and to protect China from crushing indemnities. In October, however, Great Britain and Germany once more signaled their adherence to the Open Door policy and the preservation of Chinese independence, albeit under foreign domination, and other nations soon followed.

In 1907 President Theodore Roosevelt responded to American labor's fears of competition by persuading the Japanese government temporarily to suspend emigration of laborers to the United States. Otherwise, American dealings with Japan during the latter half of the 19th century and well into the 20th century were mainly cordial and uneventful. One unusual encounter involved President Roosevelt's mediation of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, during which he warned Germany and France not to intervene on Russia's side against Japan. As a result of his efforts in working out a settlement, Roosevelt received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906.



An Outline of American History

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CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCONTENT AND REFORM

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*"A GREAT DEMOCRACY WILL BE NEITHER GREAT NOR A DEMOCRACY IF IT IS NOT PROGRESSIVE."
Former President Theodore Roosevelt, circa 1910*

AGRARIAN DISTRESS AND THE RISE OF POPULISM

In spite of their remarkable progress, 19th-century American farmers experienced recurring periods of hardship. Several basic factors were involved -- soil exhaustion, the vagaries of nature, a decline in self-sufficiency, and the lack of adequate legislative protection and aid. Perhaps most important, however, was over-production.

Along with the mechanical improvements which greatly increased yield per hectare, the amount of land under cultivation grew rapidly throughout the second half of the century, as the railroads and the gradual displacement of the Plains Indians opened up new areas for western settlement. A similar expansion of agricultural lands in countries such as Canada, Argentina and Australia compounded these problems in the international market, where much of U.S. agricultural production was now sold.

The farther west the settlers went, the more dependent they became on the railroads to move their goods to market. At the same time, farmers paid high costs for manufactured goods as a result of the protective tariffs that Congress, backed by Eastern industrial interests, had long supported. Over time, the Midwestern and Western farmer fell ever more deeply in debt to the banks that held their mortgages.

In the South, the fall of the Confederacy brought major changes in agricultural practices. The most significant of these was sharecropping, where tenant farmers "shared" up to half of their crop with the landowners in exchange for seed and essential supplies. An estimated 80 percent of the South's black farmers and 40 percent of its white ones lived under this debilitating system following the Civil War.

Most sharecroppers were locked in a cycle of debt, from which the only hope of escape was increased planting. This led to the over-production of cotton and tobacco, and thus to declining prices and the further exhaustion of the soil.

The first organized effort to address general agricultural problems was the Granger movement. Launched in 1867 by employees of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Granges focused initially on social activities to counter the isolation most farm families encountered. Women's participation was actively encouraged. Spurred by the Panic of 1873, the Grange soon grew to 20,000 chapters and one-and-a-half million members.

Although most of them ultimately failed, the Granges set up their own marketing systems, stores, processing plants, factories and cooperatives. The movement also enjoyed some political success during the 1870s. A few states passed "Granger laws," limiting railroad and warehouse fees.

By 1880 the movement began to decline, replaced by the Farmers' Alliances. By 1890 the Alliance movements had members from New York to California totaling about 1.5 million. A parallel African-American organization, the Colored Farmers National Alliance, numbered over a million members.

From the beginning, the Farmers' Alliances were political organizations with elaborate economic programs. According to one early platform, its purpose was to "unite the farmers of America for their protection against class legislation and the encroachments of concentrated capital." Their program also called for the regulation -- if not the outright nationalization -- of the railroads; currency inflation to provide debt relief; the lowering of the tariff; and the establishment of government-owned storehouses and low-interest lending facilities.

During the late 1880s a series of droughts devastated the western Great Plains. Western Kansas lost half its population during a four-year span. To make matters worse, the McKinley Tariff of 1890 was one of the highest the country had ever seen.

By 1890 the level of agrarian distress was at an all-time high. Working with sympathetic Democrats in the South or small third parties in the West, the Farmer's Alliance made a push for political power. From these elements, a third political party, known as the Populist Party, emerged. Never before in American politics had there been anything like the Populist fervor that swept the prairies and cotton lands. The elections of 1890 brought the new party into power in a dozen Southern and Western states, and sent a score of Populist senators and representatives to Congress.

Its first convention was in 1892, when delegates from farm, labor and reform organizations met in Omaha, Nebraska, determined at last to make their mark on a U.S. political system they viewed as hopelessly corrupted by the monied interests of the industrial and commercial trusts. Their platform stated:

We are met, in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political and material ruin. Corruption dominates the ballot-box, the legislatures, the Congress, and touches even the ermine of the bench [courts].... From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed the two great classes -- tramps and millionaires.

The pragmatic portion of their platform focused on issues of land, transportation and finance, including the unlimited coinage of silver.

The Populists showed impressive strength in the West and South in the 1892 elections, and their candidate for president polled more than a million votes. Yet it was the currency question, pitting advocates of silver, against those who favored gold, which soon overshadowed all other issues. Agrarian spokesmen in the West and South -- supported by labor groups in the Eastern industrial centers -- demanded a return to the unlimited coinage of silver. Convinced that their troubles stemmed from a shortage of money in circulation, they argued that increasing the volume of money would indirectly raise prices for farm products and drive up industrial wages, thus allowing debts to be paid with inflated currency. Conservative groups and the financial classes, on the other hand, believed that such a policy would be disastrous, and insisted that inflation, once begun, could not be stopped. Only the gold standard, they said, offered stability.

The financial panic of 1893 heightened the tension of this debate. Bank failures abounded in the South and Midwest; unemployment soared and crop prices fell badly. The crisis, and President Grover Cleveland's inability to solve it, nearly broke the Democratic Party. Democrats who were silver supporters went over to the Populists as the presidential elections of 1896 neared.

The Democratic convention that year was witness to one of the most famous speeches in U.S. political history. Pleading with the convention not to "crucify mankind on a cross of gold," William Jennings Bryan, the young Nebraskan champion of silver, won the Democrats' presidential nomination.

The Populists also endorsed Bryan. The moment was to prove their high-water mark. Despite carrying the South and all of the West except California and Oregon, Bryan lost the more populated, industrial North and East -- and the election -- to the Republican's William McKinley.

The following year the country's finances began to improve, in part due to the discovery of gold in Alaska and the Yukon. In 1898 the Spanish-American War drew the nation's attention further from Populist issues. If the movement was dead, however, its ideas were not. Many of them passed into law within the next two decades.

THE STRUGGLES OF LABOR

The life of a 19th-century American industrial worker was far from easy. Even in good times wages were low, hours long and working conditions hazardous. Little of the wealth which the growth of the nation had generated went to its workers. The situation was worse for women and children, who made up a high percentage of the work force in some industries and often received but a fraction of the wages a man could earn. Periodic economic crises swept the nation, further eroding industrial wages and producing high levels of unemployment.

At the same time, the technological improvements, which added so much to the nation's productivity, continually reduced the demand for skilled labor. Yet the unskilled labor pool was constantly growing, as unprecedented numbers of immigrants -- 18 million between 1880 and 1910 -- entered the country, eager for work.

Before 1874, when Massachusetts passed the nation's first legislation limiting the number of hours women and child factory workers could perform to 10 hours a day, virtually no labor legislation existed in the country. Indeed, it was not until the 1930s that the federal government would become actively involved. Until then, the field was left to the state and local authorities, few of whom were as responsive to the workers as they were to wealthy industrialists.

The laissez-faire capitalism, which dominated the second half of the 19th century and fostered huge concentrations of wealth and power, was backed by a judiciary which time and again ruled against those who challenged the system. In this, they were merely following the prevailing philosophy of the times. As John D. Rockefeller is reported to have said: "the growth of a large business is merely a survival of the fittest." This "Social Darwinism," as it was known, had many proponents who argued that any attempt to regulate business was tantamount to impeding the natural evolution of the species.

Yet the costs of this indifference to the victims of capital were high. For millions, living and working conditions were poor, and the hope of escaping from a lifetime of poverty slight. As late as the year 1900, the United States had the highest job-related fatality rate of any industrialized nation in the world. Most industrial workers still worked a 10-hour day (12 hours in the steel industry), yet earned from 20 to 40 percent less than the minimum deemed necessary for a decent life. The situation was only worse for children, whose numbers in the work force doubled between 1870 and 1900.

The first major effort to organize workers' groups on a nationwide basis appeared with The Noble Order of the Knights of Labor in 1869. Originally a secret, ritualistic society organized by Philadelphia garment workers, it was open to all workers, including blacks, women and farmers. The Knights grew slowly until they succeeded in facing down the great railroad baron, Jay Gould, in an 1885 strike. Within a year they added 500,000 workers to their rolls.

The Knights of Labor soon fell into decline, however, and their place in the labor movement was gradually taken by the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Rather than open its membership to all, the AFL, under former cigar union official Samuel Gompers, focused on skilled workers. His objectives were "pure and simple" and apolitical: increasing wages, reducing hours and improving working conditions. As such, Gompers helped turn the labor movement away from the socialist views earlier labor leaders had espoused.

Still, labor's goals -- and the unwillingness of capital to grant them -- resulted in the most violent labor conflicts in the nation's history. The first of these occurred with the Great Rail Strike of 1877, when rail workers across the nation went out on strike in response to a 10-percent pay cut. Attempts to break the strike led to rioting and wide-scale destruction in several cities: Baltimore, Maryland; Chicago, Illinois; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Buffalo, New York; and San Francisco, California. Federal troops had to be sent in at several locations before the strike was ended.

The Haymarket Square incident took place nine years later, when someone threw a bomb into a meeting called to discuss an ongoing strike at the McCormick Harvester Company in Chicago. In the ensuing melee, nine people were killed and some 60 injured.

Next came the riots of 1892 at Carnegie's steel works in Homestead, Pennsylvania. A group of 300 Pinkerton detectives the company had hired to break a bitter strike by the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers were fired upon and 10 were killed. The National Guard was called in as a result, non-union workers hired and the strike broken. Unions were not let back into the plant until 1937.

Two years later, wage cuts at the Pullman Palace Car Company just outside Chicago, led to a strike, which, with the support of the American Railway Union, soon tied up much of the country's rail system. As the situation deteriorated, U.S. Attorney General Richard Olney, himself a former railroad lawyer, deputized over 3,000 men in an attempt to keep the rails open. This was followed by a federal court injunction against union interference with the trains. When rioting ensued, President Cleveland sent in federal troops, and the strike was eventually broken.

The most militant of the strike-prone unions was the International Workers of the World (IWW). Formed from an amalgam of unions fighting for better conditions in the West's mining industry, the IWW, or "Wobblies" as they were commonly known, gained particular prominence from the Colorado mine clashes of 1903 and the singularly brutal fashion in which they were put down. Openly calling for class warfare, the Wobblies gained many adherents after they won a difficult strike battle in the textile mills of Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1912. Their call for work stoppages in the midst of World War I, however, led to a government crackdown in 1917, which virtually destroyed them.

THE REFORM IMPULSE

The presidential election of 1900 gave the American people a chance to pass judgment on the McKinley administration, especially its foreign policy. Meeting at Philadelphia, the Republicans expressed jubilation over the successful outcome of the war with Spain, the restoration of prosperity and the effort to obtain new markets through the Open Door policy. McKinley's election was a foregone conclusion. But the president did not live long enough to enjoy his victory. In September 1901, while attending an exposition in Buffalo, New York, McKinley was shot down by an assassin. (He was the third president to be assassinated since the Civil War.)

Theodore Roosevelt, McKinley's vice president, assumed the presidency. In domestic as well as international affairs, Roosevelt's accession coincided with a new epoch in American political life. The continent was peopled; the frontier was disappearing. A small, former struggling republic had become a world power. The country's political foundations had endured the vicissitudes of foreign and civil war, the tides of prosperity and depression. Immense strides had been made in agriculture and industry. Free public education had been largely realized and a free press maintained. The ideal of religious freedom had been sustained. The influence of big business was now more firmly entrenched than ever, however, and local and municipal government often was in the hands of corrupt politicians.

In response to the excesses of 19th-century capitalism and political corruption, a reform movement arose called "progressivism," which gave American politics and thought its special character from approximately 1890 until the American entry into World War I in 1917. The Progressives saw their work as a democratic crusade against the abuses of urban political bosses and corrupt robber barons. Their goals were greater democracy and social justice, honest government, more effective regulation of business and a revived commitment to public service. In general, they believed that expanding the scope of government would ensure the progress of U.S. society and the welfare of its citizens. Almost all the notable figures of the period, whether in politics, philosophy, scholarship or literature, were connected, at least in part, with the reform movement.

The years 1902 to 1908 marked the era of greatest reform activity, as writers and journalists, strongly protested practices and principles inherited from the 18th-century rural republic that were proving inadequate for a 20th-century urban state. Years before, in 1873, the celebrated author Mark Twain had exposed American society to critical scrutiny in *The Gilded Age*. Now, trenchant articles dealing with trusts, high finance, impure foods and abusive railroad practices began to appear in the daily newspapers and in such popular magazines as McClure's and Collier's. Their authors, such as the journalist Ida May Tarbell, who crusaded against the Standard Oil Trust, became known as "muckrakers."

In his sensational novel, *The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair exposed unsanitary conditions in the great Chicago meat packing houses and the grip of the beef trust on the nation's meat supply. Theodore Dreiser in *The Financier* and *The Titan* made it easy for laymen to understand the machinations of big business. Frank Norris' *The Pit* encouraged agrarian protest by revealing how secret manipulations affected the grain market in Chicago. Lincoln Steffens' *The Shame of the Cities* bared political corruption. This "literature of exposure" had a vital effect in rousing the people to action.

The hammering impact of uncompromising writers and an increasingly aroused public spurred political leaders to take practical measures. Many states enacted laws to improve the conditions under which people lived and worked. At the urging of such prominent social critics as Jane Addams, child labor laws, were strengthened and new ones adopted, raising age limits, shortening work hours, restricting night work and requiring school attendance.

ROOSEVELT'S REFORMS

By the early 20th century, most of the larger cities and more than half the states had established an eight-hour day on public works. Equally important were the workmen's compensation laws, which made employers legally responsible for injuries sustained by employees at work. New revenue laws were also enacted, which, by taxing inheritances, incomes and the property or earnings of corporations, sought to place the burden of government on those best able to pay.

It was clear to many people -- notably President Theodore Roosevelt and Progressive leaders in the Congress such as Wisconsin Senator Robert LaFollette -- that most of the problems reformers were concerned about could be solved only if dealt with on a national scale. Roosevelt, who was passionately interested in reform and determined to give the people what he called a "Square Deal," initiated a policy of increased government supervision in the enforcement of antitrust laws. Later, extension of government supervision over the railroads prompted the passage of major regulatory bills. One of the bills made published rates the lawful standard, and shippers equally liable with railroads for rebates.

Roosevelt's striking personality and his "trust-busting" activities captured the imagination of the ordinary individual, and approval of his progressive measures cut across party lines. In addition, the abounding prosperity of the country at this time led people to feel satisfied with the party in office. His victory in the 1904 election was assured.

Emboldened by a sweeping electoral triumph, Roosevelt applied fresh determination to the cause of reform. In his first annual message to Congress after his reelection, he called for still more drastic railroad regulation, and in June 1906 Congress passed the Hepburn Act. This gave the Interstate Commerce Commission real authority in regulating rates, extended the jurisdiction of the commission and forced the railroads to surrender their interlocking interests in steamship lines and coal companies.

Other congressional measures carried the principle of federal control still further. The pure-food law of 1906 prohibited the use of any "deleterious drug, chemical or preservative" in prepared medicines and foods. This was soon reinforced by an act requiring federal inspection of all concerns selling meats in interstate commerce.

Meanwhile, Congress had created a new Department of Commerce and Labor, with membership in the president's Cabinet. One bureau of the new department, empowered to investigate the affairs of large business aggregations, discovered in 1907 that the American Sugar Refining Company had defrauded the government of a large sum in import duties. Subsequent legal actions recovered more than \$4 million and convicted several company officials. The Standard Oil Company of Indiana was indicted for receiving secret rebates on shipments over the Chicago and Alton Railroad. The fine imposed, amounting to \$29,240,000 on 1,462 separate contracts, reflected the spirit of the time.

Conservation of the nation's natural resources, putting an end to wasteful exploitation of raw materials and the reclamation of wide stretches of neglected land were among the other major achievements of the Roosevelt era. The president had called for a far-reaching and integrated program of conservation, reclamation and irrigation as early as 1901 in his first annual message to Congress. Whereas his predecessors had set aside 18,800,000 hectares of timberland for preservation and parks, Roosevelt increased the area to 59,200,000 hectares and began systematic efforts to prevent forest fires and to re timber denuded tracts.

TAFT AND WILSON

Roosevelt's popularity was at its peak as the campaign of 1908 neared, but he was unwilling to break the tradition by which no president had held office for more than two terms. Instead, he supported William Howard Taft, who won the election and sought to continue his predecessor's programs of reform. Taft, a former judge, governor of the Philippines and administrator of the Panama Canal, made some progress. He continued the prosecution of trusts, further strengthened the Interstate Commerce Commission, established a postal savings bank and a parcel post system, expanded the civil service and sponsored the enactment of two amendments to the Constitution.

The 16th Amendment authorized a federal income tax; the 17th Amendment, ratified in 1913, mandated the direct election of senators by the people, replacing the system whereby they were selected by state legislatures. Yet balanced against these achievements was Taft's acceptance of a tariff with protective schedules that outraged liberal opinion; his opposition to the entry of the state of Arizona into the Union because of its liberal constitution; and his growing reliance on the conservative wing of his party.

By 1910 Taft's party was divided, and an overwhelming vote swept the Democrats back into control of Congress. Two years later, Woodrow Wilson, the Democratic, progressive governor of the state of New Jersey, campaigned against Taft, the Republican candidate, and against Roosevelt who, rejected as a candidate by the Republican convention, had organized a third party, the Progressives.

Wilson, in a spirited campaign, defeated both rivals. Under his leadership, the new Congress enacted one of the most notable legislative programs in American history. Its first task was tariff revision. "The tariff duties must be altered," Wilson said. "We must abolish everything that bears any semblance of privilege." The Underwood Tariff, signed on October 3, 1913, provided substantial rate reductions on imported raw materials and foodstuffs, cotton and woolen goods, iron and steel, and removed the duties from more than a hundred other items. Although the act retained many protective features, it was a genuine attempt to lower the cost of living.

The second item on the Democratic program was a long overdue, thorough reorganization of the inflexible banking and currency system. "Control," said Wilson, "must be public, not private, must be vested in the government itself, so that the banks may be the instruments, not the masters, of business and of individual enterprise and initiative."

The Federal Reserve Act of December 23, 1913, was one of Wilson's most enduring legislative accomplishments. It imposed upon the existing banking system a new organization that divided the country into 12 districts, with a Federal Reserve Bank in each, all supervised by a Federal Reserve Board. These banks were to serve as depositories for the cash reserves of those banks that joined the system. Until the Federal Reserve Act, the U.S. government had left control of its money supply largely to unregulated private banks. While the official medium of exchange was gold coins, most loans and payments were carried out with bank notes, backed by the promise of redemption in gold. The trouble with this system was that the banks were tempted to reach beyond their cash reserves, prompting periodic panics during which fearful depositors raced to turn their bank paper into coin. With the passage of the act, greater flexibility in the money supply was assured, and provision was made for issuing federal reserve notes to meet business demands.

The next important task was trust regulation and investigation of corporate abuses. Congress authorized a Federal Trade Commission to issue orders prohibiting "unfair methods of competition" by business concerns in interstate trade. A second law, the Clayton Antitrust Act, forbade many corporate practices that had thus far escaped specific condemnation--interlocking directorates, price discrimination among purchasers, use of the injunction in labor disputes and ownership by one corporation of stock in similar enterprises.

Farmers and other workers were not forgotten. A federal loan act made credit available to farmers at low rates of interest. The Seamen's Act of 1915, improved living and working conditions on board ships. The Federal Workingman's Compensation Act in 1916 authorized allowances to civil service employees for disabilities incurred at work. The Adamson Act of the same year established an eight-hour day for railroad labor.

The record of achievement won Wilson a firm place in American history as one of the nation's foremost political reformers. However, his domestic reputation would soon be overshadowed by his record as a wartime president who led his country to victory but could not hold the support of his people for the peace that followed.

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SIDEBAR: A NATION OF NATIONS

No country's history has been more closely bound to immigration than that of the United States. During the first 15 years of the 20th century alone, over 13 million people came to the United States, many passing through Ellis Island, the federal immigration center that opened in New York harbor in 1892. Though no longer in service, Ellis Island reopened in 1992 as a monument to the millions who crossed America's threshold there.

The first official census in 1790 numbered Americans at 3,929,214. Approximately half of the population of the original 13 states were of English origin; the rest were Scots-Irish, German, Dutch, French, Swedish, Welsh and Finnish. These white Europeans were mostly Protestants. A fifth of the population was enslaved Africans.

From early on, Americans viewed immigrants as a cheap source of labor. As a result, few official restrictions were placed upon immigration into the United States until the 1920s. As more and more immigrants arrived, however, some Americans became fearful that their culture was threatened.

The Founding Fathers, especially Thomas Jefferson, were ambivalent over whether or not the United States ought to welcome arrivals from every corner of the globe. The author of America's Declaration of Independence, Jefferson wondered whether democracy could ever rest safely in the hands of men from countries that revered monarchs or replaced royalty with mob rule. However, few supported closing the gates to newcomers in a country desperate for labor.

Immigration lagged in the late 18th and early 19th centuries as wars disrupted trans-Atlantic travel and European governments restricted immigration to retain young men of military age. After 1750 European mortality rates declined in response to improved medical care and sanitation. Food supplies increased as crop rotation and systematic fertilization became standard. Still, more people on the same land constricted the size of farming lots to a point where families could barely survive. Moreover, cottage industries were falling victim to an Industrial Revolution that was mechanizing production. Thousands of artisans unwilling or unable to find jobs in factories were out of work.

By the mid-1840s millions more immigrants made their way to America as a result of a potato blight in Ireland and continual revolution in the German homelands. Meanwhile, a trickle of Chinese immigrants, most from impoverished Southeastern China, began to immigrate to the American West Coast.

Almost 19 million people arrived in the United States between 1890 and 1921, the year Congress first passed severe restrictions. Most of these immigrants were from Italy, Russia, Poland, Greece and the Balkans. Non-Europeans came, too: east from Japan, south from Canada and north from Mexico.

By the early 1920s, however, an alliance was forged between wage-conscious organized labor and those who called for restricted immigration on racial or religious grounds, such as the Ku Klux Klan and the Immigration Restriction League. The Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924 permanently curtailed the influx of newcomers with quotas calculated on nation of origin.

The Great Depression of the 1930s dramatically slowed immigration still further. With public opinion generally opposed to immigration, even for persecuted European minorities, relatively few refugees found sanctuary in the United States after Adolf Hitler's ascent to power in 1933.

Throughout the postwar decades, the United States continued to cling to nationally based quotas. Supporters of the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 argued that quota relaxation might inundate the United States with Marxist subversives from Eastern Europe.

In 1965 Congress replaced national quotas with hemispheric ones. Relatives of U.S. citizens received preference, as did immigrants with job skills in short supply in the United States. In 1978 the hemispheric quotas were replaced by a worldwide ceiling of 290,000, a limit reduced to 270,000 after passage of the Refugee Act of 1980.

Since the mid-1970s, the United States has experienced a fresh wave of immigration, with arrivals from Asia and Latin America, in particular, transforming communities throughout the country. Current estimates suggest a total annual arrival of approximately 600,000 legal newcomers to the United States.

Because immigrant and refugee quotas remain well under demand, however, illegal immigration is still a major problem. Mexicans and other Latin Americans daily cross the southwestern U.S. borders to find work, higher wages, and improved education and health care for their families. Likewise, there is a substantial illegal migration from countries such as Ireland, China and other Asian nations. Estimates vary, but some suggest that as many as 600,000 illegals per year arrive in the United States.

An old immigrant saying is that "America beckons, but Americans repel." As the current wave of immigration spills into the American mainstream economically, politically and culturally, the debate over immigration has sharpened. Deeply ingrained in most Americans, however, is the conviction that the Statue of Liberty does, indeed, stand as a symbol for the United States as she lifts her lamp before the "golden door," welcoming those "yearning to breathe free." This belief, and the sure knowledge that their forebears were once immigrants, has kept the United States a nation of nations.

An Outline of American History

Public Affairs Section
Stockholm Sweden



CHAPTER NINE: WAR, PROSPERITY AND DEPRESSION

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"THE CHIEF BUSINESS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IS BUSINESS." President Calvin Coolidge, 1925

WAR AND NEUTRAL RIGHTS

To the American public of 1914, the outbreak of war in Europe came as a shock. At first the encounter seemed remote, but its economic and political effects were swift and deep. By 1915 U.S. industry, which had been mildly depressed, was prospering again with munitions orders from the Western Allies. Both sides used propaganda to arouse the public passions of Americans -- a third of whom were foreign-born or had one or two foreign-born parents. Moreover, Britain and Germany both acted against U.S. shipping on the high seas, bringing sharp protests from President Woodrow Wilson. But the disputes between the United States and Germany grew increasingly ominous.

In February 1915, German military leaders announced that they would attack all merchant shipping on the waters around the British Isles. President Wilson warned that the United States would not forsake its traditional right, as a neutral, to trade on the high seas -- a view of neutral rights not shared by Germany or Great Britain. Wilson declared that the nation would hold Germany to "strict accountability" for the loss of American vessels or lives. Soon afterward, in the spring of 1915, when the British liner Lusitania was sunk with nearly 1,200 people aboard, 128 of them Americans, indignation reached a fever pitch.

Anxious to avoid a possible declaration of war by the United States, Germany issued orders to its submarine commanders to give warning to ocean-going vessels -- even if they flew the enemy flag -- before firing on them. But on August 19, these orders were ignored and the British steamer Arabic was sunk without warning. In March 1916, the Germans torpedoed the French ship Sussex, injuring several Americans. President Wilson issued an ultimatum stating that unless Germany abandoned its present methods of submarine warfare, the United States would sever relations. Germany agreed.

As a result, Wilson was able to win reelection that year, partly on the strength of his party's slogan: "He kept us out of war." As late as January 1917, in a speech before the Senate, Wilson called for a "peace without victory," which, he said, was the only kind of peace that could last.

UNITED STATES ENTERS WORLD WAR I

On January 22, 1917, the German government gave notice that unrestricted submarine warfare would be resumed. When five U.S. vessels had been sunk by April, Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war. Immediately, the government set about mobilizing its military resources, industry, labor and agriculture. By October 1918, on the eve of Allied victory, a U.S. army of over 1,750,000 soldiers had been deployed in France.

The U.S. Navy was crucial in helping the British break the submarine blockade, and in the summer of 1918, during a long-awaited German offensive, fresh American troops, under the command of General John J. Pershing, played a decisive role on land. In November, for example, American forces took an important part in the vast Meuse-Argonne offensive, which cracked Germany's vaunted Hindenburg Line.

President Wilson contributed greatly to an early end to the war by defining the war aims of the Allies, and by insisting that the struggle was being waged not against the German people but against their autocratic government. His famous Fourteen Points, submitted to the Senate in January 1918 as the basis for a just peace, called for abandonment of secret international agreements, a guarantee of freedom of the seas, the removal of tariff barriers between nations, reductions in national armaments, and an adjustment of colonial claims with due regard to the interests of the inhabitants affected. Other points sought to ensure self-rule and unhampered economic development for European nationalities. The Fourteenth Point constituted the keystone of Wilson's arch of peace -- the formation of an association of nations to afford "mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike."

By the summer of 1918, when Germany's armies were being beaten back, the German government appealed to Wilson to negotiate on the basis of the Fourteen Points. The president conferred with the Allies, who acceded to the German proposal. An armistice was concluded on November 11.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

It was Wilson's hope that the final treaty would have the character of a negotiated peace, but he feared that the passions aroused by the war would cause the Allies to make severe demands. In this he was right. The concept of self-determination proved impossible to implement. Persuaded that his greatest hope for peace, the League of Nations, would never be realized unless he made concessions to the Allies, Wilson compromised on the issues of self-determination, open diplomacy and other specific points during the peace negotiations in Paris. However, he resisted the demands of the French premier, Georges Clemenceau, to detach the entire Rhineland from Germany, prevented France from annexing the Saar Basin, and frustrated a proposal to charge Germany with the whole cost of the war -- although the Versailles Peace Treaty did levy a heavy burden of reparations upon Germany.

In the end, there was little left of Wilson's proposals for a generous and lasting peace but the League itself -- and the president had to endure the final irony of seeing his own country spurn League membership. Partly due to his own poor judgment at the time, Wilson made the political mistake of failing to take a leading member of the opposition Republican Party to Paris on his Peace Commission. When he returned to appeal for American adherence to the League, he refused to make even the moderate concessions necessary to win ratification from a predominately Republican Senate.

Having lost in Washington, Wilson carried his case to the people on a tour throughout the country. On September 25, 1919, physically ravaged by the rigors of peacemaking and the pressures of the wartime presidency, he suffered a crippling stroke at Pueblo, Colorado, from which he never fully recovered. In March 1920, the Senate rejected both the Versailles Treaty and the League Covenant. As a result, the League of Nations, without the presence of the United States or Russia, remained a weak organization.

Wilson's belief in a moral and legal basis for war and peace had inspired the nation. However, when events didn't live up to this optimistic standard, Wilsonian idealism gave way to disillusion, and the nation withdrew into isolationism.

POSTWAR UNREST

The transition from war to peace was, for many, tumultuous. A massive influenza epidemic, which had spread rapidly throughout Europe in 1917, broke out in the United States in the spring of 1918. Before it vanished a year later, as mysteriously as it had begun, it claimed the lives of more than half-a-million Americans.

The immediate economic boom right after the war led to high expectations that were quickly sunk once the postwar economy returned to normal. In turn, labor became dissatisfied with the rising costs of living, long hours and unsympathetic management. In 1919 alone, over 4 million workers went on strike. During that summer, moreover, race riots broke out in both the North and South.

Yet the event that triggered the greatest national outcry and concern had occurred two years earlier outside the United States: the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in Russia. With morale low, Americans became fearful that, just as a small faction had seized power in Russia, so could a similar group take over the United States. This fear crystallized when, in April 1919, the postal service intercepted nearly 40 bombs addressed to prominent citizens.

Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer set up a new office of general intelligence within the Justice Department, and appointed J. Edgar Hoover as its head. Hoover began collecting files on known radicals, and raids on various organizations led to deportations of scores of people. Although Palmer's dire warnings continued to fuel what became known as the "Red Scare," the threats never materialized; and by the summer of 1920, the American people realized that the United States was safe from anarchy.

THE BOOMING 1920s

In the presidential election of 1920, the overwhelming victory of the Republican nominee, Warren G. Harding, was final evidence of the general repudiation of Wilson's internationalism and idealism. As journalist William Allen White explained, the American people were "tired of issues, sick at heart of ideals, and weary of being noble."

The 1920 election was also the first in which women throughout the nation voted for a presidential candidate. In 1919 Congress had submitted to the states the 19th Amendment, which was ratified in time to permit women to vote the following year.

In keeping with the prevailing prosperity (at least in the urban areas of the country), governmental policy during the 1920s was eminently conservative. It was based upon the belief that if government did what it could to foster private business, prosperity would eventually encompass most of the rest of the population.

Accordingly, Republican policies were intended to create the most favorable conditions for U.S. industry. The tariff acts of 1922 and 1930 brought tariff barriers to new heights, guaranteeing U.S. manufacturers in one field after another a monopoly of the domestic market. The second of these tariffs, the Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930, embodied rates so high that more than 1,000 economists petitioned President Herbert Hoover to veto it: subsequent events bore out their predictions of costly retaliation by other nations. At the same time, the federal government started a program of tax cuts, reflecting Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon's belief that high income taxes prevented the rich from investing in new industrial enterprises. Congress, in a series of laws passed between 1921 and 1929, responded favorably to his proposals that wartime taxes on income, excess profit taxes and corporation taxes be repealed outright or drastically reduced.

"The chief business of the American people is business," declared Calvin Coolidge, the dour, Vermont-born vice president who succeeded to the presidency in 1923 after Harding's death, and was elected in his own right in 1924. Coolidge hewed to the conservative economic policies of the Republican Party, but he was a much abler administrator than the hapless Harding, whose administration was mired in charges of corruption in the months before his death.

Throughout the 1920s, private business received substantial encouragement, including construction loans, profitable mail-carrying contracts and other indirect subsidies. The Transportation Act of 1920, for example, had already restored to private management the nation's railways, which had been under government control during the war. The Merchant Marine, which had been owned and largely operated by the government from 1917 to 1920, was sold to private operators.

Republican policies in agriculture, however, were meeting mounting criticism, for farmers shared least in the prosperity of the 1920s. The period from 1900 to 1920 had been one of general farm prosperity and rising farm prices, with the unprecedented wartime demand for U.S. farm products providing a strong stimulus to production. Farmers had opened up poor lands long allowed to remain idle or never before cultivated. As the value of U.S. farms increased, farmers began to buy goods and machinery that they had never before been able to afford. But by the end of 1920, with the abrupt end of wartime demand, the commercial agriculture of staple crops such as wheat and corn fell into sharp decline. Many factors accounted for the depression in American agriculture, but foremost was the loss of foreign markets. U.S. farmers could not easily sell in areas where the United States was not buying goods because of its own import tariff. The doors of the world market were slowly swinging shut. When the general depression struck in the 1930s, it merely shattered agriculture's already fragile state.

TENSIONS OVER IMMIGRATION

Restriction of foreign immigration during the 1920s marked a significant change in U.S. policy. Immigration had soared in the late 19th century and peaked in the early 20th century. Between 1900 and 1915, for example, more than 13 million people came to the United States, with the preponderance from Southern and Eastern Europe. Many of these people were Jewish or Catholic, a fact that alarmed many older Americans who were predominately Anglo-Saxon and Protestant. Some resented the newcomers because they competed for low-wage jobs, others because the new immigrants maintained Old World customs, often lived in urban ethnic enclaves, and seemed to resist assimilation into the larger American culture.

As a result of this immigrant surge after World War I, nativist appeals intensified. A reorganized Ku Klux Klan emerged calling for "100-percent Americanism." Unlike the Klan of Reconstruction, the new Klan restricted its membership to native-born white Protestants, and campaigned against Catholics, Jews and immigrants as well as African Americans. By redefining its enemies, the Klan broadened its appeal to parts of the North and Midwest, and for a time, its membership swelled.

Anti-immigration sentiment was codified in a series of measures, culminating in the Immigration Quota Law of 1924 and a 1929 act. These laws limited the annual number of immigrants to 150,000, to be distributed among peoples of various nationalities in proportion to the number of their compatriots already in the United States in 1920. One result of these restrictions was to reduce the appeal of nativist organizations; the Great Depression of the 1930s also caused a sharp drop in immigration.

CLASH OF CULTURES

Some Americans expressed their discontent with the character of modern life in the 1920s by focusing on family and religion, as an increasingly urban, secular society came into conflict with older rural traditions. Fundamentalist preachers such as Billy Sunday, for example, a professional baseball player turned evangelist, provided an outlet for many who yearned for a return to a simpler past.

Perhaps the most dramatic demonstration of this yearning was the fundamentalist crusade which pitted biblical interpretation against the Darwinian science of biological evolution. In the 1920s, bills to prohibit the teaching of evolution began appearing in Midwestern and Southern state legislatures. Leading this crusade, improbably, was the aging William Jennings Bryan, who skillfully reconciled his anti-evolutionary activism with his earlier radical economic proposals, saying that evolution "by denying the need or possibility of spiritual regeneration, discourages all reforms."

The issue came to a climax in 1925 in Tennessee, when the American Civil Liberties Union challenged the nation's first anti-evolution law. A young high school teacher, John Scopes, went on trial for teaching evolution in a biology class. In a case that drew intense publicity, Bryan, representing the state, was subjected to a withering examination by defense attorney Clarence Darrow. Scopes was convicted but released on a technicality, and Bryan died a few days after the trial ended.

Another example of a fundamental clash of cultures -- but one with far greater national consequences -- was Prohibition. In 1919, after almost a century of agitation, the 18th Amendment to the Constitution was enacted, prohibiting the manufacture, sale or transportation of alcoholic beverages. Prohibition, although intended to eliminate the saloon and the drunkard from American society, served to create thousands of illegal drinking places called "speakeasies," and a new and increasingly profitable form of criminal activity -- the transportation of liquor, known as "bootlegging." Prohibition, sometimes referred to as the "noble experiment," was repealed in 1933.

The common thread linking such disparate phenomenon as the resurgence of fundamentalist religion and Prohibition was a reaction to the social and intellectual revolution of the time -- variously referred to as the Jazz Age, the era of excess, the Roaring '20s. Many were shocked by the changes in the manners, morals and fashion of American youth, especially on college campuses. Among many intellectuals, H.L. Mencken, a journalist and critic who was unsparing in denouncing sham and venality in American life, became a hero. Author F. Scott Fitzgerald captured the energy, turmoil and disillusion of the decade in his short stories and novels such as *The Great Gatsby*.

Fitzgerald was part of a small but influential movement of writers and intellectuals dubbed the "Lost Generation," who were shocked by the carnage of World War I and dissatisfied with what they perceived to be the materialism and spiritual emptiness of life in the United States. Many of them -- such as their most celebrated member, writer Ernest Hemingway -- traveled to Europe and lived as emigres in Paris.

African Americans also engaged this spirit of national self-examination. Between 1910 and 1930, a huge black migration from the South to the North took place, peaking in 1915-1916. Most settled in urban areas such as Detroit and Chicago, which held greater opportunities for jobs and personal freedom than the rural South. In 1910 W.E.B. DuBois and other intellectuals founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which helped black Americans gain a national voice that would grow in importance with the passing years.

At the same time, an African-American literary and artistic movement, termed the "Harlem Renaissance," emerged. Like the "Lost Generation," these writers, such as Langston Hughes, rejected middle-class values and conventional literary forms, even as they addressed the realities of American life.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION

In October 1929 the stock market crashed, wiping out 40 percent of the paper values of common stock. Even after the stock market collapse, however, politicians and industry leaders continued to issue optimistic predictions for the nation's economy. But the Depression deepened, confidence evaporated and many lost their life savings. By 1933 the value of stock on the New York Stock Exchange was less than a fifth of what it had been at its peak in 1929. Business houses closed their doors, factories shut down and banks failed. Farm income fell some 50 percent. By 1932 approximately one out of every four Americans was unemployed.

The core of the problem was the immense disparity between the country's productive capacity and the ability of people to consume. Great innovations in productive techniques during and after the war raised the output of industry beyond the purchasing capacity of U.S. farmers and wage earners. The savings of the wealthy and middle class, increasing far beyond the possibilities of sound investment, had been drawn into frantic speculation in stocks or real estate. The stock market collapse, therefore, had been merely the first of several detonations in which a flimsy structure of speculation had been leveled to the ground.

The presidential campaign of 1932 was chiefly a debate over the causes and possible remedies of the Great Depression. Herbert Hoover, unlucky in entering The White House only eight months before the stock market crash, had struggled tirelessly, but ineffectively, to set the wheels of industry in motion again. His Democratic opponent, Franklin D. Roosevelt, already popular as the governor of New York during the developing crisis, argued that the Depression stemmed from the U.S. economy's underlying flaws, which had been aggravated by Republican policies during the 1920s. President Hoover replied that the economy was fundamentally sound, but had been shaken by the repercussions of a worldwide depression -- whose causes could be traced back to the war. Behind this argument lay a clear implication: Hoover had to depend largely on natural processes of recovery, while Roosevelt was prepared to use the federal government's authority for bold experimental remedies.

The election resulted in a smashing victory for Roosevelt, who won 22,800,000 votes to Hoover's 15,700,000. The United States was about to enter a new era of economic and political change.



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CHAPTER TEN: THE NEW DEAL AND WORLD WAR

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"We must be the great arsenal of democracy." President Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1941

ROOSEVELT AND THE NEW DEAL

In 1933 the new president, Franklin Roosevelt, brought an air of confidence and optimism that quickly rallied the people to the banner of his program, known as the New Deal. "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," the president declared in his inaugural address to the nation.

In a certain sense, it is fair to say that the New Deal merely introduced types of social and economic reform familiar to many Europeans for more than a generation. Moreover, the New Deal represented the culmination of a long-range trend toward abandonment of "laissez-faire" capitalism, going back to the regulation of the railroads in the 1880s, and the flood of state and national reform legislation introduced in the Progressive era of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson.

What was truly novel about the New Deal, however, was the speed with which it accomplished what previously had taken generations. In fact, many of the reforms were hastily drawn and weakly administered; some actually contradicted others. And during the entire New Deal era, public criticism and debate were never interrupted or suspended; in fact, the New Deal brought to the individual citizen a sharp revival of interest in government.

When Roosevelt took the presidential oath, the banking and credit system of the nation was in a state of paralysis. With astonishing rapidity the nation's banks were first closed -- and then reopened only if they were solvent. The administration adopted a policy of moderate currency inflation to start an upward movement in commodity prices and to afford some relief to debtors. New governmental agencies brought generous credit facilities to industry and agriculture. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) insured savings-bank deposits up to \$5,000, and severe regulations were imposed upon the sale of securities on the stock exchange.

UNEMPLOYMENT

By 1933 millions of Americans were out of work. Bread lines were a common sight in most cities. Hundreds of thousands roamed the country in search of food, work and shelter. "Brother, can you spare a dime?" went the refrain of a popular song.

An early step for the unemployed came in the form of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a program enacted by Congress to bring relief to young men between 18 and 25 years of age. Run in semi-military style, the CCC enrolled jobless young men in work camps across the country for about \$30 per month. About 2 million young men took part during the decade. They participated in a variety of conservation projects: planting trees to combat soil erosion and maintain national forests; eliminating stream pollution; creating fish, game and bird sanctuaries; and conserving coal, petroleum, shale, gas, sodium and helium deposits.

Work relief came in the form of the Civil Works Administration. Although criticized as "make work," the jobs funded ranged from ditch digging to highway repairs to teaching. Created in November 1933, it was abandoned in the spring of 1934. Roosevelt and his key officials, however, continued to favor unemployment programs based on work relief rather than welfare.

AGRICULTURE

The New Deal years were characterized by a belief that greater regulation would solve many of the country's problems. In 1933, for example, Congress passed the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) to provide economic relief to farmers. The AAA had at its core a plan to raise crop prices by paying farmers a subsidy to compensate for voluntary cutbacks in production. Funds for the payments would be generated by a tax levied on industries that processed crops. By the time the act had become law, however, the growing season was well underway, and the AAA encouraged farmers to plow under their abundant crops. Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace called this activity a "shocking commentary on our civilization." Nevertheless, through the AAA and the Commodity Credit Corporation, a program which extended loans for crops kept in storage and off the market, output dropped.

Between 1932 and 1935, farm income increased by more than 50 percent, but only partly because of federal programs. During the same years that farmers were being encouraged to take land out of production -- displacing tenants and sharecroppers -- a severe drought hit the Great Plains states, significantly reducing farm production. Violent wind and dust storms ravaged the southern Great Plains in what became known as the "Dust Bowl," throughout the 1930s, but particularly from 1935 to 1938. Crops were destroyed, cars and machinery were ruined, people and animals were harmed. Approximately 800,000 people, often called "Okies," left Arkansas, Texas, Missouri and Oklahoma during the 1930s and 1940s. Most headed farther west to the land of myth and promise, California. The migrants were not only farmers, but also professionals, retailers and others whose livelihoods were connected to the health of the farm communities. California was not the place of their dreams, at least initially. Most migrants ended up competing for seasonal jobs picking crops at extremely low wages.

The government provided aid in the form of the Soil Conservation Service, established in 1935. Farm practices that had damaged the soil had intensified the severity of the storms, and the Service taught farmers measures to reduce erosion. In addition, almost 30,000 kilometers of trees were planted to break the force of winds.

Although the AAA had been mostly successful, it was abandoned in 1936, when the tax on food processors was ruled unconstitutional. Six weeks later Congress passed a more effective farm-relief act, which authorized the government to make payments to farmers who reduced plantings of soil-depleting crops -- thereby achieving crop reduction through soil conservation practices.

By 1940 nearly 6 million farmers were receiving federal subsidies under this program. The new act likewise provided loans on surplus crops, insurance for wheat and a system of planned storage to ensure a stable food supply. Soon, prices of agricultural commodities rose, and economic stability for the farmer began to seem possible. **INDUSTRY AND LABOR**

The National Recovery Administration (NRA), established in 1933 with the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), attempted to end cut-throat competition by setting codes of fair competitive practice to generate more jobs and thus more buying. Although the NRA was welcomed initially, business complained bitterly of over-regulation as recovery began to take hold. The NRA was declared unconstitutional in 1935. By this time other policies were fostering recovery, and the government soon took the position that administered prices in certain lines of business were a severe drain on the national economy and a barrier to recovery.

It was also during the New Deal that organized labor made greater gains than at any previous time in American history. NIRA had guaranteed to labor the right of collective bargaining (bargaining as a unit representing individual workers with industry). Then in 1935 Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act, which defined unfair labor practices, gave workers the right to bargain through unions of their own choice and prohibited employers from interfering with union activities. It also created the National Labor Relations Board to supervise collective bargaining, administer elections and ensure workers the right to choose the organization that should represent them in dealing with employers.

The great progress made in labor organization brought working people a growing sense of common interests, and labor's power increased not only in industry but also in politics. This power was exercised largely within the framework of the two major parties, however, and the Democratic Party generally received more union support than the Republicans.

THE SECOND NEW DEAL

In its early years, the New Deal sponsored a remarkable series of legislative initiatives and achieved significant increases in production and prices -- but it did not bring an end to the Depression. And as the sense of immediate crisis eased, new demands emerged. Businessmen mourned the end of "laissez-faire" and chafed under the regulations of the NIRA. Vocal attacks also mounted from the political left and right as dreamers, schemers and politicians alike emerged with economic panaceas that drew wide audiences of those dissatisfied with the pace of recovery. They included Francis E. Townsend's plan for generous old-age pensions; the inflationary suggestions of Father Coughlin, the radio priest who blamed international bankers in speeches increasingly peppered with anti-Semitic imagery; and most formidably, the "Every Man a King" plan of Huey P. Long, senator and former governor of Louisiana, the powerful and ruthless spokesman of the displaced who ran the state like a personal fiefdom. (If he had not been assassinated, Long very likely would have launched a presidential challenge to Franklin Roosevelt in 1936.)

In the face of these pressures from left and right, President Roosevelt backed a new set of economic and social measures. Prominent among these were measures to fight poverty, to counter unemployment with work and to provide a social safety net.

The Works Progress Administration (WPA), the principal relief agency of the so-called second New Deal, was an attempt to provide work rather than welfare. Under the WPA, buildings, roads, airports and schools were constructed. Actors, painters, musicians and writers were employed through the Federal Theater Project, the Federal Art Project and the Federal Writers Project. In addition, the National Youth Administration gave part-time employment to students, established training programs and provided aid to unemployed youth. The WPA only included about three million jobless at a time; when it was abandoned in 1943 it had helped a total of 9 million people.

But the New Deal's cornerstone, according to Roosevelt, was the Social Security Act of 1935. Social Security created a system of insurance for the aged, unemployed and disabled based on employer and employee contributions. Many other industrialized nations had already enacted such programs, but calls for such an initiative in the United States by the Progressives in the early 1900s had gone unheeded. Although conservatives complained that the Social Security system went against American traditions, it was actually relatively conservative. Social Security was funded in large part by taxes on the earnings of current workers, with a single fixed rate for all regardless of income. To Roosevelt, these limitations on the programs were compromises to ensure passage. Although its origins were initially quite modest, Social Security today is one of the largest domestic programs administered by the U.S. government.

A NEW COALITION

In 1936, the Republican Party nominated Alfred M. Landon, the relatively liberal governor of Kansas, to oppose Roosevelt. Despite all the complaints leveled at the New Deal, Roosevelt won an even more decisive victory than in 1932. He took 60 percent of the population and carried all states except Maine and Vermont. In this election, a broad new coalition aligned with the Democratic Party emerged, consisting of labor, most farmers, immigrants and urban ethnic groups from East and Southern Europe, African Americans and the South. The Republican Party received the support of business as well as middle-class members of small towns and suburbs. This political alliance, with some variation and shifting, remained intact for several decades.

From 1932 to 1938 there was widespread public debate on the meaning of New Deal policies to the nation's political and economic life. It became obvious that Americans wanted the government to take greater responsibility for the welfare of the nation. Indeed, historians generally credit the New Deal with establishing the foundations of the modern welfare state in the United States. Some New Deal critics argued that the indefinite extension of government functions would eventually undermine the liberties of the people. But President Roosevelt insisted that measures fostering economic well-being would strengthen liberty and democracy.

In a radio address in 1938, Roosevelt reminded the American people that:

Democracy has disappeared in several other great nations, not because the people of those nations disliked democracy, but because they had grown tired of unemployment and insecurity, of seeing their children hungry while they sat helpless in the face of government confusion and government weakness through lack of leadership....Finally, in desperation, they chose to sacrifice liberty in the hope of getting something to eat. We in America know that our democratic institutions can be preserved and made to work. But in order to preserve them we need...to prove that the practical operation of democratic government is equal to the task of protecting the security of the people....The people of America are in agreement in defending their liberties at any cost, and the first line of the defense lies in the protection of economic security.

EVE OF WORLD WAR II

Before Roosevelt's second term was well under way, his domestic program was overshadowed by a new danger little noted by average Americans: the expansionist designs of totalitarian regimes in Japan, Italy and Germany. In 1931 Japan invaded Manchuria and crushed Chinese resistance; a year later the Japanese set up the puppet state of Manchukuo. Italy, having succumbed to fascism, enlarged its boundaries in Libya and in 1935 attacked Ethiopia. Germany, where Adolf Hitler had organized the National Socialist Party and seized the reins of government in 1933, reoccupied the Rhineland and undertook large-scale rearmament.

As the real nature of totalitarianism became clear, and as Germany, Italy and Japan continued their aggression, American apprehension fueled isolationist sentiment. In 1938, after Hitler had incorporated Austria into the German Reich, his demands for the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia made war seem possible at any moment in Europe. The United States, disillusioned by the failure of the crusade for democracy in World War I, announced that in no circumstances could any country involved in the conflict look to it for aid. Neutrality legislation, enacted piecemeal from 1935 to 1937, prohibited trade with or credit to any of the warring nations. The objective was to prevent, at almost any cost, the involvement of the United States in a non-American war.

With the Nazi assault on Poland in 1939 and the outbreak of World War II, isolationist sentiment increased, even though Americans were far from neutral in their feelings about world events. Public sentiment clearly favored the victims of Hitler's aggression and supported the Allied powers that stood in opposition to German expansion. Under the circumstances, however, Roosevelt could only wait until public opinion regarding U.S. involvement was altered by events.

With the fall of France and the air war against Britain in 1940, the debate intensified between those who favored aiding the democracies and the isolationists, organized around the America First Committee, whose support ranged from Midwestern conservatives to left-leaning pacifists. In the end, the interventionist argument won a protracted public debate, aided in large measure by the work of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies.

The United States joined Canada in a Mutual Board of Defense, and aligned with the Latin American republics in extending collective protection to the nations in the Western Hemisphere. Congress, confronted with the mounting crisis, voted immense sums for rearmament, and in September 1940 passed the first peacetime conscription bill ever enacted in the United States -- albeit by a margin of one vote in the House of Representatives. In early 1941 Congress approved the Lend-Lease Program, which enabled President Roosevelt to transfer arms and equipment to any nation (notably Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China) deemed vital to the defense of the United States. Total Lend-Lease aid by war's end amounted to more than \$50,000 million.

The 1940 presidential election campaign demonstrated that the isolationists, while vocal, commanded relatively few followers nationally. Roosevelt's Republican opponent, Wendell Wilkie, lacked a compelling issue since he supported the president's foreign policy, and also agreed with a large part of Roosevelt's domestic program. Thus the November election yielded another majority for Roosevelt. For the first time in U.S. history, a president was elected to a third term.

JAPAN, PEARL HARBOR AND WAR

While most Americans anxiously watched the course of the European war, tension mounted in Asia. Taking advantage of an opportunity to improve its strategic position, Japan boldly announced a "new order" in which it would exercise hegemony over all of the Pacific. Battling for its survival against Nazi Germany, Britain was unable to resist, withdrawing from Shanghai and temporarily closing the Burma Road. In the summer of 1940, Japan won permission from the weak Vichy government in France to use airfields in Indochina. By September the Japanese had joined the Rome-Berlin Axis. As a countermove, the United States imposed an embargo on export of scrap iron to Japan.

It seemed that the Japanese might turn southward toward the oil, tin and rubber of British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. In July 1941 the Japanese occupied the remainder of Indochina; the United States, in response, froze Japanese assets.

General Hideki Tojo became prime minister of Japan in October 1941. In mid-November, he sent a special envoy to the United States to meet with Secretary of State Cordell Hull. Among other things, Japan demanded that the U.S. release Japanese assets and stop U.S. naval expansion in the Pacific. Hull countered with a proposal for Japanese withdrawal from China and Indochina in exchange for the freeing of the frozen assets. The Japanese asked for two weeks to study the proposal, but on December 1 rejected it. On December 6, Franklin Roosevelt appealed directly to the Japanese emperor, Hirohito. On the morning of December 7, however, Japanese carrier-based planes attacked the U.S. Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in a devastating, surprise attack. Nineteen ships, including five battleships, and about 150 U.S. planes were destroyed; more than 2,300 soldiers, sailors and civilians were killed. Only one fact favored the Americans that day: the U.S. aircraft carriers that would play such a critical role in the ensuing naval war in the Pacific were at sea and not anchored at Pearl Harbor.

As the details of the Japanese raids upon Hawaii, Midway, Wake and Guam blared from American radios, incredulity turned to anger at what President Roosevelt called "a day that will live in infamy." On December 8, Congress declared a state of war with Japan; three days later Germany and Italy declared war on the United States. The nation rapidly geared itself for mobilization of its people and its entire industrial capacity. On January 6, 1942, President Roosevelt announced staggering production goals: delivery in that year of 60,000 planes, 45,000 tanks, 20,000 anti-aircraft guns and 18 million deadweight tons of merchant shipping. All the nation's activities -- farming, manufacturing, mining, trade, labor, investment, communications, even education and cultural undertakings -- were in some fashion brought under new and enlarged controls. The nation raised money in enormous sums and created great new industries for the mass production of ships, armored vehicles and planes. Major movements of population took place. Under a series of conscription acts, the United States brought the armed forces up to a total of 15,100,000. By the end of 1943, approximately 65 million men and women were in uniform or in war-related occupations.

The attack on the United States disarmed the appeal of isolationists and permitted quick military mobilization. However, as a result of Pearl Harbor and the fear of Asian espionage, Americans also committed an act of intolerance: the internment of Japanese-Americans. In February 1942, nearly 120,000 Japanese-Americans residing in California were removed from their homes and interned behind barbed wire in 10 wretched temporary camps, later to be moved to "relocation centers" outside isolated Southwestern towns. Nearly 63 percent of these Japanese-Americans were Nisei -- American-born -- and, therefore, U.S. citizens. No evidence of espionage ever surfaced. In fact, Japanese-Americans from Hawaii and the continental United States fought with noble distinction and valor in two infantry units on the Italian front. Others served as interpreters and translators in the Pacific. In 1983 the U.S. government acknowledged the injustice of internment with limited payments to those Japanese-Americans of that era who were still living.

THE WAR IN NORTH AFRICA AND EUROPE

Soon after the United States entered the war, the western Allies decided that their essential military effort was to be concentrated in Europe, where the core of enemy power lay, while the Pacific theater was to be secondary.

In the spring and summer of 1942, British forces were able to break the German drive aimed at Egypt and push German General Erwin Rommel back into Libya, ending the threat to the Suez Canal, which connected the Mediterranean to the Red Sea.

On November 7, 1942, an American army landed in French North Africa, and after hard-fought battles, inflicted severe defeats on Italian and German armies. The year 1942 was also the turning point on the Eastern Front, where the Soviet Union, suffering immense losses, stopped the Nazi invasion at the gates of Leningrad and Moscow, and defeated the German forces at Stalingrad.

In July 1943 British and American forces invaded Sicily, and by late summer the southern shore of the Mediterranean was cleared of Fascist forces. Allied forces landed on the Italian mainland, and although the Italian government accepted unconditional surrender, fighting against Nazi forces in Italy was bitter and protracted. Rome was not liberated until June 4, 1944. While battles were still raging in Italy, Allied forces made devastating air raids on German railroads, factories and weapon emplacements, including German oil supplies at Ploesti in Romania.

Late in 1943 the Allies, after much debate over strategy, decided to open a Western front to force the Germans to divert far larger forces from the Russian front. U.S. General Dwight D. Eisenhower was appointed Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe. After immense preparations, on June 6, 1944, the first contingents of a U.S., British and Canadian invasion army, protected by a greatly superior air force, landed on the beaches of Normandy in northern France. With the beachhead established after heavy fighting, more troops poured in, and many contingents of German defenders were caught in pockets by pincer movements. The Allied armies began to move across France toward Germany. On August 25 Paris was liberated. At the borders of Germany, the Allies were delayed by stubborn counteraction, but by February and March 1945, troops advanced into Germany from the west, and German armies fell before the Russians in the east. On May 8 all that remained of the Third Reich surrendered its land, sea and air forces.

THE WAR IN THE PACIFIC

In the meantime, U.S. forces were advancing in the Pacific. Although U.S. troops were forced to surrender in the Philippines in early 1942, the Allies rallied in the following months. General James "Jimmy" Doolittle led U.S. army bombers on a raid over Tokyo in April that had little actual military significance, but gave Americans an immense psychological boost. In the Battle of the Coral Sea the following month -- the first naval engagement in history in which all the fighting was done by carrier-based planes -- the Japanese navy incurred such heavy losses that they were forced to give up the idea of striking at Australia. The Battle of Midway in June in the central Pacific Ocean became the turning point for the Allies, resulting in the first major defeat of the Japanese navy, which lost four aircraft carriers, ending the Japanese advance across the central Pacific. Other battles also contributed to Allied success. Guadalcanal, a decisive U.S. victory in November 1942, marked the first major U.S. offensive action in the Pacific. For most of the next two years, American and Australian troops fought their way northward along a central Pacific island "ladder" capturing the Solomons, the Gilberts, the Marshalls, the Marianas and the Bonin Islands in a series of amphibious assaults.

THE POLITICS OF WAR

Allied military efforts were accompanied by a series of important international meetings on the political objectives of the war. The first of these took place in August 1941, before U.S. entry into the war, between President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill -- at a time when the United States was not yet actively engaged in the struggle and the military situation seemed bleak.

Meeting aboard cruisers near Newfoundland, Canada, Roosevelt and Churchill issued the Atlantic Charter, a statement of purposes in which they endorsed these objectives: no territorial aggrandizement; no territorial changes without the consent of the people concerned; the right of all people to choose their own form of government; the restoration of self-government to those deprived of it; economic collaboration between all nations; freedom from war, from fear and from want for all peoples; freedom of the seas; and the abandonment of the use of force as an instrument of international policy.

In January 1943 at Casablanca, Morocco, an Anglo-American conference decided that no peace would be concluded with the Axis and its Balkan satellites except on the basis of "unconditional surrender."

This term, insisted upon by Roosevelt, sought to assure the people of all the fighting nations that no separate peace negotiations would be carried on with representatives of Fascism and Nazism; that no bargain of any kind would be made by such representatives to save any remnant of their power; that before final peace terms could be laid down to the peoples of Germany, Italy and Japan, their military overlords must concede before the entire world their own complete and utter defeat. At Cairo, on November 22, 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill met with Nationalist Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek to agree on terms for Japan, including the relinquishment of gains from past aggression. At Tehran on November 28, Roosevelt, Churchill and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin agreed to establish a new international organization, the United Nations. In February 1945, they met again at Yalta, with victory seemingly secure, and made further agreements. There, the Soviet Union secretly agreed to enter the war against Japan not long after the surrender of Germany. The eastern boundary of Poland was set roughly at the Curzon line of 1919. After some discussion of heavy reparations to be collected from Germany -- payment demanded by Stalin and opposed by Roosevelt and Churchill -- the decision was deferred. Specific arrangements were made concerning Allied occupation in Germany and the trial and punishment of war criminals. Also at Yalta it was agreed that the powers in the Security Council of the proposed United Nations should have the right of veto in matters affecting their security.

Two months after his return from Yalta, Franklin Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage while vacationing in Georgia. Few figures in U.S. history have been so deeply mourned, and for a time the American people suffered from a numbing sense of irreparable loss. Vice President Harry Truman, former senator from Missouri, assumed the presidency.

WAR, VICTORY AND THE BOMB

The war in the Pacific continued after Germany's surrender, and the final battles there were among the hardest fought. Beginning in June 1944, the Battle of the Philippine Sea wreaked havoc on the Japanese Navy, forcing the resignation of Japanese Prime Minister Tojo. General Douglas MacArthur -- who had reluctantly left the Philippines two years before to escape Japanese capture -- returned to the islands in October, clearing the way for the U.S. Navy. The Battle of Leyte Gulf resulted in a decisive defeat of the Japanese Navy, restoring control of Philippine waters to the Allies.

By February 1945, U.S. forces had taken Manila. Next, the United States set its sight on the island of Iwo Jima in the Bonin Islands, about halfway between the Marianas Islands and Japan. But the Japanese were determined to hold the island, and made the best use of natural caves and rocky terrain. U.S. bombardment met determined Japanese resistance on land and kamikaze suicide attacks from the sky. U.S. forces took the island by mid-March, but not before losing the lives of some 6,000 U.S. Marines and nearly all the Japanese forces. The U.S. began extensive air attacks on Japanese shipping and airfields. From May through August, the U.S. 20th Air Force launched wave after wave of air attacks against the Japanese home islands.

The heads of the U.S., British and Soviet governments met at Potsdam, a suburb outside Berlin, from July 17, to August 2, 1945, to discuss operations against Japan, the peace settlement in Europe, and a policy for the future of Germany.

The conference agreed on the need to assist in the reeducation of a German generation reared under Nazism and to define the broad principles governing the restoration of democratic political life to the country. The conferees also discussed reparations claims against Germany, agreed to the trial of Nazi leaders accused of crimes against humanity, and provided for the removal of industrial plants and property by the Soviet Union. But the Soviet claim, already raised at Yalta, for reparations totaling \$10 thousand-million remained a subject of controversy.

The day before the Potsdam Conference began, an atomic bomb was exploded at Alamogordo, New Mexico, the culmination of three years of intensive research in laboratories across the United States in what was known as the Manhattan Project. President Truman, calculating that an atomic bomb might be used to gain Japan's surrender more quickly and with fewer casualties than an invasion of the mainland, ordered the bomb be used if the Japanese did not surrender by August 3. The Allies issued the Potsdam Declaration on July 26, promising that Japan would neither be destroyed nor enslaved if it surrendered; if Japan did not, however, it would meet "utter destruction." A committee of U.S. military and political officials and scientists considered the question of targets for the new weapon.

Truman had written that only military installations should be targeted. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, for example, argued successfully that Kyoto, Japan's ancient capital and a repository of many national and religious treasures be taken out of consideration. Hiroshima, a center of war industries and military operations, was chosen.

On August 6, a U.S. plane, the Enola Gay, dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima. On August 8, a second atomic bomb was dropped, this time on Nagasaki. Americans were relieved that the bomb hastened the end of the war; the realization of its awesome destructiveness would come later. On August 14, Japan agreed to the terms set at Potsdam. On September 2, 1945, Japan formally surrendered.

In November 1945 at Nuremberg, Germany, the criminal trials of Nazi leaders provided for at Potsdam took place. Before a group of distinguished jurists from Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the United States, the Nazis were accused not only of plotting and waging aggressive war but also of violating the laws of war and of humanity in the systematic genocide, known as the Holocaust, of European Jews and other peoples. The trials lasted more than 10 months and resulted in the conviction of all but three of the accused.

One of the most far-reaching decisions concerning the shape of the postwar world took place on April 25, 1945, with the war in Europe in its final days, although the conflict still raged in the Pacific. Representatives of 50 nations met in San Francisco, California, to erect the framework of the United Nations. The constitution they drafted outlined a world organization in which international differences could be discussed peacefully and common cause made against hunger and disease. In contrast to its rejection of U.S. membership in the League of Nations after World War I, the U.S. Senate promptly ratified the U.N. Charter by an 89 to 2 vote. This action confirmed the end of the spirit of isolationism as a dominating element in American foreign policy and signaled to the world that the United States intended to play a major role in international affairs.

SIDEBAR: THE RISE OF INDUSTRIAL UNIONS

While the 1920s were years of relative prosperity in the United States, the workers in industries such as steel, automobiles, rubber and textiles benefitted less than many others. Working conditions in many of these industries remained as onerous as they had been in the previous century. Until 1923, for example, the average U.S. steel worker was expected to work a 12-hour day, with one day off every two weeks.

The 1920s saw the owners of the mass production industries redouble their efforts to prevent the growth of unions, which under the American Federation of Labor (AFL) had enjoyed some success during World War I. This took many forms, including the use of spies, armed strikebreakers and firing of those suspected of union sympathies. Independent unions were often accused of being communist. At the same time, many companies formed their own union organizations.

Traditionally, state legislatures supported the concept of the "open shop," which prevented a union from being the exclusive representative of all workers. This made it easier for companies to deny unions the right to collective bargaining and block unionization through court enforcement. On a more positive note, some companies in the 1920s began offering workers various pension, profit-sharing, stock option and health plans to ensure their loyalty.

Beginning with steel in 1919, companies harshly suppressed a series of strikes in the mass production industries. Between 1920 and 1929, as a result, union membership in the United States dropped from about five million to three-and-a-half million.

The onset of the Great Depression led to a precipitous drop in demand for all types of industrial production. The result was widespread unemployment. By 1933 there were over 12 million Americans out of work. In the automobile industry, for example, the work force was cut in half between 1929 and 1933. At the same time, wages dropped by two-thirds.

The election of Franklin Roosevelt, however, was to change the status of the American industrial worker forever.

The first indication that Roosevelt was interested in the well-being of workers came with the appointment of Frances Perkins, a prominent advocate of workplace reform, to be his secretary of labor. (Perkins was also the first woman to hold a Cabinet-level position.) In June 1933 Congress passed the far-reaching National Industrial Recovery Act. It sought to raise industrial wages, limit the hours in a work week and eliminate child labor. Most important, the law prohibited companies from forcing employees to join "company" unions, and recognized the right of employees "to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing." It was John L. Lewis, the feisty and articulate head of the United Mine Workers (UMW), who understood more than any other labor leader what the New Deal meant for workers. Stressing Roosevelt's support, Lewis engineered a major unionizing campaign, building the UMW's membership from 150,000 to over 500,000 within a year.

Lewis was eager to get the AFL, where he was a member of the Executive Council, to launch a similar drive in the mass production industries. But the AFL, with its historic focus on the skilled trade worker, was unwilling to do so. After a bitter internal feud, Lewis and a few others broke with the AFL to set up the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO), later called the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

The first targets for Lewis and the CIO were the notoriously anti-union auto and steel industries. In late 1936, a series of spontaneous sit-down strikes erupted at General Motors plants in Cleveland, Ohio, and Flint, Michigan. Lewis responded quickly by sending a team of union organizers and funds of \$100,000 to help the strikers. Soon 135,000 workers were involved and the industry ground to a halt.

With the help of the sympathetic governor of Michigan, a settlement was reached in 1937. By September of that year, the United Auto Workers had contracts with 400 companies involved in the automobile industry, assuring workers a minimum wage of 75 cents per hour and a 40-hour work week.

In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the steel-making capital of the United States, representatives of the steel industry attacked Lewis in print for being a "red" and a "bloodsucker." Labor, however, was buoyed by Roosevelt's re-election as well as the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) in 1936. In the first six months of its existence, the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC), headed by Lewis lieutenant Philip Murray, picked up 125,000 members.

The capitulation of General Motors had a marked effect on the company, U.S. Steel. Realizing that times had changed, it came to terms with the CIO in 1937. That same year the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the NLRA. Subsequently, smaller companies, traditionally even more anti-union than U.S. Steel, reached agreements with the CIO unions. One by one other industries -- rubber, oil, electronics and textiles -- also followed suit. The mass production worker was no longer alone.



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CHAPTER ELEVEN: POSTWAR AMERICA

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"WE MUST BUILD A NEW WORLD, A FAR BETTER WORLD -- ONE IN WHICH THE ETERNAL DIGNITY OF MAN IS RESPECTED." President Harry S. Truman, 1945.

CONSENSUS AND CHANGE

The United States dominated global affairs in the years immediately after World War II. Victorious in that great struggle, its homeland undamaged from the ravages of war, the nation was confident of its mission at home and abroad. U.S. leaders wanted to maintain the democratic structure they had defended at tremendous cost and to share the benefits of prosperity as widely as possible. For them, as for publisher Henry Luce of Time magazine, this was the "American Century."

For 20 years, most Americans remained sure of this confident approach. They accepted the need for a strong stance against the Soviet Union in the Cold War that unfolded after 1945. They endorsed the growth of government authority and accepted the outlines of the welfare state, first formulated during the New Deal. They enjoyed the postwar prosperity that created new levels of affluence in the United States.

But gradually some Americans began to question dominant assumptions about American life. Challenges on a variety of fronts shattered the consensus. In the 1950s, African Americans launched a crusade, joined later by other minority groups and women, for a larger share of the American dream. In the 1960s, politically active students protested the nation's role abroad, particularly in the corrosive war in Vietnam, and a youth counterculture challenged the status quo of American values. Americans from many walks of life sought to establish a new equilibrium in the United States.

COLD WAR AIMS

The Cold War was the most important political issue of the early postwar period. It grew out of longstanding disagreements between the Soviet Union and the United States. In 1918 American troops participated in the Allied intervention in Russia on behalf of anti-Bolshevik forces. American diplomatic recognition of the Bolshevik regime did not come until 1933. Even then, suspicions persisted. During World War II, however, the two countries found themselves allied and thus ignored their differences to counter the Nazi threat.

At the war's end, antagonisms surfaced again. The United States hoped to share with other countries its conception of liberty, equality and democracy. With the rest of the world in turmoil, struggling with civil wars and disintegrating empires, the nation hoped to provide the stability to make peaceful reconstruction possible. Unable to forget the specter of the Great Depression (1929-1940), America now fostered its familiar position of free trade, and sought to eliminate trade barriers both to create markets for American agricultural and industrial products, and to ensure the ability of West European nations to export as a means to generate economic growth and rebuild their economies. Reduced trade barriers, it was believed, would promote economic growth at home and abroad, and bolster stability with U.S. friends and allies.

The Soviet Union had its own agenda. The Russian historical tradition of centralized, autocratic government contrasted with the American emphasis on democracy. Marxist-Leninist ideology had been downplayed during the war but still guided Soviet policy. Devastated by the struggle in which 20 million Soviet citizens had died, the Soviet Union was intent on rebuilding and on protecting itself from another such terrible conflict.

The Soviets were particularly concerned about another invasion of their territory from the west. Having repelled Hitler's thrust, they were determined to preclude another such attack. The Soviet Union now demanded "defensible" borders and regimes sympathetic to its aims in Eastern Europe. But the United States had declared the restoration of independence and self-government to Poland, Czechoslovakia and the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe one of its war aims.

HARRY TRUMAN'S LEADERSHIP

Harry Truman succeeded Franklin D. Roosevelt as president before the end of the war. An unpretentious man who had previously served as Democratic senator from Missouri, then as vice president, Truman initially felt ill-prepared to govern the United States. Roosevelt had not confided in him about complex postwar issues and he had little prior experience in international affairs. "I'm not big enough for this job," he told a former colleague.

But Truman responded quickly to new challenges. Impulsive, he proved willing to make quick decisions about the problems he faced. A sign on his White House desk, since famous in American politics, read "The Buck Stops Here," and reflected his willingness to take responsibility for his actions. His judgments about how to respond to the Soviet Union had an important impact on the early Cold War.

ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR

Origins of the Cold War The Cold War developed as differences about the shape of the postwar world created suspicion and distrust between the United States and the Soviet Union. The first such conflict occurred over Poland. Moscow demanded a government subject to Soviet influence; Washington wanted a more independent, representative government following the Western model. The Yalta Conference of February 1945 had produced a wide-ranging agreement open to different interpretations. Among its provisions was the promise of "free and unfettered" elections in Poland.

At his first meeting with Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov, Truman revealed his intention to stand firm on Polish self-determination, lecturing the Soviet diplomat about the need to carry out the Yalta accords. When Molotov protested, "I have never been talked to like that in my life," Truman retorted, "Carry out your agreements and you won't get talked to like that." Relations deteriorated from that point onward.

During the closing months of World War II, Soviet military forces occupied all of Central and Eastern Europe. Moscow used its military power to support the efforts of the communist parties in Eastern Europe and crush the democratic parties. Communist parties beholden to Moscow quickly expanded their power and influence in all countries of the region, culminating in the coup d'etat in Czechoslovakia in 1948.

Public statements defined the beginning of the Cold War. In 1946 Stalin declared that international peace was impossible "under the present capitalist development of the world economy." Winston Churchill, wartime prime minister of Great Britain, delivered a dramatic speech in Fulton, Missouri, with Truman sitting on the platform during the address. "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic," Churchill said, "an iron curtain has descended across the Continent." Britain and the United States, he declared, had to work together to counter the Soviet threat.

CONTAINMENT

Containment of the Soviet Union became American policy in the postwar years. George Kennan, a top official at the U.S. embassy in Moscow, defined the new approach in a long telegram he sent to the State Department in 1946. He extended his analysis after he returned home in an article published under the signature "X" in the prestigious journal *Foreign Affairs*. Pointing to Russia's traditional sense of insecurity, Kennan argued that the Soviet Union would not soften its stance under any circumstances. Moscow, he wrote, was "committed fanatically to the belief that with the U.S. there can be no permanent modus vivendi, that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted." Moscow's pressure to expand its power had to be stopped through "firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies...."

The first significant application of the containment doctrine came in the eastern Mediterranean. Great Britain had been supporting Greece, where communist forces threatened the ruling monarchy in a civil war, and Turkey, where the Soviet Union pressed for territorial concessions and the right to build naval bases on the Bosphorus. In 1947 Britain told the United States that it could no longer afford such aid. Quickly, the U.S. State Department devised a plan for U.S. assistance. But support for a new interventionist policy, Senate leaders such as Arthur Vandenberg told Truman, was only possible if he was willing to start "scaring the hell out of the country."

Truman was prepared to do so. In a statement that came to be known as the Truman Doctrine, he declared, "I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." To that end he asked Congress to provide \$400 million for economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey, and the money was appropriated.

However, there was a price Truman himself and American society paid for his victory. To whip up American support for the policy of containment, Truman overstated the Soviet threat to the United States. In turn, his statements inspired a wave of hysterical anti-communism throughout the country and set the stage for the emergence of McCarthyism.

Containment also called for extensive economic aid to assist the recovery of war-torn Western Europe. With many of the region's nations economically and politically unstable, the United States feared that local communist parties, directed by Moscow, would capitalize on their wartime record of resistance to the Nazis and come to power. Something needed to be done, Secretary of State George Marshall noted, for "the patient is sinking while the doctors deliberate." Marshall was formerly the highest ranking officer in the U.S. armed forces and credited as the chief organizer of the American military victory in World War II. In mid-1947 Marshall asked troubled European nations to draw up a program "directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos." The Soviets participated in the first planning meeting, then departed rather than share economic data on their resources and problems, and submit to Western controls on the expenditure of the aid. The remaining 16 nations hammered out a request that finally came to \$17 thousand million for a four-year period. In early 1948 Congress voted to assist European economic recovery, dubbed the "Marshall Plan," and generally regarded as one of the most successful U.S. foreign policy initiatives in history.

Postwar Germany was divided into U.S., Soviet, British and French zones of occupation, with the former German capital of Berlin (itself divided into four zones), near the center of the Soviet zone. The United States, Britain and France had discussed converting their zones into a single, self-governing republic. But the Soviet Union opposed plans to unite Germany and ministerial-level four-power discussions on Germany broke down. When the Western powers announced their intention to create a consolidated federal state from their zones, Stalin responded. On June 23, 1948, Soviet forces blockaded Berlin, cutting off all road and rail access from the West.

American leaders feared that losing Berlin was but a prelude to losing Germany and subsequently all of Europe. Therefore, in a successful demonstration of Western resolve known as the Berlin Airlift, Allied air forces took to the sky, flying supplies into Berlin. U.S., French and British planes delivered nearly 2,250,000 tons of goods, including food and coal. Stalin lifted the blockade after 231 days and 277,264 flights.

Soviet domination of Eastern Europe alarmed the West. The United States led the effort to create a military alliance to complement economic efforts at containment. In 1949 the United States and 11 other countries established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), an alliance based on the principle of collective security. An attack against one was to be considered an attack against all, to be met by appropriate force.

The next year, the United States defined its defense aims clearly. The National Security Council (NSC) undertook a full-fledged review of American foreign and defense policy. The resulting document, known as NSC-68, signaled a new direction in American security policy. Based on the assumption that "the Soviet Union was engaged in a fanatical effort to seize control of all governments wherever possible," the document committed America to assist allied nations anywhere in the world which seemed threatened by Soviet aggression. The United States proceeded to increase defense spending dramatically in response to Soviet threats against Europe and the American, British and French presence in West Berlin.

THE COLD WAR IN ASIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

While seeking to prevent communist ideology from gaining further adherents in Europe, the United States also responded to challenges elsewhere. In China, Americans worried about the advances of Mao Zedong and his communist party. During World War II, the Nationalist government under Chiang Kai-shek and the communist forces waged a civil war even as they fought the Japanese. Chiang had been a war-time ally, but even American support could not bolster a government that was hopelessly inefficient and corrupt. Mao's forces finally seized power in 1949, and when he announced that his new regime would support the Soviet Union against the "imperialist" United States, it appeared that communism was spreading out of control, at least in Asia.

The Korean War brought armed conflict between the United States and China. The Allies had divided Korea along the 38th parallel after liberating it from Japan at the end of World War II. The Soviet Union accepted Japanese surrender north of the 38th parallel; the United States did the same in the south. Originally intended as a matter of military convenience, the dividing line became more rigid as Cold War tensions escalated. Both major powers set up governments in their respective occupation zones and continued to support them even after departing.

In June 1950 North Korean troops crossed the 38th parallel and attacked southward, overrunning Seoul. Truman, perceiving the North Koreans as Soviet pawns in the global struggle, readied American forces and ordered General Douglas MacArthur to Korea. Meanwhile, the United States was able to secure a U.N. resolution branding North Korea as an aggressor. (The Soviet Union, which could have vetoed any action had it been occupying its seat on the Security Council, was boycotting the United Nations to protest a decision not to admit the People's Republic of China.)

The war seesawed back and forth. U.S. and Korean forces were initially pushed far to the south in an enclave around the city of Pusan. A daring amphibious landing at Inchon, the port for the city of Seoul, drove the North Koreans back; but as fighting neared the Chinese border, China entered the war, sending massive forces across the Yalu River. U.N. forces, largely American, retreated once again in bitter fighting and then slowly recovered and fought their way back to the 38th parallel.

When MacArthur violated the principle of civilian control of the military by attempting to orchestrate public support for bombing China and permitting an invasion of the mainland by Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Chinese forces, Truman charged him with insubordination and relieved him of his duties, replacing him with General Matthew Ridgeway. The Cold War stakes were high, but the government's effort to fight a limited war caused frustration among many Americans who could not understand the need for restraint. Truman's popularity plunged to a 24-percent approval rating, the lowest of any president since pollsters began to measure presidential popularity.

Truce talks began in July 1951. The two sides finally reached an agreement in July 1953, during the first term of Dwight Eisenhower, Truman's successor.

Cold War struggles were also occurring in the Middle East. Strategically important as a supplier of oil, the region appeared vulnerable in 1946, when Soviet troops failed to leave Iran as promised, even after British and American forces had already withdrawn. The U.S. demanded a U.N. condemnation of Moscow's continued troop presence. When the United States observed Soviet tanks entering the region, Washington readied for a direct clash. Confronted by U.S. resolve, the Soviets withdrew their forces.

Two years later, the United States officially recognized the new state of Israel 15 minutes after it was proclaimed -- a decision Truman made over strong resistance from Marshall and the State Department. While cultivating close ties with Israel, the United States still sought to keep the friendship of Arab states opposed to Israel.

EISENHOWER AND THE COLD WAR

Dwight D. Eisenhower, who assumed the presidency in 1953, was different from his predecessor. A war hero, he had a natural, homey manner that made him widely popular. "I like Ike" was the ubiquitous campaign slogan of the time. In the postwar years, he served as army chief of staff, the president of Columbia University and finally head of NATO before seeking the Republican presidential nomination. Although he was skillful at getting people to work together, he sought to play a restrained public role.

Still, he shared with Truman a basic view of American foreign policy. Eisenhower, too, perceived communism as a monolithic force struggling for world supremacy. He believed that Moscow, under leaders such as Stalin, was trying to orchestrate worldwide revolution. In his first inaugural address, he declared, "Forces of good and evil are massed and armed and opposed as rarely before in history. Freedom is pitted against slavery, lightness against dark."

In office, Eisenhower and his secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, argued that containment did not go far enough to stop Soviet expansion. Rather, a more aggressive policy of liberation was necessary, to free those subjugated by communism. But for all of the rhetoric, when democratic rebellions broke out in areas under Soviet domination -- such as in Hungary in 1956 -- the United States stood back as Soviet forces suppressed them.

Eisenhower's basic commitment to contain communism remained, and to that end he increased American reliance on a nuclear shield. The Manhattan Project during World War II had created the first atomic bombs. In 1950 Truman had authorized the development of a new and more powerful hydrogen weapon. Now Eisenhower, in an effort to keep budget expenditures under control, proposed a policy of "massive retaliation." The United States, under this doctrine, was prepared to use atomic weapons if the nation or its vital interests were attacked.

In practice, however, Eisenhower deployed U.S. military forces with great caution, resisting all suggestions to consider the use of nuclear weapons in Indochina, where the French were ousted by Vietnamese communist forces in 1954, or in Taiwan, where the United States pledged to defend the Nationalist Chinese regime against attack by the People's Republic of China.

In the Middle East, Eisenhower resisted the use of force when British and French forces occupied the Suez Canal and Israel invaded the Sinai in 1956, following Egypt's nationalization of the canal. Under heavy U.S. pressure, British, French and Israeli forces withdrew from Egypt, which retained control of the canal.

THE COLD WAR AT HOME

Not only did the Cold War shape U.S. foreign policy, it also had a profound effect on domestic affairs. Americans had long feared radical subversion, and during the Red Scare of 1919-1920, the government had attempted to remove perceived threats to American society. Even stronger efforts were made after World War II to root out communism within the United States. Foreign events and espionage scandals contributed to the anti-communist hysteria of the period. In 1949 the Soviet Union exploded its own atomic device, which shocked Americans into believing that the United States would be the target of a Soviet attack. In 1948 Alger Hiss, who had been an assistant secretary of state and an adviser to Roosevelt at Yalta, was accused of being a communist spy by Whitaker Chambers, a former Soviet agent. Hiss denied the accusation, but in 1950 he was convicted of perjury. Finally, in 1950, the government uncovered a British-American spy network that transferred to the Soviet Union materials about the development of the atomic bomb. The capture and trial of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg for revealing atomic secrets furthered the perception of a domestic communist danger. Attorney General J. Howard McGrath declared there were many American communists, each bearing "the germ of death for society."

When Republicans were victorious in the midterm congressional elections of 1946 and appeared ready to investigate subversive activity, the president established a Federal Employee Loyalty Program. Workers challenged about past and present associations often had little chance to fight back.

Congress, meanwhile, embarked upon its own loyalty program. In 1947 the House Committee on Un-American Activities investigated the motion-picture industry to determine whether communist sentiments were being reflected in popular films. When some writers refused to testify, they were cited for contempt and sent to prison. In response, Hollywood capitulated and refused to hire anyone with a marginally questionable past.

But the most vigorous anti-communist warrior was Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, a Republican from Wisconsin. He gained national attention in 1950 by claiming that he had a list of 205 known communists in the State Department. Though McCarthy subsequently changed this figure several times and failed to substantiate any of his charges, he struck a responsive public chord.

McCarthy gained power when the Republican Party won control of the Senate in 1952. As a committee chairman, he now had a forum for his crusade. Relying on extensive press and television coverage, he continued to charge top-level officials with treachery. Playing on his tough reputation, he often used vulgarity to characterize the "vile and scurrilous" objects of his attack.

But McCarthy went too far. Though polls showed half the public behind him, McCarthy overstepped himself by challenging the United States Army when one of his assistants was drafted. Television in its infancy brought the hearings into millions of homes. Many Americans saw McCarthy's savage tactics for the first time, and as public support began to wane, the Senate finally condemned him for his conduct.

Until then, however, McCarthy exerted enormous power in the United States. He offered scapegoats to those worried about the stalemate in Korea or about communist gains. He heightened fears aroused by the Truman administration's own anti-communist effort and legitimized tactics that were often used against innocent people. In short, McCarthy represented the worst domestic excesses of the Cold War.

THE POSTWAR ECONOMY: 1945-1960

As the Cold War unfolded in the decade and a half after World War II, the United States experienced phenomenal economic growth. The war brought the return of prosperity, and in the postwar period the United States consolidated its position as the world's richest country. Gross national product, a measure of all goods and services produced in the United States, jumped from about \$200 thousand-million in 1940 to \$300 thousand-million in 1950 to more than \$500 thousand-million in 1960. More and more Americans now considered themselves part of the middle class.

The growth had different sources. The automobile industry was partially responsible, as the number of automobiles produced annually quadrupled between 1946 and 1955. A housing boom, stimulated in part by easily affordable mortgages for returning servicemen, fueled the expansion. The rise in defense spending as the Cold War escalated also played a part.

After 1945 the major corporations in America grew even larger. There had been earlier waves of mergers in the 1890s and in the 1920s; in the 1950s another wave occurred. New conglomerates-- firms with holdings in a variety of industries -- led the way. International Telephone and Telegraph, for example, bought Sheraton Hotels, Continental Baking, Hartford Fire Insurance, and Avis Rent-a-Car, among other companies. Smaller franchise operations like McDonald's fast-food restaurants provided still another pattern. Large corporations also developed holdings overseas, where labor costs were often lower.

Workers found their own lives changing as industrial America changed. Fewer workers produced goods; more provided services. By 1956 a majority held white-collar jobs, working as corporate managers, teachers, salespersons and office employees. Some firms granted a guaranteed annual wage, long-term employment contracts and other benefits. With such changes, labor militancy was undermined and some class distinctions began to fade.

Farmers, on the other hand, faced tough times. Gains in productivity led to agricultural consolidation, as farming became a big business. Family farms, in turn, found it difficult to compete, and more and more farmers left the land.

Other Americans moved too. In the postwar period the West and the Southwest continued to grow -- a trend that would continue through the end of the century. Sun Belt cities like Houston, Texas; Miami, Florida; Albuquerque, New Mexico; and Tucson and Phoenix, Arizona, expanded rapidly. Los Angeles, California, moved ahead of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as the third largest U.S. city. By 1963 California had more people than New York.

An even more important form of movement led Americans out of inner cities into new suburbs, where they hoped to find affordable housing for the larger families spawned by the postwar baby boom. Developers like William J. Levitt built new communities -- with homes that all looked alike -- using the techniques of mass production. Levitt's houses were prefabricated, or partly assembled in a factory rather than on the final location. The homes were modest, but Levitt's methods cut costs and allowed new owners to possess at least a part of the American dream.

As suburbs grew, businesses moved into the new areas. Large shopping centers containing a great variety of stores changed consumer patterns. The number of these centers rose from eight at the end of World War II to 3,840 in 1960. With easy parking and convenient evening hours, customers could avoid city shopping entirely.

New highways created better access to the suburbs and its shops. The Highway Act of 1956 provided \$26 thousand-million, the largest public works expenditure in U.S. history, to build more than 64,000 kilometers of federal roads to link together all parts of the country.

Television, too, had a powerful impact on social and economic patterns. Developed in the 1930s, it was not widely marketed until after the war. In 1946 the country had fewer than 17,000 television sets. Three years later consumers were buying 250,000 sets a month, and by 1960 three-quarters of all families owned at least one set. In the middle of the decade, the average family watched television four to five hours a day. Popular shows for children included *Howdy Doody Time* and *The Mickey Mouse Club*; older viewers preferred situation comedies like *I Love Lucy* and *Father Knows Best*. Americans of all ages became exposed to increasingly sophisticated advertisements for products said to be necessary for the good life.

THE FAIR DEAL

The Fair Deal was the name given to Harry Truman's domestic program. Building on Roosevelt's New Deal, Truman believed that the federal government should guarantee economic opportunity and social stability, and he struggled to achieve those ends in the face of fierce political opposition from conservative legislators determined to reduce the role of government.

Truman's first priority in the immediate postwar period was to make the transition to a peacetime economy. Servicemen wanted to come home quickly, but once they arrived they faced competition for housing and employment. The G.I. Bill, passed before the end of the war, helped ease servicemen back into civilian life by providing such benefits as guaranteed loans for home-buying and financial aid for industrial training and university education.

More troubling was labor unrest. As war production ceased, many workers found themselves without jobs. Others wanted pay increases they felt were long overdue. In 1946, 4.6 million workers went on strike, more than ever before in American history. They challenged the automobile, steel and electrical industries. When they took on the railroads and soft-coal mines, Truman intervened, but in so doing he alienated millions of working-class Americans.

While dealing with immediately pressing issues, Truman also provided a broader agenda for action. Less than a week after the war ended, he presented Congress with a 21-point program, which provided for protection against unfair employment practices, a higher minimum wage, greater unemployment compensation and housing assistance. In the next several months, he added other proposals for health insurance and atomic energy legislation. But this scattershot approach often left Truman's priorities unclear.

Republicans were quick to attack. In the 1946 congressional elections they asked, "Had enough?" and voters responded that they had. Republicans, with majorities in both houses of Congress for the first time since 1928, were determined to reverse the liberal direction of the Roosevelt years.

Truman fought with the Congress as it cut spending and reduced taxes. In 1948 he sought reelection, despite polls indicating that he had no chance. After a vigorous campaign, Truman scored one of the great upsets in American politics, defeating the Republican nominee, Thomas Dewey, governor of New York. Reviving the old New Deal coalition, Truman held on to labor, farmers and black voters, and so won another term.

When Truman finally left office in 1953, his Fair Deal was but a mixed success. In July 1948 he banned racial discrimination in federal government hiring practices and ordered an end to segregation in the military. The minimum wage had risen, and social security programs had expanded. A housing program brought some gains but left many needs unmet. National health insurance and aid-to-education measures never made it through Congress. Truman's preoccupation with Cold War affairs hampered his effectiveness at home, particularly in the face of intense opposition.

EISENHOWER'S APPROACH

Dwight Eisenhower accepted the basic framework of government responsibility established by the New Deal, but sought to limit the presidential role. He termed his approach "dynamic conservatism" or "modern Republicanism," which meant, he explained, "conservative when it comes to money, liberal when it comes to human beings." A critic countered that Eisenhower appeared to argue that he would "strongly recommend the building of a great many schools...but not provide the money."

Eisenhower's first priority was to balance the budget after years of deficits. He wanted to cut spending, cut taxes and maintain the value of the dollar. Republicans were willing to risk unemployment to keep inflation in check. Reluctant to stimulate the economy too much, they saw the country suffer three recessions in eight years.

In other areas, the administration transferred control of offshore oil lands from the federal government to the states. It also favored private development of energy sources rather than the public approach the Democrats had initiated. In everything the Eisenhower administration undertook, its orientation was sympathetic to business.

Eisenhower's inclination to play a modest role in public often led to legislative stalemate. Still, he was active behind the scenes pushing his favorite programs. And he was one of the few presidents who left office as popular as when he entered it.

THE CULTURE OF THE 1950s

During the 1950s, a sense of uniformity pervaded American society. Conformity was common, as young and old alike followed group norms rather than striking out on their own. Though men and women had been forced into new employment patterns during World War II, once the war was over, traditional roles were reaffirmed. Men expected to be the breadwinners; women, even when they worked, assumed their proper place was at home. Sociologist David Riesman observed the importance of peer-group expectations in his influential book, *The Lonely Crowd*. He called this new society "other-directed," and maintained that such societies lead to stability as well as conformity. Television contributed to the homogenizing trend by providing young and old with a shared experience reflecting accepted social patterns.

But not all Americans conformed to such cultural norms. A number of writers, members of the so-called "beat generation," rebelled against conventional values. Stressing spontaneity and spirituality, they asserted intuition over reason, Eastern mysticism over Western institutionalized religion. The "beats" went out of their way to challenge the patterns of respectability and shock the rest of the culture.

Their literary work displayed their sense of freedom. Jack Kerouac typed his best-selling novel *On the Road* on a 75-meter roll of paper. Lacking accepted punctuation and paragraph structure, the book glorified the possibilities of the free life. Poet Allen Ginsberg gained similar notoriety for his poem "Howl," a scathing critique of modern, mechanized civilization. When police charged that it was obscene and seized the published version, Ginsberg won national acclaim with a successful court challenge.

Musicians and artists rebelled as well. Tennessee singer Elvis Presley popularized black music in the form of rock and roll, and shocked more staid Americans with his ducktail haircut and undulating hips. In addition, Elvis and other rock and roll singers demonstrated that there was a white audience for black music, thus testifying to the increasing integration of American culture. Painters like Jackson Pollock discarded easels and laid out gigantic canvases on the floor, then applied paint, sand and other materials in wild splashes of color. All of these artists and authors, whatever the medium, provided models for the wider and more deeply felt social revolution of the 1960s.

ORIGINS OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

African Americans became increasingly restive in the postwar years. During the war they had challenged discrimination in the military services and in the work force, and they had made limited gains. Millions of blacks had left southern farms for northern cities, where they hoped to find better jobs. They found instead crowded conditions in urban slums. Now, black servicemen returned home, intent on rejecting second-class citizenship, as other blacks began to argue that the time was ripe for racial equality.

Jackie Robinson dramatized the racial question in 1947 when he broke baseball's color line and began playing in the major leagues. A member of the Brooklyn Dodgers, he often faced trouble with opponents and teammates as well. But an outstanding first season led to his acceptance and eased the way for other black players, who now left the Negro leagues to which they had been confined.

Government officials, and many other Americans, discovered the connection between racial problems and Cold War politics. As the leader of the free world, the United States sought support in Africa and Asia. Discrimination at home impeded the effort to win friends in other parts of the world.

Harry Truman supported the civil rights movement. He believed in political equality, though not in social equality, and recognized the growing importance of the black urban vote. When apprised in 1946 of lynchings and other forms of mob violence still practiced in the South, he appointed a committee on civil rights to investigate discrimination based on race and religion. The report, issued the next year, documented blacks' second-class status in American life. It asserted the need for the federal government to secure the rights guaranteed to all citizens.

Truman responded by sending a 10-point civil rights program to Congress. When Southern Democrats, angry about a stronger civil rights stance, left the party in 1948, Truman issued an executive order barring discrimination in federal employment, ordered equal treatment in the armed forces and appointed a committee to work toward an end to military segregation. The last military restrictions ended during the Korean War.

Blacks in the South enjoyed few, if any, civil and political rights. More than 1 million black soldiers fought in World War II, but those who came from the South could not vote. Blacks who tried to register faced the likelihood of beatings, loss of job, loss of credit or eviction from their land. Lynchings still occurred, and Jim Crow laws enforced segregation of the races in street cars, trains, hotels, restaurants, hospitals, recreational facilities and employment.

DESEGREGATION

Blacks took matters into their own hands. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was determined to overturn the judicial doctrine, established in the court case *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896, that segregation of black and white students in schools was constitutional if facilities were "separate but equal." That decree had been used for decades to sanction rigid segregation in the South, where facilities were seldom, if ever, equal.

Blacks achieved their goal of overturning *Plessy* in 1954 when the Supreme Court -- presided over by an Eisenhower appointee, Chief Justice Earl Warren -- handed down its *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. The Court declared unanimously that "separate facilities are inherently unequal," and decreed that the "separate but equal" doctrine could no longer be used in public schools. A year later, the Supreme Court demanded that local school boards move "with all deliberate speed" to implement the decision.

Eisenhower, although sympathetic to the needs of the South as it faced a major transition, nonetheless acted quickly to see that the law was upheld. He ordered the desegregation of Washington, D.C., schools to serve as a model for the rest of the country, and sought to end discrimination in other areas as well.

He faced a major crisis in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957. Just before implementation of a desegregation plan calling for the admission of nine black students to a previously all-white high school, the governor declared that violence threatened, and posted Arkansas National Guardsmen to keep peace by turning the black students away. When a federal court ordered the troops to leave, the students came to school, only to encounter belligerent taunts. As mobs became hostile, the black students left.

Eisenhower responded by placing the National Guardsmen under federal command and calling them back to Little Rock. He was reluctant to do so because federal troops had not been used to protect black rights since the end of Reconstruction, but he knew he had no choice. And so desegregation began with soldiers standing in classrooms to ensure the rule of law.

Another milestone in the civil rights movement occurred in 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama. Rosa Parks, a 42-year-old black seamstress who was also secretary of the state chapter of the NAACP, sat down in the front of a bus in a section reserved by law and custom for whites. Ordered to move to the back, she refused. Police came and arrested her for violating the segregation statutes. Black leaders, who had been waiting for just such a case, organized a boycott of the bus system. Martin Luther King Jr., a young minister of the Baptist church where the blacks met, became a spokesman for the protest. "There comes a time," he said, "when people get tired...of being kicked about by the brutal feet of oppression." King was arrested, as he would be again and again, but blacks in Montgomery sustained the boycott and cut gross bus revenue by 65 percent. About a year later, the Supreme Court ruled that bus segregation, like school segregation, was unconstitutional. The boycott ended. The civil rights movement had won an important victory -- and discovered its most powerful, thoughtful and eloquent leader in Martin Luther King Jr.

African Americans also sought to secure their voting rights. Although the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteed the right to vote, many states had found ways -- whether by a poll ("head") tax or a literacy test -- to circumvent the law. Eisenhower, working with Senate majority leader Lyndon B. Johnson, lent his support to a congressional effort to guarantee the vote. The Civil Rights Act of 1957, the first such measure in 82 years, marked a step forward, as it authorized federal intervention in cases where blacks were denied the chance to vote. Yet loopholes remained, and so activists pushed successfully for the Civil Rights Act of 1960, which provided stiffer penalties for interfering with voting, but still stopped short of authorizing federal officials to register blacks.

Relying on the efforts of black Americans themselves, the civil rights movement gained momentum in the postwar years. Working through the Supreme Court and through Congress, civil rights supporters created the groundwork for an even more extensive movement in the 1960s.



An Outline of American History

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CHAPTER TWELVE: DECADES OF CHANGE

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"I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood." Martin Luther King Jr., 1963

By 1960 government had become an increasingly powerful force in people's lives. During the 1930s, The White House had initiated legislation and worked closely with Congress to ease the trauma of the Great Depression. New executive agencies were created to deal with many aspects of American life. The number of civilians employed by the federal government rose from 1 million to 3.8 million during World War II, then stabilized at 2.5 million throughout the 1950s. Federal expenditures, which had stood at \$3.1 thousand-million in 1929, increased to \$75 thousand-million in 1953 and passed \$150 thousand-million in the 1960s.

Most Americans accepted government's expanded role, even as they disagreed about how far that expansion should continue. Democrats wanted the government to use its power to ensure growth and stability. They wanted to extend federal benefits for education, health and welfare. Republicans, while accepting government's basic and necessary responsibility, hoped to cap spending and restore a larger measure of individual initiative.

KENNEDY AND THE NEW FRONTIER

John F. Kennedy, Democratic victor in the election of 1960, was at 43 the youngest man ever to win the presidency. On television, in a series of debates with opponent Richard Nixon, he appeared able, articulate and energetic. In the campaign, he spoke of moving aggressively into the new decade, for "the New Frontier is here whether we seek it or not." In his first inaugural address he concluded with an eloquent plea: "Ask not what your country can do for you -- ask what you can do for your country." Throughout his brief presidency, Kennedy's special combination of grace, wit and style sustained his popularity and influenced generations of politicians to come.

Kennedy wanted to exert strong leadership to extend economic benefits to all citizens, but a razor-thin margin of victory limited his mandate. Even though the Democratic Party controlled both houses of Congress, conservative Southerners resisted plans to increase federal aid to education, provide health insurance for the elderly and create a new Department of Urban Affairs. And so, despite his rhetoric, Kennedy's policies were often limited and restrained.

One priority was to end a recession and restore growth. But Kennedy lost the confidence of business leaders in 1962, when he sought to roll back what the administration regarded as an excessive price increase in the steel industry. Though he succeeded in his immediate goal, he alienated an important source of support. When he later called for a large tax cut to provide capital and stimulate the economy, conservative opposition in Congress destroyed any hopes of passing the deficit measure.

The overall legislative record of the Kennedy administration was meager. The president made some gestures toward civil rights leaders but did not embrace the goals of the civil rights movement until nearly the end of his presidency. He failed in his effort to aid public education and to provide medical care for the elderly. He gained only a modest increase in the minimum wage. Still, he did secure funding for a space program, and established the Peace Corps to send men and women overseas to assist developing countries in meeting their own needs. Kennedy had planned an ambitious legislative program for the last year of his term. But then on November 22, 1963, he was assassinated while riding in an open car during a visit to Dallas, Texas.

It was a traumatic and defining moment for a generation, just as the death of Franklin Roosevelt had been for an earlier one. In retrospect, Kennedy's liberal reputation stems more from his style and ideals than from the implementation of his policies; but because the agenda set out in the last year of his presidency was enacted in 1964-1966, he was seen as a liberal force for change after his death.

LYNDON JOHNSON AND THE GREAT SOCIETY

Lyndon Johnson, a Texan who was majority leader in the Senate before becoming Kennedy's vice president, was a masterful politician. He had been schooled in Congress, where he developed an extraordinary ability to get things done. He could plead, cajole or threaten as necessary to achieve his ends. As president, he wanted to use his power aggressively to eliminate poverty and spread the benefits of prosperity to all.

Johnson took office determined to secure the measures that Kennedy had sought. Immediate priorities were bills to reduce taxes and guarantee civil rights. Using his skills of persuasion and calling on the legislators' respect for the slain president, in 1964 Johnson succeeded in gaining passage of the Civil Rights Bill. Introduced by Kennedy, it was the most far-reaching piece of civil rights legislation enacted since Reconstruction. Soon Johnson addressed other issues as well. By the spring of 1964, he had begun to use the name "Great Society" to describe his reform program, and that term received even more play after his landslide victory over conservative Republican Barry Goldwater in the presidential election of that year. On the economic front, Johnson pushed successfully for a tax cut, then pressed for a poverty program Kennedy had initiated. "This administration today, here and now, declares unconditional war on poverty in America," he announced. The Office of Economic Opportunity provided training for the poor and established various community-action programs to give the poor themselves a voice in housing, health and education programs.

Medical care came next. Truman had proposed a centralized scheme more than 20 years earlier, but had failed to gain congressional passage. Under Johnson's leadership, Congress enacted Medicare, a health insurance program for the elderly, and Medicaid, a program providing health-care assistance for the poor.

Similarly, Johnson succeeded in the effort to provide aid for elementary and secondary schooling where Kennedy had failed. The measure that was enacted gave money to the states based on the number of their children from low-income families. Funds could be used to assist public- and private-school children alike.

The Great Society reached even further. A new housing act provided rent supplements for the poor and established a Department of Housing and Urban Development. An immigration measure finally replaced the discriminatory quotas set in 1924. Federal assistance went to artists and scholars to encourage their work.

The Johnson administration also addressed transportation safety issues, in part because of the efforts of a young lawyer, lobbyist and consultant named Ralph Nader. In his 1965 book, *Unsafe at Any Speed: The Designed-In Dangers of the American Automobile*, Nader argued that many cars could cause death or damage in even low-speed accidents. Nader said that automobile manufacturers were sacrificing safety features for style, and he named specific models in which faulty engineering contributed to highway fatalities. In September 1966, Johnson signed into law two transportation bills. The first provided funds to state and local governments for developing safety programs, while the other set up federal safety standards for cars and tires. In all, the Great Society was the greatest burst of legislative activity since the New Deal. But support for the Johnson administration policies began to weaken as early as 1966. Some of Johnson's programs did not live up to expectations; many programs went underfunded. Still, the Great Society achieved some reductions in poverty -- between 1965 and 1968, for example, black-family income rose from 54 percent to 60 percent of white-family income.

CONFRONTATION OVER CUBA

In the 1960s and 1970s, the United States remained locked in bitter conflict with communist countries. Most American leaders throughout the period saw the world in Cold War terms and sought to counter the perceived threat of the Soviet bloc. Cuba became a battleground in the Kennedy years.

Ever since Fidel Castro's revolutionary army seized power in 1959 and gained the support of the Soviet Union, relations with Cuba had been strained. The United States broke diplomatic ties just before Kennedy assumed office, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) began training Cuban exiles to invade their homeland and spark an uprising.

The attack at the Bay of Pigs in the spring of 1961 failed miserably. Kennedy, who approved the plan initiated by the Eisenhower administration, accepted responsibility for the defeat.

The next year, seeking to recoup lost prestige, Kennedy stood firm when he learned the Soviet Union was secretly installing offensive nuclear missiles in Cuba. After considering different options, he decided on a quarantine to prevent Soviet ships from bringing additional missiles to Cuba, and he demanded publicly that the Soviets remove the weapons. After several days of tension, during which the world was closer than ever before to nuclear war, the Soviets backed down. Supporters applauded Kennedy's courage; critics charged that he risked nuclear disaster when quiet diplomacy might have been more appropriate. In retrospect, however, the Cuban missile crisis marked a turning point in U.S.-Soviet relations as both sides saw the need to defuse tensions that could lead to direct military conflict. The following year, the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain signed a landmark Limited Test Ban Treaty, which prohibited nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere.

THE SPACE PROGRAM

Space became another arena for competition after the Soviet Union launched Sputnik -- an artificial satellite -- in 1957. Americans were chastened, for the Russians had beaten them into orbit with a rocket that could have easily carried a nuclear bomb. The United States only managed to launch its first satellite, Explorer I, in 1958. The public mood worsened when the Soviets placed the first man in orbit in 1961. Kennedy responded by committing the United States to land a man on the moon and bring him back "before this decade is out."

With Project Mercury, in August 1962 John H. Glenn Jr. became the first U.S. astronaut to orbit the Earth. In the mid-1960s, U.S. scientists used the Gemini program to examine the effects of prolonged space flight on man. Gemini, Latin for "twins," carried two astronauts, one more than the earlier Mercury series and one less than subsequent Apollo spacecraft. Gemini achieved several firsts, including an eight-day mission in August 1965 -- the longest space flight at that time -- and in November 1966, the first automatically controlled reentry into the Earth's atmosphere. Gemini also accomplished the first manned linkup of two spacecraft in flight as well as the first U.S. walks in space.

The Apollo project achieved Kennedy's goal. In July 1969, with hundreds of millions of television viewers watching around the world, Neil A. Armstrong became the first human to walk on the surface of the moon.

Other Apollo flights followed, but many Americans began to question the value of manned space flight. In the early 1970s, as other priorities became more pressing, the United States scaled down the space program. Some Apollo missions were scrapped; only one of two proposed Skylab space stations was built.

THE WAR IN VIETNAM

Indochina was still another Cold War battlefield. France had controlled Vietnam since the middle of the 19th century, only to be supplanted by Japan during the Second World War. Meanwhile, Ho Chi Minh, a Vietnamese communist, sought to liberate his nation from colonial rule and took the American War for Independence as his model. After the Allies defeated the Japanese in 1945, they still had to deal with Ho Chi Minh.

France, hoping to regain great-power status, insisted on returning to Vietnam. Ho refused to back down, and the war for liberation continued. The United States, eager to maintain French support for the policy of containment in Europe, provided France with economic aid that freed resources for the struggle in Vietnam. Even that assistance could not prevent French defeat in 1954. At an international conference in Geneva, Vietnam was divided, with Ho in power in the North and Ngo Dinh Diem, a Roman Catholic anti-communist in a largely Buddhist population, heading the government in the South. Elections were to be held two years later to unify the country.

Persuaded that the fall of Vietnam could lead to the fall of Burma, Thailand and Indonesia, Eisenhower backed Diem's refusal to hold elections in 1956 and began to increase economic and military aid. Kennedy increased assistance, and sent small numbers of military advisors, but still the struggle between North and South continued. Diem's unpopularity culminated in his overthrow and death in 1963.

The situation was more unstable than ever before. Guerrillas in the South, known as Viet Cong, challenged the South Vietnamese government, sometimes covertly, sometimes through the National Liberation Front, their political arm. Aided by North Vietnam, they gained ground, especially among the peasants in the countryside. Determined to halt communist advances in South Vietnam, Johnson made the Vietnam War his own. After a North Vietnamese naval attack on two American destroyers, Johnson won from Congress on August 7, 1964, passage of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which allowed the president to "take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression." After his re-election in November 1964, he embarked on a policy of escalation. From 25,000 troops at the start of 1965, the number of soldiers -- both volunteers and draftees -- rose to 500,000 by 1968. A massive bombing campaign wrought havoc in both North and South Vietnam.

With grisly battles shown on television, Americans began to protest their country's involvement in the war. Such foreign policy specialists as George Kennan found fault with U.S. policies. Others argued that the U.S. had no strategy for ending the war. Americans watched as the massive military campaign seemed to have no effect on the course of the war. Public dissatisfaction with U.S. policy, especially among the young, pressured Johnson to begin negotiating for peace.

Anti-war sentiment in 1968 led Johnson to renounce any intention of seeking another term. At the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Illinois, protesters fought street battles with police. The chaos in the Democratic Party, especially after the murder of Robert Kennedy in June; white opposition to the civil rights measures of the 1960s; and the third-party candidacy of Alabama Governor George Wallace (who won his home state, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana and Georgia) helped elect Republican Richard Nixon, who ran on a plan to extricate the United States from the war and to increase "law and order" at home.

While slowly withdrawing American troops, Nixon ordered some of the most fearful bombing in the war. He also invaded Cambodia in 1970 to cut off North Vietnamese supply lines, which passed through there to South Vietnam. This led to another round of protests and demonstrations, as students in many universities took to the streets. In one such demonstration, at Kent State in Ohio, national guard troops who had been called in to restore order panicked and killed four students.

A cease-fire, negotiated for the United States by Nixon's national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, was finally signed in 1973. Although American troops departed, the war lingered on into the spring of 1975, when North Vietnam consolidated its control over the entire country.

The war had a tremendous price. It left Vietnam devastated, with millions maimed or killed. The United States spent over \$150 thousand-million in a losing effort that cost 58,000 American lives. The war also ended the Cold War foreign policy consensus. The public found that certain American military units had engaged in atrocities in Vietnam and that the government had lied about the circumstances surrounding the Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964. Many Americans were horrified at the invasion of Cambodia. The war led many young Americans to question the actions of their own nation and the values it sought to uphold.

DETENTE

As the war wound down, the Nixon administration was able to deal pragmatically with the major communist powers. The most dramatic step was opening ties to the People's Republic of China. In the two decades since Mao Zedong's victory, the United States had argued that the Nationalist government on Taiwan represented all of China. In 1971 and 1972, Nixon softened the American stance, eased trading restrictions and became the first American president ever to visit Beijing.

With the Soviet Union, Nixon was equally successful in pursuing a policy of detente. Several months after his trip to China, he visited the Soviet Union. He held several cordial meetings with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in which they agreed to limit stockpiles of missiles, cooperate in space and ease trading restrictions. The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) culminated in 1972 in an arms control agreement limiting the growth of nuclear arsenals and restricting anti-ballistic missile systems.

NIXON'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND DEFEATS

Nixon took office after eight years of Democratic rule. Vice president under Eisenhower before his unsuccessful run for the presidency in 1960, Nixon embraced politics, but without the passion of President Johnson. Distant often appearing ill at ease, he was always calculating his next move. That helped him at first, but finally led to his downfall.

Although Nixon subscribed to the Republican value of fiscal responsibility, he recognized the need for government's expanded role and accepted the basic contours of the welfare state. He simply wanted to manage its programs better.

Nixon confronted a series of economic problems during his presidency. By 1973 the inflation rate was 9 percent; the Dow-Jones average of industrial stocks fell 36 percent between November 1968 and May 1970; and the unemployment rate reached 6.6 percent by the end of 1970. Nixon imposed wage-price controls in 1971, but they did little good.

Factors beyond Nixon's control undermined his economic policies. In 1973 the war between Israel, Egypt and Syria prompted Saudi Arabia to impose an embargo on oil shipped to Israel's ally, the United States. Other member nations of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) quadrupled their prices. Americans faced both shortages and rapidly rising prices. Even when the embargo ended the next year, prices remained high. Higher energy prices affected all areas of American economic life: in 1974 inflation reached 12 percent, causing disruptions that led to even higher unemployment rates. This era of recession and inflation ("stagflation") brought an end to the unprecedented economic boom America had enjoyed since 1948.

While trying to manage the economy, Nixon also sought to restore "law and order." Rising crime rates in American cities and political protests, increased drug use and more permissive views about sex in U.S. universities offended many Americans. Seeking to strengthen his own political constituency, Nixon chose to use government power to counter disruption. He lashed out at demonstrators, attacked the press for distorted coverage and sought to silence his opponents.

That strategy backfired in the Watergate affair. Facing Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress during his first term, Nixon wanted to win an overwhelming re-election victory in 1972 that would bring Republican congressional majorities and end the legislative stalemate. The Committee to Re-elect the President launched a massive fund-raising campaign to collect money before contributions had to be reported under a new law.

Early in 1972, Nixon's team proposed to tap the telephones of the Democratic National Committee in the Watergate apartment complex in Washington, D.C. The attempt failed. When the burglars, carrying money and documents that could ultimately be traced to The White House, were arrested, the administration decided to cover up its involvement. Six days after the discovery of the break-in, Nixon told the Central Intelligence Agency to order the Federal Bureau of Investigation to cease its investigation on the grounds that national security was at stake. In fact, the break-in was just one aspect of a campaign to locate and destroy people whom the administration considered its "enemies." These activities involved illegal wiretapping, break-ins and fundraising. Although Nixon was overwhelmingly re-elected that year, the press, particularly the Washington Post, continued to investigate. As the scandal unfolded, the Democratic majority in the Congress instituted impeachment proceedings against Nixon. As the evidence of his involvement began to mount, he resigned on August 9, 1974.

THE FORD INTERLUDE

Gerald Ford, an unpretentious man who had spent most of his public life in Congress, became Nixon's vice president following the resignation of the previous vice president, Spiro T. Agnew, after it was revealed that he had accepted bribes both before and during his term as vice president. Twenty months later, upon Nixon's resignation, Ford became president. His first priority was to restore trust in the government, which had been shaken by impeachment proceedings aimed at removing Nixon from office. Initially Ford enjoyed a great deal of confidence, but it quickly eroded when he pardoned Nixon and thus headed off any possible prosecution in the future.

In public policy, Ford followed the course Nixon had set. Economic problems remained serious, as inflation and unemployment continued to rise and the gross national product fell. Ford first tried to cajole the public, much as Herbert Hoover had done in 1929. When that failed, he imposed measures to curb inflation, which led to a 12-percent unemployment rate, and the most serious recession since the Great Depression. A tax cut, coupled with higher unemployment benefits, led to modest recovery, but still no end to economic difficulties.

THE CARTER YEARS

Jimmy Carter, former Democratic governor of Georgia, won the presidency in 1976. Portraying himself during the campaign as an outsider to Washington politics, he promised a fresh approach to governing, but his very lack of experience at the national level complicated his tenure from the start. A naval officer and engineer by training, he often appeared to be a technocrat, when Americans wanted someone more vibrant to lead the way through troubled times.

In economic affairs, Carter at first permitted a policy of deficit spending. When the Federal Reserve Board, responsible for setting monetary policy, increased the money supply to cover deficits, inflation rose to 10 percent a year. Carter responded by cutting the budget to slow inflation, but cuts affected social programs at the heart of Democratic policy. By the end of his term, with deficits still high, the alienation of the business community could be seen in falling bond prices and rising interest rates.

Carter also faced criticism for his failure to develop an effective energy policy. He presented a comprehensive program, aimed at reducing dependence on foreign oil, that he called the "moral equivalent of war." Opponents thwarted it in Congress.

Though Carter called himself a populist, his political priorities were never wholly clear. He endorsed government's protective role, but then began the process of deregulation -- the removal of governmental controls in economic life. Arguing that some restrictions over the course of the past century limited competition and increased consumer costs, he favored decontrol in the oil, airline, railroad and trucking industries.

Carter hoped to reestablish Democratic leadership, but his efforts failed to gain either public or congressional support. By the end of his term, his disapproval rating reached 77 percent, and Americans began to look toward the Republican Party again.

POST-VIETNAM FOREIGN POLICY

In the aftermath of the Vietnam War, the United States continued to pursue an active policy in world affairs, addressing issues in Europe, the Middle East and Latin America. However, in the late 1970s, serious problems emerged in relations with the Soviet Union, and particularly with Iran.

President Ford continued the Nixon administration policy of pursuing detente with the Soviet Union. In November 1974, Ford met with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in Vladivostok. The meeting resulted in a preliminary agreement on further U.S.-Soviet arms control measures. It also helped pave the way for a multi-nation conference in Helsinki, Finland, in 1975.

The Helsinki Conference, the largest summit meeting in European history, was attended by the leaders of 35 European countries as well as the United States and Canada. The conference produced a historic 30,000-word Final Act, which incorporated some significant points championed by Western countries as well as some advocated by regimes in the Eastern bloc. It recognized the permanence of the changes in European borders after World War II -- an acknowledgment that Moscow had long sought. The Helsinki Final Act also contained pledges to respect individual rights and human liberties. Western nations hoped to increase pressure on Eastern bloc governments by getting them to sign the pledge. In fact, Western nations effectively used periodic "Helsinki review meetings" to call attention to various abuses of human rights by communist regimes of the Eastern bloc.

President Jimmy Carter helped to achieve a significant breakthrough between Egypt and Israel in which these countries ended 30 years in a state of war. Acting as both mediator and participant, Carter met in 1978 at Camp David, Maryland, the presidential retreat, with Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin to negotiate a peace settlement. Both leaders returned to the United States to sign the peace treaty at The White House in March 1979.

After protracted and often emotional debate, Carter also secured Senate ratification of treaties returning the Panama Canal to Panama by the year 2000. And he followed Nixon's lead as he extended formal diplomatic recognition to the People's Republic of China.

But Carter enjoyed less success with the Soviet Union. Though he assumed office with detente at high tide and declared that the United States had escaped its "inordinate fear of communism," his insistence that "our commitment to human rights must be absolute" antagonized the Soviet government. A SALT II agreement further limiting nuclear stockpiles was signed, but not ratified by the U.S. Senate, in part to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. That same year Carter began a defense build-up that paved the way for the huge expenditures of the 1980s.

In 1979 Carter encountered even more trouble with Iran. After a fundamentalist revolution, led by Shiite Muslim leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, replaced a corrupt but friendly regime, Carter admitted the deposed shah to the United States for medical treatment. Angry Iranian militants seized the American embassy in Teheran and held 53 American hostages for more than a year. Despite his efforts, Carter could not secure their release, and his failure contributed to his electoral defeat.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT 1960-1980

The struggle of black Americans for equality reached its peak in the mid-1960s. After progressive victories in the 1950s, blacks became even more committed to nonviolent direct action. Groups like the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), made up of black clergy, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), composed of younger activists, sought reform through peaceful confrontation.

In 1960 black college students sat down at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter in North Carolina and refused to leave. Their sit-in captured media attention and led to similar demonstrations throughout the South. The next year, civil rights workers organized "freedom rides," in which blacks and whites boarded buses heading South toward segregated terminals, where confrontations might capture media attention and lead to change.

They also organized rallies, the largest of which was the "March on Washington" in 1963. More than 200,000 people gathered in the nation's capital to demonstrate their commitment to equality for all. The high point of a day of songs and speeches came with the address of Martin Luther King Jr., who had emerged as the preeminent spokesman for civil rights. "I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood," King proclaimed. Each time he used the refrain "I have a dream," the crowd roared.

But the rhetoric of the civil rights movement at first failed to bring progress. President Kennedy was initially reluctant to press white Southerners for support on civil rights because he needed their votes on other issues. But events forced his hand. When James Meredith was denied admission to the University of Mississippi in 1962 on account of his race, Kennedy sent federal troops to uphold the law. After protests aimed at the desegregation of Birmingham, Alabama, prompted a violent response by the police, he sent Congress a new civil rights bill mandating the integration of public places. Not even the "March on Washington," however, could extricate the measure from a congressional committee, where it was still bottled up when Kennedy was assassinated.

President Johnson was more successful. A Southerner from Texas, he became committed to civil rights as he sought national office. In 1963, he told Congress: "No memorial oration or eulogy could more eloquently honor President Kennedy's memory than the earliest possible passage of the civil rights bill." Using all his authority, he persuaded the Senate to limit debate and secured the passage of the sweeping Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed discrimination in all public accommodations. The next year, he pressed further for what became the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It authorized the federal government to appoint examiners to register voters where local officials made black registration impossible. The year after passage, 400,000 blacks registered in the deep South; by 1968 the number reached 1 million and nationwide the number of black elected officials increased substantially. Finally, in 1968, the Congress passed legislation banning discrimination in housing.

For all of the legislative activity, some blacks became impatient with the pace of progress. Malcolm X, an eloquent activist, argued for black separation from the white race. Stokely Carmichael, a student leader, became similarly disillusioned by the notions of nonviolence and interracial cooperation. He preached the need for black power, to be achieved by whatever means necessary.

Violence accompanied militant calls for reform. Riots broke out in several big cities in 1966 and 1967. In the spring of 1968, Martin Luther King fell before an assassin's bullet. Several months later, Senator Robert Kennedy, a spokesman for the disadvantaged, an opponent of the Vietnam War and the brother of the slain president, met the same fate. To many these two assassinations marked the end of an era of innocence and idealism in both civil rights and the anti-war movements. The growing militancy on the left, coupled with an inevitable conservative backlash, opened a rift in the nation's psyche which took years to heal.

The federal commitment to civil rights diminished when Richard Nixon became president. Nixon was determined to consolidate his political base around conservative whites who felt that the movement for black equality had gone too far. The "Southern strategy" led the administration to reduce the appropriation for fair housing enforcement and in 1970, to prevent, unsuccessfully, the extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. When the Supreme Court ruled in 1971 that busing children was a permissible means of desegregating schools, Nixon denounced the ruling on television and sought a congressional moratorium or restriction. Though he failed to achieve his end, he made his position clear. Opponents of busing gained a victory in 1974 in *Milliken v. Bradley*, in which the Supreme Court invalidated efforts to transfer inner-city black students to suburban schools that were predominately white.

The backlash against preferential treatment for minorities became even more public in a Supreme Court case in 1978. Allan Bakke, a white man, claimed that a quota reserving places for minority applicants was responsible for the rejection of his application to medical school in California. The court ordered his admission, arguing that quotas could no longer be imposed, but then upheld the consideration of race as one of the relevant factors in selection procedures.

Nevertheless, the controversy over busing and affirmative action sometimes obscured the steady march of many African Americans into the ranks of the middle class and suburbia throughout these tumultuous years.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

During the 1950s and 1960s, increasing numbers of married women entered the labor force, but in 1963 the average working woman earned only 63 percent of what a man made. That year author Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, an explosive critique of middle-class patterns that helped millions of women articulate a pervasive sense of discontent. Arguing that women often had no outlets for expression other than "finding a husband and bearing children," Friedan encouraged readers to seek new roles and responsibilities, to seek their own personal and professional identities rather than have them defined by the outside, male-dominated society.

The women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s drew inspiration from the civil rights movement. It was made up mainly of members of the middle class, and thus partook of the spirit of rebellion that affected large segments of middle-class youth in the 1960s. Another factor linked to the emergence of the movement was the sexual revolution of the 1960s, which in turn was sparked by the development and marketing of the birth-control pill.

Reform legislation also prompted change. During debate on the 1964 Civil Rights bill, conservatives hoped to defeat the entire measure by proposing an amendment to outlaw discrimination on the basis of gender as well as race. First the amendment, then the bill itself, passed, giving women a legal tool to secure their rights.

Women themselves took measures to improve their lot. In 1966, 28 professional women, including Betty Friedan, established the National Organization for Women (NOW) "to take action to bring American women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now." By the next year, 1,000 women had joined; four years later membership reached 15,000. NOW and similar organizations helped make women increasingly aware of their limited opportunities and strengthened their resolve to increase them.

Feminism, or organized activity on behalf of women's rights and interests, reached high tide in the early 1970s. Journalist Gloria Steinem and several other women founded a new magazine, *Ms.*, which began publication in 1972. Between 1971 and 1976, *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, a handbook by a woman's health collective, sold 850,000 copies.

Some activists pressed for ratification of an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the Constitution. Passed by Congress in 1972, it declared, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." Over the next several years, 35 of the necessary 38 states ratified it. The courts also promoted sexual equality.

In 1973 the Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade* sanctioned women's right to abortion during the early months of pregnancy -- a significant victory for the women's movement.

In the mid- to late 1970s, however, the women's movement stagnated. It failed to broaden its appeal beyond the middle class. Divisions arose between moderate and radical feminists. Conservative opponents mounted a campaign against the Equal Rights Amendment, and it died in 1982 without gaining the approval of the 38 states needed for ratification.

THE LATINO MOVEMENT

In post-World War II America, Spanish-speaking groups faced discrimination as well. Coming from Cuba, Puerto Rico, Mexico and Central America, they were often unskilled and unable to speak English. Some worked as farm laborers and at times were cruelly exploited while harvesting crops; others gravitated to the cities, where, like earlier immigrant groups, they encountered serious difficulties in their quest for a better life.

Chicanos, or Mexican-Americans, mobilized in organizations like the radical *Asociacion Nacional Mexico-Americana*, yet did not become confrontational until the 1960s. Hoping that Lyndon Johnson's poverty program would expand opportunities for them, they found that bureaucrats failed to respond to less vocal groups. The example of black activism in particular taught Hispanics the importance of pressure politics in a pluralistic society.

The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 had excluded agricultural workers from its guarantee of the right of labor to organize and bargain collectively. But Cesar Chavez, founder of the overwhelmingly Hispanic *United Farm Workers*, demonstrated the efficacy of direct action in seeking recognition for his union. Taking on the grape growers of California, Chavez called for a nationwide consumer boycott that finally provided exploited migrant workers with union representation. Similar boycotts of lettuce and other products were also successful. Though farm interests continued to try to obstruct Chavez's organization, the legal foundation had been laid for representation to secure higher wages and improved working conditions.

Hispanics became politically active as well. In 1961 Henry B. Gonzalez won election to Congress from Texas. Three years later Elizo ("Kika") de la Garza, another Texan, followed him, and Joseph Montoya of New Mexico went to the Senate. Both Gonzalez and de la Garza later rose to positions of power as committee chairmen in the House. In the 1970s and 1980s, the pace of Hispanic political involvement increased, and by the time Bill Clinton became president, two prominent Hispanics were named to his cabinet: former San Antonio mayor Henry Cisneros as secretary of housing and urban development (HUD), and former Denver mayor Frederico Pena as secretary of transportation.

THE NATIVE AMERICAN MOVEMENT

In the 1950s, Native Americans struggled with the government's policy of moving them off reservations and into cities where they might assimilate into mainstream America. Not only did they face the loss of land; many of the uprooted Indians often had difficulties adjusting to urban life. In 1961 when the policy was discontinued, the United States Commission on Civil Rights noted that for Indians, "poverty and deprivation are common."

In the 1960s and 1970s, watching both the development of Third World nationalism and the progress of the civil rights movement, Native Americans became more aggressive in pressing for their own rights. A new generation of leaders went to court to protect what was left of tribal lands or to recover that which had been taken, often illegally, in previous times. In state after state, they challenged treaty violations, and in 1967 won the first of many victories guaranteeing long-abused land and water rights. The American Indian Movement (AIM), founded in 1968, helped channel government funds to Indian-controlled organizations and assisted neglected Indians in the cities.

Confrontations became common. In 1969 a landing party of 78 Native Americans seized Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay and held it until federal officials removed them in 1971. In 1973 AIM took over the South Dakota village of Wounded Knee, where soldiers in the late 19th century had massacred a Sioux encampment. Militants hoped to dramatize miserable conditions in the reservation surrounding the town, where half of the families were on welfare and alcoholism was widespread. The episode ended, after one Indian was killed and another wounded, with a government agreement to re-examine treaty rights, although little was subsequently done.

Still, Indian activism brought results. Other Americans became more aware of Native American needs. Officials in all branches of government had to respond to pressure for equal treatment that was long overdue. The Senate's first Native American member, Ben Nighthorse Campbell of Colorado, was elected in 1992.

THE COUNTER-CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTALISM

The agitation for equal opportunity sparked other forms of upheaval. Young people in particular rejected the stable patterns of middle-class life their parents had created in the decades after World War II. Some plunged into radical political activity; many more embraced new standards of dress and sexual behavior.

The visible signs of the counterculture permeated American society in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Hair grew longer and beards became common. Blue jeans and tee shirts took the place of slacks, jackets and ties. The use of illegal drugs increased in an effort to free the mind from past constraints. Rock and roll grew, proliferated and transformed into many musical variations. The Beatles, the Rolling Stones and other British groups took the country by storm. "Hard rock" grew popular, and songs with a political or social commentary, such as those by singer-songwriter Bob Dylan, became common. The youth counterculture reached its apogee in August 1969 at Woodstock, a three-day music festival in rural New York State attended by almost half-a-million persons. The festival, mythologized in films and record albums, gave its name to the era -- The Woodstock Generation.

The energy that fueled the civil rights movement and catalyzed the counterculture also stimulated an environmental movement in the mid-1960s. Many were aroused by the publication in 1962 of Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring*, which pointed to the ravages of chemical pesticides, particularly DDT. Public concern about the environment continued to increase throughout the 1960s as many became aware of other pollutants surrounding them - automobile emissions, industrial wastes, oil spills -- that threatened their health and the beauty of their surroundings. On April 22, 1970, schools and communities across the United States celebrated Earth Day. "Teach-ins" educated Americans about the dangers of environmental pollution.

But many resisted proposed measures to clean up the nation's air and water. Solutions would cost money to businesses and individuals, and force changes in the way people lived or worked. However, in 1970, Congress amended the Clean Air Act of 1967 to develop uniform national air-quality standards. It also passed the Water Quality Improvement Act, which made cleaning up off-shore oil spills the responsibility of the polluter. Then, in 1970, the Environmental Protection Agency was created as an independent federal agency to spearhead the effort to bring abuses under control.

An Outline of American History

Public Affairs Section
Stockholm Sweden



CHAPTER THIRTEEN: TOWARD THE 21ST CENTURY

United States Information Agency May 1994

"AMERICA, TO ENDURE, MUST CHANGE...CHANGE TO PRESERVE AMERICA'S IDEALS -- LIFE, LIBERTY, THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. THOUGH WE MARCH TO THE MUSIC OF OUR TIME, OUR MISSION IS TIMELESS."

President Bill Clinton, 1993

A SOCIETY IN TRANSITION

Shifts in the structure of American society, begun years or even decades earlier, had become apparent by the time the 1980s arrived. The composition of the population and the most important jobs and skills in American society had undergone major changes.

The dominance of service jobs in the economy became undeniable. By the mid-1980s, capping a trend under way for more than half a century, three-fourths of all employees worked in the service sector -- for instance, as retail clerks, office workers, teachers, physicians and other health care professionals, government employees, lawyers, and legal and financial specialists.

Service-sector activity benefited from the availability and increased use of the computer. This was the information age, with hardware and software that could aggregate previously unimagined amounts of data about economic and social trends. The federal government had made significant investments in computer technology in the 1950s and 1960s as part of its military and space programs. In the late 1970s, two young California entrepreneurs, working out of a garage, assembled the first widely marketed computer for home use, named it the Apple -- and ignited a revolution. By the early 1980s, millions of microcomputers had found their way into U.S. businesses and homes, and in 1982, Time magazine dubbed the computer its "Machine of the Year."

Meanwhile, America's "smokestack industries," such as steel and textiles, were in decline. The U.S. automobile industry reeled under competition from such highly efficient Japanese car makers as Toyota, Honda and Nissan -- many of which opened their own factories in the United States. By 1980 Japanese automobile manufacturers controlled a quarter of the American market. Only by the late 1980s and early 1990s did U.S. manufacturers begin to match the cost efficiencies and engineering standards of their Japanese rivals, and start winning back the share of the domestic car market they had ceded to imports over the previous two decades. Although consumers were the beneficiaries of this ferocious competition -- and in other highly competitive industries, as well, such as computers -- the painful struggle to cut costs meant the permanent loss of thousands of jobs in the U.S. auto industry.

Population patterns shifted as well. After the end of the postwar "baby boom," which lasted from approximately 1946 to 1964, the overall rate of population growth declined and the population grew older. Household composition also changed. In 1980 the percentage of family households dropped; a quarter of all groups were now classified as "nonfamily households," in which two or more unrelated persons lived together.

New immigrants changed the character of American society in other ways. The 1965 reform in immigration policy shifted the focus away from Western Europe, and the number of new arrivals from Asia and Latin America increased dramatically. Vietnamese refugees, for example, poured into the United States in the aftermath of the war. In 1980, 808,000 immigrants arrived, the highest number in 60 years, as the country once more became a haven for people from around the world.

In the 1980s, additional groups became active participants in the struggle for equal opportunity. Homosexuals, using many of the tactics of the civil rights movement, sought the same freedom from discrimination that other groups claimed. Often pressure brought results. In 1975, for example, the U.S. Civil Service Commission lifted its ban on employment of homosexuals, and many states enacted anti-discrimination laws. Inevitably, a backlash occurred, and incidents of hostility toward homosexuals surfaced as well.

Then, in 1981, came the discovery of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), a devastating disease striking the body's immune system. AIDS is transmitted sexually or through blood; and in the United States it struck homosexual men and intravenous drug users with particular virulence, although the general population proved vulnerable as well. By 1992 more than 150,000 Americans had died of AIDS, with estimates of those carrying the AIDS virus ranging from 300,000 to more than one million. But the AIDS epidemic was by no means limited to the United States, and the effort to treat the disease encompassed physicians and medical researchers throughout the world. One of their earliest successes, largely the result of U.S. and French research, was to isolate the AIDS virus and develop tests to ensure protection of the blood supply.

CONSERVATISM AND THE RISE OF RONALD REAGAN

For many Americans, the economic, social and political trends of the previous two decades -- ranging from crime and racial polarization in many urban centers, to the economic downturn and inflation of the Carter years -- engendered a mood of disillusionment. It also strengthened a renewed suspicion of government and its ability to deal effectively with the country's deep-rooted social and political problems.

Conservatives, long out of power at the national level, were well positioned to exploit this new mood. It was a time when many Americans were receptive to their message of limited government, strong national defense and the protection of traditional values against what were seen as the encroachments of a permissive and often chaotic modern society.

This conservative upsurge had many sources. A large group of fundamentalist Christians, who regard the Bible as the direct and inerrant word of God, were particularly concerned about an increase in crime and sexual immorality. One of the most politically effective groups in the early 1980s, called the Moral Majority, was led by a Baptist minister, Jerry Falwell. Another, led by Pat Robertson, built an organization called the Christian Coalition which by the 1990s was a potent force in the Republican Party. Like many such groups, they wanted to return religion to a central place in American life. Television evangelists like Falwell and Robertson developed huge followings.

Another galvanizing issue for conservatives was one of the most divisive and emotional issues of the time: abortion. Opposition to the 1973 Supreme Court decision, *Roe v. Wade*, which upheld a woman's right to an abortion in the early months of pregnancy, brought together a wide array of organizations and individuals. They included, but were not limited to, large numbers of Catholics, political conservatives and religious fundamentalists, most of whom regarded abortion under virtually any circumstances as tantamount to murder. They were prepared to organize in support of politicians who agreed with their position -- and against those who disagreed with it. Pro-choice and antiabortion demonstrations became a fixture of the political landscape.

Within the Republican Party, the right wing grew dominant once again. The right had briefly seized control of the Republican Party in 1964 with its presidential candidate, Barry Goldwater, then faded from the spotlight. By 1980, however, with the use of modern fund-raising techniques, the right overtook the moderate wing of the party. Drawing on the intellectual firepower of such conservatives as economist Milton Friedman, journalists William F. Buckley and George Will, and research institutions like the Heritage Foundation, the New Right played a significant role in defining the issues of the 1980s.

Like other conservatives, or the "Old Right," the New Right favored strict limits on government intervention in the economy. But the New Right was willing to use state power to encourage its view of family values, restrict homosexual behavior and censor pornography. In general, the New Right also favored tough measures against crime, strong national defense, a constitutional amendment to permit prayer in public schools, opposition to abortion and defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment for women.

The figure who drew all these disparate strands together was Ronald Reagan. Reagan, born in Illinois, achieved stardom as an actor in Hollywood movies and television before turning to politics. He first achieved political prominence with a nationwide televised speech in 1964 in support of Barry Goldwater. In 1966 Reagan won the governorship of California, owing to a wave of voter reaction against the student rebellion at the University of California-Berkeley, and served until 1975. He narrowly missed winning the Republican nomination for president in 1976 before succeeding in 1980 and going on to win the presidency from Jimmy Carter. Reagan won overwhelming reelection in 1984 against Carter's vice president, Walter Mondale.

President Reagan's unflagging optimism and his ability to celebrate the achievements and aspirations of the American people persisted throughout his two terms in office. He was a figure of reassurance and stability for many Americans. Despite his propensity for misstatements, Reagan was known as the "Great Communicator," primarily for his mastery of television. For many, he recalled the prosperity and relative social tranquility of the 1950s -- an era dominated by another genial public personality who evoked widespread affection, President Dwight Eisenhower.

Reagan believed that government intruded too deeply into American life. He wanted to cut programs he contended the country did not need by eliminating "waste, fraud and abuse." Throughout his tenure, Reagan also pursued a program of deregulation more thoroughgoing than that begun by Jimmy Carter. Reagan sought to eliminate regulations affecting the consumer, the workplace and the environment that he argued were inefficient, expensive and impeded economic growth.

THE ECONOMY IN THE 1980s

President Reagan's domestic program was rooted in his belief that the nation would prosper if the power of the private economic sector was unleashed. A proponent of "supply side" economics, a theory which holds that a greater supply of goods and services is the swiftest road to economic growth, Reagan sought large tax cuts to promote greater consumer spending, saving and investment. Supply-side economists argued that a tax cut would lead to increased business investment, increased earnings and -- through taxes on these earnings -- increased government revenues. Despite only a slim Republican majority in the Senate and a House of Representatives controlled by the Democrats, President Reagan succeeded during his first year in office in enacting the major components of his economic program, including a 25-percent tax cut for individuals to be phased in over three years. The Reagan administration also sought and won significant increases in defense spending to modernize the nation's military and counter what it felt was a continual and growing threat from the Soviet Union.

A recession marked the early years of Reagan's presidency, hitting almost all sections of the country. Real gross national product (GNP) fell by 2.5 percent in 1982, as the unemployment rate rose above 10 percent and almost one-third of America's industrial plants lay idle. Throughout the Midwest, major firms like General Electric and International Harvester released workers. The oil crisis contributed to the decline. As gains in U.S. productivity slowed, economic rivals such as Germany and Japan won a greater share of world trade. American consumption of goods produced by other countries rose sharply.

Farmers also suffered hard times. The number of farmers declined, as production became concentrated in the hands of a smaller number. During the 1970s, American farmers had helped India, China, the Soviet Union and other countries suffering from crop shortages, and had borrowed heavily to buy land and increase production. Then the rise in oil prices raised farm costs and a worldwide economic slump in 1980 reduced the demand for farm products. Farmers had major difficulties making ends meet.

But the deep recession throughout 1982 -- combined with falling oil prices -- had one important benefit: it curbed the runaway inflation that had started during the Carter years. Conditions improved for some segments of the economy in late 1983; by early 1984, the economy rebounded and the United States entered one of the longest periods of sustained economic growth since World War II. Japan agreed to impose a voluntary quota on its car exports to the United States. Consumer spending increased in response to the federal tax cut. The stock market climbed as it reflected the optimistic buying spree. Over a five-year period following the start of the recovery, GNP grew at an annual rate of 4.2 percent. The annual inflation rate remained between 3 and 5 percent from 1983 to 1987, except in 1986 when it fell to just under 2 percent -- the lowest level in decades. The nation's Gross National Product grew substantially during the 1980s; from 1982 to 1987, the U.S. economy created more than 13 million new jobs.

However, an alarming percentage of this growth was based on deficit spending. Under Reagan the national debt nearly tripled. Furthermore, virtually all the growth in national wealth took place in the highest income group. Many poor and middle-class families actually lost ground, as low- and semi-skilled jobs were eliminated from the economy, or failed to keep pace with the rest of society.

Steadfast in his commitment to lower taxes, Reagan signed the most sweeping federal tax-reform measure in 75 years during his second term. This measure, which had widespread Democratic as well as Republican support, lowered income tax rates, simplified tax brackets and closed loopholes, taking an important step toward taxing low-income Americans more equitably. Still, serious problems remained. The chronically poor failed to benefit as the economy improved. Farmers continued to suffer, and serious droughts in 1986 and 1988 compounded their distress.

The increased military budget -- combined with the tax cuts and the growth in government health spending -- resulted in the federal government spending far more than it received in revenues each year. Some analysts charged that the deficits were part of a deliberate administration strategy to prevent further increases in domestic spending sought by the Democrats. However, both Democrats and Republicans in Congress refused to cut such spending. From \$74 thousand million in 1980, the deficit soared to \$221 thousand million in 1986 before falling back to \$150 thousand million in 1987. A stock market crash in late 1987 dramatized doubts about the stability of the economy.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

In foreign policy, President Reagan sought a more assertive role for the nation, and Central America provided an early test. The United States provided El Salvador with a program of economic aid and military training when a guerrilla insurgency was threatening to topple its government. It also actively encouraged the transition to an elected democratic government, but efforts to curb the active right-wing death squads were only partly successful. U.S. support helped stabilize the government, but the level of violence in El Salvador remained undiminished and actually increased in late 1989. A peace agreement was reached, however, in early 1992.

U.S. policy toward Nicaragua was much more controversial. In 1979 revolutionaries calling themselves Sandinistas overthrew the repressive right-wing Somoza regime. The Sandinista government rejected U.S. demands to cut its military ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union and open its political system to democratic reforms. Regional peace efforts ended in failure, and the focus of administration efforts shifted to support for the anti-Sandinista resistance, known as the *contras*. Following intense political debate over this policy, the Congress ended all military aid to the *contras* in October 1984, but continued humanitarian assistance. Congress, under administration pressure, reversed itself in the fall of 1986, and approved \$100 million in military aid for the *contras*. However, a lack of success on the battlefield, charges of human rights abuses and the revelation that funds from secret arms sales to Iran had been diverted to the *contras* undercut political support in Congress for continuing military aid to the anti-Sandinista guerrillas.

Subsequently, the administration of President George Bush abandoned any effort to secure military aid for the *contras*. The Bush administration also supported the opposition political coalition, led by Violetta Chamorro, which won an astonishing upset election over the Sandinistas in February 1990.

The Reagan administration was more fortunate in witnessing a return to democracy throughout Latin America, from Guatemala to Argentina. The emergence of democratically elected governments was not limited to Latin America, however; in Asia, the "people power" campaign of Corazon Aquino overthrew the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos, and elections in Korea ended decades of military rule.

By contrast, South Africa remained intransigent in the face of the Reagan administration's efforts to encourage an end to racial apartheid through the controversial policy of "constructive engagement." In 1986, frustrated at the lack of progress, the U.S. Congress overrode Reagan's veto and imposed a set of economic sanctions on South Africa. Only in December 1988, in the last weeks of the Reagan administration, did years of patient U.S. mediation contribute to an historic peace settlement and independence for the territory of Namibia in southern Africa.

Despite its outspoken anti-communist rhetoric, the Reagan administration's direct use of military force was relatively restrained. On October 25, 1983, U.S. forces landed on the Caribbean island of Grenada after an urgent appeal for help by neighboring countries. The action followed the assassination of Grenada's leftist prime minister by members of his own Marxist-oriented party. After a brief period of fighting, U.S. troops captured hundreds of Cuban military and construction personnel and seized caches of Soviet-supplied arms.

In December 1983, the last American combat troops left Grenada, which held democratic elections a year later.

But military efforts in Lebanon, where the United States was attempting to bolster a weak, but moderate, pro-Western government, ended tragically, when 241 U.S. Marines were killed in a terrorist bombing in October 1983. In April 1986, U.S. Navy and Air Force planes struck targets in Tripoli and Benghazi, Libya, in retaliation for Libyan-instigated terrorist attacks on U.S. military personnel in Europe.

In the Persian Gulf, the earlier breakdown in U.S.-Iranian relations and the Iran-Iraq war set the stage for U.S. naval activities in the region. Initially, the United States responded to a request from Kuwait for protection of its tanker fleet; but eventually the United States, along with naval vessels from Western Europe, kept vital shipping lanes open by escorting convoys of tankers and other neutral vessels traveling up and down the Gulf.

U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS

In relations with the Soviet Union, President Reagan's declared policy was one of peace through strength. Rooted in the Cold War tradition, he was determined to stand firm in dealing with the country he termed the "evil empire." Two events increased U.S.-Soviet tensions: the suppression of the Solidarity labor movement in Poland in December 1981, and the destruction of an off-course civilian airliner, Korean Airlines Flight 007, by a Soviet jet fighter on September 1, 1983. The United States also condemned the continuing Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and provided aid to the mujahidin resistance there.

In Reagan's first term, his administration spent unprecedented sums for a massive defense buildup, including the placement of intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe to counter Soviet deployments of similar missiles. And on March 23, 1983, in one of the most hotly debated policy decisions of his presidency, Reagan announced the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) research program to explore advanced technologies, such as lasers and high-energy projectiles, to defend against intercontinental ballistic missiles. Although many scientists questioned the technological feasibility of SDI and economists pointed to the extraordinary sums of money involved, the administration pressed ahead with the project.

After reelection in 1984, Reagan softened his rigid position on arms control. For its part, Moscow was amenable to agreement, in part because the Soviet economy was incapable of sustaining the level of expenditures necessary to compete with the U.S. defense build-up. In November 1985, Reagan held a summit meeting with the new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, in Geneva. They agreed in principle to seek 50-percent reductions in strategic offensive nuclear arms as well as an interim agreement on intermediate-range nuclear forces. In December 1987, President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty providing for the destruction of a whole category of nuclear weapons.

SPACE SHUTTLE

If the Strategic Defense Initiative was problematical for the Reagan administration, other efforts in space were more promising. In 1981 the U.S. launched the space shuttle Columbia -- the first reusable manned spacecraft. Between 1981 and 1985, the shuttle demonstrated extraordinary versatility, with astronauts conducting experiments, taking photographs, and launching, retrieving and repairing satellites while in orbit. But in January 1986, tragedy struck: the space shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds after takeoff, instantly killing six astronauts and a schoolteacher who was to have been the first ordinary citizen in space. Space shuttle missions were postponed indefinitely while NASA set out to redesign the shuttle for safety. By the time the United States successfully launched the shuttle Discovery in late 1988, there had been over 300 changes in the shuttle's launch systems and computer software.

IRAN-CONTRA AND BLACK MONDAY

The Reagan administration's most serious foreign policy problem surfaced near the end of the president's second term. In 1987 Americans learned that the administration had secretly sold arms to Iran in an attempt to win freedom for American hostages held in Lebanon by radical organizations controlled by Iran's Khomeini government. Investigation also revealed that funds from the arms sales had been diverted to the Nicaraguan contras during a period when Congress had prohibited such military aid.

The ensuing Iran-contra hearings before a joint House-Senate committee examined issues of possible illegality as well as the broader question of defining American foreign policy interests in the Middle East and Central America. In a larger sense, the Iran-contra hearings, like the celebrated Senate Watergate hearings 14 years earlier, addressed fundamental questions about the government's accountability to the public, and the proper balance between the executive and legislative branches of government.

The United States suffered an economic setback on October 19, 1987, so-called "Black Monday," when the value of stocks tumbled 22 percent -- immediately bringing back memories of the fabled stock market crash of 1929, which had been followed by the Great Depression of the 1930s. The causes of the crash included anxiety about U.S. international trade and federal-budget deficits, concern about the high level of corporate and personal debt, and a new stock market innovation known as "program trading" in which computers automatically ordered the buying or selling of a large volume of shares when certain circumstances occurred.

Nevertheless, the nation recovered in a remarkably short time. Although many Americans turned from the stock market to safer forms of investment, a recession did not materialize. In fact, economic growth continued, with the unemployment rate dropping to a 14-year low of 5.2 percent in June 1988.

THE PRESIDENCY OF GEORGE BUSH

President Reagan enjoyed unusually high popularity at the end of his second term in office, but under the terms of the U.S. Constitution he could not run again in 1988. His political heir, the vice president during all eight years of his presidency, George Bush, benefited greatly from Reagan's popularity and was elected the 41st president of the United States.

Bush campaigned by promising voters a continuation of the prosperity Reagan had brought; he also argued that his expertise could better support a strong defense for the United States than that of the Democratic Party's candidate, Michael Dukakis. Dukakis, the governor of Massachusetts, claimed that less fortunate Americans were hurting economically and that the government had to help those people while simultaneously bringing the federal debt and defense spending under control. The public was much more engaged, however, by Bush's economic message: a promise of no new taxes. In the balloting, Bush finished with a 54-to-46-percent popular vote margin.

During his first year in office, Bush followed a conservative fiscal program, pursuing policies on taxes, spending and debt that were faithful to the Reagan administration's economic program. Yet, with an outsized budget deficit and a deficit-reduction law requiring that it be pared, Bush found himself locked into a program permitting few if any new budget items while requiring spending cuts. Thus, administration policies that would cost Washington the least progressed the furthest. On environmental protection and education -- issues in which private industry and local and state government pay most of the bills -- Bush introduced changes in policy. In November 1990, Bush signed sweeping legislation to impose new federal standards on urban smog, automobile exhaust, toxic air pollution and acid rain, but most of the costs were assigned to industrial polluters. He signed legislation ensuring physical access for the disabled, but the costs were transferred to business. The president also launched a campaign to encourage volunteerism for social beneficence, which he called, in a memorable phrase, "a thousand points of light."

BUDGETS AND DEFICITS

Bush administration efforts to gain control over the federal budget deficit, however, were more problematic. One source of the difficulty was the savings and loan crisis. Fraud, mismanagement, lax regulation and economic downturns in certain regions of the United States in the early and mid-1980s led to widespread insolvencies among savings-and-loan institutions. Of more than 3,100 such institutions that existed in the late 1970s, only 2,453 remained as of June 30, 1990. By 1993 the total cost of selling and closing down failed thrifts -- whose deposits were guaranteed by the government -- was staggering: between \$300 and \$500 thousand million.

In January 1990 President Bush presented his budget proposal to Congress. Democrats argued that administration budget projections were far too optimistic, and that meeting the deficit reduction law would require tax increases and sharper cuts in defense spending. The budget negotiations dragged on, and by June -- in spite of his campaign promise -- President Bush told congressional leaders that changing circumstances in the national economy meant that tax increases would have to be part of any overall budget package.

Despite the budget agreement, the combination of economic recession, losses from the savings and loan industry rescue operation, and escalating health-care costs for Medicare and Medicaid offset all the deficit reduction measures and produced a shortfall in 1991 at least as large as the previous year's.

END TO THE COLD WAR

Superpower relations in the late 1980s were driven by political turmoil in Eastern Europe. The United States and the world watched as popular uprisings for democratic reforms resulted in the fall of communist governments throughout the region.

Despite a successful 1989 summit meeting between Bush and Gorbachev in Malta, few would have predicted the extraordinary achievements to be made in U.S.-Soviet relations in 1990. In his January State of the Union message, President Bush announced his intention to cut U.S. troops stationed in Europe to 195,000. In February, the Bush administration held discussions with the Soviets on arms control as well as the unification of East and West Germany. Within seven months, after numerous bilateral and multilateral discussions, the Soviet Union had renounced its wartime rights and accepted a unified Germany with full membership in NATO. The Treaty on the Final Settlement with respect to Germany was signed in Moscow on September 12.

President Bush and the heads of state of 21 other countries signed the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) on November 19, 1990, at a three-day summit meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The CFE Treaty was one of the most complex and ambitious arms agreements ever concluded, covering thousands of tanks, aircraft and artillery pieces deployed by NATO and the countries of the former Warsaw Pact from the Atlantic to the Ural Mountains.

Then, on July 31, 1991, the United States reached its last major arms agreement with the Soviet Union when Presidents Bush and Gorbachev signed the long-negotiated Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) in Moscow, which mandated cuts of 30 to 40 percent in the nuclear arsenals of both sides. But even these cuts were dwarfed by President Bush's agreement with Boris Yeltsin, president of the new Russian Federation, to eliminate all multiple-warhead missiles completely by the year 2003. In combination, the two agreements would reduce the number of nuclear warheads by two-thirds, from approximately 21,000 to between 6,000 to 7,000. The disposal of nuclear materials, and the ever-present concerns of nuclear proliferation superseded the threat of nuclear conflict between Washington and Moscow.

The Cold War was indeed over.

THE GULF WAR

The euphoria caused by the drawing down of the Cold War was dramatically overshadowed by the August 2, 1990, invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. Iraqi control of Kuwait and the danger it posed to Saudi Arabia and the smaller Gulf states threatened a vital U.S. interest, because the United States, and the West in general, remained dependent on this region for much of its oil supplies.

President Bush strongly condemned the Iraqi action and called for Iraq's immediate and unconditional withdrawal. An emergency session of the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to condemn Iraq, urge a cease-fire and demand the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

Later in August, Iraq announced the annexation of Kuwait, ordered the closing of all embassies in that country, and began taking U.S. and British citizens in Kuwait hostage. On August 8, President Bush went on national television to announce the deployment of U.S. troops to the Middle East. The president then worked to assemble one of the most extraordinary military and political coalitions of modern times, with military forces from Asia, Europe and Africa, as well as the Middle East.

In the days and weeks following the invasion, the U.N. Security Council passed 12 resolutions condemning the Iraqi invasion and imposing wide-ranging economic sanctions on Iraq. The 12th resolution, issued on November 29, approved the use of force by U.N. member states if Iraq did not withdraw from Kuwait by January 15, 1991. The new U.S.-Soviet relationship provided the necessary condition for the U.N. action to stem the Iraqi invasion. Without the new entente between the two countries, the United Nations would never have authorized military action against Iraq.

Members of Congress had publicly called on President Bush and the international community to exhaust all means for resolving the Gulf crisis peacefully. But the underlying issue was constitutional: the U.S. Constitution gives the legislative branch the power to declare war. Yet in the second half of the 20th century, the United States has repeatedly become involved in armed conflicts without such a congressional mandate, most notably in Vietnam. Some members of Congress declared that Bush must get congressional backing before going to war. Others argued, however, that Congress really wanted a voice in where, when and under what conditions the United States goes to war -- not the responsibility of declaring war itself.

On January 12, 1991, three days before the U.N. deadline, Congress granted President Bush the authority he sought in the most explicit and sweeping war-making power given a president in nearly half a century.

War broke out less than 24 hours after the U.N. deadline. The United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait succeeded in liberating Kuwait with a devastating, U.S.-led air campaign that lasted slightly more than a month. It was followed by a massive invasion of Kuwait and Iraq by armored and airborne infantry forces. With their superior speed, mobility and firepower, the allied forces overwhelmed the Iraqi forces in a land campaign lasting only 100 hours.

The United States and its allies achieved their military goal, but the victory was incomplete. Saddam Hussein remained in power, savagely repressing the Kurds in the north and the Shiites in the south, both of whom had risen in rebellion after the war. Hundreds of oil-well fires, deliberately set by the Iraqis, took until November 1991 to extinguish. Saddam's regime also attempted to thwart United Nations inspectors who, operating in accordance with Security Council resolutions, worked to locate and destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear facilities and huge stocks of chemical weapons.

Indirectly, however, the Gulf War enabled the United States to persuade the Arab states, Israel and a Palestinian delegation to begin direct negotiations aimed at resolving the complex and interlocked issues that could eventually lead to a lasting peace in the region. The talks began in Madrid, Spain, on October 30, 1991. In turn, they set the stage for the secret negotiations in Norway that led to the historic agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, signed at the White House on September 13, 1993.

PANAMA AND NAFTA

The president also received broad bipartisan congressional backing for the brief U.S. invasion of Panama on December 20, 1989, that deposed dictator General Manuel Antonio Noriega. In the 1980s, addiction to crack cocaine reached epidemic proportions, and President Bush put the "war on drugs" at the center of his domestic agenda. The United States had compelling evidence that Noriega was involved in drug smuggling operations and by means of the invasion sought to bring Noriega to justice. But there were other reasons. One of Bush's aims was to replace Noriega with a government headed by Guillermo Endara, who had won a presidential election that Noriega subsequently annulled. Bush also told reporters that he ordered U.S. troops to Panama to safeguard the lives of American citizens, to help restore democracy and to protect the integrity of the Panama Canal treaties. Noriega eventually turned himself over to U.S. authorities, and he was later tried and convicted in U.S. federal court in Miami, Florida, of drug trafficking and racketeering.

The Bush administration marked progress on the economic front with the negotiation of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Mexico and Canada, which became the focus of an intense ratification debate in the Clinton administration. Labor unions charged that NAFTA would encourage the export of U.S. jobs, and environmentalists expressed concern that the agreement provided incentives to industries to relocate to regions having lax controls on industrial pollution. Both the Bush and Clinton administrations, however, argued that NAFTA would permit a greater flow of goods and services at lower cost, and would make industry in all three countries more competitive in the global marketplace.

NAFTA, which was approved by the Congress after a vigorous national debate in late 1993, is viewed by many as a testing ground for future trade agreements, which could eventually lead to free trade throughout the Western Hemisphere.

1992 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

As the 1992 presidential election approached, Americans found themselves in a world transformed in ways almost unimaginable four years earlier. The familiar landmarks of the Cold War -- from the Berlin Wall to intercontinental missiles and bombers on constant high alert -- were gone. Eastern Europe was independent, the Soviet Union had dissolved, Germany was united, Arabs and Israelis were engaged in direct negotiations, and the threat of nuclear conflict was greatly diminished. It was as though one great history volume had closed and another had opened.

Yet at home, Americans were less sanguine -- and faced some deep and familiar problems. Once the celebrations and parades following the Gulf War ended, the United States found itself in its deepest recession since the early 1980s. Many of the job losses were occurring among white-collar workers in middle management positions, not solely among blue-collar workers in the manufacturing sector who had been hit hardest in earlier years. Even when the economy began recovering in 1992, its growth was virtually imperceptible until late in the year, and many regions of the country remained mired in recession. Moreover, the federal deficit continued to mount, propelled most strikingly by rising expenditures for health care. Many Americans exhibited profound pessimism about their future, believing that their country was headed in the wrong direction.

Despite an early challenge by conservative journalist Patrick Buchanan, President Bush and Vice President Dan Quayle easily won renomination by the Republican Party. On the Democratic side, Bill Clinton, governor of Arkansas, defeated a crowded field of candidates to win his party's nomination. As his vice presidential nominee, he selected Senator Al Gore of Tennessee, generally acknowledged as one of the Congress's most knowledgeable and eloquent advocates of environmental protection.

But the country's deep unease over the direction of the economy also sparked the emergence of a remarkable independent candidate -- wealthy Texas entrepreneur H. Ross Perot. Perot, who earned a fortune in computers and data processing, tapped into a deep wellspring of frustration over the inability of Washington to deal effectively with economic issues, principally the federal deficit, and his volunteers succeeded in collecting enough signatures to get his name on the ballot in all 50 states. Although Perot squandered even a remote chance of winning the election by dropping out of the presidential contest in July only to reenter in the fall, his presence ensured that economic issues remained at the center of the national debate.

Every U.S. presidential election campaign is an amalgam of issues, images and personality; and despite the intense focus on the country's economic future, the 1992 contest was no exception. The Bush reelection effort was built around a set of ideas traditionally used by incumbents: experience and trust. It was in some ways a battle of generations. George Bush, 68, probably the last president to have served in World War II, faced a young challenger in Bill Clinton who, at age 46, had never served in the military and had participated in protests against the Vietnam War. In emphasizing his experience as president and commander-in-chief, Bush also drew attention to what he characterized as Clinton's lack of judgment and character.

For his part, Bill Clinton organized his campaign around another of the oldest and most powerful themes in electoral politics: change. As a youth, Clinton had once met President Kennedy, and in his own campaign 30 years later, much of his rhetoric challenging Americans to accept change consciously echoed that of Kennedy in his 1960 campaign.

As governor of Arkansas for 12 years, Clinton could point to his experience in wrestling with the very issues of economic growth, education and health care that were, according to public opinion polls, among President Bush's chief vulnerabilities. Where Bush offered an economic program based on lower taxes and cuts in government spending, Clinton proposed higher taxes on the wealthy and increased spending on investments in education, transportation and communications that, he believed, would boost the nation's productivity and growth and thereby lower the deficit. Similarly, Clinton's health care proposals to control costs called for much heavier involvement by the federal government than Bush's.

Clinton successfully hammered home the theme of change throughout the campaign, as well as in a round of three televised debates with President Bush and Ross Perot in October. On November 3, Bill Clinton won election as the 42nd president of the United States, despite receiving only 43 percent of the popular vote.

AFTERWORD

From its origins as a set of obscure colonies hugging the Atlantic coast, the United States has undergone a remarkable transformation into what political analyst Ben Wattenberg has called "the first universal nation," a population of almost 250 million people representing virtually every nationality and ethnic group on the globe. It is also a nation where the pace and extent of change -- economic, technological, cultural, demographic and social -- is unceasing. The United States is often the harbinger of the modernization and change that inevitably sweep up other nations and societies in an increasingly interdependent, interconnected world.

Yet the United States also maintains a sense of continuity, a set of core values that can be traced to its founding. They include a faith in individual freedom and democratic government, and a commitment to economic opportunity and progress for all. The continuing task of the United States will be to ensure that its values of freedom, democracy and opportunity -- the legacy of a rich and turbulent history -- are protected and flourish as the nation, and the world, approach the doorway of a new century.

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SIDEBAR: A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

By the time American independence was declared in 1776, two-fifths of all settlers were of non-English origin. The first U.S. census, taken in 1790, revealed a population of just under four million people, with about 10,000 new settlers arriving each year. When the U.S. government began keeping records of arriving passengers in 1820, the majority of immigrants were from Northern Europe; by the end of the 19th century, they came largely from Southern and Eastern Europe. Today, the majority arrive from Latin America and Asia. Their reasons for coming, however -- opportunity and freedom -- remain unchanged.

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SIDEBAR: THIRD-PARTY AND INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES

The United States is often thought of as a two-party system. In practical effect it is: either a Democrat or a Republican has occupied the White House every year since 1852. At the same time, however, the country has produced a plethora of third and minor parties over the years. For example, 58 parties were represented on at least one state ballot during the 1992 presidential elections. Among these were such obscure parties as the Apathy, the Looking Back, the New Mexico Prohibition, the Tish Independent Citizens and the Vermont Taxpayers.

In general, third parties organize around a single issue or set of issues. They tend to fare best when they have a charismatic leader. With the presidency out of reach, most seek a platform to publicize their political and social concerns.

Theodore Roosevelt. The most successful third party candidate of this century was a Republican, Theodore Roosevelt, the former president. His Progressive or Bull Moose Party won 27.4 percent of the vote in the 1912 election. The progressive wing of the Republican Party, having grown disenchanted with President William Howard Taft, whom Roosevelt had hand-picked as his successor, urged Roosevelt to seek the party nomination in 1912. This he did, defeating Taft in a number of primaries. Taft controlled the party machinery, however, and secured the nomination.

Roosevelt's supporters then broke away and formed the Progressive Party. Declaring himself as fit as a bull moose (hence the party's popular name), Roosevelt campaigned on a platform of regulating "big business," women's suffrage, a graduated income tax, the Panama Canal and conservation. His effort was sufficient to defeat Taft. By splitting the Republican vote, however, he helped ensure the election of the Democrat Woodrow Wilson.

Socialists. The Socialist Party also reached its high point in 1912, attaining 6 percent of the popular vote. Perennial candidate Eugene Debs won over 900,000 votes that year, advocating collective ownership of the transportation and communication industries, shorter working hours and public works projects to spur employment. Jailed for sedition during World War I, Debs campaigned from his cell in 1920, but neither he nor his successors ever duplicated the results of 1912.

Robert LaFollette. Another Progressive was Senator Robert LaFollette, who won 16.6 percent of the vote in the 1924 election. Long a champion of farmers and industrial workers, and an ardent foe of big business, LaFollette was a prime mover in the recreation of the Progressive movement following World War I. Backed by the farm and labor vote, as well as by Socialists and remnants of Roosevelt's Bull Moose Party, LaFollette ran on a platform of nationalizing railroads and the country's natural resources. He also strongly supported increased taxation on the wealthy and the right of collective bargaining. Despite a strong showing in certain regions, he carried only his home state of Wisconsin.

Henry Wallace. The Progressive Party reinvented itself in 1948 with the nomination of Henry Wallace, a former secretary of agriculture and vice president under Franklin Roosevelt. Briefly Harry Truman's secretary of commerce, he was fired for opposing Truman's firm stand against the Soviet Union. Wallace's 1948 platform opposed the Cold War, the Marshall Plan and big business. He also campaigned to end discrimination against blacks and women, backed a minimum wage and called for the elimination of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. His failure to repudiate the U.S. Communist Party, which had endorsed him, undermined his popularity and he wound up with just over 2.4 percent of the popular vote.

Dixiecrats. The same percentage was attained by the States Rights or Dixiecrat Party, led by South Carolina governor Strom Thurmond. Like the Progressives, the Dixiecrats broke away from the Democrats in 1948. Their opposition, however, stemmed not from Truman's Cold War policies, but his civil rights platform. Although defined in terms of "states rights," the party's main goal was continuing racial segregation and the "Jim Crow" laws which sustained it.

George Wallace. The racial and social upheavals of the 1960s helped bring George Wallace, another segregationist Southern governor, to national attention. Wallace built a following through his colorful attacks against civil rights, liberals and the federal government. Founding the American Independent Party in 1968, he ran his campaign from the statehouse in Montgomery, Alabama, winning 13.5 percent of the overall presidential vote.

H. Ross Perot. Every third party seeks to capitalize on popular dissatisfaction with the major parties and the federal government. At few times in recent history, however, has this sentiment been as strong as it was during the 1992 election. A hugely wealthy Texas businessman, Perot possessed a knack for getting his message of economic common sense and fiscal responsibility across to a wide spectrum of American people.

Lamponing the nation's leaders and reducing his economic message to easily understood formulae, Perot found little difficulty gaining media attention. His campaign organization, United We Stand, was staffed primarily by volunteers and backed by his personal fortune. Far from resenting his wealth, many admired Perot's business success and the freedom it brought him from soliciting campaign funds from special interests.

Perot withdrew from the race in July. Re-entering it a month before the election, he won over 19 million votes, by far the largest number ever tallied by a third party candidate and second only to Roosevelt's 1912 showing as a percentage of the total.



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(*Denotes hardcover edition.)

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