

The Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

- 1950, 2/3 of the Black population still lived in the south, still segregated.
 - 1955, Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott.
 - Martin Luther King rises as a leading figure in the Civil Rights struggle during this affair.

* Truman ended segregation in the civil service and the military, but otherwise did nothing to expand civil rights. To do so would risk losing southern Democrats and destroying the Democratic Solid South.

* Eisenhower as a Republican was much more focused on civil rights for African Americans.

* *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* (1954).

- Chief Justice Earl Warren.
- 9 to 0 decision overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson* of 1896.
- The Court demanded that segregated school systems should integrate "with all deliberate speed."
- this was deeply resented in the south.
- Little Rock Arkansas, in 1957, the governor decided to call out the national guard to prevent 9 black students from attending a white high school.
- Ike uses federal troops to escort the students to class.
- similar confrontations took place in school systems across the South and in a number of northern school districts as well — Boston, Cleveland, Denver, Los Angeles, Pasadena, Ca., to name a few.
- integration of urban public schools in many areas increases the flight of middle-class students to the suburbs and into private schools. According to the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, the desegregation of U.S. public schools peaked in 1988; since then, schools have become more segregated because of changes in demographic residential patterns with continuing growth in suburbs and new communities.

* In 1957 a Civil Rights Bill was passed, the first since Reconstruction.

- Proposed to Congress by President Eisenhower.
- Senator Strom Thurmond sustained the longest one-person filibuster in history in an attempt to keep it from becoming law. His one-man filibuster consisted of 24 hours and 18 minutes of readings from the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, Washington's Farewell Address, and various phone books.
- The Democratic Senate leader, Lyndon Baines Johnson, realized that the bill and its journey through Congress could tear apart his party. Democratic membership made up of anti-civil rights and pro-civil rights members. He sabotaged the bill so that it would have little effect on voting rights of blacks in the South.
- The bill passed the House with a vote of 270 to 97 and the Senate 60 to 15.
- President Eisenhower signed it on 9 September 1957.
- Because of opposition and amendment of The Civil Rights Act of 1957, it was largely ineffective in its enforcement and its scope.

- By 1960, slightly fewer blacks were voting in the South than had been in 1956.

- * 1957 the Southern Christian Leadership Conference was set up by Martin Luther King.

- in an effort to promote Civil Rights.
- it mobilized the Black Churches.

John F. Kennedy elected president in 1960.

- he had a young cabinet.
- had his 35 year old brother Robert as Attorney General.
- His domestic program was called the "New Frontier."

Civil Rights.

- Kennedy moved slowly in the area.
- he needed the support of the southern legislators.
- Freedom Riders, people who traveled around the country to test civil rights legislation, they were protected by US Marshals as the southern officials refused to protect them.
- also saw sit ins at lunch counters to test civil rights.
- Voter education projects established to help more blacks pass the test to be able to vote.

- * Martin Luther King.

- in 1963 he and 200,000 people march on Washington to promote Civil Rights.
- Gives his famous "I have a Dream Speech."

- * JFK on 22 Nov. 1963 is assassinated in Dallas.

- Lee Harvey Oswald did it.
- Jack Ruby killed Oswald shortly after.
- Kennedy is best remembered for his high ideas rather than his actions.
- He was a great speaker and a charismatic personality, but as far as programs and legislation, his most important act was to reduce taxes, which began a boom in what had become a lackluster American economy.

- * LBJ takes over the Presidency when Kennedy is killed.

- Johnson had been a ruthless and powerful leader in the Senate before becoming Vice President.
- he kept most of Kennedy's people in place.

- * 1964 Election.

- Democrats ran Johnson, his domestic policy was the "Great Society," this was his war on poverty.
- Republicans ran Barry Goldwater, he was a senator from Az.
- The Democrats stoked some voters' fears that Goldwater would lead us into WWII.
- Democrats also painted Goldwater as a racist and played the "race card" in localities with high black voter populations.

- Goldwater had only lukewarm support among the liberal wing of the Republican Party because he had been critical of Eisenhower's social legislation, calling it "a dime store New Deal."

- Some GOP moderates even formed a "Republicans for Johnson" organization.
- Johnson positioned himself as a moderate on civil rights and social programs and as a hard-line "cold warrior." He essentially promised to continue JFK's legacy.
- Johnson wins in a landslide.

* Once in office LBJ launched a vast social welfare agenda called the "Great Society."

- Johnson had control of Congress and most of his legislation was passed.
- the education bill.
- Medicare.
- Department of Housing and Urban Development created.
- these were all part of his war on poverty.

* Civil Rights Act of 1964.

- gave the government more power to force desegregation.
- it outlawed segregation in public places.
- LBJ decided to steal the civil rights issue from the Republicans who had dominated the movement in the 1950s. JFK had talked about civil rights as an issue, but had balked at threatening Democratic Party disintegration by introducing civil rights legislation.

- LBJ depended heavily on Republican support to get passage of the legislation.

Civil Rights Act

Vote totals

Totals are in "Yea-Nay" format:

The original House version: 290-130 (69%-31%)

Cloture in the Senate: 71-29 (71%-29%)

The Senate version: 73-27 (73%-27%)

The Senate version, in the House: 289-126

(70%-30%) By party

The original House version:

Democratic Party: 152-96 (61%-39%)

Republican Party: 138-34 (80%-20%)

Cloture in the Senate:

Democratic Party: 44-23 (66%-34%)

Republican Party: 27-6 (82%-18%)

The Senate version:

Democratic Party: 46-21 (69%-31%)

Republican Party: 27-6 (82%-18%)

The Senate version, voted on by the House:

Democratic Party: 153-91 (63%-37%)

Republican Party: 136-35 (80%-20%)

* Voting Rights Act of 1965.

- eliminated the obstacles that prevented blacks from voting.

Voting Rights Act Vote count

The two numbers in each line of this list refer to the number of representatives voting in favor and against the act, respectively.

Senate: 77-19

Democrats: 47-17 (73%-27%)

Republicans: 30-2 (94%-6%)

House: 333-85

Democrats: 221-61 (78%-22%)

Republicans: 112-24 (82%-18%)

Conference Report:

Senate: 79-18

Democrats: 49-17 (four Southern Democrats voted in favor: Albert Gore, Sr., Ross Bass, George Smathers and Ralph Yarborough).

Republicans: 30-1 (the lone nay was Strom Thurmond; John Tower who did not vote was paired as a nay vote with Eugene McCarthy who would have voted in favor.)

House: 328-74

Democrats: 217-54

Republicans: 111-20

* WATTS, in Los Angeles.

- Race riots in August, 1965.
- these riots lasted for 6 days.
- The riot was a reaction to a long record of police brutality by the LAPD and other racial injustices suffered by black Americans in Los Angeles, including jobs and housing.

* Malcolm X was murdered in 1965.

- he was a Black Muslim leader.
- the murder was perpetrated as part of a power struggle within the Black Muslim movement.
- Following a trip to Mecca, Malcolm X had begun to promote racial tolerance.
- Elijah Mohammed led the more radical, less racially tolerant faction of the Black Muslim movement. He benefitted from the assassination and took control of the movement. Was behind the assassination of Malcolm X.

* The assassination of Martin Luther King, April 4th, 1968 in Memphis.

- he was killed by James Earl Ray.
- The assassination led to a nationwide wave of riots in more than 60 cities.

The Vietnam War and Stuff

*Vietnam had been a colony of France since the 19th century. French influence had been most pronounced in the South of Vietnam, especially in Saigon.

- But well before W.W.II Vietnamese nationalists lead by Ho Chi Minh had fought and agitated for the withdrawal of the French and for Vietnamese independence.

- Ho Chi Minh had been educated in Paris and in the Soviet Union.

- He was an avowed communist, but also a believer in western style democracy and the American virtues of free speech.

- At heart he was a nationalist land reformer, primarily concerned with restoring Vietnam to the Vietnamese.

- In 1952, Ho defeated French forces in the battle of Dien Bien Phu. The French left Vietnam to its independence.

* In 1954, Vietnam was divided in half at the 17th parallel, and the French agreed to withdraw.

- The treaty specified that free elections would be held to decide the country's fate. But before these elections could be held, anti-Communist government was proclaimed in the South.

- The US diplomatically recognized the new nation of South Vietnam. By 1955, the US was backing South Vietnam with a small number of military advisors and monetary aid.

- Around one million northerners, mainly minority Catholics, fled south, fearing persecution by the communists.

* Eisenhower sent 800 military advisers into South Vietnam to help the South Vietnamese defend themselves from North Vietnamese aggression.

- initially the war in South Vietnam is a civil war between supporters of the South Vietnamese government (which ever one happens to be in power) and the anti-government guerillas (supplied and often trained by the North Vietnamese communists) called the Viet Cong (or National Liberation Front).

* John Kennedy believed that Vietnam under South Vietnamese dictator Ngo Dinh Diem was an important player in the war against the spread of Communism in the Pacific.

- Diem's rule was authoritarian, nepotistic and pro-Catholic. He gave lucrative positions of authority to family members and favored Vietnamese Catholics against Buddhists.

- In May 1961, Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson visited Saigon and enthusiastically declared Diem the "Winston Churchill of Asia." Asked why he had made the comment, Johnson replied, "Diem's the only boy we got out there."

- Johnson assured Diem of more aid in molding a fighting force that could resist the Communists.

* Vienna Summit, 1961

- JFK and Nikita Khrushchev (Soviet leader) met in Vienna and this caused heightened tensions between the US and Russia.
- Khrushchev thought that JFK was a punk, so he tried to push him around.
- Khrushchev threatened war if, among other things, the U.S. didn't pull back on medium range missiles in Europe.
- JFK was a consummate cold warrior, refused to back down in the face of Khrushchev's aggressive posturing.
- Kennedy began to believe that, in addition to MAD tactics, the U.S. should create a military that was well versed in counterinsurgency tactics and other kinds of small scale tactical warfare to counter Soviet and Chinese trained guerilla fighters.
- Kennedy created the Special Forces (Green Berets) as part of this new policy.
- Shortly after the Summit, JFK sent a larger contingent of U.S. troops to Vietnam to act as trainers and advisors to Diem's military forces.

* Cuba, April 1961.

- The CIA, hatched a plan during the Eisenhower administration to overthrow Castro using Cuban exiles from Castro's takeover it involved an invasion by Cuban exiles at a place in Cuba called the Bay of Pigs.
- Kennedy agreed to this plan.
- CIA, train anti-Castro Cuban refugees to invade and retake Cuba with CIA sea and air support.
- This mission was a total fiasco.
- This made relations between the US and Cuba worse.

* The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962.

- US learns the USSR is putting nuclear weapons in Cuba.
- Kennedy demanded the Russians remove those weapons from Cuba.
- Said that if Cuba attacked the US it would be seen as an attack by Russia and the US would respond accordingly.
- JFK set a naval blockade of Cuba.
- Khrushchev backs down.
- Kennedy also agrees to remove US missiles from Turkey.

* Meanwhile Back in Vietnam

- By 1963, there were 16,000 American military personnel in South Vietnam, up considerably from Eisenhower's 900 advisors.

* The Strategic Hamlet Program had been initiated in 1961.

- This joint U.S.-South Vietnamese program attempted to resettle the rural population into fortified camps. The aim was to isolate the population from the insurgents, provide education and health care, and strengthen the government's hold over the countryside.
- The Strategic Hamlets, however, were quickly infiltrated by Viet Cong guerrillas who ruthlessly punished any peasants who accepted support from the Americans or Army of South Vietnam.

- The peasants resented being uprooted from their ancestral villages.
- Colonel Pham Ngoc Thao, a Diem favorite who ran the program, was in fact a communist agent who used his religious label to gain influential posts and damage the ROV from the inside.
- Additionally, the U.S. depended on the Vietnamese regime to help them cross the cultural gaps between Vietnamese peasants and G.I.s, and the Vietnamese regime, which was primarily made up of French-influenced urban South Vietnamese didn't understand the peasants much more than the Americans.
- The Strategic Hamlet Program had another unfortunate effect on the U.S. perception of the Vietnam War. U.S. military leadership began to stress that the U.S. was "fighting for the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese people." This mentality stuck in the U.S. and policy makers began to echo it.
- It increasingly came to define U.S. war goals, which had previously been better focused on eradicating communist insurgency.
- Hearts and Minds campaigns typically refer to Liberal, Western governments that are attempting to liberate oppressed people from communism, fascism or religious theocracies.
- Lyndon Johnson used some version of the phrase "hearts and minds" a total of 28 times while in office. In fact he would take the idea even further than Kennedy, coming up with a "Hearts and Minds Program."
- The idea was laughable. One military officer went so far as to report in a hearing in Congress that "We had to burn the village to save the village."

* Diem's regime was problematic at best.

- The ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) was riddled with corruption and the soldiers in the army were poorly trained and inept.
- Many officers in the ARVN were promoted because they were Catholic friends of Diem, and not for their command skills.
- Diem became increasingly paranoid of possible coups against his regime.
- Buddhists in South Vietnam were increasingly angered and frustrated with favor piled on Catholics, and this resulted in mass protests against policies that gave privileges to the Catholic Church and its adherents.
- in 1963, with the wholehearted support of the CIA, a group of generals killed Diem and set up a new government.

* Following the coup, chaos ensued.

- Hanoi (Capital of the North) took advantage of the situation and increased its support for the guerrillas.
- South Vietnam entered a period of extreme political instability, as one military government toppled another in quick succession.
- Increasingly, each new regime was viewed as a puppet of the Americans; whatever the failings of Diem, his credentials as a nationalist had been impeccable.
- U.S military advisers were embedded at every level of the South Vietnamese armed forces. They were, however, almost completely ignorant of the political nature of the insurgency.

- The insurgency was a political power struggle, in which military engagements were not the main goal.
- The Kennedy administration sought to refocus U.S. efforts on pacification of the country side and on “winning over the hearts and minds” of the population.

*Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ), as he took over the presidency after the death of Kennedy, initially did not consider Vietnam a priority and was more concerned with his "Great Society" and progressive social programs. Presidential aide Jack Valenti recalls, "Vietnam at the time was no bigger than a man's fist on the horizon. We hardly discussed it because it was not worth discussing."

- In the fall of 1964, Johnson was up for reelection and, like many presidents before him, he became paranoid about the possibility of defeat. The Republican Party nominated the conservative Barry Goldwater, and he was delivering tough, uncompromising speeches against Johnson.

- LBJ realized that he needed to be tougher on the Vietnam issue in order to counter Goldwater's firm commitment to containment. In other words, Johnson believed that his "Great Society" social commitment *without* a strong position on Vietnam would cost him the election.

- Johnson sparked and exaggerated a conflict in Vietnam in order to increase public support for his leadership.

- The American destroyer USS Maddox attacked three North Vietnamese P-4 torpedo boats. The captain sent a report that he had been fired upon first. Johnson, without trying to get the facts, reported to Congress that the *Maddox* had been, in effect, bushwacked in international waters by the torpedo boats. Johnson presented this information to Congress in order to obtain passage of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which granted Johnson the power to expand the U.S. mission in South Vietnam against the North Vietnamese state.

- The so-called *Tonkin Resolution* was not a declaration of war, but Johnson used it to support injecting a massive force of U.S. troops into Vietnam War. He also ordered a series of airstrikes against North Vietnamese civilian and military targets.

- As a political strategy, Johnson's new policy worked in the election of 1964. He won by a landslide.

- After reelection, LBJ became obsessed with bombing North Vietnam, but placed unrealistic objectives and increasingly difficult rules of engagement on the ground forces in order to counter complaints by the growing "peace wing" of the Democratic Party.

- LBJ also increasingly dictated war plans and tactics from the White House instead of allowing the field commanders to make decisions based on facts in the field.

- In the long term the escalation and LBJs policies were catastrophic for Johnson and the Democratic Party, *AND* any real hope of success in the war.

* By 1968, anti-war sentiment had created a growing anti-war movement, especially among American youth.

- The anti-war movement coalesced against the Democratic Party in the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago.

- In 1967, protest groups had been promising to come to Chicago and disrupt the convention, and the city promised to maintain law and order.

- For eight days, protesters and police battled for control of the streets of Chicago, whilst the US Democratic Party met at the convention.
- In a panic over the possibility that the protests would turn public opinion against the Democratic Party, Democrats in the convention ignored the protestors and tried to bully the press into not showing footage of the chaos in the streets outside of the convention center.
- The strategy failed as the confrontation in the streets, however, had a greater impact than the seating of racially mixed delegates from southern states, credential and platform battles, and even the presidential nomination.
- Brought down by his Vietnam policy, alienated from the left wing of his own party, that had initially cheered him for his Great Society policies, Lyndon Baines Johnson, refused to run in 1968.
- The Democrats chose Hubert Humphrey as their candidate. Humphrey, who had been LBJ's vice president was widely viewed as a stand-in for LBJ.
- Republicans nominated Richard M. Nixon, who promised to end the war in Vietnam and reform an ever increasing post Great Society welfare system.
- Additionally, Pro-segregation Alabama governor, George Wallace, ran on an American Independent ticket. He promoted states' rights (segregation) and tough anti-Communist policies.
- With support from moderate and some anti-war Democrats, and from his own party, Nixon won.

* Nixon and the War

- Shortly after coming into office, Nixon's Secretary of State and primary international policy advisor, Henry Kissinger, began to put together plans for a cease fire and peace meetings with North Vietnam.
- Ho Chi Minh was convinced by American media coverage of the war protest movement that he could get the U.S. essentially, to surrender South Vietnam.
- Ho also realized that Nixon wished to improve relations with China and the USSR, so he used these other policy goals to complicate the Paris Peace Talks.
- As the war and the peace negotiations dragged out the anti-war movement grew larger and more violent and chaotic.
- The war, and particularly the draft, became hugely unpopular. Particularly students, began protesting the war. They caused disruption at colleges.
- Democrats used Nixon's failures to recast the war as a Republican war in order to distance themselves from the fallout of the war among the left wing of the Democratic Party.

* January 31, 1968, North Vietnamese launched that Tet Offensive (Tet is the Vietnamese word for New Years).

- Under command of North Vietnamese forces, most of the actual fighting was performed by the Viet Cong (South Vietnamese communist guerillas).
- The offensive was countrywide in scope and well coordinated, with more than 80,000 communist troops striking more than 100 towns and cities, including 36 of 44 provincial capitals, five of the six autonomous cities, 72 of 245 district towns, and the southern capital.

- The Tet offensive was the largest military operation yet conducted by either side up to that point in the war.

- The initial attacks stunned the US and South Vietnamese armies and took them by surprise, but most were quickly contained and beaten back, inflicting massive casualties on communist forces.

- The American press initially characterized the offensive as a massive defeat for American and South Vietnamese forces and a victory for the Viet Cong.

- In fact the Tet Offensive practically wiped out the V.C., the South Vietnamese insurgents. Some historians believe that the offensive was designed by the North Vietnamese to do just that. They anticipated a takeover of South Vietnam and didn't want a large, well-armed insurgent force in the South when they arrived.

- Tailored by the press as an American defeat, the anti-war movement latch on to it to increase demands for American withdrawal.

- At Kent State University in 1970, peaceful protesters were shot at by National Guardsmen and several were killed. Unrest continued. The United States began looking for ways to get out of the war in any way possible.

* U.S. Withdrawal From Vietnam and the Aftermath

- Anti-war protests ended with the final withdrawal of troops after the Paris Peace Accords were signed in 1973. South Vietnam was left to defend itself alone when the fighting resumed.

- Many South Vietnamese fled to the United States in one of the largest war refugee migrations in history.

- There was no peace movement to protest the renewed bloodshed, and little media coverage.

- In the spring of 1974/1975 The North Vietnamese rolled across South Vietnam in a bid to take over all of the nation.

- at first the South Vietnamese put up a successful defense of their country, but by April of 1975, well supplied with Russian and Chinese equipment, the city of Saigon fell to the Army of North Vietnam.

*Lessons of the War

- The war along with Kissinger's rethinking of U.S. foreign policy marks the end of Containment as an acceptable policy for the Cold War.

- The Democratic Party is broken successively by both the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War.

- ☒ Southern Conservatives leave the Democratic Party by 1968 to join the Republican Party. The Solid South is dead.

- ☒ "Cold Warriors," now called Hawks leave the Democratic Party as that party becomes increasingly dominated by more left leaning and pacifistic Democrats.

- ☒ As the Democratic Party moves increasingly further left, the GOP is pushed Right by the refugees from the Democratic Party.

- ☒ Moderate and liberal Republicans all but disappear in the face of the new configuration.

- ☒ These changes and desertions leads to the political parties that we have today.