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**THE UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA**

**History and Political System**

(vysokoškolské učebné texty)

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# 0 | INTRODUCTION

The textbook is intended for all those, who are interested and would like to discover more about history and political system of the USA. The target group are mainly the students of journalism but the texts may serve as an additional material for anyone who wants to broaden his knowledge of the English language or facts about the USA.

The chapters chronologically follow particular historical periods from the discovery of the new continent up to the most present history and the final chapter is dedicated to the political system of the USA. Also, the chapters follow similar structure: they consist of an explanatory text supplemented by revision activities provided at the end of each chapter and related authentic texts of various kinds: historical documents, news reports, letters, constitutional amendments, press releases, press conference transcripts, senate resolutions, court appeals, blogs, reviews, biographies and many more.

There are several reasons for providing the authentic texts in the textbook. They were primarily chosen to supplement or enrich the information about a certain historical period, event or phenomenon. Secondly, they serve an example of various styles of authentic writing and help the students of Journalism understand the way the texts are written in English. And finally, they may serve also a background for both individual and class activities.



## DISCOVERY AND FIRST SETTLEMENT

**Leif Ericson** was an Icelandic explorer and he is thought to be the first European visitor to North America, in approximately 11th century (500 years before Christopher Columbus). According to the *Sagas*, he was converted to Christianity in Norway in around 1000 by Olaf I, who sent him to Greenland to convert the settlers there. However, on his voyage to Greenland he sailed off-course and arrived in a place he called Vinland (because of the grapes growing there, and the general fertility of the land). With a group of Vikings he established a Norse settlement at Vinland. The precise identity of Vinland remains uncertain; however, after discovering ruins of a Viking-type settlement, it is now commonly identified with the Norse L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland, modern-day Canada. Ericson may also have visited Nova Scotia and New England, but he failed to establish any permanent settlement there.



*First voyage of C. Columbus. Modern place names are shown in bold and Columbus's place names are shown in italics.*

The knowledge of the Vikings was not accesible to the Europeans. After Constantinopole and the trade routes were taken by the Turks, Europe was seeking for the new access to Indies. And so, five hundred years after Ericson, the need for increased trade and error in navigation led

**Christopher Columbus** to land in the new continent (New World). Columbus was an Italian sailor and traveller sailing for Ferdinand and Isabella - the King and Queen of Spain. On the 3 August 1492 he set sail from Palos, Spain with three ships: the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria. He wanted to find a new route to the Far East. In India, China and Japan he could get valuable silks, spices, precious stones and china. He knew the world was round and believed that by sailing approximately 6,500 km west from Europe (instead of passing the coast of Africa) he could reach the Far East. On the 12 October 1492 he reached San Salvador, a small island in the Bahamas in the Caribbean Sea and later he landed also in present Cuba. He thought he had discovered a new way to Indies. He never knew he had discovered a new continent.

The first explorer to realize that a new continent (New World) was discovered by the Europeans was another Italian, *Amerigo Vespucci*, and in 1507 the continent was named after him: America. **Further exploration** includes Italian navigator and explorer Giovanni Caboto (known in English as *John Cabot*) who helped to open the European era of exploration and colonial expansion. He was sailing in the service of Henry VII of England, and he reached the North American mainland (present Newfoundland) in 1497. On the basis of his voyage, England later claimed the entire North America. *Pedro Álvares Cabral* reached Brazil and claimed it for Portugal; *Jacques Cartier*, a French explorer of Breton origin, claimed what is now Canada for France.

The New World, however, had been inhabited long before the arrival of European navigators. Estimates of the number of first inhabitants living in what is now the United States at the onset of European colonization range from 2 to 18 million. This number was, however, radically reduced after the arrival of European settlers, because the **Indians** (as Columbus named them) lacked natural immunity to European diseases. Smallpox, in particular, ravaged whole communities. The Indians received the first Europeans in a friendly manner, taught them how to cultivate crops such as tobacco and corn, but they received brutal treatment in return. Settlers invaded Indian's agriculture lands and changed the natural environment drastically. Settlers bought up lands and valuable furs from the Indians at trifling prices, seized Indian lands through war and threats, cut their forests and built big cities. That



caused the fact, that later the white men became unwanted trespassers to the Indians.

The word *Indian* may even nowadays cause difficulties, since it denotes both Native American as well as a person from India. There are attempts to differentiate them: East Indians (India) and West Indians (America), but the term West Indian denotes however somebody coming from the West Indies (islands by the American coastline). Red Indian is pejorative, so most commonly used names are American Indians, Native Americans, Amerindians, first nations, aboriginal or indigenous people. Some countries of the American continent have still sizeable population of Indians: Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Greenland, Mexico and Peru and at least a thousand different indigenous languages are spoken in the area. Some California and Southwestern tribes, such as the Kumeyaay, Cocopa, Pascua Yaqui and Apache span both sides of the US – Mexican border. Haudenosaunee people, for example, have the legal right to freely cross the US – Canadian border. There are some other tribes, such as Huron, Blackfeet, Lenape, Penobscot, Athabascan or Iñupiat to mention some, who live in both Canada and the US.

### **The True Story of Pocahontas as NOT told by Disney**

*by M. R. Reese*

Most people are familiar with the story of Pocahontas – the Native American princess who fell in love with Englishman John Smith during the height of conflict between the English settlers and the indigenous people of the Americas. In 1995, Disney released an artistically beautiful animated film showing the supposed events that unfolded between John Smith and Pocahontas. Although Disney is known for creating fictional tales, many people believed that Disney's account of the life of Pocahontas was a true reflection of past events: the love between Pocahontas and John Smith, the bravery Pocahontas showed when saving John Smith's life, and the tragic ending when John Smith returned to England for medical treatment. However, this depiction is a far departure from the actual events that occurred, and from the real life of Pocahontas.

It is believed that Pocahontas was born around 1595 to a Powhatan chief. Her given name at birth was Matoaka, although she was sometimes called Amonute. "Pocahontas" was a derogatory nickname meaning "spoiled child" or

“naughty one.” Matoaka’s tribe was a part of a group of about thirty Algonquian-speaking tribes located in Tidewater, Virginia.

During Matoaka’s childhood, the English had arrived in the ‘New World’ and clashes between the colonizers and the Native Americans were commonplace. In 1607, John Smith, an Admiral of New England and an English soldier and explorer, arrived in Virginia by ship, with a group of about 100 other settlers. One day, while exploring the Chickahominy River, John Smith was captured by one of Powhatan’s hunting parties. He was brought to Powhatan’s home at Werowocomoco. The accounts of what happened next vary from source to source. In John Smith’s original writing, he told of having a large feast, after which he sat and spoke with Chief Powhatan. In a letter written to Queen Anne, John Smith told the story of Matoaka throwing herself across his body to protect him from execution at the hands of Powhatan. It is believed that John Smith was a pretentious man who told this lie to gain notoriety. In the Disney version, Matoaka/Pocahontas is depicted as a young woman when she saved John Smith, but by his accounts, she was only a 10-year-old child when these events occurred, and therefore highly unlikely that there was any romance between them.

Matoaka often visited the settlement at Jamestown to help the settlers during times when food was in short supply. On 13<sup>th</sup> April, 1613 AD, during one of these visits, Samuel Argall captured Matoaka to ransom her for some English prisoners held by her father. She was held hostage at Jamestown for over a year. During her captivity, tobacco planter John Rolfe took a ‘special interest’ in the attractive young prisoner, and he eventually conditioned her release upon her agreeing to marry him. Matoaka was baptized ‘Rebecca’ and in 1614, she married John Rolfe - the first recorded marriage between a European and a Native American.

Two years later, John Rolfe took Matoaka to England to use her in a propaganda campaign to support the colony of Virginia, propping her up as the symbol of hope for peace and good relations between the English and the Native Americans. ‘Rebecca’ was seen an example of a civilized ‘savage’ and Rolfe was praised for his accomplishment in bringing Christianity to the ‘heathen tribes’.

While in England, Matoaka ran into John Smith. She refused to speak with him, turning her head and fleeing from his presence – a far cry from the undying love between the two as portrayed in the Disney movie. In 1617, the Rolfe family boarded a ship to return to Virginia. However, Matoaka would not complete this journey home. She became gravely ill – theories range from smallpox, pneumonia, or tuberculosis, to her having been poisoned – and she was taken off the ship at Gravesend where she died on March 21, 1617. It is

believed she was 21 years old when she died. Sadly, there were no fairy tale endings for Matoaka.

The *real* story of 'Pocahontas' would make a greater movie than the one produced by Disney, as her tragic life.

*Source: <http://www.ancient-origins.net/history-famous-people/true-story-pocahontas-not-told-disney-002285>*

## **Activities**

1. Discuss and compare the treatment of native inhabitants by white newcomers in northern America with the treatment of the natives in other parts of the world, e.g. southern America, Australia, New Zealand.
2. What stereotypical images of American Indians and the first settlers do you meet in films and literature? How would you characterize both?
3. After having read the text about Pocahontas, think of a similar story or person, where the legend or romantic version differs from the real story and write a text explaining or polemicizing the differences.



# 2 |

## THIRTEEN ENGLISH COLONIES

Stories of the New World's gold attracted the first European explorers who came to America to increase their wealth and broaden their influence over world affairs. The Spanish were among the first Europeans to explore the New World and the first to settle in what is now the United States. The founding of Saint Augustine (in Florida) in 1565 marked the beginning of European colonization. In 1588, England and Spain were engaged in warfare, which virtually annihilated the Spanish naval power. After this defeat, Spain no longer figured as a rival of England for possession of North America. The thirteen colonies along the Atlantic coast were under British rule. West of these was French territory extending to the Rocky Mountains in the west, to Louisiana in the south, and reaching northward into present-day Canada. The territory was called New France. Part of it was later in 1803 bought by the U.S. in the Louisiana Purchase.



*13 English colonies*

## The Tobacco Colonies

In 1585 Sir Walter Raleigh with a group of colonists (91 men, 17 women and nine children) settled on the island of Roanoke (present area of North Carolina). Mysteriously, by 1590 the Roanoke colony had vanished entirely and thus it is sometimes referred to as Lost Colony. It is so probably because the first colonists were mostly adventurous and impoverished men incapable of any sustained effort, and that is why the very early wave of colonisation was a complete failure.

The first successful and permanent English colony able to survive thanks to own labour was **Virginia** (named by Sir Walter Raleigh in honor of the "virgin-queen," Elizabeth I) in 1607, after the London Company had sent 144 men to Virginia on three ships: the *Godspeed*, the *Discovery* and the *Susan Constant*. They reached the Chesapeake Bay in the spring of 1607 and headed about 60 miles up the James River, where they built a settlement they called *Jamestown* (named after the king James I). The Jamestown colonists had a rough time. They were so busy looking for gold and other exportable resources that they could barely feed themselves. The first year was devastating for the colonists, with only 32 of them surviving the winter. However, the Native Americans helped them and colony of Jamestown survived. It was not until 1616, when Virginia's settlers learned how to grow tobacco that it seemed the colony might survive. The first African slaves arrived in Virginia in 1619.

In 1634 **Maryland** was founded, unlike Virginia, by a group of English Catholics who could not practice their religion in England. These were the about 300 settlers sent by Cecilius Calvert, the 2nd Lord Baltimore, after he was granted about 12 million acres of land at the top of the Chesapeake Bay by the English crown. Lord Baltimore's intention was to create a safe home for English Catholics in the New World in the time of the European wars of religion. Maryland, named after Henrietta Maria – the French Princess, was similar to Virginia in many ways. Its landowners produced tobacco on large plantations that depended on the labor of servants and (later) African slaves. Maryland became known for its policy of religious toleration for all.

### **A Jamestown settler describes life in Virginia, 1622**

*Sebastian Brandt to Henry Hovener, 13 January, 1622.  
(Gilder Lehrman Collection)*

The first English settlers in Jamestown, Virginia, who arrived in 1607, were eager to find gold and silver. Instead they found sickness and disease. Eventually, these colonists learned how to survive in their new environment, and by the middle of the seventeenth century they discovered that their fortunes lay in growing tobacco.

This 1622 letter from Jamestown colonist Sebastian Brandt to Henry Hovener, a Dutch merchant living in London, provides a snapshot of the colony in flux. Brandt, who likely arrived in 1619 in a wave of 1,200 immigrants, writes of his wife's and brother's deaths the previous year almost in passing. He mentions that, due to his own illness, he "was not able to travell up and downe the hills and dales of these countries but doo nowe intend every daye to walke up and downe the hills for good Mineralls here is both golde silver and copper." Most of Brandt's letter is devoted to its real purpose: putting in orders for cheese, vinegar, tools, spices, and other assorted goods from the London Company that were not available in Virginia. Interestingly, he promises to pay in tobacco and furs - not in the gold and copper he's looking for.

We know little about Brandt. He does not appear in any known existing official records, and historians presume he died not long after writing this letter. The glimpse he offers into early Jamestown serves as a tantalizing example of the challenges and thrills of studying colonial American history.

#### **TRANSCRIPT OF THE LETTER**

Well beloved good friend Henry Hovener

My comendations remembred, I hartely [wish] your welfare for god be thanked I am now in good health, but my brother and my wyfe are dead aboute a yeare pass'd And touchinge the busynesse that I came hither is nothing yett performed, by reason of my sicknesse & weaknesse I was not able to travell up and downe the hills and dales of these countries but doo nowe intend every daye to walke up and downe the hills for good Mineralls here is both golde silver and copper to be had and therefore I will doe my endeavour by the grace of god to effect what I am able to performe And I intreat you to beseeche the Right Hon: & Wor: Company in my behalfe to grant me my freedome to be sent either to me I dowbte not to doo well & good service in these countries

humbly desyringe them also to provyde me some [appointed] fellowe & a strong boye to assiste me in my businesse, and that it may please the aforesaid Company to send me at my charge a bed wth a bolster and cover and some Linnen for shirtes and sheetes. Sixe fallinge bands wth Last Size pairs of shoes twoo pairs of bootes three pairs of cullered stockings and garters wth three pairs of lether gloves some powder and shott twoo little runletts of oyle and vinnegar some spice & suger to comfort us here in our sicknesse abowte ffyftie pounds weight of holland and Englishe cheese together, Lykewyse some knyves, spoons, combes and all sortes of cullerd beads as you knowe the savage Indians use Allso one Rundlett wth all sortes of yron nayles great and small, three haire sives, two hatchetts wth twoo broad yrons and some Allum And send all these necessaries thinges in a dry fatt wth the first shippinge dyrected unto Mr. Pontes in James Towne here in Virginia And whatsoever this all costes I will not onely wth my moste humble service but allso wth some good Tobacco Bevor and Otterskins and other commodities here to be had recompence the Company for the same And yf you could send for my brother Phillipps Sonne in Darbesheere to come hether itt [were] a great commoditie ffor me or suche another used in minerall workes And thus I comitt you to the Almightie. Virginia 13 January 1622.

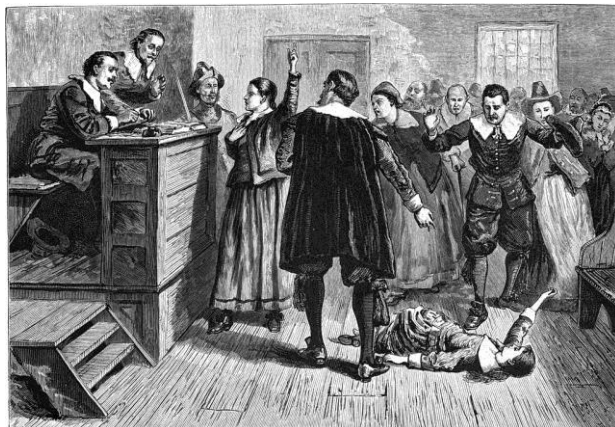
*Source: The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History,  
[http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/early-settlements/  
resources/jamestown-settler-describes-life-virginia-1622](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/early-settlements/resources/jamestown-settler-describes-life-virginia-1622)*

## **The New England Colonies**

In the North, English Puritans established several settlements. These people came to America to escape persecution in England. These first colonies in the North were called and even now the territory is referred to as New England. In the years 1620 - 1640, some 30,000 Puritans settled there. A group of Puritans called the Pilgrims crossed the Atlantic in the ship *Mayflower* and settled at *Plymouth* (named after a port in Britain), **Massachusetts** in 1620. They escaped Britain because of catholic persecution of the Stuarts. Originally, their desired destination was Virginia, however, thanks to poor navigation abilities and unknown sea currents they landed at what is know the coastline of Boston. With the help of local natives, the colonists soon got the hang of farming, fishing and hunting, and Massachusetts prospered. The Puritans were orthodox Protestants and even now the term puritan



denotes a man of extreme moral and religious principals, especially in sexual matters. No wonder the famous witch trials took place in colonial Massachusetts in the town of *Salem*, where a series of hearings and prosecutions of people accused of witchcraft were held in 1692 and 1693. The trials resulted in the executions of twenty people, fourteen of them women, and all but one by hanging.



*The central figure in this 1876 illustration of the courtroom is usually identified as Mary Walcott, one of the "afflicted" girls called as a witness at the Salem Witch Trials.*

As the Massachusetts settlements expanded, they generated new colonies in New England. To the north of the Massachusetts Bay colony, the colony of **New Hampshire** was founded in 1629. Since the land in Massachusetts was very rocky and also some of its Puritan settlers were not satisfied with the acting of their leaders, a handful of adventurous men led by John Mason went to find more fertile farming land and they settled in *Portsmouth* and founded the New Hampshire Colony. Firstly, the colony (or province, as colonies are also referred to) consisted for many years of a small number of communities along the seacoast and the Piscataqua River. The province's economy was dominated by timber and fishing and the New Hampshire population was more religiously diverse.

Puritans who thought that Massachusetts was not pious enough formed the colony of **Connecticut**. The colony, originally known as the River

colony, was founded in 1636 by Thomas Hooker, who left the Massachusetts Bay Colony with 35 families. Later, two other English colonies merged into the Colony of Connecticut: Saybrook Colony and New Haven Colony. The economy began with subsistence farming and developed with greater diversity and an increased focus on production for distant markets, especially the British colonies in the Caribbean. The colony was also the scene of a bloody and raging war between the English and the Pequot tribe of Native Americans, known as the *Pequot War*. The Pequots lost the war and about 700 Pequots had been killed or taken into captivity.

Another man who decided to leave the Massachusetts Bay Colony and begin a colony of his own was Roger Williams. He was a Puritan minister who disagreed with the decisions of the community and he protested that the state should not interfere with religion. He claimed that the colony leaders should not be the church leaders and he also believed the Indians should be paid for the land they were taking. Puritan leaders wanted to punish him, but he escaped. In 1636 he bought the land from Indians and established the **Rhode Island Colony**. The land was first home to the Narragansett Indians, who had extensive trade relations across the region, which evoked the idea of the town of *Narragansett* (today's recreation town of some 16 thousand population) to show respect to the Indians. In the colony, everybody including Jews was allowed to practice their own religion and enjoy complete "liberty in religious concerns". The separation of church and state was thus guaranteed.

## **The Middle Colonies**

Also the Dutch were trying to colonize the New World. They sent Captain Henry Hudson and he found a river that ran westward, followed it and found that it turned north in what is now New York. The river still bears his name. In 1623 the Dutch sent people to live in this area. They formed a new colony and began trading with the native inhabitants. They called this new colony *New Netherlands*. Its main town was *New Amsterdam* (Nieuw Amsterdam) on Manhattan Island, which was bought from local Indian chiefs for 60 guilders (\$24). However, in 1664, English king Charles II gave the territory between New England and

Virginia, much of which was already occupied by Dutch traders and landowners called patroons, to his brother James, the Duke of York. The English soon absorbed Dutch New Netherlands along with New Amsterdam and renamed it **New York** (named after the Duke of York), but most of the Dutch people, as well as the Belgian Flemings and Walloons, French Huguenots, Scandinavians and Germans who were living there, stayed. This made New York one of the most diverse and prosperous colonies in the New World.



*According to legend, Native Americans met William Penn under an elm tree at Shackamaxon, the site of present day Penn Treaty Park.*

In 1680, the king granted 45,000 square miles of land west of the Delaware River to William Penn, a Quaker (member of a Christian sect) who owned large swaths of land in Ireland. Penn's North American holdings became the colony of "Penn's Woods," or **Pennsylvania**. Lured by the fertile soil and the religious toleration that Penn promised, people migrated there from all over Europe. Like their Puritan counterparts in New England, most of these emigrants paid their own way to the colonies – they were not indentured servants – and had enough money to establish themselves when they arrived. As a result, Pennsylvania soon became a prosperous and relatively egalitarian place. The colony was also characterized by religious toleration where religious freedom was granted to everyone monotheist and government was initially open to all Christians. Pennsylvania Hospital, the first hospital in the British American colonies, and The Academy and

College of Philadelphia, the predecessor to the private University of Pennsylvania, both opened here.

The **Province of New Jersey** had originally been settled by Europeans as part of New Netherlands, but came under English rule after the surrender of Fort Amsterdam in 1664, becoming a proprietary colony. The English then renamed the province after the Isle of Jersey in the English Channel. The English justified the seizure by claiming that John Cabot, an Italian under the sponsorship of the English King Henry VII, had been the first to discover the place. The original boundaries of the province were slightly larger than the current state and it was not dominated by a specific religion, which gave way to religious freedom for Quakers, Catholics, Lutherans, Jews and others. New Jersey was often referred to as a breadbasket colony because it grew so many crops, especially wheat. The wheat was ground into flour and then shipped to England.

Sweden also wanted a colony of their own to trade with the others, so they landed in **Delaware** in 1638 and established a new colony there. The Delaware Colony was founded in 1638 by Peter Minuit and New Sweden Company. But the land fell under British control in 1664 when William Penn was given the deed by the Duke of York. Delaware was then governed as part of Pennsylvania from 1682 until 1701. The colony was named after the Delaware River whose name was derived from that of Sir Thomas West (Lord de la Warr) who was Virginia Company's first governor. The Delaware Colony's mild climate made farming feasible for the colonists and its natural resources included also timber, coal, furs, fish, and iron ore. There was no dominating religion there and religious tolerance made the area attractive to those who were not purists.

## **The Southern Colonies**

The land that stretched south of Virginia to Florida was granted to the group of King's Charles friends in 1663. They named the colony Carolina in honor of Charles. The first settlement was *Charleston*. When these men arrived to the area they found that many people had been already living there and the area was much less cosmopolitan when compared to the northern states of New England. In its northern half,



the largest city, followed by *New York*, *Boston* and *Charleston*. The colonists did not have much in common, but they were able to band together and fight for their independence.

### **Activities**

1. What are the characteristics of each of the four types of colonies (Tobacco, New England, Middle and Southern colonies)? Who were the colonists, what kind of people, what did they mainly do for living, what was the prevailing religion, organization of the social life? How did the types of the colonies differ?
2. Write a report about the life of early colonists in Jamestown according to information from Sebastian Brandt's letter and the texts about colonies.
3. Find more information about the Salem witch trial and write a news story about the trial from the point of view of a contemporary observer.

# 3

## CREATION OF INDEPENDENCE

### The Seven Years' War and colonial sense of commonality

The French were the main rival of the English in the colonization of North America. They controlled Canada and Louisiana, which included the entire Mississippi watershed - a vast area with few people. French influence can be seen even nowadays: Louisiana was named after King Louis and similar was the motivation for Saint Louis, a town on Mississippi river. New Orleans was named in the honour of Jane of Arc (the Maid of Orléans). Britain and France fought several wars; however, the conflict known as the **Seven Years' War** was the most crucial they were engaged in. The struggle began in 1754 after a squadron of soldiers led by an unknown, twenty-two year old George Washington attacked a French fortress *Fort Duquesne*.



*At Point State Park in downtown Pittsburgh, bricks mark the outline of the former site of Fort Duquesne.*

The war was also called the French and Indian War by the colonies because the English were fighting the French and their Native American allies, the Hurons. The two countries were fighting for control of North America which meant gaining an access to the all-important Mississippi River, the lifeline of the frontier to the west. Soon after the British captured Louisbourg, a strategic gate to the St. Lawrence Seaway, the

French chapter of North American history ended in a bloody finale. England's superior strategic position and its competent leadership ultimately brought victory in this war. After the Peace of Paris was signed in 1763, France relinquished all of Canada, the Great Lakes and

the upper Mississippi Valley to the British. In North America alone, British territories more than doubled.

Gradually, the English, Welsh, Scots-Irish, German, French, Irish, Swedish, Native American, and African descent cultures began to blend. Americans became culturally distinct from the English: their language, culture, and religions differed a lot. Most Americans were born here and never even visited England, the Germans were never loyal to England and the Scots-Irish had great resentment toward Great Britain. The experience of the war also did not bring the British and the Americans closer together: British troops felt haughty about colonials, since Americans were regarded as crude and lacking culture and the pious New Englanders found the British to be profane. The American colonists started to feel closer to each other. The first sign of **unity**, commonality or even nationalism was seen when settlers from all thirteen colonies fought together.

### **Which of the 11 American nations do you live in?**

*By Reid Wilson, Washington Post, November 8, 2013*

Red states and blue states? Flyover country and the coasts? How simplistic. Colin Woodard, a reporter at the Portland Press Herald, says North America can be broken neatly into 11 separate nation-states, where dominant cultures explain our voting behaviors and attitudes toward everything from social issues to the role of government. “Our continent’s famed mobility has been reinforcing, not dissolving, regional differences, as people increasingly sort themselves into like-minded communities.” Woodard lays out his map in the new book *American Nations: A History of the Eleven Rival Regional Cultures of North America*. Here’s how he breaks down the continent:

**Yankeedom:** Founded by Puritans, residents in Northeastern states and the industrial Midwest tend to be more comfortable with government regulation. They value education and the common good more than other regions.

**New Netherland:** The Netherlands was the most sophisticated society in the Western world when New York was founded, Woodard writes, so it’s no wonder that the region has been a hub of global commerce. It’s also the region most accepting of historically persecuted populations.



**The Midlands:** Stretching from Quaker territory west through Iowa and into more populated areas of the Midwest, the Midlands are “pluralistic and organized around the middle class.” Government intrusion is unwelcome, and ethnic and ideological purity isn’t a priority.

**Tidewater:** The coastal regions in the English colonies of Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland and Delaware tend to respect authority and value tradition. Once the most powerful American nation, it began to decline during Westward expansion.

**Greater Appalachia:** Extending from West Virginia through the Great Smoky Mountains and into Northwest Texas, the descendants of Irish, English and Scottish settlers value individual liberty. Residents are “intensely suspicious of lowland aristocrats and Yankee social engineers.”

**Deep South:** Dixie still traces its roots to the caste system established by masters who tried to duplicate West Indies-style slave society, Woodard writes. The Old South values states’ rights and local control and fights the expansion of federal powers.

**El Norte:** Southwest Texas and the border region is the oldest, and most linguistically different, nation in the Americas. Hard work and self-sufficiency are prized values.

**The Left Coast:** A hybrid, Woodard says, of Appalachian independence and Yankee utopianism loosely defined by the Pacific Ocean on one side and coastal mountain ranges like the Cascades and the Sierra Nevadas on the other. The independence and innovation required of early explorers continues to manifest in places like Silicon Valley and the tech companies around Seattle.

**The Far West:** The Great Plains and the Mountain West were built by industry, made necessary by harsh, sometimes inhospitable climates. Far Westerners are intensely libertarian and deeply distrustful of big institutions, whether they are railroads and monopolies or the federal government.

**New France:** Former French colonies in and around New Orleans and Quebec tend toward consensus and egalitarian, “among the most liberal on the continent, with unusually tolerant attitudes toward gays and people of all races and a ready acceptance of government involvement in the economy,” Woodard writes.

**First Nation:** The few First Nation peoples left — Native Americans who never gave up their land to white settlers — are mainly in the harshly Arctic north of Canada and Alaska. They have sovereignty over their lands, but their population is only around 300,000.

The clashes between the 11 nations play out in every way, from politics to social values. Woodard notes that states with the highest rates of violent deaths

are in the Deep South, Tidewater and Greater Appalachia, regions that value independence and self-sufficiency. States with lower rates of violent deaths are in Yankeedom, New Netherland and the Midlands, where government intervention is viewed with less skepticism. And more than 95 percent of executions in the United States since 1976 happened in the Deep South, Greater Appalachia, Tidewater and the Far West. States in Yankeedom and New Netherland have executed a collective total of just one person. That doesn't bode well for gun control advocates, Woodard concludes: "With such sharp regional differences, the idea that the United States would ever reach consensus on any issue having to do with violence seems far-fetched. The cultural gulf between Appalachia and Yankeedom, Deep South and New Netherland is simply too large. But it's conceivable that some new alliance could form to tip the balance."

*Full version source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/govbeat/wp/2013/11/08/which-of-the-11-american-nations-do-you-live-in/>*

## **The Background to the War of Independence**

The Britain's victory over France led directly to a conflict with American colonies. The end of the Seven Years' War left England in control of Canada and all of North America, east of the Mississippi. But the war was long and when it ended, England was in debt. Running an empire and administration of the new territories, as well as of the old, was an expensive business and would require huge amount of money. The king's ministers looked around for additional income and they decided to get the money from American colonies, which were a virtually rich and untaxed section of the empire. Philadelphia was the biggest British city, after London and poverty common in Britain was practically unknown amongst people in the American colonies. Moreover, King George was afraid that New England was becoming too powerful and therefore, the British government started a new policy and passed a number of laws designed to paralyze the rising industry in the colonies.

The colonies produced some raw materials such as iron, steel, tobacco and timber, but they were forbidden to build their own manufacturing industries. Direct trade of the English colonies with the Spanish and French settlements was also prohibited. To prevent fighting with the

Native Americans, the **Proclamation** of 1763 denied the colonists the right to settle west of the Appalachians. The colonists hated this because they were already farming there. The first attempt to extract money out of the colonists was the **Sugar Act** in 1764. This act forbade the importation of foreign rum and taxed all sugar products from Britain. In fact, it reduced the taxation on molasses imported to the colonies, but severely punished anyone who tried to smuggle the syrup. Then, in 1765, the Quartering and Stamp Acts were enacted. The **Quartering Act** forced the colonies to house and feed British soldiers, whose task was no longer to protect the settlements, but to oppress them: to enforce prohibitions, to prevent smuggling, and to suppress the liberation movement of American people. With the passage of the **Stamp Act**, special tax stamps had to be attached to all newspapers, pamphlets, legal documents and licenses.

The colonists thought this was unfair and a storm of protests arose against the acts. People regarded the situation as a violation of their rights. In the summer of 1765, prominent men organized themselves into the **Sons of Liberty** - a secret organization formed to protest the Stamp Act, often through violent means. *No taxation without representation* was their motto. It meant that no British subject should be taxed unless its representative sat as a member in the Parliament. Riots were organized, merchants refused to sell British goods, mobs threatened stamp distributors and most colonists simply refused to use the stamps. The British government did not want trouble so the Act was repealed in 1766.

Repeal of the Stamp Act left Britain's problems unresolved. In 1767, Charles Townshend, British chancellor of exchequer, declared he had a plan for getting money out of the Americans without upsetting them. In fact, it was simply a tax on every day goods, such as tea, paint, glass, and paper, imported from Britain. The response of the Americans was to boycott any of the taxed goods. The colonists protested in Boston, and Massachusetts became the centre of anti-British feeling. Opposition became so strong that the English Parliament repealed the Act. However, new taxes were soon introduced, and English troops were sent to America. This made the colonists even angrier than ever. In March 1770, a riot occurred between British troops and Boston citizens, who

taunted and jeered the soldiers. The troops killed five people. The colonist went wild. They called this **The Boston Massacre**.

## **Outbreak of the War**

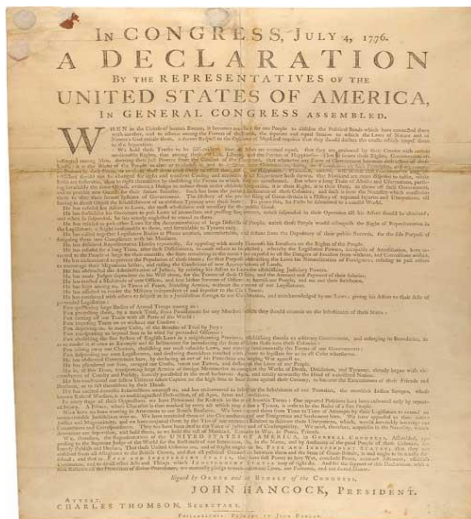
Due to colonial economic boycotts, the Townshend Duties, except tea, were repealed in 1770. The colonists were huge consumers of tea, drinking two million cups a day. To avoid paying this duty, Americans drank smuggled Dutch tea. This contributed to the decline of East India Company. After permission to ship tea directly to America from India, cutting out the middlemen in Britain, the price of tea dropped by half. East Indian tea, although still taxed, was now cheaper than Dutch tea. But Americans were not happy about the cheap, but still taxed tea, and refused to buy it. They viewed the act as another violation of their rights. In Boston, on 16 December 1773, a crowd of men disguised as Indians, boarded the ships full of tea and they dumped all of the tea into the water, which became known as the **Boston tea party**. The Parliament responded by passing an *Intolerable Acts*, which closed the port of Boston to trade and more British soldiers were sent to the port. In September 1774, a congress of the *ablest and wealthiest men in America* met in Philadelphia. It was called **The First Continental Congress**. The leaders urged Americans to disobey the Intolerable Acts and to boycott British trade. Colonists began to organize militias and to collect weapons and ammunition. Arms were bought illegally, and secret military trainings, to prepare the people for armed resistance, were organized.

## **The Revolution**

On 19 April 1775, British soldiers were sent to seize an illegal depot of arms in the nearby town of Concord. At the village of Lexington, they confronted 70 militiamen (armed farmers) and the American War of Independence began. The colonists knew that, if they were to succeed in the struggle, some kind of union would be necessary. In May 1775, **The Second Continental Congress** met in Philadelphia and began to assume the functions of a national government and established the American Continental Army. The Virginian landowner, George Washington was placed in command.

In this stage there were some radicals who demanded complete independence, but the majority of the Congress still believed in the possible compromise with the King of England. The idea of independence became extremely popular after the publication of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* in 1776. In this pamphlet he argued that independence was the only remedy, and that it would be harder to win the longer it was delayed. The idea of independence became universal soon. On 4 July, 1776, the Continental Congress adopted the **Declaration of Independence** declaring that *the colonies are and of right ought to be free and independent States*. The author of this document was Thomas Jefferson.

In the first years, the war went badly for the Americans. It was very difficult to convert colonists into an efficient fighting force since American soldiers were short of money and supplies, and they lacked training and discipline. The quality of the officers was poor, and they had practically no navy. The English, on the other hand, had to fight 3,000 miles from home. It was expensive to transport men and supplies. Also proper strategic management of the force from London was impossible. The British captured New York City in 1776, and Philadelphia was captured a year later. The tide turned in October 1777 at *Saratoga*, where Continentals forced the British to surrender. It was a turning point in the war. After this victory, a Franco-American alliance was signed in February 1778. This alliance brought men, money,



*Declaration of Independence (1776): the second document image, a printed version that was publicly distributed after the original was created.*

encouragement, supplies and, above all, the navy. Holland and Spain also began to support Americans soon.



*Original design of the Great Seal of the United States (1782)*

After 1778, the fighting shifted to the south. The Americans suffered many defeats here, but they won the last battle, which was decisive. At Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781, the English commander, Lord Cornwallis was forced to surrender by the American army under George Washington's command. The war was now over, but King George III refused to acknowledge defeat for another two years. The **Treaty of Paris** was

signed in September 1783. The treaty recognized the independence of the United States and granted the new nation all the territory north of Florida, south of Canada and east of the Mississippi River.

## **The Constitution**

The USA first operated under an agreement called *the Articles of Confederation* (1781). The document set up a very weak central government, with too few powers for defense, trade, and taxation. There was no federal judiciary and no permanent executive. The individual states were almost independent. It was soon clear that this loose agreement was not working well and there was little to bind the 13 colonies together. Each individual colony started minting its own money, making its own laws and imposing duties on goods from other states. Some states were even preparing to establish their own army. This situation could cause a crisis. To prevent such crises, each state sent representatives (George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and James

Madison among them) to Philadelphia in May 1787, to prepare a constitution. In 1789, the **Constitution** was written down. As the first president of the United States, George Washington was elected on 30 April, 1789. In 1791, first amendments, called the **Bill of Rights**, were added to the Constitution. The delegates decided that America would be a Republic with a president as a head of state. There would be two assemblies; an Upper House, called the Senate, and a Lower House, called the House of Representatives. Together the two houses were to be called Congress. The new Constitution also established the Supreme Court.

### **Bill of Rights (1791)**

#### **Congress of the United States**

begun and held at the City of New-York,  
on Wednesday the fourth of March,  
one thousand seven hundred and eighty nine.

**THE** Conventions of a number of the States, having at the time of their adopting the Constitution, expressed a desire, in order to prevent misconstruction or abuse of its powers, that further declaratory and restrictive clauses should be added: And as extending the ground of public confidence in the Government, will best ensure the beneficent ends of its institution.

**RESOLVED** by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, two thirds of both Houses concurring, that the following Articles be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States, as amendments to the Constitution of the United States, all, or any of which Articles, when ratified by three fourths of the said Legislatures, to be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of the said Constitution; viz.

**ARTICLES** in addition to, and Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America, proposed by Congress, and ratified by the Legislatures of the several States, pursuant to the fifth Article of the original Constitution.

**Article the first...** After the first enumeration required by the first article of the Constitution, there shall be one Representative for every thirty thousand, until the number shall amount to one hundred, after which the proportion shall be so regulated by Congress, that there shall be not less than one hundred Representatives, nor less than one Representative for every forty thousand

persons, until the number of Representatives shall amount to two hundred; after which the proportion shall be so regulated by Congress, that there shall not be less than two hundred Representatives, nor more than one Representative for every fifty thousand persons.

**Article the second...** No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

**Article the third...** Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

**Article the fourth...** A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

**Article the fifth...** No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

**Article the sixth...** The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

**Article the seventh...** No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

**Article the eighth...** In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

**Article the ninth...** In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no



fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

**Article the tenth...** Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

**Article the eleventh...** The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

**Article the twelfth...** The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

*Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg, Speaker of the House of Representatives*

*John Adams, Vice-President of the United States, and President of the Senate*

*John Beckley, Clerk of the House of Representatives.*

*Sam. A Otis Secretary of the Senate*

Source: <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=13&page=transcript>

## Activities

1. According to the text about 11 nations write an essay explaining and describing regional differences in Slovakia.
2. What do you think were the most crucial and influential events for the War of Independence to begin? If you only had to choose one major factor, what would it be? Discuss your choice.
3. What rights does the *Bill of Rights* guarantee?
4. In groups, discuss and write your own *Bill of the rights and duties of a journalist* and then compare your statements and ideas with the real *Declaration of the rights and duties of journalists*.



# 4

## WESTWARD EXPANSION AND THE WILD WEST

In the beginning of the 19 century, America enjoyed a period of rapid **economic and territorial expansion**. During this period, the United States expanded westwards and the colonization of the whole continent was completed. The frontier of settlement was pushed west to the Mississippi River and beyond.



The huge Louisiana territory, stretching from the Middle West to the Gulf of Mexico, was bought from France for \$15 million. Florida was purchased by force of arms from Spain for \$5 million. Meanwhile, thousands of Americans were settling in Texas then a part of Mexico. However, the Texans found Mexican rule increasingly oppressive, and in 1835 they rebelled and defeated the Mexican army. In 1845, the United States annexed Texas. As a result, Mexico suspended all diplomatic relations. In May 1846, Congress declared **war on Mexico**. In this war the Americans conquered over a half of Mexico's territory

(the present states of California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado). Thus, America became a truly continental power and by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century this country had reached almost its present dimensions.

In 1862 the **Homestead Act** was adopted to make lands opening up in the west available to a wide variety of settlers. It made the process of formal land acquisition easier and it lowered the land price for squatters who had occupied the land for minimum of 14 months. The famous **Pony Express**, a system of horses and riders, was set up in the mid 1800s to deliver mail and packages to the distant areas. It employed 80 deliverymen and between four and five hundred horses, that were changed in the horse-changing stations. However, the **First Transcontinental Telegraph** linked Omaha, Nebraska and San Francisco in 1861 and the Pony Express ended soon after because it could not compete with the telegraph.

The new territories were commonly reached on foot or by horseback. The **Oregon Trail** is a reference to the path stretching 2000 miles across the United States and used by people, inspired by dreams of rich farmlands, travelling from Missouri to Oregon. The Oregon Trail was laid down by traders and fur trappers and by the year 1836 the first of the migrant train of wagons was put together. The journey took approximately half of the year and the trail was used by an estimated 350 000 settlers from the 1830s through 1869. After the first railroad was completed, use of the trail quickly declined.

**Donner Party**, a group of 81 emigrants to California who in the winter of 1846–47 met with one of the most famous tragedies in Western history. The families were mostly from Illinois and Iowa, and most prominent among them were the two Donner families and the Reed family. In going West they took a little-used, supposedly shorter route, but it proved arduous and they were delayed. They suffered severely and ill feelings in the party arose when they reached what is today Donner Lake in Sierra Nevada. In October 1846 they paused to recover their strength, and early snow caught and trapped them. Many of the emigrants died. Finally, expeditions from the Sacramento valley made their way through the snowdrifts to rescue the hunger-maddened migrants. Only about half of the original party reached California.

*Adapted version. Original source: The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, <http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/history/donner-party.html> University*

The great improvement in transportation facilities was an important stimulus to western prosperity. In this period a national network of roads and canals was built, and the **first steam railroad** was opened in Baltimore, Maryland. From 1850 to 1857 the Appalachian Mountain barrier was pierced by five railway trunk lines. In those days, the Industrial Revolution had reached America. By the 1850s, factories had been producing rubber goods, shoes, sewing machines, clothes, guns and farm implements.

### **Donner Party: Did They or Didn't They?**

*by Gabrielle Burton, The Huffington Post, 17 June 2010*

Human flesh on the menu for the Donner Party or not? That burning question is back in the news again.

Americans have a hard time remembering last week's crook or celebrity, but we seem to have lasting fascination with the ill-fated pioneer party from 164 years ago. Well, at least the cannibal part. It's one of our shared cultural memories, a source of bad macabre jokes, that the Donner Party of 1846, trapped by early snows in the Sierra Nevadas for four months, turned to cannibalism to survive.

But did they?

News reports of a study by a team of biological anthropologists at Appalachian State University are creating a stir. Analyses of bone remains found at the Alder Creek Donner campsite in 2003-2004 digs show no evidence of cannibalism. In 2006, a preliminary report of this same study created a similar stir.

Because I've published two books on the Donner Party in the last year (a memoir, *Searching for Tamsen Donner*, and a novel in Tamsen Donner's voice, *Impatient with Desire*), I've been deluged with email links to newspaper, TV, and online accounts of the "new finding." Most are variations of:

*New study says Donner Party didn't eat each other!*

**THE STUDY DOES NOT SAY THIS.**

It says that, by using modern technological methods, researchers have identified bone fragments of cattle, horse, deer, and dog, but no human bone

fragments. They're not saying cannibalism didn't happen there, they're saying they haven't found any PHYSICAL evidence of cannibalism, they haven't found evidence so far that confirms cannibalism.

Maybe they won't ever find physical evidence at Alder Creek where Tamsen and George Donner were, but certainly cannibalism occurred at one, two, or three of the campsites and in the open mountains on escape and rescue attempts. Credible rescuers wrote about and testified to seeing evidence at the camps; members of the party wrote and spoke about it at the time and later. We may never get archeological evidence but there's plenty of historical evidence.

At the end of February, 1847, trapped nearly four months, Patrick Breen wrote in his diary:

*Mrs. Murphy said here yesterday that thought she would commence on Milt & eat him. I don't think she has done so yet, it is distressing. The Donnos {Donners} told the California folks (the 1st rescue, a group too small to take everyone out) that they commence to eat the dead people 4 days ago, if they did not succeed that day or next in finding their cattle then under ten or twelve feet of snow & did not know spot or near it, I suppose they have done so ere this time.*

I've always felt that people make too much of the cannibalism, while simultaneously not really getting it. The idea of cannibalism may be so emotionally laden that people automatically layer their own fears and revulsion on it, but rationally, cannibalism was a terrible yet natural progression for members of the Donner Party in their determination to keep themselves and their families alive.

After 160 plus years, bone fragments of cattle and other animals were there to be found in the archeological digs because those bones had been cooked long periods of time to make them edible. The hard facts are that, after the Donners ate the cattle flesh, they scraped the hair off the hides, cut them into strips, and boiled them into a gluey pulp. Then they boiled and burned the bones, crumbling them into bits to eat. They ate mice, pet dogs, shoelaces... *until there was nothing left* but dead bodies.

Any cannibalism at the camps would have occurred at the very end of the pioneers' entrapment, and would have lasted only a short period of time—until rescue or death, whichever came first. Because the period was short, the energy flagging, and the supply of dead humans plentiful, the even harder fact is that it's highly unlikely that humans would have been processed the way the animals had been. Only the flesh would have been cooked, not the bones. Since uncooked bone disintegrates quickly in acidic soil, the absence of human bones may mean only that they weren't there to be found in the digs.

Then why these headlines: Donners eat dog but not people...? Although the scientists aren't claiming they've proven there was no cannibalism, reporters are writing on deadline with pressure to grab the attention of a media saturated public.

I have a soft spot for the reporters. A lot of scientific writing is tedious and boring—it's that precision thing. In my early years married to a research scientist, I tried in vain to perk up his papers by eliminating all his pesky qualifiers—maybe, perhaps, theoretically... Not only was I unable to convince him to streamline his writing; somehow, slowly, sneakily, he taught me an appreciation of the precision science requires in its methods and language.

But none of this IS THE ISSUE. For people nearly unshockable, we're a bit obsessed by cannibalism. It's practically a shivery parlor game: Would YOU eat human flesh? Grossssssss.

Here's the real issue and it's dramatic and shivery enough. The story of the Donner Party is a HUMAN story of people who suffered greatly and tried mightily to survive. A story of people for whom the American dream—heading west for a better life—turned nightmare. A story of people who paid part of the heavy price to open up this country.

Of the 81 pioneers trapped in the mountains, a little over half survived. Even if it were provable that no one ever turned to cannibalism, why do people today care so much whether they did or didn't? If they didn't cannibalize, would that make them better people? Or just fewer survivors?

*Source: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/gabrielle-burton/donner-party-did-they-or\\_b\\_541658.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/gabrielle-burton/donner-party-did-they-or_b_541658.html)*

The first great wave of immigration from Asia was brought by the building of Transcontinental Railroad and also by California Gold Rush. California **Gold Rush** started after James W. Marshall discovered gold in 1848 in the American River at Sutter's Mill in Coloma, California, in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Not long after, gold was discovered in the Feather and Trinity Rivers, also located northeast of Sacramento. The first people to rush the gold fields were those already living in California, but as word slowly got out, people from other parts of the United States as well as from foreign countries (Mexico, Chile, Peru, Pacific Islands, Australia, New Zealand, China and other parts of Asia, and some from Europe, mainly France) arrived. It is estimated that by 1855 some 300,000 people had streamed into California hoping to strike

it rich. The port town of San Francisco went from a population of about 1,000 in 1848 to become the eighth largest city in the U.S. in 1890, with a population of almost 300,000. Several decades later, a similar gold rush broke out in the Klondike region. The Klondike Gold Rush consisted of the arrival of prospectors to the Klondike region of Canada as well as Alaska. Over 100 000 people set out on the year long journey to Klondike, with less than one third ever finishing it. Only a small percentage of the prospectors found gold and the rush was soon over.

Popular attention is focused on the Western United States in the second half of the 19th century, a period commonly called the Old West, or the **Wild West**. A more complex term, however, is the **American Frontier** covering the geography, history, folklore, and cultural expression of life of American expansion since first English colonial settlements untill admission of the last mainland territories as states in 1912. The term Wild West frequently exaggerates the romance and violence of the period and is easily associated with Indian wars, cowboys, wagon trains, saloons and banditry.

### **Sundance Kid Biography**

Thief (1867 - 1908)

Sundance Kid was an American criminal best known for his train robberies and bank heists with the Wild Bunch gang in the late 1890s and early 1900s.

#### **Synopsis**

American criminal Sundance Kid, originally named Harry Longabaugh, was born in 1867 in Mont Clare, Pennsylvania. At age 15, he headed west and received his nickname when was arrested for stealing a horse in Sundance, Wyoming. After a couple of years in jail, Sundance Kid resumed a career in crime, robbing trains and banks. Named the Wild Bunch, he and his conspirators went on the longest crime spree in the history of the American West. Sundance Kid eventually fled to South America where he continued his life of crime. Historians disagree on his death with some citing a shootout in Bolivia on November 3, 1908 while others suggest he returned to the U.S. under the name William Long and lived there until 1936.



## **Early Years**

Harry Alonzo Longabaugh was born in 1867 in Mont Clare, Pennsylvania. He was considered the fastest gunslinger in the Wild Bunch, a well-known gang of robbers and cattle rustlers that roamed the American West during the 1880s and 1890s.

Longabaugh was just 15 when he left home for good. He took his nickname from the Wyoming town of Sundance, where he was arrested for the only time in his life after stealing a horse. For the crime, Sundance served nearly two years in jail. Upon his release in 1889, he attempted to create an honest life for himself as a cowboy.

## **The Wild Bunch**

By the early 1890s, Sundance was back to being an outlaw. Authorities fingered him for a train robbery in 1892, and five years later for a bank heist that he pulled off with a group that came to be known as the Wild Bunch. The gang largely consisted of Robert Parker (aka Butch Cassidy), Harry Tracy ("Elzy Lay"), Ben Kilpatrick (the "Tall Texan") and Harvey Logan ("Kid Curry"). Together, the group embarked on the longest stretch of successful train and bank robberies in the history of the American West.

Among the men, Sundance was considered to be the fastest gunslinger, though historical evidence indicates he never killed anyone during the Wild Bunch's run. The gang's robberies were scattered around parts of South Dakota, New Mexico, Nevada and Wyoming. Between robberies, the men hid out at Hole-in-the-Wall Pass, located in Johnson County, Wyoming, where several outlaw gangs had their hideouts.

With each new robbery, the Wild Bunch became better known and well liked by an American public eager to read about their exploits. Their robberies also became bigger. One of the largest was a \$70,000 haul from a train just outside Folsom, New Mexico.

Unable to stop the Wild Bunch, the Union Pacific Railroad hired the famed Pinkerton National Detective Agency to find and arrest Sundance and the rest of the gang. Perhaps sensing their run was over, Sundance and Cassidy pushed into South America, first to Argentina, where they tried to make it as honest farmers. With the pair was Etta Place, a former prostitute who'd become Sundance's lover.

## **Final Years**

An honest life, however, was not a good fit for either Sundance or Cassidy. Before long the two were back to being outlaws, robbing banks and trains just as they'd done in the States.

As the story goes, Cassidy and Sundance lost their lives in a shootout with soldiers in southern Bolivia on November 3, 1908, but the truth of their end has never been fully settled. Debate lingers over where and when Sundance actually died. One account, which bears some historical evidence, suggests he returned to the United States under a new name, William Long, and settled into a new life as a Utah rancher. According to the story, he married a widow with six children in 1894 and lived to be an old man, eventually dying in 1936.

Whatever the true story might be, Sundance is one of the real legends of the American West. In 1969, his life and relationship with Butch Cassidy was turned into an Oscar-winning movie, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, starring Paul Newman (Cassidy) and Robert Redford (Sundance).

Source: <http://www.biography.com/people/sundance-kid-9499214>

## Activities

1. Write a travelogue following the Oregon Trail. Imagine you take the journey yourself and follow the original route.
2. Interview a classmate on his or her most dramatic or adventurous experience and write a short article about it.
3. Write a biography of a person inspiring or interesting to you.
4. Write a blog entry polemising about how a strange, interesting or mysterious event actually happened, confronting myth and evidence.

# 5 | CIVIL WAR (1861 -1865)

By the 1860, the North and the South had developed into **two very different regions**. The North was the main center of manufacturing, commerce and finance. Principal products of this area were textiles, clothing, machinery, leather, and wooden goods and shipping had reached the height of its prosperity. The South, resisting industrialization, manufactured little and that is why, almost all manufactured goods had to be imported. The South was agricultural area where the chief source of wealth was the cotton crop, rice, sugar and tobacco and also the area was dependant on the plantation system and its essential component, slavery.

## **\$200 Reward.**

RUNAWAY from the subscriber, on the night of Thursday, the 30th of September,

### **FIVE NEGRO SLAVES,**

To-wit: one Negro man, his wife, and three children.

The man is a black negro, full height, very erect, his face a little thin. He is about forty years of age, and calls himself *Washington Reed*, and is known by the name of Washington. He is probably well dressed, possibly takes with him an ivory headed cane, and is of good address. Several of his teeth are gone.

*Mary*, his wife, is about thirty years of age, a bright mulatto woman, and quite stout and strong. The oldest of the children is a boy, of the name of *FIELDING*, twelve years of age, a dark mulatto, with heavy eyelids. He probably wears a new cloth cap.

*MATILDA*, the second child, is a girl, six years of age, rather a dark mulatto, but a bright and smart looking child.

*MALCOLM*, the youngest, is a boy, four years old, a lighter mulatto than the last, and about equally as bright. He probably also wears a cloth cap. If examined, he will be found to have a swelling at the navel.

Washington and Mary have lived at or near St. Louis, with the subscriber, for about 15 years. It is supposed that they are making their way to Chicago, and that a white man accompanies them, that they will travel chiefly at night, and most probably in a covered wagon.

A reward of \$150 will be paid for their apprehension, so that I can get them, if taken within one hundred miles of St. Louis, and \$200 if taken beyond that, and secured so that I can get them, and other reasonable additional charges, if delivered to the subscriber, or to *THOMAS ALLEN, Esq.*, at St. Louis, Mo. The above negroes, for the last few years, have been in possession of Thomas Allen, Esq., of St. Louis.

**WM. RUSSELL.**

ST. LOUIS, Oct. 1, 1847.



No. 536. IRON COLLAR FOR PREVENTING THE ESCAPE OF SLAVES.

Conflicting interests in north and south became apparent. The Northerners declared that slavery was wholly responsible for the relative backwardness of the South. For capitalism to develop freely and to expand rapidly it was necessary to abolish slavery and to break the influence of the Southern planters on politics. In some areas of the country, strong opposition to having slaves appeared. Rhode Island abolished slavery in 1774 and was soon followed by other states (Vermont, Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts,

New Hampshire, Connecticut and New Jersey). The importation of

slaves from other countries was banned soon as well. However, the selling of slaves within the southern states continued.

The conflict over slavery began to boil over with the territorial expansion of the United States westwards. The acquisition of new territories in 1845 converted the moral question of slavery into a burning political issue. The Northerners wanted all the new territories to be free, while the Southerners wanted to introduce slavery into them. From the middle 1840s, the issue of slavery overshadowed everything else in American politics. In 1852, H. B. Stowe wrote an antislavery novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabine*. It was a sentimental but powerful novel, which converted many readers to the abolitionist cause. Politically, the 1850s can be characterized as a decade of failure in which the nation's leaders were unable to resolve the divisive issue of slavery.

In 1854, a new political party, the Republican Party was founded by the Northern capitalists and Abraham Lincoln was a party candidate in the **presidential elections of 1860**. He demanded a halt to the spread of slavery. He was willing to tolerate slavery in the Southern states where it already existed, but it was not to spread into any new territory. The Southern slaveholders, who fought for an extension of slavery, strongly opposed this policy. The majority in every Southern state voted against him, but the North supported him and he won the election. This fact was viewed by the South as a threat to slavery and ignited the war.

### **Gone With the Wind, review: 'sublime'**

An epic from the golden age of moviemaking, the story of Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler swept the Oscars in 1939

*Film review by Serena Davies, 16 November 2015, The Telegraph*

***Gone With the Wind (1939) was directed by Victor Fleming. Starring Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh, Leslie Howard, Olivia de Havilland.***

Gone with the Wind, Margaret Mitchell's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, is one of the bestsellers of all time, with at least 28 million copies and more than 155 editions having been published in nearly every language and country. Its immortality has been secured by David O. Selznick's 1939 film adaptation, winner of 11 Oscars, including the first for a black actor, Hattie McDaniel.

It was also one of the first major movies to be made in splendid (and expensive) Technicolor, *Gone With the Wind* is an epic from the golden age of moviemaking. Overblown and melodramatic, it somehow achieves more than the schmaltz of its parts, thanks to a spirited modern heroine, the spoilt Scarlett O'Hara, and its refusal to give us the neat conclusions you'd expect from a 19th-century saga of "cottonfields and cavaliers".

Scarlett stalks across the vast and awe-inspiring canvas of the American Civil War, backbiting and betraying along the way, but always lighting up the screen with what the man she is in love with, the wet Ashley Wilkes, describes as her "passion for life".

MGM had taken a risk, plucking Vivien Leigh from relative obscurity (England) to play the lead in one of the most lavish projects they'd ever undertaken, but it paid off. Victor Fleming's screen version of Mitchell's mediocre tale of thwarted love amid the ashes of the old South worked because Leigh's mercurial brilliance made Scarlett believable. Add to that the charm and grace of Olivia de Havilland (the angelic Melanie), Leslie Howard (Ashley) and the never-so-divine Clark Gable (the actor who played the noble cad Rhett Butler died on November 16th 1960 after shooting the final scenes of *The Misfits* opposite Marilyn Monroe) and the whole thing became a sublime excuse to wallow in high passion for hours on end (all four of them).

Finally, its mythologised vision of history, where all Yankees were money-grabbing "baddies" and all Southern landowners nice to their slaves, can barely ring true; nor can its frequent declarations of romantic love. But this is a film that never fights shy of clichés. Rather, it collects them all up in one glorious heap so you can cherry-pick those that appeal. After all, tomorrow is another day.

*Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/filmreviews/10765573/Gone-With-the-Wind-film-review.html>*

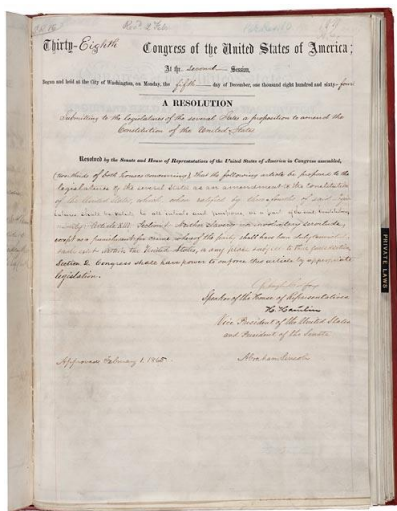
In the three months that followed the elections of Abraham Lincoln, seven states seceded from the Union: South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas. Representatives from these states quickly established a new political organization - **the Confederate States of America** and Jefferson Davis was elected the president.

The Southern states seized and occupied most of the federal forts within their borders or off their shores. Only four remained in the hands of the

Union. Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor was the most important. In April 1861, general Pierre T. Beauregard (South) demanded major Robert Anderson to surrender the fort, which was garrisoned by federal troops. When he refused to comply with this demand, the Southern rebels opened the fire on **Fort Sumter** and the Civil War began. After 34 hours of bombardment, the fort was severely damaged and Anderson was forced to surrender.

The people of each section entered the war with high hopes for an early victory. The Union was stronger not only in population, but also in industrial resources. The 23 states of the North had about 22 million people, while 11 states of the South had only a little more than 9 million people, including nearly 4 million black slaves. The North had a tremendous advantage in industrial development, making almost all of its war supplies, while the South had to depend on foreign imports. Similarly, the network of railways in the north contributed to federal military prospects. On the other hand, the Confederates had the advantage of fighting on their home territory, and their morale was excellent. They also had superb soldiers and generals, but the Union forces greatly outnumbered them.

In spite of all advantages, the North was not very successful at first. The generals of the Confederacy were much more able than those of the Union. The unity of purpose made the South very strong enemy and the Confederates won some victories in the early part of the war. A military turning point of the war came in 1863, when Southern general Robert E. Lee marched north into Pennsylvania, and at **Gettysburg** he met the Union army. The largest battle ever fought on American soil ensued. After three days, the Confederates were defeated.



13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S.  
Constitution: Abolition of Slavery  
(1865)

In 1864, Abraham Lincoln at last found a capable general Ulysses S. Grant and made him a commander of all the Union forces. Although there was no doubt about the victory of the North, the South fought on till complete exhaustion. *Richmond*, the capital of the Southern Confederacy was captured on April 1, 1865. Finally, on April 9 the end of the war came, when General Lee surrendered to General Grant at *Appomattox Court House*. Five days later, on April 14, Lincoln was assassinated by the actor John Wilkes Booth. After this conflict the South was devastated and subjected to military occupation. The Civil War was the most traumatic episode in American history. It has been estimated that 120,000 men were killed in action during the conflict, and further 64,000 died of their wounds. More than 186,000 died of a variety of different illnesses. Even today, the scars have not entirely healed. In general however, it can be said that the war resolved two fundamental questions that had divided the United States since 1776. It put an end to slavery, which was completely abolished in 1865 by the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, and it also decided that America was not a collection of states, but a single indivisible nation.

**13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:  
Abolition of Slavery (1865)**

AMENDMENT XIII

Section 1.

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

*Passed by Congress January 31, 1865. Ratified December 6, 1865.*

*Note: A portion of Article IV, section 2, of the Constitution was superseded by the 13th amendment.*

*Source: <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=40&page=transcript>*

## **Activities**

1. Think of all the differences between the South and the North in the time of the Civil War (mentality, industry, way of living) and discuss them.
2. Find more information on the internet and write a report from a Civil War battlefield (e.g. Fort Sumter, Gettysburg, Richmond capture, etc.).
3. Write an obituary announcing the death of Abraham Lincoln.
4. Write a review on a book or a movie dealing with slavery.



# 6

## FROM RECONSTRUCTION TO DEPRESSION

### Period of Reconstruction

The war was followed by the period of Reconstruction, which lasted for twelve years (1865-1877). The characteristic feature of this period was an enormous **economic growth**, which made the United States the most powerful nation in the world. The country became a leading industrial power. There were great factories, steel mills, flourishing cities and vast agricultural holdings. The first transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, and by 1900, the United States had more railroads than all of Europe. The industries, such as petroleum, steel and textile, prospered. Americans made use of a series of inventions: the telephone, the light bulb, the phonograph. In Chicago, architect Louis Sullivan used steelframe construction to develop the first skyscraper.

In 1866 the Russian government offered to sell the territory of *Alaska* to the United States. Secretary of State William H. Seward, enthusiastic about American expansion, negotiated the deal. On March 30, 1867, the two parties agreed that the United States would pay Russia \$7.2 million for the territory of Alaska. Opponents of the Alaska Purchase persisted in calling it *Seward's Folly* or *Seward's Icebox* until 1896, when the great Klondike Gold Strike convinced everybody that Alaska was a valuable addition to American territory.



*The Russian exchange copy of the Treaty of Cession*

During this period a real progress in the field of democracy was made as well. The Blacks were given the right to vote, and some of them were elected not only to various state legislatures in the South, but also to the U.S. Congress. While being in these posts, they introduced a lot of legislation beneficial to the common people. However, in 1866, the Southern planters founded a secret organization, **the Ku Klux Klan**, as an instrument of terror against the Blacks. Most of the leaders were former members of the Confederate Army. During the next years Klansmen wearing masks, tortured and killed black Americans and sympathetic whites. Immigrants, who they blamed for the election of Radical Republicans (they tried to protect civil rights of the blacks and bring them into the mainstream of an American life), became also their targets.

In 1868, the **14<sup>th</sup> Amendment** to the United States Constitution was ratified. It grants citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States, which included former slaves who had just been freed. Known as the Reconstruction Amendment, it forbids any state to deny any person *life, liberty or property, without due process of law* or to *deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of its laws*. Reconstruction came to an end in 1877, when new constitutions had been ratified in all Southern states and all federal troops were withdrawn from the area of these states.

### **14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Civil Rights (1868)**

#### **AMENDMENT XIV**

##### **Section 1.**

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

## Section 2.

Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

## Section 3.

No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

## Section 4.

The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

## Section 5.

The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

*Source: <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=43&page=transcript>*

## First half of the 20th century

Despite Constitutional guarantees, Southern blacks were now second-class citizens and were subordinated to the whites, though they still had limited civil rights. In 1896, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution permitted separate facilities and services for the two races, so long as these facilities and services were equal. Promptly there were set separate, but unequal facilities for the blacks.

Laws enforced strict **segregation** in public transportation, schools, sports, and even cemeteries. Poll taxes were enacted, in order to exclude the blacks and poor whites from voting. Often, the Blacks accused of minor crimes were sentenced to hard labor and violence was

perpetrated against them. Although blacks were legally free, they were still treated very much like slaves.

During this period, the United States was becoming the world's leading industrial power. The **Panama Canal** was built in 1904 - 14, and it increased the U.S. influence in Central America.



### ACP Reaffirms Its Commitment to Panama Canal Expansion

Press Release

Panama City, Panama, January 2, 2014

*The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) reaffirms its commitment to successfully complete the Expansion Program to fulfill its objective of offering a new era to world maritime commerce.*

“For the Panama Canal it is of utmost importance that the Expansion Program is completed to better serve the international maritime community and its customers,” said Panama Canal Administration Jorge L. Quijano.

ACP categorically rejects the pressures by contractor Grupo Unidos del Canal, S.A. (GUPCSA) in recent statements, which sole purpose are to force the ACP to negotiate outside the terms established in the contract for the new locks alleging over costs and demanding to be provided additional funds from those agreed in the contract. GUPCSA is the contractor in charge of the new locks project, one of the components of the overall Panama Canal Expansion.

To date, the contractor has not followed the claims and conflict resolution processes established in the contract to support the claims.

“No matter what type of pressure is exercised against the ACP, we maintain our request that GUPCSA respects the contract that they accepted and signed,” said Quijano.

According to the contract, the intention to suspend the works does not imply the termination or abandonment of the project by the international consortium, formed by the companies Sacyr Vallehermoso, S.A (Spain), Impregilo, S.p.A. (Italy), Jan de Nul Group (Belgium) and Constructora Urbana S.A. (CUSA) (Panama).

The ACP reiterated that the only channels to process claims are clearly established in the contract. A third party decides two of the three methods established in the contract for the resolution of claims. These contractual clauses were accepted by GUPCSA upon signature of the contract.

The ACP also trusts that the contractor is able to comply with the terms agreed upon under contract. The contract includes guarantees that will allow completing the new locks. With 65% completion, the new locks project is at a stage that the construction may be completed with the mechanisms included in the contract, if needed.

Overall, the Expansion Program is 72% complete. GUPCSA has previously indicate that instead of finishing construction October 2014, as originally established in the contract, the new locks will be finished June 2015.

The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) is the autonomous agency of the Government of Panama in charge of managing, operating and maintaining the Panama Canal.

January 3, 2014

*Source: Panama Canal Expansion*

*<https://micanaldepanama.com/expansion/2014/01/acp-reaffirms-its-commitment-to-panama-canal-expansion/>*

After the First World War the United States were in an even stronger economic position. The war disturbed the economies of its European rivals and U.S. companies were able to capture markets, which had previously been supplied by countries like Britain and Germany. U.S. companies also began to make full use of mass production. However, unrestrained economic growth created many serious problems. Some businesses became too big and powerful. The United States Steel Corporation, formed in 1901, was the largest corporation in the world. Such giant enterprises could produce and sell goods cheaply, but on the other hand they could also destroy smaller competitors.

The period of 1922 to 1933 in the USA was famous for **prohibition**, a period during which the production and sale of alcoholic beverages were illegal. Initially, it was supposed to lower crime and corruption, reduce social problems, lower taxes needed to support prisons and poorhouses, and improve health and hygiene in America. Instead, illegal alcohol became more dangerous to consume, organized crime flourished, courts and prisons became overloaded, and corruption of police and public officials worsened. The roots of prohibition went back to the early 1900s where there was a temperance movement originating in the public toward prohibition of alcohol. The movement was supported by rural Protestants, Anti-Saloon League, Democratic and Republican parties and Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Many women became active in supporting prohibition believing it would protect families, women and children from the effects of abuse of alcohol. Prohibition began on January 16, 1920, when the 18th Amendment to the Constitution went into effect. Even though the sale of alcohol was illegal, alcoholic drinks were still widely available at *speakeasies* (a saloon or nightclub selling alcoholic beverages illegally) and other underground drinking establishments.

Large quantities of alcohol were smuggled in from Canada, overland and via the Great Lakes. In addition, the Prohibition era encouraged the rise of criminal activity, especially organized crime (**gangsterism**) often



associated with bootlegging. The most notorious example was the Chicago gangster Al Capone, who earned a staggering \$60 million annually from bootleg operations and speakeasies. Support for prohibition was waning by the end of the 1920s and with the country caught in the Great Depression, creating jobs and revenue by legalizing the liquor industry had an undeniable appeal. Franklin D. Roosevelt ran for president in the 1932 election and his victory meant the end for prohibition. In February 1933 Congress adopted a resolution proposing a 21st Amendment to the Constitution that would repeal the 18th Amendment.

### **Solving Scarface**

#### **How the Law Finally Caught Up With Al Capone**

In the “roaring twenties,” he ruled an empire of crime in the Windy City: gambling, prostitution, bootlegging, bribery, narcotics trafficking, robbery, “protection” rackets, and murder. And it seemed that law enforcement couldn’t touch him.

The early Bureau would have been happy to join the fight to take Capone down. But we needed a federal crime to hang our case on—and the evidence to back it up.

In those days, racketeering laws weren’t what they are today. We didn’t have jurisdiction over prohibition violations; that fell to the Bureau of Prohibition. Even when it was widely rumored that Capone had ordered the brutal murders of seven gangland rivals in the infamous “St. Valentine’s Day Massacre,” we couldn’t get involved. Why? The killings weren’t a federal offense.

Then, in 1929, we got a break.

On February 27, Capone was subpoenaed at his winter home near Miami, Florida, to appear as a witness before a federal grand jury in Chicago on March 12 for a case involving a violation of prohibition laws.

Capone said he couldn’t make it. His excuse? He claimed he’d been laid up with broncho-pneumonia for six weeks and was in no shape to travel.

That’s when we got involved. We were asked by U.S. Attorneys to find out whether Capone was on the level. Our agents went to Florida and quickly found that Capone’s story didn’t hold water. When he was supposedly bedridden,

Capone was out and about – going to the race tracks, taking trips to the Bahamas, even being questioned by local prosecutors. And by all accounts, his health was just fine.

On March 27, 1929, Capone was cited for contempt of court in Chicago and arrested in Florida. He was released on bond, but from there on, it was downhill for the notorious gangster:

- Less than two months later, Capone was arrested in Philadelphia by local police for carrying concealed weapons and was sent to jail for a year.
- When he was released in 1931, Capone was tried and convicted for the original contempt of court charge. A federal judge sentenced him to six months in prison.
- In the meantime, federal Treasury agents had been gathering evidence that Capone had failed to pay his income taxes. Capone was convicted, and on October 24, 1931, was sentenced to 11 years in prison. When he finally got out of Alcatraz, Capone was too sick to carry on his life of crime. He died in 1947.

In the end, it took a team of federal, state, and local authorities to end Capone's reign as underworld boss.

*Source: [https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/stories/2005/march/capone\\_032805](https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/stories/2005/march/capone_032805)*

## Great Depression and New Deal

Americans developed a tendency to invest savings and earnings in speculative ventures. One way of making money during the 1920s was to buy stocks and shares. Prices of these stocks and shares constantly went up, so investors kept them for a short-term period and then sold them at a good profit. On October 29, 1929 (the Black Tuesday) the Stock Market crashed. It had lost 47 percent of its value in twenty-six days. Although less than one percent of the American people actually possessed stocks and shares, the **Wall Street Crash** was to have an enormous impact on the whole population. Business houses closed their doors, factories shut down and banks failed. By 1932 approximately one out of every four Americans was unemployed. The big disparity between the country's productive capacity and the ability of people to



consume was the core of the problem. The Great Crash was the beginning of a deep, worldwide economic crisis - the Great Depression.



*Unemployed men queued outside a depression soup kitchen opened in Chicago by Al Capone.*



*The Great Depression affected families to the core. Hopeless situation demanded hopeless solutions. Suicide and crime became the only option for many who had lost everything.*

Soon after he was elected as a president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt introduced a series of measures, called the **New Deal**. The main ideas of the New Deal were recovery from the economic depression and stabilization of the national economy to prevent severe economic crises in the future. Under the New Deal industrial enterprises and farmers were given subsidies to be able to restrict their production, farm surpluses were purchased by the Government and banks received government support too. Within three months, the historic *Hundred Days*, Roosevelt enacted a number of laws to help the economy to recover. New jobs were created by the construction of roads, airports, bridges, and public buildings. The program reduced unemployment from 17 million to 8 million. In addition, the New Deal also included social and labor legislation.

The cornerstone of the New Deal was the **Social Security Act** of 1935. It created a system of insurance for the aged, disabled and unemployed. The system was based on employer and employee contributions. Roosevelt also banned unfair employer practices and protected the workers' right to collective bargaining. These measures made Roosevelt extremely popular. He was the only American president who served three terms and was elected to a fourth. Although the economy improved, the Roosevelt's New Deal programs did not end the Depression.

## **Franklin D. Roosevelt's 9th Press Conference**

(shortened version)

THE PRESIDENT: It is very good to see you all. My hope is that these conferences are going to be merely enlarged editions of the kind of very delightful family conferences I have been holding in Albany for the last four years. And so I think we shall discontinue the practice of compelling the submitting of questions in writing before the conference in order to get an answer. There will be a great many questions, of course, that I won't answer, either because they are "if" questions—and I never answer them—and Brother Stephenson will tell you what an "if" question is—

MR. STEPHENSON (Reporter): I ask forty of them a day.

THE PRESIDENT: And the others, of course, are the questions which for various reasons I do not want to discuss, or I am not ready to discuss, or I do not know anything about. There will be a great many questions you will ask that I do not know enough about to answer.

Then, in regard to news announcements, Steve (Early, Assistant Secretary to the President) and I thought that it would be best that straight news for use from this office should always be without direct quotations. In other words, I do not want to be directly quoted, unless direct quotations are given out by Steve in writing. That makes that perfectly clear.

Then there are two other matters we will talk about: The first is "background information," which means material which can be used by all of you on your own authority and responsibility, not to be attributed to the White House, because I do not want to have to revive the Ananias Club. (Laughter)

Then the second thing is the "off the record" information which means, of course, confidential information which is given only to those who attend the conference. Now there is one thing I want to say right now about which I think you will go along with me. I want to ask you not to repeat this "off the record" confidential information either to your own editors or to your associates who are not here; because there is always the danger that, while you people may not violate the rule, somebody may forget to say, "This is off the record and confidential," and the other party may use it in a story. That is to say, it is not to be used and not to be told to those fellows who happen not to come around to the conference. In other words, it is only for those present.

Now, as to news, I don't think there is any. (Laughter)

Steve reminds me that I have just signed the application for Associate Membership in the Press Club, which I am very happy to do.

Q. You mentioned in your greetings to the Governors on Monday that you favored a unified banking system. Is that in your emergency plan?

THE PRESIDENT: That wasn't quite the way I put it to them. What I said to them was that it was necessary to treat the State and national banks the same way in this emergency, so there would not be two different classes of banks in this country; and the other thing I said was to try to avoid forty-eight different plans of putting this into effect.

Q. Do I understand you are going to keep hold of this banking situation until permanent legislation is enacted?

THE PRESIDENT: Off the record answer, yes.

Q. May I ask if the long-time settlement of the banking situation is intermeshed with the World Economic Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say on that—background information—so far as banks go within the United States, no; so far as international exchange goes, yes. I think that is the easiest way of putting it. In other words, the opening of banks and the maintaining of banks once they are opened are not connected with the World Economic Conference.

Q. In your Inaugural Address, in which you only touched upon things, you said you are for sound and adequate . . .

THE PRESIDENT: I put it the other way around. I said "adequate but sound."

Q. Now that you have more time, can you define what that is?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter.) In other words—and I should call this "off the record" information—you cannot define the thing too closely one way or the other. On Friday afternoon last we undoubtedly did not have adequate currency. No question about that. There wasn't enough circulating money to go around.

Q. I believe that. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: We hope that when the banks reopen a great deal of the currency that was withdrawn for one purpose or another will find its way back. We have got to provide an adequate currency. Last Friday we would have had to provide it in the form of scrip, and probably some additional issues of Federal Bank notes. If things go along as we hope they will, the use of scrip can be very greatly curtailed, and the amounts of new Federal Bank issues, we hope, can be also limited to a very great extent. In other words, what you are coming to now really is a managed currency, the adequateness of which will depend on the conditions of the moment. It may expand one week and it may contract another week. That part is all off the record.

Q. Can we use that part-managed?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think not. . . .

Q. Now you came down to adequacy; but you haven't defined what you think is sound. Don't you want to define that now?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't want to define "sound" now. In other words, in its essence—this is entirely off the record—in its essence we must not put the Government any further in debt because of failed banks. Now, the real mark of delineation between sound and unsound is when the Government starts to pay its bills by starting printing presses. That is about the size of it.

Q. When you speak of a managed currency, do you speak of a temporary proposition or a permanent system?

THE PRESIDENT: It ought to be part of the permanent system that is off the record—it ought to be part of the permanent system, so we don't run into this thing again. . . .

Q. Can you tell us anything about guaranteeing of bank deposits?

THE PRESIDENT: I can tell you as to guaranteeing bank deposits my own views, and I think those of the old Administration. The general underlying thought behind the use of the word "guarantee" with respect to bank deposits is that you guarantee bad banks as well as good banks. The minute the Government starts to do that the Government runs into a probable loss. I will give you an example. Suppose there are three banks in town; one is 100 percent capable of working out, one 50 percent and another 10 percent. Now, if the Government assumes a 100 percent guarantee, it will lose 50 percent on one and 90 percent on the other. If it takes on a 50 percent guarantee, it will lose nothing on the first and second, but will lose a lot on the 10 percent solvent bank. Any form of general guarantee means a definite loss to the Government. The objective in the plan that we are working on can be best stated this way: There are undoubtedly some banks that are not going to pay one hundred cents on the dollar. We all know it is better to have that loss taken than to jeopardize the credit of the United States Government or to put the United States Government further in debt. Therefore, the one objective is going to be to keep the loss in the individual banks down to a minimum, endeavoring to get 100 percent on them. We do not wish to make the United States Government liable for the mistakes and errors of individual banks, and put a premium on unsound banking in the future.

Q. That is off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Couldn't you make it background? There is a demand for the guarantee proposition.

THE PRESIDENT: As long as you don't write stories to give the average depositor the thought that his own particular bank isn't going to pay. That is what I want to avoid, because, when you come down to it, the great majority of banks are going to pay up. There will be many other banks which won't pay out the whole thing immediately, but will pay out 100 percent in time. There will be a very small number of banks that will probably have to go to the Examiner; but I don't want anybody to get the idea in reading the stories that the average bank isn't going to pay one hundred cents on the dollar, because the average bank is going to pay it. . . .

*Source: Franklin D. Roosevelt: "Press Conference," March 8, 1933.  
Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley,  
The American Presidency Project.  
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=14672>.*

## Americans in the World War II

In September 1939, war erupted in Europe. The policy of the United States was to be neutral but not indifferent. The United States gave the British 50 overage destroyers in return for naval bases in the Western Atlantic in the time when Great Britain was threatened by German invasion. During the war, USA lent \$ 13.5 thousand million in war supplies to Britain and another \$9 thousand million to the Soviet Union.

The United States entered the war on 7 December 1941, after the Japanese attack on **Pearl Harbor**. The States played a leading part in the war in the Far East, North Africa, Sicily, Italy and Normandy. The famous Supreme Commander of the allied forces was General Dwight David Eisenhower. Under his command all Africa was cleared of the enemy within a short time. In 1943 the Allies landed in Italy and after two years of hard fighting German armies were forced to surrender. With the help of United States, France and Belgium were liberated in 1944.

In February 1945 Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin met in Yalta in the Crimea where they discussed the problem of arranging zones of occupation in Germany. They continued the work of the Yalta Conference in May 1945 in Potsdam. The USA was represented there by Harry Truman, who became the President after Roosevelt's death. Roosevelt died in April 1945, shortly before the end of the war in

Europe. Truman represented the right wing of the Democratic Party. In hopes of inducing Japanese to surrender and thus avoiding heavy casualties in an invasion of Japan, he made a controversial decision. On 6 August 1945 he ordered the use of an **atomic bomb** (Project Manhattan) against Hiroshima and on 9 August against Nagasaki. After these attacks Japan agreed to surrender (14 August). Nearly 200,000 civilians died in the nuclear attacks. The war came to an end and it strengthened the position of the USA

### Activities

1. According to the information in the Panama Canal press release, write a short report.
2. Political nightmare role play: in the class, choose five students who are going to represent government's five ministers (e.g. the minister of education, foreign affairs, finances, etc.) who have just made provoking statements or had scandalous affairs. In the class, decide on every specific scandal. The rest of the class is going to represent the press. At the press conference, "journalists" will interview the "ministers" who will try to defend or explain their acting.
3. Write a report from the press conference with Franklin D. Roosevelt.
4. Write news about a recent invention, major scientific event or scientific discovery in Slovakia.

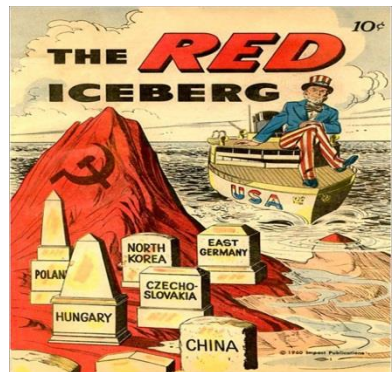
# 7 | FROM THE WW II ONWARDS

## Postwar challenges

President Truman tried to check the spread of socialist and communist movements by giving aid to anti-socialist regimes. The policy became known as the **Truman Doctrine**, as the President outlined these intentions with his request for monetary aid for Greece and Turkey. Both countries were about to be taken over by Soviet-backed guerrilla movements. Truman decided to act and in 1947, he asked Congress for \$400 million to send to these two nations in the form of military and economic assistance. Within two years the communist threat had passed, and both nations were comfortably in the western sphere of influence.

The U.S.A started to influence the affairs of Europe more than ever before. In the time, when Europe was suffering after the war, the United States came with the **Marshall Plan**. It was an offer to all European countries needing help in their recovery and reconstruction introduced in 1947. The plan was announced by George Marshall, the Secretary of State. To avoid antagonizing the Soviet Union, Marshall announced that the purpose of sending aid to Western Europe was humanitarian, and even offered aid to the communist states

in the east. Congress approved the request of \$12 billion over four years to be sent to Europe. Altogether, eighteen countries joined the American scheme and the plan became the basis of their economies. Countries, which were under the Soviet influence, refused the help.



*Example of American cold-war propaganda: a 1960 comic book cover presenting communism as the iceberg that could sink America.*

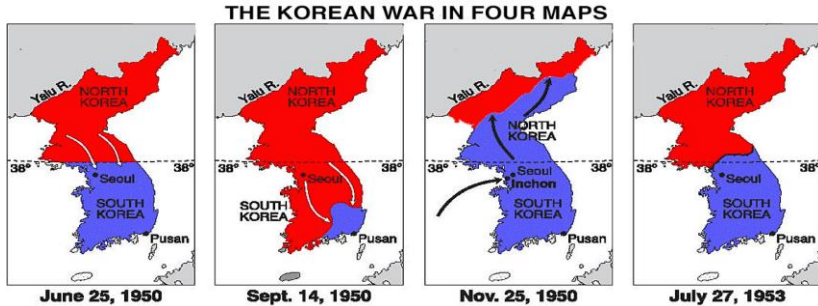
The world trying to recover from one war almost immediately began another, the **Cold War** of economic as well as diplomatic struggles. Winston Churchill's 1946 speech to Westminster University in Missouri contained the first reference to the communism of Eastern Europe as *an iron curtain which had descended across the continent*. In 1949, the West European countries together with the United States and Canada formed a military organization called the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a system of collective defence.

### **Korean War (1950-1953)**

In Asia, however, it was not that easy to check spreading of communism. American troops established a presence in the southern part of the Korean peninsula, but as the Soviets sent troops into Korea, they began cutting roads and communications at the 38th parallel. Soon, two separate governments emerged, as Korea began to resemble the divided Germany. In the elections, the South elected Syngman Rhee as president, but the Soviet-backed North was ruled by Kim Il Sung. After the United States withdrew its forces from the peninsula, Northern Korean armed forces crossed the 38th parallel in 1950. Truman hoped to build a broad coalition against the aggressors from the North by asking support from the United Nations. Of course, the Soviet Union could have vetoed any proposed action by the UN's Security Council. But the Soviets were just boycotting the Security Council for refusing to admit Red China into the United Nations and as a result, the Council voted to repel the attack of North Korea. Northern troops were taken by surprise and quickly pushed back far beyond the 38th Parallel up to the Yalu River, which borders China. The commander of the UN forces was Douglas MacArthur who saw an opportunity to create a complete indivisible Korea. However, over 400,000 Chinese soldiers soon flooded across the Yalu River. In 1949, Mao Tse-tung had established a communist dictatorship in China, and the Chinese now tried to aide the communists in northern Korea. American troops were once again forced below the 38th Parallel. General MacArthur's intention was to escalate the war and bomb the Chinese mainland and blockade their coast. Truman disagreed as he feared the conflict could lead to World War III, especially if the nuclear-armed Soviet Union would assist China. Meanwhile, the war evolved into a stalemate, with the front line



corresponding more or less to the 38th Parallel. Ceasefire negotiations followed for two more years, when finally, in 1953, an armistice was signed at Panmunjom. North Korea remained under communist control, and South Korea remained under the control of USA



## 1950s: American dream

In the 1950s the United States experienced considerable economic growth with an increase in manufacturing and home construction. The country was both socially and politically conservative and highly materialistic in nature. Automobiles once again rolled off the factories of the Big Three: Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler. The construction of thousands of miles of high-speed roads made living farther from work a possibility. Families that had delayed having additional children for years no longer waited, and the nation enjoyed a postwar baby boom. For millions of Americans in the 1950s, the **American Dream** became a reality. Within their reach was the chance to have a house on their own land, a car, a dog, and 2,3 kids.

## Cold War continues: CIA and McCarthyism

The **CIA** (Central Intelligence Agency) was formed after World War II to monitor the potential threat of communist countries and to monitor espionage activities around the globe. In addition to gathering information on Soviet plans and maneuvers, the CIA also involved itself in covert operations designed to prevent communist dictators from rising to power, as for example in Iran, the first such instance, when Iranian Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh was replaced by the

American-backed Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. Similarly, when Jacobo Arbenz came to power in Guatemala and promised to relieve the farmers by redistributing land held by the American-owned United Fruit Company, a CIA-backed band of mercenaries overthrew him and established a military dictatorship.



*Senator Joseph R. McCarthy*

Fear of communism intensified in the U.S.A after Alger Hiss, a high-ranking State Department official was convicted on espionage charges. Republican senator from Wisconsin Joseph R. McCarthy took advantage of the national paranoia by proclaiming that communist spies were omnipresent and

that he was America's only salvation. His speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, in 1950, started the era of **McCarthyism**. He proclaimed that he was aware of 205 members of the Communist Party who worked for the United States Department of State. In the 1950s, thousands of Americans who worked in the government, served in the army, worked in the movie industry, or came from various walks of life had to answer before a congressional panel the question, whether they are or have ever been a member of the Communist party.

McCarthy went even for questioning the loyalty of George Marshall and his accusations went on into 1954, when the Wisconsin senator focused on the United States Army and for eight weeks, in televised hearings, he interrogated army officials, including many decorated war heroes. The army then went on the attack, questioning McCarthy's methods and credibility. Fed up, McCarthy's colleagues censured him for dishonoring the Senate, and the hearings came to a close. Plagued with poor health and alcoholism, McCarthy himself died three years later. Books were pulled from library shelves, including *Robin Hood*, which was deemed communist-like for suggesting stealing from the rich to give to the poor. No politician could consider opening trade with China or withdrawing from Southeast Asia without being branded a communist. Although McCarthyism was dead by the mid-1950s, its effects lasted for decades.

### **Senate Resolution 301/1954: Censure of Senator Joseph McCarthy**

Resolved, That the Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. McCarthy, failed to cooperate with the Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration in clearing up matters referred to that subcommittee which concerned his conduct as a Senator and affected the honor of the Senate and, instead, repeatedly abused the subcommittee and its members who were trying to carry out assigned duties, thereby obstructing the constitutional processes of the Senate, and that this conduct of the Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. McCarthy, is contrary to senatorial traditions and is hereby condemned.

Sec 2. The Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. McCarthy, in writing to the chairman of the Select Committee to Study Censure Charges (Mr. Watkins) after the Select Committee had issued its report and before the report was presented to the Senate charging three members of the Select Committee with "deliberate deception" and "fraud" for failure to disqualify themselves; in stating to the press on November 4, 1954, that the special Senate session that was to begin November 8, 1954, was a "lynch-party"; in repeatedly describing this special Senate session as a "lynch bee" in a nationwide television and radio show on November 7, 1954; in stating to the public press on November 13, 1954, that the chairman of the Select Committee (Mr. Watkins) was guilty of "the most unusual, most cowardly things I've ever heard of" and stating further: "I expected he would be afraid to answer the questions, but didn't think he'd be stupid enough to make a public statement"; and in characterizing the said committee as the "unwitting handmaiden," "involuntary agent" and "attorneys-in-fact" of the Communist Party and in charging that the said committee in writing its report "imitated Communist methods -- that it distorted, misrepresented, and omitted in its effort to manufacture a plausible rationalization" in support of its recommendations to the Senate, which characterizations and charges were contained in a statement released to the press and inserted in the Congressional Record of November 10, 1954, acted contrary to senatorial ethics and tended to bring the Senate into dishonor and disrepute, to obstruct the constitutional processes of the Senate, and to impair its dignity; and such conduct is hereby condemned.

*Source: <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=86&page=transcript>*

The end of the Korean War in 1953 did not bring an end to global hostilities, but it saw Cold War continue even more frenzied. As the

British and French Empires slowly got used to independence movements, a new Third World emerged. This became the major battleground of the Cold War as the United States and the Soviet Union struggled to bring new nations into their respective orbits. The United States's recognition of Israel in 1948 created a strong new ally, but created many enemies. Arab nations, enraged by American support for the new Jewish state, found support in the Soviet Union. When Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser wanted to strengthen ties with the Soviet bloc, the United States refused to help Nasser construct the all-important Aswan Dam. Nasser responded by nationalizing the Suez Canal, which provoked British, French, and Israeli armies to invade Egypt. With Soviet influence growing in the oil-rich region, President Dwight Eisenhower issued the **Eisenhower Doctrine**, which pledged American support to any government fighting communist rebellions in the Middle East. Making good on that promise, he sent over 5,000 marines to Lebanon to put a stop to an anti-Western takeover.

### **Civil rights movements and the sit-ins**

Although the Civil War brought an official end to slavery in the United States, it did not abolish the social barriers. The United States operated for long time under an apartheid-like system of real white supremacy. Legal equality did not bring economic equality and social acceptance. Only in the 1950s a peaceful equality movement began under the unofficial leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. A wave of marches, boycotts, sit-ins, and freedom rides swept the American South and parts of the North, but there was no greater unity in the movement.

Right in the beginning of the 1960s, a new tactic was added to the peaceful activists' strategy. In 1960, four African American college students walked up to a whites-only lunch counter at the local Woolworth's store in Greensboro, North Carolina, and asked for coffee. When service was refused, the students sat patiently. Despite threats and intimidation, the students sat quietly and waited to be served. The **civil rights sit-in** was born.

The instructions were simple: sit quietly and wait to be served. Often the participants would be threatened by local customers. Sometimes they would be pelted with food or ketchup. Angry onlookers tried to provoke fights that never came. In the event of a physical attack, the student would curl up into a ball on the floor and take the punishment. Sit-in organizers believed that if the violence were only on the part of the white community, the world would see the righteousness of their cause.



*Rosa Parks rode at the front of a Montgomery, Alabama, bus on the day the Supreme Court's ban on segregation of the city's buses took effect. A year earlier, she had been arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus.*

Before the end of the school year, over 1500 black demonstrators were arrested. But their sacrifice brought results. Slowly, but surely, restaurants throughout the South began to abandon their policies of segregation. The initial sit-ins were a start to future sit-ins at lunch counters, wade-ins at segregated swimming pools, and pray-ins at white-only churches. African American leaders set a new, ambitious goal: a federal law banning racial discrimination in all public accommodations and in employment.

In the summer of 1963, President Kennedy indicated he would support such a measure, and

thousands marched on Washington to support the bill. Blacks and whites sang *We Shall Overcome* and listened to Martin Luther King Jr. deliver his *I Have a Dream* speech. However, attention had to be paid to vote system as well. Many African Americans had been robbed of the right to vote since southern states enacted discriminatory poll taxes and literacy tests. The 24th Amendment banned the Poll Tax in 1964 and the Voting Rights

Act of 1965 banned the literacy test. However, as the 1960s progressed, a radical wing of the movement grew stronger. The *Black Power* movement rejected the policy of nonviolence at all costs. Race-related violence began to spread across the country. Beginning in 1964, a series of *long, hot summers* of rioting plagued urban centers. As youths of the counterculture celebrated the famed Summer of Love in 1967, serious racial upheaval took place in more than 150 American cities. The assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968 touched off a wave of violence in 125 more urban centers.



*The "Black Panther Party for Self Defense" was formed to protect Black individuals and neighborhoods from police brutality. This 1966 photo features the six original members of the Black Panthers.*

Hope and optimism gave way to alienation and despair as the 1970s began. Many realized that although changing racist laws was actually relatively simple, changing racist attitudes was a much more difficult task.

One of the milestone documents was the Supreme Court decision in the civil rights case **Brown vs. Board of Education** of Topeka, Kansas (17 May, 1954), saying that separating children in public schools on the basis of race was unconstitutional. It signaled the end of legalized racial segregation in schools, overruling the *separate but equal* principle set forth in the 1896 *Plessy vs. Ferguson* case.

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

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954) (USSC+)

Argued December 9, 1952

Reargued December 8, 1953

Decided May 17, 1954

APPEAL FROM THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE  
DISTRICT OF KANSAS\*

Syllabus

Segregation of white and Negro children in the public schools of a State solely on the basis of race, pursuant to state laws permitting or requiring such segregation, denies to Negro children the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment -- even though the physical facilities and other "tangible" factors of white and Negro schools may be equal.

(a) The history of the Fourteenth Amendment is inconclusive as to its intended effect on public education.

(b) The question presented in these cases must be determined not on the basis of conditions existing when the Fourteenth Amendment was adopted, but in the light of the full development of public education and its present place in American life throughout the Nation.

(c) Where a State has undertaken to provide an opportunity for an education in its public schools, such an opportunity is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.

(d) Segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race deprives children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities, even though the physical facilities and other "tangible" factors may be equal.

(e) The "separate but equal" doctrine adopted in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537, has no place in the field of public education.

(f) The cases are restored to the docket for further argument on specified questions relating to the forms of the decrees.

Opinion

MR. CHIEF JUSTICE WARREN delivered the opinion of the Court.

These cases come to us from the States of Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware. They are premised on different facts and different local conditions, but a common legal question justifies their consideration together in this consolidated opinion.

In each of the cases, minors of the Negro race, through their legal representatives, seek the aid of the courts in obtaining admission to the public schools of their community on a nonsegregated basis. In each instance, they had been denied admission to schools attended by white children under laws requiring or permitting segregation according to race. This segregation was alleged to deprive the plaintiffs of the equal protection of the laws under the Fourteenth Amendment. In each of the cases other than the Delaware case, a three-judge federal district court denied relief to the plaintiffs on the so-called "separate but equal" doctrine announced by this Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537. Under that doctrine, equality of treatment is accorded when the races are provided substantially equal facilities, even though these facilities be separate. In the Delaware case, the Supreme Court of Delaware adhered to that doctrine, but ordered that the plaintiffs be admitted to the white schools because of their superiority to the Negro schools.

The plaintiffs contend that segregated public schools are not "equal" and cannot be made "equal," and that hence they are deprived of the equal protection of the laws. Because of the obvious importance of the question presented, the Court took jurisdiction. Argument was heard in the 1952 Term, and reargument was heard this Term on certain questions propounded by the Court.

Reargument was largely devoted to the circumstances surrounding the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868. It covered exhaustively consideration of the Amendment in Congress, ratification by the states, then-existing practices in racial segregation, and the views of proponents and opponents of the Amendment. This discussion and our own investigation convince us that, although these sources cast some light, it is not enough to resolve the problem with which we are faced. At best, they are inconclusive. The most avid proponents of the post-War Amendments undoubtedly intended them to remove all legal distinctions among "all persons born or naturalized in the United States." Their opponents, just as certainly, were antagonistic to both the letter and the spirit of the Amendments and wished them to have the most limited effect. What others in Congress and the state legislatures had in mind cannot be determined with any degree of certainty.

An additional reason for the inconclusive nature of the Amendment's history with respect to segregated schools is the status of public education at that time.

In the South, the movement toward free common schools, supported by general taxation, had not yet taken hold. Education of white children was largely in the hands of private groups. Education of Negroes was almost nonexistent, and practically all of the race were illiterate. In fact, any education of Negroes was forbidden by law in some states. Today, in contrast, many Negroes have achieved outstanding success in the arts and sciences, as well as



in the business and professional world. It is true that public school education at the time of the Amendment had advanced further in the North, but the effect of the Amendment on Northern States was generally ignored in the congressional debates. Even in the North, the conditions of public education did not approximate those existing today. The curriculum was usually rudimentary; ungraded schools were common in rural areas; the school term was but three months a year in many states, and compulsory school attendance was virtually unknown. As a consequence, it is not surprising that there should be so little in the history of the Fourteenth Amendment relating to its intended effect on public education.

In the first cases in this Court construing the Fourteenth Amendment, decided shortly after its adoption, the Court interpreted it as proscribing all state-imposed discriminations against the Negro race. The doctrine of "separate but equal" did not make its appearance in this Court until 1896 in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, supra, involving not education but transportation. American courts have since labored with the doctrine for over half a century. In this Court, there have been six cases involving the "separate but equal" doctrine in the field of public education. In *Cumming v. County Board of Education*, 175 U.S. 528, and *Gong Lum v. Rice*, 275 U.S. 78, the validity of the doctrine itself was not challenged. In more recent cases, all on the graduate school level, inequality was found in that specific benefits enjoyed by white students were denied to Negro students of the same educational qualifications. *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada*, 305 U.S. 337; *Sipuel v. Oklahoma*, 332 U.S. 631; *Sweatt v. Painter*, 339 U.S. 629; *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents*, 339 U.S. 637. In none of these cases was it necessary to reexamine the doctrine to grant relief to the Negro plaintiff. And in *Sweatt v. Painter*, supra, the Court expressly reserved decision on the question whether *Plessy v. Ferguson* should be held inapplicable to public education.

In the instant cases, that question is directly presented. Here, unlike *Sweatt v. Painter*, there are findings below that the Negro and white schools involved have been equalized, or are being equalized, with respect to buildings, curricula, qualifications and salaries of teachers, and other "tangible" factors. Our decision, therefore, cannot turn on merely a comparison of these tangible factors in the Negro and white schools involved in each of the cases. We must look instead to the effect of segregation itself on public education.

In approaching this problem, we cannot turn the clock back to 1868, when the Amendment was adopted, or even to 1896, when *Plessy v. Ferguson* was written. We must consider public education in the light of its full development and its present place in American life throughout the Nation. Only in this way

can it be determined if segregation in public schools deprives these plaintiffs of the equal protection of the laws.

Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for education both demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to our democratic society. It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.

We come then to the question presented: Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other "tangible" factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities? We believe that it does.

In *Sweatt v. Painter*, *supra*, in finding that a segregated law school for Negroes could not provide them equal educational opportunities, this Court relied in large part on "those qualities which are incapable of objective measurement but which make for greatness in a law school." In *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents*, *supra*, the Court, in requiring that a Negro admitted to a white graduate school be treated like all other students, again resorted to intangible considerations: ". . . his ability to study, to engage in discussions and exchange views with other students, and, in general, to learn his profession." Such considerations apply with added force to children in grade and high schools. To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone. The effect of this separation on their educational opportunities was well stated by a finding in the Kansas case by a court which nevertheless felt compelled to rule against the Negro plaintiffs:

Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children. The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law, for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn. Segregation with the sanction of law, therefore, has a tendency to [retard] the educational and mental development of negro

children and to deprive them of some of the benefits they would receive in a racial[ly] integrated school system.

Whatever may have been the extent of psychological knowledge at the time of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, this finding is amply supported by modern authority. Any language in *Plessy v. Ferguson* contrary to this finding is rejected.

We conclude that, in the field of public education, the doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and others similarly situated for whom the actions have been brought are, by reason of the segregation complained of, deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. This disposition makes unnecessary any discussion whether such segregation also violates the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Because these are class actions, because of the wide applicability of this decision, and because of the great variety of local conditions, the formulation of decrees in these cases presents problems of considerable complexity. On reargument, the consideration of appropriate relief was necessarily subordinated to the primary question -- the constitutionality of segregation in public education. We have now announced that such segregation is a denial of the equal protection of the laws. In order that we may have the full assistance of the parties in formulating decrees, the cases will be restored to the docket, and the parties are requested to present further argument on Questions 4 and 5 previously propounded by the Court for the reargument this Term. The Attorney General of the United States is again invited to participate. The Attorneys General of the states requiring or permitting segregation in public education will also be permitted to appear as amici curiae upon request to do so by September 15, 1954, and submission of briefs by October 1, 1954.

It is so ordered.

\* Together with No. 2, *Briggs et al. v. Elliott et al.*, on appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of South Carolina, argued December 9-10, 1952, reargued December 7-8, 1953; No. 4, *Davis et al. v. County School Board of Prince Edward County, Virginia, et al.*, on appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, argued December 10, 1952, reargued December 7-8, 1953, and No. 10, *Gebhart et al. v. Belton et al.*, on certiorari to the Supreme Court of Delaware, argued December 11, 1952, reargued December 9, 1953.

*Source: <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=87&page=transcript>*

## Vietnam War

The **Vietnam War** was the longest war in United States history: promises to the people of South Vietnam to keep communist forces from overtaking them reached back into the Truman Administration. Eisenhower placed military advisers and CIA operatives in Vietnam, and John F. Kennedy sent American soldiers to Vietnam. Lyndon Johnson ordered the first real combat by American troops, and Richard Nixon concluded the war.

In 1941, a nationalist movement in Vietnam was formed and led by Ho Chi Minh. Ho was educated in the West, where he became a disciple of Marxist thought. Ho was resistant to colonial powers in Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia), he resented and resisted the French supremacy and had successfully won the hearts and minds of the majority of the Vietnamese people. The USA supported France against Ho Chi Minh from 1940s till its own military involment. The action of Americans was evoked mainly by the fear of domino theory, where after Vietnam communism could spread also in Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Americans were not willing to allow so. In 1945-54 Vietnam was in war with France (supported by the USA) and after the French left, the country was divided by buffer zone at the 17th parallel into communist North (with *Hanoi* as the capital city and with new band of guerillas called Viet Cong created by Ho Chi Minh) and South (with the capital of *Saigon*) supported by Americans and led by unpopular Ngo Dinh Diem. 1964- 68 were the years of escalation of the conflict. North Vietnam boats fired on U.S. navy in Tonkin gulf. President Johnson got support in Congress to *take all necessary measures*. In the war there were only a few major ground battles, since mostly it was a guerilla war with the Viet Cong. *Napalm* was introduced to remove the jungle cover utilized by the Viet Cong and more bombs rained down on Vietnam than the Allies used on the Axis powers during the whole of World War II. Often unable to see the enemy through the dense growth of Vietnam's jungles, the U.S. military sprayed a chemical herbicide known as *Agent Orange* in an attempt to destroy the trees. Currently, debate rages on whether or not exposure to this compound is responsible for disease and disability in many Vietnam veterans. One of the most confounding problems faced by U.S. military personnel in

Vietnam was identifying the enemy. The same Vietnamese peasant who waved hello in the daytime might be a Viet Cong guerrilla fighter by night.

One factor that influenced the failure of the United States in Vietnam was lack of public support. However, it lacked support only by the end of the war. Early initiatives made under Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy received broad support. Only two members of the United States Congress voted against granting Johnson broad authority to wage the war in Vietnam, and most Americans supported this measure as well. The antiwar movement in 1965 was small, and news of its activities was buried in

the inner pages of newspapers, if there was any mention at all. However, in the late 1960s opposition against the war grew much stronger (average age of an American soldier dying in Vietnam was 19, compared to the age of 21 when young Americans were legally allowed to vote and drink alcohol; this influenced the law and the 26th Amendment changed the suffrage to 18 years). Americans understood that immediate withdrawal would be a defeat, so in 1969 president Nixon introduced a plan later known as *Vietnamization*, which meant gradual withdrawal from Vietnam. In 1973 Paris Peace Treaty was signed among North and South Vietnam, the USA and Viet Cong and in 1976 Vietnam united as Vietnam Socialist Republic. Neighboring Cambodia and Laos also became communist dictatorships.



*Tunnels of the Viet Cong: the Cu Chi Tunnels lie 75 km northwest of Saigon. At the height of the Vietnam War, the system of tunnels stretched from the outskirts of Saigon all the way to the Cambodian border, over 240 km in total.*

## John Fitzgerald Kennedy

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, democratic senator from Massachusetts, was a new type of presidential election candidate. At the age of 43 he could become the youngest person ever to be elected President. Kennedy was also Roman Catholic, and no Catholic had ever been elected President before. John F. Kennedy's youthful good looks helped him win the White House in 1960 and introduce an era of American politics remembered as Camelot. In his inauguration speech, he challenged his fellow citizens to *ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country*. The youthful president and his wife Jackie drew parallels to the magical time of King Arthur. His *New Frontier* program asked the nation's talented and fortunate to work to eliminate poverty and injustice at home, while projecting confidence overseas.

### President John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address (1961)

*Vice President Johnson, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chief Justice, President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon, President Truman, Reverend Clergy, fellow citizens:*

We observe today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom - symbolizing an end as well as a beginning - signifying renewal as well as change. For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forbears prescribed nearly a century and three-quarters ago.

The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe - the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God.

We dare not forget today that we are the heirs of that first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans--born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage--and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

This much we pledge - and more.

To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided there is little we can do--for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder.

To those new states whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny. We shall not always expect to find them supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them strongly supporting their own freedom--and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside.

To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required--not because the communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right. If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.

To our sister republics south of our border, we offer a special pledge--to convert our good words into good deeds--in a new alliance for progress--to assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty. But this peaceful revolution of hope cannot become the prey of hostile powers. Let all our neighbors know that we shall join with them to oppose aggression or subversion anywhere in the Americas. And let every other power know that this Hemisphere intends to remain the master of its own house.

To that world assembly of sovereign states, the United Nations, our last best hope in an age where the instruments of war have far outpaced the instruments of peace, we renew our pledge of support--to prevent it from becoming merely a forum for invective--to strengthen its shield of the new and the weak--and to enlarge the area in which its writ may run.

Finally, to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.

We dare not tempt them with weakness. For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed.

But neither can two great and powerful groups of nations take comfort from our present course--both sides overburdened by the cost of modern weapons, both rightly alarmed by the steady spread of the deadly atom, yet both racing to alter that uncertain balance of terror that stays the hand of mankind's final war.

So let us begin anew--remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.

Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us.

Let both sides, for the first time, formulate serious and precise proposals for the inspection and control of arms--and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations.

Let both sides seek to invoke the wonders of science instead of its terrors. Together let us explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean depths and encourage the arts and commerce.

Let both sides unite to heed in all corners of the earth the command of Isaiah--to "undo the heavy burdens . . . (and) let the oppressed go free."

And if a beachhead of cooperation may push back the jungle of suspicion, let both sides join in creating a new endeavor, not a new balance of power, but a new world of law, where the strong are just and the weak secure and the peace preserved.

All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days. Nor will it be finished in the first one thousand days, nor in the life of this Administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin.

In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe.

Now the trumpet summons us again--not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need--not as a call to battle, though embattled we are-- but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"--a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.

Can we forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? Will you join in that historic effort?



In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility--I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it--and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.

Source: <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=91&page=transcript>

The newest challenge was space. In 1957, the Soviet Union shocked Americans by launching *Sputnik*, the first satellite to be placed in orbit. Congress responded by creating **NASA** (The National Aeronautics and Space Administration) under President Eisenhower. When Kennedy took office, the issue fell farther behind. The Soviets had already placed a dog in space, and in Kennedy's first year, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human being to orbit the earth. Kennedy challenged the American people and government to put a man on the moon by the end of the decade. Congress responded enthusiastically by appropriating billions of dollars for the effort. In 1969, Neil Armstrong became the first human being to set foot on the moon.

Kennedy's greatest foreign policy failure and greatest foreign policy success both involved **Cuba**. In 1961, CIA-trained Cuban exiles landed in Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, hoping to begin a popular uprising that would deprive Fidel Castro of power. When the revolution failed to occur, Castro's troops moved in. The exiles believed air support would come from the United States, but Kennedy refused. Many of the rebels

were shot, and the rest were arrested. The incident was an embarrassment to the United States and a great victory for Fidel Castro.

Although Congress blocked many of his programs, his confidence was infectious, and the shock of his untimely death on November 22, 1963, was nothing less than devastating. Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested for the murder, but was killed himself two days later. In his abbreviated Presidency, Kennedy failed to accomplish all he wanted domestically, nevertheless his proposals concerning medicare, federal support for education, and wilderness protection all became part of Lyndon Johnson's policy.

His *Great Society* plan declared a war on poverty that produced a glut of legislation. Welfare benefits were increased, health care costs were defrayed, and funds were allotted for cleaning the air and water, rebuilding cities, and subsidizing the arts and humanities.

## **Social movements**

Apart from activists for civil rights of African Americans, other groups of people who felt marginalized by the American mainstream culture began to raise demands of their own. Mainly, it was the **feminist movement** that has influenced the culture not only in the U.S.A, but globally. It emerged in the 1960s, a swinging era of ethnic activists, anti-Vietnam protesters and hippies. The image of a typical 1950s housewife has completely changed. With few exceptions, until the feminist movement cried for a reform, women were excluded from the highest paying jobs, earning only a fraction of the wages of their male counterparts. Even more crucial became the call for legality and availability of birth control options like the contraception pill. Eventually, the right to obtain a safe, legal abortion became a new milestone.

Other relevant voices calling for change were coming from the economically weak milieu of **Latino Americans** and **Native Americans**. By the end of the decade, **gay Americans** started demanding equality as well and efforts to save the planet from environmental destruction, toxic emissions, deadly pesticides, and fears of nuclear holocaust brought many concerned Americans together in the earth awareness movement. This time **green activists** went beyond

conservation of resources to demand regulation of economic activities that could hurt the nation's environment.



*Women's liberation movement (WLM) is sometimes seen as synonymous with radical feminism, as both were concerned with freeing women from oppressive social structure. Both have sometimes been characterized as a threat to men, particularly when both movements use rhetoric about struggle and revolution.*

*However, feminist theorists are actually concerned with how society can eliminate unfair sex roles. They point out women's liberation and not the anti-feminist arguments that feminists are women who want to eliminate men.*

## **Watergate scandal**

On June 17, 1972, five men were arrested after breaking into the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee located in the Watergate Hotel in Washington, D.C. The burglars were not ordinary thieves: they carried wiretaps to install on telephones and they carried cameras to photograph documents. Four of the five criminals were anti-Castro Cubans who had been previously hired by the CIA. The fifth was James McCord, the security adviser for President Nixon's campaign staff. The group was labelled as *the plumber unit*. The Watergate scandal escalated after it became clear that Nixon's administration actively hindered investigation of the matter. It was later proved that Nixon knew about it and that he lied about the case at the Congress

hearing, which ultimately led to forced resignation of the President in 1974. He was accused of obstruction of justice, abuse of power and contempt of Congress. Nevertheless, his successor, Gerald Ford, promptly awarded Nixon a full and complete pardon for any crimes he may have committed while in office. Watergate was the worst political scandal in United States history and forced a president to resign before facing certain impeachment. Details of illegal, unethical, and immoral acts by members of the White House staff covered the nation's newspapers.

### **The USA at the turn of the centuries**

In 1981, faith in the American economy and government hit rock bottom. Looking for a change and the promise of better future, voters decided for **Ronald Reagan** as president. Reagan came up with several solutions. Government has become too big and needs to be trimmed down. Taxes are high and need to be cut to stimulate growth and investment. Military spending should be increased to fix the degenerating state of the American war machine. Morality and character need to be reemphasized in American life. Reagan's election brought a dramatic change to the federal government. No president, Republican or Democrat, had attempted to reduce the size of the federal government since Franklin Roosevelt initiated his New Deal. In an effort to wind down the Cold War, Ronald Reagan met with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who had been promoting *Glasnost* (Openness), at home. The Cold War came to an end in 1991.

**George H.W. Bush** was the victor in the elections in 1988 and presided over the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the communist regimes, ending the Cold War. In 1991, Bush organized a broad coalition of 34 nations led by the United States against Iraq in response to Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait in the Persian Gulf War. Bush also sent American soldiers to Panama to remove General Manuel Noriega. The United States later operated as well during the conflicts of former Yugoslavia (1992-96), Somalia (1992-95), Haiti (1994-95), and many others. Americans began to think of themselves as peacekeepers of the world.

The Election of 1992 brought **Bill Clinton** to the White House. He could have made use of the prosperous era, but was politically discredited by the Monica Lewinsky and other scandals. The resulting impeachment by the House of Representatives was followed by a vote for acquittal in the Senate, thus leaving Clinton to finish out his term of office. The 1990s saw the longest economic expansion in modern U.S. history, ending in 2001. Originating in U.S. defense networks, the Internet spread to international academic networks, and then to the public in the 1990s, greatly impacting the global economy, society, and culture.

The Election of 2000 (George W. Bush Jr. versus Al Gore) was hotly contested due to voting irregularities and required the involvement of the U.S. Supreme Court to select the President - **George W. Bush Jr.** With the coming of the new millenium, the United States was greeted on September 11, 2001, by the worst attack by a foreign country on American soil. The terrorist group Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the destruction of the World Trade Center's twin towers in New York City and lesser damage to the Pentagon, killing nearly 3000 people. George W. Bush responded by launching the War on Terror including the invasions of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003).

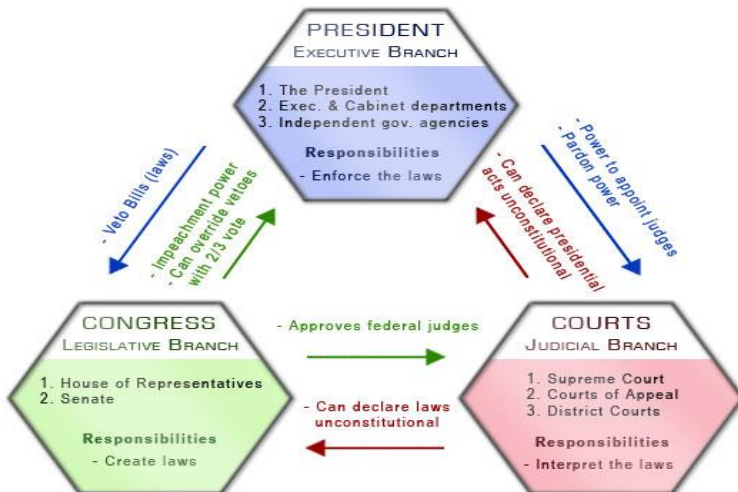
Corporations increased outsourcing jobs to elevate profits. Influence of labor unions on political and economic policy continued to decline. The middle class slowly began to disappear. **Barack Obama**, the first African American president, was elected in 2008 amid the Great Recession, which began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009. Among the leading topics of his presidential campaign were the Iraq war (Obama was strongly against the intervention in Iraq), lowering money supplies for army, lowering taxes and mainly healthcare system transformation: he wanted the healthcare to be available for all Americans. Barack Obama was in 2009 awarded the Nobel Peace Prize; nevertheless, he was often criticized for being unexperienced in politics.

## Activities

1. According to what you know about the period and what you have read in the J.F.Kennedy's inaugural speech, why do you think the speech is valued and remembered so much? Is there anything you would change or you miss from the point of view of a 21st century observer? Discuss the style of the speech.
2. Write a news story about the Brown vs. Board of Education case from the point of view of a reporter being present at the court and observing the case.
3. Compare the war conflicts in Korea and Vietnam and American involvement in both of them: what were the similar and different aspects?
4. In groups, write a resolution similar to the Senate Resolution 301 censuring a person or a social or political phenomenon and in class compare your ideas and discuss them. Do you think that resolutions of this kind may have a real impact on the society?
5. Find more information about Barack Obama, his policy, PR and public acting. In two groups (one being for him and the other one being against him), discuss his presidency from two opposing points of view – Barack Obama's followers and oponents, regardless of what is your personal opinion.

## POLITICAL SYSTEM OF THE USA

The United States of America is a federation of 50 states with 48 on the continent, Hawaii in the Mid-Pacific south - west of San Francisco and Alaska in the North. There is also one district, D.C.-District of Columbia. The capital city, Washington D.C., is situated there. Each state is different from all the others. It has its own state government, laws, education, taxes and customs. The structure of American government is really a mosaic composed of thousands of interlocking units. In addition to the federal government, there are 50 state governments and the government of the District of Columbia, and further down the ladder there are still smaller units that govern counties, cities, towns and villages, to name a few.



*The Constitution of the USA establishes a stronger federal government empowered to collect taxes, conduct diplomacy, maintain armed forces, and regulate foreign trade and commerce among the states, but most importantly, it establishes the principle of a balance of power. It means that the power in the USA is divided into three branches - legislative, executive and judicial, each one having powers (checks and balances) over the other.*

## **The President**

The executive branch is represented by the President and 13 executive departments. The official residence of the President is the White House in Washington D.C. The President, together with his Vice-President is chosen in nation-wide elections every four years and he can be re-elected for only a second term. The only President who was elected four times was Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1932, 1936, 1940, 1944). The President must be a natural-born U.S. citizen and must be at least 35 years old. The Vice-President takes over president in case of death, resignation or sickness, which happened so far in eight occasions. However, the role of a Vice-President is not well-defined in the Constitution.

The national presidential elections play a significant role in the citizens' lives and they are held on the first Tuesday in November (the Election day). The President is inaugurated on 20 January the following year. Anyone who is an American citizen, at least 18 years of age, and is registered to vote may vote. The President is elected by electors (electoral college) pledged in advance to one presidential candidate. The candidate who wins the most votes within a state receives all its electoral college votes, no matter how small majority there is. The only exception are the states of Maine and Nebraska, where the votes are counted proportionally. Such a principle caused, for example, the election paradox in 2000. The number of electors depends on how populous the state is, but at least there have to be three electors per state. Altogether, there are 538 electors in the whole USA. With the principle that the winner takes it all, the candidate who wins at least 270 electors becomes the president. Since 1960 there was no president without having won elections in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Florida.

Presidential powers are rather big. Just to mention some, he proposes bills, he can veto or refuse a bill, he is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, he makes treaties with foreign countries (with the approval of the Senate), he appoints federal judges and ambassadors.

Under the President there are 13 executive departments. The heads of these departments form a council known as the President's cabinet. The head of each department is appointed by the president and is directly responsible to him. Secretaries, as the department heads are usually



called, serve as long as the President wants them to. Currently these are the departments of State, Treasury, Defence, Justice, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, Health and Human Services, Transportation, Energy, Education and Housing and Urban development.

### **Donald Trump Reaffirms Support for Warmer Relations With Putin**

Trump Calls for Better Ties with Russia

*by Alexander Burns*

MECHANICSBURG, Pa. — Donald J. Trump unabashedly trumpeted his support for warmer relations with Russia at a campaign rally here on Monday night, acidly mocking opponents who say he is too friendly to Vladimir V. Putin, the country's strongman president.

Mr. Trump, who has been under fire from Democrats and some conservative national security leaders for his accommodating stance toward Mr. Putin, cast his supportive remarks as a matter of practical necessity. By aligning itself with Russia, he said, the United States could more easily take on the Islamic State and other terrorist groups.

"If we could get Russia to help us get rid of ISIS — if we could actually be friendly with Russia — wouldn't that be a good thing?" Mr. Trump, the Republican presidential nominee, said. Repeating the question moments later, he won loud applause from the crowd: "If we could get along with Russia, wouldn't that be a good thing, instead of a bad thing?"

Noting that Mr. Putin had made laudatory comments about him, Mr. Trump teased political rivals, including Hillary Clinton, the Democratic presidential nominee, who have criticized his friendliness with the Russian leader. "They say, 'Putin likes Trump,'" Mr. Trump began. He continued the mimicry: "How dare he like Putin? How dare he?"

Mr. Trump also reiterated his view that NATO, the security alliance formed as a bulwark against the Soviet Union, was "obsolete."

Both Mrs. Clinton and her running mate, Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia, have chastised Mr. Trump for praising Mr. Putin, and Mr. Trump has

raised concerns among defense experts for repeated comments that appear to signal tolerance of Russia's aggression in Eastern Europe.

In an appearance on "This Week" on ABC News over the weekend, Mr. Trump declined to express disapproval of Russia for its annexation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea in 2014. On the contrary, Mr. Trump suggested that the people there might be happier under Russian rule.

And the Republican nominee said in an interview with The New York Times in July that he would not necessarily come to the defense of NATO states in the event of invasion, and would decide based on whether the country in question had paid its dues to the alliance.

Mr. Trump also touched off an uproar during the Democratic National Convention last week when he said in a news conference that he hoped Russian hackers would infiltrate Mrs. Clinton's email. He later said he was being sarcastic.

With his appearance in Pennsylvania on Monday, Mr. Trump showed no intention of abandoning his embrace of Mr. Putin and his country. He professed disbelief that political opponents have said he should swear off Mr. Putin. "He said nice things about me," Mr. Trump said. "Why would I disavow it? Why?"

He derided Mrs. Clinton at length and accused her Democratic primary opponent, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, of having made a "deal with the devil" to support her in the general election.

"She's the devil," Mr. Trump said of Mrs. Clinton.

*Source: New York times, Aug. 1, 2016*

## **The Congress**

The legislative branch makes federal laws, levy federal taxes, declare war or put foreign treaties into effect. The main body is called the Congress and it is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Its seat is in the Capitol, Washington D.C.

**The House of Representatives** consists of 435 lawmakers who serve two-year terms. House of Representatives is rather a dynamic

institution. Each House member represents a district (consisting of approximately 520 000 people) in his or her home state. The number of districts depends on a count of the population taken every 10 years. The most heavily populated states have more districts and, therefore, more representatives than the smaller states, some of which have only one. The Representatives are elected in a general election, held in November every second year. A candidate must be at least 25 years old and a citizen of the USA for 7 years. The chairman of the House of Representatives is called the Speaker.

**The Senate** comprises 100 Senators who serve six-year terms. In contrast to the House of representatives, the Senate is a more conservative institution. A Senator has to be at least 30 years old, a citizen of the USA for 9 years, living in the state that elects him. Each state, regardless of population, has two Senators. That assures that the smaller states have an equal voice in one of the houses of Congress. One-third of the Senators are elected every two years making sure that there are some experienced senators in the Congress after each election.



*The Congress meets in  
the Capitol in Washington, D.C.*

The Senators represent all of the people in a state and their interests.

The U.S. Congress is a law-making body and each house has the power to introduce legislation. Each can also vote against legislation passed by

the other. A law begins as a proposal called *a bill*. It is read, studied in committees, commented on and amended in the Senate or House chamber in which it was introduced. Then it is voted upon. If it passes, it is sent to the other house where a similar procedure occurs. When both houses of the Congress pass a bill on which they agree, it is sent to the President for his signature. Only then it becomes a law. The Senate and the House of Representatives sit separately. They meet in joint session in the House of Representatives to hear the President's State of the Union Address and on other special occasions.

## **Federal Judiciary**

This branch is made up of Federal District Courts (91), Federal Courts of Appeal (11) and at the top is the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court determines whether or not the laws and acts of the other two branches are in accordance with the Constitution. To safeguard the authority and independence of the judiciary against the interests of the executive and legislative branches, judges are protected from a political reprisal by the Constitution. The Supreme Court consists of a chief justice and eight associate justices. All of them are nominated by the President but must be also approved by the Senate. Their appointments are for life, unless they commit some offence for which they can be impeached and removed. Federal courts decide cases involving federal law, conflicts between states or between citizens of different states, issues involving foreign citizens or governments, etc.

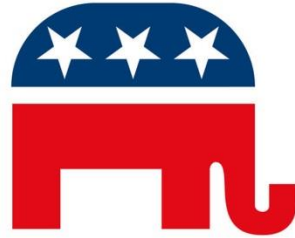
## **Political Parties**

The United States of America has had only two major parties throughout its history, the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. Neither the Democrats, nor the Republicans have ever completely dominated American politics. When one party dominated national politics, the other party retained much support at state or local levels. These two parties have alternated in power since the beginning.

There are also other political parties in the USA besides the two major parties. There is the Libertarian Party, the Constitution Party, the Green Party and also several smaller parties. But none of them has enough popular support to win a presidential election. However, some of them are very strong in certain cities and states. In most cases, minor parties have just faded away.



**The Democratic Party** evolved out of Thomas Jefferson's party, formed before 1800. Most Americans today consider this party the more liberal party. This means that the Democrats believe the federal government and the state governments should be active in providing social and economic programs for those who need them (the poor, the unemployed or students). They are centre-left oriented with traditionally poor voters and their symbol is the donkey, or the rooster (opposed to the eagle of the Republicans). Some Democratic presidents: Andrew Jackson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Bill Clinton, Barack Obama.



**The Republican Party** was formed in the 1850s, by the people in the states of the North and West, such as Abraham Lincoln, who wanted the government to prevent the expansion of slavery. Republicans are considered to be more conservative. This party puts more emphasis on private enterprise and individual initiative. They also oppose the involvement of the federal government in some areas of public life, which they consider to be the responsibility of the states and communities. They are centre-right oriented with traditionally rich voters and their symbols are the elephant and eagle.

Some Republican presidents: Abraham Lincoln, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush.

### **Activities**

1. Compare Slovak and American political systems, their main differences.
2. After reading the text about Donald Trump, write its shortened version.
3. Find more information on the internet and write a short text explaining the American system of presidential election.



## AMERICAN PRESIDENTS

### PRESIDENT

1. George Washington (1789-1797)
2. John Adams (1797-1801)
3. Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809)
4. James Madison (1809-1817)
5. James Monroe (1817-1825)
6. John Quincy Adams (1825-1829)
7. Andrew Jackson (1829-1837)
8. Martin Van Buren (1837-1841)
9. William Henry Harrison (1841)
10. John Tyler (1841-1845)
11. James K. Polk (1845-1849)
12. Zachary Taylor (1849-1850)
13. Millard Fillmore (1850-1853)
14. Franklin Pierce (1853-1857)
15. James Buchanan (1857-1861)
16. Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865)

### VICE PRESIDENT

- John Adams (1789-1797)
- Thomas Jefferson (1797-1801)
- Aaron Burr (1801-1805)  
George Clinton (1805-1809)
- George Clinton (1809-1812)  
none (1812-1813)  
Elbridge Gerry (1813-1814)  
none (1814-1817)
- Daniel D. Tompkins (1817-1825)
- John C. Calhoun (1825-1829)
- John C. Calhoun (1829-1832)  
none (1832-1833)  
Martin Van Buren (1833-1837)
- Richard M. Johnson (1837-1841)
- John Tyler (1841)
- none (1841-1845)
- George M. Dallas (1845-1849)
- Millard Fillmore (1849-1850)
- None (1850-1853)
- William King (1853)
- John C. Breckinridge (1857-1861)
- Hannibal Hamlin (1861-1865)



	Andrew Johnson (1865)
17. Andrew Johnson (1865-1869)	none (1865-1869)
18. Ulysses S. Grant (1869-1877)	Schuyler Colfax (1869-1873) Henry Wilson (1873-1875) none (1875-1877)
19. Rutherford B. Hayes (1877-1881)	William Wheeler (1877-1881)
20. James A. Garfield (1881)	Chester Arthur (1881)
21. Chester Arthur (1881-1885)	none (1881-1885)
22. Grover Cleveland (1885-1889)	Thomas Hendricks (1885) none (1885-1889)
23. Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893)	Levi P. Morton (1889-1893)
24. Grover Cleveland (1893-1897)	Adlai E. Stevenson (1893-1897)
25. William McKinley (1897-1901)	Garret Hobart (1897-1899) none (1899-1901) Theodore Roosevelt (1901)
26. Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909)	none (1901-1905) Charles Fairbanks (1905-1909)
27. William Howard Taft (1909-1913)	James S. Sherman (1909-1912) none (1912-1913)
28. Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921)	Thomas R. Marshall (1913-1921)
29. Warren G. Harding (1921-1923)	Calvin Coolidge (1921-1923)
30. Calvin Coolidge (1923-1929)	none (1923-1925) Charles Dawes (1925-1929)
31. Herbert Hoover (1929-1933)	Charles Curtis (1929-1933)
32. Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933-1945)	John Nance Garner (1933-1941) Henry A. Wallace (1941-1945) Harry S. Truman (1945)

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 33. Harry S. Truman (1945-1953)      | none (1945-1949)<br>Alben Barkley (1949-1953)                     |
| 34. Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961) | Richard Nixon (1953-1961)   |
| 35. John F. Kennedy (1961-1963)      | Lyndon B. Johnson (1961-1963)                                     |
| 36. Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969)    | none (1963-1965)<br>Hubert Humphrey (1965-1969)                   |
| 37. Richard Nixon (1969-1974)        | Spiro Agnew (1969-1973)<br>none (1973)<br>Gerald Ford (1973-1974) |
| 38. Gerald Ford (1974-1977)          | none (1974)<br>Nelson Rockefeller (1974-1977)                     |
| 39. Jimmy Carter (1977-1981)         | Walter Mondale (1977-1981)  |
| 40. Ronald Reagan (1981-1989)        | George Bush (1981-1989)   |
| 41. George Bush (1989-1993)          | Dan Quayle (1989-1993)  |
| 42. Bill Clinton (1993-2001)         | Al Gore (1993-2001)   |
| 43. George W. Bush (2001-2009)       | Dick Cheney (2001-2009)   |
| 44. Barack Obama (2009-2017)         | Joe Biden (2009-2017)   |
| 45.                                  |   |

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