



Politics of the Cold War

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Standards

SSUSH20 The student will analyze the domestic and international impact of the Cold War on the United States.

- c. Describe the Cuban Revolution, the Bay of Pigs, and the Cuban missile crisis.
- d. Describe the Vietnam War, the Tet offensive, and growing opposition to the war.

SSUSH21 The student will explain economic growth and its impact on the United States, 1945-1970.

- b. Describe the impact television has had on American culture; include the presidential debates (Kennedy/Nixon,1960) and news coverage of the Civil Rights Movement.

SSUSH23 The student will describe and assess the impact of political developments between 1945 and 1970.

- a. Describe the Warren Court and the expansion of individual rights as seen in the Miranda decision.
- b. Describe the political impact of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy; include the impact on civil rights legislation.
- c. Explain Lyndon Johnson's Great Society; include the establishment of Medicare.
- d. Describe the social and political turmoil of 1968; include the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, and the events surrounding the Democratic National Convention.

Eisenhower's Presidency



- Dwight D. Eisenhower was president from 1952-1960.
- Architect of D-Day
- Richard Nixon was his vice president
- John Foster Dulles was his secretary of state
- Dulles advocated for brinkmanship: active support for nations that wanted liberation from communism –The Us would push the aggressor nation to the brink of nuclear war, forcing it to back down and make concessions in the face of American superiority
- He wanted to emphasize nuclear and air power more than traditional troops and weapons
- Massive retaliation: the US would unleash its arsenal of nuclear weapons on any nation that attacked it



US Intervention

- As colonial governments collapsed in Asia, the Pacific, and Africa, the US struggled to keep up with the need to avoid communist take over in these vulnerable countries
- In addition to brinkmanship and massive retaliation, Dulles supported the use of covert action to fight the Cold War
- In 1953, the CIA staged a coup that led to the return of the liberal, corrupt, and ruthless shah of Iran
- Similarly, the CIA aided in the overthrow of a left-learning government in Guatemala



Geneva Convention

- The French were losing control of their colonies in Indochina; without US assistance, the French were forced to give up the colony entirely
- As a result of the Geneva Convention, the region was divided into three countries: Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos
- The convention also decided to divide Vietnam at the 17th parallel, with the communists led by Ho Chi Minh in the north and the Nationalists led by Ngo Dinh Diem in the south (It further decided that elections to reunite the country would occur in two years)
- Ngo Dinh Diem became increasingly dictatorial
- Fearing a communist take over, the elections were never allowed to take place



Domino Theory

- Domino Theory: where one Asian nation would fall to communism and the rest would follow
- Dulles was urged to action by the domino theory
- He created the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), which resembled NATO, to give mutual military assistance to member nations to hold up Ngo's crumbling regime



Eisenhower & the Middle East

- Middle Eastern countries were also a concern
- Egyptian leader Nasser asked the US to assist in building the Aswan Dam
- The US refused, as Egypt seemed to threaten the security of the new Jewish state of Israel
- Nasser seized the foreign-held Suez Canal in response
- This cut-off the free flow of oil from the Middle East to Europe and the US



Eisenhower & The Middle East

- Unbeknownst to Eisenhower, Britain, France, and Israel launched a surprise attack on Egypt and regained control of the Suez Canal
- An angry Eisenhower called upon the UN Security Council to denounce the surprise attacks and call for the immediate removal of multinational forces
- The UN complied, and Britain and France fell from their role as world leaders



Eisenhower Doctrine

- Eisenhower seized this opportunity to become more of a presence in the Middle East by proclaiming the Eisenhower Doctrine
- Like the Truman Doctrine, but was pointed at the Middle East



The Soviet Union & Hungary

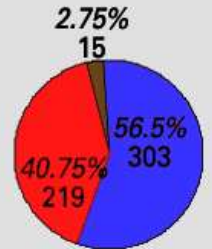
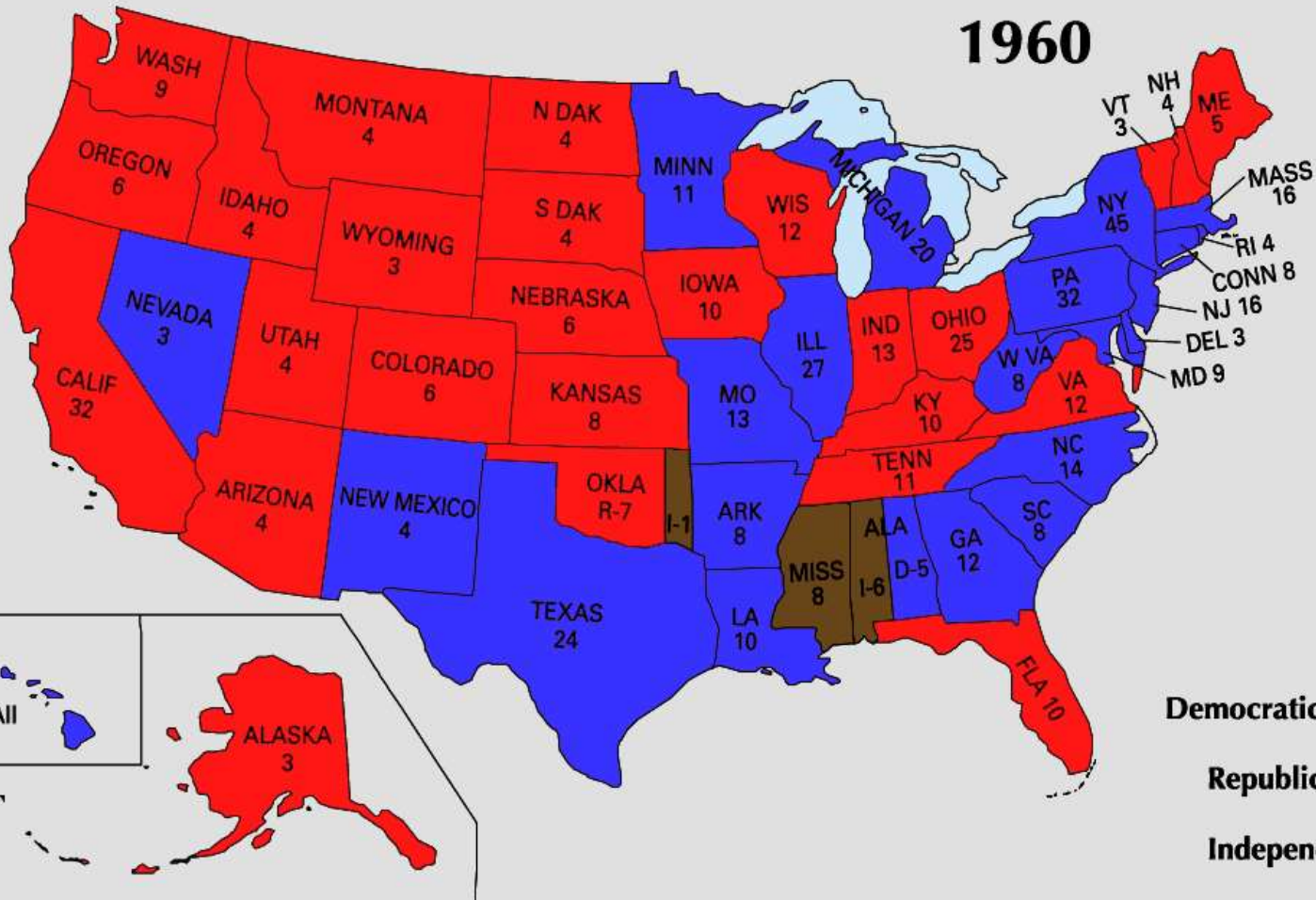
- Stalin died of a stroke in 1953
- Many looked for relief from Cold War tensions
- Signs existed that this was a possibility
- Hungary successfully overthrew a Soviet puppet government
- The new government demanded Hungary's removal from the Warsaw Pact
- The new Soviet premier, Nikita Khrushchev, ordered Soviet troops to crush the resistance
- The US did not respond
- Eisenhower feared that sending US troops would begin World War III
- USSR brutally crushed Hungarian resistance, killing many



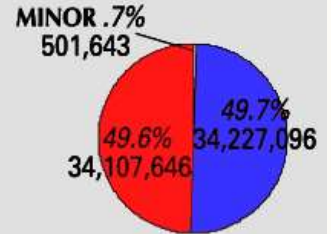
Spy Planes over the Soviet Union

- Khrushchev demanded in 1958 that Western troops be removed from Berlin within 6 months
- Eisenhower called an urgent meeting with the Soviet premier, and they agreed to hold off any decision until they could meet again in Paris in 1960
- Unfortunately, this meeting would never occur
- A US U-2 spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union two weeks before the meeting in Paris
- It was revealed that the US had been flying regular spy missions over the USSR since 1955
- Khrushchev called off the Paris talks

1960



ELECTORAL VOTE TOTAL: 537



MINOR .7%
501,643

POPULAR VOTE TOTAL: 68,836,385

- Democratic (Kennedy) 
- Republican (Nixon) 
- Independent (Byrd) 

Kennedy take office



- 1960 – JFK defeats VP Richard Nixon in one of the closest popular vote races in history.
- Eisenhower left office with high approval ratings
- The JFK/Nixon televised debates had a tremendous impact on the election. Some argue these TV debates were the reason Kennedy won.
- Kennedy became the first (and only) Catholic to be elected President. And up until that time he was the youngest elected as well.



“New Frontier”

- “Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.”
- JFK’s domestic policy was named the, “New Frontier”
- Promised equality, full employment, and financial aid to the needy

Kennedy and the Cold War

- 1959 – Cuban Revolution turns Cuba Communist; led by Fidel Castro
- April 1961 – Kennedy proceeds with CIA plan to invade Cuba and overthrow Castro
- This attempt (known as the Bay of Pigs) fails; Kennedy embarrassed, US image ruined





Berlin Wall

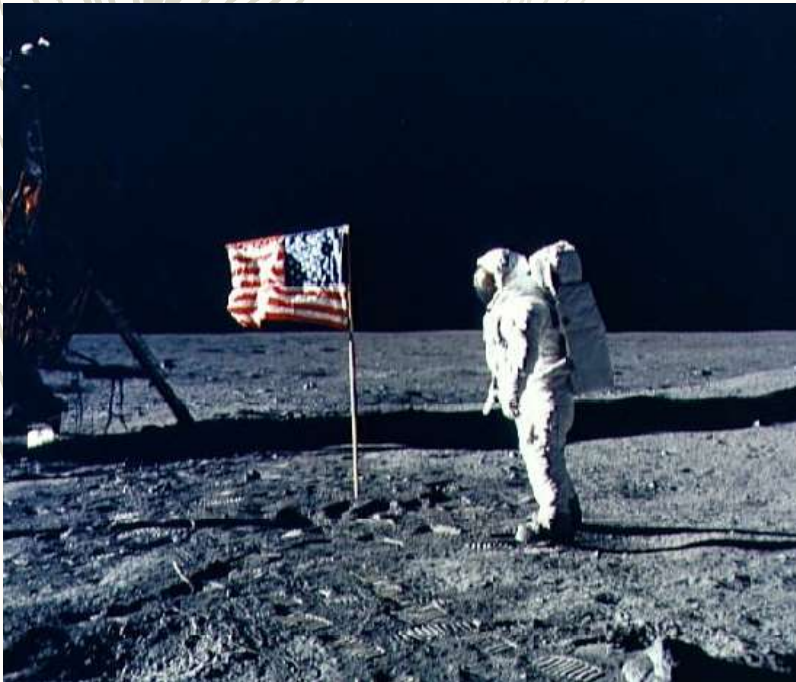
- Khrushchev threatened that Kennedy must remove US troops from Berlin
- Kennedy did not back down, and refused to move the troops
- The Soviets responded by beginning construction of a wall around West Berlin to stem the flow of East Berliners escaping to the West
- JFK did not stop the building of the wall, but he did travel to West Berlin in 1963 to proclaim support for its citizens

Kennedy and the Cold War



- October 1962 – Cuban Missile Crisis begins.
- US discovers nuclear missile in Cuba, 90 miles from Miami, FL.
- US had similar missiles stationed in Turkey.
- For 13 days the world was on the brink of nuclear war.
- Crisis was averted when JFK and Russian leader Nikita Khrushchev agree to withdrawal missiles from respective bases.
- A direct line known as the “red phone” was installed so that the world leaders could have immediate contact in the event of an emergency

Kennedy and the space race



- April 1961 – Russians put a man in space; Kennedy then vows to put a man on the moon by the end of the decade.
- He would not live to see his dream realized on July 20, 1969 when *Apollo 11* landed on the moon.
- “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind” – Neil Armstrong
- Kennedy Space Center in Orlando named in his honor

Kennedy and civil rights



- Because of his narrow win in 1960, Kennedy was reluctant to pursue major Civil Rights legislation.
- However after violence erupted across the South, he changed his mind.
- Together with his brother, Attorney General Robert “Bobby” Kennedy, JFK pressed for sweeping Civil Rights legislation.

JFK assassinated

- November 23rd, 1963 – During a trip to Dallas, TX Kennedy is shot while riding in a motorcade.
- Alleged “lone gunman” Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested hours later.
- Oswald himself was killed on live TV by gunman Jack Ruby.
- Numerous conspiracy theories still circulate as to why JFK was killed.



Lyndon Johnson sworn in

- After the death of JFK, LBJ becomes President.
- Despite being from Texas, Johnson politically supported Civil Rights.
- He vowed to continue the work of JFK.

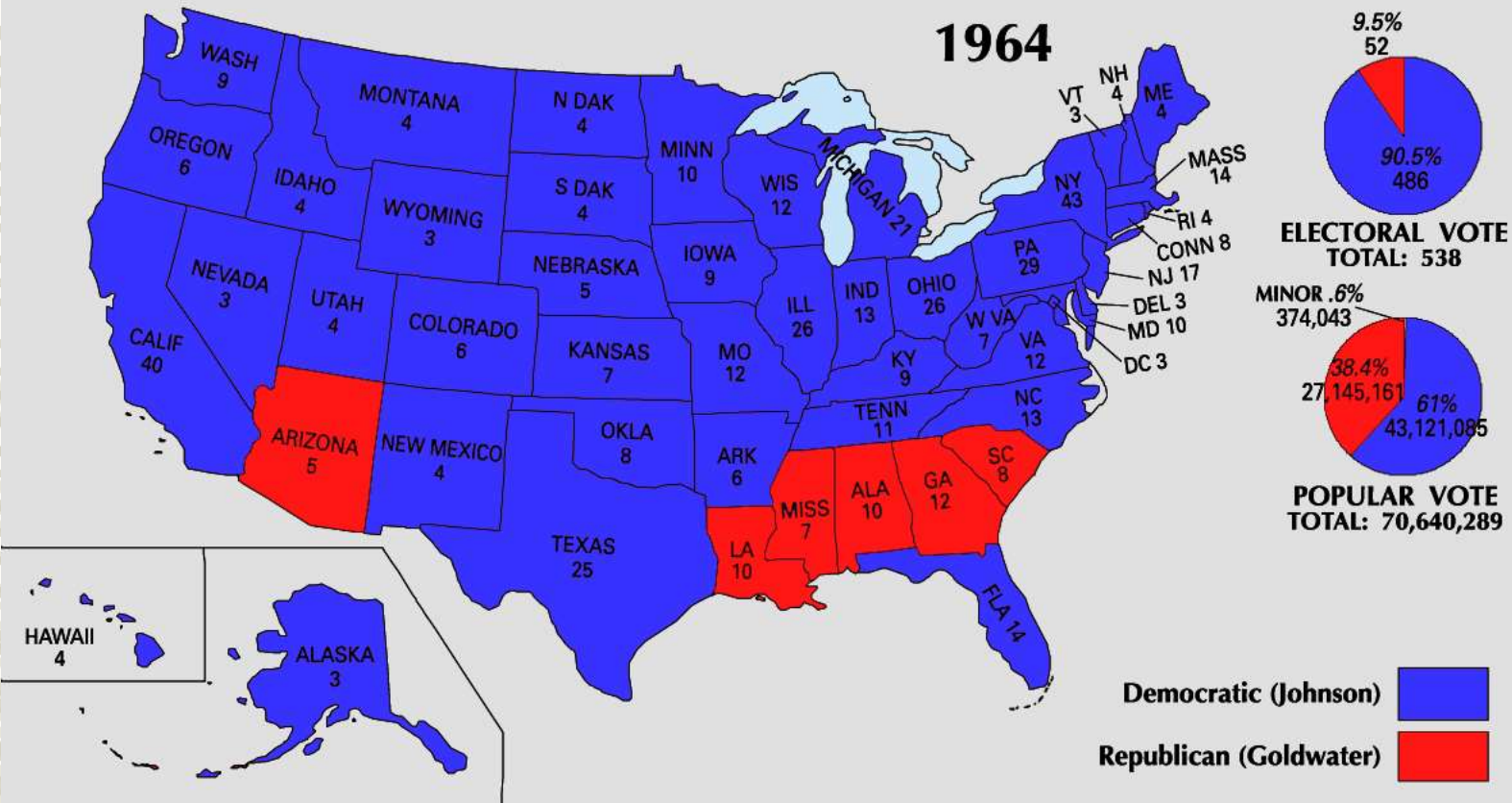


Johnson's "Great Society"



- Johnson sought to expand New Frontier goals he found to be too modest.
- Johnson's vision for America was known as the "Great Society".
- He continued New Deal programs started by FDR
- He pushed for legislation that would:
 - End poverty
 - Provide job training to young people
 - Improve education
 - End the "Quota System" on immigration
 - Provide medical care for the elderly (Medicare) and the poor (Medicaid).

1964



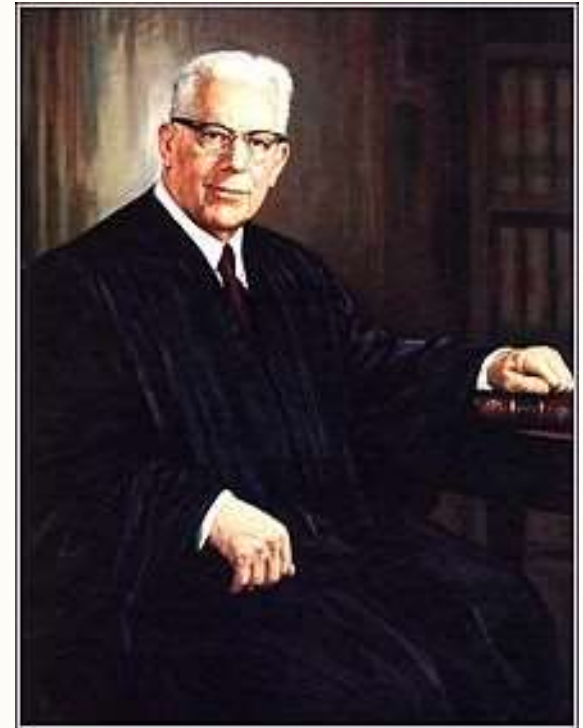
Johnson defeats Goldwater



- In 1964, LBJ runs for President against conservative Barry Goldwater of Arizona.
- The conservative movement was gaining ground for years during and after the New Deal era.
- Conservatives believe in a smaller federal government in all aspects from economic to social issues.
- Infamous “Daisy” ad used fear of nuclear war to help LBJ attain votes.

Warren Court expands individual freedoms

- During the 1960s the Supreme Court took the lead on controversial social, religious and political issues.
- Court was led by Chief Justice Earl Warren who also guided the court in the *Brown v. Board* ruling of 1954.
- *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963) – All accused criminals had the right to a lawyer whether they could afford one or not.
- *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966) – All accused criminals had to be informed of his or her 5th and 6th amendment rights before being questioned.
- These included the right to an attorney and protection against self-incrimination.
- “You have the right to remain silent...”



The Vietnam War



- Despite the efforts to improve America domestically, the nation was experiencing a foreign policy nightmare: the Vietnam War.
- Seen as another *front* in the Cold War; an attempt to stop the spread of communism.
- North Vietnam was communist; supported by Soviet Union.
- South Vietnam was democratic; supported by the US
- US came to the aid of South Vietnam in an effort to stop the North from invading and turning the South communist.



Instability in South Vietnam

- The Ngo Dinh Diem regime had become more and more of a liability
- Buddhist monks in the South Vietnamese capital set themselves on fire to protest Ngo's policies discriminating against fellow Buddhists
- Ngo was assassinated shortly before JFK was assassinated
- When LBJ took office, Vietnam was very politically unstable and LBJ took the advice of his secretary of defense, Robert McNamara, to take more forceful action to prevent the fall of South Vietnam to Communism



Gulf Of Tonkin Resolution

- In August of 1964, LBJ claimed that a North Vietnamese gunboat had carried out an unprovoked attack on two US destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin off the coast of North Vietnam
- LBJ used this event to ask Congress for an increase in his authority to wage war in Vietnam without an actual war declaration
- Gulf of Tonkin Resolution increased executive power to engage in the Vietnam War
- It was later discovered that the US destroyers had actually been involved in an attack to aid the South Vietnamese

Vietnam Continued

- US forces focused on destroying the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which linked the South Vietnamese Vietcong fighters with the North Vietnamese supply lines
- The US dropped more bombs on North Vietnam than were used in all of WWII
- In January 1968, Vietcong forces surprise attacked American troops by attacking military bases and capitals
- The Tet Offensive changed the course of the war in Vietnam and at home
- Increasingly, people demanded that the US pull out of the war-torn country
- “Doves” =people in the US that did not support the Vietnam War
- “Hawks” =people in the US that supported the Vietnam War

