

The Nixon Years

- I. Election of 1968 – most heated political season in history
 - A. Democratic convention has mass riots – protesters bait officers
 - 1. Eventually police riot breaks out
 - 2. Robert Kennedy had been killed – leaves pro-war Humphrey as nominee
 - B. Republicans – victory in Vietnam and strong anti-crime policy
 - C. George Wallace – segregation campaign – gets 45 electoral votes from South
 - C. Nixon wins – doesn't win one city – Democrats vote in cities, blacks vote in cities
- II. Johnson remembered – Vietnam failure, but did more for Civil Rights than Lincoln
- III. Nixon-Kissinger Foreign Policy
 - A. Vietnam – escalation and then pull-out troops
 - 1. Asians and others have to fight own wars
 - 2. “Vietnamization” – train Vietnamese to fight war for selves
 - 3. Bomb Cambodia to clear out Vietnamese
 - B. China – restoring relations – road to getting out of Vietnam requires help of China
 - 1. China starting to clash with Soviets – take advantage of opportunity
 - 2. 1972 makes journey to China
 - C. Soviet Union – détente – relaxed tension – slowing of arms race
 - 1. Soviets need U.S. food and are afraid of strong US support of Chinese
 - a. \$750 million in wheat, corn
 - 3. Anti-ballistic missile treaty – limited nations to defensive weapons
 - a. SALT – freeze number of missiles for 5 years
- IV. New Federalism- Expands welfare programs – not liked by Conservatives
 - A. Increases for food stamps and Medicaid
 - B. Supplemental Security Income for disabled
 - C. Poverty rate reduced to 11% - lowest in modern history
 - D. Attack on racial discrimination – affirmative action – protection for groups not just individuals
 - 1. Supreme Court prohibits intelligence or other tests that hurt women/blacks
 - E. Environmental Protection Agency – dealt with smog, pesticides and pollution
- V. Supreme Court – Roe v. Wade – prohibited states from passing laws against abortion
 - A. Warren Court of previous two decades had changed face of nation - reformist
 - 1. Rights of accused, legality of contraception, sue for libel if you could prove malice, support black people in civil rights cases, redrawing of district lines
- VI. Watergate Crisis and resignation
 - A. Nixon paranoid – believes liberals of Kennedy/Johnson era destroyed political career
 - B. Wins 1972 election by landslide but actions come back to haunt him
 - 1. Plumbers supposed to seal “leaks” after Pentagon Papers show fault in previous presidents
 - 2. Group caught in Watergate Hotel at Democratic Party
 - 3. CREEP – committee to reelect president has tons of money to play “dirty tricks” on opposition
 - C. Washington Post reporters Woodward and Bernstein uncover story – eventually traced to Nixon
 - D. Nixon resigns before impeachment – later pardoned by Ford – only President to resign
 - E. John Dean states that Nixon had bugged rooms to record conversations
 - 1. Eventually Nixon tapes asked for, but denied – minutes “lost”