

There's More Online!

- ✓ IMAGE 1968 Election Cartoon
- ✓ IMAGE Ping Pong Diplomacy
- ✓ IMAGE Nixon Visits China
- ✓ MAP Presidential Election of 1972
- ✓ VIDEO The Nixon Administration
- ✓ INTERACTIVE SELF-CHECK QUIZ



LESSON 1

The Nixon Administration

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS • How do you think the Nixon administration affected people's attitudes toward government? • How does society change the shape of itself over time?

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

After he won the 1968 election, President Richard Nixon sought to restore law and order at home. His greatest accomplishments, however, were in foreign policy, where he worked to ease Cold War tensions with China and the Soviet Union.

Appealing to Middle America

GUIDING QUESTION What were Nixon's keys to victory in the 1968 presidential election?

Many Americans longed for an end to the turmoil that seemed to be plaguing the nation. In 1968 these frustrated citizens turned to Republican presidential candidate Richard Nixon. He aimed his campaign messages at this group, whom he referred to as "Middle America" and the "silent majority." Nixon promised "peace with honor" in Vietnam and law and order at home. He also promised a more streamlined government and a return to more traditional values.

In the election, Nixon faced President Johnson's vice president, Democrat Hubert Humphrey. He also went up against a strong third-party candidate, George Wallace, an experienced Southern politician and avowed supporter of segregation. Wallace captured 13.5 percent of the popular vote. Yet Nixon managed to win with 43.4 percent of the popular vote to Humphrey's 42.7, and 301 electoral votes to Humphrey's 191.

The Southern Strategy

Nixon partially owed his victory to a surprisingly strong showing in the South. The South had long been a Democratic stronghold, but Nixon worked hard to get its support. He had met with powerful South Carolina senator Strom Thurmond and won his support by promising several things. Nixon agreed to appoint only conservatives to the federal courts and to name a Southerner to the Supreme Court. He also promised to oppose court-ordered busing and to choose a vice-presidential candidate that the South could support. (Nixon chose Spiro Agnew, governor of the state of Maryland.)

Reading HELPDESK



Academic Vocabulary

- welfare
- liberal

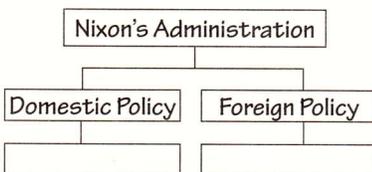
Content Vocabulary

- revenue sharing
- impound
- détente
- summit

TAKING NOTES:

Key Ideas and Details

Organizing As you read, complete a graphic organizer similar to the one below by listing Nixon's domestic and foreign policies.



Nixon's efforts paid off on Election Day. Large numbers of white Southerners left the Democratic Party. Humphrey's only Southern victory was in Lyndon Johnson's home state of Texas. Wallace claimed most of the states in the Deep South, but Nixon captured Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and North Carolina. Thurmond's support delivered his state of South Carolina for the Republicans as well.

After his victory, Nixon set out to attract more Southerners to the Republican Party. This effort became known as the Southern strategy. He took steps to slow desegregation and worked to overturn civil rights policies. He also reversed a program that had cut off funds for racially segregated schools.

A Law-and-Order President

Nixon had promised to uphold law and order, and his administration went after antiwar protesters. Attorney General John Mitchell warned that he stood ready to prosecute anyone who crossed state lines to start riots. His deputy, Richard Kleindienst, declared, "We're going to enforce the law against draft evaders, against radical students, against deserters, against civil disorders, against organized crime, and against street crime."

President Nixon also attacked the recent Supreme Court rulings that expanded the rights of accused criminals. Nixon openly criticized the Court and its chief justice, Earl Warren. The president promised to fill vacancies on the Court with judges who would support the rights of law enforcement over the rights of suspected criminals.

Warren retired soon after Nixon took office. The president replaced him with respected conservative judge Warren Burger. He placed three other conservative justices on the Court, including one from the South. The Burger Court did not reverse Warren Court rulings on suspects' rights, but it refused to expand those rights. For example, in *Stone v. Powell* (1976), it limited defendants' rights to appeal state convictions to the federal judiciary. The Burger Court also reaffirmed capital punishment.

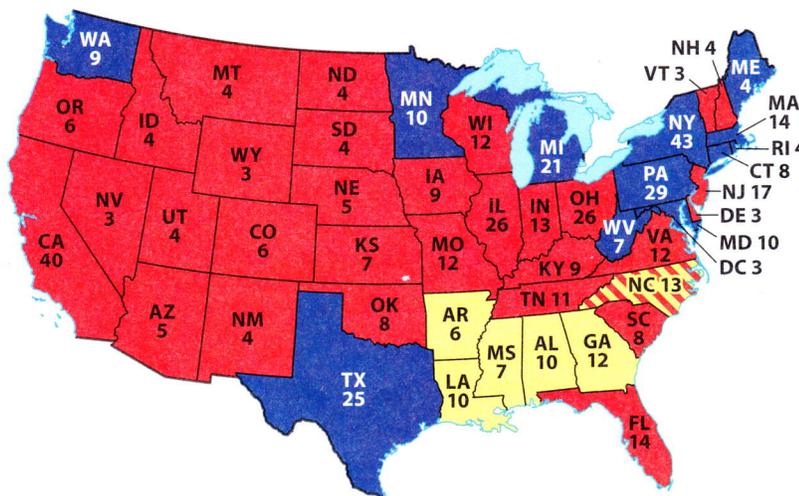
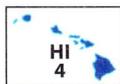
GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Republican Richard Nixon defeated Democrat Hubert Humphrey and third-party candidate George Wallace in the election of 1968.

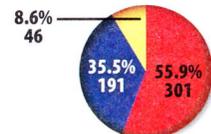
- PLACES AND REGIONS** *In which region did Nixon receive the most support?*
- THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS** *Which states' electoral votes went wholly or in part to Wallace?*



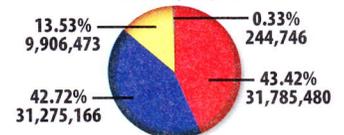
Presidential Election of 1968



ELECTORAL VOTE TOTAL: 538



POPULAR VOTE TOTAL: 73,211,865



* Twelve electors in North Carolina voted for Nixon and one voted for Wallace.

revenue sharing federal tax money that is distributed among the states

impound to take possession of

welfare aid in the form of money or necessities for those in need, especially disadvantaged social groups

liberal a person who generally believes the government should take an active role in the economy and in social programs but should not dictate social behavior

Connections to TODAY

Removal of U.S. Troops From Iraq

Just as Vietnamization called for the South Vietnamese military to take over duties from American troops, the gradual close of American involvement in Iraq has seen American troops give increased responsibility to Iraqi security forces. Although American combat troops officially left Iraq in August 2010, some 50,000 soldiers remained in the country. Their primary duty was to help the Iraqi army as it assumed full control over the nation's security.

The New Federalism

Nixon had also promised to reduce the size of the federal government. He planned to end several federal programs and give more control to state and local governments. Nixon called this the “New Federalism.” He argued that such an approach would make government more effective. “I reject the patronizing idea that government in Washington, D.C., is inevitably more wise, more honest and more efficient than government at the local or State level,” Nixon declared. “The idea that a bureaucratic elite in Washington knows what’s best for people . . . is really a contention that people cannot govern themselves.”

Under Nixon’s New Federalism plan, Congress passed a series of **revenue-sharing** bills granting federal funds to state and local agencies. As states came to depend on federal funds, the federal government could impose conditions on states. Unless states met those conditions, funds would be cut off.

As part of the New Federalism, Nixon wanted to end many of Johnson’s Great Society programs. He vetoed funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. He eliminated the Office of Economic Opportunity, and tried unsuccessfully to shut down the Job Corps. When Congress appropriated money for programs he opposed, Nixon **impounded**, or refused to release, the funds. By 1973, it was estimated that he had impounded as much as \$18 billion. The Supreme Court eventually declared the practice of impoundment unconstitutional.

The Family Assistance Plan

One federal program Nixon wanted to reform was the nation’s **welfare** system—Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The program had many critics. In 1969 Nixon proposed replacing the AFDC with the Family Assistance Plan. The plan called for providing needy families a yearly grant of \$1,600, which could be supplemented by outside earnings. Many **liberals** applauded the plan as a significant step toward expanding federal responsibility for the poor.

Although the program won approval in the House in 1970, it soon came under harsh attack. Welfare recipients complained that the federal grant was too low. Conservatives disapproved of guaranteed income. Such opposition led to the program’s defeat in the Senate.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Explaining What were Nixon’s first priorities when coming into office?

Nixon’s Foreign Policy

GUIDING QUESTION *What do you think was Nixon’s greatest foreign policy achievement?*

Despite Nixon’s domestic initiatives, a State Department official later recalled that Nixon had a “monumental disinterest in domestic policies.” Nixon once expressed his hope that a “competent cabinet” of advisers could run the country, allowing him to focus on foreign affairs.

Nixon and Kissinger

In a move that would greatly influence his foreign policy, Nixon chose as his national security advisor Henry Kissinger, a former Harvard professor. Kissinger had served under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson as a foreign policy consultant. Although Secretary of State William Rogers outranked him, Kissinger soon took the lead in helping shape Nixon’s foreign policy.

The Nixon Doctrine Nixon and Kissinger shared many views. Both believed abandoning the war in Vietnam would damage the nation's position in the world. Thus, they worked toward a gradual withdrawal while also training the South Vietnamese to defend themselves.

This policy of Vietnamization, as it was called, was extended globally in what came to be known as the Nixon Doctrine. In July 1969, only six months after taking office, Nixon announced that the United States would honor all of the alliances it had signed. The nation would continue to provide military aid and training to allies. Yet, it would no longer “conceive all the plans, design all the programs, execute all the decisions and undertake all the defense of the free nations of the world.” America's allies would have to take responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in their own areas of the world.

The New Policy of Détente The Soviet Union was not pleased when Nixon became president. He was known to be strongly anti-Communist. Yet Nixon and Kissinger believed the United States needed to adjust to the growing role of China, Japan, and Western Europe. This emerging “multipolar” world demanded a different approach to American foreign policy.

Both Nixon and Kissinger wanted to continue to contain communism, but they believed that negotiation with Communists was a better way for the United States to achieve its international goals. They developed a new approach called **détente**, or relaxation of tensions, between the United States and its two major Communist rivals, the Soviet Union and China. Nixon said that the nation had to build a better relationship with its main rivals for world peace:

PRIMARY SOURCE

“We must understand that détente is not a love fest. It is an understanding between nations that have opposite purposes, but which share common interests, including the avoidance of a nuclear war. Such an understanding can work—that is, restrain aggression and deter war—only as long as the potential aggressor is made to recognize that neither aggression nor war will be profitable.”

—quoted in *The Limits of Power*, 1992

The successes of détente were diminished due to upheavals in smaller nations. In Chile, President Salvador Allende was killed during a coup supported by the American CIA. Similarly, the Angolan Civil War, which began in 1975, featured secret aid from the United States. The conflicts in Chile and Angola were examples of proxy wars—conflicts during the Cold War that did not directly involve the United States and the Soviet Union but pursued Cold War aims of the two superpowers.

Nixon Visits China

Détente began with an effort to improve American-Chinese relations. Since 1949, when Communists took power in China, the United States had refused to recognize the Communists as the legitimate rulers. Instead, the U.S. government recognized the exiled regime on the island of Taiwan as the Chinese government. Having long supported this policy, Nixon now set out to reverse it.

détente a policy that attempts to relax or ease tensions between nations

Mao Zedong, leader of China, greets President Nixon in Beijing on February 21, 1972.

CRITICAL THINKING

Identifying Central Ideas What was the primary goal of the policy of détente?



BIOGRAPHY



Henry Kissinger (1923–)

Henry Kissinger and his family left Germany for the United States in 1938 to escape Nazi anti-Jewish restrictions. Kissinger served in U.S. military intelligence during World War II, then attended Harvard University, later joining its faculty. He was a consultant on national security under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, before becoming Nixon's national security advisor and later secretary of state. He helped establish the policy of détente with the Soviet Union and China. Kissinger negotiated the cease-fire with North Vietnam and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1973. In 1977 Kissinger received the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

▶ CRITICAL THINKING

Drawing Conclusions How did Henry Kissinger influence foreign policy in the 1970s?

summit a meeting between heads of government

After a series of highly secret negotiations between Kissinger and Chinese leaders, Nixon announced that he would visit China in February 1972. During the historic trip, the leaders of both nations agreed to establish “more normal” relations between their countries. In a statement Nixon told his Chinese hosts during a banquet toast:

PRIMARY SOURCE

“[S]o let us, in these next five days, start a long march together. Not in lockstep, but on different roads leading to the same goal: the goal of building a world structure of peace and justice in which all may stand together with equal dignity.”

—quoted in the *New York Times*, February 22, 1972

United States–Soviet Tensions Ease

Nixon's strategy toward the Soviet Union worked. Shortly after the public learned of American negotiations with China, the Soviets proposed an American-Soviet **summit**, or high-level diplomatic meeting, to be held in May 1972. On May 22, President Nixon flew to Moscow for a weeklong summit. Nixon was the first American president since World War II to visit the Soviet Union.

During the historic Moscow summit, the two superpowers signed the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, or SALT I, a plan the two nations had been working on for years. The treaty temporarily froze the number of strategic nuclear weapons. Nixon and Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev also agreed to increase trade and the exchange of scientific information. Détente had helped ease tensions between the two countries. One Soviet official admitted that by the end of Nixon's presidency, “the United States and the Soviet Union had their best relationship of the whole Cold War period.”

Another highlight of détente was a series of meetings that created the Helsinki Accords. In 1975 the United States, Canada, and most of the countries of Eastern and Western Europe committed to three sets of recommendations focusing on security, economic, and human rights issues. In one section, the signing states agreed to “respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.”

President Nixon indeed had made his mark on the world stage. However, a scandal was about to engulf his presidency and plunge the nation into one of its greatest constitutional crises.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Defining What was the policy of Vietnamization, and how did it relate to the Nixon Doctrine?

LESSON 1 REVIEW



Reviewing Vocabulary

- 1. Explaining** How does revenue sharing work?
- 2. Identifying** What takes place at a summit?

Using Your Notes

- 3. Summarizing** Review the notes that you completed throughout the lesson to summarize Nixon's major domestic and foreign policy initiatives.

Answering the Guiding Questions

- 4. Stating** What were Nixon's keys to victory in the 1968 presidential election?
- 5. Evaluating** What do you think was Nixon's greatest foreign policy achievement?

Writing Activity

- 6. INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY** Take on the role of a journalist assigned to cover the 1972 Moscow summit. Write a newspaper article about the events and outcomes of this meeting.