

# **The New Frontier and the Great Society**

# The New Frontier

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## Kennedy's Vision of Progress

- **New Frontier** – medical care for the elderly, rebuilding urban areas and education.
- JFK faces Republican-Southern Democrat coalition
- Lacks skill to get policies passed

## Stimulating the Economy

- By 1960, U.S. in recession; 6% unemployment
- JFK administration pushes for deficit spending to stimulate growth
- Gets 20% increase for defense; money for unemployment problems

## Addressing Poverty Abroad

• **Peace Corps**—volunteers assist developing nations; great success. Americans worked as teachers, health aides, and agricultural advisors.

- 1968 – 35,000 Americans in 60 nations
- **Alliance for Progress**—economic, technical assistance to Latin America - in part meant to deter spread of communism in Latin America

- 1961 – 1969 the US had spent \$12 billion in Latin America
- <http://khsd-safari/?a=5409&ch=3&d=02237AA>

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## **Race to the Moon**

- April 1961, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri A. Gagarin is first man in space
- US establishes NASA – National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- Soon after, U.S. puts man in space, uses satellite communications
- July 1969 U.S astronaut Neil Armstrong is first man to walk on moon
- University science programs grow; new industries, technologies arise

## **Addressing Domestic Problems**

- Michael Harrington's *The Other America* brings attention to poverty; 50 million Americans made less than \$1,000 a year
- 1963, JFK begins to work on poverty, racial injustice, civil rights
- Wanted to cut taxes by \$10 billion and pass Civil Rights legislation
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# Tragedy in Dallas

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## Four Days in November

- November 22, 1963, JFK shot, killed riding in motorcade in Dallas
- Jack Ruby shoots alleged assassin Lee Harvey Oswald
- Vice president Lyndon Johnson succeeds JFK

## Unanswered Questions

- **Warren Commission** investigates, concludes Oswald acted alone
- 1979 reinvestigation concludes Oswald part of conspiracy
- Possible causes
  1. plot by anti-Castro Cubans
  2. communist sponsored attack
  3. conspiracy by the CIA
- From JFK's assassination we learn that the government is sturdy.
- <http://khsd-safari/?a=5409&ch=6&d=02237AA>

# Lydon Baines Johnson

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## From the Texas Hills to Capitol Hill

- As Congressman, **Lyndon Baines Johnson** mentored, helped by FDR
- 1948, LBJ narrowly wins Senate seat

## A Master Politician

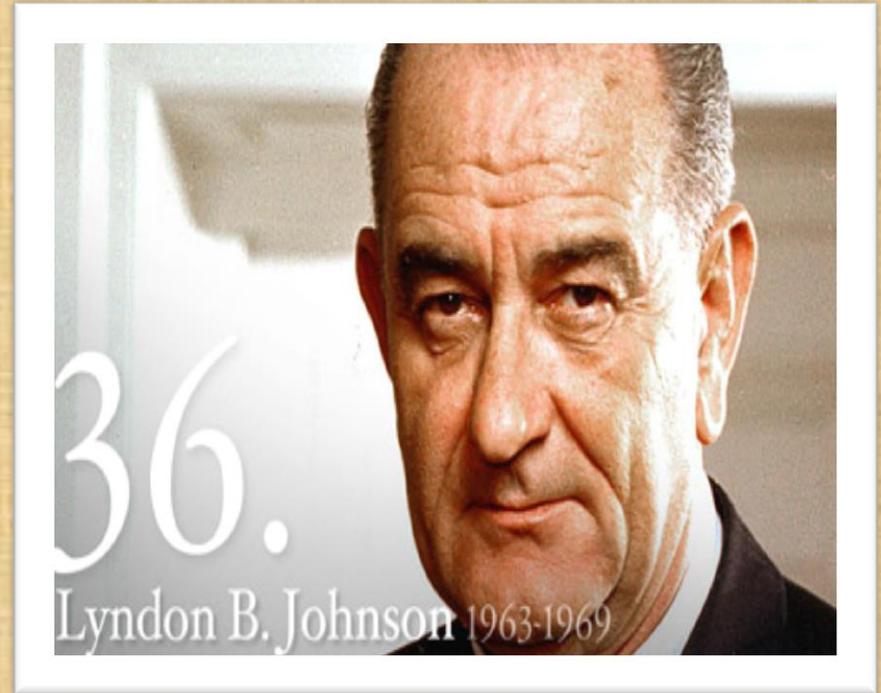
- 1955, LBJ becomes Senate majority leader
- “LBJ treatment”—ability to persuade senators to support his bills
- Gets Civil Rights Act of 1957 passed—voting rights measure
- LBJ helps Kennedy win key Southern states in presidential election

## The War on Poverty

- 1964 tax cut spurs economic growth; lowers federal deficit
- 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, national origin and sex, allows enforcement
- LBJ declares “war on poverty”
- **Economic Opportunity Act**: \$1 billion for education, training, small business loans
- Includes Job Corps, VISTA, Head Start, Community Action Program

## **The 1964 Election**

- Republicans nominate Senator Barry Goldwater
- Goldwater: government should not deal with social, economic problems
- Threatens to bomb North Vietnam, advocates intervention
- LBJ says will not send troops to Vietnam; wins by landslide
- Democrats big majority; Southern Democrats not needed to pass bills



# Building the Great Society

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## The Great Society

- **Great Society**—LBJ's legislation to end poverty, discrimination
- Johnson gets Congress to pass 206 of his bills

## Education

- **Elementary and Secondary Education Act** funds school materials like textbooks and library books

## Healthcare

- **Medicare**—low-cost medical, hospital insurance for senior citizens
- **Medicaid**—health insurance for welfare recipients

## Housing

- Money set aside for public housing; low-, moderate-income homes
- 240,000 units
- Dept. of Housing and Urban Development created
- Robert Weaver is first African American in cabinet, HUD secretary

## Immigration

- Existing immigration quotas discriminate against non-Western Europeans
- **Immigration Act of 1965** ends quotas based on nationality

## *continued* Building the Great Society

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### **The Environment**

- Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* exposes dangers of pesticides
- **Water Quality Act of 1965** requires states to clean up rivers
- LBJ orders government to search out worst chemical polluters

### **Consumer Protection**

- Laws set standards for consumer labels, auto safety, food safety
- <http://khsd-safari/?a=5409&ch=7&d=02237AA>

# Reforms of the Warren Court

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## The Warren Court

- **Warren Court**—Supreme Court under Chief Justice Earl Warren
- Rejects loyalty oaths, affirms free speech, church-state separation

## Rights of the Accused

- Warren Court rulings expand rights of people accused of crimes:
  - illegally seized evidence cannot be used in court – *Mapp vs. Ohio* (1962)
  - courts must provide legal counsel to poor – *Gideon vs. Wainwright* (1961)
  - Right to have a lawyer present at the time of questioning – *Escobedo vs. Illinois* (1964)
  - suspect must be read rights before questioning – *Miranda vs. Arizona* (1966)
- Some praise protection of right to a fair trial and other think rulings handicap police investigations

# Impact of the Great Society

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## **Social and Economic Effects**

- Post-WW II, LBJ extends federal power more than all other presidents
- Poverty drops from 21% of population in 1962 to 11% in 1973
- Massive tax cut spurs economy; Great Society contributes to deficit
- Debate over finances, effectiveness of programs, government role
- Republican party begins to gain political power because Americans dislike the Great Society programs.
- Republican Ronald Reagan becomes governor of California in 1966
- Vietnam War overshadows the Great Society