President Richard Nixon: New Federalism and Realpolitik
E. America Enters World War II (1945-Present)
h. Describe and evaluate the political and social impact of the Vietnam War

2. Changes at Home
c. Identify the events and influential individuals of the civil rights, human rights, and counterculture movements and assess their impact
d. Evaluate the impact of changes in the national economy on contemporary American society
Richard Nixon, a Republican, lost the Election of 1960 to JFK, a Democrat. Yet, Nixon won the Election of 1968 by defeating Hubert Humphrey, a Democrat.
- Winning the election of 1968, Nixon wanted to return the nation to conservative rule and go against the liberal movements going on around the country.

- He wanted to decrease the role of the federal government. Nixon was concerned that government spending on social programs could damage the economy with high taxes.

- In an approach Nixon called **New Federalism**, he attempted to give more power to local and state governments and reduce spending on various social programs.
Nixon’s New Federalism

-Nixon practiced revenue sharing. This meant the federal government did not restrict states on how to spend money.

-Yet, Nixon tried to set limits on welfare payments and make unemployed recipients take job training courses as they looked for work. They had to accept any “reasonable” work offered to them or lose their benefits.

-Revenue sharing did come about. Yet, these changes to welfare and unemployment never passed the Senate.
Nixon vs. The Democrats

-To achieve support from the Democrat controlled Congress, Nixon had to give in and fund several social programs. Ironically, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid payments increased under his leadership, despite his desire to reduce government spending.

-Nixon opposed the anti-war protest movement against the Vietnam War. He wanted to end the conflict, but did not support the liberal protest movements that seemed to disregard government leadership.

-He claimed there was a “silent majority” of middle class people who opposed the liberal “hippie” movements and the changing morals of the new generation.
Nixon wanted to end the war in Vietnam. Yet, he opposed the liberal “hippie” movements that protested against government leadership.
Nixon and Civil Rights

In Brown vs. Board of Education, the Supreme Court ruled racial segregation in schools was unconstitutional. This was a huge step to end the evil system of segregation.

In Swann vs. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education, it was ruled that busses could be used to bring African Americans to traditionally white schools to help end segregation. Nixon tried to oppose this ruling.

Many whites in the South did not support Civil Rights or the Great Society of President Johnson. Nixon wanted to slow desegregation efforts and cater to these voters. Nixon tried to slow down integration in states like Mississippi.
Economics and Foreign Policy

-During Nixon’s presidency, the economy experienced stagnation, high inflation and high unemployment. Deficit spending and dependence on oil influenced this occurrence.

-The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) stopped selling oil to the USA because the USA supported Israel in the 1973 Yom Kippur war with Egypt. Many oil producing nations had Muslim populations that supported Egypt.

-Nixon’s aid, Henry Kissinger, helped manage foreign affairs. Kissinger practiced Realpolitik. This meant that the USA dealt with nations based on their power. In other words, the USA could not refuse to work with large nations simply because they were Communist.
Some members of OPEC, such as Iraq, wanted to see Egypt win the Yom Kippur war against Israel in 1973. The USA supported Israel. As a result, OPEC stopped selling oil to the USA, further damaging the already struggling American economy. This radically increased gas prices when trade began again in 1974.
The Yom Kippur War of 1973:
Egypt and Syria vs. Israel
After WW II, when the Communists took over China, the USA reduced cooperation with the nation to protest their government system. Richard Nixon challenged that approach. He asserted that it was in the best interest of the USA to trade with China, since China was such a large nation. To the left is a picture of Nixon standing on The Great Wall of China.
President Richard Nixon shaking hands with the Communist leader of China, Mao Zedong.
Realpolitik and China

- For years, the USA had refused to trade with China due to their Communist government. Yet, following Realpolitik, Nixon opened up a new relationship with China in the early 1970s. By the late 1970s, a formal relationship between China and the USA was established.

- In 1972, Nixon traveled to Moscow to initiate a new relationship with the Soviet Union and discuss the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.

- Nixon had great accomplishments in foreign policy. Yet, Vietnam still loomed as a disastrous conflict that Nixon would have to try and bring to a close.
The End