

Economy

1. Sources of Stagnation
 1. America had enjoyed a long economic boom in the 1950s and 60s. The 1970s would see that boom end.
 2. No year's productivity during the 70s would equal any year in the 50s or 60s. There were several reasons for the slow-down.
 1. Women and teens increasingly entered the workforce. Generally speaking, they were less skilled, often had temporary jobs.
 2. Machinery was getting old and run down by this time.
 3. The major cause was the upward spiral of inflation. Vietnam War spending helped cause inflation, but it was caused mostly from increased oil prices.
 4. What's more, the boom-years had put more money in people's hands. *Anytime* this is the case, prices go up.
 3. America's economic lead had dwindled as Germany and Japan had by then rebuilt and caught back up.

Foreign Policy

2. Nixon's Détente with Beijing (Peking) and Moscow
 1. China and the Soviet Union were fighting (literally at times) over what it means to be a communist. Nixon saw this as a chance to step in and play one against the other.
 2. National security adviser **Henry A. Kissinger** had been secretly meeting in Paris with North Vietnamese officials in hopes of working to an end of the war. He was also preparing the way for Nixon to visit China and Russia.
 3. Nixon did visit China, in 1972. It was a symbolic visit where each side promised to get along better. Three months later, Nixon went to Russia. With better U.S.-China relations, he felt Russia would be inclined to give in a bit. He was right.
 1. The U.S.S.R. was low on food. A deal was struck where the U.S. would sell \$750+ million grain to the Soviets.
 2. There was some disarmament as well. America and the Soviets agreed to an anti-ballistic missile (ABM) reduction and to a string of "Strategic Arms Limitations Talks" (SALT).
 1. This was a hollow victory though. The *quantity* may have been limited, but agreements could be easily ignored and were by both sides.
 2. Plus, the move was now toward "**MIRVs**" (multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles) where several nuclear weapons were mounted on a single missile.
 4. Still, getting along better with China and Russia brought on another round of détente (eased tensions).

5. Nixon was still against communism. This is seen in the government's involvement in Latin American governments that were possibly going red.

Supreme Court 60s and 70s

3. A New Team on the Supreme Bench
 1. Under **Chief Justice Earl Warren**, the Supreme Court had made a noticeable shift to the left (liberal side) and was activist. Nixon fussed about this move. Several cases showed the trend...
 2. *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965) - Struck down a state law banning contraceptive use as a "right of privacy."
 3. A series of cases gave rights to defendants in criminal cases.
 1. *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963) - Said all defendants were entitled to a lawyer.
 2. **The Escobedo and Miranda** cases (1966) - Said arrested individuals must be told their rights.
 4. *New York Times v. Sullivan* (1964) - A public figure could only sue for libel if "malice" on the writer's part could be proven. This opened wide the door for jabs at politicians and movies stars.
 5. *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) and *School District of Abington Township v. Schempp* (1963) - Removed prayer and the Bible from schools, arguing the First Amendment separates church and state.
 6. *Reynolds v. Sims* (1964) - Forbade creative district lines that made some people's votes weigh more than others. This type of gerrymandering had been used by southern whites to keep power.
 7. Nixon sought to change the Court's liberal trend by appointing otherwise-minded justices. **Warren E. Burger** was quickly nominated, accepted, and became chief justice. Nixon appointed a total of four supposedly conservative justices.
 1. However, justices are free to rule as they wish, not how the president wants. **The Burger Court was reluctant to undo what the Warren Court had done.**
 2. Evidence of how the court was *not* conservative came with the *Roe v. Wade* decision (1973) which legalized abortion.

Domestic Policies

"Nixon should not be considered a liberal or a conservative, but rather a master politician."

4. Nixon on the Home Front
 1. Contrary to what one might guess from a conservative, Nixon made the Great Society programs grow. For example:
 1. Money for Medicare, Medicaid, and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) increased. The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) was created to help the old, blind, and

- disabled. Social Security would be automatically increased with inflation.
2. In his controversial "**Philadelphia Plan**", trade-unions were required to set "goals and timetables" for hiring blacks.
 1. **The policy was extended to all federal contracts. It forced businesses to hire a quota of minorities.**
 2. The Supreme Court backed Nixon in *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.* (1971).
 1. The court prohibited things like intelligence tests, saying they limited women and minorities in some fields. The court suggested hiring proportions should be the same ratio as the population.
 3. **To many, especially white males, the idea of "affirmative action" had turned into "preferential treatment" or "reverse discrimination."**
 3. Environmental laws were passed.
 1. The godmother of the modern environmental movement was **Rachel Carson**. She wrote *Silent Spring* (1962) about the ill-effects of the pesticide DDT.
 2. The **Environmental Protection Agency** (EPA) was formed in 1970 along with the Occupational Health and Safety Admin. (**OSHA**) to set safety standards in workplaces.
 3. The **Clean Air Act** (1970) and the **Endangered Species Act** (1973) were passed. Symbolically, "Earth Day" began.
 4. Back to the economy, Nixon tried to halt inflation by imposing a 90-day wage and price freeze in 1971.
 1. He surprisingly took the U.S. off the gold standard and devalued the dollar. This ended the "Bretton Woods" system of currency stabilization set after WWII.
 5. **Southern Strategy**--As a minority president (he'd gotten only 43% of the votes), Nixon gathered southern support by appointing conservative justices, paying little attention to civil rights, and opposing school busing.
5. The Nixon Landslide of 1972
 1. North Vietnam attacked across the dividing line (the "DMZ") in 1972. Nixon responded by ramping up bombings and mining the harbors of the North.
 1. The fear was that Russia and China might respond—they didn't, thanks to Nixon's smoothing of relations.
 2. The presidential election of 1972 saw Nixon seek reelection. The Democrats nominated **George McGovern** who promised to end the war in 90 days.
 1. McGovern was supported by young adults and women. His campaign was hurt when it became known that his V.P. candidate, **Thomas Eagleton**, had received psychiatric treatment.

2. 12 days before the election, Henry Kissinger announced that "peace is at hand" and an agreement would be announced in a few days. Nixon won in a huge way, 520 to 17.
3. The agreement Kissinger had spoken of didn't come just yet. Nixon ramped up the bombings in attempt to drive the North back to the bargaining table, it work, and on January 23, 1973 a cease-fire was reached.
 1. Nixon declared "peace with honor", but it was hollow. The U.S. would withdraw, but the North kept 145,000 soldiers and 30% of the South occupied.
6. The Arab Oil Embargo and the Energy Crisis
 1. The Arab nations were unhappy about their loss to Israel in the Six-Day War of 1967. In 1973, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel trying to win back lands lost.
 1. **America aided Israel**, while Kissinger helped keep the Soviets out of the fray. After tense times, an uneasy peace was reached.
 2. But, Arab nations were not pleased at America's support of Israel.
 2. In October of 1973, Arab nations placed an embargo on oil.
 1. Long lines formed at gas stations and prices of gas skyrocketed in the U.S.
 3. The "energy crisis" changed things in America.
 1. The Alaska pipeline was approved to flow oil southward.
 2. A 55 MPH speed limit was set to conserve fuel. Americans also moved to smaller cars, like the VW Bug.
 3. There were calls for more use of coal and nuclear power.
 4. The embargo was lifted after 5 months. But, the message was clear: America was addicted to oil and the Middle East had nearly all of the cards in their hands.
 1. Using OPEC to exert their will, the Arab nations nearly quadrupled the price of oil by the end of the 70s.
7. Watergate and the Unmaking of a President
 1. During the campaign, five men had been caught breaking into the Democratic party's headquarters in the Watergate building. They were snooping files and planting microphones. It was discovered they were part of **CREEP** (the Committee to Reelect the President).
 1. The question became, "Who ordered this and who knew of this?" Nixon said he knew nothing of the business.
 2. At about the same time, Nixon's V.P., **Spiro Agnew**, had his own mini-scandal involving past bribes. Agnew resigned and Gerald Ford was chosen as the new Vice President.
 2. The Senate investigated Watergate. A former White House lawyer, **John Dean**, accused Nixon of a cover-up (to quiet anyone with any knowledge). It was then learned Nixon had tape recordings of all Oval Office conversations, so the tapes were sought. Nixon refused which looked bad.
 1. Also, in the "Saturday Night Massacre", Nixon fired Watergate investigators and the attorney general, which also looked bad.

2. Some tapes were handed over in 1974 at the Supreme Court's ruling. They revealed Nixon's foul mouth—embarrassing but not impeachable.
3. A month later, impeachment for "obstruction of justice" was going forward so Nixon handed over all of the tapes. Those revealed Nixon *had* indeed ordered a cover-up—this was an impeachable offense.
3. Rather than get booted out of office, Nixon resigned on August 8, 1974. Gerald Ford was sworn in as the new president.