**Period 8: 1945 to 1980 (End of WWII through Reagan’s Election)**

**Key Concept 8.1:**

The United States responded to an uncertain and unstable postwar world by asserting and working to maintain a position of global leadership, with far-reaching domestic and international consequences.

1. United States policymakers engaged in a Cold War with the authoritarian Soviet Union, seeking to limit the growth of Communist military power and ideological influence, create a free-market global economy, and build an international security system.

A. As postwar tensions dissolved the wartime alliance between Western democracies and the Soviet Union, the United States developed a foreign policy based on **collective security**, international aid, and economic institutions that bolstered non-Communist nations. (one example of each)

**Examples:** United Nations, Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, NATO, SEATO, Bretton Woods Accords, International Monetary Fund, World Bank

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B. Concerned by expansionist Communist ideology and Soviet repression, the United States sought to contain communism through a variety of measures, including major military engagements in Korea and Vietnam. (one example from Korean War, one example from Vietnam, one other example)

**Examples: containment** policy, George F. Kennan’s “long telegram” (1946), **domino theory**,NSC-68 (1950), hydrogen bomb (1952), John F. Dulles and massive retaliation (1954), Sputnik and the space race (1957), National Defense Education Act (1958), JFK’s flexible response policy, Truman’s “limited war” in the Korean War, Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (1964), Operation Rolling Thunder (1965-1968), Tet Offensive (1968)

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C. The Cold War fluctuated between periods of direct and indirect military confrontation and periods of mutual coexistence (or **détente**). (one example of military

confrontation and one example of mutual coexistence)

**Examples:** Khrushchev’s visit to US (1959), U-2 incident (1960), Berlin Wall (1961), Cuban Missile Crisis (1962), Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (1963), Nixon’s visit to China (1972), Nixon’s “Vietnamization” policy (1969-1972), Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty/SALT I (1972)

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D. Postwar **decolonization** and the emergence of powerful **nationalist movements** in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East led both sides in the Cold War to seek allies among new nations, many of which remained nonaligned.

**Examples:** US recognition of Israel (1948), US supported coup in Iran (1953), SEATO (1954), Peace Corps (1961), US support of Israel in Yom Kippur War (1973), Camp David Accords (1978), Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979)

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E. Cold War competition extended to Latin America, where the U.S. supported non-Communist regimes that had varying levels of commitment to democracy.

**Examples:** Rio Treaty (1947),US intervention in overthrow of leader of Guatemala (1954), US embargo of Cuba (1960), Bay of Pigs (1961), Alliance for Progress (1961), Peace Corps (1961), Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)

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1. Cold War policies led to public debates over the power of the federal government and acceptable means for pursuing international and domestic goals while protecting civil liberties.

A. Americans debated policies and methods designed to expose suspected communists within the United States even as both parties supported the broader strategy of containing communism.

**Examples:** House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigation of Hollywood (1947), Hollywood Ten (1947), Loyalty-Security Program (1947), Trial of Alger Hiss (1950), Senator Joseph McCarthy/McCarthyism (early 1950s), Execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (1953)

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B. Although anticommunist foreign policy faced little domestic opposition in previous years, the **Vietnam War** inspired sizable and passionate antiwar protests that became more numerous as the war escalated, and sometimes led to violence.

**Examples:** Teach-ins (1965), hawks vs. doves, credibility gap, Fulbright hearings (1966-1967), Students for a Democratic Society Columbia University protest (1968), Democratic National Convention riots (1968), Vietnam Moratorium Day (1969), Woodstock (1969), exposure of the My Lai Massacre (1969), Pentagon Papers (1969), Kent State and Jackson State (1970)

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C. Americans debated the merits of a large nuclear arsenal, the **military-industrial complex**, and the appropriate power of the executive branch in conducting foreign and military policy.

**Examples:** Eisenhower’s Farewell Address warning against the growing military-industry complex (1961), Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (1964), Pentagon Papers and *New York Times v. US* (1971), SALT I (1972), War Powers Act (1973), SALT II (1979)

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| **Eisenhower’s**  **Farewell Address** |  |  |
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D. Ideological, military, and economic concerns shaped U.S. involvement in the Middle East, with several oil crises in the region eventually sparking attempts at creating a national energy policy. (one example of each)

**Examples:** Suez Canal crisis (1956), Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (1960), Arab oil embargo (1973), Iranian hostage crisis (1979), Three Mile Island (1979), Carter’s “Moral Equivalent of War [MEOW] (1977), Energy Crisis (1970s)

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**Key Concept 8.2:**

New movements for civil rights and liberal efforts to expand the role of government generated a range of political and cultural responses.

I. Seeking to fulfill Reconstruction-era promises, civil rights activists and political leaders achieved some legal and political successes in ending segregation, although progress toward equality was slow.

A. During and after World War II, civil rights activists and leaders, most notably **Martin Luther King Jr**., combatted racial discrimination utilizing a variety of strategies, including legal challenges, direct action, and nonviolent protest tactics. (one example of each; at least one but not all three including MLK Jr.)

**Examples:** A. Phllip Randolph’s threat to “March on Washington” (1941), Congress of Racial Equality/CORE (1942), Double V campaign, Fair Employment Practices Commission (1942), Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955-1956), Southern Christian Leadership Conference (1957), Martin Luther King’s nonviolent civil disobedience, , integration of Central High/”Little Rock Nine” (1957), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (1960), Greensboro lunch counter sit-ins (1960), Freedom Rides (1961), King’s *Letter from Birmingham Jail* (1963), March on Washington (1963), Freedom Summer (1964), Fannie Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (1964), John L. Lewis and SNCC, Selma March (1965), Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP

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B. The three branches of the federal government used measures including desegregation of the armed services, ***Brown v. Board of Education***, and the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** to promote greater racial equality.

**Examples:** Executive Order 9981 desegregated US armed forces (1948), *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), Civil Rights Act (1964), 24th Amendment (1964), Voting Rights Act (1965), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1965), Fair Housing Act (1968), *Griggs v. Duke Power* (1971)

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| **Brown v. Board of Education1954)** |  |  |
| **Civil Rights Act (1964)** |  |  |

C. Continuing white resistance slowed efforts at desegregation, sparking social and political unrest across the nation. Debates among civil rights activists over the efficacy of nonviolence increased after 1965. (one example of each)

**Examples:** Declaration of Constitutional Principles/Southern Manifesto (1956), Little Rock Nine (1957), murders of civil rights workers during Freedom Summer (1964), Watts Riot (1965), Selma March (1965), Black Power (1966), Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam (1952-1964), black nationalism, Stokely Carmichael and Black Power (1966), Black Panther Party (1966)

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II. Responding to social conditions and the African American civil rights movement, a variety of movements emerged that focused on issues of identity, social justice, and the environment.

A. Feminist and gay and lesbian activists mobilized behind claims for legal, economic, and social equality. (one example of each)

**Examples:** Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* (1963)*,* Equal Pay Act of 1963, National Organization for Women (1966), Stonewall Riots (1969), Gloria Steinem’s *Ms. Magazine* (1971), Title IX (1972), *Roe v. Wade* (1973), Harvey Milk

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B. Latino, American Indian, and Asian American movements continued to demand social and economic equality and a redress of past injustices (one example of each)

**Examples:** Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers (1962), Delano grape strike (1965-1970), Chicano movement*, La Raza Unida*, American Indian Movement (1968), the Occupation of Alcatraz (1969), occupation of Wounded Knee (1973), *US v. Wheeler* (1978), Young Lords Organization, fight for “ethnic studies” majors in college, replacing oriental with Asian-American

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C. Despite an overall affluence in postwar America, advocates raised concerns about the prevalence and persistence of poverty as a national problem.

**Examples:** Galbraith’s *Affluent Society* (1958), Michael Harrington’s *The Other America* (1962), Kerner Commission (1968), MLK’s Poor People’s Campaign

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D. Environmental problems and accidents led to a growing environmental movement that aimed to use legislative and public efforts to combat pollution and protect natural resources. The federal government established new environmental programs and regulations. (one environmental problem and one government response)

**Examples:** Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962), Wilderness Protection Act of 1964, Water Quality Act of 1965, Clean Air Act of 1970, Environmental Protection Act of 1970, Earth Day (1970), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (1970), Endangered Species Act (1973)

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III. Liberalism influenced postwar politics and court decisions, but it came under increasing attack from the left as well as from a resurgent conservative movement.

A. **Liberalism**, based on anticommunism abroad and a firm belief in the efficacy of government power to achieve social goals at home, reached a high point of political influence by the mid-1960s.

**Examples:** Cold War Liberalism, Fair Deal, Great Society, War on Poverty, Economic Opportunity Act (1964),

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B. Liberal ideas found expression in Lyndon Johnson’s **Great Society**, which attempted to use federal legislation and programs to end racial discrimination, eliminate poverty, and address other social issues. A series of Supreme Court decisions expanded civil rights and individual liberties. (one example of each)

**Examples:** *Engel v. Vitale* (1962), Civil Rights Act (1964), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1964), Jobs Corp (1964), Food Stamp Act (1964), Voting Rights Act (1965), Medicaid (1965), Medicare (1965), Head Start (1965), Department of Housing and Urban Development (1965), Immigration and Nationality Act (1965), *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), Warren Court, *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966), *Griggs v. Duke Power* (1971), *Roe v. Wade* (1973)

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C. In the 1960s, conservatives challenged liberal laws and court decisions and perceived moral and cultural decline, seeking to limit the role of the federal government and enact more assertive foreign policies.

**Examples:** Young Americans for Freedom, Sharon Statement (1960), Barry Goldwater (1964), Warren Court opposition, Nixon’s election (1968)

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D. Some groups on the left also rejected liberal policies, arguing that political leaders did too little to transform the racial and economic status quo at home and pursued immoral policies abroad.

**Examples:** Students for a Democratic Society (1962), Port Huron Statement (1962), “New Left”, University of California Berkeley and the Free Speech movement (1964-1965), Columbia University protests (1968), Woodstock (1969), Black Panther Party (1966), Black Power movement, draft evasion during Vietnam War, conscientious objectors

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E. Public confidence and trust in government’s ability to solve social and economic problems declined in the 1970s in the wake of economic challenges, political scandals, and foreign policy crises. (one example of each)

**Examples:** Arab Oil Embargo (1973), stagflation, deindustrialization, rust belt, decline of organized labor, the urban crisis, Watergate scandal (1972-1974), *US v. Nixon* (1974), Ford’s pardon of Nixon, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Iranian hostage crisis (1979-1981), Operation Eagle Claw (1980)

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F. The 1970s saw growing clashes between conservatives and liberals over social and cultural issues, the power of the federal government, race, and movements for greater individual rights.

**Examples:** Silent Majority, War Powers Act (1973), Freedom of Information Act (1974) Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (1978), *Bakke v. University of California* (1978), affirmative action, ERA/Phyllis Schlafly’s STOP ERA movement (1972-1982), public discontent over “law and order” and forced busing, Proposition 13 (1978), deregulation

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**Key Concept 8.3:**

Postwar economic, demographic, and technological changes had a far-reaching impact on American society, politics, and the environment.

I. Rapid economic and social changes in American society fostered a sense of optimism in the postwar years.

A. A burgeoning private sector, federal spending, **the baby boom**, and technological developments helped spur economic growth.

**Examples:** Cold War defense spending, Interstate and Defense Highways Act, NASA, space race, Apollo 11, increases in the service sector industry, National Defense Education Act

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B. As higher education opportunities and new technologies rapidly expanded, increasing social mobility encouraged the migration of the middle class to the suburbs and of many Americans to the South and West. The **Sun Belt** region emerged as a significant political and economic force.

**Examples:** GI Bill of Rights, FHA and VA, suburbanization, Levittowns, aerospace industry boom in South and West

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| **GI Bill of Rights** |  |  |
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C. Immigrants from around the world sought access to the political, social, and economic opportunities in the United States, especially after the passage of new immigration laws in 1965.

**Examples:** Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, increase in immigration of families related to legal immigrants, increase in immigration from Latin America and Asia, refugees from wars in Southeast Asia

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| **Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965** |  |  |
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II. New demographic and social developments, along with anxieties over the Cold War, changed U.S. culture and led to significant political and moral debates that sharply divided the nation.

A. Mass culture became increasingly homogeneous in the postwar years, inspiring challenges to conformity by artists, intellectuals, and rebellious youth. (one example of homogeneity and one example of a challenge to conformity

**Examples:** Suburbanization, ubiquity of television, consumerism, post-war feminine ideal, rise of white collar workers, McDonald’s and the rise of fast food, growth of shopping malls, David Reisman’s *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), Jack Kerouac and the Beat Movement,Allen Ginsburg’s *Howl,* rock and roll music, Vietnam War teach-ins (1965), counterculture, hippies, pop art, Woodstock

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B. Feminists and young people who participated in the counterculture of the 1960s rejected many of the social, economic, and political values of their parents’ generation, introduced greater informality into U.S. culture, and advocated changes in sexual norms.

**Examples:** Birth control pill, Alfred Kinsey and his reports on sex in America, Masters and Johnsons’ *Human Sexual Response*, sexual revolution, communes

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C. The rapid and substantial growth of evangelical Christian churches and organizations was accompanied by greater political and social activism on the part of religious conservatives.

**Examples:** Fourth Great Awakening,rise of Christian media (TV and books),Focus on the Family, Moral Majority, *Fascinating Womanhood,* the Religious Right

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