Chapter 28—New Frontier and Great Society

I. Kennedy and the Cold War (Chapter 28, Section 1)
   a. 1960 Election
      i. John F. Kennedy
         1. The Democratic nominee for president in 1960 was a young Massachusetts senator named John Kennedy
         2. He promised to “get America moving again”
         3. Kennedy had a well-organized campaign and was handsome and charismatic
         4. People Feared:
            a. his age (43)—would be second-youngest president
            b. his religion—Catholicism
               i. Americans worried would lead to pope having influence of American policies
               ii. He put people at ease by openly discussing the issue
      ii. Republican Candidate: Richard Nixon
         1. The Republicans nominated Richard Nixon, Ike’s Vice-President
         2. The candidates agreed on many domestic and foreign policy issues
         3. Two factors helped put Kennedy over the top: T.V. and Civil Rights
      iii. Televised Debate Affects Election
         1. On September 26, 1960, Kennedy and Nixon took part in the first televised debate between presidential candidates
            a. Nixon, a foreign policy expert, hoped to show Kennedy’s inexperience
         2. Kennedy looked and spoke better than Nixon—coached by TV producers
            a. Nixon, according to one observer, resembled a "sinister chipmunk"
            b. JFK looked cool, collected, presidential
         3. Television had become so central to people's lives—many blamed Nixon's loss to his poor appearance in the televised presidential debates
            a. Journalist Russell Baker said, “That night, image replaced the printed word as the national language of politics”
      iv. Kennedy and Civil Rights
         1. A second major event of the campaign took place in October, 1960
         2. Police arrested Martin Luther King for conducting a “Sit-In” at a lunch counter in Georgia
         3. King was sentenced to hard labor
         4. While the Eisenhower Administration refused to intervene, JFK phoned King’s wife and his brother, Robert Kennedy, worked for King’s release
         5. The incident captured the attention of the African-American community, whose votes JFK would carry in key states
      v. Closest Election Since 1884
         1. Kennedy won the election by fewer than 119,000 votes
2. Nixon dominated the west, while Kennedy won the south and the east coast

b. The Camelot Years
   i. “ASK NOT . . .”
      1. In his inaugural address, JFK uttered this famous challenge:
         a. “Ask not what your country can do for you --- ask what you can do for your country”
      2. Critics argue his smooth style lacks substance—but the public loved it
      3. During his term in office, JFK and his beautiful young wife, Jacqueline, invited many artists and celebrities to the White House
      4. The press loved the Kennedy charm and JFK appeared frequently on T.V.
      5. The Kennedy’s were considered American “Royalty” (hence “Camelot” reference)

   ii. Kennedy Mystique
      1. The first family fascinated the American public
      2. For example, after learning that JFK could read 1,600 words a minute, thousands enrolled in speed-reading courses
      3. Jackie, too, captivated the nation with her eye for fashion and culture

   iii. The Best and the Brightest
      1. JFK surrounded himself with what one journalist described as the “best and the brightest” available talent
         a. McGeorge Bundy (Harvard University Dean)—Secretary of Defense
         b. Robert McNamara (President of Ford Motor Company)—Secretary of Defense
         c. Dean Rusk (President of the Rockefeller Foundation)—Secretary of State
      2. Of all of his elite advisors, he relied most on his 35-year-old brother Robert, whom he appointed attorney general

   c. A New Military Policy (Taught During Chapter 20)
   d. Crisis Over Cuba (Taught During Chapter 20)
   e. Crisis Over Berlin (Taught During Chapter 20)
II. The New Frontier (Chapter 28, Section 2)
a. The Promise of Progress
   i. Kennedy’s Vision of Progress
      1. New Frontier—name given to Kennedy’s domestic policies
         a. Called on Americans to be "new pioneers" and explore
            "uncharted areas of science and space, . . . unconquered pockets
            of ignorance and prejudice, unanswered questions of poverty and
            surplus."
         b. The economy, education, medical care for the elderly and the
            poor, and space exploration were all part of his vision
      2. Majority of his policies do not get past congress (provide medical care
         for the aged, rebuild blighted urban areas, and aid education)
         a. JFK is unable to get many of his policies past the same
            Republican-Southern Democrat coalition that wouldn’t pass
            Truman’s Fair Deal
         b. He also lacks mandate—clear voter support for his agenda (won
            election by the smallest of margins)
   ii. Stimulating the Economy
      1. By 1960, U.S. in recession—a moderate slowdown of the economy
         a. Unemployment was at 6%, the highest since WWII
         b. America’s economy was lagging behind other Western
            democracies and the Soviet Union
      2. JFK administration pushes for lower taxes and deficit spending—
         spending more money than the government collects in order to
         stimulate growth
      3. Kennedy got congress to approve 20% increase for defense spending,
         increased minimum wage, extended unemployment insurance, etc.
   iii. Addressing Poverty Abroad
      1. Peace Corps—volunteers assist developing nations of Asia, Africa, and
         Latin America
         a. “Kennedy’s Kiddie Corps” became a huge success
         b. By 1968, more than 35,000 volunteers had served in 60 nations
            around the world
      2. Alliance for Progress—offered economic and technical assistance to
         Latin American countries
         a. Part of the goal was to deter spread of communism in Latin
            America
         b. While the money brought some development, it did not change
            fundamental reforms
   iv. Race to the Moon
      1. In April 1961, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri A. Gagarin is first man in space
      2. Kennedy saw the space race as a challenge and sought to surpass the
         Soviets—main goal was send a man to the moon
3. In May 1961, the U.S. too put a man in space and a year later put a communications satellite into space
4. Meanwhile, America’s space agency (NASA) began construction on new launch facilities in Cape Canaveral, Florida and a mission control center in Houston, Texas
5. On July 20, 1969, U.S astronaut Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon
6. The new focus and funding on the space program (science and technology) allowed for University science programs to grow, new industries to form and new technologies to arise

v. Addressing Domestic Problems
   1. Michael Harrington’s *The Other America* brings attention to poverty
      a. Harrington profiled the 50 million people who scraped by each year on less than $1,000
      b. The number of poor shocked Americans
   2. In 1963, Kennedy called for “a national assault on the causes of poverty”
   3. He also ordered his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy to investigate racial injustice in the South
   4. Finally, he presented Congress with a sweeping civil rights bill and a sweeping tax cut bill to spur the economy

b. Tragedy in Dallas
   i. Four Days in November
      1. November 22, 1963, Kennedy was in Dallas to mend differences with the state’s Democratic party
      2. While greeting the crowds in an open-air limousine, JFK was shot in the neck and then the head and was pronounced dead upon arrival at the hospital
      3. Vice president Lyndon Johnson succeeded JFK—taking the oath of office on *Air Force One* in front of Jackie Kennedy
      4. On the same day—Ex-Marine Lee Harvey Oswald, a former visitor to the Soviet Union and a Castro supporter, was charged with the Murder
         a. The former sniper allegedly shot the president from the Texas School Book Depository
      5. Two days later Jack Ruby, a nightclub owner, then shot Oswald in front of a live television audience
      6. On November 25, all worked stopped for Kennedy’s funeral
   ii. Unanswered Questions
      1. The bizarre chain of events led many to believe that Oswald was part of a conspiracy
      2. Warren Commission investigated the assassination and concluded that Oswald had indeed acted alone
3. The 1979 investigation by the House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA), concluded that Oswald assassinated President Kennedy as a result of a probable conspiracy
   a. This conclusion of a likely conspiracy contrasts with the earlier conclusion by the Warren Commission that the President was assassinated by a lone gunman
   b. Conspiracy theories existed since JFK’s death but they intensified after the HSCA’s findings
III. The Great Society (Chapter 28, Section 3)
   a. LBJ’s Path to Power
      i. From the Texas Hills to Capitol Hill
         1. Won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1937
         2. As Congressman, Lyndon Baines Johnson caught the eye of FDR
         3. FDR helped Johnson secure key committee assignments in Congress
         4. In 1948, LBJ narrowly won a seat in the Senate and by 1955, LBJ
            becomes Senate majority
      ii. A Master Politician
         1. Great leader thanks to his masterful touch and maneuvering
         2. Many called it the “LBJ treatment”—ability to persuade senators to
            support his bills
            a. LBJ helped get passed the Civil Rights Act of 1957—voting
               rights measure
            b. Kennedy saw the quality traits (masterful politician, from the
               south, Protestant background) and named Johnson his running
               mate
         3. LBJ helped Kennedy win key Southern states in the presidential
            election
   b. Johnson’s Domestic Agenda
      i. Continuing Kennedy’s Legacy
         1. Tax Cuts
            a. Johnson urged Congress to pass the civil rights and tax-cut bills
               that Kennedy had sent to Capitol Hill
            b. In 1964, Congress passed a tax reduction of over $10 billion
               dollars
            c. Democrats hoped tax cut would lead to better economy and less
               deficit spending
               i. People had more money to spend and they did which
                  meant profits for businesses
               ii. Increased profits for businesses meant increased tax
                  revenues which made up for lost revenue from tax break
                  and then some
                  1. lowered the federal budget deficit from $6 billion in
                     1964 to $4 billion in 1966
         2. Civil Rights
            a. Johnson pushed through Kennedy’s idea for Civil Rights—1964
               Civil Rights Act
            b. The Act prohibited discrimination based on race, color, religion
               or national origin, and granted the federal government new
               powers to enforce the law
            c. Voting Rights Act
               i. Part of the Civil Rights Act—voting rights for all
                  Americans
1. The act prohibited literacy tests or other discriminatory practices for voting
2. The act insured consistent election practices

ii. The War on Poverty
1. In 1964, LBJ declares “unconditional war on poverty”
2. Economic Opportunity Act: approved nearly $1 billion for youth programs, antipoverty measures, small-business loans, and job
3. Includes:
   a. Job Corps—youth training program (vocational training and job search skills)
   b. VISTA—(Volunteers In Service To America) places individuals with community-based agencies to help find long-term solutions to the problems caused by urban and rural poverty
   c. Head Start—an education program for underprivileged preschoolers with a special focus on helping develop the early reading and math skills
   d. Community Action Program—encouraged poor people to participate in public-works programs

iii. The 1964 Election
1. Barry Goldwater
   a. In 1964, the Republicans nominated conservative senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona to oppose Democrat Lyndon Johnson
   b. Goldwater opposed LBJ’s social legislation—believed government should not solve social and economic issues
   c. Goldwater further alienated voters by suggesting the use of nuclear weapons in Cuba and North Vietnam
2. Landslide Victory
   a. LBJ promises not send troops to Vietnam
   b. For many Americans it was an anti-Goldwater vote—voters believed that government could and should help solve the nation’s problems and they saw Goldwater as a War Hawk
   c. LBJ won in a landslide and the Democrats also increased their majority in Congress which means Southern Democrats are no longer needed to pass bills

c. Building the Great Society
   i. The Great Society
      1. In May of 1964, LBJ summed up his vision for America in a phrase: “The Great Society”
      2. The Great Society—LBJ’s domestic policy aimed at ending poverty and discrimination
      3. By the time he left the White House in 1969, Congress had passed 206 of LBJ’s Great Society legislative initiatives
   ii. Education
      1. Elementary and Secondary Education Act funds school materials
2. Johnson considered education “the key which can unlock the door to the Great Society”
   a. Elementary and Secondary Education Act provided $1 billion to schools for textbooks, library materials, and special education
   b. Higher Education Act funded scholarships and low-interest loans for college students.
   c. National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities was created to financially assist painters, musicians, actors, and other artists

iii. Healthcare
   1. LBJ and Congress enhanced Social Security by establishing Medicare and Medicaid
      a. Medicare provided hospital insurance and low-cost medical care to the elderly
      b. Medicaid provided health benefits to the poor

iv. Housing
   1. Legislation shifts political power from rural to urban areas
   2. Some of the legislation was:
      a. Omnibus Housing Act appropriated money to build some 240,000 units of low-rent public housing and helping low- and moderate-income families pay for better private housing
      b. Forming of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—formed to administer federal housing programs
         i. appointing Robert Weaver, the first African-American cabinet member in American history, as Secretary of HUD
      c. Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Area Redevelopment Act funded slum rebuilding, mass transit, and other improvements for selected "model cities"

v. Immigration
   1. The Great Society also brought reform to immigration laws
   2. The Natural Origins Acts of the 1920s strongly discriminated against immigration by those outside of Western Europe
   3. The Immigration Act of 1965 ends quotas based on nationality and thus opened the door for many non-European immigrants to settle in the U.S.

vi. The Environment
   1. Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring exposes dangers of pesticides
      a. claimed detrimental effects of pesticides on the environment, particularly on birds claiming that DDT had been found to cause thinner egg shells and result in reproductive problems and death
      b. Carson accused the chemical industry of spreading disinformation, and public officials of accepting industry claims uncritically.
      c. Its title was meant to evoke a spring season in which no bird songs could be heard, because they had all died from pesticides
2. Silent Spring let to the Water Quality Act of 1965—required states to clean up their rivers and lakes
3. LBJ also ordered the government to search out and clean up corporate polluters of the environment

vii. Consumer Protection
1. Auto Industry
   a. Ralph Nader’s *Unsafe at Any Speed* detailed resistance by car manufacturers to the introduction of safety features, like seat belts, and their general reluctance to spend money on improving safety
   b. National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act set federal safety standards for the auto and tire industries
      i. Required new safety features such as: head rests, energy-absorbing steering wheels, shatter-resistant windshields, safety belts, etc.
   c. Highway Safety Act required states to set up highway safety programs
      i. Roads were improved by better delineation of curves (edge and center line stripes and reflectors), use of breakaway sign and utility poles, improved illumination, addition of barriers separating oncoming traffic lanes, and guardrails, etc.
   d. Department of Transportation was created to deal with national air, rail, and highway transportation.
2. Food
   a. Wholesome Meat Act—Also called "Equal To" law, required that states have inspection programs "equal to" that of the federal government
   b. Truth in Packaging Act set standards for labeling consumer products
3. LBJ said, “Americans can feel safer now in their homes, on the road, and at the supermarket”

d. Reforms of the Warren Court
   i. The Warren Court
      1. Warren Court—Supreme Court under Chief Justice Earl Warren
      2. Warren Court took an activist stance on the leading issues of the day
         a. Rejects loyalty oaths
         b. Free Speech
            i. Limited the power of communities to ban books and films
            ii. Allowed students to wear black armband to school by antiwar students
         c. reaffirmed the separation of church-state—no sanctioned prayer in public schools
   ii. Congressional Reapportionment
1. Reapportionment—way states redraw election districts by population
2. By 1960, 80% of Americans lived in cities and suburbs, however many states failed to change their districts
   a. rural areas had more representation (power) than those in urban areas
3. Through key cases (Baker v. Carr (1962) and Reynolds v. Sims (1964), court rules districts must have approximately equal population—“one person, one vote”
4. Led to a shift in political power from rural to urban areas

iii. Rights of the Accused
1. Warren Court rulings expand rights of people accused of crimes:
   a. Mapp v. Ohio (1961)—illegally seized evidence cannot be used in court
   b. Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)—courts must provide legal counsel to poor
   c. Escobedo v. Illinois (1964)—accused has the right to have an attorney present when questioned by police
   d. Miranda v. Arizona (1966) all suspects must be read their rights before questioning
      i. Origins of the Case—In 1963, Ernesto Miranda was arrested at his home in Phoenix, Arizona, on charges of kidnapping and rape. After two hours of questioning by police, he signed a confession and was later convicted, largely based on the confession. Miranda appealed. He claimed that his confession was invalid because it was coerced and because the police never advised him of his right to an attorney or his right to avoid self-incrimination.
      ii. The Ruling—The Court overturned Miranda's conviction, holding that the police must inform criminal suspects of their legal rights at the time of arrest and may not interrogate suspects who invoke their rights.
      iii. Significance—The Miranda Warning (to Mirandize a suspect): “You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be provided for you.”

2. Some praise protection of right to a fair trial
3. Others think rulings handicap police investigations

e. Impact of the Great Society
   i. Social and Economic Effects
      1. The Great Society and the Warren Court changed the United States
      2. No president in Post-WWII era extended the power and reach of the federal government more than LBJ
      3. Poverty drops from 21% of population in 1962 to 11% in 1973
4. Massive tax cut spurs economy
5. Great Society contributes to deficit
6. Debate over finances, effectiveness of programs, and government’s role continued for years—and still continues today