

Chapter Summary

The New Frontier and the Great Society, 1961–1968

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

***Can government fix society's problems?
How do you think Presidents Kennedy
and Johnson changed American society?***

This chapter focuses on the issues of whether government can fix society, promote democracy abroad, and make a dramatic shift in American foreign policy.

The New Frontier

- In 1960, John Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon for president.
- Kennedy launched a legislative agenda called the New Frontier.
- Congress viewed the New Frontier as too expensive and defeated many of JFK's proposals.
- Congress invested money in defense and space exploration.
- Minimum wage was increased.
- The Area Redevelopment Act and Housing Act created jobs and built homes in poor areas.
- The Equal Pay Act was passed.
- New programs aided the disabled.
- The Warren Supreme Court made decisions that dramatically changed American society.
- *Reynolds v. Sims* required states to adhere to the principle "one person, one vote."
- The Supreme Court extended due process, giving more protection to those accused of crimes.
- The court ruled that states could not require prayer in public schools.

JFK and the Cold War

- Kennedy pushed the "flexible response policy" to prevent the spread of communism.

- The Alliance for Progress pledged aid to Latin America.
- Peace Corps volunteers were sent to help in poor countries.
- The Soviets launched *Sputnik*, and the space race began.
- The U.S. aided Cuban exiles, but the Bay of Pigs failed.
- Khrushchev built the Berlin wall, dividing the city.
- Soviet missiles in Cuba led to the Cuban missile crisis.
- The U.S. and Soviets signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.
- JFK was assassinated in Texas.

The Great Society

- Johnson became president.
- A growing awareness of poverty and women's and minorities rights led to a series of new programs known as the War on Poverty and the Great Society.
- In 1964, the Economic Opportunity Act fought poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and disease.
- Head Start was established to help preschoolers.
- Vista helped unemployed people aged 16 to 21 acquire job skills.
- The Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act were passed.

Chapter Summary *Cont.*

networks

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- Medicare and Medicaid aided seniors and the poor.
- HUD was created to provide affordable housing.
- The elementary and Secondary Education Act increased aid to public schools.
- The impact of the Great Society was limited.