

Part **12**

*The Angry
Years*



Looking Ahead



On election day, 1960, a man with reddish hair played touch football on a Massachusetts beach. He liked football almost as much as he liked politics. His name was John F. Kennedy. The next morning, Kennedy learned that he had been elected President of the United States. He had beaten the Republican candidate, Richard Nixon, by only a few thousand votes.

In Texas that morning, another leader also celebrated victory. He was Lyndon B. Johnson, the Democratic candidate for Vice-President.

The election of Kennedy and Johnson started a new period in U.S. history. It was a time of excitement and high hopes. But it was to be scarred by anger and violence. Kennedy could not have known in 1960 that he had only three years to live. He could not

The burdens of world leadership increased in the 1960's as the U.S. role in Vietnam grew. The war divided Americans deeply and led to protests such as this one in Washington, D.C.

have known that Johnson and Nixon would both follow him as President.

Who were these three men who would soon be Presidents in difficult times? Here, briefly, is each man's life story:

John F. Kennedy. In his high school yearbook, Kennedy was named "most likely to succeed." He went to Harvard College and then joined the U.S. Navy during World War II. He was given command of a crew aboard a PT (for Patrol Torpedo) boat. His job was to patrol the sea and torpedo enemy ships. When the Japanese attacked and sank his boat, he and other survivors swam three miles (about five kilometers) to the nearest island. He was later awarded a medal for his bravery.

After the war, Kennedy entered politics. His father, a millionaire, helped him with his campaigns. John Kennedy never lost an election. Three times he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Twice he was elected to the U.S. Senate. Out-

side Massachusetts he was best known for the books he wrote. His *Profiles in Courage*, a biography of U.S. Senators, won a prize. People liked to call Kennedy by different nicknames—"JFK" or "Jack." At 43 he was the youngest person ever to be elected President. (Theodore Roosevelt became President at 42, when William McKinley died. But Roosevelt was 46 when he won the next election.)

Lyndon B. Johnson. Politics was in Johnson's blood. Both of his grandfathers had been in the Texas state legislature. When Lyndon was born on a Texas farm, one grandfather said, "A United States Senator was born today." The Johnson family was poor. Lyndon had to work as a janitor to pay for his college education at Southwest Texas State Teachers College. He was elected to Congress in 1936.

Johnson enjoyed power. For many years, he was the Democratic leader of the Senate. He had almost as much power as the President. In 1960 Johnson tried to get the Democrats to nominate him for President. Kennedy beat him. Johnson disliked being Vice-President because this job gave him little power.

Richard M. Nixon. Like Johnson, Nixon was born on a farm. His was a farm in California. Like Kennedy, he served in the Navy in World War II. A graduate of Duke University Law School, Nixon ran for Congress from California in 1946. He scored an upset victory over an opponent he accused of being "soft on communism."

In 1950 Nixon won a seat in the U.S. Senate. Two years later, he was the Republican choice for Vice-Presi-

dent. He served in this post under President Dwight D. Eisenhower for eight years. When Kennedy defeated Nixon in 1960, many thought that Nixon's political career was over. Nixon did not give up. He kept telling people, "I am not a quitter." In 1968 Nixon had a second chance to run for President. This time he won.

These were the three men who led the United States through the 1960's. Each had his own vision of a better world. For Kennedy, it was a world where young people could make a difference in improving life. For Johnson, it was a world where poverty could be ended. For Nixon, it was a world where people could—and should—rely less on government and more on themselves.

Often, however, the visions grew dim. So many problems kept getting in the way. One problem was a costly and confusing war in Vietnam. Another problem was the revolt of some young people against older values and ideas. A third problem was the growing anger of blacks. Why was each problem so painful and difficult to solve?

Vietnam. The war in Vietnam was different from any other war in U.S. history. It was not like World War II, for example, when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and Congress then declared war. In the case of Vietnam, by contrast, few Americans knew when the fighting really began. President Eisenhower gave military aid to South Vietnam's government. President Kennedy gave a little more. President Johnson gave a lot more. And suddenly people realized that U.S. troops were fighting and dying in a far-off Asian country.



All through the 1960's, Vietnam was a scene of horror. Both sides in the war killed and wounded innocent people. This photo shows refugees fleeing from a rocket attack in South Vietnam in 1968.

At first most Americans supported the U.S. role in Vietnam. This role was necessary, they thought, to prevent the spread of communism in Asia. But before long, critics began speaking out. It seemed to some of them as if the U.S. Constitution were being ignored. After all, Congress had not declared war against the Vietnamese rebels. Some critics also thought that the United States was acting like a bully. A few Americans even started cheering for the rebels and their backers in North Vietnam. This behavior upset many people even more than the war itself.

Revolt of youth. Boys in high school used to crop their hair short.

That was the fashion in the 1950's. But in the 1960's, many boys let their hair grow over their ears and even down their backs. Parents were bewildered. Students on college campuses rioted against the Vietnam War. They threw rocks and smashed windows. Parents were dismayed. Young people went around saying, "Make love, not war." Parents were appalled. Adults wondered what was wrong with youth. Youths wondered what was wrong with adults. The two generations, or age groups, seemed to be drifting farther apart. People called this the *generation gap*.

Anger of many blacks. Every summer from 1964 to 1967, riots broke



When John Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, Lyndon Johnson became the nation's 36th President. After taking the oath of office, Johnson said, "I will do my best. That is all I can do."

out in black neighborhoods. In cities across the country, rioters looted stores and set buildings on fire. The police tried to keep order. At times, innocent people died. These riots stunned Lyndon Johnson. He had done more than any other President to win blacks their civil rights. Yet black people were not satisfied. They had never been angrier. Why? Few whites could understand it.

Many Americans thought they were living in a revolution. Youth was revolting against the old ways. Blacks were demanding full equality. People were being killed by the thousands in Vietnam. In 1963 President Kennedy was killed by an assassin. In 1968 his brother, Robert Kennedy, was shot and killed. Martin Luther King was also killed that year. The 1960's were angry, confusing years.

CHAPTER 67

The Youngest President

John F. Kennedy was the youngest person—and the first Roman Catholic—ever to be elected President. He was likeable, charming, and intelligent. But would he make a good President? Some people feared that he was too young to handle one of the world's biggest jobs.

John Kennedy himself had few doubts about his ability. His father, Joseph Kennedy, once warned him about the problems he would face. He said the world's problems in 1960 were worse than at any time in history. John Kennedy answered: "Dad, for 2,000 years, every generation, or most generations, have been faced with the most terrible problems ever seen. They all have been solved by humans with God's help. If they can do it, why can't we?"

It was in this spirit that John Kennedy took the oath of office on January 20, 1961. The day did not begin well. During the opening prayer, a short circuit in the sound system caused smoke to rise from the speaker's stand. Then an 86-year-old

American poet, Robert Frost, was bothered by the glare of the sun. He could not read the poem he had written for the occasion. But Kennedy did not seem worried as he rose to make a speech. The words that he spoke were bold and stirring.

He announced that a "new generation of Americans" had now come to power. He asked this new generation to dedicate itself to an old ideal—freedom throughout the world. The dangers to freedom were great, he said. This was why he needed the help of all Americans, young and old. "And so, my fellow Americans," he said, "ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country."

Kennedy's speech lasted only 14 minutes. But newspaper editors called it one of the finest speeches ever made by a U.S. President. Kennedy seemed to promise a new beginning for the United States. He called his program the **New Frontier**.

Creative ideas. The young President brought to the White House a team



John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Jr., was born in November 1960, shortly after his father was elected President. Here, the two are shown in front of the President's plane.

of people to help him. They were much like himself. They were bright. They had new ideas about how to run the government. They were willing to work day and night to get Kennedy's New Frontier moving. One of the most powerful members of the team was the President's younger brother, Robert Kennedy. "Bobby," as people called him, was John Kennedy's Attorney General.

The Kennedy brothers eagerly plunged into their work. The President amazed people by his habit of reading five newspapers while eating his breakfast. He spoke almost as fast as he read. A writer once followed the President through one complete day. He reported that Kennedy "did everything today except shinny up the Washington Monument."

John Kennedy believed there were many young people with energy like his own. Talented Americans, he thought, could share their skills with people in foreign countries. For example, they could teach African villagers how to make their drinking water safer. The goal was to improve people's lives. This would help make the world more peaceful. Kennedy wanted Americans to be volunteers for the cause of peace. He asked Congress to create what he called a **Peace Corps**.

Congress approved the program in 1961. Kennedy's brother-in-law, Sargent Shriver, ran it. By 1963 about 5,000 Americans—mostly young people—were working in remote villages in Africa, Asia, and South America. The volunteers saw firsthand the joys and heartbreaks of the villagers. The villagers, in turn, discovered a new

kind of American. These were not tourists or people who traveled overseas to make money. They were human beings like the villagers, living much as the villagers lived, sharing the same day-to-day problems and pleasures.

John Kennedy and his young team moved fast to try to meet the world's challenges. But the challenges came very rapidly. When Kennedy became President in 1961, there was trouble in Cuba, trouble in Germany, trouble in Southeast Asia. New troubles soon flared up in all three places.

Faulty strategy. The young President caused some of his own problems. His first major decision was to send a band of Cuban exiles to overthrow Fidel Castro's Communist government in Cuba. His military advisers assured him that the attack would succeed. Instead, 1,400 invaders were quickly surrounded by Castro's defending army. Many were slaughtered on a beach in Cuba's Bay of Pigs in April 1961. Why? Partly because of bad planning by the U.S. government, Kennedy admitted. This made people ask if Kennedy was too "green."

Kennedy worried about what people thought. He believed the shrewd Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, might try to take advantage of any weakness. In the summer of 1961, Khrushchev suddenly focused world attention on Germany's former capital, Berlin. He demanded changes that would give the U.S. less voice in Berlin's affairs. Kennedy said no. He sent U.S. troops to West Berlin over a road held by the German Communists. Khrushchev backed down. The next year, the Soviets secretly

shipped missiles into Cuba (see Chapter 60). Again Kennedy took strong action. And again, Khrushchev backed down. He ordered the missiles pulled out.

But there was still more to worry about in Southeast Asia. Kennedy wanted to stop Communist-led rebels from overthrowing the government of South Vietnam. For a while, he thought he was succeeding. U.S. advisers helped the government fight the rebels. But South Vietnam's president, Ngo Dinh Diem, treated his opponents in a cruel way. A group of generals revolted against Diem and shot him to death. Kennedy received the news with mixed feelings. He was glad that new leaders had come to power in South Vietnam. He hoped that they could fight the rebels better than Diem. At the same time, he was shocked by Diem's brutal murder.

Grim climax. It was now November 1963. The young President had spent about a thousand days in his new job. He had made some mistakes. He thought he had also made some progress. He hoped to do a lot more in the future to bring about the New Frontier. But first he had to be re-elected.

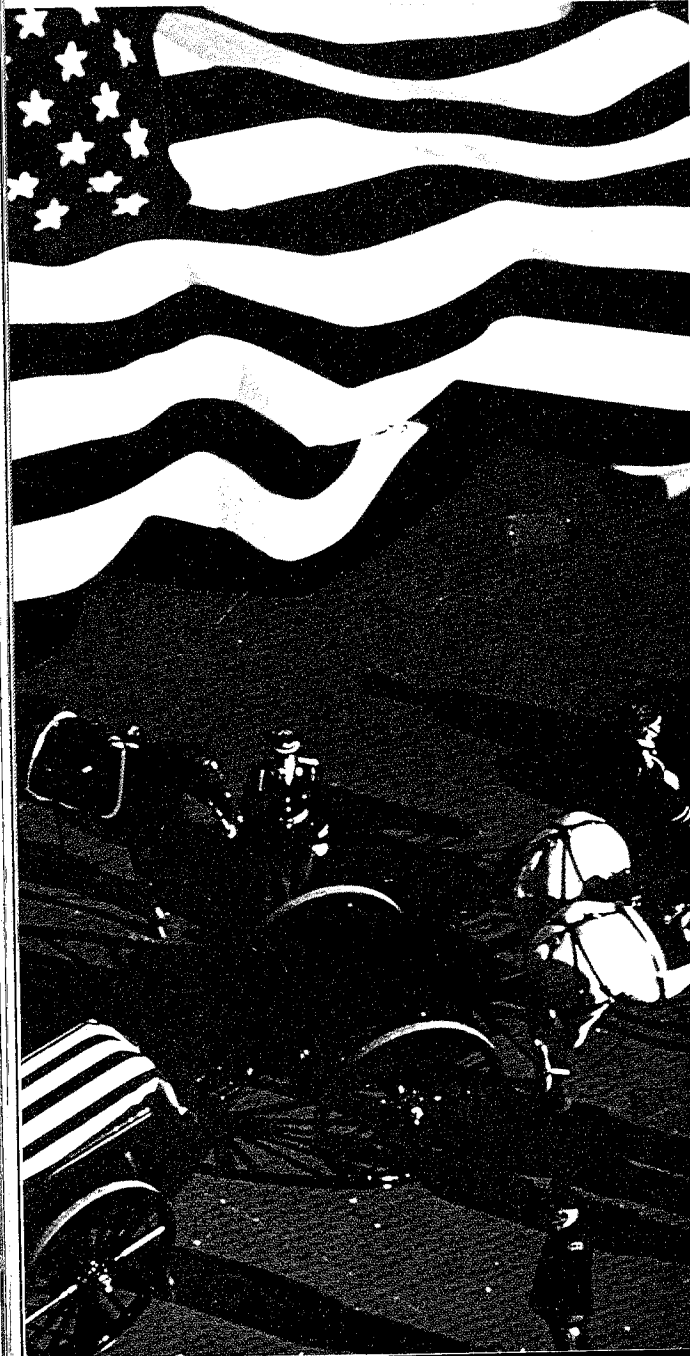
He therefore flew to Texas to begin campaigning for the 1964 election. His wife, Jacqueline, went with him. They sat side by side in a black car that drove slowly down a street in Dallas. They waved to the crowds of cheering people lining the street.

Their car passed an old red-brick building that was used for storing school books. A man with a gun was waiting there. A shot rang out; then another; then a third. John Kennedy slumped down in the seat of the car.

His wife cradled his head in her arms, crying, "Jack! Jack!" Within an hour, the President was pronounced dead.

For the next three days, television

The flag-draped coffin of the fallen President is taken to be buried on a Virginia hillside.



and radio devoted almost full time to the tragedy. Solemn music replaced ads. Bulletins told that a suspect had been captured. His name was Lee Harvey Oswald. His motive was unknown. Then someone shot Oswald in full view of TV watchers. The nation was numb with shock. The emotion-charged events turned John Kennedy into a hero for many people who had not thought of him as one before. They would miss the young President in the difficult years ahead.

Chapter Check

1. Early in his Presidency, Kennedy created the Peace Corps. What was his goal in doing this? What effects did the Peace Corps have?
2. What were three of the problems that Kennedy faced as President? How did he deal with them?
3. How did Kennedy's Presidency come to an end? Do you think this has affected the evaluation of JFK as President? Explain.
4. One of a President's key roles is as a maker of foreign policy. How would you rate Kennedy's performance in this respect? Would you say he was: (a) one of the greatest Presidents? (b) a good President who made a few mistakes? (c) a fair President who did not accomplish much? Base your opinion on evidence in this book.

CHAPTER 68

LBJ's "Great Society"

Lyndon B. Johnson placed one hand on a Bible and raised the other in the air. He could hardly believe what was happening. Only two-and-a-half hours before, he was helping President John Kennedy campaign in Dallas. Johnson was Vice-President then. Now in the President's airplane, *Air Force One*, he was being sworn in as the nation's 36th President. Next to him stood Mrs. Kennedy, her pink suit stained with blood. In the corridor was her dead husband's coffin.

So began the Presidency of Lyndon Johnson. It was a sad start. Yet there were to be months of great achievement before a new ordeal closed in.

Johnson was nine years older than Kennedy. He had once suffered a heart attack. But fears about his health did not slow him down. He worked as hard as Kennedy—perhaps even harder. In his first month in office, he was lucky to get five hours of sleep a night. He said he wanted to carry out Kennedy's plans.

Civil-rights laws. Johnson and Rob-

ert Kennedy together fought for a new civil-rights law. It was a law that John Kennedy had proposed to Congress shortly before he was killed. Its main purpose was to protect blacks in the South from discrimination in hotels and restaurants. Up to this time, there had been no federal law against such discrimination. A restaurant owner could refuse to serve meals to blacks. A hotel owner could refuse to rent them rooms. In the North, some states had laws against discrimination. But in the South, the laws of some states required that whites and blacks be kept separate. The new law would make such discrimination illegal in all states.

Some members of Congress were opposed to the new law. But Johnson was a master at dealing with Congress. He was much better at it than Kennedy had been. Also, Kennedy's death had changed the thinking of many Americans. They now wanted Kennedy's program to pass because Kennedy himself would have wanted it. Congress debated the bill



In the 1960's, Pat Oliphant of The Denver Post pictured the many faces of President

for months. At last both houses passed it. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act into law on July 2, 1964.

"War on poverty." In January 1964, he announced a "war on poverty." He said that 35 million poor people in the United States needed government help. They needed training to hold skilled jobs. Their children needed better education. Johnson traveled to many parts of the country to explain why the poor needed such help. He proposed a law to provide it. Congress enacted Johnson's program in August 1964.

The President, however, was not satisfied. Poor people, he thought, needed still more help. Blacks needed more protection. Schools needed more money. Old people needed help paying doctors' bills. Young people needed help finding jobs. Americans, Johnson said, could soon hope to live in a **Great Society**. In such a society, there would be no poverty, no injustice, no ugliness. But to build the Great Society, Congress would need to create many new government programs. Also, Johnson would need a strong victory in the 1964 election.

Most Democrats believed that Americans wanted these programs. Democrats chose Lyndon Johnson as their Presidential candidate. But

many Republicans opposed Johnson's program. Their candidate for President, Barry Goldwater, claimed this program would cost too much money.

Johnson campaigned hard. He traveled 60,000 miles (about 95,000 kilometers), shaking hands and making speeches. He shook voters' hands so much that his own hand became swollen. Johnson wanted to win the election by a bigger margin than any President in history. And he did. On election day, 1964, he received slightly more than six out of every 10 votes cast. He won more votes than any President before him.

It was the kind of victory Johnson needed to get his Great Society ideas through Congress. In 1965 he asked Congress for one law after another. In the past, Congress had rejected some of these ideas over and over again. Now Johnson invited members of Congress to the White House to talk. He knew what to say to get their support.

In one way or another, Johnson persuaded Congress to create the following programs:

Medicare. This program gave health insurance to people 65 years old and over. It paid their hospital bills and most of their doctors' bills.



Johnson. He drew LBJ as Soldier, Preacher, Policeman, Liberal, Crusader, and Devil.

For the first time, most elderly people did not have to worry about using up all their savings to pay for expensive medical care.

Voting rights. This law protected black citizens and others whose right to vote was blocked by unfair state laws. State officials could no longer stop an adult citizen from voting because of failure to pass a literacy test (a test to determine if a voter can read or write). Federal officials could now go into state polling places and protect blacks as they registered to vote. In Alabama, many black people were free to vote for the first time in their lives. One elderly woman said: "I'm going to vote now. I'm going to vote because I haven't been able to in my 67 years."

Aid to education. This law gave over one billion dollars in aid to schools. Most of the money went to improve the education of children from poor families. Of all his Great Society programs, Johnson was proudest of this one. He remembered, as a young man, teaching Mexican-American students in a poor farming region in Texas. He invited some of his former students to be present when he signed the education bill.

Lyndon Johnson signed into law a

total of 89 major acts of Congress in 1965. He brought more changes to government than any President since Franklin Roosevelt. And yet his Great Society was on shaky ground. It had already cost large sums of money. Many whites resented what they thought was special treatment of blacks. Now the simmering war in Vietnam was about to reach a boil. The war would cost the U.S. more and more money. Prices and taxes would rise. And many Americans would turn their anger against Lyndon Johnson.

Chapter Check

1. Which groups benefited most from Lyndon Johnson's programs? Which programs helped each of the groups?
2. Suppose you were a U.S. Senator in 1964 and 1965. Would you have voted for or against the following: (a) the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (b) the act creating Medicare in 1965, (c) the 1965 act providing federal aid to education? Give reasons for each decision.
3. What was Lyndon Johnson's idea of a "Great Society"? Do you think America is a "Great Society" today?

CHAPTER 69

The Tragedy of Vietnam

“Hey, hey, go away!
Hey, hey, go away!”

A crowd of people were shouting at police officers on a street in Chicago. It was early in the evening, August 28, 1968. Democratic leaders were meeting in Chicago to select a candidate for President. People on the street wanted to get closer to the place where the meeting was taking place. They wanted to show their anger over the war in Vietnam. But the police blocked their way. “Hey, hey, go away,” the mob chanted.

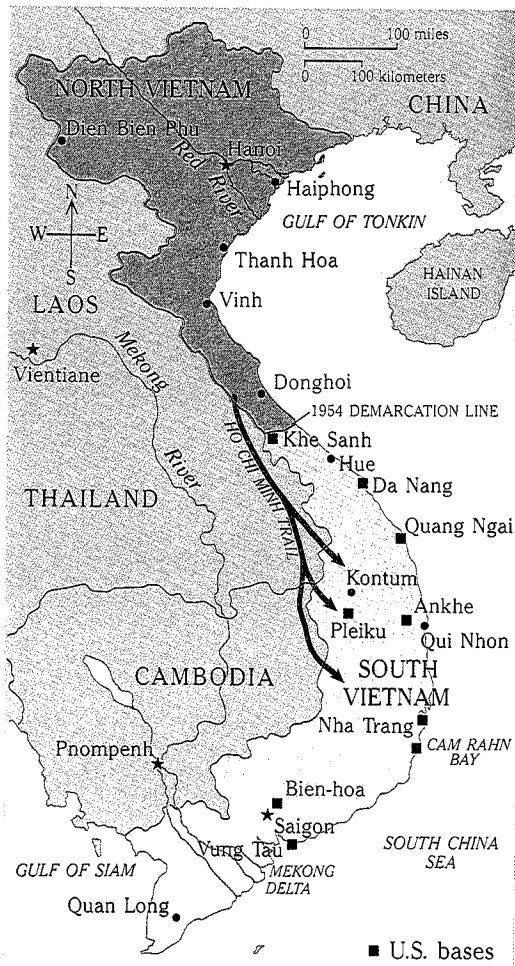
The police felt angry, threatened. Glass bottles flew at them. Bags of garbage landed at their feet and splattered on the pavement. Suddenly the police started swinging their billy clubs and charged into the mob. People got hurt. Some tried to run for safety. The police chased them, hit them, and dragged them into police wagons.

Millions of TV viewers that night had their sets tuned to the Democratic convention. The picture on their screens kept switching from the

convention itself to the bloody street fighting outside. It seemed like madness. It was just one more example of the kind of thing that kept appearing on TV in 1968. One more example of the nation's anguish over the war in Vietnam.

Two views. Many people were bitter and confused about the war. Why can't we end it? they asked. Who got us into it in the first place? they wanted to know. The answer to the second question was complex. Dwight Eisenhower had sent arms and advisers when he was President. Then John Kennedy had sent more arms, more advisers, and some non-combat troops. Lyndon Johnson had gone still further. He said he was carrying out promises made to South Vietnam by former Presidents.

Johnson had first taken his stand in November 1963. He had said the U.S. had a duty to protect South Vietnam. He had claimed that North Vietnam had no business sending troops to help the rebels in South Vietnam. He had called North Viet-



The War in Vietnam

nam an **aggressor** nation (one which had attacked first). Aggressors must be stopped, Johnson believed, or freedom everywhere would be in danger.

But others saw the matter differently. They argued that the war had begun as a *civil war* within South Vietnam. To them, the U.S. had no business getting involved. They said the U.S. should leave the future of Vietnam to the Vietnamese.

Escalation. At first Johnson ignored these critics. After his landslide election victory in 1964, he moved to strengthen U.S. aid. Now Army generals advised him that the Viet Cong rebels and their North Vietnamese allies could be beaten. But the U.S. would have to strike at military targets in North Vietnam. In 1965 Johnson ordered U.S. planes to drop bombs over North Vietnam. At the same time, he ordered more U.S. troops into South Vietnam.

How many U.S. troops were needed? Under Kennedy in 1963, there had been about 15,000. By 1965 the generals were saying 100,000 would probably be enough. By 1968 there were almost 550,000 U.S. soldiers in Vietnam. News reporters gave a name to this military buildup. They called it **escalation**.

Reporters also wrote about something called a *credibility gap*. They meant that there was a gap between what the U.S. government said and what many U.S. citizens believed. It was a confusing time. The U.S. government would announce a "major victory" in Vietnam. Then news reporters would go to the battle site. They would report that U.S. troops had suffered heavy losses. They would make the same battle sound like a defeat. Whom should the public believe?

Tet offensive. In February 1968, public doubts about the war grew. This was the time of the Vietnamese New Year, called *Tet*. The Viet Cong had smuggled guns and bombs into every major city of South Vietnam. Rebels had hidden in the homes of friends. Just as Tet began, the rebels attacked. In many places, there was

terrible fighting and loss of life. Americans were shocked to hear about this *Tet offensive*, as it was called. By this time, millions of tons of U.S. bombs had been dropped. Yet the rebels were still strong—very strong. More than 20,000 U.S. troops had been killed.

Growing numbers of people wanted an end to the war. Lyndon Johnson was criticized from two sides. Some people said he should get the war over by using more bombs—or more powerful ones. The U.S. could win if it tried harder, these people argued. These people were called **hawks**. Others thought the U.S. could not win the war. They argued that the U.S. should get out and let the Vietnamese settle their own problems. These people were called **doves**.

Johnson tried to please both sides. He stepped up the bombing to please the hawks. He helped to start peace talks to please the doves. Still the

war dragged on, seemingly without end. Johnson grew more and more frustrated.

Mounting criticism. So did U.S. citizens. They wanted a way out. Some of them turned to one of the war's strongest critics, Eugene McCarthy. McCarthy was a Democratic Senator from Minnesota. He decided to challenge Johnson for the Democratic nomination for President. McCarthy entered Democratic **primaries** in several states. (Primaries are elections within a political party, held to help decide the candidates for a main election.) Experts said McCarthy had no chance at all.

Even so, McCarthy stayed on the attack. He made speeches calling the war in Vietnam wrong, immoral. Thousands of college students backed him and worked for him. Because of them, McCarthy almost beat the old pro, Lyndon Johnson, in the New Hampshire primary. The experts

As the fighting went on, millions of Vietnamese were caught in the cross fire. This woman had just found her husband's body buried in a mass grave. The photo was one of the most famous of the war.





Police clashed with antiwar demonstrators during the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago.

were amazed.

After McCarthy's surprise showing in New Hampshire, other war critics also entered the race. One of them was Robert Kennedy, who had become a Democratic Senator from New York. He had split with Johnson over the war. Now Kennedy was challenging Johnson directly.

Lyndon Johnson worried about what was happening. He could see that the nation was dividing into two angry groups—hawks and doves. He believed that much of the controversy centered on himself. So he made a surprising decision. On March 31,

1968, he went on TV. He began with a routine talk about the war. Then he announced his surprise. He would not run for re-election. TV viewers could hardly believe it. Can he mean it? they wondered. Johnson did mean it—every word.

Political violence. One writer called 1968 "the year that everything went wrong." First there was the Tet offensive. Then the turmoil over the Presidential election campaign. In April, Martin Luther King was shot to death. In June, shots rang out again. This time the victim was Robert Kennedy. He had just won California's

Democratic primary. It looked as if he might win the Democratic nomination for President. Now, on June 5, he crumpled to the floor of a hotel kitchen in Los Angeles. Within a few hours, he was dead. Vice-President Hubert Humphrey became the leading Democratic candidate for President.

Next came the Democratic convention in Chicago. Inside the convention hall, there were battles of words between supporters of McCarthy and supporters of Humphrey. Outside, on Chicago's streets, there were battles between antiwar demonstrators and police. Injured young people staggered into McCarthy's hotel room. Hotel sheets were torn into rags to bandage their bleeding heads.

Hubert Humphrey won the Democratic nomination. But the feuding Democrats were still deeply divided. They could not unite behind Humphrey. He had been too close to Lyndon Johnson. Neither the hawks nor the doves were happy. Everyone wanted to know how much longer the war would last. In 1968 there was no clear answer.

Chapter Check

1. What reasons did Lyndon Johnson give for escalating the war in Vietnam? Why did some Americans reject Johnson's arguments?
2. How did Eugene McCarthy show his opposition to the war in Vietnam? What effects did his actions have on the American political scene?
3. If you had been following the news in the 1960's, which one or



In Vietnam, death could wait in hiding behind the next tree. Most U.S. troops fought bravely, but with a constant sense of fear. Many hoped only to get through the war, and then get home.

two events would have concerned you the most: (a) Lyndon Johnson's decision to bomb North Vietnam, (b) the Tet offensive, (c) Johnson's decision not to run for re-election, (d) the assassination of Robert Kennedy, (e) the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, or (f) telecasts of mass arrests in Chicago, 1968? Make a list of your choices in order of your concern. Be prepared to give reasons for your answer.

CHAPTER 70

Trouble in the Streets

Sunday, July 23, 1967, was to have been a day off for patrolman Ronald August. August worked for the Detroit police force. At seven A.M. a telephone call awakened him. Go to the police station at once, the caller said. There is big trouble in Detroit.

Soon the patrolman was in a paddy wagon moving through riot-torn streets. "Gee," he remembered later, "it looked like everything was burning. There were people swarming everywhere." Many of the people were looters. They had broken into stores and stolen things. Some were carrying whiskey; some, tape recorders; others, cameras or TV sets. Even, August recalled, "little six-year-olds with wagons full of brand-new underwear, socks, and shoes. Carrying everything out."

The riot lasted five days. Forty-three people died. An estimated 2,000 were injured. Fire destroyed some 2,000 stores and homes. The riot was the most destructive one in the U.S. in the 1960's.

The National Guard went into action. U.S. Army troops moved into Detroit streets. Michigan's governor George Romney toured the city. He saw block after block with nothing but ruined stores and apartments. "It looked like a city that had been bombed," he said.

Detroit wasn't the decade's first flare-up. In 1964 rioting had ripped through Harlem in New York City. In 1965 a part of Los Angeles called Watts had been torn up. In 1966 there had been riots in Cleveland and Chicago. Early in July 1967, riots had broken out in Newark, New Jersey. The nation was on edge. Were law and order crumbling away?

The riots all had one thing in common: They hit black neighborhoods hardest. Most—but not all—of the rioters were black. This led some people to call the incidents "race riots." But these riots did not pit race against race. They pitted rioters against property—stores were looted, buildings were burned. And they pitted citizens against police.



During the "long, hot summer" of 1967, violence and unrest spilled out onto city streets. This photo was taken in Detroit in July of that year, just after the rioting and looting stopped.

The Detroit riot started when police raided a party being held by about 80 blacks. It was a "welcome-

home" party for two veterans just back from Vietnam. But it was an illegal party. It was being held in a

club that had stayed open into the early-morning hours, after closing time. Police began to arrest party-goers. Someone threw a bottle. It broke the window of a police car. The riot had begun.

Death by accident. At first police did nothing to stop looting. They were under orders not to shoot. Detroit's leaders considered the black area a powder keg. They feared that police shooting might touch off a real war between blacks and police. "If we had started shooting," Detroit's police commissioner said, "not one of our policemen would have come out alive."

Some of the rioters set fire to buildings. As the riot spread, police reported gunshots being fired by people on rooftops. Many police officers were scared. So were young soldiers called up to control the crowds. On one street, a youth lit a cigarette in his apartment house. A nervous soldier saw a sudden flash of light and fired. A bullet ripped through the apartment window and killed a little girl, four years old. Many other innocent people were also killed by accident. Most reports of snipers on rooftops later turned out to have been false.

By the end of the week, order had been restored. But many questions remained. Why would people purposely burn down neighborhoods in which they lived? Why was there such hatred between police and citizens? Why was racial trouble hitting hardest in the North, not the South?

Many white people had assumed that all was well for blacks in the North. Hadn't the civil-rights movement broken down old barriers?

Hadn't President Johnson declared war on poverty? Indeed, for many blacks, there had been progress. In Detroit, particularly, many blacks had well-paying jobs in auto factories.

Defeat by circumstance. But reporters covering the slums brought back another story. They found angry young men and women who were unable to get jobs. These youths had seen on TV and in the movies how other Americans lived. They wanted a share of this good life. Yet they had limited education and few job skills. They were unfamiliar with the customs of the business world. They took up a bold swagger and slangy speech that set them apart. Many of these youths had nothing but scorn for white society. In fact, they were calling the violence in the cities "revolution," rather than riots.

Some people began to talk of such blacks as part of a separate **class** of Americans. (A class is a division of social order, usually based on wealth and social standing. Usual examples are the upper class, middle class, and lower class.) These blacks became known as members of an **underclass**. This term meant a group of people locked into poverty from one generation to the next. People who feel beaten. People with no hope. People who are very hostile toward the community they live in.

After the Detroit riot, President Johnson asked a group of experts to study the causes of urban rioting in general. He called this group the *National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*. It reached these conclusions:

First, nobody planned the riots. No



"These weren't damaged in the riots—they went to pieces years before," says the photographer's friend in this 1967 Herb Luback cartoon. The drawing first appeared in *The Washington Post*.

group of blacks plotted in secret to stir up trouble.

Second, there was not just one cause for the riots, but many. Distrust of police was one important cause. Unemployment among blacks was another.

Third, there was not just one solution to the problem, but many. Most of the cities affected by the rioting needed to do a better job of training police officers. Most of them needed more black officers. Two million new jobs were needed, especially for black youths. More money was needed for schools and housing in black neighborhoods.

Above all, the commission said,

whites would have to change their attitudes toward blacks. Whites had long treated black people unfairly, the commission argued. This treatment is called *racism*. The commission said that "white racism" had been a major cause of the rioting.

The nation was sharply divided over the commission's report. Some applauded the stark statement against racism. Others were angry. They felt that the riots resulted from a breakdown of law and order. The police had been too soft, they said. Police officers should have cracked down on the looting as soon as it began.

The riots left their scars. A decade later, gaping shells of buildings still remained in some places. But the riots also started many people thinking about some hard questions. Just how *could* blacks and whites work out their problems with each other? And what lay ahead if they didn't?

Chapter Check

1. What event touched off the riot in Detroit? What were two *general* causes of the rioting?
2. How did each of the following groups suffer during the riots in Detroit? (a) Looters. (b) Police and soldiers. (c) White store-owners. (d) Black families who lived in riot-torn neighborhoods. Explain.
3. President Johnson's National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders suggested several solutions to the problem of rioting. What were the suggestions? Does it seem to you that these suggestions would work? Explain the reasons for your opinion.

CHAPTER 71

The Now Generation

In 1967 a runaway girl sat in a pizza parlor in Haight-Ashbury (hate ASH-buh-ree), a section of San Francisco. On the wall, brightly colored magic mushrooms danced across a mural. Outside, other young people strolled past. Their rumpled clothes and dreamy eyes looked odd to many people in 1967. But to the runaway, these young people were part of a big family.

"If I went home," she was saying, "I'd have food and fine clothes. But I'd have to give up and be somebody I'm not. When I grew up, there wasn't a name for it. The word *hippie* didn't exist. But I knew I wasn't the same as the [other] kids. . . . I knew there was something wrong with the society I was living in. But I couldn't put my finger on it. I only found out when I got here."

Haight-Ashbury was a community of hippies. Above all, it was a community of runaways. Teenagers running away from their parents. People in their twenties running away from rules and regulations. People in their

thirties running away from boring jobs. They all came together in places such as Haight-Ashbury.

What has happened to our children? parents asked. Why are there so many runaways? What are they trying to escape?

The runaway girl was giving some of the answers. She was trying to explain her friends. They didn't want wealth—although many had money and didn't mind spending it. They didn't want nine-to-five jobs. They didn't want to have to smile when they felt like screaming. These young people rejected the "straight" world of their parents. They called themselves "freaks," and that's what they seemed to be—misfits in somebody else's world.

"Freaking out." What they wanted, hippies said, was to enjoy life—*now*. Most adults, they said, were out of touch with life. Adults worked and sacrificed for *future* happiness. You can't enjoy life that way, hippies said. Instead, you can know the joy of life only by being aware of your



"Do your own thing" was the advice offered by hippies in the 1960's. These San Francisco hippies did their thing by living in a rainbow-colored bus and traveling around the city giving "concerts."

feelings NOW . . . this very second.

What frightened many parents were the methods some hippies used in order to enjoy life now. The most common method was drugs. Marijuana. LSD. Speed. Uppers. Downers. The young people borrowed an advertising slogan used by a chemical company: "Better living through chemistry." Young hippies giggled and popped a pill. Older people were horrified.

Many hippies had their moments of horror too. When they used drugs, they talked about "taking a trip." But some trips were frightening. Instead of pleasant visions, there were nightmares. Like a war zone, Haight-Ashbury had a place for casualties. It was called the Free Clinic. A sign on

the door in the morning said: "Bum trippers and emergencies only."

In its heyday, Haight-Ashbury had several thousand hippies. Similar communities could be found in other big cities. There were hippie groups on ranches and farms. But most young people weren't hippies—even if they looked that way to adults. They might wear their hair long, if they were boys. Or wear jeans instead of dresses, if they were girls. But they weren't hippies. They hadn't completely rejected the adult world.

Playing by older rules. To the contrary, most young people accepted adult rules—and did so proudly. Instead of trying to escape from the world, many threw themselves into

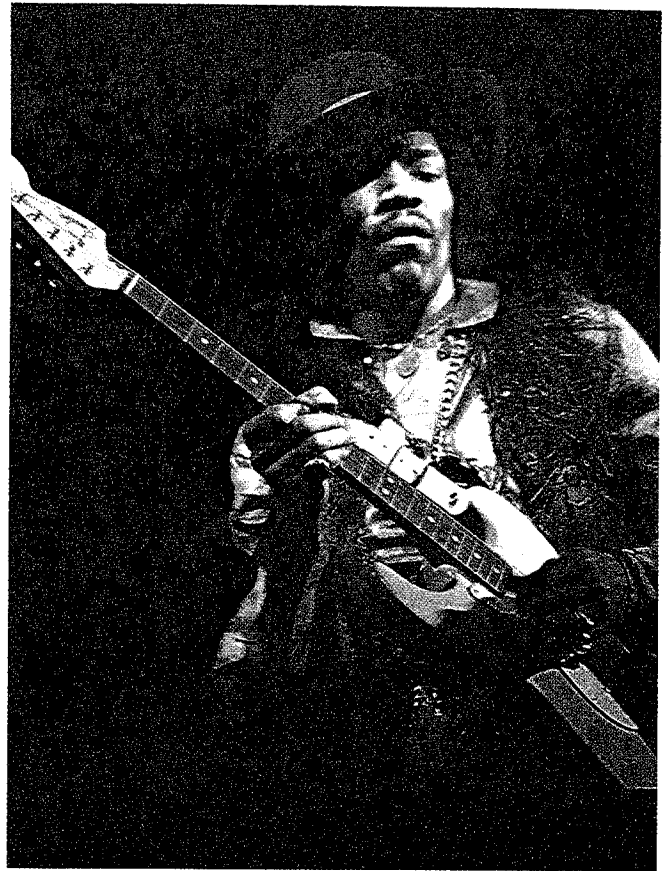
it. They took part in clean-up projects in city slums. They helped raise money for worthy charities. They handed out leaflets for political candidates they favored. And in many cases they did these things with their parents' support.

Yet young rebels attracted more attention in the newspapers and on TV. Many of these young people criticized their parents for not living up to their own ideals. Was it decent, they asked, to kill people in Vietnam? Was it decent to push blacks around, as whites had done for so long? Adult life, these rebels said, was too often an empty lie—a sham.

All this made many adults very angry. Nothing like this had happened when *they* were young. Oh, of course, sometimes they too had defied their parents. Sometimes they had used drugs—alcohol mostly. But they had soon settled down. Many of them had gone off to fight in World War II. After that, they had gotten jobs. They had worked hard to save their money so their children would have a good life. And now *this*.

"Ripping the war." Certainly the young generation was not marching off to war like the last one had. The Vietnam War did not bring Americans together in a common cause. Instead, it divided them. Some young people did go off to fight. Others stayed home—and in school—hoping they would not be called. Still others went to Canada, Sweden, and other countries to avoid the draft. Young people were among the war's most outspoken critics.

Some of these critics were as hostile to the hippies as many adults were. They thought the hippies were



Rock stars of the 1960's used electronics to create a new music. One writer claimed that Jimi Hendrix "could make an electric guitar sing or even talk in a million different voices."

wasting their lives. Young people should work to improve the world, they said, not drop out of it. Because they called for sweeping changes, these youths were known as **radicals**.

The radicals came in all varieties. Some were violent. They set bombs in public buildings to protest the war. Others were peaceful. They folded their arms and sang when the police moved in to arrest them. Some called themselves Communists. They

waved red flags and talked of revolution. Others cared nothing about communism. They thought *any* government that used force to get its way was wrong. These people simply thought *both* sides in the Vietnam War too brutal.

Many radicals blamed the war on the **Establishment**. But what did they mean by the term? To them, the Establishment was a group of powerful individuals who ran the U.S. Its members were not just Presidents and U.S. Senators. They were also business leaders, college professors, scientists, editors, and others. In short, a ruling class. The radicals argued that democracy in the U.S. was only skin deep. They said the important decisions were made behind the scenes, by the Establishment.

Young people were only part of the antiwar movement. Many adults—including some members of the Establishment—also disliked the war. Nor did all the nation's young people stand against the war. Polls showed that only a minority of them did. Yet those who did were quite outspoken. They made the antiwar movement seem part of the generation gap.

Learning to cope. What had caused this gap between the generations? Some Americans thought they saw an answer in the way parents had raised their children. Parents had given their children too much, these people said. American parents had become too easy, too "permissive" in raising children. This permissiveness had led to muddled thinking among young people, these critics claimed.

One scholar, Margaret Mead, had another explanation. She presented it in a book, *Culture and Commit-*

ment. Why were youths so different from their parents? Because, Mead said, the world they were growing up in was so different from the world their parents knew. For thousands of years, parents had been able to teach children how to cope with life. They had taught them how to raise crops, build homes, and rear children of their own. But now, for the first time in history, the world was changing too fast. The old skills weren't needed. The old values didn't always fit. Children saw that their parents' generation no longer knew how to cope. "The young do not know what must be done," said Mead, "but they feel that there must be a better way."

In her book, Mead quoted the words of a 15-year-old boy. He wrote: "Sometimes I walk down a deserted beach listening to the waves and birds and I hear them forever calling and forever crying. And sometimes we [young people] feel that way but everyone goes on with his own little routine, afraid to stop and listen. . . . The answer lies out there somewhere. We need to search for it."

Chapter Check

1. How did the hippies differ from most Americans? What kind of behavior by some of the "younger generation" did the "older generation" worry about?
2. How did the radicals differ from the hippies? What methods did the radicals use to achieve their goals?
3. In your opinion, does a generation gap still exist today? Explain your answer.

CHAPTER 72

More War, More Grief

In 1969 the United States had a new President—Richard Nixon. Nixon had defeated the Democratic candidate, Hubert Humphrey, in the election of 1968. Nixon had promised to bring Americans together again. He had promised to put “an honorable end” to the war in Vietnam.

Nixon tried. He announced a policy that he called *Vietnamization*. This meant turning over the defense of South Vietnam to the South Vietnamese government and army. Nixon planned to pull U.S. troops out of Vietnam slowly. In two or three years, he said, the South Vietnamese would be fighting mostly on their own. They would no longer have much help from the U.S.

Antiwar protests. But many Americans could not wait two or three years. They wanted peace now. Some of them plastered this message—“Peace Now!”—on the bumpers of their cars. Students showed that they were against the war by wearing black armbands to school. (Black

armbands are often worn at funerals as signs of grief.) Special days were set aside for demonstrating against the war. More than a million people took part in the first such day on October 15, 1969. Whole families went to church together wearing black armbands. They carried candles and listened to speeches calling for peace.

Richard Nixon argued that he was doing everything he could to make peace. He called the demonstrators a small minority. He asked for support from “the great silent majority of my

As the war in Vietnam continued, opposition to that war grew. In the late 1960's and early 1970's, enormous crowds marched on Washington to protest.



fellow Americans." Some people made signs to show their support of the President. One sign said: "God Save America from Traitors." Another sign said: "America, Love It or Leave It." Instead of black armbands, supporters of Nixon wore armbands with red, white, and blue stripes.

More and more people began talking about a "silent majority." It was true that most Americans were not demonstrating about the war on one side or the other. But this didn't mean that they had no thoughts about the war. Opinion polls showed that most people didn't want to lose the war. But they wanted it to end.

Richard Nixon did not want to lose either. He could not send more troops to Vietnam as Lyndon Johnson had done. Public opinion was against this. Instead, Nixon hoped to crush North Vietnam with bombing attacks. Wave after wave of U.S. planes flew over Hanoi (hah-NOY), North Vietnam's capital. They dropped more bombs on this city than had been dropped on the German city of Berlin in World War II. Their targets were military bases and fuel tanks. Still, some bombs missed the targets and hit homes and hospitals. Hundreds of civilians—men, women, and children—were killed.

Paris peace talks. Nixon hoped that these bombings would make North Vietnam give up. But he was disappointed. U.S. diplomats and North Vietnamese diplomats met together in Paris, France. For four years, off and on, they sat across a table and talked about terms of peace. Neither side was willing to back down. The Paris peace talks dragged on and on—and so did the war.

Meanwhile, Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces had been using trails in neighboring Cambodia for moving supplies. Early in 1970, U.S. and South Vietnamese forces crossed into Cambodia. They marched over jungle trails seeking to destroy Viet Cong camps. In the end, however, the invasion made many Americans angry. On more than 100 college campuses across the nation, students went on strike. They refused to attend classes until the government had put an end to the invasion of Cambodia.

On May 2, an antiwar protest at Kent State University in Ohio ended in the burning down of a school building. The governor of Ohio ordered the National Guard to the campus. Two days later, there was another demonstration. A few Kent State students threw rocks at the soldiers. Apparently panicking, the soldiers opened fire without warning. Sixty-one bullets ripped into the crowd of students. Four students fell to the ground, dead. The news shocked the nation. Angry protests swept other college campuses. The Senate voted to deny the President money to keep the invasion of Cambodia going.

Not all the anger was on the nation's campuses. Many people who supported Nixon were angry at college rioters. They agreed with the President when he called the rioters "bums." In New York, a group of construction workers wearing hard hats charged into a line of student demonstrators. They beat the students up, as police looked on. The nation was becoming more divided every day.



In this 1970 photograph, a young woman screams in horror at the killing of a Kent State University student. The student was one of four who died when troops shot into a crowd of antiwar protesters at the Kent State campus.

Election of 1972. The Democratic party was divided too. It needed a strong candidate to run against President Nixon in the 1972 Presidential election. But the Democrats fought among themselves. George McGovern, a Senator from South Dakota, won the Democratic nomination. He said that the U.S. should withdraw from Vietnam. But many leading Democrats refused to support him. They thought he talked too much like the student radicals. Many Democrats voted for Nixon. So Nixon won, with 60.7 percent of the popular vote. He collected 520 electoral votes. This was the second largest electoral-vote victory in U.S. history. (The largest had been Franklin Roosevelt's in 1936.)

President Nixon had been bringing U.S. troops home from Vietnam. This

was one reason many people voted for him. In 1968 there had been 550,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam. By election time, 1972, fewer than 50,000 of them were left. The South Vietnamese government was taking over the fighting. This was Vietnamization.

Richard Nixon and his successor, Gerald Ford, hoped that Vietnamization would do two things. They said it would get the U.S. out of the war. They also hoped that it would lead to a victory for South Vietnam's government. Only the first happened. In April 1975, South Vietnam's army fell apart. It lost the war. A Communist government took over in the South. Vietnam became one country again.

The war was over. But the arguments went on. Could the U.S. and South Vietnam have won by fighting harder, bombing more? Why had the U.S. stayed in the war so long? Was it all worth it—or was the war just one ghastly mistake?

Chapter Check

1. How did Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford try to end the war in Vietnam? In what way did they succeed? In what way did they fail?
2. What was the importance of the protest at Kent State? What were the reactions of the public?
3. Imagine that you were a high school student in 1969. Would you have supported the U.S. role in the Vietnam War or opposed it? Or would you have been neutral? Why?

Looking Back: *The Angry Years*

MAIN EVENTS

1. Three Presidents—Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon—led the U.S. through the troubled years of the 1960's. Each had his own vision of a better world.
2. John F. Kennedy was elected President in 1960. He believed young people could make a contribution in the world.
3. Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963. Lyndon B. Johnson became the new President.
4. Johnson wanted to build a Great Society in America. He succeeded in passing the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act, Medicare, and a program of federal aid to education.
5. But many Americans were unhappy and angry in the 1960's. Black people were rioting in the nation's urban ghettos.
6. Young people all over the country were "dropping out." Many rejected the world and values of their parents.
7. Some of the anger was caused by the Vietnam War. It was an issue that divided all America. In 1961, President Kennedy had sent U.S. troops to help South Vietnam fight a Communist take-over. President Johnson greatly increased American military involvement in Vietnam. By 1968, many Americans wanted the U.S. to get out of Vietnam.
8. The Presidential campaign of 1968 was marked by violence. One of the candidates, Robert Kennedy, was shot and killed in California. Antiwar demonstrators at the Chicago Democratic convention clashed with police.
9. Richard M. Nixon was elected President. He promised to start pulling American troops out of Vietnam.
10. Millions of Americans participated in antiwar demonstrations after Nixon ordered the invasion of Cambodia. Four students were killed at Kent State University during a Vietnam protest in 1970.
11. In 1969, the withdrawal of U.S. troops began. In 1975, a Communist government took over South Vietnam.

WORDS TO KNOW

Match the vocabulary terms listed below with the definitions that follow. Number your paper from 1 to 12, and write the correct term beside each number.

New Frontier	aggressor	doves	underclass
Peace Corps	escalation	primary	radical
Great Society	hawks	class	Establishment

1. one that attacks first
2. President Kennedy's call for a new beginning for America
3. Lyndon Johnson's vision of a society in which there would be no poverty and no injustice
4. a gradual build-up
5. Americans who thought the U.S. should try harder to win the war in Vietnam
6. a program that sent Americans to work abroad to help people improve their lives
7. a group of people locked into poverty from one generation to the next
8. Americans who thought the U.S. should get out of Vietnam
9. the group of powerful people who control a government or society
10. a division of society, usually based on wealth and social standing
11. someone who favors extreme changes in existing laws or conditions
12. an election within a political party to help select the party's candidate for an office

THINKING AND WRITING

Comparing Presidents

In this exercise, you will compare two Presidents of the United States, John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson.

First, review Chapter 67. Make a list that includes information about the personality and professional accomplishments of John F. Kennedy. The list should include things he did, things he said, how he felt, and what he believed. Be sure to include laws that were passed while he was President. Add a special section on the major foreign policy issues and actions of the Kennedy administration.

Then, review Chapter 68. Make a similar list about Lyndon B. Johnson.

Write an essay that compares these two Presidents. Use your lists as a source of comparison. Your essay should begin with an introductory paragraph. In the second paragraph, discuss their *differences*. In the third paragraph, discuss their *similarities*. Your final paragraph should summarize your ideas and conclude your essay.

SHARPENING YOUR SKILLS

In 1968 *Fortune Magazine* asked three groups of young people about their views on Vietnam and other issues. The young people were all between the ages of 18 and 24. One group had not gone to college. A second group had gone to college for practical reasons—getting training for a career. A third group had gone to college with no career goals in mind. They just wanted to attend college to learn about life. As you can see from the tables shown here, each group reacted differently to the same set of questions. Study the three tables carefully. Then answer the questions.

1. Which group is *most* likely to support the idea of going to war? Which group is *least* likely to sup-

port the idea of going to war? (Compare especially the responses in Table Two.)

2. On one point in Table One, all three groups come very close to sharing the same attitude. What point is this?
3. Compare the attitudes of Groups A and C on the issue of law and order (Table Three). Write a statement pointing out the differences between the two groups on this issue.
4. Which of the three groups do you think gave most support to Presidents Johnson and Nixon? Which group probably criticized these Presidents the most? Explain your answers.

Survey of Young People's Opinions, 1968

	Group A No college	Group B College for practical reasons	Group C College to learn about life
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TABLE ONE:

Which of the following phrases describe your personal feelings about the war?

Sympathy for our boys	78%	75%	76%
Patriotism	46%	37%	22%
Strong support for the U.S. position	46%	26%	14%
Feeling of helplessness	31%	31%	54%
Disgust with our government	30%	40%	54%
Anger at our government	20%	24%	31%
Anger at opponents of the war	19%	11%	6%
Sympathy for the Viet Cong	11%	8%	21%

TABLE TWO:

Aside from the particular issues of the Vietnam War, which of these values do you believe are always worth fighting for?

	Group A	Group B	Group C
Protecting our national interest	73%	65%	40%
Containing the Communists	68%	59%	28%
Counteracting aggression ¹	65%	75%	50%
Fighting for our honor	64%	44%	20%
Maintaining our position of power in the world	54%	46%	22%
Protecting allies	53%	51%	37%
Keeping a commitment ²	30%	24%	14%

TABLE THREE:

Which of the following social changes would you welcome?

More emphasis on law and order	91%	78%	39%
More emphasis on combating crime	88%	95%	70%
More respect for authority	87%	73%	41%
More emphasis on work being meaningful in its own right	85%	78%	88%
More emphasis on self-expression ³	69%	68%	90%
More freedom to debate and disagree openly	68%	73%	92%
More freedom for the individual to do whatever he wants, provided he doesn't hurt others	65%	69%	84%
More acceptance of other people's peculiarities	60%	75%	93%
Less emphasis on status—on "keeping up with the Joneses"	57%	75%	80%
Less emphasis on money	57%	53%	80%
More emphasis on private enterprise	42%	55%	36%
More emphasis on the arts	42%	55%	84%
More vigorous but nonviolent protests by blacks and other minority groups	35%	41%	64%

¹Aggression, in this sense, means the making of an attack on the rights or territory of another without good reason.

²A commitment is a promise.

³Self-expression, in this sense, means the freedom to express oneself as one wishes.