

Chapter Summary

Section 1: Nixon and the Watergate Scandal

Richard Nixon was reelected in 1972 by a landslide due in part to his southern strategy. The Watergate scandal caused him to resign the office in disgrace two years later and changed how Americans felt about their government.

Section 2: The Ford and Carter Years

During the Ford and Carter years, Americans dealt with a struggling economy as many of the social and cultural changes begun in the 1960s took hold. Some felt the nation had gone off the right track as people's values and lifestyles changed.



Chapter Summary (continued)

Section 3: Foreign Policy Troubles

During the Ford administration, Nixon's foreign policies were continued. Carter put more emphasis on human rights in his dealings with the developing world. When radicals in Iran took 66 American hostages, the United States realized that the Middle East might be a bigger threat than the Soviet Union.

Objectives

- Describe Richard Nixon's attitude toward "big" government.
- Analyze Nixon's southern strategy.
- Explain the Watergate incident and its consequences.



Terms and People

- **silent majority** – voters whom Nixon sought to reach who did not demonstrate, but rather worked and served quietly in “Middle America”
- **stagflation** – the dual conditions of a stagnating economy and inflation
- **OPEC** – the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, a group of mostly Arab countries that cooperates to regulate the price and supply of oil
- **southern strategy** – a plan to make the Republican Party a powerful force in the South by attracting the votes of blue-collar workers and southern whites

Terms and People (continued)

- **affirmative action** – a policy that gives special consideration to women and minorities, in order to make up for past discrimination
- **Watergate** – the scandal that began with a burglary of Democratic Party headquarters and led to Nixon's resignation
- **Twenty-Fifth Amendment** – an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that describes the process of presidential succession
- **executive privilege** – the principle that the President has the right to keep certain information confidential



What events led to Richard Nixon's resignation as President in 1974?

President **Nixon won reelection in a landslide** in 1972.

Due to the Watergate scandal, however, **he left office in disgrace two years later**. The event changed Americans' attitudes toward government in a way that is still felt today.

Nixon made a dramatic political comeback in 1968 when he won the presidency.



He did it by working to appeal to the **silent majority** of those he called Middle Americans.



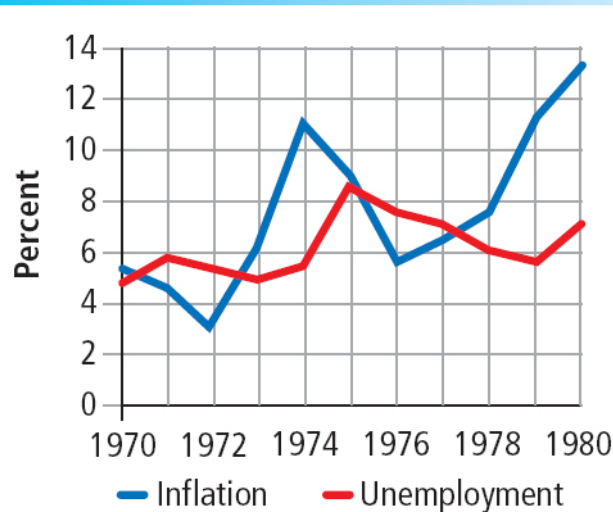
Nixon tried to give power back to the state governments but...



Nixon actually expanded the federal government when he was in office.

The economy was unstable during Nixon's presidency.

Inflation and Unemployment Rates, 1970–1980



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Stagflation was the combination of a recession and inflation.

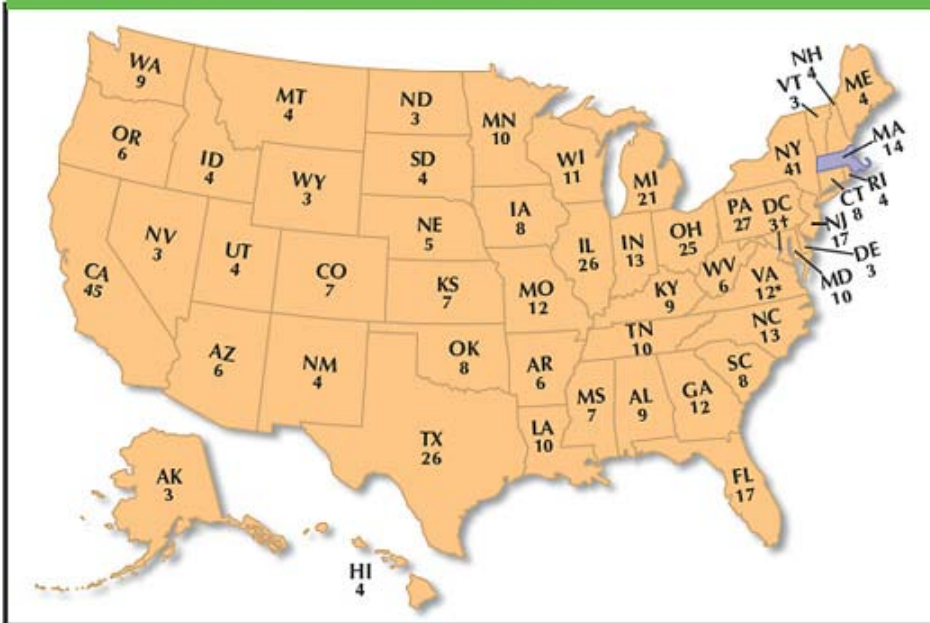
Oil prices went up due to an embargo issued by **OPEC**.



Nixon criticized the court-ordered busing of children to schools outside their neighborhoods.

Nevertheless, Nixon's civil rights initiatives included **affirmative action.**

Presidential Election of 1972

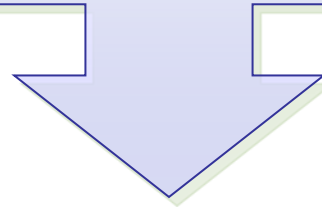


In the election of 1972, Nixon used a new **southern strategy**.

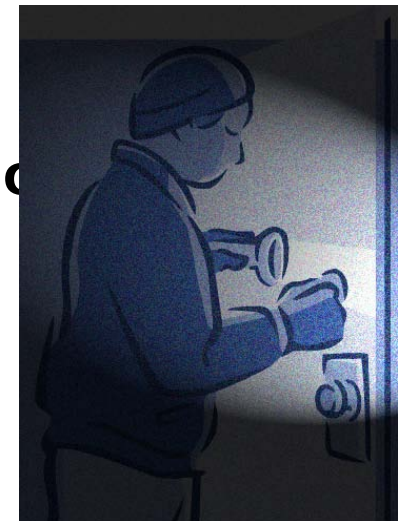
Nixon's strategy succeeded and he was reelected in a landslide.

Candidate (Party)	Electoral Vote	Popular Vote	% Electoral Vote	% Popular Vote
Richard M. Nixon (Republican)	520	46,740,323	96.7	60.7
George S. McGovern (Democratic)	17	28,901,598	3.1	37.5
Other	1	1,341,502	0.2	1.7

Despite Nixon's strong victory, **the seeds of his downfall were planted** during a break-in of the Democratic Party headquarters in 1972.



The **Watergate** scandal, as it came to be called, changed everything.




Nixon denied any wrongdoing.



Two Washington Post reporters investigated.

It was revealed that Nixon had been secretly taping conversations in the Oval Office.



Nixon refused to turn over the tapes, citing **executive privilege.**

The Supreme Court ordered him **to turn them over.**



The tapes proved Nixon's involvement so the House voted to impeach him.

As a result, Nixon decided to resign in August of 1974, the first and only President to ever do so.

I hereby resign the Office of President of the
United States.

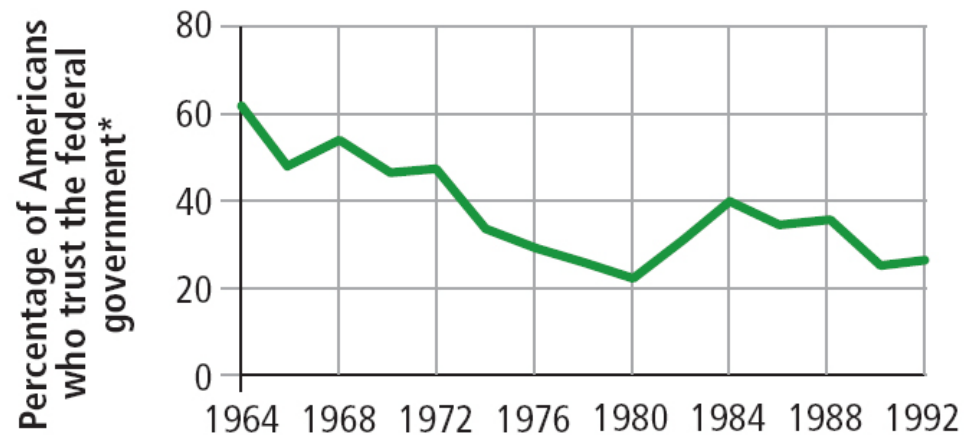
Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Richard Nixon.

Watergate had a lasting impact on the country.

- It shook the public's confidence in its government.
- It showed that the system of checks and balances worked.

Public Trust in the Federal Government, 1964–1992



SOURCE: The American National Election Studies

*Most of the time

Post-Watergate Government Reforms:

- Federal Election Campaign Act Amendments (1974)
- Freedom of Information Act Amendments (1974)
- Government in the Sunshine Act (1976)
- Ethics in Government Act of 1978



Objectives

- Evaluate the presidency of Gerald Ford.
- Assess the domestic policies of Jimmy Carter.
- Analyze how American society changed in the 1970s.



Terms and People

- **Gerald Ford** – became President in 1974 after Nixon's resignation
- **pardon** – officially forgiveness
- **Jimmy Carter** – a former governor of Georgia who was elected President in 1976
- **Christian fundamentalist** – a person who believes in a strict, literal interpretation of the Bible as the foundation of the Christian faith

Terms and People (continued)

- **amnesty** – political pardon
- **televangelist** – minister who preached on television



What accounted for the changes in American attitudes during the 1970s?

Compared to the turbulent 1960s, the 1970s appeared uneventful.

However, the 1970s brought many social, economic, and cultural changes. Many felt those changes put America on the wrong track.



Button promoting
Gerald Ford's voluntary
controls

Vice President **Gerald Ford** became President after Nixon's resignation. He **faced the worst economic problems** that America had experienced since the Great Depression.

Although Ford worked hard to solve the country's problems, his Whip Inflation Now (WIN) program did not succeed. As **unemployment grew**, his popularity declined rapidly.

The struggling economy and frustrations over **Gerald Ford's pardon** of Nixon led to **Jimmy Carter's** win of the presidential election in 1976.

Carter cast himself as an **outsider** and had the support of **Christian fundamentalists**.

He presented himself as a "**citizens' President**" with no ties to professional politicians, which appealed to many voters after the Watergate scandal.

Crises and Carter's inexperience reduced the effectiveness of his presidency.

- Having no close allies in Washington, his legislative bills in Congress rarely passed without changes.
- Carter **grappled with the energy crisis** and inflation.
- He granted **amnesty** to Americans who had evaded the draft during the Vietnam War. This was highly unpopular with many Americans.

The Sunbelt gained more political influence.



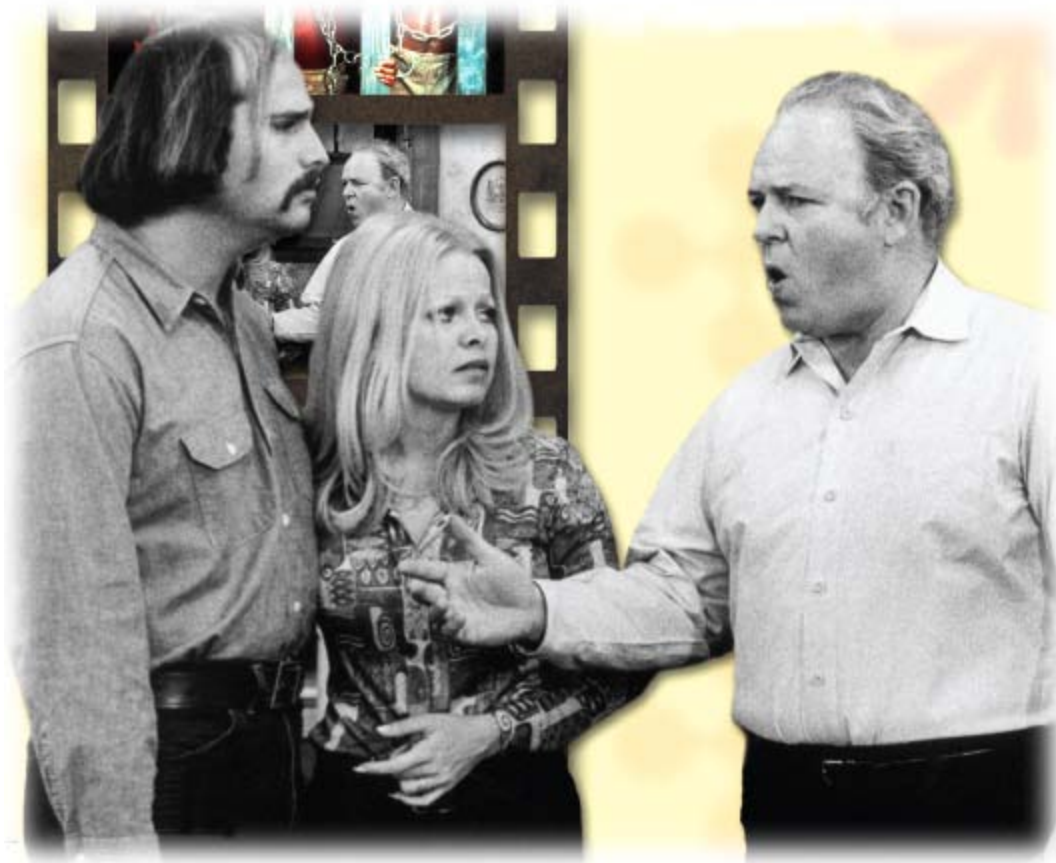
The nation's demographics changed due to immigration and Americans moving south and west.

Life in America changed in other ways:



There was more premarital sex, drug use, and a higher divorce rate.

The 1970s gained the nickname the **me decade** as people focused on themselves.



One of the most popular television shows of the 1970s was *All in the Family*.

The characters debated hot-button social issues. The show signaled a move away from nostalgia and escapism.

A resurgence of fundamental Christianity occurred as a response to the shift in values.



Televangelists reached millions.

Religious conservatives formed alliances with political conservatives.

Objectives

- Compare the policies of Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter toward the Soviet Union.
- Discuss changing U.S. foreign policy in the developing world.
- Identify the successes and failures of Carter's foreign policy in the Middle East.



Terms and People

- **Helsinki Accords** – a document that put the nations of Europe on record in favor of human rights, endorsed by the U.S. and Soviet Union in a 1975 meeting
- **human rights** – the basic rights that every human being is entitled to have
- **SALT II** – an agreement between the United States and Soviet Union to limit nuclear arms production
- **boat people** – people who fled communist-controlled Vietnam on boats, looking for refuge in Southeast Asia, the United States, and Canada

Terms and People (continued)

- **sanctions** – penalties
- **developing world** – the poor nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America
- **Camp David Accords** – agreements that provided the framework for a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel
- **Ayatollah Khomeini** – a fundamentalist Islamic cleric who took power in Iran when the Shah fled in 1979



What were the goals of American foreign policy during the Ford and Carter years, and how successful were Ford's and Carter's policies?

The Vietnam War caused many Americans to question the direction of the nation's foreign policy.

Debates about détente, human rights, and which regimes deserved American support became part of the national conversation.

Gerald Ford continued Nixon's policies of détente with the Soviet Union after he took office in 1974.



The United States continued disarmament talks with the Soviets that led to **SALT II**.



Ford also endorsed the **Helsinki Accords**, a document that put major nations on record in support of **human rights**.

The U.S. sought to put the Vietnam War in the past.



South Vietnam fell to the communists. Many of the **boat people** eventually found refuge in the United States and Canada.

Early in his presidency, Jimmy Carter continued Nixon's and Ford's policies toward the Soviet Union.

In June 1979, Carter signed the SALT II arms control treaty despite opposition from many Americans who believed it jeopardized U.S. security. The U.S. Senate held heated debates about whether to vote for the treaty, which angered the Soviet Union.

Despite the signed treaty, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to support its communist government. Carter withdrew SALT II from Congress and imposed **sanctions** on the Soviets.

Jimmy Carter changed the course of American foreign policy by declaring it would be guided by a concern for human rights.

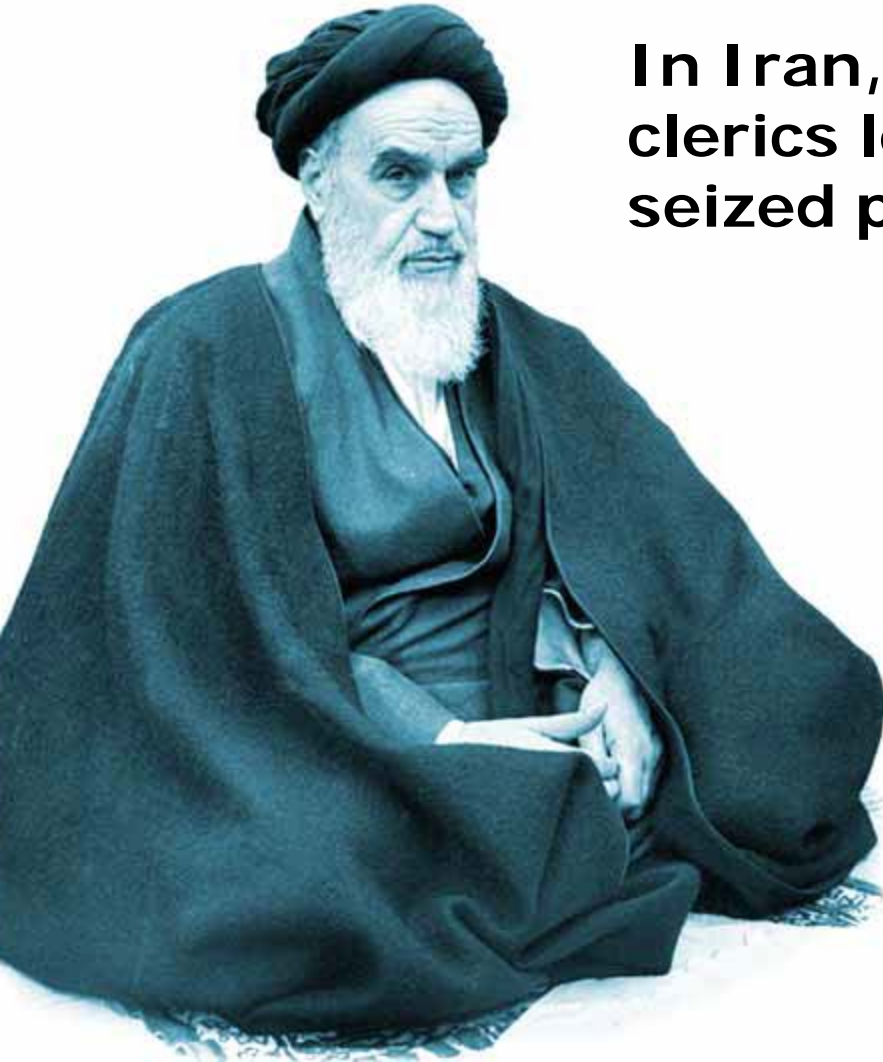
Carter's beliefs about human rights **changed the way that the U.S. dealt with countries in the developing world**. The U.S. stopped sending money to countries that ignored their citizens' rights, such as Nicaragua.

Carter also decided to **return the Panama Canal Zone to Panama** by 1999. Although some Americans feared that this would weaken national security, the Canal Zone treaties were ratified in 1978 and Panama now has full control of the canal.



Carter helped to negotiate a peace agreement between Egypt and Israel known as the **Camp David Accords**.

Egypt became the first Arab nation to officially recognize the nation of Israel.



In Iran, fundamentalist Islamic clerics led by **Ayatollah Khomeini** seized power.

Radical students took over the U.S. Embassy and held **66 Americans** hostage.

President Carter **failed to win all of the hostages' release**—evidence to some that his foreign policy was not tough enough.

The hostage crisis showed that the Soviet Union was no longer the only threat to America.



Conflicts in the Middle East threatened to become the greatest foreign policy challenge for the United States.