

Ch 27 The Postwar Boom

Section 1 Postwar America

Readjustment and Recovery

The Impact of the GI Bill

- 1944 **GI Bill of Rights** eases veterans' return to civilian life
- Pays partial tuition, unemployment benefits; provides low-interest loans

Housing Crisis

- 10 million returning veterans face housing shortage
- Developers use assembly-line methods to mass-produce houses and build **suburbs**—small residential communities around cities

Redefining the Family

- Tensions from changed gender roles during war increase divorce rate

Economic Readjustment

- Over 1 million defense workers laid off; wages drop for many workers
- Price controls end; 25% increase in cost of scarce consumer goods
- Congress reestablishes price, wage, rent controls

Remarkable Recovery

- People have savings, service pay, war bonds; buy goods long missed
- Cold War keeps defense spending up; foreign aid creates markets

Meeting Economic Challenges

President Truman's Inheritance

- **Harry S. Truman** can make difficult decisions, take responsibility

Truman Faces Strikes

- 1946, higher prices, lower wages lead 4.5 million to strike
- Truman seizes mines, threatens to take over railroads
- Threatens to draft workers; unions give in

“Had Enough?”

- Republicans win Senate, House; ignore Truman's domestic policy
- Congress passes Taft-Hartley Act, overturns many union rights

Social Unrest Persists

Truman Supports Civil Rights

- African Americans, especially veterans, demand rights as citizens
- Congress rejects civil rights laws; Truman issues executive orders:
 - integrates armed forces; ends discrimination in government hiring

The 1948 Election

- Southern Democrats—**Dixiecrats**—protest civil rights, form own party; nominate J. Strom Thurmond for president in 1948
- Truman calls special session; asks Congress for social legislation
- Congress refuses; Truman goes on “whistlestop campaign”

Stunning Upset

- Truman defeats Thomas E. Dewey in close political upset with his relentless campaign against a “do-nothing” Congress
- Democrats regain control of Congress, lose some Southern states

The Fair Deal

- Truman's **Fair Deal** is ambitious economic program, includes:
 - higher minimum wage, flood control projects, low-income housing

- Congress passes parts of Fair Deal

Republicans Take the Middle Road

I Like Ike!

- Truman's approval rating drops over Korean War, McCarthyism
 - decides not to run for reelection
- Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower "Ike" runs against IL governor Adlai Stevenson
- Newspapers accuse VP candidate Richard M. Nixon of corruption
 - defends self in televised "Checkers speech"
 - Nixon 1st politician to skillfully use the new medium of TV
- Eisenhower wins; Republicans narrowly take Congress

Walking the Middle of the Road

- Eisenhower conservative about money, liberal on social issues
- Ike tries to avoid civil rights movement, which is gaining strength
- Popularity soars; is reelected in 1956