

Ch 28 Section 3 The Great Society

LBJ's Path to Power

From the Texas Hills to Capitol Hill

- As Congressman, **Lyndon Baines Johnson** mentored, helped by FDR
- 1948, LBJ narrowly wins Senate seat

A Master Politician

- 1955, LBJ becomes Senate majority leader
- “LBJ treatment”—ability to persuade senators to support his bills
- Gets Civil Rights Act of 1957 passed—voting rights measure
- LBJ helps Kennedy win key Southern states in presidential election

Johnson's Domestic Agenda

The War on Poverty

- 1964 tax cut spurs economic growth; lowers federal deficit
- 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination, allows enforcement
- LBJ declares “war on poverty”
- **Economic Opportunity Act:** education, training, small business loans
- Includes Job Corps, VISTA, Head Start, Community Action Program

The 1964 Election

- Republicans nominate Senator Barry Goldwater
- Goldwater: government should not deal with social, economic problems
- Threatens to bomb North Vietnam, advocates intervention
- LBJ says will not send troops to Vietnam; wins by landslide
- Democrats big majority; Southern Democrats not needed to pass bills

Building the Great Society

The Great Society

- **Great Society**—LBJ's legislation to end poverty, discrimination; there was a conservative backlash
- Johnson gets Congress to pass 206 of his bills

Healthcare

- **Medicare**—low-cost medical, hospital insurance for senior citizens
- **Medicaid**—health insurance for welfare recipients

Housing

- Money set aside for public housing; low-, moderate-income homes
- Dept. of Housing and Urban Development created
- Robert Weaver is first African American in cabinet, HUD secretary

Immigration

- Existing immigration quotas discriminate against non-Western Europeans
- **Immigration Act of 1965** ends quotas based on nationality

The Environment

- Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* exposes dangers of pesticides
- Water Quality Act of 1965 requires states to clean up rivers
- LBJ orders government to search out worst chemical polluters

Consumer Protection

- Laws set standards for consumer labels, auto safety, food safety

Reforms of the Warren Court

The Warren Court

- **Warren Court**—Supreme Court under Chief Justice Earl Warren
- Rejects loyalty oaths, affirms free speech, church-state separation

Congressional Reapportionment

- **Reapportionment**—way states redraw election districts by population
- Court rules districts must have approximately equal population
- Leads to shift in political power from rural to urban areas

Rights of the Accused

- Warren Court rulings expand rights of people accused of crimes:
 - illegally seized evidence cannot be used in court
 - courts must provide legal counsel to poor
 - suspect must be read rights before questioning
- Some praise protection of right to a fair trial
- Others think rulings handicap police investigations

Impact of the Great Society

Social and Economic Effects

- Post-WW II, LBJ extends federal power more than all other presidents
- Poverty drops from 21% of population in 1962 to 11% in 1973
- Massive tax cut spurs economy; Great Society contributes to deficit
- Debate over finances, effectiveness of programs, government role