

## Ch 29 Civil Rights

### Section 1 Taking on Segregation

#### The Segregation System

##### *Plessy v. Ferguson*

- Civil Rights Act of 1875 act outlawed segregation
- In 1883, all-white Supreme Court declares Act unconstitutional
- 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling: separate but equal constitutional
- Many states pass Jim Crow laws separating the races
- Facilities for blacks always inferior to those for whites

#### Segregation Continues into the 20th Century

- After Civil War, African Americans go north to escape racism
- North: housing in all-black areas, whites resent job competition

#### A Developing Civil Rights Movement

- WW II creates job opportunities for African Americans
- Need for fighting men makes armed forces end discriminatory policies
- FDR ends government, war industries discrimination
- Returning black veterans fight for civil rights at home

#### Challenging Segregation in Court

##### The NAACP Legal Strategy

- Professor Charles Hamilton Houston leads NAACP legal campaign
- Focuses on most glaring inequalities of segregated public education
- Places team of law students under **Thurgood Marshall**
  - win 29 out of 32 cases argued before Supreme Court

##### *Brown v. Board of Education*

- Marshall's greatest victory is *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*
- In 1954 case, Court unanimously strikes down school segregation
- In the field of public education, "separate but equal" has no place.

#### Reaction to the *Brown* Decision

##### Resistance to School Desegregation

- Within 1 year, over 500 school districts desegregate
- Some districts, state officials, pro-white groups actively resist
- Court hands *Brown II*, orders desegregation at "all deliberate speed"
- Eisenhower refuses to enforce compliance; considers it impossible

##### Crisis in Little Rock

- Since 1948, Arkansas integrating state university, private groups
- Gov. Orval Faubus has National Guard turn away black students
- Elizabeth Eckford faces abusive crowd when she tries to enter school
- Eisenhower has Nat. Guard, paratroopers supervise school attendance
- African-American students harassed by whites at school all year
- 1957 Civil Rights Act—federal government power over schools, voting

#### The Montgomery Bus Boycott

##### Boycotting Segregation

- 1955 NAACP officer **Rosa Parks** arrested for not giving up seat on bus
- Montgomery Improvement Association formed, organizes bus boycott
- Elect 26-year-old Baptist pastor **Martin Luther King, Jr.** leader

#### Walking for Justice

- African Americans file lawsuit, boycott buses, use carpools, walk
- Get support from black community, outside groups, sympathetic whites
- 1956, Supreme Court outlaws bus segregation

### **Martin Luther King and the SCLC**

#### **Changing the World with Soul Force**

- King calls his brand of nonviolent resistance “soul force”
  - civil disobedience, massive demonstrations
- King remains nonviolent in face of violence after *Brown* decision

#### **From the Grassroots Up**

- King, others found **Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)**
- By 1960, African-American students think pace of change too slow
- Join **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)**

#### **The Movement Spreads**

##### **Demonstrating for Freedom**

- SNCC adopts nonviolence, but calls for more confrontational strategy
- Influenced by Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) to use **sit-ins**:
  - refuse to leave segregated lunch counter until served
- First sit-in at Greensboro, NC Woolworth’s shown nationwide on TV
- In spite of abuse, arrests, movement grows, spreads to North
- Late 1960, lunch counters desegregated in 48 cities in 11 states