OPTION 3C: A DIVIDED UNION? THE USA 1945-70

Key Topic 1: McCARTHYISM AND THE RED SCARE

The impact of the Cold War, 1945-50

- The fear of communism in the USA grew because of the development of the Cold War in the years after 1945 which worsened relations between the USA and the USSR.

- The US President, Truman, and Soviet leader Stalin, first clashed at the peace conference at Potsdam in July 1945 over the treatment of Germany and Soviet ambitions in Eastern Europe.

- The war ended in August 1945 and throughout the first months of peace, relations between the two Superpowers worsened.

- The USA genuinely feared Soviet expansion in Eastern and then possibly Western Europe.

- In March 1946, Churchill talked of an ‘iron curtain’ separating the West and East in Europe – there seemed to be clear hostility between the former allies.

- The British inability to stem communism in Greece led President Truman to issue the Truman Doctrine.

- However, the supreme effort to contain communism came with the Marshall Plan which gave US economic aid to countries in Western Europe.

- In 1948, the Soviet Union prevented the development of democracy in Czechoslovakia and ensured the Czech Communist Party was able to take control of the government.

- The Berlin Blockade of 1948–49 indicated that Stalin was prepared to risk war in the hope of removing the Allies from Berlin, when he stopped all land transport into the city.

- The success of the Communist Party in China in 1949 indicated the ‘danger’ of communism as a truly worldwide threat.

- The Western countries formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), which stated that an attack on any NATO member was seen as an attack on the whole alliance.

- The invasion of South Korea by communist controlled North Korea in 1950 convinced many in the USA that the fear of communism had spread to Asia and had to be contained.
The development of the Red Scare

- Growing US involvement in Cold War politics after 1945 encouraged the view that difficulties faced abroad resulted from treason and subversion at home.

- After World War Two, increasing numbers of Democrats and Republicans took up these anti-Communist views and many Americans became subject to loyalty oaths.

- In 1945, a raid on the offices of a pro-Communist magazine revealed that classified documents had been given to the periodical by two State Department employees and a naval intelligence officer.

- In March 1947, Truman issued Executive Order 9835 establishing loyalty checks on all government workers which included their associations and beliefs.

- Between 1947 and 1951, loyalty boards forced nearly 3,000 government employees to resign and a further 300 were sacked on charges of disloyalty.

- By the end of the Truman presidency in 1953, 39 states had loyalty programmes. Schoolteachers, college professors and state and city employees were forced to sign loyalty oaths or lose their jobs.

- In 1947 The House Un-American Activities Committee began hearings to expose Communist influence in American life. Those refusing to answer HUAC questions often lost their jobs.

- HUAC extended its investigations into the entertainment industry. The most famous case involved the Hollywood Ten. These were ten writers and producers had to testify before HUAC.

- They refused to answer, pleading the Fifth Amendment. They were found guilty of contempt of Congress and put in jail for a year.

- In the middle of the 1948 presidential election campaign, HUAC conducted a sensational hearing in which Whittaker Chambers, a senior editor at Time magazine and a former Soviet agent identified Hiss as an underground party member throughout the 1930s.

- Hiss had worked for the Supreme Court, was at Yalta with Roosevelt and in 1948 was working for a peace organisation.

- However, later that year, 1948, Nixon was invited to Chambers' farm; Chambers took Nixon to a pumpkin patch, pulled off the top of a pumpkin and took out a roll of microfilm.
In 1950, Hiss was tried for perjury and sentenced to five years in jail. This further increased the fear of communism in the USA as many Americans believed that communism spies and sympathisers had infiltrated key positions in government agencies.

In September 1950, at the height of the Hiss Case and the beginning of the Rosenberg Case, Congress passed the McCarran Internal Security Act.

The McCarran Act meant that the Communist Party had to register with the justice department to ensure that the party and its members could be carefully monitored.

In February 1950, the British arrested Klaus Fuchs, a German-born scientist involved in The Manhattan Project for passing atomic secrets to the Soviets.

The confession made by Fuchs led to the arrest of two Americans, Ethel and John Rosenberg as fellow conspirators.

The Rosenbergs spent two years on ‘death row’. They made several appeals against their sentence, all of which failed. They were executed in June 1953.

The impact of McCarthyism

The fear of communism in the USA was turned into hysteria by Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin.

In February 1950, McCarthy claimed to have ‘a list of 205 names known to The Secretary of State as being members of the Communist Party and who nevertheless are still working and shaping policy’.

A Senate Committee was set up to investigate but found his accusations ‘a fraud and a hoax’. The committee chairman was accused of being a communist.

McCarthy persisted with his campaign despite the continuing absence of supporting evidence. He ridiculed US Secretary of State Dean Acheson as the ‘Red Dean’.

He received support from many sections of US society. Many Republicans encouraged McCarthy.

For millions of American citizens, McCarthy offered simple answers to complex Cold War questions.

McCarthy was made Chairman of the Government Committee on Operations of the Senate. This enabled him to investigate state bodies and also interview hundreds of individuals about their political beliefs.

During his interrogations, which were televised, he bullied the accused. His hearings and public statements ruined the lives of many people.
HUAC still continued to seek out possible communists or communist sympathisers, especially in the film industry. Many actors and writers were blacklisted and unable to secure work or several years.

In late 1952, McCarthy’s researchers investigated libraries to see whether they contained books written by communists. Many books were now banned.

Eisenhower disliked McCarthy intensely but was reluctant to confront him whereas Richard Nixon, the vice-presidential candidate continued to use his ideas to portray the Democrats as liberals and pro-Communist.

Eisenhower dealt with the communist threat in his own way. He set up a Federal Loyalty Programme, similar to that of Truman. In addition, he introduced the Communist Control Act. This limited the rights of the party and made membership very difficult.

In 1954, McCarthy accused the army of harbouring Communist spies whilst, in response, the army charged McCarthy with using his influence to obtain preferential treatment for a staff member who had been drafted.

The Army-McCarthy Senate hearings began in April 1954 and were televised throughout the nation. The American public saw, for the first time, the true nature of McCarthy – the bully who had no hard evidence.

McCarthy was aggressive in his cross-examination of witnesses. On the other hand, the army attorney, Joseph Welsh, was calm in his manner. His claim against the army was dismissed.

McCarthy also faced challenges from the media. In March 1954 the popular television broadcaster and journalist, Ed Murrow, made a documentary which exposed McCarthy was a bully whose claims had no substance.

In December 1954, he was officially rebuked by the Committee Chairman for endless interruptions and for showing contempt for its proceedings. McCarthy then lost the chairmanship of the Committee on Operations of the Senate.

Although McCarthy died in 1957, the fears that he had exploited lingered on. Congress still continued to fund The House Un-American Activities Committee and many state and local governments continued to regard Communists and other liberals within the United States as a threat.

The words ‘red’, ‘pinko’ and ‘commie’ were seen as unpatriotic and a threat to the USA. Anyone who tried to change the USA, such as the civil rights campaigners, was seen as communist.
Key Topic 2 THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, 1945-62

- Black Americans (about 12% of all US citizens) are descended from the slaves brought over from Africa to work the tobacco, cotton and sugar plantations. They were theoretically freed in 1863, but still suffered from poverty, segregation and discrimination of all kinds.

- In the southern states in the USA blacks had their own separate, cafes, cinemas, transport, and toilets.

- ‘Jim Crow’ Laws prevented blacks from voting and enforced separate, and unequal, schools. These were state laws that forced, for example, blacks to pass tests in order to vote. Thirty-two states had segregated schools.

- The NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People) was founded in 1909 and particularly tried to raise the issue of their denial of civil rights.

- The Second World War provided black Americans with a good opportunity to push for civil rights.

- 700,000 Black Americans moved north and west from the southern states to find work in the war industries.

- In 1941 Philip Randolph organised a march of 100,000 on Washington, with the slogan ‘We loyal Americans demand the right to work and fight for our country’.

- In 1942 CORE, the Congress of Racial Equality was set up and black newspapers set up the Double V campaign. Victory over Hitler and Victory in the struggle for equality.

- By 1946 the NAACP, the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, had 460,000 members. This was more than ten times its membership in 1940.

- Roosevelt attempted to force industry to employ blacks if they wanted to receive government contracts. In 1941 he issued Executive Order 8802. It said:

- In 1941 Roosevelt set up the Fair Employment Practices Committee to enforce the order, but had no power to compel companies to follow his policy.

- Race riots broke out in Detroit in June 1943 and thirty-four people were killed and $2,000,000 worth of damage was caused. Black soldiers also rioted in nine army training camps because they were receiving unequal treatment.
By the end of the war some units in the army were desegregated. General Eisenhower, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe personally supported integrated units.

At the beginning of the war there were only twelve black officers in the US Army and black soldiers were often given routine tasks to perform.

By the end of the war much had changed. Black officers were also appointed in all three services and the Air Force began to train black pilots, 600 in all by the end of the war.

Altogether about 1,000,000 black Americans served in the armed forces. They found themselves involved in a struggle against a racist dictator, while they were themselves subject to racist discrimination at home.

Many were sent to Europe where they served in countries that had no racial bars. When they returned to the USA in 1945 it was even harder to accept the return to discrimination.

Whatever the experiences of black Americans during the war, in 1945 they returned to the USA where many were unable to vote and were condemned to be second class citizens. In this respect the war was a big boost to the civil rights movement.

Progress, especially in education and problems in implementation

In 1945 Roosevelt died and was succeeded by his Vice-President Harry Truman. In 1946 President Truman set up a President’s Committee on Civil Rights and produced a programme of reforms in 1947, including a bill to outlaw lynching and ban Jim Crow Laws, but this was crushed by Congress.

In 1948, Truman issued an Executive Order ending segregation in units in the armed forces. This came into effect in 1950 and was in force during the Korean War.

In 1950 the Supreme Court declared that black and white student could not be segregated in the same school and that the education provided in segregated schools had to be equal in every respect.

This gave the NAACP an important foothold. Segregated schools were very rarely equal in every respect. The whole point of segregation was to ensure privileged treatment for some. Their big opportunity came in 1954.

The Brown v Topeka Case

In 1954 Oliver Brown was told by the Topeka Board of Education in Kansas that his seven year old daughter Linda could not attend her nearest school.
Brown used the Supreme Court ruling to take the City of Topeka in Kansas to court for forcing his daughter to attend a school a long way away, instead of being allowed to go to the nearby whites only school.

The NAACP supported the case and Brown was represented by Thurgood Marshall, who later became the first black member of the Supreme Court. Eventually Oliver Brown won his case. In 1954 the Supreme Court declared that all segregated schools were illegal, because separate must mean unequal.

The following year the Supreme Court ordered all states with segregated schools to integrate black and white schoolchildren. But this was easier said than done.

In 1956, the University of Alabama refused to accept Authorine Lucy as a student despite a government court order.

**Emmett Till**

The extent of racial hatred in the USA was revealed in 1955 when Emmett Till, a black boy from Chicago, visited relatives in Mississippi.

His friends dared him to speak to a white woman in a store. As he left, after buying some sweets, he said ‘bye baby’.

The store-keeper seized him and three days later the body of the body was found dead. He had a bullet in his head and his skull was crushed.

An all white Jury found the store-keeper and his half-brother, both of whom were white, not guilty after an hour of deliberation.

**Little Rock**

Despite the appalling case of the death of Emmett Till, the campaign for equality of education continued. In 1957 Elizabeth Eckford and eight other black students tried to enrol at Little Rock High School in Arkansas.

She was stopped by the State Governor, Orval Faubus, who surrounded the school with the state National Guard.

When the nine black students tried to enrol on 5 September, they were faced by a crowd of more than 1,000. After lunch they were escorted home by the police.

Press and TV coverage in the USA and across the world was a serious embarrassment to the USA – a country which apparently championed freedom and equality.

President Eisenhower sent federal troops to escort Elizabeth Eckford and protect her and the other students.
After a month they were replaced by National Guardsmen under the orders of the President, they stayed at the school for a year.

In 1957 Eisenhower introduced the first Civil Rights Act since 1875. It set up a commission to prosecute anybody who tried to deny American citizens their rights.

The demonstrations were seen on television and in newspapers across the world. Many US citizens saw, for the first time, the racial hatred that existed in the southern states.

Governor Faubus attempted to get round the President's action by closing all the schools in Arkansas in September 1958.

He was forced to reopen them to black and white students by the Supreme Court.

However, even after Little Rock, progress on integration was slow. By 1963 there were only 30,000 children at mixed schools in the South, out of a total of 2,900,000 and none at all in Alabama, Mississippi or South Carolina.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott

In 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give her seat on a bus to a white man.

When Rosa Parks refused to give her seat to a white man, the bus driver stopped the bus and she was arrested.

The Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) was set up to organise a boycott of buses, led by a local church minister, Martin Luther King.

Martin Luther King organised a boycott of the buses which lasted for a year. All of the Black Americans in Montgomery and the surrounding area walked rather than use the buses.

Eventually the bus company was compelled to give in and desegregate the buses.

Throughout the boycott, there were appeals to the Supreme Court challenging segregation on buses. In 1956 the Supreme Court said that segregation on buses was also illegal.

A peaceful approach had brought about a significant victory. It had shown that black Americans could organise themselves.

The boycott established King as the leader of the civil rights movement. His energy and enthusiasm were a major reason for the success of the campaign.
• He followed the methods used by Gandhi when campaigning for independence for India – non violent civil disobedience.

**Martin Luther King and further progress and problems, 1958-62**

• Following the boycott King set up the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and became its president in 1957.

**Sit-ins**

• The first was at Woolworth’s in Greensboro North Carolina, where eighty-five students demanded to be served at a whites only counter.

• When they were refused they organised a sit-in. They sat at the counters waiting to be served but did not react to intimidation, threats or abuse.

• Altogether 70,000 took part and 3,600 went to jail. When whites turned violent there was widespread television coverage and support for Civil Rights.

• Other variations of sit-ins developed to try to end segregation. There were ‘kneel-ins’ in churches, ‘wade-ins’ in swimming baths and ‘read-ins’ in libraries.

• By 1961, 810 towns and cities were desegregated. The civil rights movement gained much publicity when television highlighted the non-violence of the protestors in the face of violence from some white racists.

• Student protests also began to be organised by the Student Non-violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC), which was formed in April 1960. Many students dropped out of their studies to work full-time for civil rights.

**Freedom Riders**

• The Supreme Court decided in December 1960 that all bus stations and terminals that served interstate travellers should be integrated.

• In 1961 King and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) wanted to test that decision by using the tactic of the freedom ride.

• The Freedom Riders began to make bus journeys to break Jim Crow Laws. The first of the freedom riders was in May 1961, when thirteen CORE volunteers left Washington DC by bus to travel to New Orleans.

• At Anniston, Alabama, a bus was attacked and burnt. In Birmingham, there was no protection and the freedom riders were attacked by an angry mob. The police chief, Bull Connor, had given the police the day off.
Nevertheless, they had gained tremendous publicity. The Freedom Riders wanted to put pressure on the Kennedy. They succeeded; later the same year all railway and bus stations were desegregated by the Interstate Commerce Committee.

### John F Kennedy and civil rights

- It soon became clear that Kennedy intended to do more than pay lip service to the cause of civil rights.
- He began to appoint black Americans to important positions. His brother Robert, who was Attorney General, prosecuted people who tried to prevent blacks from voting.
- In the same year both the Kennedy’s held meetings with the main civil rights groups, including the SNCC, CORE and the NAACP. Between them they formed the Voter Education Project.
- This was intended to help black Americans register for the vote and so increase the number of black voters. There was a large increase in the number of black voters, but instances of intimidation of blacks also increased and houses and property were burnt.
- In June 1962, the Supreme Court had upheld a federal court decision to force Mississippi University to accept James Meredith. The University did not want any black students and Meredith was prevented from registering.
- President Kennedy sent the National Guard and federal troops into Mississippi to make sure that a black student, James Meredith, could take his place at a university. But when rioting followed, 23,000 troops were needed to keep order.
- There were riots and two people were killed and 70 were wounded. Soldiers had to remain on the campus until he received his degree, three years later.
Key Topic 3: CHANGES IN THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, 1963-70

Peace marches in 1963: Washington and Alabama

- Despite his clear support for civil rights, Kennedy had still shown no sign of introducing a Civil Rights Bill to Congress.

Events in Birmingham, Alabama

- In 1962 the city of Birmingham closed all public parks, buildings, playing fields and swimming pools to avoid integrating them.

- Martin Luther King organised a campaign to force the city to back down. He wanted to achieve maximum publicity for civil rights.

- The Police Commissioner, Eugene ‘Bull’ Connor responded with water cannon, dogs and baton charges. Arrests reached 500 a day, but it was all shown on television and most people were sickened by the violence.

- In 1963 Kennedy forced the city to give way and Alabama, the last state, was forced to allow desegregated schools.

- The impact of the events in Birmingham went far beyond the city and the state. The television coverage had a dramatic effect on US and world opinion.

- President Kennedy was also influenced by the events in Birmingham and at last introduced a Civil Rights Bill to Congress. However, it got bogged down, partly because of opposition from Kennedy’s own party the Democrats, who were strong in the South.

- The problem that Kennedy faced was that he had made too many enemies amongst the supporters of segregation. He was a young brash, Catholic from New England. Nobody could have been further removed from the old-fashioned, landed gentry of the South.

- His lack of political experience meant that his measures were soon bogged down in the mire of Congressional politics. By the time he was assassinated in November 1963, he had 97 measures stuck in Congress.

The March on Washington

- Martin Luther King tried to put pressure on the President and planned a march through Washington.
Kennedy asked King to call it off, but he refused and 200,000 people marched and heard King speak. It has been estimated that there were about 80,000 white supporters.

King was the final speaker of the day during which he made one of the most famous speeches of the twentieth century – ‘I have a dream’.

**Martin Luther King and civil rights legislation**

- King’s campaigns played a key role in bringing about the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts.

**The Civil Rights Act 1964**

- Johnson was a southerner from Texas, where segregation was common, so it was surprising that he forced Congress to accept the act. This was partly a result of Kennedy’s assassination, but also because Johnson had been a schoolteacher who had seen the effects of segregation.

- He was also a skilled and ruthless politician who knew how Congress worked. With opposition weakening after Kennedy's assassination, Johnson forced the legislation through Congress with little difficulty.

- The Civil Rights Act made segregation in education and housing illegal. It stated that all Americans were entitled to equal employment opportunities and that all Federal projects must include racial integration.

**Voting Rights campaign**

- Having achieved a Civil Rights Act, King went on with his campaign and tried to encourage more black Americans to register for the vote.

- He targeted the town of Selma, Alabama, for his non-violent campaign. Here there were only 383 black American voters who had been able to register out of a possible 15,000.

- The march was to start at Selma and end at Birmingham where they would present a petition to Governor Wallace. Wallace banned the march but King ignored the ban.

- The march was stopped on the Edmund Petrus Bridge in Selma and the marchers were attacked by Sheriff Clark’s men and state troopers using tear gas, horses and clubs.

- A second march took place two days later. King, however, turned the marchers back because he had agreed with President Johnson that he would avoid another violent confrontation if Johnson introduced a Voting Rights bill.
The Voting Rights Act, 1965, made it illegal to try to prevent blacks from registering for the vote by setting literacy tests for voters. 1,000,000 more black voters were added to the registers.

Malcolm X and Black Power

Malcolm X

- The reasons for the rejection of non-violent protest were complex. For some activists Martin Luther King’s tactics were simply taking too long.

- They were legally entitled to equality and did not see why they should wait for whites to be persuaded of the justice of their arguments.

- For others it was not just a matter of speed, it was a belief that no matter how well meaning whites were, blacks would never be accepted.

- Malcolm X was not just rejecting King’s tactics; he was also rejecting his aims. Malcolm X did not want to be integrated into white society. He wanted a separate black society.

- Malcolm X’s beliefs were exemplified in his refusal to use his surname, Little, which came from his Baptist parents and his support for the Nation of Islam, a militant black Muslim organisation, which had been founded in the 1930s.

- Malcolm X accepted that black Americans had the right to use violence in self-defence if they were attacked. At first he was regarded with horror by many whites.

- The growing interest in Islam amongst black Americans was also a sign of a basic change in the campaigns for civil rights.

- Islam was seen as a black religion. The Nation of Islam, or Black Muslims, was not only an alternative belief, but also represented an alternative society. It founded mosques and schools in the USA to teach the faith and educate its members.

- However, by the mid-1960s Malcolm X was beginning to moderate his stance. After a pilgrimage to Mecca he converted to mainstream Islam and began to talk in terms of a brotherhood of black and white.

- This led to a split with the Nation of Islam and its leader Elijah Muhammed. Malcolm X was assassinated in 1965 probably by Black Muslims who regarded him as a traitor.
Black Power

- After Malcolm X’s murder, leadership of what became known as the Black Power Movement passed to Stokeley Carmichael. He had become leader of the SNCC in 1964, but King’s death led him to more radical views.

- Black Power was a rejection of the idea of integration and in some cases a demand for a separate black society.

- There had already been serious trouble in 1965. In the Watts area of Los Angeles 34 people had died and 1,000 buildings were destroyed when frustration amongst young blacks got out of hand.

- There were further riots in the next three years in Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland and New York. 1967 was the worst year, with 150 cities affected. It seemed that civil war was breaking out in the USA.

- Black Power reached a peak when some US athletes demonstrated at the Olympic Games in Mexico in 1968. Two medallists in the 400 metres raised their right arms in the Black Power salute when the anthem was played after the medals had been awarded.

The Black Panthers

- The Black Panthers wanted full employment, good housing and adequate education. They wore uniforms and were prepared to use weapons. By the end of 1968 they had 5,000 members

- In 1969, 27 Panthers were killed and 700 were injured in clashes with the police. They gradually lost influence and were eventually disbanded in 1982.

- In response to Black Power, President Johnson appointed Governor Kerner of Illinois to head a commission in 1967 to discover what was causing the riots.

- The Kerner Report was published in April 1968 and stated that the main cause was frustration of young blacks.

Further progress in later 1960s

- In the same month Martin Luther King was assassinated by James Earl Ray. This led to a new wave of riots in 130 cities.

- The unrest and the Kerner Report brought positive action by the Federal Government. In April 1968, the Open Housing Law banned discrimination in the sale or rental of houses.
In the same year a second Civil Rights Act was passed. This banned discrimination in housing and made it a Federal offence to injure civil rights workers, or even to cross a state boundary with the intention of committing such a crime.

In 1969 the Supreme Court ruled that desegregation of schools should begin ‘at once’. Since separate schools had been declared illegal in 1954, progress had clearly been slow.

The Supreme Court decision created problems, however. Creating desegregated schools was not easy. The usual solution was ‘bussing’, which meant taking pupils from one neighbourhood to another by bus.

White parents objected to their children being sent to schools several miles away, where academic standards could be lower. Black parents objected to white children arriving in schools that had been previously all black.

The National Black Political Convention believed that the move was racist.

By the end of the 1960s the attempts to improve civil rights for black Americans were beginning to have some effect.

In education, black Americans still suffered from discrimination because facilities were poorer than those provided for white children. But despite these disadvantages, civil rights became a less important issue in the USA.

There was also increasing evidence of positive discrimination in appointments to Federal posts. This had begun under Kennedy but continued throughout the 1960s and 1970s.
Key Topic 4: OTHER PROTEST MOVEMENTS IN THE 1960s

The reasons for student protest

Youth culture

- The 1950s was a decade of frustration and anger for many young Americans. They wanted to rebel against everything, especially what their parents believed. This frustration led to the formation of teenage gangs and heavy drinking.

- Teenagers discovered an alternative culture – rock ‘n roll music. Elvis Presley, with his tight jeans, became a cult figure. Parents hated it but this only made it more attractive to the young who identified with James Dean in the film ‘Rebel without a Cause’.

- The young and the student movement were very much influenced by the explosion in pop music some of which protested against important issues of the day.

- Bob Dylan led the way. His lyrics covered the themes of the changing times, nuclear war, racism and the hypocrisy of waging war.

- The songs were about peace, free love and drugs. Artists such as Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin and Joan Baez, sang about sex, drugs and opposition to the war in Vietnam.

Vietnam

- US involvement in the war in Vietnam united the student movement. Half a million young Americans were fighting in the war and many others would be called up by the draft or conscription system.

- Opposition to the war grew with the number of casualties. In 1965 there was less than 2000 US casualties. By 1968 the number had increased to 14000.

- The methods of warfare used by the USA in Vietnam intensified student protest.

- The media also encouraged student opposition. The war in Vietnam was the first to be televised in great detail. Colour television, readily accessible by the late 1960s, worsened the bloody nature of what was shown.

Other reasons

- The student movement in the USA was also influenced by student protests all over the world. For example in 1968 students demonstrations in Paris were so serious that they almost overthrew the government.
President Kennedy’s assassination in 1963, angered and disillusioned many young Americans and drove them into protest movements

For many young Americans, white and black, their first experience of protest was in civil rights.

**Key features of the student movement**

**The SDS**

- One of the first protest groups to emerge in the USA was the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). It was set up in 1959 by Tom Hayden to give students a greater say in how courses and universities were run.

- The SDS denounced the Cold War and demanded controlled disarmament to avoid the possibility of a nuclear war. It also wanted to help the poor and disadvantaged.

- It eventually formed groups in 150 colleges and universities and had 100,000 members by the end of the 1960s.

- The SDS first became known nationally in 1964, when it organised a sit-in against a ban on political activities at the University of California at Berkeley.

- Membership greatly increased when, in 1966, President Johnson abolished student draft deferments. 300 new SDS branches were set up.

- The SDS organised a variety of activities against the war in Vietnam including staging draft card burnings, harassing campus recruiters for the CIA, occupying buildings in universities and destroying draft card records.

- At the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago, SDS protestors, organised by Tom Hayden, created a riot in order to destroy the election chances of the pro-war candidate, Hubert Humphrey.

- The SDS was heavily involved in anti-war protests which reached their peak during 1968–70. In the first half of 1968, there were over a 100 demonstrations against the war,

**Kent State University**

- The worst incident occurred at Kent State University, Ohio in 1970 where students were holding a peaceful protest against President Nixon’s decision to bomb Cambodia as part of the Vietnam War.

- National Guardsmen, called to disperse the students, used tear gas to try to move them. When they refused to move shots were fired by the Guardsmen. Four people were killed and eleven injured.
The press in the USA and abroad were horrified and some 400 colleges were closed as two million students went on strike in protest against this action.

The Hippy Movement

In the later 1960s, the student movement became more extreme in its views. Some of its members called themselves ‘Weathermen’ and began to support violence to achieve their aims.

They took their name from the Bob Dylan song ‘You don’t need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows’. They bombed army recruitment centres and government buildings.

Other young people decided to ‘drop out’ of society and become hippies. This meant they grew their hair long, wore distinctive clothes and developed an 'alternative lifestyle'.

Because they often wore flowers and handed them out to police, they were called 'flower children', and often settled in communes. San Francisco became the hippie capital of America.

This movement was of particular concern to the older generation because hippies refused to work and experimented in drugs such as marijuana and LSD.

Importance of the student movement

The student movement did influence government policy towards the war in Vietnam. They strongly influenced President Johnson's decision not to seek re-election in 1968 as well as Nixon's later policy of withdrawal and Vietnamisation.

Student support greatly strengthened the civil rights campaign and the attack on white racism. They showed that most American youths would no longer tolerate discrimination and segregation.

Many supporters of the student movement were from comfortable middle class backgrounds. Their views and attitudes profoundly shocked the more conservative older generation.

It had a long lasting effect on the culture of the young, especially fashion. Teenagers became much more aware of their individuality and demanded a greater say in what they wore and did.
The women's movement

Reasons for the movement

- Women had a very traditional role in US society in the 1950s. Indeed women who went out to work instead of getting married were treated with great suspicion by the rest of society.

- One very influential book, ‘Modern Women: the Lost Sex’, actually blamed many of the social problems of the 1950s, such as teenage drinking and delinquency, on career women.

- However, in the 1950s, growing numbers of women, especially from middle-class backgrounds, began to challenge their traditional role as they became increasingly frustrated with life as a housewife.

- Many female teenagers were strongly influenced by the greater freedom of the ‘swinging sixties’ which, in turn, encouraged them to challenge traditional attitudes and roles.

- Women were now much better educated so they could have a professional career. In 1950, there were 721,000 women at university. By 1960, this had reached 1.3 million.

- Eleanor Roosevelt, the widow of President Roosevelt, was asked by President Kennedy to head a commission to investigate the status of women at work.

- The results were reported in 1963 and highlighted women’s second class status in employment.

- 95 per cent of company managers were men and 85 per cent of technical workers. Only seven per cent of doctors were women and even less, four per cent, lawyers.

- Women only earned 50 to 60 per cent of the wages of men who did the same job and generally had low-paid jobs.

- Betty Friedan had an even greater impact on the emergence of the woman’s movement with her book The Feminine Mystique, written in 1963.

- Her book expressed the thoughts of many women – there was more to life than being a mother and housewife.

- Friedan was important because she called for women to reject this ‘mystique’ and called for progress in female employment opportunities. In 1966 she set up the National Organisation for Women (NOW).

- Members of NOW believed that progress was too slow and that the Equal Opportunities Commission did not take female issues seriously.
By the early 1970s, NOW had 40,000 members and had encouraged the formation of other groups such as the National Women's Caucus and the Women's Campaign Fund.

They challenged discrimination in courts and, in a series of cases between 1966 and 1971, secured $30 million in back pay owed to women who had not been paid wages equal to men.

**Achievements of women's movement**

- The Equal Pay Act of 1963 required employers to pay women the same as men for the same job. However, it did not address the issue of discrimination against women seeking jobs in the first place.
- The 1964 Civil Rights Act made it illegal to discriminate on the grounds of gender. The Equal Opportunities Commission did not take female discrimination seriously, so the Act was not fully enforced.
- The Educational Amendment Act of 1972 outlawed sex discrimination in education so that girls could follow exactly the same curriculum as boys.
- In 1972 the Supreme Court ruled that the US Constitution did give men and women equal rights.

**The Women’s Liberation Movement**

- This was the name given to women who had far more extreme aims than NOW. They were also known as feminists and were much more active in challenging discrimination.
- They believed that even not wearing make-up was an act of protest against male supremacy and were determined to get as much publicity for their cause as possible.
- In 1968, others picketed the Miss America beauty contest in Atlantic City and even crowned a sheep 'Miss America'. The whole contest, they argued, degraded the position of women.

**Abortion**

- Abortion was illegal in the USA. Feminists challenged this, arguing it was wrong to force women to have a child they did not want, and began to challenge this through courts of law.
- The most important case was Roe v Wade which lasted from 1970 to 1973. A feminist lawyer, Sarah Weddington, defended the right of one of her clients, Norma McCorvey, named Jane Roe to protect her anonymity, to have an abortion.
She already had three children, who had all been taken into care, and did not want any more children. She won the right to have an abortion. The victory led to abortions becoming more readily available.

Opposition to the women’s movement

Some women opposed the women’s movement: because they believed that NOW was dominated by white middle-class females who did not seem to be doing enough to help poor women.

Others objected to the extreme demands and methods of the Women’s Liberation Movement whilst a number genuinely believed in and accepted the traditional role of women.

Phyllis Schafly was the most important opponent. She was an author and had been active in politics. She had worked as a researcher for several US politicians and had stood for Congress on several occasions between 1952 and 1970.

She set up STOP ERA. ERA stood for the Equal Rights Amendment, proposed by NOW in 1967, to change the US Constitution to guarantee women equality.

She opposed ERA because it would require women to serve in combat and thought it would have a bad influence on family life.