

## Unit 17 Notes- The Age of Limits and Reagan

### *Politics and Diplomacy After Watergate (p. 886-889)*

- Ford takes presidency, issues full pardon to Nixon- controversial
  - Despite being generally well liked, Ford doesn't do much to help economy
  - Inflation heavy- largely due to energy crisis- OPEC cartel raises prices, US buys even more
  - Foreign Policy- generally the same- Kissinger continues similar policies
    - **SALT II**- Continues plan for disarmament
    - Kissinger helps resolve dispute over Egyptian/Israeli land
    - Mao dies- more US friendly government takes place
  - Ford faces challenges from Reagan for being soft on communism in '76 election
    - Jimmy Carter runs good campaign- sows disenchantment with gov.
    - Carter wins election, by not as much as predicted
- Carter faces enormous challenges- but seems to make them worse by being "inflexible"
  - Carter runs as outsider- most of staff is from his previous circle
  - Criticized for lacking vision, direction- initial welfare legislation not passed
  - Economic policies- successfully reduces unemployment, can't help inflation
    - Energy crisis worsens- OPEC keeps hiking prices
    - Carter's calls for tight money, restraint, assigns conservatives to Fed Reserve Board- high interest rates
    - Economy is crippled, major fuel shortage, prices go higher, approval 26%
    - Carter comes up with "**Malaise**" **Speech**- gives negative assessment of economy, only offers some changes
    - Subsequent firing of cabinet members deepens dislike of Carter
- Carter moves foreign policy towards "defense of human rights"
  - Treaty turns Panama Canal over to Panama
  - Carter's finest hour is **Camp David Accords**- successful negotiation of treaty between Egypt and Israel- Carter had mediated during retreat
  - Carter also eases relation with USSR- SALT II, and opens up trade with China
- Shah of Iran is back by US (not communist)- disliked widely for being authoritarian (888)
  - Revolutionist movement against modernization by Shah forces him out of country
  - US tries to make relations with new gov., but country descends into chaos
    - Shah comes to US for medical treatment, armed mob storms US embassy in reaction, takes 53 hostages for over a year
  - USSR invades Afghanistan, Carter enrages, withdraws US from olympics, stops SALT II
  - International turmoil worsens Carter's popularity, political switch ready

### *The Rise of the New American Right (p. 889-895)*

- **Rise of Sunbelt**- CA, TX, FL, etc. rise in population, influence from 1960s-1980s (
  - Traditional populist ideals, radical tendencies unite around conservative politics
    - Anger at gov. involvement, regulation creates anger at liberal policy
    - Rise of "rugged individualism" and attack on gov. Influence

- **Sagebrush Rebellion-** Unified protest against environmental restrictions, tries to portray west as victim in order to allow more development on land (891)
  - Due to conservatism, population growth, US becomes more conservative
  - Suburbs and their homogeneity, afraid of diversity nature also help growing conservative movement
- US experiences religious revival- Evangelical, even radical christianity grows (892)
  - Scientology, Church of Sun Myung Moon, People's Temple
  - New popularity largely due to evangelical emergence from rural poverty
    - "Born again" evangelicals become middle class- increasing voice and influence- 70 million members including Jimmy Carter
    - Some preach liberal ideas- world peace, etc.
  - Other evangelicals form new right- worry about "godless" culture in their lives
    - Especially alarmed by feminism, lack of religion in school, Roe v. Wade
  - **Moral Majority-** Fundamentalist movement attacking rejection of religion
    - **Christian Coalition-** Similar movement- both oppose fed. Involvement, also homosexuality, divorce, abortion, etc.
    - Some fight for creationism, others for censorship of various media
- New Right forms after Goldwater defeat in '64- large list of organizers, contributors form base for new approach to campaigning (893)
  - Conservatives become increasingly well funded through growing organization
  - Right also rises due to Reagan leadership- farm actor made conservative thru marriage
    - Made famous by speech in support of Goldwater, rises in his place
    - Rise also due to Ford- had been example of uniting both sides of Republican party through liberal VP
    - Reagan runs tough opposition in 1976- attacks Ford for being soft on communism- makes Ford dump VP and some liberal views
- **Proposition 13-** First successful tax revolt- referendum in CA to reduce property tax
  - Begins tax revolt trend- becomes trademark republican issue
    - Way to attack government role without attacking programs- its unpopular to be believed to dismantle Social Security, Medicare etc.
    - No one likes taxes- plays on resentment against gov., economy
- Carter is unpopular, barely manages nomination, Reagan steamrolls through nomination
  - Reagan draws from support of tax revolt, general unhappiness with Carter's gov.
  - Reagan destroys Carter in 1980 election, republicans gain influence in Congress
    - Hostages released on the day of Reagan's inauguration in exchange for \$

*The "Reagan Revolution" (p. 895-901)*

- Conservative movement isn't all united- different groups (895)
  - Corporate Elites- Like Reagan's stance on allowing economic growth, little regulation of markets- are hostile to New Deal redistributive policies
    - Reagan works especially hard to please this group
  - Neoconservatives- Include many outspoken voices- hard on communism wing
    - "Win back the culture" idea- fight vs. multiculturalism

- New Right- Includes sunbelt, those who fear influence of establishment
- Testament to Reagan's political skill that he unites all factions
- Reagan's image is well polished- attractive, almost youthful, rugged, masters TV
  - Survives assassination attempt, recovers quickly- never seems to attract blame
  - Reagan isn't intimately involved with policy- good advisors, he handles propaganda, public support for general policy
- **"Supply Side" Economics**- Idea that taxation was killing US economy (896)
  - Meant dramatic tax cut to induce growth- meant less spending
  - In first few months Reagan passes \$40 bil. Budget reduction, 25% tax cut
    - Largely due to republicans support, democratic fractures
- **Deregulation**- Reagan's appointees open up land, limit EPA power (897)
  - Civil Rights enforcement also relaxed, less gas, truck regulations,
  - But by '82 unemployment is at 11%, major recession
    - But recovers quickly, inflation down, GNP up, unemployment 8%
  - Economic improvement due to tight money policies, relief from oil crisis
    - Gov. money makes its way back into market, stock especially
- But good economy doesn't shrink debt- Reagan fails promise to balance debt (898)
  - Debt up due to increasing cost of welfare programs, MIC, tax cuts
    - Reagan won't fix any of said 3 problems- instead targets "discretionary programs"- food stamps, Medicare, Medicaid, student loans
    - By end of 80s programs are still underfunded but deficit continues growth
- Reagan preaches US involvement abroad- hard on communism (899)
  - Accuses USSR of sponsoring terrorism, condemns Poland's implementation of martial law with Russian pressure
  - **SDI Program**- Reagan idea of satellites and laser to stop nukes- end all nuclear war, also a huge arms increase
  - Popular movement to freezing nuclear assets- 1 million gather in protest in NYC
    - Reagan bows to pressure, begins to freeze weapon construction
  - **Reagan Doctrine**- Challenge communism whether or not connected to USSR
    - Latin America- Grenada, El Salvador- US provides military assistance to oust anti-US leaders
    - Nicaragua- Supports Contra group fighting communist gov.- little success
    - Israel invades Lebanon to hunt Palestinians- US forces get involved supervising evacuation, supporting Lebanese government
      - US withdraws troops after being targeted, notably by terrorists
  - Third World struggle changes- use of terrorism grows (US bombing of Libya)
- Election of 1984- Walter Mondale leads fractured democrats vs Reagan (901)
  - Reagan basically ignores Mondale- easily wins victory in a landslide
  - But democrats make gains in Congress- conservatives laud approaching political revolution led by Reagan

*America and the Waning Cold War (p. 901-906)*

- Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika*- End of some repressive part of gov., some introduction of capitalism to help struggling economy (902)

- Economy at home reduces USSR's role abroad- reduces influence in E. Europe
  - Communism shrinks to left wing parties in E. Europe
- Not the same elsewhere- **Tiananmen Square**- Protesters call for democracy, Chinese government massacres protesters in Tiananmen Square
- China is one of few to not become more democratic- South Africa and end of apartheid
- Communist coup fails in USSR, communist party loses support, Gorbachev remains in power for short time until fracturing is complete- no more USSR
  - Gorbachev and Reagan interacted well- arms reduction, USSR out of Afghanistan
- International events distract US from administration scandals (902)
  - Reports of corruption, unethical behavior in many departments
    - Savings bank regulators front largest scandal- allows banks to recklessly expand without regulation- creating bank crisis
    - Gov. must intervene to stop collapse- costs \$500 billion
    - Another damaging report of US arms aid to Iranian, Nicaraguan rebels
  - Investigations show administration had used illegal, secret means in foreign policy- but never able to directly tie Reagan to illegality
- Election of 1988- Democratic Dukakis vs VP George H.W. Bush (903)
  - Dukakis leads in last few months, but Bush mounts critical campaign- ties Dukakis to everything everyone hates about liberals
  - Bush wins election- not really that close, democrats gain in Congress
- Bush presidency is based on international events- little domestic policy
  - Reaches even more progressive arms reduction deals with Gorbachev
  - Bush pledges to decrease debt, but not increase taxes- not going to work
    - With Congress is able help stabilize banks, reduce deficit thru taxes
  - **1990 Recession**- Slowly creeping recession that causes many bankruptcies
- Soviet threat gone- US foreign policy changes direction (904)
  - Could reduce military spending to help domestic issues, or not (USA! USA!)
    - Invade Panama and replace military leader with US supporter
  - Saddam Hussein invades Kuwait- announces annexation
    - US responds by leading global embargo on Iraq, with allies establishes enormous military presence on Saudi-Kuwait border
    - Congress authorizes use of force- invasion and bombings are deadly
      - Allies suffer little casualties, 100k Iraqis dead, Hussein's government accept ceasefire but remains in power
    - War is popular due to its success and defense of economic interests
- Despite Gulf War popularity, recession hurts Bush's image leading into 1992 election
  - Democrats somewhat divided, Bill Clinton of Arkansas runs- stresses economic issues over divisive racial issues
  - Independent Ross Perot runs as anti-establishment, leads field, but media storm forces him out, but results in getting 19 million votes
  - Clinton wins without majority, democrats gain control of Congress

*A Resurgence of Partisanship (p. 910-913)*

- Clinton first years are rocky- tries to allow homosexuals in army- met with resistance, inquiry into banking affairs shows possible corruption, cleared later (Whitewater affair)
  - But Clinton passes tax increase on rich to ease deficit crisis
  - Clinton also fights hard for free trade, globalism
    - **NAFTA**- Establishes free trade in NA, **GATT** continues free trade policy
  - Biggest effort is health care- task force led by his wife for universal health care
    - Conservatives fight fiercely against it, Clinton gives up by 1994
  - Notable peacekeeping effort in Bosnia- unites Serbs and Christians under peace pact, sends troops to keep the peace
- Democrats hurt by health care failure- Republicans led by Newt Gingrich create “**Contract With America**”- Conservative demands/vision for America (910)
  - Republican legislators continue to create dramatic programs for tax cuts, less gov. spending, unite behind cause
    - Clinton appears to give in, shift agenda towards center
    - Battle over 1995 budget becomes political (election next year)- government shutdown forced by republicans
    - Huge mistake- republicans become less popular, especially Gingrich
- Election of 1996- Clinton in good position by moving towards center, championing popular liberal issues, runs against uninspiring Bob Dole (912)
  - Economy is slowly improving, Congress is being more active
    - Raised minimum wage, somewhat conservative welfare reform bill
    - Reform bill moves aid towards low-wage workers, state responsibility
  - Clinton once again wins without majority, democrats can't get majority in Congress (lost in 1994)
- Clinton's agenda is economic- tax cuts and education benefits, revised budget bill generates first surplus in 30 years
  - Clinton needs popularity, scandals include Whitewater, sexual harassment
  - Paula Jones alleges sexual harassment, suit brings up Monica Lewinsky
    - Clinton allegedly lies about his relationship under oath, lawyer Kenneth Starr pursues charges- but public backs Clinton, suit dismissed
  - Lewinsky affair resurfaces due to independent investigation, Clinton admits relationship- Congress tries to impeach
- In partisan affair, impeachment charges approved for obstructing justice, lying under oath- but trial ends without even a majority for impeachment
  - Clinton is less active domestically after scandal
  - Instead goes after Iraq- bombs Hussein for breaking Gulf War agreement
  - Serbia- Province called Kosovo erupts into civil war between gov., rebels
    - Many reports of Serbian atrocities against Kosovo muslims
    - NATO leads bombing campaign, Serbs and Yugoslavia agree to peace, peacekeeping troops sent to keep it
- Overall Clinton ends very popular- world stability and booming economy (913)