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CCEA

A2

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY 1901–2000



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How to use this book

This book explores the changing role and powers of the presidents across the 20th century. It has been written specifically to assist teachers and students to meet the requirements of CCEA's GCE History A21, Option 4: The American Presidency 1901–2000.

Chapters 1–7 guide the reader through the course content, covering the seven topics of the CCEA specification. The text addresses domestic and foreign affairs separately to help students assess the successes and failures of the presidents in both these areas. Each chapter is supported with various tasks to check students' understanding, deepen their knowledge, practice their essay skills and develop their exam technique.

A final 'Essay Skills and Exam Guidance' section prepares students for the exam. It explains how the book's various essay practice questions build towards answering the past paper questions that cover the entire 1901–2000 period. It also offers guidance on essay skills and techniques for the final essay, which must show a full overview across the whole period. It includes a sample top-grade student response with commentary from a senior examiner.

The tasks

Learning activities

These summary questions check students' knowledge and understanding of each section. They are ideal for revising recent material and helping students make their own notes on the individual presidents, their achievements, failures and personalities. These questions are designed to prepare the information needed to answer the practice essay questions. They are an ideal homework exercise or can be completed in class. Once finished, there is real benefit to discussing the answers in a whole-class setting. This could be an ongoing process as the chapters are covered.

Further thinking

These tasks encourage extended study and deeper understanding of key moments or events within the course. They are ideal for group work and class discussion.

Essay practice

These questions are designed to improve students' essay skills and exam technique.

It is important that essay skills are developed throughout the course, rather than left until the end of the year once all the content has been covered. This is complicated by the synoptic nature of the exam questions and the fact that students need to address the entire period in their answers. With this in mind, the book begins with short-answer essay practice questions (covering part of the course) and builds to the kind of full-length essay questions that will be asked in the exam (covering the entire course). Short-answer essay practice questions are *not* exam questions. Instead, they are designed as building blocks to help students develop the skills needed to answer exam questions. These tasks are shorter and carry fewer marks (20, 25 or 30 marks) than the full 40-mark CCEA exam questions. Once the full course has been studied, the most effective method of exam preparation is completing timed, full-length questions from past papers.

The ‘Essay Skills and Exam Guidance’ section on page 272 provides more information on how to use these essay practice questions effectively. We recommend reading this before commencing the course.

NOTE

The essay practice questions in this book are not past paper CCEA exam questions. It is essential to work through a range of the past paper questions available on the CCEA website to prepare for the exam.

Publisher’s Note

This book has been written to help students preparing for ‘A2 1 Option 4: The American Presidency 1901–2000’ of the History specification from CCEA. While Colourpoint Educational and the authors have taken every care in its production, we are not able to guarantee that the book is completely error-free. Additionally, while the book has been written to closely match the CCEA specification, it is the responsibility of each candidate to satisfy themselves that they have fully met the requirements of the CCEA specification prior to sitting an exam set by that body. For this reason, and because specifications change with time, we strongly advise every candidate to avail of a qualified teacher and to check the content of the most recent specification for themselves prior to the exam. Colourpoint Educational therefore cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions in this book or any consequences thereof.

CHAPTER 1

An Emerging International Presence: Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, 1901–20

This chapter will examine:

- Roosevelt's foreign and domestic policy and Wilson's social reforms
- America's role in World War I and the significance of Wilson's Fourteen Points
- The extent to which the emergence of America's international presence under these presidents was due to its economic strength or their personalities

Three different presidents were in office between 1901 and 1920:

- Theodore Roosevelt (14 September 1901 – 4 March 1909)
26th president, a Republican
- William Taft (4 March 1909 – 4 March 1913)
27th president, a Republican
- Woodrow Wilson (4 March 1913 – 4 March 1921)
28th president, a Democrat

NOTE

US presidents officially take office in January of the year *after* they are elected. Before 1933, presidents took office in March. They are indirectly elected through the Electoral College system each November of the preceding year.

1. Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt, 'The Accidental President': 1901–1909



Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt assumed office after the assassination of President McKinley in 1901. He was the first American president to carve out a larger role for America on the world stage and truly transform the office of president.

Personal background

When President McKinley (1897–1901) was assassinated in September 1901, he was, under the terms of the US Constitution, automatically replaced by Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt, who had been elected vice president in 1900. For this reason, Roosevelt has been called 'The Accidental President' by many historians.

Roosevelt was a very active politician from the 1880s, well before his presidency, and played a prominent role in New York politics. Two key issues defined the foundations of his early career: first, the government's response to the growth of big business since the 1880s; and second, the role of the USA in world affairs. With the second he took an increasingly belligerent attitude, arguing in the 1890s that the USA should modernise and expand its navy to play a more active role in world affairs. In 1897, Roosevelt was appointed Assistant Secretary of the Navy – a post he left the following year to take an active role in the Spanish–American War. The war and his personal exploits turned Roosevelt into a popular hero and helped secure his election

as Governor of New York in November 1898. The Republican Party (often called the GOP, short for Grand Old Party) Convention in 1900 saw only one leading member oppose Roosevelt's nomination for vice president: Mark Hanna, Senator from Ohio, who famously warned, "Don't any of you realise that there's only one life between this madman and the White House."¹ Within just months, the prophetic-like comments of Hanna became a political reality.

On 14 September 1901, Theodore Roosevelt became the youngest ever president in US history at just 42 years old. Suddenly, a man with deep political convictions – such as the importance of national unity and the need for the USA to become a world power – was in the White House. For the first time since Abraham Lincoln, the USA had a popular figure as president, and Roosevelt would use his endless energy and appeal to transform the office of the president beyond recognition by 1909. Even without the assassin's bullet of 1901, Roosevelt's strengths gave him an excellent chance of becoming president at some stage in the future. For now, he had been given the keys to power earlier than had been expected.

Part A: Roosevelt's first term in office, 1901–1905

(i) Domestic affairs

Background

Between 1870 and 1900 the population of the USA nearly doubled. As industries developed across the country, immigrants flocked to the cities to provide the necessary workforce. The resulting urban growth led to widespread overcrowding and poverty in many areas. In his first message to Congress, in December 1901, Roosevelt acknowledged that "tremendous and highly complex industrial development" had created "very serious social problems." He promised to deliver social justice and promote economic opportunity, and sought to achieve this through government regulation. He warned that doing so would require new thinking and new laws. These were later included in his 'Square Deal' of 1904 (see page 16).

Roosevelt's political experience in New York had convinced him that big business was a natural part of the capitalist system, but one that needed to be regulated and controlled by government to prevent the rise of socialism. He believed strongly that the government should intervene to protect the interests of ordinary Americans, who he felt were being exploited by some businessmen and industrialists. Although Congress had passed the Sherman Anti-Trust Act in 1890, aimed at banning monopolistic business practices, it had rarely been enforced by previous presidents. This had led to the growth of huge monopolies in certain industries in the USA, including the railroad

sector. Roosevelt became increasingly concerned that these companies were exploiting the public by charging high prices without regulation.

KEY TERM

Trusts – A term used to describe powerful business combinations that emerged in the late 19th century. Shareholders in different companies would delegate control of their shares to a group of trustees, who would then effectively control several firms at once. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act was passed in 1890 to address the behaviour of these monopolies in practice, but it was rarely enforced before 1900.

With his popular support and self-confidence, Roosevelt differed from the presidents who served before him: he welcomed challenges rather than avoided them. He understood the need to work with the Republicans in Congress for two key reasons: first, to get his measures passed through Congress; and second, to secure the Republican presidential nomination in 1904. Nevertheless, during his first term in office, Roosevelt significantly expanded the power and influence of the executive office. He believed the presidency held untapped political potential, and that any president had the right to use its powers to achieve their political aspirations. As a result, the president – rather than Congress or the two main political parties – became the centre of the US political arena. Prior to 1900, Congress had been the most powerful part of the government, with the president in a subservient role. After Roosevelt, however, the authority and influence of Congress was permanently diminished. This shift effectively created the modern presidency.

Major events of Theodore Roosevelt's domestic policy

Roosevelt was the first president to recognise the power of the press and how it could be used to his advantage to appeal directly to the public. He was also the first president to invite journalists to his swearing-in ceremony in Washington. In one of his first acts as president, Roosevelt summoned the managers of the three main press companies in the USA and surprised them by promising to be open with them. No president had ever done this before. He admitted that at times he would need to withhold information and warned that if they published anything confidential or untrue, he would publicly deny the story and restrict their future access to him. In other words,

Roosevelt would only allow reporting on matters he wanted the public to know about. He was using the media as “a bully pulpit”² to influence public opinion in his favour to strengthen his position.

Roosevelt challenged traditional ideas about limited government and individualism. During his first term, he promoted government regulation as a way to achieve social and economic justice, leading some historians to refer to him as the ‘Great Regulator’. He also pioneered the use of executive orders to help implement his domestic policy goals.

KEY TERMS

Executive order – A rule or directive issued by the president or another executive authority, which carries the force of law. Executive orders are used to implement provisions of the Constitution, treaties or statutes. Before Theodore Roosevelt, they were rarely used by presidents to effectively bypass Congress.

Progressive Movement – A political and social reform movement active in the United States from 1896 to 1932. It was made up largely of middle-class activists who sought to address the social and economic consequences of rapid industrialisation. Progressives aimed to improve education, working conditions and public health.

Roosevelt worked hard to improve the lives of American citizens. The ‘Square Deal’ domestic programme reflected the aims of the Progressive Movement, seeking to reform the American workplace through welfare legislation and the introduction of government regulation of industry for the first time.

These radical and bold initiatives reflected Roosevelt’s boundless energy and confidence. His domestic policy was defined by three major actions:

1. **Secretary of Commerce and Labor** – In March 1903, Roosevelt created a new and important cabinet post: Secretary of Commerce and Labor. The president now established the right of government to inspect the financial records of all companies engaged in interstate commerce. Roosevelt justified this by pointing to widespread corruption among such companies, which often exploited legal loopholes created by differing state laws. His actions were, in effect, a declaration of war on some of the worst elements of American capitalism, particularly trusts and monopolies.

2. *Trust-busting campaign* – In March 1902, Roosevelt started legal action against the Northern Securities Company, a massive railroad trust controlled by J.P. Morgan, one of the wealthiest men in America. Whilst his predecessor, McKinley, had failed in his legal actions against the trusts, Roosevelt was determined to use the Supreme Court to uphold these anti-trust laws. He was so confident of the success of his actions that he failed to inform his own cabinet about his plans to challenge the trusts. The president used the Sherman Anti-Trust Act to introduce a lawsuit against the Northern Securities Company, claiming that it was a monopoly. In March 1904, the Supreme Court ruled in his favour and ordered that this powerful trust should be dissolved. This represented a massive breakthrough for Roosevelt in his campaign to regulate big business in the USA. Over the remaining seven years of his presidency, Roosevelt initiated legal action against a further 43 major corporations as part of his wider trust-busting agenda.

The Supreme Court's ruling shocked the rich and powerful capitalists in America, who had previously dominated Congress. Never before had their political power been successfully challenged by a president. Roosevelt had proved that the executive office was now more powerful than even the wealthiest industrialists such as J. P. Morgan. For the first time, a US president had asserted his constitutional authority in a clear and decisive way.

3. *Square Deal* – In May 1902, a major strike broke out between coal miners and powerful mining companies in Pennsylvania. Over 140,000 members of the United Mine Workers demanded higher wages and shorter working hours. When the mine owners refused to compromise, Roosevelt decided to intervene, hoping to avoid a coal shortage with winter approaching. This was the first time a president had directly intervened in an industrial dispute between workers and employers.

In October 1902, Roosevelt called a conference at the White House and warned the employers that he would appoint an arbitration commission, and if they refused to cooperate, he would allow the federal government to take control of the coal mines. This was largely a bluff, but the mine owners agreed to arbitration under the Anthracite Coal Commission. The miners eventually returned to work in spring 1903 with both a wage increase and a reduction in working hours. Roosevelt claimed he had not taken sides, but had acted to ensure a 'Square Deal' for all. The principle behind the Square Deal was to address urgent

social problems and protect the rights of the American people. It aimed to balance competing interests – labour and management, consumer and big business – in the name of fairness. Roosevelt was the first president to give a popular name to a domestic policy programme, a model later followed by Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Truman.

Another important element of the Square Deal was the Elkins Act of February 1903. The ICC (Interstate Commerce Commission) had provided Roosevelt's administration with evidence of how major railroad companies were exploiting loopholes between state laws to maximise profits. A common practice was the granting of shipping rebates (partial refunds on shipping costs) to favoured, powerful companies, which gave them an unfair advantage over smaller competitors. Roosevelt responded by introducing the Elkins Act, which imposed fines on anyone who offered or accepted such rebates. Despite his good intentions, powerful companies continued to find ways to undermine the legislation.

Another major reform was the Newlands Reclamation Act of June 1902, which used federal funds to finance irrigation projects in arid western states. This was Roosevelt's first legislative act as a conservationist – a reflection of his life-long fascination with nature.

In October 1901, Roosevelt became the first president to invite an Black American leader, Booker T. Washington, to the White House.

Roosevelt's approach to his first term as president was unique. Historian Cooper explained: "He used the theatrical powers of the presidency as no one before him had. He sought to assert the rights of the people against special interests. Above all, he sought to regulate big business, not to cripple it, still less destroy it."³

(ii) Foreign affairs

Events by 1905

The USA did not have a clearly defined foreign policy until the Spanish–American War of 1898. This changed under Roosevelt, who strived to move away from the traditional American isolationist foreign policy of the 19th century. He was a true internationalist who believed that a successful foreign policy would boost the USA's international standing and transform it into a global power. As the historian Evans observed, "the United States emerged as a great power, and a global one, with all kinds of new responsibilities".⁴

In 1904, several European nations attempted to forcibly collect debts owed

CHAPTER 5

The Limits of Presidential Power: Johnson and Nixon 1963–1973

This chapter will examine:

- The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965
- America's role in the Vietnam War
- The importance of détente with the USSR and the 'opening' to China
- How far both Johnson and Nixon were themselves victims of the Vietnam War and its division of American society

Two presidents were in office between 1963 and 1973:

- Lyndon B. Johnson (22 November 1963 – 20 January 1969)
36th president, a Democrat
- Richard Nixon (20 January 1969 – 9 August 1974)
37th president, a Republican

1. Lyndon B. Johnson, 'The Texan President': 1963–1969

Personal background

Lyndon Baines Johnson, or LBJ as he was known, was born into a poor farming background in rural Texas in 1908. Johnson's character was shaped by his personal experience of poverty and hardship that marked his life growing up. Although he was an above-average student, when he left high school, Johnson was forced to take a variety of jobs, including labouring, to make a living. In 1926, Johnson started teacher training college and successfully qualified in 1930. He was forced to work alongside his studies to support himself. It was a job that his heart was never truly in and it was not long before Johnson, who had always shown an interest in politics, was appointed to work as an aide to

a congressman from Texas in 1931. He soon became a firm supporter of FDR and his New Deal after 1933 and established useful contacts in Congress. This got Johnson noticed and in 1937 he ran for the Democrats in Texas, winning easily and going on to serve as a congressman until 1949. LBJ excelled in Congress, building up a reputation as a skilled politician. As World War II approached, he enlisted as an officer in the Naval Reserve and served in the Pacific after 1941 under General MacArthur, winning a war medal and ultimately rising to the rank of commander.



Lyndon Baines Johnson, known as LBJ, was a moderate Democrat and powerful presence in the Senate for many years before being elected as vice president to John F. Kennedy in 1961. He inherited the presidency after Kennedy's assassination in 1963. He introduced the most sweeping domestic reforms in a century but his legacy was damaged by the Vietnam War.

In 1941, LBJ ran for the Senate in Texas but narrowly lost to another Democratic candidate under controversial circumstances, amid claims that local industrialists backed his opponent and manipulated the result in his favour. In 1948, he again sought the Democratic nomination for Texas, winning the party nomination by 87 delegate votes, earning him the nickname 'Landslide Lyndon', which he happily adopted. The Democrats in Texas had long been split between those opposed to liberal reforms and those loyal to

FDR and the New Deal, which Johnson supported. Johnson won over 66% of the popular vote in Texas and went on to serve two terms as senator. His rise in politics from this point on was almost meteoric; unusually for a new senator, he was appointed Democratic whip in the Senate in 1951, making him one of the most powerful Democrats in US politics.

With his war experience and his interest in foreign affairs, he served on the Senate's Armed Services Committee from 1949–61. In 1953, he was appointed Senate Minority Leader – the main spokesperson for the opposition party, which does not hold a majority in the Senate. His rise continued when the Democrats took a majority in the Senate in 1954, and Johnson was made Senate Majority Leader, one of the most powerful political positions in the country apart from the presidency. Using this position he became a highly regarded majority leader as he adopted a bipartisan approach in supporting Eisenhower's (a Republican) foreign policy while remaining true to the New Deal principles of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party. This reputation meant that people in both parties were willing to work with him, such as when LBJ used his influence and political skills to manage the Senate and help steer Eisenhower's 1957 Civil Rights Bill through Congress. Despite his remarkably successful Senate career, Johnson made two unsuccessful attempts to secure the vice-presidential nomination before seeking the presidential nomination for the 1960 election. After he lost this to Kennedy, he was offered the nomination for vice president by the Kennedy camp. Many believe that JFK's triumph in 1960 was partly due to Johnson's help delivering key southern states that the young and inexperienced Kennedy would otherwise have lost. However, after being elected in 1961, Johnson was frustrated as he was not part of Kennedy's inner circle of trusted advisors, and he had several clashes over issues with Bobby Kennedy in particular. This was hardly surprising for a man and a politician of his background. As Traynor observers, "During the Eisenhower era, Johnson had earned a well-deserved reputation as a supremely skilled political operator."¹

First term 1963–1965

(i) Domestic affairs

Impact of the Kennedy assassination

Johnson was hugely ambitious and had always desired to be president, but thought he had missed his opportunity until the tragic events in Dallas, in November 1963. He had not enjoyed being vice president, felt sidelined and unable to contribute to the political life of the nation in the way he previously had. Graubard remarked: "Johnson's thousand days as vice president were

among the unhappiest days in his long political life.”² Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn in as the 36th president of the USA on board Air Force One as he was flown back to Washington from Texas, only hours after the assassination of Kennedy. Within a few days, the new president addressed Congress. Seizing upon Kennedy’s inaugural plea to “let us begin anew”, Johnson asked Congress to “let us continue.” Over the next 12 months, he endorsed the late president’s reforms even as he announced his own domestic reforms. Johnson pushed for the passage of Kennedy’s tax cuts and the civil rights bill he had started, and declared a War on Poverty. Unlike most southerners, Johnson was in favour of major reform on civil rights and he was determined to use all his political skills and experience, gained in both the House and the Senate, to push the Civil Rights Bill through Congress. Johnson retained Kennedy’s cabinet, including Bobby Kennedy as Attorney General, and instructed him to steer the Civil Rights Bill through Capitol Hill, where many influential politicians opposed its progress. It is worth noting that many of those he retained in the cabinet were opponents of Johnson but he decided to put the needs of the nation first. He knew that a major cabinet reshuffle would not help the American people move on and feel confident in their government in the aftermath of the Kennedy assassination.

Civil Rights Act 1964

Johnson felt a moral obligation to advance the domestic legislation that the Kennedy administration had committed to before the tragic events in Dallas. Congress, mindful of the Kennedy legacy and the late president’s popularity, offered less resistance to Johnson’s push to end segregation in public facilities. Drawing on his personal leadership and strong relationships with influential senators, Johnson forged a bipartisan coalition of northern and midwestern Democrats and moderate Republicans to steer Kennedy’s Civil Rights Bill through Congress. The House of Representatives passed the Civil Rights Act with 290 votes for and 110 against, and the Senate passed it in June 1964 by 71 votes for and 29 against. On 2 July 1964, it became law and this was a major achievement for Johnson. It was universally welcomed as a significant step towards a better future by most civil rights leaders. Brogan states: “Johnson had rushed through the entire Kennedy programme, including the Civil Rights Act, which was proclaimed as the dead leader’s best memorial.”³ This was the most important piece of legislation affecting the Black American community since Reconstruction in 1865.

Johnson was only the second president from the South since 1865. He demonstrated strong leadership and political skill in making employment

discrimination and racial segregation in public accommodations illegal. This stance was unpopular with many of his southern counterparts and supporters, where such discriminatory practices were widespread. The Civil Rights Commission, formed in 1957, had its powers expanded and two new federal bodies were set up: the Community Relations Service and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Traynor claims: “The Civil Rights Bill, considerably strengthened, was the most important measure passed.”⁴ Johnson, due to his mastery of Congress, had succeeded where JFK had been unable to progress.



President Johnson shakes the hand of Martin Luther King after signing into law the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The Act was a highpoint of both their careers, which they had worked together to achieve.

The Great Society

In March 1964, during a TV interview, Johnson was asked whether he had chosen a political phrase similar to FDR’s ‘New Deal’. He replied that he had been too busy during his first five months in office. A few months later, in May 1964, Johnson outlined his vision of a ‘Great Society’ in a major speech in Michigan. He stated that his main political principle as president was to “fulfil FDR’s mission.”⁵ He pledged to improve education, provide better access to healthcare and especially to end poverty. Poverty was an issue that was always keenly felt by Johnson and his poor childhood had been a major source of his inspiration as a politician. As this was an election year, Johnson outlined what he hoped to achieve if elected for a second full term as president. His vision

of the 'Great Society' for the USA was met with widespread public acclaim. The Civil Rights Act was the first step towards achieving Johnson's political dreams.

(ii) Foreign affairs

Vietnam and the Tonkin Resolution

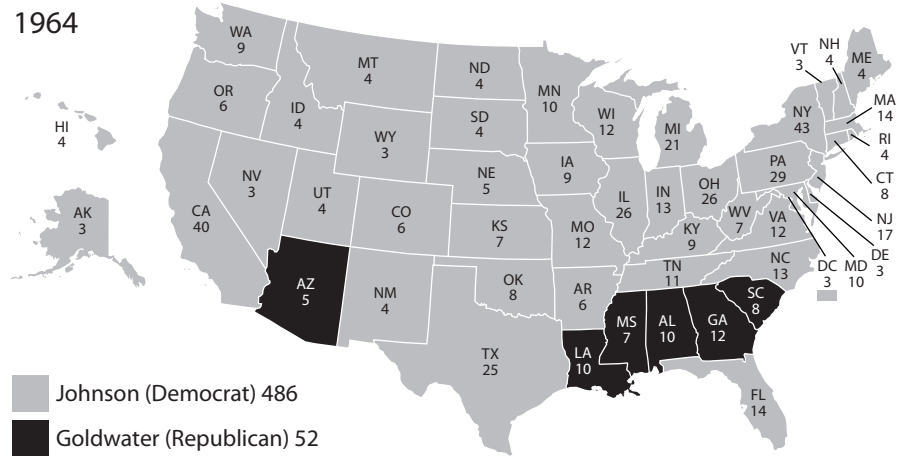
The first major foreign policy initiative in Johnson's first term as president was to tackle the deteriorating situation in Vietnam. Within weeks of Kennedy's death, Johnson made it clear that he would continue to support South Vietnam against the communist threat of North Vietnam, telling one of his advisors that "I don't think Congress wants us to let the communists take over South Vietnam."⁶ By December 1963, some of his advisors, such as Robert McNamara, were warning that the situation was dangerous and unstable. Johnson wanted to concentrate more on his domestic aims rather than getting increasingly involved in Vietnam. Privately he confided to his closest advisors that he was worried about the pitfalls of the Vietnam problem.



Map showing the location of the highly contentious Gulf of Tonkin incident. This event would escalate the war in Vietnam and lead to Congress passing the Tonkin Resolution, which gave President Johnson unprecedented powers to wage war in Vietnam.

In August 1964, US Navy ships off the coast of North Vietnam reported being attacked in the Gulf of Tonkin, escalating the situation for Johnson. The Pentagon stated that communist forces had attacked two US Navy destroyers

November 1964 Presidential Election



Electoral map showing the result of the 1964 Presidential Election. Johnson won by a landslide to hold the presidency in his own right. He was seen by many as the natural successor to Kennedy and was helped by millions of Black Americans voting for him after the passing of the Civil Rights Act. He won 43 million popular votes, the largest share of the popular vote for any 20th-century, US president until Nixon in 1972.

Another factor behind Johnson's cautious foreign policy was his ambition to win the November 1964 Presidential Election, and complete his aim of a 'Great Society' as an elected president in his own right. Johnson's public popularity saw him win the Democratic Party Convention with a unanimous vote from the party delegates. Herbert Humphrey was selected to run for vice president. The Republicans selected the conservative senator Barry Goldwater, from Arizona, with William Miller running for the vice presidency. This was the only presidential election between 1952 and 1972 in which Richard Nixon did not stand as a candidate. Goldwater ran a very right-wing campaign, which allowed the Democrats to portray him as an extremist, particularly over his suggestion that nuclear weapons should be considered in Vietnam. In the run-up to the

election, Johnson and the Democrats used slogans like “you know he’s nuts”⁸ to reinforce this image. Johnson’s campaign featured the famous ‘Daisy Girl’ advertisement, crafted to tap into public fears of nuclear war should his opponent be elected. The advert showed a young girl counting to ten as she picked petals off a daisy, abruptly followed by a terrifying nuclear explosion.

To the American people Johnson was the obvious successor to the Kennedy legacy, and millions of Black Americans used their votes to thank Johnson for civil rights. Johnson won by a landslide, securing the highest ever share of the public vote in any American presidential election in the 20th century. Goldwater took only 6 states (all in the Deep South), compared with the 44 states that backed Johnson. Johnson won nearly 43 million popular votes (61.1%); Goldwater gained just over 27 million popular votes (38.5%). The new president had 486 Electoral College votes compared with only 52 Electoral College votes for Goldwater. Johnson had been given a clear mandate to continue building his ‘Great Society’ by the American people. It would be the peak of his political career.

Second term 1965–1969

(i) *Domestic affairs*

Voting Rights Act 1965

During his election campaign, Johnson had promised to continue his programme of social reforms. Since the 1890s, Black Americans had been denied voting rights in the southern states by state laws that denied them access to the polling booths on a racial basis. This had been made possible by historic methods used to control the local voting registrars. Three main methods were used to suppress Black American voting in the South:

- ***Literacy tests*** – These were often administered subjectively, allowing officials to fail even literate Black or non-White applicants based on personal bias.
- ***‘Good character’ clauses*** – These required existing voters (mainly White) to vouch for new registrants, effectively excluding Black applicants, as White voters rarely vouched for them.
- ***Poll taxes*** – These disproportionately affected poor people of all races, but had a particularly strong impact on Black and other non-White communities. Poll taxes were eliminated by the 24th Amendment to the US Constitution, leaving literacy tests as the last major legal barrier to equal voting rights for Black Americans.

Biographical Notes

Acheson, Dean (1893–1971)

A leading American statesman, Acheson was Secretary of State from 1949 to 1953. He played a major role in the formation of NATO and was a key figure in US diplomacy during the Korean War. Acheson was one of the people in government attacked by McCarthy and his supporters for allegedly being soft on communism.

Agnew, Spiro (1918–1996)

Agnew was Governor of Maryland before being selected to run as vice president in the 1968 Election. He was chosen to secure the votes of the southern states. He was forced to resign in October 1973 after disclosure of income tax evasion.

Bryan, William Jennings (1860–1925)

A leading Democratic politician, Bryan ran unsuccessfully for the presidency in 1896, 1900 and 1908. When he ran in 1896, he was the youngest ever major-party candidate, aged 36. He served as Secretary of State from 1913 until 1915, when he resigned in objection to President Wilson's handling of the sinking of the *Lusitania* by a German submarine.

Dawes, Charles Gates (1865–1951)

A US politician and diplomat, Dawes served as the 30th vice president from 1925 to 1929 under President Coolidge. He was the architect of the Dawes Plan, which involved the United States helping Germany to pay its reparations to the former Allied powers, and he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for this work in 1925. He later served as US ambassador to the UK from 1929 to 1932, and was appointed chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in 1932.

Dewey, Thomas Edmund (1902–1971)

A leading Republican politician, Dewey ran unsuccessfully for the presidency in both 1944 and 1948. He was Governor of New York from 1943 to 1954.