

Chapter 39: The Stalemated Seventies, 1968-1980

You should be able to:

1. describe Nixon's foreign policy in relation to Vietnam, the Soviet Union, and Communist China
2. analyze Nixon's domestic policies, his opposition to the "Warren Court," his southern strategy, and his landslide victory against George McGovern in 1972?
3. examine the conflicts created by the secret bombing of Cambodia, the American withdrawal from Vietnam, and the first Arab oil embargo
4. discuss the Watergate scandals and Nixon's resignation
5. explain the related economic, energy and Middle East crises of the 1970s and why both Republican and Democratic administrations were unable successfully to address them
6. describe the racial tensions of the 1970s and the rise of the new feminist movement
7. discuss the Iranian crisis and its disastrous political consequences for President Carter

Define:

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| 1. moratorium | 7. attorney general |
| 2. Marxism | 8. executive privilege |
| 3. anti-ballistic missile | 9. recession |
| 4. devaluation | 10. born-again |
| 5. foray | 11. balance of payments |
| 6. Kremlin | 12. commando |

Answer:

1. Was the Nixon Kissinger foreign policy of détente with the Soviet Union and engagement with Communist China fundamentally a great success? How does the failed end of the Vietnam War color the assessment of Nixon's overall diplomatic achievement?
2. In what ways did Nixon's domestic policies appeal to Americans' racial and economic fears, and in what ways did he positively address problems like inflation, discrimination and pollution?
3. How did Nixon fall from the political heights of 1972 to his forced resignation in 1974? What were the political consequences of Watergate?
4. How did the administration of the 1970s attempt to cope with the interrelated problems of energy, economics, and the Middle East?
5. Why can the 1970s be characterized as a decade of stalemate? What caused the apparent inability of the federal government to cope with the new problems of the time?
6. In what ways were the foreign policy and economic issues of the 1970s similar to those of the whole post WWII era, and in what ways were they different?
7. It is sometimes said that the recent American disillusionment and even cynicism about politics dates to the paired tribulations of Vietnam and Watergate. Why were these two events so deeply unsettling to traditional American views of democracy and government? Is the linking of the two events accurate, or were there fundamental differences between them?