Notes: Women’s Rights

**Women’s Rights**

For most women at the start of the 20th Century the only role in society they were considered competent to carry out was that of wife and mother.

Many societies kept women out of the public eye altogether

In Muslim lands women were kept in Purdah (hiding their faces and bodies from the eyes of strangers

In China little girl’s feet were mutilated to satisfy a male sense of beauty

In India the murder of newborn baby girls and the practice of suttee (widows burning themselves alive on their husband’s funeral pyres) secretly continued despite the attempts of the British to control these practices. In the Western world men’s attitude towards women differed tremendously based on the social standing of the woman in question

With few exceptions women’s influence was restricted to the home. Only in Australia(1902), New Zealand (1893) and Finland did women have the right to vote before 1910

**Changes in the 20th Century**

The 20th Century resulted in a remarkable amount of change in the status of women and their influence in society.

The industrial revolution created work in factories and gave women the opportunity for paid employment in factories, shops and schools

Artificial methods of contraception offered women the ability to limit the number of years they would spend in the bearing and rearing of children

Women began to demand the right to control their own property

More politically minded women began to organize the fight for the right to vote and the suffragette movement was born

Questions/Main ideas:

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Questions/Main ideas:

**The Woman’s movement pre 1900**

1874 The Women’s Christian Temperance Union: Formed originally to promote the prohibition of alcohol; later joined forces with the Canadian and American Suffrage Association. 1867 In Britain John Stuart Mill put his case to Parliament for female suffrage. Parliament passed Parliamentary Reform Act giving the vote to many working class men. London Society for Women's Suffrage formed to campaign for female suffrage. 1870 The Married Women’s Property Act allows married women to own their own property. Previously, when women married, their property transferred to their husbands. Divorce heavily favoured men, allowing property to remain in their possession. This act allows women to keep their property, married, divorced, single or widowed  
**The Women’s Movement in Britain**

Women's suffrage in the United Kingdom as a national movement began in 1872. Women were not formally prohibited from voting in the United Kingdom until the 1832 Reform Act and the 1835 Municipal Corporation Act. Both before and after 1832 establishing women's suffrage on some level was a political topic. It would not be until 1872 that it would become a national movement with the formation of the National Society for Women's Suffrage and later the more influential National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. Little victory was achieved in this constitutional campaign in its earlier years up to around 1905. It was at this point that the militant campaign began with the formation of the Women's Social and Political Union. The outbreak of the First World War led to a halting of almost all campaigning, but some argue that it was the competence of women war workers that led to the extension of the franchise to single women over the age of 30 in 1918; providing they were householders, married to a householder or if they held a university degree. Universal suffrage for all adults over 21 years of age was not achieved until 1928.

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**Suffrage movement in Britain: A Timeline**

1870 Married Women's Property Act allowed married women to own their own property - until this point all women's property belonged to the husband. Elementary Education Act passed, which allowed women ratepayers (property owners) to vote for and serve in school boards.

1897 Formation of NUWSS - National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (the main Suffragist movement) - under leadership of Millicent Fawcett.

1903 Formation of WSPU - Women's Social and Political Union (the main Suffragette movement) - under Emmeline Pankhurst.

1904 Beginnings of militant action. Emmeline Pankhurst disrupted a Liberal Party meeting in Manchester

1905 First arrests of Suffragettes for disrupting a Liberal Party meeting.

1910 In June an All Party Committee of MPs put forward a Conciliation Bill to give some women the vote. The Bill was passed by the House of Commons but then dropped when another election was called in November. Furious Suffragettes stepped up their campaign of violence resulting in many clashes with police and arrests

**Militant action by British Suffragettes**

1905, 1908, 1913 – 3 phases of WSPU militancy (Civil Disobedience – Destruction of Public Property – Arson/Bombings)

5 July 1909 – Marion Wallace Dunlop went on the first hunger strike – was released after 91 hours of fasting

September 1909 – Force feeding introduced to resistors in prisons

1910 – Lady Constance Lytton disguised herself as a working class seamstress, Jane Wharton, and was arrested and endured force feeding to prove prejudice in prisons against working class women. Lady Lytton was instrumental in reforming conditions in prisons. The force feeding probably shortened her life considerably

Questions/Main ideas:

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Questions/Main ideas:

**The Right to vote in the USA: The role of Susan B Anthony**

Dates: February 15, 1820 -March 13, 1906 Occupation: activist, reformer, teacher, lecturer

Known for: key spokesperson for the 19th century women's suffrage movement

Susan B. Anthony: At 29 Anthony became involved in abolitionism and then temperance. A friendship with Amelia Bloomer led to a meeting with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who was to become her lifelong partner in political organizing, especially for women's rights and woman suffrage. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, served as the writer and idea-person of the two, and Susan B. Anthony,, was more often the organizer and the one who traveled, spoke widely, and bore the brunt of antagonistic public opinion. After the Civil War, discouraged that those working for "Negro" suffrage were willing to continue to exclude women from voting rights, Susan B. Anthony became more focused on woman suffrage. She helped to found the American Equal Rights Association in 1866, and in 1868 with Stanton as editor, became publisher of Revolution. Stanton and Anthony founded the National Woman Suffrage Association, larger than its rival American Woman Suffrage Association, associated with Lucy Stone

Susan B. Anthony opposed abortion. She blamed men, laws and the "double standard" for driving women to abortion because they had no other options. ("When a woman destroys the life of her unborn child, it is a sign that, by education or circumstances, she has been greatly wronged." 1869) She believed, as did many of the feminists of her era, that only the achievement of women's equality and freedom would end the need for abortion. Anthony used her anti-abortion writings as yet another argument for women's rights.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Effect of WWI on the Women’s Movement**

As men went to fight in WWI women took over their civilian jobs

Men protested women doing work in engineering and munitions works, on railways and buses, but there simply were not enough men to do these jobs during the war, so women had to fill in

In Britain women’s organizations (who, pre-war, were already demanding the right to vote) began to demand “the right to serve”

The war undermined many old fashioned prejudices about women as the weaker, inferior and gentler sex

**Suffrage and the Right to vote**

By the 1930’s women had the right to vote in the USA, Canada, the UK, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the USSR and all the Scandinavian countries

**Beyond WWI**

The following year, the women's suffrage movement made great advances and women became eligible for election to the House of Commons. In 1921, Agnes Macphail became the first woman to be elected to the House.

**Women’s Rights in Canada: The Person’s Case**

Emily Murphy was at the centre of one of Canada’s most famous cases regarding the rights of women.

This is known as the Persons case

Emily was appointed magistrate of the police court in Edmonton. Making her the first female judge in the British Empire.

She was challenged by a defense lawyer on the grounds that she could not stand in judgment against anyone as under the terms of the Canadian Constitution Emily Murphy was not legally a person, because she was a woman.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**The Fight**

Legally this was true. In 1920, however the supreme Court of Alberta ruled that every woman had the right to be a judge.

This inspired a group of women to petition Prime Minister Robert Borden for a woman to be appointed to the Senate.

They were refused on the grounds that women were not persons under the B.N.A act and were therefore not eligible for the Senate. By law any group of five citizens can petition the Supreme court of Canada for the interpretation of a point in the B.N.A act. A group of women who would become known as the “Famous Five” or the “Alberta Five” petitioned Ottawa to determine if under the Act women were persons.

**Persons Under the Law**

The decision of the courts was that: Under British common law the status of women is this… “Women are persons in matters of pains and penalties, but are not persons in matters of rights and privileges” After weeks of deliberating the Supreme Court delivered a unanimous ruling. Since women did not have the vote in 1867, they were not eligible to become senators. So women were not considered “qualified persons”

**Continuing the fight**

Discouraged but not defeated Emily Murphy and the “Famous Five” (Nellie McClung, Louise Mc Kinney, Henrietta Edwards and Irene Parlby) decided to appeal the decision to the Privy Council in London

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Victory**

In October 1929, the Privy Council in London (the highest court of appeal in Canada at that time) reversed the decision of Canada’s Supreme court by declaring that “the word persons includes members of the male and female sex… and that women are eligible to be summoned and become members of the Senate of Canada.” The ruling noted that excluding women from the term person was a “relic of days more barbarous than ours”Victory

**Changing role of women in Society**

Progress can be measured in a variety of ways

The right to vote

Opportunities for employment outside the home

The availability of artificial means of contraception

And the mass production of appliances

Most of the progress for women was achieved in Western societies but not all were adopted as goals throughout the world

**Women in Society**

By the mid 1980’s the right to vote was commonplace in most of the world

That did not give women the power to change the societies in which they lived

Few women were elected to parliaments and even fewer became members of governments in either the Western or Communist world

Between 1945 and 1985 only five women gained supreme political power in their own countries

Mrs. Indira Gandhi in India

Mrs. Bandaranaike in Sri Lanka

Mrs. Golda Meir in Israel

Mrs. Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain

Mrs. Violeta Chamorro in Nicaragua

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Questions/Main ideas:

**The struggle for equality continues**

In industrialized countries women’s employment was boosted by the growth in the numbers of service jobs

In China, the Soviet Union and other Communist countries women were recruited for work of all kinds, including heavy manual tasks

By 1974 roughly sixty million Soviet women had jobs outside their homes

Nearly 85% of all women of working age

In the US about 50% of women had jobs outside the home by the 1970’s

In Communist nations equal pay for equal work was firmly established as a principle

In Britain in the mid 1970’s female workers were granted equal pay and it became illegal to discriminate against women in appointments to jobs

The Catholic church still forbade the use of Birth Control, however most other western women became able to determine the number of pregnancies they would experience in their life times, by the 1960’s

In Communist nations they availability of both abortion and birth control varied based on what the state felt was necessary

**Birth Control and Abortion**

Most developing countries began to organize public campaigns for Birth Control as populations increased and began to outstrip food supplies and the development of public services

There has been a lot of resistance to family planning initiatives, especially in lands where infant mortality rates are still high or where there was no real prospect that one fewer child to feed or educate would make a real difference to their standard of living

**The Soviet Response**

In 1977 the USSR led the US 3 to 2 in mega tonnage ( the explosive yield of bombs measured in tonnes of TNT) however, it lacked missile accuracy.

Between 1971 and `84 defence spending in the USSR grew by 5% per year.

Estimates suggest that this was the equivalent of between 13 and 17% of their GNP (compared to 5.5% of the US GNP)

In the late 1970`s Soviet accuracy improved an d technology they imported from Japan allowed Soviet Submarines to move more quietly

In the 1980`s the quality of Soviet aircraft, submarines, warships and missiles all improved significantly

However by 1985 the money committed to the defence sector of the economy had created serious problems in the domestic economy and unrest and discontent among the Soviet citizens

Between 1979 and 1985 the arms race escalated, as the US and USSR argued about the Soviets in Afghanistan and NATO`s nuclear policy, among other issues

In 1981 Reagan proposed the Zero option according to which the Americans would not deploy missiles in Europe if the USSR would dismantle their SS-20`s there. The USSR refused fearing the remaining bombs of the French and British

In November of `81 Reagan puts forth the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START)

This involved the destruction of missiles on both sides, however left the US in a position of superiority regarding cruise missiles and bombers

The Soviets were not interested

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Questions/Main ideas:

Birth Control and Abortion in Britain

In Britain: 1967 Labour MP David Steel sponsors an Abortion Law Reform Bill, which becomes the Abortion Act. The Act decriminalizes abortion in Britain on certain grounds. Originally, abortion was entirely illegal, but was changed to make it legal when the woman was in danger of dying. However, in 1968, Dr. Alex Bourne deliberately challenged the law to clarify what constituted legal practice in relation to abortions. He performed an abortion on a 14-year-old rape victim, though her life was not in danger. The doctor won and the ‘Bourne Judgment’ opened the way for other doctors to interpret the law more flexibly. 1967 The contraceptive pill becomes available through Family Planning Clinics. Act permits health authorities to give contraceptive advice regardless of marital status

**Abortion in the USA**

1967: Colorado Gov. John A. Love signs the first "liberalized" ALI-model abortion law in the United States, allowing abortion in cases of permanent mental or physical disability of either the child or mother or in cases of rape or incest. Similar laws are passed in California, Oregon, and North Carolina.

1970: New York allows abortion on demand up to the 24th week of pregnancy, as Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller signs a bill repealing the state's 1830 law that banned abortion after quickening except to save a woman's life. Similar laws are passed in Alaska, Hawaii, and Washington state.  
1971: The U.S. Supreme Court rules on its first case involving abortion in United States v. Vuitch, upholding a District of Columbia law permitting abortion only to preserve a woman's life or "health." However, the Court makes it clear that by "health" it means "psychological and physical well-being," effectively allowing abortion for any reason.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Abortion in the USA: Roe v. Wade**

1972 By year's end a total of 13 states have an ALI-type law. Four states allow abortion on demand. Mississippi allows abortion for rape and incest (1966)

Alabama allows abortion for the mother's physical health [1954].

However, 31 states allow abortion only to save the mother's life.

In 1973 The U.S. Supreme Court issues its ruling in Roe v. Wade, finding that a "right of privacy" it had earlier discovered was "broad enough to encompass" a right to abortion and adopting a trimester scheme of pregnancy.

In the first trimester, a state could enact virtually no regulation. In the second trimester, the state could enact some regulation, but only for the purpose of protecting maternal "health." In the third trimester, after viability, a state could ostensibly "proscribe" abortion, provided it made exceptions to preserve the life and "health" of the woman seeking abortion.

Issued on the same day, Doe v. Bolton defines "health" to mean "all factors" that affect the woman, including "physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the woman's age.“

May 14: The National Right to Life Committee is incorporated.

**The Pill**

The Combined Oral Contraceptive Pill (COCP), often referred to as the birth-control pill, or simply "the pill", is a birth control method.

First approved for contraceptive use in the United States in 1960.

They are currently used by more than 100 million women worldwide and by almost 12 million women in the United States.

Usage varies widely by country, age, education, and marital status

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Questions/Main ideas:

**The Pill Continued**

The Pill was approved by the FDA in the early 1960s; its use spread rapidly in the late part of that decade, generating an enormous social impact.

Time Magazine placed the pill on its cover in April, 1967.

The pill was more effective than most previous reversible methods of birth control, giving women unprecedented control over their

The choice to take the Pill was a private one. This combination of factors served to make the Pill immensely popular within a few years of its introduction.

Claudia Goldin, among others, argue that this new contraceptive technology was a key player in forming women's modern economic role, in that it prolonged the age at which women first married allowing them to invest in education and other forms of human capital as well as generally become more career-oriented.

Soon after the birth control pill was legalized, there was an increase in college attendance and graduation rates for women. From an economic point of view, the birth control pill reduced the cost of staying in school.

The ability to control fertility without sacrificing sexual relationships gave women more control over long term educational and career plans.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**The Civil Rights Movement Continued: Voter Registration Organizing**

In the US white Americans especially in the South had political control of the country . The voting rights of blacks were oppressed,

racial segregation imposed, and violence against African Americans was wide spread.

The early 1900s was a period of massive racial prejudice and oppression in the USA.

While problems and civil rights violations were most intense in the South, social tensions affected African Americans in other regions as well.

The system of overt, state-sanctioned racial discrimination and oppression that emerged out of the post-Reconstruction South became known as the "Jim Crow" system. It remained virtually intact into the early 1950s.

Systematic disenfranchisement (the removal of the African American’s ability to vote) of African Americans lasted until national civil rights legislation was passed in the mid-1960s.

For more than 60 years, they were not able to elect a single person in the South to represent their interests in Congress, and because African Americans could not vote, they could not sit on juries limited to voters.

They had no part in the justice system or law enforcement.

There were many tactics used by the white majority to keep African Americans from being able to vote these included:

literacy tests, employers firing blacks who tried to register to vote and landlords evicting them from their homes

voter registration campaigns became an integral part of the Civil Rights Movement., and helped to led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act (1965)

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Organizations associated with the Civil Rights movement**

NAACP National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (founded 1909)

SNCC Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee

CORE Congress on Racial Equality

All of these groups were active in various parts of the following civil rights activities

**Civil Rights Continued: Desegregation**

Integration of Mississippi Universities, 1956-1965 resulted in massive protests, initially the universities blocked African Americans from entering the universities. After integration was forced through the court system white students and other whites began rioting , throwing rocks at the U.S. Marshals guarding the African American student who wished to enter the State university, then firing on the marshals. Two people, including a French journalist, were killed; many marshals suffered gunshot wounds; and many others were injured. After the Mississippi Highway Patrol withdrew from the campus, President Kennedy sent in the regular Army to enforce desegregation.

Albany Movement, 1961-1962 a desegregation movement formed in Albany, Georgia by local activists, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) ,later Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) also became involved.

The Albany Movement mobilized thousands of citizens and attracted nationwide attention but failed to accomplish its goals due to opposition.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Civil Rights Continued: Desegregation**

Birmingham campaign, 1963-1964 the Birmingham campaign focused on one goal—the desegregation of Birmingham's downtown merchants, rather than total desegregation, as in Albany. The movement's efforts were helped (in a way) by the brutal response of local authorities

The campaign used a variety of nonviolent methods of confrontation, including sit-ins, kneel-ins at local churches, and a march to the county building to mark the beginning of a drive to register voters.

The city obtained an injunction banning the protests. Believing that the order was unconstitutional, the protestors defied it and prepared for the mass arrests of their supporters. Martin Luther King Jr. was one of those arrested, this is where King is supposed to have written his famous “Letter from Birmingham Jail” in which King stated that: not only was civil disobedience justified in the face of unjust laws, but that "one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.“ He also said one should be willing to face the consequences of breaking the law.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Desegregation the Birmingham campaign and the Children’s Crusade**

The Children’s Crusade The desegregation movement in Birmingham was faltering. So a proposal was made to train high school students to take part in the demonstrations.

As a result, more than one thousand students skipped school to meet at the 16th Street Baptist Church to join the demonstrations, in what would come to be called the Children's Crusade.

Hundreds of them ended up in jail. This was newsworthy, but in this first encounter, the police acted with restraint

The crusade however continued. On the next day, another group of students gathered at the church. When they started marching, officials unleashed police dogs on them, then turned the city's fire hoses on the children.

Television cameras broadcast to the nation the scenes of water from fire hoses knocking down schoolchildren and dogs attacking individual demonstrators.

Sympathy for the movement grew in some areas, however other events of 1963 included, George Wallace, the Governor of Alabama, trying to block the integration of the University of Alabama. President John F. Kennedy was forced to send in the national guard to insure the enrolment of two black students.

Shortly after this Medgar Evers was murdered in Mississippi.

Despite these discouraging events the movement was gaining government recognition the week after Evers’s murder, on June 19, 1963, JFK submitted his Civil Rights bill to Congress.

The KKK bombed a church in Birmingham, killing four young girls in September

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Civil Rights Continued: March on Washington, 1963**

The march had six official goals:

meaningful civil rights laws

a massive federal works program

full and fair employment

decent housing

the right to vote

adequate integrated education

Of these, the march's real focus was on passage of the civil rights law that the Kennedy Administration had proposed after the upheavals in Birmingham.

The march was a success, an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 demonstrators gathered in front of the Lincoln Memorial, to listen to King deliver his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

**St. Augustine, Florida, 1963-1964**

Events in St. Augustine, Florida also contributed to the passage of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. A movement, led by a local African American dentist and Air Force veteran, had been picketing segregated local institutions since 1963, he and three companions were brutally beaten at a Ku Klux Klan rally in the fall of that year.

Nightriders shot into black homes

Four teenagers who came to be known as "The St. Augustine Four" spent six months in jail and reform school for a sit-in in at the local Woolworth's lunch counter. It took a special action of the governor and cabinet of Florida to release them after national protests. In 1964, activists urged northern college students to come to the St. Augustine for Spring Break and go not to the beach, but to take part in demonstrations. Four prominent Massachusetts women all of whose husbands were Episcopal bishops, and the wife of the vice president of a major insurance company also came to lend their support

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Questions/Main ideas:

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**The civil rights movement**

Mississippi Freedom Summer, 1964 In the summer of 1964, nearly 1,000 activists went to Mississippi most of them were white college students who went to join with local black activists to register voters, teach in "Freedom Schools," and organize the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party

Many white residents deeply resented the protestors

State and local governments, police, the White Citizens' Council and the Ku Klux Klan used arrests, beatings, arson, murder, spying, firing, evictions, and other forms of intimidation and harassment to oppose the project and prevent blacks from registering to vote

In June three civil rights workers disappeared. A young black Mississippian and two Jewish activists, they were found weeks later, murdered by conspirators who turned out to be local members of the Klan, some of them members of the Neshoba County sheriff's department. (The movie Mississippi Burning was based on these events).

Dr. King Awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Dr Martin Luther King Jr Accepts the Nobel Peace Prize

Boycott of New Orleans by American Football League players, 1965

Questions/Main ideas:

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Civil Rights in the USA: Selma Alabama**

Selma and the Voting Rights Act, 1965 a voter registration program had been under way in Selma, Alabama, since 1963, but by 1965 had made little headway

King came to Selma to lead several marches, at which he was arrested along with other demonstrators. The marchers continued to meet violent resistance from police. When a resident of nearby Marion, was killed by police at a march in February. The director of the Selma Movement, initiated a plan to march from Selma to Montgomery.

In March of 1965, a march of 600 people to walked the 54 miles (87 km) from Selma to the state capital in Montgomery.

Only six blocks into the march, however, state troopers and local law enforcement, some mounted on horseback, attacked the peaceful demonstrators with Billy clubs, tear gas, rubber tubes wrapped in barbed wire and bull whips. Driving the marchers back into Selma..

national broadcasts of footage of lawmen attacking unresisting marchers seeking the right to vote provoked a national response. The marchers were able to obtain a court order permitting them to make the march without incident two weeks later.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Selma and the Voting Rights Act, 1965, Continued**

After a second march in March, however, local whites murdered another voting rights supporter,

Also in March, four Klansmen shot and killed a Detroit homemaker as she drove marchers back to Selma at night after the successfully completed march to Montgomery. Eight days after the first march, Johnson delivered a televised address to support of the voting rights bill he had sent to Congress. In it he stated: “But even if we pass this bill, the battle will not be over. What happened in Selma is part of a far larger movement which reaches into every section and state of America. It is the effort of American Negroes to secure for themselves the full blessings of American life. Their cause must be our cause too. Because it is not just Negroes, but really it is all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice. And we shall overcome.” President Lyndon Johnson passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, this act suspended poll taxes, literacy tests and other subjective voter tests. It authorized Federal supervision of voter registration in states and individual voting districts where such tests were being. Memphis, King assassination 1968 King was assassinated on April 4, 1968. Riots broke out in more than a hundred cities across the US

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Questions/Main ideas:

**The other side of the Civil Rights movement: Black power**

King faced challenges from within the Civil Rights Movement in two areas that were foundations of the movement as he saw it integration and non-violence.The Black Power movement was made most public by the Black Panther Party founded in 1966. This group followed ideology stated by Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam using a "by-any-means necessary" approach to stopping inequality.

They sought to rid African American neighbourhoodof Police Brutality. Their dress code consisted of leather jackets, berets, light blue shirts, and they adopted the afro hairstyle. They set up free breakfast programs, but were also known for referring to police officers as "pigs", and displaying shotguns and a black power fist. The statement "Power to the people.“ Was a popular Black Panther slogan

**American Society: Vietnam the early years**

The US had re-established its relationship with China at a time when they were mired in the Vietnam war.

Intervention in Vietnam began in the 50’s with military assistance to the French. By ’54, America was paying for 80% of the French war effort in Indo-China. In 1957, Eisenhower revealed the domino theory (the idea that if Vietnam fell to Communism the rest of South East Asia would also fall like “dominos”) this therefore meant that Vietnam was of great strategic significance to the Americans and apparently quite important to stop the spread of communism. Eisenhower also believed that Vietnam lay on the West’s defensive perimeter and therefore within the American sphere of influence

Thus begins one of the most controversial wars in USA’s history. While the Vietnam war still goes without validation, it had dramatic effects on American society.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**American Society: Vietnam continued Lyndon Johnson’s two front war**

Between 1959 and 1975 approximately 55, 000 Americans were killed and another 303,000 wounded in Vietnam

The US also spent about $150 Billion on a war that ended in the Communists taking Vietnam

The Americans began to escalate their action in Vietnam in 1965, when they began what would become a massive bombing campaign

Between 1965 and 1968 there were more than 500 000 American military personnel stationed in Vietnam. By the end of ’67, more bombs had been dropped on Vietnam than on Europe during WWII.

Commitment to military action in Vietnam came when President Lyndon Johnson was implementing his “war on poverty,” in an effort to create the Great Society

The two main goals of the Great Society were :social reforms; the elimination of poverty and the elimination of racial injustice.

Lyndon Johnson launched major spending programs that addressed education, medical care, urban problems, and transportation

This meant that Johnson wanted the American eeconomy to fund two wars and he wanted to accomplish this without raising taxes.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**American Society: Vietnam and social change in the US**

Vietnam occurred at a time when American society was undergoing fundamental change.

The civil rights movement, women’s movement, the environmental movement, and anti-establishment groups that manifested themselves in communes of “flower children” all challenged societal norms.

Civil disobedience, draft-dodging, and anti-war demonstrations indicted a decline of public supported. Growing divisiveness was promoted by the mass media. The Tet Offensive by North Vietnam on American bases, although considered a military failure on their part, brought about the first time the American public saw their enemies close-up on television killing their boys. The Vietnam war had become increasingly unpopular at home and internal dissent was on the rise. The election of Nixon came largely as a result of his promise to extricate the US out of ‘Nam. The Watergate scandal ultimately ends his presidency

**Détente Ends**

Issues other than Vietnam preoccupied the US.

The American government still wanted to take a leading role in policing the world while at the same time providing high-quality consumer goods to its population at reasonable prices.

Lack of ability to compete in automotive, steel, and textile markets pressured American industrialists to become more innovative.

The automotive industry was under siege particularly: The energy crisis of 1973 made fuel economy imperative, and Japanese cars were far superior in fuel efficiency.

Trade imbalances and energy prices led to a recession in the US by the late 1970’s.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**End of the Détente continues**

The years of Jimmy Carter (1976-1980) were characterized on the international scene not only by the end of the détente, but also the development of the notion that use of nukes need not destroy humanity.

USA’s national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, saw the world in bipolar terms and clearly viewed the Soviets as a global threat to be met militarily.

The Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, disagreed

Faced by two competing positions, Carter adopted a humanitarian approach and focused on human rights issues in the USSR.

His support of dissidents infuriated Brezhnev and lessened any opportunity for meaningful negotiations.

The most serious rupture in American-Soviet relations at the end of the 1970s occurred when Brzezinski (the American security advisor) used détente with China to decrease the influence of the Soviet Union.

In the new year of 1979, Carter and Deng Xiaoping had exchanged diplomatic representations and ended 30 years of American non-recognition of China.

Brzezinski capitalized on this opportunity and American exports to China nearly doubled in 1979.

The Chinese used the relationship to imply American relations while SALT II agreements were still un-ratified .

When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, détente effectively ended: America boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympics and refused to ratify SALT II.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Cola War**

After the rapprochement between the US and China in ‘79, Coca-Cola (having links to Carter) obtained a monopoly to produce its beverage in China. The Soviet soft drink market had been given to Pepsi-cola , whose officials were closely linked to Nixon.

**Reagan**

In 1980, Ronald Reagan won a landslide victory over Carter.

He focused attention on the “evil empire” of USSR– promising to take a hard-line stand in foreign policy.

He argues the Soviets continued to produce arms at a time when the US had directed its attention to domestic issues.

He figured it was time to redress the imbalance and equip the US to fight a protracted war with conventional and nuclear weaponry.

The belief that nuclear war could be won had been popularized already, and despite contrary evidence, the Reagan administration operated on such a premise.

Believing that the economy could afford a massive military buildup, the administration ignored the budgetary deficit it was running.

The results were devastating: factories became less competitive and workers faced increased prices and fewer jobs.

Committed to “taking the government off the backs of the people”, Reagan refused to raise taxes. The government’s share of the GNP was 25.2%, the highest degree of involvement since WWII.

The Reagan administration was supported by a militant right wing anxious to protect the world from Communism.

Central America was too close to the US for it to allow success. The Reagan government, thusly, attempted to secure friendly governments in El Salvador and Nicaragua and prevent infiltration of Cuban or Soviet communists.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**American Sphere of Influence**

As early as 1823, with the issue of the Monroe doctrine, the Americans had declared their hegemony in Central America. The US had challenged Great Britain in the area by investing in it’s plantations, railroads, gold and silver, and in utilities and government securities. By 1914, Central America’s economy was dependent on its trade with the US. Latin America early 20th century intervention Part 2

Subject to Spanish colonization and economic imperialism of other nations, Central America has not been able to develop social and economic systems that satisfy the majority of their citizens.

Typically, their economies are controlled by a combination of foreign investors and local elites. This tends to turn countries into producers of one or two primary crops for export, rendering most of the locals impoverished and malnourished.

Over the years revolutionary groups devoted to ousting the wealthy elite and breaking the foreign economic monopolies have sprung up.

As American political influence in Central America has risen with increasing economic investment, the US has been determined to maintain economic stability in and control of the region,

This has been accomplished partially by supporting governments opposed to revolutionary ideals.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**El Salvador**

In the 1970’s, 2% of the population was made up of the Fourteen Families that controlled all the fertile soil and 60% of the total land area.

The ordinary people of El Salvador ranked among the five most poorly fed populations in the world, also having one of the highest population growth rates at 3.5% per year. This caused significant strain on the agricultural and environmental sector

El Salvador had for some time been in the grip of a civil war that can be traced to the 1972 presidential elections that saw Jose Napoleon Duarte deprived of his democratically achieved victory when the army declared its own candidate the winner.

After a failed coup, Duarte was exiled to Guatemala and guerrilla groups organized in the countryside.

Archbishop Oscar Romero became outspoken in condemning government and government supported vigilante terrorism, and the atrocities the military was committing on the population

When Pope John Paul II was elected in 1978, the Church advised Latin American Catholic leaders to commit to community, but not partisan causes. However, Romero continued his anti-government criticism. As government repression increased, most church leaders withdrew from political involvement

Pope John Paul II voiced disapproval of political activism.

Romero continued his anti-government protests until he was eventually killed by a right-wing political group in San Salvador (while celebrating mass).

The military dictatorship lost whatever support they had when the bodies of three American nuns and a layperson were found in a shallow grave, the nuns had been raped and then killed.

Jimmy Carter suspended military aid to the El Salvador government in response to these murders

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Questions/Main ideas:

**El Salvador: Continued**

American protest against Salvadoran government atrocities was short-lived.

The military aid Carter suspended to protest the slaying of US churchwomen was resumed under Reagan. By 1984 US military aid to the government of El Salvador amounted to $196 million dollars

Rebel groups were funded through Nicaragua from Cuba. The US was committed to the government in power to prevent leftist revolutions.

In 1984, Jose Napolean Duarte won the election,

Though Duarte was officially in charge, the army remained the dominant force in country.

This continued a vicious cycle of repression and rebellion of guerrilla forces in the countryside that left at least 45 000 civilians dead and created 750 000 Salvadoran refugees.

**Nicaragua**

From 1911 to 1933, the US was in military occupation of Nicaragua to control the natural system of waterways and the site of a contemplated trans isthmian canal much like Panama.

During this period, Nicaragua was essentially a protectorate of the US as they sought to prevent German and Japanese interests from constructing a canal through the region to rival its own.

From 1936 to 1979, the Somoza family ruled Nicaragua with American support and were unhindered in their manipulation of the Nicaraguan economy, controlling over half the arable land and state air and shipping lines. In 1972, an earthquake in the capital city of Managua marked the beginning of the Somoza family’s downfall. Relief supplies totaling $600 million were stolen by the National Guard and were resold on the black market.

Anastasio Somoza Debayle profited from the disaster by demanding that Managua be rebuilt on land he owned, even though the area was liable to future earthquakes.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Nicaragua: Continued**

The Somoza family fortune reached $1 billion as they profited from reconstruction contracts and further crowded out the small economic elite outside their ranks. This small group, now dispossessed of its wealth, formed the first effective opposition to the Somozas. This group of moderates led by Joaquin Chamorro in December 1974 formed the Union Democraticia Liberacion (hereafter UDEL). UDEL was soon obscured by the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN) , a radical group founded in 1962 and named after guerilla leader Sadino. The Sandinistas were initially unsuccessful in their attempts to organize a resistance movement, but in 1977 they staged a series of raids that identified them as a significant threat to the government. The assassination of Jaoquin Chamorro on 10 January 1978 provoked rioting and a general strike. The moderates, though wary of the Sandinistas, joined them in a coalition to mobilize the masses. In August 1978, they seized 1500 hostages from a legislative session and demanded release of political prisoners. This sparked Sandinista support in the countryside, and sporadic uprisings resulted in 3000 deaths.

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Nicaragua continued**

Despite American attempts to get Somoza and the Sandinistas to negotiate, the Sandinistas gained control of most of the country the following year.

On 17 July 1979, Somoza fled the country and was assassinated a year later in Paraguay.

The Sandinistas emerged victorious during the formation of a provisional government, which included representatives of both left-wing and moderate groups.

Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, widow of the assassinated Jaoquin Chamorro, was one of the country’s most important moderates and a representative of the business community.

The Sandinistas, represented by Daniel Ortega Saavedra, were now the dominant faction and encouraged a land-reform program that created both state farms and state cooperative as well as granting private holdings.

By 1981, members of the provisional government feared the continued dominance of the Sandinistas

The Sandinistas refused to allow elections fearing resistance.

Former members of Somoza’a National Guard launched guerrilla raids into Nicaragua from bases in Honduras

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Questions/Main ideas:

**Contras**

These guerrilla groups were known as the Contras, they received about $10 million in covert US aid in 1981 and another $19 million in 1982

The Regan administration wanted to undermine the Sandinista government in 1983 it gave $24 million to the Contras, whom Reagan now termed “Freedom Fighters”

However by ‘84 fears of a new Vietnam style war caused Congress to stop granting aid

IN 1985 Congress approved nonmilitary aid AM Iran Contra Affair

While the CIA had been secretly funding the Contra resistance, the Cubans had been providing military aid to the Sandinistas, to whom the Soviets had given a $300 million subsidy

In 1984 , the Sandinistas allowed elections and Daniel Ortega won

As commander-in-chief of the Sandinista army, Ortega had been key in the 1979 expulsion of Union organizers who had attempted to ruin the Nicaraguan branches of US companies like Coca-Cola and Standard Fruit, this suggested that he was willing to cooperate with US interests

However by the time he took power Ortega was in open opposition to the US and had travelled to the Soviet Union in 1985 to gain support

**Iran-Contra Affair**

In November 1986 the US public learned that profits from the sale of arms to Iran had been diverted to the Contra rebels in Nicaragua

Colonel Oliver North revealed that, in addition to the arms money, $14 million in Private donations had been raised to aid resistance to the Sandinista government

This was a problem as Congress had called for a halt in military funding to the Contras in ‘84

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Questions/Main ideas:

**The War In Nicaragua continued**

As the conflict continued other Latin American countries became involved in August of ‘87 Oscar Arias (president of Costa Rica0 put forward a peace initiative based on three principles

Cessation of aggression in Latin American countries

Cessation of foreign aid to insurgencies

Respect for political Freedoms

In March of ‘88 a ceasefire is negotiated between the Sandinistas and the Contras

This was maintained with only sporadic violence

Then in ‘89 Ortega held another election on February 25,1990

Violeta Chamorrow won with 55% of the vote to Ortega’s 41%

**Violeta Chamorro**

Violeta Chamorro who won leadership of Nicaragua from Danielle Ortaga was the wife of a newspaper Owner/editor who had been assassinated for criticising the Somoza regime

She focused on revitalizing the economy and paying back money Nicaragua owed to the IMF and the World Bank

She gave back the sugar, coffee and cotton industries to the private sector and promised to compensate people who lost land during the program of nationalizing land

She asked president Bush for $2 billion in aid, he responded by stopping the US trade embargo and promising to resume diplomatic relations

The strategic nature of Nicaragua’s location made the US commit to a program of support for the forces opposing the Sandinistas

In October of ‘96 Right wing candidate from the PCL (associated with Somoza) won the election

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