

Guide to Reading

Connection

In the previous chapter, you learned about the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations. In this section, you will discover what caused the rise of a new conservative coalition.

Main Idea

- Conservatives and liberals disagree on the role of government. (p. 887)
- Americans turned to conservatism as a reaction against the government's influence on the economy. (p. 888)
- Geographical regions tend to support either liberal or conservative ideas. (p. 888)

Content Vocabulary

liberal, conservative, televangelist

Academic Vocabulary

instance

People and Terms to Identify

William F. Buckley, Sunbelt, Billy Graham, Moral Majority

Reading Objectives

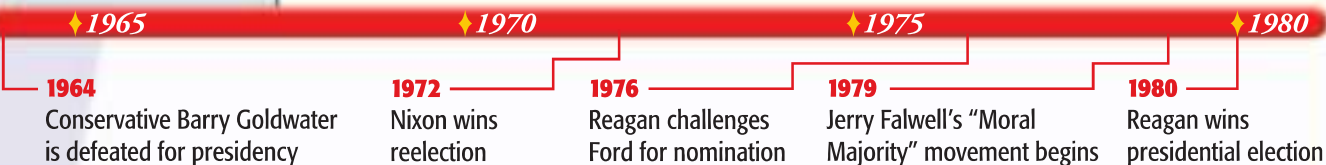
- **Explain** how discontent with government led to a conservative shift in Americans' political convictions.
- **Describe** how the nation's population shifts led to a change in voting patterns.

Reading Strategy

Taking Notes As you read about the rise of a new conservative coalition in the United States, use the major headings of the section to create an outline similar to the one below.

The New Conservatism
I. Conservatism and Liberalism
A.
B.
II.
A.

Preview of Events



The following are the main History–Social Science Standards covered in this section.

11.3.2 Analyze the great religious revivals and the leaders involved in them, including the First Great Awakening, the Second Great Awakening, the Civil War revivals, the Social Gospel Movement, the rise of Christian liberal theology in the nineteenth century, the impact of the Second Vatican Council, and the rise of Christian fundamentalism in current times.

11.8.6 Discuss the diverse environmental regions of North America, their relationship to local economies, and the origins and prospects of environmental problems in those regions.

11.9.4 List the effects of foreign policy on domestic policies and vice versa (e.g., protests during the war in Vietnam, the "nuclear freeze" movement).

11.11.7 Explain how the federal, state, and local governments have responded to demographic and social changes such as population shifts to the suburbs, racial concentrations in the cities, Frostbelt-to-Sunbelt migration, international migration, decline of family farms, increases in out-of-wedlock births, and drug abuse.

The Big Idea

Societies change over time. Many Americans began to turn to conservative ideals in response to the Cold War. Some believed liberal economic policies did not reflect American values. Others thought liberals were to blame for the spread of Soviet power. Many people with deep religious faith viewed the war against communism as a battle between good and evil and supported conservative politicians. Conservative ideals appealed to many Americans who were tired of the protests, riots, and economic problems that had plagued the nation. These factors combined to create a resurgence of conservatism.

Conservatism and Liberalism

Main Idea Conservatives and liberals disagree on the role of government.

Reading Connection In what other categories are voters sometimes grouped? Read on to learn more about conservative and liberal ideas of government.

Liberal ideas generally dominated American politics for much of the 1900s, but conservative ideas gained significant support among Americans in the 1970s.

★ An American Story ★

Midge Decter, a New Yorker and a writer for the conservative publication *Commentary*, was appalled at the terror that hit her city on a hot July night in 1977. On the night of July 13, the power failed in New York City. Street lights went dark. Elevators, subways, and air conditioners stopped running. The blackout left millions of people in darkness, and looting and arson rocked the city.

City officials and the media blamed the lawlessness on the anger and despair of youth in neglected areas. “They were just waiting for something like this so they could go berserk,” said Lydia Rivers, a Brooklyn resident. Decter, however, had other ideas about who was to blame for the terror in her city:

“The answer is that all those young men went on their spree of looting because they had been given permission to do so. They had been given permission to do so by all the papers and magazines, movies and documentaries—all the outlets for the purveying of enlightened liberal attitude and progressive liberal policy—which had for years and years been proclaiming that race and poverty were sufficient excuses for lawlessness. . . .”

—quoted in *Commentary*, September 1977

Midge Decter’s article blaming liberalism for the riots in New York during the 1977 blackout exemplifies a debate in American politics that continues to the present day. On one side of the debate are people who call themselves liberals; on the other side are those who identify themselves as conservatives. In 1980 Ronald Reagan, a strong conservative, was elected president.

Liberalism In American politics today, people who call themselves **liberals** believe several basic ideas. In general, liberals believe that the government should regulate the economy to protect people from the power of large corporations and wealthy elites. Liberals also believe that the government, particularly the federal government, should play an active role in helping disadvantaged Americans, partly through social programs and partly by putting more of society’s tax burden on wealthier people.

Although liberals favor government intervention in the economy, they are suspicious of any attempt by the government to regulate social behavior. They are strong supporters of free speech and privacy, and they are opposed to the government supporting or endorsing religious beliefs, no matter how indirectly. They believe that a diverse society made up of many different races, cultures, and ethnic groups tends to be more creative and energetic. Liberals often support high taxes on the wealthy. They believe that most social problems have their roots in economic inequality.

Conservatism Unlike liberals, **conservatives** generally have a fundamental distrust of the power of government, particularly the federal government. They support the original intent of the Constitution and believe that governmental power should be divided into different branches and split between the state and federal levels to limit its ability to intrude into people’s lives.

Conservatives believe that if the government regulates the economy, it makes the economy less efficient, resulting in less wealth and more poverty. They believe that the free enterprise system is the best way to organize society. They often argue that if people and businesses are free to make their own economic choices, there will be more wealth and a higher standard of living for everyone.

Midge Decter ➤



For this reason, conservatives generally oppose high taxes and government programs that transfer wealth from the rich to those who are less wealthy. They believe that taxes and government programs discourage investment, take away people's incentive to work hard, and reduce the amount of freedom in society.

The more the government regulates the economy, conservatives argue, the more it will have to regulate every aspect of people's behavior. Ultimately, conservatives fear, the government will so restrict people's economic freedom that Americans will no longer be able to improve their standard of living.

Many conservatives believe that religious faith is vitally important in sustaining society. They believe most social problems result from issues of morality and character—issues, they argue, that are best addressed through commitment to a religious faith and through the private efforts of individuals and communities helping those in need. Despite this general belief, conservatives do support the use of the governmental police powers to regulate social behavior in some instances.

 **Reading Check** **Contrasting** How do liberal and conservative opinions about government differ?

Conservatism Revives

 **Main Idea** Americans turned to conservatism as a reaction against the government's influence on the economy.

Reading Connection What trends in voting do you notice today? Read on to discover more about the end of the dominance of liberalism and the swing toward conservatism.

During the New Deal era of the 1930s, conservative ideas had lost much of their influence in national politics. In the years following World War II, however, conservatism began to revive.

Conservatism and the Cold War Support for conservative ideas began to revive for two major reasons, both related to the Cold War. First, the struggle against communism revived the debate about the role of the government in the economy. Some Americans believed that liberal economic ideas were slowly leading the United States toward communism and became determined to stop this trend. They also thought the United States had failed to stop the spread of Soviet power because liberals did not fully understand the need for a strong anticommunist foreign policy.

At the same time, many Americans viewed the Cold War in religious terms. Communism rejected religion and emphasized the material side of life. To Americans with a deep religious faith, the struggle against communism was a struggle between good and evil. Liberalism, which emphasizes economic welfare, gradually lost the support of many religious Americans to conservatism.

Conservatives Organize In 1955 a young conservative named **William F. Buckley** founded a new conservative magazine called *National Review*. Buckley's magazine helped to revive conservative ideas in the United States. Buckley debated in front of college students and appeared on radio and television shows, spreading conservative ideas to an even wider audience.

Within the Republican Party, conservatives, particularly young conservatives, began to push their ideas and demand a greater role in party decision-making. In 1960 some 90 young conservative leaders met at Buckley's family estate and founded Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), an independent conservative group, to push their ideas and to support conservative candidates.

By 1964 the new conservative movement had achieved enough influence within the Republican Party to enable the conservative Barry Goldwater to win the nomination for president. To the dismay of the conservatives, however, President Johnson easily defeated Goldwater and won the election in a landslide.

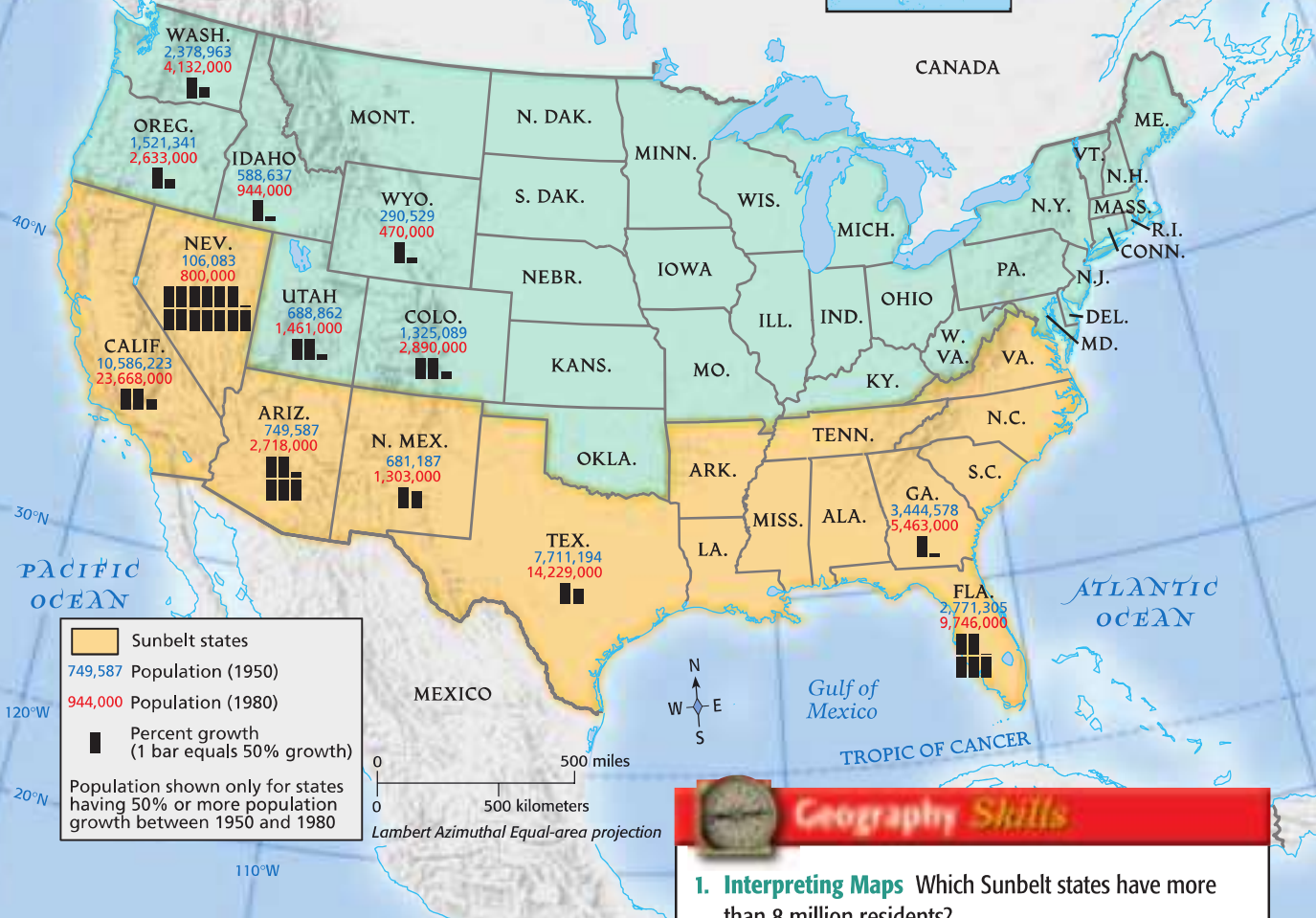
 **Reading Check** **Explaining** Why did conservatism revive in the 1950s?

Conservatism Gains Support

 **Main Idea** Geographical regions tend to support either liberal or conservative ideas.

Reading Connection Politically, how would you define yourself or the region in which you live? Read on to learn about the growing political power of voters in the Southwest.

Conservatism could not have become a mass movement if Americans had not responded to conservative ideas. The events of the late 1960s and 1970s played an important role in convincing Americans to support conservatism. After Goldwater's huge loss in 1964, American society moved decisively in a conservative direction.



Geography Skills

- 1. Interpreting Maps** Which Sunbelt states have more than 8 million residents?
- 2. Applying Geography Skills** Nevada has the highest percentage growth in population for the time period shown. Looking at its 1950 population, how would you explain this large percentage increase?

The Rise of the Sunbelt One of the problems facing conservatives in the 1950s and early 1960s was that they generally split their votes between the Republicans and the Democrats. Two regions of the country, the South and the West, were more conservative than other areas. Southern conservatives, however, generally voted for the Democrats, while conservatives in the West voted Republican. This meant that the party that won the heavily populated Northeast would win the election. Since the Northeast strongly supported liberal ideas, both parties were pulled toward liberal policies.

This pattern began to change during World War II, when large numbers of Americans moved south and west to take jobs in the war factories. The movement to the South and West—together known as the **Sunbelt**—continued after the war. Adding to the growth of the Sunbelt during the 1980s and 1990s was a surge in immigrants, mostly from Asia and Mexico. As the Sunbelt’s economy expanded, Americans living in those regions began to view the federal government differently from people living in

the Northeast. Federal, state, and local governments had to change to respond to new and unique needs.

Sunbelt Conservatism Industry in the Northeast was in decline, leading to the region’s nickname—the Rust Belt. This region had more unemployed people than any other, and its cities were often congested and polluted. These problems prompted Americans in the Northeast to look to the federal government for programs and regulations that would help them solve their problems.

In contrast, Americans in the Sunbelt opposed high taxes and federal regulations that threatened to interfere with their region’s growth. Many white Southerners were also angry with the Democrats for supporting civil rights, which they interpreted as an effort by the federal government to impose its policies on the South.

When Barry Goldwater argued in 1964 that the federal government was becoming too strong, many Southerners agreed. For the first time since Reconstruction, they began voting Republican in large numbers. Although Goldwater lost the election, his candidacy showed Republicans that the best way to attract Southern votes was to support conservative policies.

Americans living in the West also responded to conservative attacks on the size and power of the federal government. Westerners were proud of their frontier heritage and spirit of “rugged individualism.” They resented federal environmental regulations that limited ranching, controlled water use, and restricted the development of the region’s natural resources. Western anger over such policies inspired the “Sagebrush Rebellion” of the early 1970s—a widespread protest led by conservatives against federal laws hindering the region’s development.

By 1980 the population of the Sunbelt had surpassed the Northeast. This gave the conservative regions of the country more electoral votes and, therefore, more influence in shaping party policies. With Southerners shifting their votes to the Republican Party, conservatives could now build a coalition to elect a president.

▼ *Supporters of Proposition 13 celebrate after it is passed*



Suburban Conservatism As crime soared during the 1960s and 1970s, many Americans moved to suburbs. Even there, however, they found the quiet middle-class lifestyle they desired to be in danger. The rapid inflation of the 1970s had caused the buying power of the average middle-class family to shrink while taxes remained high.

Many Americans resented the taxes they had to pay for New Deal and Great Society programs when they themselves were losing ground economically. By the late 1970s, Americans had begun to rebel against these high taxes. In 1978 Howard Jarvis, a conservative activist, launched the first successful tax revolt in California with Proposition 13, a referendum on the state ballot that greatly reduced property taxes.

Anti-tax movements soon appeared in other states, and tax cuts became a national issue. For many Americans, the conservative argument that the government had become too big meant that taxes were too high. As conservatives began to call for tax cuts, middle-class Americans flocked to their cause.

The Religious Right Conservatism also drew people who feared American society had lost touch with its traditional values. Many Americans of deep religious faith were shocked by the events of the 1960s and 1970s. The Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which established abortion as a constitutional right, greatly concerned them. Other Supreme Court decisions that limited prayer in public schools and expanded the rights of people accused of crimes also drew criticism. 📖 (See page 1006 for more information on *Roe v. Wade*.)

The feminist movement and the push for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) further alarmed religious Americans because it seemed to represent an assault on the traditional family. The growing number of single mothers in the 1970s continued to increase in the 1980s. Many religious people were also shocked by the behavior of some university students in the 1960s, whose contempt for authority seemed to indicate a general breakdown in American values and morality. These concerns helped expand the conservative cause into a mass movement.

Religious conservatives included people of many different faiths. The number of these faiths had increased with the recent influx of immigrants. Still, the largest group within the social conservative movement was evangelical Protestant Christians. Evangelicals believe they are saved from their sins through conversion (which they refer to as being “born again”) and a personal commitment to follow Jesus Christ, whose death and resurrection reconciles them to God.

After World War II, a religious revival began in the United States. Protestant ministers such as **Billy Graham** and Oral Roberts built national followings. By the late 1970s, about 70 million Americans described themselves as “born again.” Christian evangelicals owned their own newspapers, magazines, radio stations, and television networks.

Television in particular allowed evangelical ministers to reach a large nationwide audience. These “**televangelists**,” as they were nicknamed, included Marion “Pat” Robertson, who founded the Christian Broadcasting Network, and Jerry Falwell, who used his television show *The Old-Time Gospel Hour* to found a movement that he called the “**Moral Majority**.” Using television and mail campaigns, the Moral Majority built up a network of ministers to register new voters who backed conservative candidates and issues. Falwell later claimed to have brought in 2 million new voters by 1980.



Jerry Falwell (below) and Pat Robertson (right)

A New Coalition By the end of the 1970s, the new conservative coalition of voters had begun to come together in the United States. Although the members of this coalition were concerned with many different issues, they were held together by a common belief that American society had somehow lost its way.

The Watergate scandal, high taxes, and special interest politics had undermined many Americans’ faith in their government. Rising unemployment, rapid inflation, and the energy crisis had shaken their confidence in the economy. Riots, crime, and drug abuse suggested that society itself was falling apart. The retreat from Vietnam, the hostage crisis in Iran, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan made the

nation look weak and helpless internationally. Many Americans were tired of change and upheaval. They wanted stability and a return to what they remembered as a better time. For some, the new conservatism and its most prominent spokesperson, Ronald Reagan, offered hope to a nation in distress.

Reading Check **Summarizing** Why did many Americans begin to support the conservative movement?

HISTORY Online Study Central

For help with the concepts in this section of *American Vision: Modern Times* go to tav.mt.glencoe.com and click on **Study Central**.

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- Vocabulary** Define: liberal, conservative, instance, televangelist.
- People and Terms** Identify: William F. Buckley, Sunbelt, Billy Graham, Moral Majority.
- Explain** why evangelical Protestant Christians began to support conservative issues.

Reviewing Big Ideas

- Describing** What kind of economy did conservatives want?

Critical Thinking

- Historical Analysis** **Analyzing** How did Christian evangelicals contribute to a growing conservative national identity? **CA H11**
- Organizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list conservative beliefs.

Conservative Beliefs

Analyzing Visuals

- Analyzing Maps** Study the map of the Sunbelt on page 889. What impact would the migration patterns shown have on representation in the U.S. House of Representatives?

Writing About History

- Persuasive Writing** Many conservatives believe that “government that governs least, governs best.” Write a paragraph supporting or opposing this statement. **CA 11WS1.1**

Guide to Reading

Connection

In the previous section, you learned about the rise of the new conservative coalition. In this section, you will discover how Ronald Reagan brought conservative ideals to the White House.

Main Idea

- President Reagan's experiences in Hollywood and as governor of California led to his successful campaign for presidency. (p. 893)
- Believing that government was part of the problem, President Reagan cut social service programs, sponsored tax cuts, and deregulated industry. (p. 894)
- President Reagan oversaw the largest peacetime buildup of the military in American history. (p. 896)

- President Reagan supported governments fighting communism, a policy known as the Reagan Doctrine. (p. 897)
- President Reagan's decision to place nuclear missiles in Western Europe triggered calls for a "nuclear freeze." (p. 898)

Content Vocabulary

supply-side economics, budget deficit, contra

Academic Vocabulary

exceed, offset, visible

People and Terms to Identify

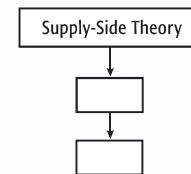
Reaganomics, Sandra Day O'Connor, William Rehnquist, Geraldine Ferraro, Iran-Contra scandal, Oliver North, Mikhail Gorbachev

Reading Objectives

- **Explain** President Reagan's economic recovery plan.
- **Discuss** Reagan's policies toward the Soviet Union.

Reading Strategy

Organizing As you read about the Reagan presidency, complete the graphic organizer below by filling in the major points of the supply-side theory of economics.



Preview of Events



The following are the main History–Social Science Standards covered in this section.

11.8.4 Analyze new federal government spending on defense, welfare, interest on the national debt, and federal and state spending on education, including the California Master Plan.

11.9.4 List the effects of foreign policy on domestic policies and vice versa (e.g., protests during the war in Vietnam, the "nuclear freeze" movement).

11.9.5 Analyze the role of the Reagan administration and other factors in the victory of the West in the Cold War.

11.9.6 Describe U.S. Middle East policy and its strategic, political, and economic interests, including those related to the Gulf War.

11.11.2 Discuss the significant domestic policy speeches of Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Carter, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton (e.g., with regard to education, civil rights, economic policy, environmental policy).

The Big Idea

International competition can lead to conflict and cooperation. President Reagan believed government policies were responsible for the country's economic and social problems. To combat the stagflation hindering the economy, he supported a policy of high interest rates and tax cuts. This policy became known as Reaganomics. He also proposed cuts to social programs and deregulation of oil and gas. Reagan's policies encouraged economic growth. In the 1984 election, he won in an overwhelming landslide. After his reelection, President Reagan focused on increasing military spending, believing that a strong military would foster peace. The combination of military spending and tax cuts, however, led to a large federal budget deficit. Reagan supported countries fighting against communism. By 1987 he had made great progress in ending the Cold War.

The Road to the White House

Main Idea President Reagan's experiences in Hollywood and as governor of California led to his successful campaign for presidency.

Reading Connection How could being a movie star help someone be elected? Read on to learn more about the way that President Reagan's background shaped his conservatism.

Ronald Reagan grew up in Dixon, Illinois, the son of an Irish American shoe salesman. After graduating from Eureka College in 1932, Reagan worked as a sports broadcaster. In 1937 he won a contract from a Hollywood movie studio. Over the next 25 years, he made over 50 movies. Reagan learned how to speak publicly and how to project an image, skills that proved invaluable when he entered politics.

★ An American Story ★

In 1926 when he was 15 years old, Ronald Reagan earned \$15 a week as a lifeguard at Lowell Park on the Rock River in Illinois. Being a lifeguard, Reagan later wrote, taught him quite a bit about human nature:

“Lifeguarding provides one of the best vantage points in the world to learn about people. During my career at the park, I saved seventy-seven people. I guarantee you they needed saving—no lifeguard gets wet without good reason. . . . Not many thanked me, much less gave me a reward, and being a little money-hungry, I'd done a little daydreaming about this. They felt insulted. I got to recognize that people hate to be saved. . . .”

—quoted in *Where's the Rest of Me?*

The belief that people did not really want to be saved by someone else was one of the ideas that Ronald Reagan took with him to the White House. It fit with his philosophy of self-reliance and independence.

Moving to Conservatism In 1947 Reagan became president of the Screen Actors Guild—the actors' union. As head of the union, he testified about communism in Hollywood before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Reagan had been a staunch Democrat and supporter of the New Deal, but his experience in dealing with Communists in the union began shifting him toward conservative ideas.

In 1954 Reagan became the host of a television program called *General Electric Theater* and agreed to be a motivational speaker for the company. As he traveled around the country speaking to workers, secretaries, and managers, he became increasingly conservative. Over and over again, Reagan said later, he heard stories from average Americans about how high taxes and government regulations made it impossible for them to get ahead.

By 1964 Reagan had become such a popular national speaker that Barry Goldwater asked him to make a televised speech on behalf of Goldwater's presidential campaign. Reagan's speech greatly impressed several wealthy entrepreneurs in California. They convinced Reagan to run for governor of California in 1966 and helped finance his campaign. Reagan won the election and was reelected in 1970. Ten years later, he won the Republican presidential nomination.

The Election of 1980 Reagan's campaign appealed to Americans who were frustrated with the economy and worried that the United States had become weak internationally. Reagan promised to cut taxes and increase defense spending. He won the support of social conservatives by calling for a constitutional amendment banning abortion. During one debate with Carter, Reagan asked voters, “Are you better off than you were four years ago?” On Election Day, the voters answered “No.” Reagan won nearly 51 percent of the popular vote and 489 electoral votes, easily defeating Carter in the Electoral College. For the first time since 1954, Republicans also gained control of the Senate.

Reading Check **Describing** What event jumpstarted Ronald Reagan's political career as a conservative leader?

“... people hate to be saved ...”

—Ronald Reagan



Different Viewpoints

Carter and Reagan on Government

As President Carter sought re-election in 1980, he had to deal with inflation, unemployment, and an energy crisis. He urged Americans to make sacrifices so that the government could solve these problems. His opponent, Ronald Reagan, disagreed. Reagan argued that Americans should trust themselves, not the government, to solve their problems.

President Jimmy Carter:

"[A] president cannot yield to the shortsighted demands, no matter how rich or powerful the special interests might be that make those demands. And that is why the president cannot bend to the passions of the moment, however popular they might be. And that is why the president must sometimes ask for sacrifice when his listeners would rather hear the promise of comfort.

. . . The only way to build a better future is to start with realities of the present. But while we Democrats grapple with the real challenges of a real world, others talk of a world of tinsel and make-believe.

. . . A world of good guys and bad guys, where some politicians shoot first and ask questions later.

No hard choices. No sacrifice. No tough decisions. It sounds too good to be true—and it is."

—from his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention, August 14, 1980



California governor Ronald Reagan:

"The American people, the most generous people on earth, who created the highest standard of living, are not going to accept the notion that we can only make a better world for others by moving backwards ourselves. Those who believe we *can* have no business leading the nation.

I will not stand by and watch this great country destroy itself under mediocre leadership that drifts from one crisis to the next, eroding our national will and purpose.

"Trust me" government asks that we concentrate our hopes and dreams on one man; that we trust him to do what's best for us. My view of government places trust not in one person or one party, but in those values that transcend persons and parties. The trust is where it belongs—in the people."

—from his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention, July 17, 1980

Learning From History

1. **Historical Analysis** **Recognizing Ideologies** How do the two candidates differ regarding the role of government in solving the nation's problems? **CA HI2**
2. **Making Inferences** Ronald Reagan won the election of 1980. What part of his speech do you think may have had the most influence on voters? Why?

Reagan's Domestic Policies

Main Idea Believing that government was part of the problem, President Reagan cut social service programs, sponsored tax cuts, and deregulated industry.

Reading Connection Do you think cutting social programs is a good way to help the economy? Read on to learn more about Reagan's economic policies.

Ronald Reagan believed the key to restoring the economy and overcoming problems in society was to get Americans to believe in themselves again. He expressed this idea in his Inaugural Address:

“We have every right to dream heroic dreams. . . . You can see heroes every day going in and out of factory gates. Others, a handful in number, produce enough food to feed all of us. . . . You meet heroes across a counter. . . . There are entrepreneurs with faith in themselves and faith in an idea who create new jobs, new wealth and opportunity. . . . Their patriotism is quiet but deep. Their values sustain our national life.”

—from Reagan's First Inaugural Address

Reagan also explained that Americans should not look to Washington for answers: “In this present

crisis, government is not the solution to our problem. Government is the problem.”

Reaganomics Reagan’s first priority was the economy, which was suffering from stagflation—a combination of high unemployment and high inflation. According to most economists, the way to fight unemployment was to increase government spending. Increasing spending, however, made inflation worse. Stagflation puzzled many economists, who did not expect inflation and high unemployment to occur at the same time.

Conservative economists offered two competing ideas for fixing the economy. One group, known as monetarists, argued that inflation was caused by too much money in circulation. They believed the best solution was to raise interest rates. Another group supported **supply-side economics**. They argued that the economy was weak because taxes were too high.

Supply-side economists believed that high taxes took too much money away from investors. If taxes were cut, businesses and investors could use their extra capital to make new investments, and businesses could expand and create new jobs. The result would be a larger supply of goods for consumers, who would now have more money to spend.

Reagan combined monetarism and supply-side economics. He encouraged the Federal Reserve to keep interest rates high, and asked Congress to pass a massive tax cut. Critics called his approach **Reaganomics** or “trickle-down economics.” They believed Reagan’s policy would help corporations and wealthy Americans, while only a little bit of the wealth would “trickle down” to average Americans. Reagan made deals with conservative Democrats in the House and moderate Republicans in the Senate. Eventually Congress passed a 25 percent tax rate cut.

Cutting Programs Cutting tax rates meant the government would receive less money. This would increase the **budget deficit**—the amount by which expenditures exceed income. To keep the deficit under control, Reagan proposed cuts to social programs. Welfare benefits, including the food stamp program and the school lunch program, were part of the cuts the president recommended. Medicare payments, student loans, housing subsidies, and unemployment compensation were also reduced.

After a struggle, Congress passed most of these cuts. The fight convinced Reagan that he would never get Congress to cut spending enough to balance the budget. He decided that cutting taxes and building up the military were more important than balancing the budget. He accepted the high deficit as the price of getting his other programs passed.

Deregulation Reagan believed that burdensome government regulations were another cause of the economy’s problems by increasing costs for industries. His first act as president was to sign an executive order eliminating price controls on oil and gasoline. Critics argued that getting rid of controls would drive prices up, but in fact, they began to fall. The falling energy prices freed up money for businesses and consumers to spend elsewhere, helping the economy to recover.

Other deregulation soon followed. The National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration reduced its demand for air bags and higher fuel efficiency for



Student Web Activity Visit the *American Vision: Modern Times* Web site at tav.mt.glencoe.com and click on **Student Web Activities—Chapter 20** for an activity on the 1980s.

The Attempt to Kill the President, March 30, 1981

Barely two months after the inauguration, on March 30, 1981, John Hinckley tried to kill President Reagan in a misguided attempt to impress actress Jodie Foster. Hinckley fired six shots as Reagan left a hotel in Washington, D.C. One bullet bounced off the president’s rib and lodged near his heart. Another bullet seriously wounded press secretary Jim Brady. Reagan’s

John Hinckley (center)



recovery was long, but he stayed upbeat. His jaunty reply to his wife, “Honey, I forgot to duck,” won the affection of many.



(l)CORBIS/Bettmann, (r)Halstead/Getty Images News Services

cars. The Federal Communications Commission abandoned efforts to regulate the new cable television industry. Carter had already begun deregulating the airline industry, and Reagan encouraged the process, which led to price wars, cheaper fares, and the founding of new airlines.

Reagan's Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, increased the amount of public land corporations could use for oil drilling, mining, and logging. Watt's decisions angered environmentalists, as did the Environmental Protection Agency's decisions to ease regulations on pollution control equipment and to reduce safety checks on chemicals and pesticides.

The Economy Booms In 1983 the economy finally began to recover. By 1984 the United States had begun the biggest economic expansion in its history up to that time. The median income of American families climbed steadily, rising 15 percent by 1989. Sales of goods and services shot upward. Five million new businesses and 20 million new jobs were created. By 1988 unemployment had fallen to about 5.5 percent, the lowest since 1973.

Shifting the Judicial Balance Reagan did not apply his conservative ideas only to the economy. He also tried to bring a strict constructionist outlook to the federal judiciary. Reagan wanted judges who followed the original intent and wording of the Constitution rather than those who interpreted and expanded its meaning. He also changed the face of the Supreme Court by nominating **Sandra Day O'Connor** to be the first woman on the Supreme Court.

In 1986 Chief Justice Warren Burger retired. Reagan chose the most conservative associate justice, **William Rehnquist**, to succeed him. He then named Antonin Scalia, also a conservative, to fill the vacancy left by Rehnquist. In 1987 Reagan's nomination of Robert Bork to the Court led to a bitter confirmation fight in the Senate. Liberals argued that Bork's opinions on issues were too extreme, and they managed to block his confirmation. Anthony Kennedy, a moderate, ultimately became the new associate justice.

Reagan Wins Reelection As the 1984 election approached, the growing economy made Reagan very popular. Democrats nominated Jimmy Carter's vice president, Walter Mondale. He chose as his running mate Representative **Geraldine Ferraro**, the first woman to run for vice president for a major party.

Instead of arguing issues with his opponent, Reagan emphasized the good economy. In an over-

whelming landslide, he won about 59 percent of the popular vote and all the electoral votes except those from Minnesota and the District of Columbia.

Reading Check **Explaining** What is supply-side economics?

Reagan Builds Up the Military

Main Idea **President Reagan oversaw the largest peacetime buildup of the military in American history.**

Reading Connection What was President Eisenhower's warning about the military as he left office? Read on to learn what President Reagan thought about the power of the military to defeat the Soviets.

Reagan did not limit his reforms to the domestic scene. He adopted a new Cold War foreign policy that rejected both containment and détente. Reagan called the Soviet Union "the focus of evil in the modern world" and "an evil empire." In his view, the United States should not negotiate with or try to contain evil. It should try to defeat it.

Peace Through Strength In Reagan's opinion, the only option in dealing with the Soviet Union was "peace through strength." The military buildup Reagan launched was the largest peacetime buildup in American history. It cost about \$1.5 trillion over five years.

Reagan believed that the Soviets could not match the buildup. Any such attempt would require economic reform, or their economy would collapse. In 1982 Reagan told students at Eureka College that massive Soviet defense spending eventually would cause the Communist system to collapse:

“The Soviet empire is faltering because rigid centralized control has destroyed incentives for innovation, efficiency, and individual achievement. But in the midst of social and economic problems, the Soviet dictatorship has forged the largest armed force in the world. It has done so by preempting the human needs of its people and in the end, this course will undermine the foundations of the Soviet system.”

—quoted in *Ronald Reagan*

A Growing Deficit Reagan's military buildup drove the federal budget deficit higher and higher. At the same time, however, increased military spending helped expand the economy by providing jobs in

Profiles IN HISTORY

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor 1930–

When a Supreme Court vacancy opened up in 1981, President Reagan decided to fulfill his campaign promise to name the first woman justice. He chose Sandra Day O'Connor, an Arizona appeals court judge.

When Reagan called O'Connor to ask to nominate her, she was surprised. "I was overwhelmed and, at first, speechless," O'Connor said. "After a moment I managed to tell him that I would be honored."

O'Connor grew up on the Day family's Lazy B Ranch in Arizona. Unlike most Supreme Court justices, she also had broad political experience. After earning a law degree in 1952, she found that most law firms would not hire a woman—except as a legal secretary. She went into public service, had three sons, and practiced law privately.

Appointed to a state senatorial vacancy in 1969, she successfully ran for the position and became its first woman majority leader in 1972. O'Connor won election as superior court judge in 1974 and was later appointed to the appeals court.

Her nomination to the Supreme Court had strong support from Justice William Rehnquist—a classmate at Stanford Law School—and Arizona senator Barry Goldwater. O'Connor's nomination was opposed by the Moral Majority because she had supported the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and refused to back an antiabortion amendment or criticize the *Roe v. Wade* decision. Others, however, praised her legal judgment and conservative approach to the law. As a moderate conservative, she quickly became an important swing-vote on the Court, between more liberal and more conservative justices.



defense industries. Originally, Reagan had hoped to offset the cost of the buildup by cutting other government programs. He also hoped, as supply-side economists had predicted, that the economic boom would lead to an increase in total tax revenue collected.

As the economy grew in the 1980s, the amount of money the government collected in taxes did rise steadily, but it was not nearly enough. With Congress unwilling to cut other programs, Reagan's defense spending pushed the annual budget deficit from \$80 billion to over \$200 billion.

✓ Reading Check **Describing** How did Reagan's Cold War military policy affect the nation's economy?

The Reagan Doctrine

Main Idea President Reagan supported governments fighting communism, a policy known as the Reagan Doctrine.

Reading Connection What other presidents supported governments fighting communism? Read on to learn how President Reagan supported governments attempting to overthrow Communist regimes.

Building up the military was only part of Reagan's military strategy. He also believed the United States should support guerrilla groups around the world

who were fighting to overthrow Communist or pro-Soviet governments. This policy became known as the Reagan Doctrine.

Aid to the Afghan Rebels Perhaps the most visible example of the Reagan Doctrine was in Afghanistan. In late December 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to support a Soviet-backed government. The Soviets soon found themselves fighting Afghan guerrillas known as the *mujahadeen*.

President Carter sent about \$30 million in military aid to the Afghan guerrillas. After taking office, President Reagan sent \$570 million more. The Soviets were soon trapped in a situation similar to the American experience in Vietnam. They could not defeat the Afghan guerrillas. As casualties mounted, the war put additional strain on the Soviet economy. In 1988 the Soviets agreed to withdraw.

Nicaragua and Grenada Reagan was also concerned about Soviet influence and the spread of communism in Nicaragua. Rebels known as the Sandinistas had overthrown a pro-American dictator in Nicaragua in 1979. The Sandinistas set up a socialist government. They also accepted Cuban and Soviet aid and began supporting antigovernment rebels in neighboring El Salvador.

In response, the Reagan administration began secretly arming an anti-Sandinista guerrilla force

known as the **contras**, from the Spanish word for “counterrevolutionary.” When Congress learned of this policy, it banned further aid to the contras.

Aiding the contras was not Reagan’s only action in Latin America. In 1983 radical Marxists overthrew the left-wing government on the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada. In October, Reagan sent in American troops. The Cuban and Grenadian soldiers were quickly defeated and a new anticommunist government was put in place.

The Iran-Contra Scandal Although Congress had prohibited aid to the Nicaraguan contras, individuals in Reagan’s administration continued to illegally support the rebels. These officials secretly sold weapons to Iran in exchange for the release of American hostages being held in the Middle East. Profits from these sales were then sent to the contras.

News of the illegal operations broke in November 1986. One of the chief figures in the **Iran-Contra scandal** was Marine Colonel **Oliver North**, an aide to the National Security Council (NSC). He and other senior NSC and CIA officials testified before Congress and admitted to covering up their actions, including shredding documents to destroy evidence.

President Reagan had approved the sale of arms to Iran, but the congressional investigation concluded

that he had not been informed about the diversion of the money to the contras. To the end, Reagan insisted he had done nothing wrong, but the scandal tainted his second term in office.

Reading Check Identifying What was the Reagan Doctrine?

New Approaches to Arms Control

New Idea President Reagan’s decision to place nuclear missiles in Western Europe triggered calls for a “nuclear freeze.”

Reading Connection How did President Eisenhower use brinkmanship to maintain peace after World War II? Read on to learn about President Reagan’s opinion of “mutual assured destruction.”

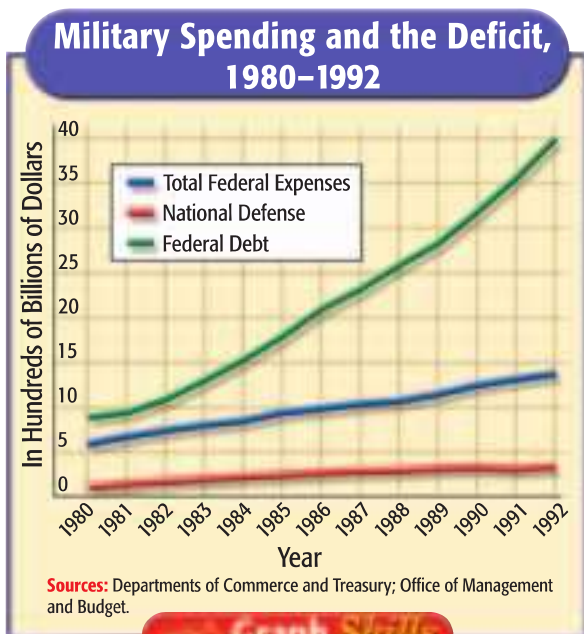
As part of the military buildup, Reagan decided to place nuclear missiles in Western Europe to counter Soviet missiles in Eastern Europe. This decision triggered a new peace movement. Tens of thousands of protesters pushed for a “nuclear freeze”—a halt to the deployment of new nuclear missiles.

Reagan offered to cancel the deployment of the new missiles if the Soviets removed their missiles from Eastern Europe. He also proposed Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) to cut the number of missiles on both sides in half. The Soviets refused and walked out of the arms control talks.

“Star Wars” Despite his decision to deploy missiles in Europe, Reagan generally disagreed with the military strategy known as nuclear deterrence, sometimes called “mutual assured destruction.” This strategy assumed that as long as the United States and Soviet Union could destroy each other with nuclear weapons, they would be afraid to use them.

Reagan believed that mutual assured destruction was immoral because it depended on the threat to kill massive numbers of people. He also felt that if nuclear war did begin, there would be no way to defend the United States. In March 1983, Reagan proposed the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). This plan, nicknamed “Star Wars,” called for the development of weapons that could intercept and destroy incoming missiles.

A New Soviet Leader In 1985 **Mikhail Gorbachev** became the leader of the Soviet Union and agreed to resume arms control talks. Gorbachev believed that the Soviet Union had to reform its



- Graph Skills**
- Interpreting Graphs** How much money was spent on national defense in 1986?
 - Analyzing** Why is the federal debt shown rising at a faster rate than that of the other two figures combined?

economic system or it would soon collapse. It could not afford a new arms race with the United States.

Reagan and Gorbachev met in a series of summit meetings. The first of these were frustrating for both, as they disagreed on many issues. Gorbachev promised to cut back Soviet nuclear forces if Reagan would agree to give up SDI, but Reagan refused.

Reagan then challenged Gorbachev to make reforms. In West Berlin, Reagan stood at the Brandenburg Gate of the Berlin Wall, the symbol of divided Europe, and declared: “General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe . . . tear down this wall!”

Relations Improve By 1987 Reagan was convinced that Gorbachev did want to reform the Soviet Union and end the arms race. While some politicians distrusted the Soviets, most people welcomed the Cold War thaw and the reduction in the danger of nuclear war. In December 1987 the two leaders signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. It was the first treaty to call for the destruction of nuclear weapons.

No one realized it at the time, but the treaty marked the beginning of the end of the Cold War. With an arms control deal in place, Gorbachev felt confident that Soviet military spending could be reduced. He pushed ahead with economic and political reforms that eventually led to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union.

With the economy booming, the American military strong, and relations with the Soviet Union rapidly improving, Ronald Reagan’s second term came to an end. As he prepared to leave office, Reagan assessed his presidency: “They called it the Reagan



Picturing History

Superpower Summits During the 1980s, President Reagan and Premier Gorbachev met several times to discuss nuclear arms reductions. **What Reagan defense proposal did Gorbachev want to eliminate before beginning arms reduction talks?**

revolution. Well, I’ll accept that, but for me it always seemed more like the great rediscovery, a rediscovery of our values and our common sense.”

Reading Check **Interpreting** What was the significance of the INF Treaty?

HISTORY Online Study Central

For help with the concepts in this section of *American Vision: Modern Times* go to tav.mt.glencoe.com and click on **Study Central**.

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

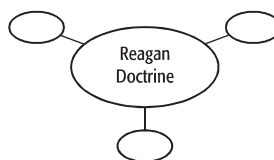
- Vocabulary** Define: supply-side economics, budget deficit, exceed, offset, visible, contra.
- People and Terms** Identify: Reaganomics, Sandra Day O’Connor, William Rehnquist, Geraldine Ferraro, Iran-Contra scandal, Oliver North, Mikhail Gorbachev.
- List** the groups that Ronald Reagan appealed to in the 1980 presidential election.

Reviewing Big Ideas

- Explaining** What was President Reagan’s stance on Foreign Policy?

Critical Thinking

- Forming an Opinion** Was the Iran-Contra affair a violation of the separation of powers? Explain.
- Organizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list the ways that the Reagan doctrine was implemented.



Analyzing Visuals

- Analyzing Graphs** Study the graph on page 898 detailing the amount of money spent by the federal government from 1980 to 1992. What relationship do you see between military spending and the national debt?

Writing About History

- Expository Writing** Take on the role of a newspaper editorial writer during the Reagan administration. Write an article in which you present your opinion of Reagan’s plans for a military buildup.

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Urban America on the Move

Since the end of World War II, millions of Americans have abandoned older cities to find better lives—safer neighborhoods, bigger homes, better schools, and better jobs. Many found what they were seeking in the suburbs. Cities have grown into metropolitan areas that have continued to expand farther and farther into formerly rural regions.

The map at right shows patterns of recent population growth in the United States. The yellow and red areas represent growth since 1993, showing suburbs radiating out from the cities. A lot of growth has taken place in the Sunbelt states of the South and Southwest, helped by the spread of air-conditioning. The Atlanta region, for example, has more than doubled its population to 3.3 million in the last 30 years. It is now so big—and congested—that residents drive an average of 34 miles (55 km) per day.

Such rapid urban growth, or “sprawl,” has brought a variety of cultural, social, and economic problems. In central cities and older suburbs, it has resulted in deteriorating infrastructure and a shortage of affordable housing. In the newer suburbs, growth has increased traffic and taxes and has resulted in declining air quality and a loss of open space.

Many city planners have mixed emotions about continued growth, and some—like those of San Francisco, California—have tried to curb it. Such efforts have been dubbed “smart growth.” Proponents of smart growth seek to improve conditions in existing communities and to limit the spread of urbanization in outlying and rural areas. Specifically, they encourage developers to build housing and businesses in city centers rather than in the suburbs. They promote the preservation of undeveloped areas and parks near metropolitan regions. Smart growth advocates endorse expanding public transportation, combining residential and commercial areas, and building pedestrian-friendly communities as ways to reduce reliance on the automobile.

With smarter growth, cities can channel development in ways that maintain quality of life and make existing communities more inviting. Faced with long commutes on congested highways, some suburban residents are now opting to return to the cities that were so readily abandoned after the Second World War.



LEARNING FROM GEOGRAPHY

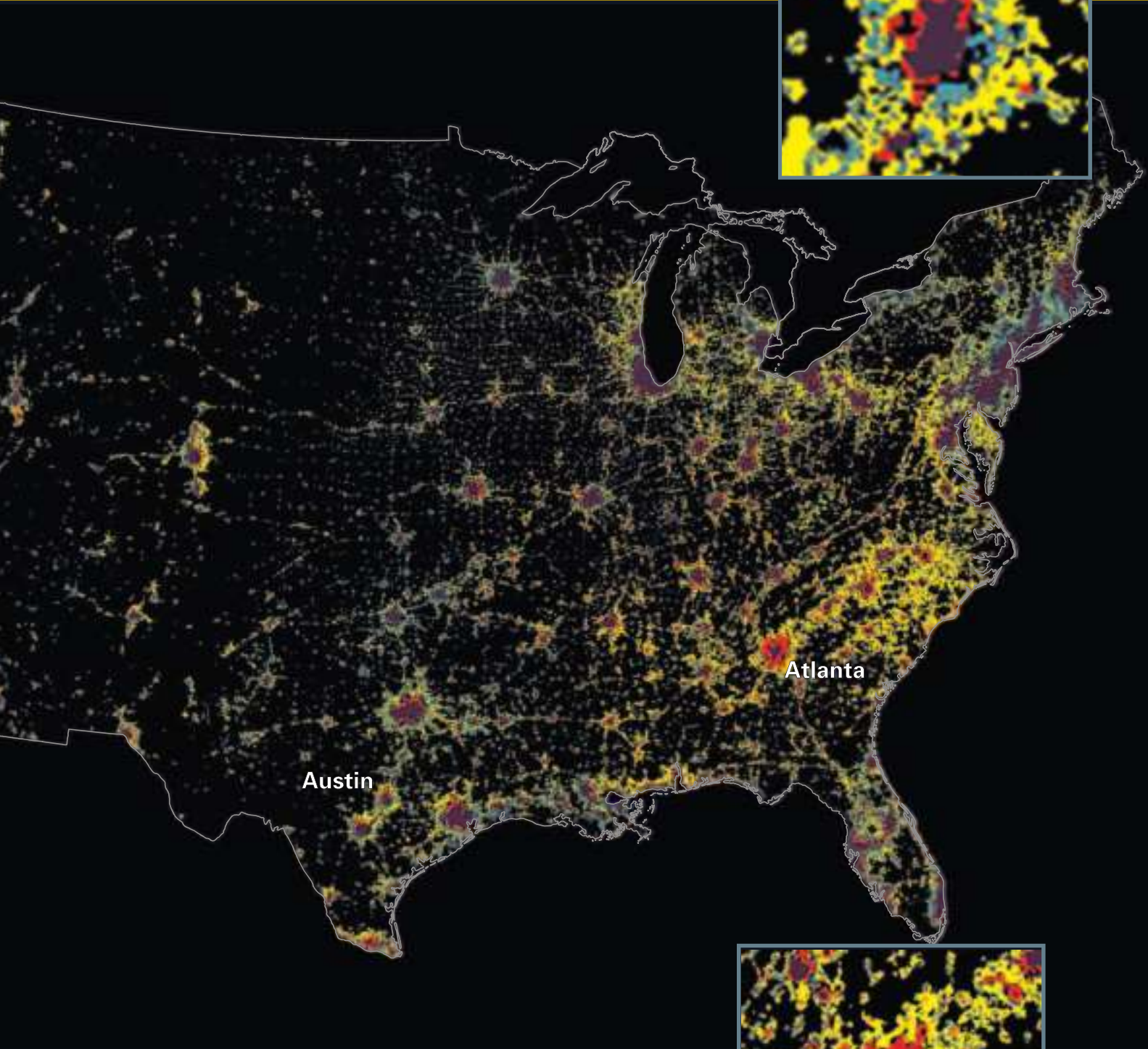
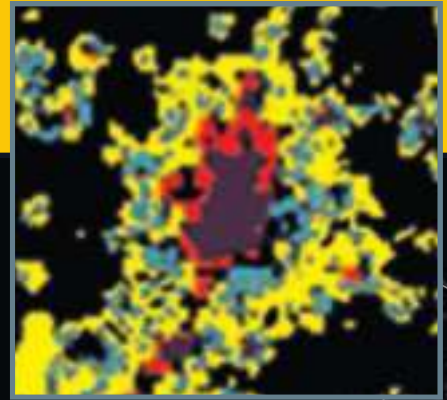
1. Why did many Americans move to the suburbs after World War II?
2. In what parts of the country are cities growing fastest?



Urban sprawl, traffic congestion, high ozone levels, and skyrocketing property taxes are part of the price Atlanta has paid for rapid growth.

AUSTIN

Like many Sunbelt cities, Austin, Texas (right), has experienced rapid growth in recent years, much of it fueled by an influx of high-tech companies. By 2010 its population—about 465,000 in 1990—is expected to reach 800,000.



ATLANTA

One of the fastest-growing regions in the country, metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia (right), is already larger in area than the state of Delaware. Atlanta's expansion into the surrounding counties since 1993 is shown at right in yellow and red.

