**AMERICAN HISTORY 2**

The Roaring 1920s and the Depression years

* U.S. very rich – other countries owed it a lot of money after the WWI
* enough raw materials, factories
* 1919- alcohol prohibited by the 18th Amendment
* buying shares (= playing the market) had become a national hobby
* shares could be bought on credit ⇒ large sums of money borrowed from banks (= “buying on the margin”)
* shares on demand ⇒ prices rising
* by 1929 the profit of many firms had been decreasing
* many people began to sell their shares
* Thursday, Oct 24, 1929 = Black Thursday – 13 million shares sold
* Tuesday, Oct 29, 1929 = Terrifying Tuesday – 15 million shares sold
* collapse of the U.S. share prices = Wall Street Crash

- FDR proposed his set of measures called “New Deal” to fight the Depression

**1950s in America**

**a ) Civil Rights**

In 1954, the Supreme Court overturned the existing ‘separate but equal’ policy as a result of the trial between Brown and the Topeka Board of Education.

The process of desegregation of schools even occasionally led to violence, like in **Little Rock,** Arkansas, in 1957.

Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955) initiated by the actions of a black female worker named **Rosa Parks** who refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white male - **Martin Luther King, Jr.** became famous

**b) The Cold War and Communism -** diplomatic tension between the United States of America on one side and the Soviet Union on the other

**Senator Joseph McCarthy – Red Scare –** witch hunts for communists in the society

**c )The Conflict in Korea**

After WWII, Korea, which had been previously ruled by Japan, was divided into two parts using the 38th parallel of latitude as a boundary. While the north was communist, the south was supported by the U.S.A. The conflict arose when the North Koreans wanted to unite the country through the use of military power.

# 1960s in the USA

**a) the Civil Rights Movement**

sit-ins - a new form of racial protests

**March on Washington** - over 200,000 people singing “We Shall Overcome” gathered at the Lincoln Memorial to protest for equality, MLK’s *‘I Have A Dream’* speech

- militant black groups such as the **Black Panthers** or **Black Muslims**.

**b )John Fitzgerald Kennedy**

* **Kennedy’s Domestic Policy**

**NASA** (as the institution responsible for the further exploration of space)

**Peace Corps** (which brought together volunteers to assist developing countries) fervent support of minority and women’s rights.

- assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas, Texas in 1963

* **Kennedy’s Foreign Policy - Cuba**

When Fidel Castro took control of Cuba in 1959, he was supported by the U.S. government

**Bay of Pigs invasion** in 1961 – a group of Cuban refugees sent to assassinate Castro, a total failure,the operation was defeated and 1,200 men were captured within 3 days

**Cuban Missile Crisis (**1962) – Soviet missiles located in Cuba

**c) Lyndon B Johnson**

* **The** **Great Society -** a number of bills which dealt with fighting poverty, improving the educational system, protecting the rights of the elderly, bringing culture to the people, and protecting the environment

**d )The War in Vietnam**

The north was communist, the south non-communist, Ho Chi Minh wanted to unite Vietnam through war and the U.S. government decided to help the French in line with the US policy to contain communism. Money and weapons were sent to South Vietnam and later, soldiers and military advisers.

- the North Vietnamese guerilla army - the **Vietcong**

* 1964, Johnson announced that North Vietnamese ships had attacked the USS Maddox in the Gulf of Tonkin = **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution** followed by operation **Thunderstorm**
* the **Tet Offensive -**  the North Vietnamese violated the existing armistice and unexpectedly attacked South Vietnam
* 1969- the newly-elected president Richard Nixon came up with a concept referred to as the ‘**Vietnamization’** of the war
* anti-war protests in America

**1970s in the USA**

* the War in Vietnam comes to its end
* Nixon visits China and the Soviet Union in 1972 – improvement of relationships – SALT treaty limiting the use of nuclear weapons

1. **social Issues In America**

* Equality of Sexes – feminism, abortion made legal
* Minorities -Latinos and Native Americans
* Homosexuals – homosexuality no longer considered to be a mental deviation

**b ) The Watergate Scandal**

* associated with President **Richard Nixon**

1972 - five burglars were arrested in the Democratic Party’s national headquarters in the Watergate Building in Washington, D.C. , a political scandal

Try to estimate the main reasons leading to the overall dissatisfaction of U.S. citizens with the political situation in the country.

1. **The Iranian Hostage Crisis**

A mob of fundamentalists gathered and occupied the American embassy in Tehran taking about 60 employees hostage,the siege of the embassy lasted for 444 days and all diplomatic negotiations through the UN failed.

The official end of the Hostage Crisis came on January 20, 1981, the last day of Carter’s presidency and the day of **Ronald Reagan’s** inauguration.

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