**Chapter 28: The Civil Rights Movement**

**Chapter 28: The Movement Begins**

**I. The Origins of the Movement** *(pages 866–868)*

**A.** The African American civil rights movement began after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. An organized boycott of the bus system was just the beginning as African Americans demanded equal rights.

**B.** In 1896 the Supreme Court had declared segregation legal in *Plessy* v. *Ferguson*. This ruling had established a **separate**-**but**-**equal** doctrine, making laws segregating African Americans legal as long as equal facilities were provided.

**C.** “Jim Crow” laws segregating African Americans and whites were common in the South after the *Plessy* v. *Ferguson* decision.

**D.** In places without segregation laws, such as in the North, there was **de facto segregation**— segregation by custom and tradition.

**E.** The **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People** (NAACP) had supported court cases trying to overturn segregation since 1909. It provided financial support and lawyers to African Americans.

**F.** African Americans gained political power as they migrated to Northern cities where they could vote. African Americans voted for politicians who listened to their concerns on civil rights issues, resulting in a strong Democratic Party.

**G.** In Chicago in 1942, the **Congress of Racial Equality** (CORE) was founded. CORE used **sit-ins** as a form of protest against segregation and discrimination. In 1943 CORE used sit-ins to protest segregation in restaurants. These sit-ins resulted in the integration of many restaurants, theaters, and other public facilities in Chicago, Detroit, Denver, and Syracuse.

**II. The Civil Rights Movement Begins** *(pages 868–870)*

**A.** When African Americans returned from World War II, they had hoped for equality. When this did not occur, the civil rights movement began as African Americans planned protests and marches to end prejudice.

**B.** African American attorney and chief counsel for the NAACP **Thurgood Marshall** worked to end segregation in public schools. In 1954 several Supreme Court casesregarding segregation—including the case of **Linda Brown**—were combined in oneruling. The girl had been denied admission to her neighborhood school in Topeka,Kansas, because she was African American. In the Supreme Court case *Brown* v. *Board**of Education of Topeka, Kansas,* the Court ruled that segregation in public schools wasunconstitutional and violated the equal protection clause of the FourteenthAmendment.

**C.** *Brown* v. *Board of Education* convinced African Americans to challenge all forms of

segregation, but it also angered many white Southerners who supported segregation.

**D.** On the day Rosa Parks appeared in court, the Women’s Political Council led African Americans in a boycott against the Montgomery bus system. The Montgomery Improvement Association was created to run the boycott and negotiate with city leaders to end segregation. **Dr**. **Martin Luther King, Jr.,** elected to head the organization, called for a nonviolent passive resistant approach to end segregation and racism.

**E.** The boycott of the bus system continued for over a year as African Americans walked or participated in carpools. In December 1956, the United States Supreme Court declared Alabama’s laws requiring segregation on buses to be unconstitutional.

**III. African American Churches** *(pages 870–871)*

**A.** African American churches played a key role in the success of the boycott. Churches became a place for forums, planning meetings, and organizing volunteers for civil rights campaigns.

**B.** The **Southern Christian Leadership Conference** (SCLC), led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., challenged the segregation of public transportation, housing, at the voting booths, and in public accommodations.

**IV. Eisenhower and Civil Rights** *(pages 871–872)*

**A.** President Eisenhower became the first president since Reconstruction to send federal troops into the South to protect African Americans and their constitutional rights.

**B.** In Little Rock, Arkansas, the governor ordered the Arkansas National Guard to prevent African American students from entering the Little Rock high school. President Eisenhower demanded that the troops be removed. The governor withdrew the troops, but left the school to the angry mob. Two African Americans reporters were beaten and many windows of the school were broken. Eisenhower ordered the United States Army to surround the school, and the students were escorted into the building. The troops remained for the entire school year.

**C.** The **Civil Rights Act of 1957** was created to protect the right of African Americans to vote. It marked an important first step in bringing the federal government into the civil rights debate.

**Chapter 28: Challenging Segregation**

**I. The Sit-In Movement** *(pages 873–874)*

**A.** In 1960 four African Americans staged a sit-in at a Woolworth’s whites-only lunch counter. This led to a mass movement for civil rights. Soon sit-ins were occurring across the nation.

**B.** Students like **Jesse Jackson** from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College felt that sit-ins gave them the power to change things.

**II. SNCC** *(page 874)*

**A.** As sit-ins became more popular, it was necessary to choose a leader to coordinate the effort. **Ella Baker,** executive director of the SCLC, urged students to create their own organization. The students formed the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee** (SNCC). Among SNCC’s early leaders were **Marion Barry,** later the mayor of Washington, D.C., and John Lewis, later a member of Congress.

**B.** Robert Moses, an SNCC volunteer from New York, pointed out that most of the civil rights movement was focused on urban areas, and rural African Americans needed help as well.

**C.** When they went South, SNCC volunteers had their lives threatened and others were beaten. In 1964 three SNCC workers were murdered as they tried to register African Americans to vote.

**D.** SNCC organizer, **Fannie Lou Hamer,** was arrested in Mississippi after encouraging African Americans to vote. While in jail, she was beaten by police. Later she helped organize the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. She challenged the legality of the segregated Democratic Party at the 1964 Democratic National Convention.

**III. The Freedom Riders** *(pages 874–875)*

**A.** In 1961 CORE leader James Farmer asked teams of African Americans and white Americans to travel into the South to integrate bus terminals. The teams became known as **Freedom Riders.**

**B.** Violence erupted in several Alabama cities, making national news and shocking many Americans. President John F. Kennedy was compelled to control the violence.

**IV. John F. Kennedy and Civil Rights** *(pages 875–877)*

**A.** During John F. Kennedy’s presidential campaign in 1960, he supported the civil rights movement, which resulted in African American votes that helped him narrowly win the race.

**B.** Once in office, President Kennedy became cautious on civil rights, realizing that in order to get other programs passed through Congress, he would have to avoid new civil rights legislation.

**C.** President Kennedy had his brother, Robert F. Kennedy of the Justice Department, actively support the civil rights movement. Robert Kennedy helped African Americans register to vote by having lawsuits filed throughout the South.

**D.** When violence broke out in Montgomery Alabama, the Kennedy brothers urged the Freedom Riders to stop for a “cooling off “ period. A deal was struck between Kennedy and Senator James Eastland of Mississippi. The senator stopped the violence, and Kennedy agreed not to object if the Mississippi police arrested the Freedom Riders.

**E.** The CORE used all their funds to bail the riders out of jail, which threatened future rides. Thurgood Marshall offered the use of the NAACP’s Legal Defense Fund, and the rides began again. President Kennedy ordered the Interstate Commerce Commission to increase regulations against segregation at bus terminals. By 1962 segregation on interstate travel had ended.

**F.** In 1962 **James Meredith,** an African American air force veteran, tried to register at the segregated University of Mississippi. Meredith was met with the governor blocking his path. President Kennedy ordered 500 federal marshals to escort Meredith to the campus. A full-scale riot broke out with 160 marshals being wounded. The army sent in thousands of troops. For the remainder of the year, Meredith attended classes under federal guard until he graduated the following August.

**G.** Martin Luther King, Jr., was frustrated with the civil rights movement. As the Cuban missile crisis escalated, foreign policy became the main priority at the White House. King agreed to hold demonstrations in Alabama, knowing they might end in violence but feeling that they were the only way to get the president’s attention. King was jailed, and after his release the protests began again. The televised events were seen by the nation. Kennedy ordered his aides to prepare a civil rights bill.

**V. The Civil Rights Act of 1964** *(pages 877–879)*

**A.** After Alabama Governor George Wallace blocked the way for two African Americans to register for college, President Kennedy appeared on national television to announce his civil rights bill.

**B.** Martin Luther King, Jr., wanted to pressure Congress to get Kennedy’s civil rights bill through. On August 28, 1963, he led 200,000 demonstrators of all races to the nation’s capital and staged a peaceful rally.

**C.** Opponents of the civil rights bill did whatever they could to slow the procedure to pass it. The bill could easily pass in the House of Representatives, but it faced difficulty in the Senate. Senators could speak for as long as they wanted while debating a bill. A **filibuster** occurs when a small group of senators take turns speaking and refuse to stop the debate to allow the bill to be voted on. Today a filibuster can be stopped if at least three-fifths of the Senate (60 senators) vote for **cloture,** a motion which cuts off debate and forces a vote. In 1960 a cloture had to be two-thirds, or 67 senators. The minority of senators opposed to the bill could easily prevent it from passing into law.

**D.** After Kennedy’s assassination, President Johnson committed himself to getting Kennedy’s program, including the civil rights bill, through Congress.

**E.** The **Civil Rights Act of 1964** gave the federal government broad power to stop racial discrimination in the segregation in public places, to bring lawsuits to end school segregation, and to require employers to end discrimination in the workplace.

**VI. The Struggle for Voting Rights** *(pages 879–880)*

**A.** The Civil Rights Act of 1964 did little to guarantee the right to vote. Many African American voters were attacked, beaten, and killed. Bombs exploded in many African American businesses and churches. Martin Luther King, Jr., decided it was time for another protest to protect African American voting rights.

**B.** The protest was staged for Selma, Alabama, where African Americans were the majority of the population while only 3 percent were registered to vote. Their march for freedom began in Selma and headed toward the state capitol in Montgomery. Sheriff Jim Clark ordered 200 state troopers and deputized citizens to rush the peaceful demonstrators. The brutal attack became known as Bloody Sunday, and the nation saw the images on television.

**C.** On August 3, 1965, the House of Representatives passed the voting bill, with the Senate passing the bill the following day. The **Voting Rights Act of 1965** gave the attorney general the right to send federal examiners to register qualified voters, bypassing the local officials who often refused to register African Americans. This resulted in 250,000 new African American voters and an increase in African American elected officials in the South.

**Chapter 28: New Issues**

**I. Problems Facing Urban African Americans** *(pages 881–883)*

**A.** Even after the passage of civil rights laws in the 1950s and 1960s, **racism,** or prejudice or discrimination toward someone because of their race, was common. The civil rights movement had resulted in many positive gains for African Americans, but their economic and social problems were much more difficult to address.

**B.** Race riots broke out in many American cities between 1965 and 1968. A race riot in Watts, a neighborhood in Los Angeles, lasted six days. The worst of the riots occurred in Detroit when the United States Army was forced to send in tanks and soldiers with machine guns to gain control.

**C.** The **Kerner Commission** was created to make recommendations that would prevent further urban riots. It concluded that the problem was white society and white racism. The commission suggested the creation of two million new jobs in inner cities and six million new units of public housing. However, with the massive spending in the Vietnam War, President Johnson never endorsed the recommendation.

**II. The Shift to Economic Rights** *(page 883)*

**A.** By the mid-1960s, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was criticized for his nonviolent strategy because it had failed to improve the economic condition of African Americans. As a result, he began focusing on economic issues affecting African Americans.

**B.** The **Chicago Movement** was an effort to call attention to the deplorable housing conditions that many African Americans faced. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his wife moved into a slum apartment in an African American neighborhood in Chicago.

**C.** Dr. King led a march through the white suburb of Marquette Park to demonstrate the need for open housing. Mayor **Richard Daley** had police protect the marchers, and Daley met with King to propose a new program to clean up slums.

**III. Black Power** *(pages 884–886)*

**A.** After 1965 many African Americans began to turn away from the nonviolent teachings of Dr. King. They sought new strategies, which included self-defense and the idea that African Americans should live free from the presence of whites.

**B.** Young African Americans called for **black power,** a term that had many different meanings. To some it meant physical self- defense and violence. For others, including SNCC leader **Stokely Carmichael,** it meant they should control the social, political, and economic direction of their struggle for equality.

**C.** Black power stressed pride in the African American culture and opposed **cultural assimilation,** or the philosophy of incorporating different racial or cultural groups intothe dominant society. These ideas were popular in poor urban neighborhoods,although Dr. King and many African American leaders were critical of black power.

**D.** In the early 1960s, **Malcolm X** had become a symbol of the Black Power movement. Malcolm X was a member of the **Nation of Islam,** known as the Black Muslims, who believed that African Americans should separate themselves from whites and form their own self-governing communities.

**E.** Malcolm X later broke from the Nation of Islam and began to believe an integrated society was possible. In 1965 three members of the Nation of Islam shot and killed Malcolm X. He would be remembered for his view that although African Americans had been victims in the past, they did not have to allow racism to victimize them now.

**F.** The formation of the **Black Panthers** was the result of a new generation of militant African American leaders preaching black power, black nationalism, and economic self-sufficiency. The group believed that a revolution was necessary to gain equal rights.

**IV. The Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.** *(pages 885–886)*

**A.** By the late 1960s, the civil rights movement had fragmented into many competing organizations. The result was no further legislation to help African Americans.

**B.** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated by a sniper on April 4, 1968, creating national mourning as well as riots in more than 100 cities.

**C.** In the aftermath of King’s death, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which contained a fair housing provision.