

## 1 SOCIETY AFTER WORLD WAR II

### 2 CHALLENGES OF PEACE

- PROBLEMS OF DEMOBILIZATION
  - BY MID-1946 MORE THAN 9 MILLION MEN AND WOMEN WERE DISCHARGED FROM THE MILITARY
- GI BILL OF RIGHTS
  - HELPED PROVIDE VETERANS WITH PENSIONS AND GOV. LOANS TO HELP VETS START BUSINESSES, BUY HOMES, AND ATTEND COLLEGE
  - BETWEEN 1944-1956 ABOUT 8 MILLION VETS GO TO COLLEGE ON GI BILL
- POST WAR DEPRESSION NEVER HITS, BUT PROBLEMS ARISE
  - VETERANS GIVEN PRIORITY FOR JOBS
  - INFLATION UP, PRICES THAT HAD BEEN HELD DOWN DURING WAR SOAR AFTER – “HORSEMEAT HARRY”
  - WOMEN ENCOURAGED/FORCED TO QUIT JOBS AND GO BACK HOME

### 3 LABOR UNREST

- AS INFLATION CONTINUED TO RISE, WORKERS WENT ON STRIKE, ABANDONED THEIR WWII PLEDGE NOT TO STRIKE
- TRUMAN ACTS QUICKLY TO SQUASH SEVERAL STRIKES
  - THREATENS TO DRAFT SOME RAILWAY STRIKERS INTO THE ARMY
- TAFT-HARTLEY ACT IS PASSED BY CONGRESS, TRUMAN VETOES, CONGRESS OVERRIDES HIS VETO
  - CREATED TO REDUCE STRENGTH OF UNIONS
  - GAVE JUDGES POWER TO END STRIKES, OUTLAWED CLOSED-SHOP AGREEMENTS
  - ANGERS MANY, PRO-LABOR SUPPORTERS SAID IT WAS A “SLAVE LABOR” LAW

### 4 1948 ELECTION

- DUE TO HIGH INFLATION TRUMAN’S IMAGE HAS TAKEN A HIT
- TRUMAN ESTABLISHES “COMMITTEE ON CIVIL RIGHTS”
  - EXAMINED RACIAL ISSUES AND FOUND WIDE SPREAD CIVIL RIGHTS ABUSES
- TRUMAN WORKS TO INTEGRATE THE MILITARY AND GET RID OF SEGREGATION IN THE HIRING PROCESS
  - ALSO URGES CONGRESS TO PASS AN ANTILYNCHING LAW AND A

## LAW AGAINST POLL TAXES

- TRUMAN'S STANCE ON CIVIL RIGHTS DIVIDES THE PARTY AND SOUTHERN DEMOCRATS FORM "DIXIECRATS"
- ANOTHER GROUP OF DEMOCRATS FORM A NEW PROGRESSIVE PARTY, B/C OF TRUMAN'S ANTI-LABOR ACTIONS

5  **1948 ELECTION**

- WHY ARE THE SPLITS WITH DEMOCRATS A PROBLEM?
- IN ONE OF BIGGEST UPSETS EVER, TRUMAN WINS PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WITH 303 ELECTORAL VOTES
- IMPLEMENTS THE "FAIR DEAL"
  - PROMISED FULL EMPLOYMENT
  - HIGHER MINIMUM WAGE
  - NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM
  - CONSTRUCTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING
  - INCREASED AID TO FARMERS
  - EXPANSION OF WELFARE BENEFITS TO MORE PEOPLE
- FAIR DEAL HAS LIMITED SUCCESS DUE TO POSTWAR CONSERVATISM
  - SOCIAL SECURITY IS EXPANDED TO 10 MILLION MORE, MINIMUM WAGE UP FROM 40 TO 75 CENTS AN HOUR, DEMOLITION OF SLUMS

6  **EISENHOWER ERA**

- EISENHOWER WINS 1952 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
- PLEDGED TO CUT BUREAUCRACY, CURB "CREEPING SOCIALISM", BALANCE THE BUDGET, AND REDUCE GOVERNMENT REGULATION
- IN FIRST YEAR CUT THOUSANDS OF GOV. JOBS, BILLIONS FROM FEDERAL BUDGET, AND CUT FARM SUBSIDIES
- EXPANDS SOC. SECURITY, AND RAISES MIN. WAGE
- ESTABLISHED: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
  - SUPPORTS LARGEST SPENDING INCREASE IN EDUCATION, UP TO THAT TIME
- ONLY 3 OF 8 BUDGETS ARE BALANCED UNDER EISENHOWER, FEDERAL DEBT GROWS 9% TO \$291 BILLION
  - DUE IN PART TO FUNDING FOR SOCIAL PROGRAMS, DEFENSE, AND GOV. OBLIGATIONS

## 7 **THE ECONOMY**

- 1950's time of prosperity for everyone
  - Middle class contains 60% of Americans
  - Earn \$3,000 - \$10,000 annually
- By 1960, women make up 1/3 of the workforce
  - Jobs include: nursing, teaching, retail sales, and low-level clerical work
- Automation greatly increases productivity but decreases blue-collar/factory jobs
  - Automation: machines that could perform industrial operations faster than humans

## 8 **SUBURBAN LIFE**

- BY 1960 AROUND 60 MILLION AMERICANS LIVED IN SUBURBS, HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS BUILT OUTSIDE OF THE BIG CITIES
- EXPLOSION OF THE MIDDLE CLASS HELPS AS DOES THE HIGHWAY ACT OF 1956
- BABY BOOM OCCURS, MORE PEOPLE GETTING MARRIED YOUNGER AND HAVING MORE KIDS, SOME 30 MILLION DURING THE 1950'S
- THE ROLE OF WOMEN IS BEING DEFINED BY POPULAR IMAGES AS A HOUSEWIFE WHICH IS CONTRARY TO REALITY
  - MOTHERS IN THE WORKFORCE ACTUALLY ROSE, HAD PART TIME JOBS
- "KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES"

## 9 **POPULAR CULTURE**

- TELEVISION
  - BECAME ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR FAMILY ACTIVITIES, BY END OF THE 1950'S AROUND 46 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS HAD 1 TV
  - ADVERTISING BECOMES BIG BUSINESS, BY THE 1960'S COMPANY'S WERE SPENDING \$1.6 BILLION ANNUALLY
  - PROGRAMS CONSISTED OF SPORTS, VARIETY SHOWS, COMEDIES, AND DRAMAS
  - TV SHOWS STAYED PRIMARILY IN THE MIDDLE CLASS/SUBURBAN EXPERIENCE, POVERTY TREATED AS A MINOR PROBLEM
    - "I LOVE LUCY" WILDLY POPULAR
    - "AMOS' N' ANDY" MOST CONTROVERSIAL SHOW

## 10 **POPULAR CULTURE**

- TEENAGERS
  - FICTIONAL REBELS
    - HOLDEN CAULFIELD – “THE *CATCHER IN THE RYE*”
    - JAMES DEAN – “*REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE*”
    - MARLON BRANDO – “*THE WILD ONE*”
  - JUVENILE DELINQUENCY
    - MANY PARENTS WORRIED KIDS WOULD GET INTO TROUBLE WITH EXTRA TIME AND MONEY THEY HAD
    - MANY MOVIES DEPICTED TEENAGERS REBELLING AND QUESTIONING THEIR FAMILIES SUBURBAN VALUES

#### 11 **POPULAR CULTURE**

- MUSIC
  - ROCK’ N’ ROLL BECAME ANOTHER ESCAPE FOR TEENAGERS WANTING TO SHED THE CONFORMITY OF SUBURBIA
  - ELVIS PRESLEY EMERGES AS THE LEADING TALENT OR ROCK’ N’ ROLL, FIRST DUAL THREAT – MUSIC AND MOVIES
  - COMBINATION OF BLUES MUSIC WITH MORE ENERGETIC RHYTHMS
  - PARENTS HATED ROCK’ N’ ROLL B/C THEY THOUGHT IT MADE TEENAGERS ANTISOCIAL AND REBELS

#### 12 **POPULAR CULTURE**

- MUSIC
  - ROCK’ N’ ROLL ALSO UPSET PEOPLE B/C IT CHALLENGED RACIAL SEGREGATION
    - CHUCK BERRY, FATS DOMINO, LITTLE RICHARD, RITCHIE VALENS – MINORITY MUSICIANS WHO INFLUENCED AND CHANGED THE MUSIC CULTURE
    - ELVIS, BUDDY HOLLY, JERRY LEE LEWIS – WHITE MUSICIANS
    - MANY TIMES BLACK AND WHITE SHARED THE STAGE TOGETHER, SIGN OF RACIAL CHANGE TO COME