

## Ch 21 Civil Rights

### Sec 1 Taking on Segregation

*Plessy v. Ferguson* – 1896 Supreme Court case

1. Ruled that a law in Louisiana requiring railroads to provide “equal but separate accommodations” for blacks and whites did not violate the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment
2. Paved the way for segregation in the South

WWII Set the Stage for the Civil Rights Movement

1. Demand for soldiers created a shortage of white male laborers
2. So many fighting men were needed in the armed forces that discriminatory policies preventing blacks from fighting were gradually eliminated
3. Civil rights organizations actively campaigned for African-American voting rights and challenged Jim Crow laws during the war

Challenging Segregation in Court

1. NAACP Legal Strategy – focused on the blatant inequality between black and white schools provided by many states
  - a. Thurgood Marshall – prepared a battery of cases to take to the Supreme Court, would win 29 out of 32 cases

2. *Brown v. Board of Education* of Topeka, KS – May 17, 1954, Marshall’s most stunning victory
  - a. Linda Brown was denied admission to an all-white elementary school four blocks from her home
  - b. She was told to cross a railroad yard and take a bus to an all-black elementary school 21 blocks away
  - c. Supreme Court ruled that “separate but equal” education for black and white students was unconstitutional
  - d. Immediately effected 12 million school children in 21 states

### Resistance to School Integration

1. 1955 - Supreme Court issues a second *Brown* ruling, ordering district courts to implement school desegregation with all “deliberate speed”
2. Congress nor Eisenhower move to enforce the ruling
3. Mississippi and Georgia vowed total resistance
4. Little Rock, Arkansas – Sept. 1957
  - a. Gov. Orval Faubus, caught in a tight reelection race, orders the National Guard to turn away nine African American students from Central HS
  - b. Eisenhower placed the Arkansas National Guard under federal control and sent in a thousand paratroopers to maintain order

c. Faubus shut down Central at the end of the school year instead of letting segregation continue

5. Civil Rights Act of 1957 – first civil rights law since Reconstruction
  - a. Gave the attorney general greater power over school desegregation and gave the federal gov't authority over violations of black voting rights

### Boycotting Segregation

1. Rosa Parks – Dec. 1, 1955, arrested for refusing to give up her seat in the colored section of a bus so that a white man wouldn't have to sit next to any blacks
2. The NAACP quickly organized a boycott of the buses under the direction of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
3. African Americans boycotted Montgomery buses for 381 days until the Supreme Court outlawed bus segregation in late 1956

### Dr. King and the SCLC

1. "Soul Force" – King's brand of nonviolent resistance taken from the teachings of several people
  - a. Jesus – love one's enemies
  - b. Henry David Thoreau – civil disobedience (refusal to obey an unjust law)
  - c. A. Philip Randolph – techniques for organizing massive demonstrations

d. Mohandas Gandhi – one could powerfully resist oppression w/o violence

2. Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) – organization formed in 1957 by King and other leaders to work for civil rights through nonviolent means
3. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) – formed in 1960 to coordinate sit-ins and other protests and to give young blacks a larger role in the civil rights movement
  - a. Sit-ins – form of demonstration in which African Americans would sit down in a segregated business and refuse to leave until they were served
  - b. Protesters endured arrests, beatings, suspension from college, tear gas, and fire hoses

## Sec 2 The Triumphs of Crusade

### Riding for Freedom

1. Freedom Riders – civil rights activists who rode buses through the South in the early 1960s to challenge segregation
  - a. Bus companies refused to carry them because of the violence they encountered
  - b. SNCC volunteers resumed the freedom ride

- c. Despite orders from Attorney General Robert Kennedy, the police refused to protect the riders in Montgomery, AL
- d. In response JFK ordered 400 marshals to protect the riders on the remainder of their journey
- e. Attorney General and ICC banned segregation in all interstate travel facilities

### Standing Firm

1. Integrating Ole Miss – Sept. 1962, James Meredith won a federal case allowing him to enroll in the all-white University of Mississippi
  - a. Gov. Ross Barnett refused to allow Meredith to register
  - b. JFK responded with federal marshals to escort Meredith leading to riots resulting in two deaths and 200 arrests
2. Birmingham, AL – 1963
  - a. Known for its strict enforcement of total segregation
  - b. Dr. King and a small group of followers marched through the streets and were promptly arrested
  - c. May 2 – a thousand African American children marched and 959 were arrested
  - d. May 3 – a second children's march was halted by police who used fire hoses and attack dogs while beating those who fell

- e. City of Birmingham finally gave in to the continued protests, economic boycott, and negative media attention and ended segregation
- 3. Medgar Evers – NAACP field secretary and WWII veteran, shot in the driveway of his home in Jackson, MS on June 11, 1963
  - a. White supremacist Byron de la Beckwith was charged with the crime but was released b/c of hung juries (found guilty in 1994)

### Marching to Washington

- 1. Aug 28, 1963 – 250,000 people converged on the D.C. to persuade Congress to pass Kennedy’s civil rights bill
  - a. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivers his famous “I Have a Dream” speech
- 2. Civil Rights Act of 1964 – passed July 2, 1964, banned discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin, or religion in public places and most workplaces

### Fighting for Voting Rights

- 1. Freedom Summer – 1964 project to register African American voters in Mississippi
  - a. Headed by Robert Moses
  - b. By the end of the summer 4 were dead, 4 critically wounded, 80 beaten, and dozens of

African American churches had been bombed or burned

2. Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) – open to anyone, hoped to unseat MS’s regular party delegates at the Democratic National Convention
  - a. Fannie Lou Hamer – chosen to speak for the MFDP at the convention in June 1964
    - i. Registered to vote in 1962 at the cost of a crippling beating and her family’s eviction from their farm
  - b. President Johnson feared that he would lose white votes in the South if he agreed to seat MFDP members, so he worked out a compromise
  - c. Democrats would give 2 of the 68 seats to the MFDP with a promise to ban discrimination at the 1968 convention
3. Selma Campaign – African Americans account for more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  the population but only 3% of registered voters
  - a. Dr. King and the SCLC hoped that a concentrated voter-registration drive would provoke a hostile white response
  - b. 2,000 demonstrators were arrested, demonstrators were brutally attacked, and one man was shot and killed

- c. Dr. King organized a protest march from Selma to the state capital which was met with tear gas, whips, and clubs
  - d. March 21, 1965, King led 25,000 marchers to Montgomery
4. Voting Rights Act of 1965 – eliminated the literacy test and allowed federal examiners to enroll voters who were denied that right at the local level

### Sec 3 Challenges and Changes in the Movement

#### Northern Segregation

- 1. De Facto Segregation – segregation that exists by practice and custom
- 2. De Jure Segregation – segregation by law
- 3. Race Riots break out in major African American communities across the U.S.: Harlem and Watts (one of the worst race riots in U.S. history)
- 4. African Americans wanted and needed economic equality of opportunity in jobs, housing, and education

#### New Leaders Voice Discontent

- 1. Nation of Islam (Black Muslims) – founded by Elijah Muhammad to promote black separatism and the Islamic religion
  - a. Malcolm X – preached Muhammad's views that whites were the cause of the condition in which



blacks found themselves and blacks should separate from white society

- b. After a pilgrimage to Mecca, Malcolm X still burned with a hatred of racism and injustice but his attitude toward whites had changed
  - c. Assassinated on Feb 21, 1965 while speaking in Harlem
2. Black Power – slogan used by Stokely Carmichael in the 1960s to encourage African American pride and political and social leadership
  3. Black Panthers – militant African American political organization formed in 1966 by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale to fight police brutality and to provide services in the ghetto

1968 – A Turning Point in Civil Rights

1. King's Assassination – shot April 4, 1968 in Memphis, TN by James Earl Ray
2. King's death led to the worst urban rioting in U.S. history, 125 cities exploded in flames
3. Robert Kennedy – assassinated in June of 1968 by a Jordanian immigrant who was angry of Kennedy's support of Israel

Legacy of the Civil Rights Movement

1. Kerner Commission – group appointed by Johnson to study the causes of urban violence and that recommended the elimination of de facto segregation

- a. Johnson Administration ignored many of the recommendations
2. Civil Rights Gains
- a. Brought about the end of de jure segregation
  - b. Civil Rights Act of 1968 – banned discrimination in housing
  - c. Increased graduation rates from high school and college
  - d. Greater pride in racial identity
  - e. Substantial political gains
3. Unfinished Work
- a. Public support for civil rights declined because some whites were frightened by the urban riots and the rhetoric of the Black Panthers
  - b. Whites fled the cities for the suburbs, increasing the problem of de facto segregation
  - c. African Americans had a poverty rate 3 times that of whites
  - d. Affirmative Action – making special efforts to hire or enroll groups that have suffered from discrimination in the past