Aditya Patel

APUSH

Period 4

03/12/2021

CH 28 Focus Qs 2,3,6

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2. America had been one of the largest countries in the world during the 20th century and had one of the largest populations. This population, due to almost all of America’s growth being from immigration, was much more diverse than most other nations, and had many different factions and microcosms of other nations. During the postwar era, however, America went through a significant homogenization, becoming more united, and fitting many people into a mold expected from society. During this time period, almost every family in America wanted a house in the suburbs, in one of the “Levittown.” As millions of people moved into houses that were designed the same, felt the same, and were identical, the country began the homogenization. Television was one of the main causes of this. After its advent in the late 1940s, it was quickly popularized, and was in a majority of Americans’ homes by the late 1950s. These televisions sent the same messages to people from all different ethnicities and social backgrounds, giving them the same ideas of “normal” or “right”. Only three national networks became the main source of information and news for all Americans. Television had a “Homogenizing Message” which reinforced gender roles, which were quickly embraced by the public. Their public, idealized version of an American household or family became another thing all people of ethnicities strived for. However, there was significant pushback against this homogenizing message. “The Other America” and an anti-culture movement pushed back against the homogenizing message, and a large percent of the population had always found this unsatisfying. African Americans saw it and were further motivated to unite for their rights, and this was a significant cause of the Civil Rights movement. Children of the suburban class also pushed back with the counterculture, rock and roll and the beat generation. The main result of this homogenization was eventually a homogenous, similar America, and it was extensive.

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3. After decades of being second class citizens, a reckoning was in sight after the end of the war for African Americans. As the black middle class continued to grow throughout the 20th century, the battle against segregation and hate intensified. Brown Vs Board of Education was the first major victory for African Americans in a while, finally an official rebuke of the Plessy V Ferguson decision from decades ago. There was much resistance to this decision, but eventually, most schools came to comply with the decision. Following this was one of the most incredible movements in American history, starting with the successful Montgomery Bus Boycott. Influenced in part by the Brown V Board of Education, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the protestors. Here, Martin Luther King Jr. became the leader of the movement, with his ideology of peaceful protest becoming integral to the Civil Rights Movement. The movement was popular due to a variety of factors. After the Second World War, many African Americans were determined to regain and build upon the extra liberties and ideas of the broadened world given to them while working in factories and on the battlefield. The Black Urban Middle class was integral to the success of the movement, as these educated and experienced protestors had huge obstacles in their path to success and needed them gone. Many African Americans were motivated by television and seeing how white Americans lived on a daily basis. Northern liberals, blacks, and unions were also crucial in the Civil Rights movement, who supported for ideological or politically practical reasons. Another major reason for the widespread support of the Civil Rights movement was its symbolic nature to the rest of the world. The lack of equality for every man and woman was a major stain on the American way and changing that would prove once again that the Soviet Union was not better than the United States.

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6. The United States made some incredibly important and influential policy decisions in the 1950s, fueled by the seemingly necessary opposition to Soviet Communism and its expansion. The Red Scare was a major part of the early 1950s, destroying lives and political dreams with unrivaled power. However, it disappeared when McCarthy was ousted after attacking the military, leaving Eisenhower with control of the Foreign Policy. His secretary of state recommended “Massive Retaliation” against communist threats, such as the ones in Korea a few years back, and recommended using the threat of nuclear annihilation against the Soviet Union to force them to make concessions. They also continued to increase military expenditure and continued to advance nuclear weapons. Eisenhower was not eager to have a repeat of the Korean War, so when Communist forces attacked French Vietnam, no American forces were sent to intervene. Other crises also occurred during Eisenhower’s term. The Suez Crisis, the rise of Fidel Castro, and the controversial and deadly creation of Israel all occurred during his term. America had influence in all three of these events, once again displaying the influence that America had gained during the Second World War and how it had become a global superpower. The United States Department of Defense did end up intervening in many of these, via CIA coups and destabilizations, political pressure, and by imposing sanctions. The U2 Crisis with the Soviet Union was also resolved relatively peacefully, with increased tensions but not a war. He was able to deal with these crises rather calmly, however, and Eisenhower’s restraint in intervention and using America’s military was one of his most defining features. When Eisenhower left office, he revealed what he had seen as President, and warned the American People of increasing influence of the military and the “military-industrial complex,” warning Americans on too much dependance on the military industry.

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