

# The Post War Years



▲ Physicists Albert Einstein and Robert Oppenheimer. The atomic bomb was based on Einstein's theories, but Einstein himself opposed its creation. Oppenheimer led the development of the bomb.



▲ The atomic bomb explodes over Nagasaki, Japan on August 8, 1945.

The end of World War II marked the end of an era for both the United States and the world. The Great Depression, which had devastated the American and global economies, was effectively over. The military expansion and resultant expenditures created new jobs, bringing an end to high unemployment. Moreover, the United States and the Allies were victorious over the Axis Powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan.

But the cost of victory was high. It is estimated that over 17 million soldiers died in the conflict. Of these over 400,000 were Americans. The number of civilian deaths from World War II will never be known, but some scholars estimate that the total number of deaths caused by World War II was over 40 million. By any measure, World War II brought about a catastrophic amount of pain and suffering around the globe.

In addition to the sheer loss of humanity, World War II had devastating consequences for the political stability of the world. Much of Europe was in ruins. Great Britain, France, Germany, Poland, Italy, and the Soviet Union were especially hard hit from massive bombing campaigns and large battles. The fighting had left these countries both physically and financially exhausted. Furthermore, the devastation in these European countries threatened global security.

Great Britain, France, Italy, and Germany all had overseas possessions. Particularly, Great Britain and France maintained extensive colonies in Africa, southern Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands. Maintaining these colonies required time and manpower. Following the war, European countries simply did not have the resources to support the colonies. However, giving the colonies back their freedom threatened to cause violence and further warfare within these territorial possessions. The colonies were a powder keg that posed a serious threat to global stability.

As a result of the devastation in Europe, North Africa, and Asia, the United States emerged as the world's preeminent power. The geographic isolation of North America meant that the continental United States had not sustained any damage during the war. Consequently, the United States was the only industrial economy in the world to emerge from World War II unscathed. Additionally, the United States possessed a large, powerful, and well-trained military. These factors made the United States the most powerful nation in the world.

## THE COLD WAR

The United States did not remain unchallenged for global dominance. Shortly after the end of World War II, it became increasingly clear that the Soviet Union would become the country's new rival. During World War II, the Soviet Union and the United States had been allies, but their partnership was always uneasy. Since the Bolshevik Revolution that created the Soviet Union in 1917, the United States had a profound distrust of the Soviets.

In part the distrust was ideological. The Soviet Union was founded upon the socialist and communist principles of the 19th century German philosopher Karl Marx. In the Soviet Union, the government, run by the Communist Party, was not only the political authority of the country, but it also controlled the economy, land ownership, the press, and many other aspects of daily life. They did so in order to create a more equal society.

The Soviet Union rejected capitalism, upon which the economy of the United States is based. In a capitalistic economy, the government regulates and manages the economy as little as possible, preferring privately owned businesses, consumer demand, technological innovation, and the market to drive the economy. The Soviet Union argued that this type of system favored business leaders and the wealthy, enabling them to profit off the working and less wealthy classes. In the Soviet system, everyone was, in theory, equal because the government controlled all means of creating and generating wealth. There was no private ownership.

The ideological differences between the Soviets and the Americans made for an uneasy partnership during World War II. After the war, tensions increased. The Soviet Union, occupied the countries of Eastern Europe and installed communist governments in each. The United States, as well as Western European countries, opposed this occupation, calling on the Soviets to leave. For its part the Soviet Union was upset that communists were prevented from serving in governments in Italy and other European countries. The "Iron Curtain" divided Europe.

The Soviet Union and the United States also disagreed about the occupation of Germany. Eventually the American, British, and French portions of Germany were separated to form the country of West Germany, while the Soviets created East Germany out of their occupation zone. The capital of Berlin was also divided. Additionally, Soviets supported communist forces in China and elsewhere in Asia, while the United States opposed them.

In short a new rivalry had emerged between the Soviet Union and the United States. Historians have labeled this conflict the **Cold War**, because the United



▲ The Japanese surrender to General Douglas MacArthur on board the U.S.S. Missouri on September 2, 1945.



▲ President Harry Truman became President after the death of Franklin Roosevelt on April 12, 1945. Truman made the decision to drop the atomic bombs on Japan and actively opposed the expansion of the Soviet Union.

States and the Soviet Union never went to war directly, but, nonetheless, competed intensely across the globe.

The Cold War was made all the more dangerous by the state of military affairs after World War II. Both countries possessed large and powerful armed forces. However, the United States also possessed nuclear weapons, which they had used on Japan. In 1949, the Soviet Union gained its own atomic bomb. Now both countries had the devastating power of nuclear weapons and they began to speak openly of using them on one another. The international rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, combined with the threat of nuclear warfare, would have profound consequences for the entire planet, including Washington, during the post war era.





▲ Former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt meets with Japanese Americans in Tacoma to thank them for their support and service during World War II.



▲ The sale of consumer goods, like the household appliances showcased at the Tacoma Home Show above, surged after World War II.



▲ A model demonstrates a dishwasher, the latest convenience for modern homes in 1955.

## POST WAR AMERICA

In spite of the grave global consequences of World War II and the looming possibility of military conflict with the Soviet Union, most Americans welcomed the end of the war with intense and widespread celebration. The news of Japan's intent to end military activities on August 14, 1945 resulted in spontaneous parades, parties, and celebrations across the United States. Further celebrations followed Japan's official surrender on September 2, 1945. In part, America's collective jubilation sprang from the end of hard times. For nearly sixteen years, the American public had endured economic depression, social hardships, and warfare. The conclusion of World War II promised to bring about a return to prosperity.

The feelings of euphoria were also brought about by renewed public confidence. Following World War I, many Americans became disillusioned and depressed. The brutality of the conflict and the, seemingly, pointless nature of the war shattered the ideals of an entire generation of Americans. Even though the scale of World War II was much larger and the casualties many times higher, the conclusion of this conflict did not cause the widespread despair that World War I did in the United States.

Instead, Americans were more confident than ever in their beliefs and values. Unlike World War I, the majority of the American public was certain in the moral superiority of their position during World War II. The public believed that they were eliminating multiple evils from the world. To the public, Germany, Italy, and Japan represented repressive, totalitarian regimes that sought to eliminate freedom and democracy. It was America's moral duty to oppose them. The discovery of the German directed Holocaust and the Japanese atrocities in China and Southeast Asia only further confirmed the American position.

The euphoria of victory continued in the years directly following the war. After sixteen years of struggle, the public was ready to embrace better times. Even though the onset of World War II had brought economic recovery to the nation, the general public was unable to fully enjoy the fruits of their employment. During the war, key goods, such as food, clothing, paper, gasoline, tires, and much more, were rationed. Moreover, all factories were devoted to producing material for the war effort. Consumer goods for the general public, like cars, were simply not widely available for purchase. Thus, Americans had money, but no means to spend it.

Consequently, the end of war and the return to normalcy allowed the American public to spend much of its hard earned money. As a result, the national economy boomed. To ensure that consumer demand would not be so great as to create inflation, and thus risk the country's economic future, the federal government took a more active role in monitoring the economy. This combination of available capital, consumer demand, and timely government monitoring worked, as the post war national economy soared.



▲ Following the conclusion of World War II, small towns such as Longview, grew substantially. Their growth was due in part to affordable automobiles and improved roads.

In addition to economic expansion, the population also grew significantly. Historians refer to this growth as the "baby boom." As the population grew, so too did the need for more housing. Much of this housing demand was met outside of established cities, in new communities known as suburbs. Suburbs were small towns outside of major cities. Suburbs flourished as a result of improved roads and the automobile, that made travel to major cities, which were still business and commercial hubs, practical.

While times were good for many Americans in the post war period, not all was perfect in American society. The collective relief at the end of the war, rapid consumer expansion, population growth, and economic prosperity masked many social problems in the United States. For instance, America had just fought a war to ensure freedom and end oppression, yet so many people in this country, especially African Americans, American Indians, and Asian Americans, still experienced much discrimination and prejudice at home. Additionally, women had discovered a new economic freedom and empowerment through employment during World War II. Yet after the war, many women were expected to return

to the home and continue their lives as homemakers. Many women found such expectations unfair and were dissatisfied with this situation.

In addition to these social concerns, the Cold War threat with the Soviet Union loomed. The threat of another war, or worse yet nuclear conflict, began to weigh heavily on Americans. In response, many Americans began to see the Soviet Union, and any communists, as enemies. This attitude had profound consequences for the country.

Many unions and reform movements were based upon socialist principles. These beliefs did not mean that all union members and reformers were communists or that they favored the Soviet Union. However, much of the public did not see the difference between someone who held socialist beliefs and the Soviet Union. The general public began to view anyone with socialist leanings as a communist traitor or Soviet spy. Widespread persecution of anyone with socialist beliefs was common in the post war period. The most famous example was Senator Joseph McCarthy's campaign to root out communists in government, industry, and entertainment during the 1950s. This movement is often called the "Red Scare."





▲ Newly smelted aluminum is removed from the smelter.



▲ Aluminum is placed on an assembly line to be molded into the proper shape for each customer.



▲ Finished aluminum is sent to port and awaits transportation to its intended destination.

## POST WAR WASHINGTON

In many ways the post war years in Washington were a mirror image of the national picture. During World War II, Washington was home to many strategic military industries and bases. Its location in the northern Pacific Ocean made it ideal for naval stations, shipbuilding, and aircraft manufacturing. Consequently, Washington residents felt the strain of the conflict more intensely than many other areas of the country.

The end of the war was greeted with relief and celebration. However, many politicians, business leaders, and average citizens had private reservations. The end of World War I had hurt the Washington economy, leading many businesses to close and resulting in high unemployment. Those individuals who remembered that experience were rightly concerned about the consequences of the conclusion of World War II.

### ECONOMY

The fears of politicians and business communities, though, remained unrealized. Unlike the end of World War I, Washington enjoyed the economic boom of the post World War II era with the rest of the United States. In part, the reason for this success came from the maturity in economic wisdom of federal policy makers. The Great Depression had taught many politicians, advisors, and policy makers that the federal government could take a more active role in helping the economy.

In particular, federal officials hoped to prevent massive economic disasters like the Great Depression. To accomplish this, the federal government, through the **Federal Reserve Bank**, closely monitored inflation. **Inflation** occurs when the price of goods rise rapidly. If the price of one good rises, it may cause the price of other goods to rise, which in turn causes further inflation.

The Federal Reserve Bank can combat inflation by monitoring interest rates. If inflation becomes a problem, then the bank can raise interest rates, which helps lower inflation. Given the rationing program and the pent up demand for consumer goods caused by World War II, there was real concern about inflation. However the federal government was able to correctly adjust for interests rates and avoid inflation problems, thus keeping the economy in Washington and the nation soaring.

Still, the most important lesson realized from the Great Depression, was the need for the government to take an active part in the economy through government programs and contracts. The New Deal programs and military contracts of World War II had brought the American economy out of the Depression. The federal government knew that they had to keep money flowing into the economy to ensure its health after World War II. Thus, the federal government continued to fund projects throughout the country.



◀ The Hanford Nuclear Site, seen here, became even more important during the Cold War. As the Cold War progressed, the federal government ordered more and more nuclear weapons, thus increasing plutonium production at Hanford.

For Washington, the continuation of contracts prevented a post war recession. Because of the Cold War conflict with Soviet Union, the United States decided to keep a sizable standing military. Consequently, there was a continued need for military aircraft from Boeing. In turn, the military contracts at Boeing helped the aluminum industry remain healthy in Washington. Furthermore, the need to keep the aluminum and aircraft factories operating increased the need for cheap power provided by hydroelectric dams. As a result, the federal government continued to fund hydroelectric dam projects throughout the state, especially on the Columbia and Snake rivers.

### Korean War

Inevitably, the Cold War demands for military goods from Washington were not as high as it was during World War II, and some layoffs did occur. However demand increased once more between June 25, 1950 and July 27, 1953 as the United States became involved in the **Korean War**. The origins of the Korean War were found in the complicated division of the Korean peninsula following the conclusion of World War II. Eventually the peninsula was divided at the 38th Parallel, between the communist North Korea and the democratic South Korea. When North Korea, supported by communist allies in China and the Soviet Union, invaded South Korea, the United States and United Nations (UN) forces rushed to South Korea's aid. Initially, North Korea held the advantage, but within a year the United States had forced North Korea to retreat.

While the Korean War was a much smaller conflict than World War II, it did cause an increase in demand for war goods, which helped the state economy even more, especially the aircraft and aluminum industries. In addition, the Korean War underscored the importance of another World War II legacy in Washington.

During the Korean War many military leaders, particularly **General Douglas MacArthur** who was initially in charge of the conflict, advocated using nuclear weapons on not only North Korea, but Red China and the Soviet Union as well. While **President Harry Truman** declined such an option, its very suggestion speaks volumes about the climate of the post war era.

Nuclear weapons were a fact of not just military life, but politics and society as well. The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the beginnings of the Nuclear Age. Throughout the Cold War, the United States created an extensive arsenal of nuclear weapons. The **Hanford Nuclear Site** had produced the plutonium fuel for the first atomic bombs and was still one of the only places in the country to produce the material. As such, the Hanford Nuclear site was destined to play a key role in the history of the Cold War.

Thus, Hanford became a critical component of Washington's economy, particularly in the Tri-Cities of southcentral Washington. During the Cold War the federal government spent billions of dollars expanding and maintaining the facilities at Hanford. These expenditures were a boon to Richland, Kennewick, and Pasco. The Tri-Cities grew to accommodate the workers of Hanford. This growth fueled further expansion of housing and businesses to support the cities.





▲ Immigration to Washington still occurred after World War II. Here, Greek immigrants operate a café.



▲ The economic growth of the post war period fueled an expansion of businesses of all types, like the French bakery above.



▲ Organized labor remained a driving force in Washington society and politics after World War II, as evidenced by the Maritime Strike above in 1945.

## SOCIETY

Many of the general social trends that defined the post war era in the United States manifested in Washington. In general the post war period was one of prosperity for many Washingtonian families. Wages were high and employment fairly easy to find. The economic prosperity and post war euphoria that resulted in the national population increase or the "baby boomers," also occurred in Washington.

The expanding population combined with a newfound wealth and the ability to spend money on consumer items, resulted in new demographic and geographic trends for Washington. Gradually, people preferred living outside of major metropolitan areas. To be sure, major cities, like Seattle, Tacoma, and Spokane, were still commercial and industrial hubs. People who could afford to live elsewhere, but still worked in the cities, often moved to new communities. Geographers and historians often call these communities **suburbs** because they are usually located quite close to major urban centers. In the Puget Sound, many suburbs either were formed or expanded rapidly. Cities like Bellevue and Kirkland grew as affluent families left the city for the peace and quiet of the suburbs.

This flight to the suburbs was due to the widespread affordability of cars and the expansion of existing road networks, both of which made it possible to commute to work in cities from the suburbs. In addition to roads and automobiles, suburbs also reshaped economic and commercial activity.

As the suburbs grew, more Washingtonians began to need shopping centers for groceries and new consumer goods, like televisions, radios, appliances, clothing, and the like. Consequently the first shopping malls appeared such as Bellevue Square in 1946 and Northgate in 1950. The appearance of these new shopping centers not only made suburbs more viable and self-sustaining communities, but they also took business away from traditional urban markets and department stores. Moreover, they made consumer goods more affordable and accessible to people in Washington, thus initiating the start of what historians term as the **consumer society**.

While affluence and prosperity existed for many Washingtonians, there were still social tensions bubbling underneath the surface. As noted in previous chapters, racial and ethnic minorities often faced challenges and discrimination in Washington. These problems continued after the end of World War II. One of the foremost examples of discrimination was the **real estate covenant**. A **covenant** is a promise, and in the context of real estate it was a stipulation in the contract of property owners that prohibited them from selling to certain ethnic and minority groups.

For instance, an African American in Seattle may have had the financial resources to purchase a home, but a covenant in a mortgage or property deed would prevent a seller from allowing them to purchase the property.

Covenants effectively kept neighborhoods and communities segregated, forcing minorities to live in certain areas. While covenants were applied primarily to African Americans, they were also used against Asian groups and Jewish individuals as well. Covenants were widespread throughout cities and communities in the Puget Sound. In 1948, the United States Supreme Court ruled that covenants were illegal but they continued to be enforced well into the 1960s.

In addition to the racial and ethnic tensions, labor disputes remained a prominent part of Washington society and politics. While the labor movement was no where near as active or violent as it had been earlier in the 20th century, it was still quite substantial and demonstrated the continued strength of unions and more liberal groups in Washington. The largest strike in the post war period was the 1948 **machinist strike** at Boeing.

The strike was over Boeing's decision to revoke many benefits, especially to long time employees. In the end, the strike was successful, but not without its troubles. The striking machinist union had to fight not only Boeing, but the local Teamster's Union headed by **Dave Beck**. Beck had hoped to replace the machinists with individuals who belonged to his own Teamster's Union and thus collaborated with Boeing. While in the end he was unsuccessful, the incident revealed the division within the labor movement in Washington.

The labor movement did not just face troubles from within during the post war era. Historically, unions and labor movements were associated with socialist and communist principles, especially among the movements in Washington. However, the Cold War had led to widespread distrust for people espousing such beliefs. Many politicians, business leaders, and members of the general public began to see liberals, unions, and socialists as agents of the Soviet Union. Being labeled a communist became synonymous with traitor.

At the national level this manifested itself in **Senator Joseph McCarthy** and his investigation into un-American activities. But scrutiny of socialists and other liberal leaning groups in Washington began even earlier. On March 8, 1947, the Washington State legislature passed the **Un-American Activities Bill**. The bill authorized a state legislature committee to investigate any suspicious activities in the state. All government agencies were scrutinized especially higher education, which was seen as a training ground for many socialists.

In 1948, the committee declared that there were over 700 communists among the University of Washington faculty. A year later three professors were fired for communist activities and the rest of the faculty was required to take loyalty oaths. This incident was just one example of the Cold War paranoia that swept not only Washington but the country as a whole.



▲ The expansion of life to the suburbs resulted in the creation of malls and department stores, like the one above, during the late 1940s and 1950s.



▲ Cold War tensions led to a persecution of many socialist and communist groups. In the photo above, socialist sympathizers demonstrate against this persecution.

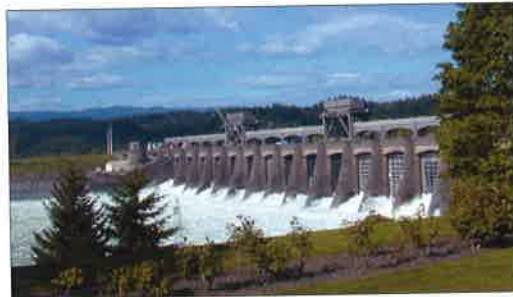


▲ Senator Joseph McCarthy, pictured here, was the leading proponent of the anti-Communist crusade in the early 1950s.





▲ Grand Coulee Dam



▲ Bonneville Dam



▲ Rocky Reach Dam



▲ John Day Dam

## Social Change and Economic Development

While the immediate post war era saw the continued dominance of industries established in previous decades, there were some significant changes during the 1950s that created new economic opportunities and products. Moreover, the 1950s saw a growing awareness of the major social tensions that plagued both Washington and the rest of the country. The recognition of these social tensions and the attempt to identify both the cause and a solution to them would define much of the state and nation's history in the late 1950s and 1960s.

### COLUMBIA BASIN IRRIGATION PROJECT

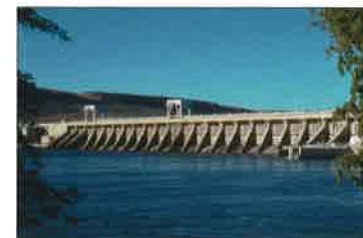
During the Great Depression and World War II, the federal government chartered and funded the creation of dams along the Columbia River, beginning with Rock Island, Grand Coulee, and Bonneville dams. To manage the dams along the Columbia, the **Bonneville Power Administration**, an independent federal agency, was organized to transport and to market Pacific Northwest electricity throughout the western region of the United States.

The federal government initiated the second phase of dam construction along the Columbia River during the 1950s. The second phase of Washington's hydroelectric dam construction occurred as a result of the 1948 **Vanport Flood**. The Vanport Flood left 17,500 people homeless, destroyed 5,000 homes, caused 100 million dollars in damages, and took 39 human lives. The United States Federal government and several public utility districts received authorization and funding to construct eight multiple purpose hydroelectric dams on the Columbia River and four dams on the Snake River in the state of Washington. These dams increased electric power output, increased water storage capacity, and decreased the chances of another catastrophic flood in the Columbia River system.

These major hydroelectric dam construction projects included McNary (1953), Chief Joseph (1955), The Dalles (1957), Priest Rapids (1959), Rocky Reach (1961), Wanapum (1963), Wells (1967), and John Day (1968) on the Columbia River. The four Snake River dams included Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose, and Lower Granite. These construction projects created numerous jobs and provided many financial benefits for nearby communities and businesses.

In addition to flood control and hydroelectric power, the dams also provided ample reservoir supplies for farmland irrigation. The challenge was to transport the water from these reservoirs to farmlands throughout Eastern Washington. For nearly three decades, hundreds of engineers and thousands of construction workers planned, designed, and constructed, the **Columbia Basin Irrigation Project**.

The construction process required designing and building a series of pumping stations, siphons, tunnels, earth filled dams, and reservoirs. Likewise, a network of main canals,



▲ McNary Dam



▲ Chief Joseph Dam



▲ The Dalles Dam

supplementary canals, ditches, and waterways were necessary to distribute the Columbia River's irrigation water to the project's 10,000 farms and 700,000 acres of cropland.

Most of the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project was constructed by the 1960s. However another phase of this project, the **Second Bacon Siphon and Tunnel**, was completed in the mid 1970s. The Columbia Basin Irrigation Project, twice the size of the state of Delaware, was 2.5 million acres, or nearly 4,000 square miles. More

than one million acres of the project was destined to become irrigated cropland equal to an area larger than Rhode Island. The irrigation project extended southward more than 160 miles from Grand Coulee Dam to Pasco.

The project's major irrigated farming communities include Ephrata, Moses Lake, Quincy, Warden, Royal City, Othello, Connell, and Pasco. The most valuable agricultural commodities include potatoes, sugar beets, sweet corn, beans, alfalfa hay, wheat, apples and many other specialty crops.



# FRUIT

*The Growth of the Fruit Industry in the 1950s and 1960s ...*

The expansion of irrigation projects in Eastern Washington fueled the growth of the fruit industry in the 1950s and 1960s. Fruits, such as apples, cherries, peaches, nectarines, plums, pears, apricots, and grapes grow very well in the rich soils of Eastern Washington. In addition, the climate provides an excellent growing season for each of these crops. However, fruits do require regular and substantial amounts of water. Without adequate irrigation, fruit trees, and their crops, shrivel and die. Thus, the abundance of irrigation water helped the development of the fruit industry. In addition to irrigation, the fruit industry in the 1950s and 1960s was assisted by the development of effective pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. Fertilizers allowed trees to produce larger crops, while pesticides and herbicides protected crops from insects and weeds. The combination of irrigation, pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers enabled the fruit industry to become a staple economic activity in Washington during this time period.



▲ Golden Delicious apples ready to be harvested.

## Apples

▶ A Red Delicious apple ready to be picked.



▲ Golden Delicious variety.



▲ Granny Smith variety.



▲ Apple blossoms in full bloom.



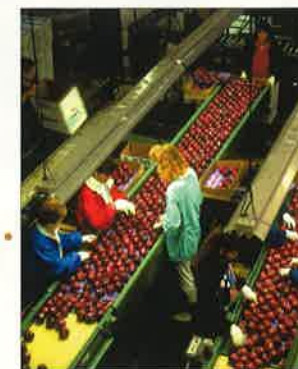
▲ Red Delicious variety.



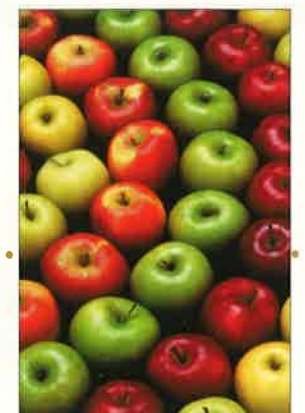
▲ A blossoming tree.



▲ Pickers harvest Golden and Red Delicious varieties.



▲ Sorting and packing apples at a fruit shed.



▲ A variety of apples.

## Nectarines



## Pears



## Apricots



## Plums



## Cherries





## FOCUS ON

### *The Growth of the Vegetable Industry in the 1950s and 1960s ...*

The same developments that benefited fruit farming in Eastern Washington also created conditions favorable to the cultivation of vegetables in the 1950s and 1960s. Like fruits vegetables require fertile soil, adequate irrigation, and a good growing season. In addition, vegetable production was assisted by the development of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. In particular, herbicides were quite important as they prevented weeds, grasses, and other plants from competing with crops for water and nutrients. Among the most important vegetables grown in the state were corn, potatoes, peas, carrots, and onions. Unlike fruit crops, though, vegetable farming benefited from technological advancements in agricultural machinery. Farmers can harvest most vegetable crops with massive tractors and combines. Fruits bruise too easily for this method of harvest. As a result, vegetable farmers need fewer laborers than orchards.

## Corn



## Onions

## Carrots



## Potatoes



▲ The planting of potatoes.

## Peas



# VEGETABLES



▲ Barley field in the Palouse Hills. Barley is used in bread, animal feed, and beer.

# GRAINS

Washington wheat farmers plant and harvest hundreds of thousands of acres of spring and winter varieties of wheat. Major production areas include the dryland farming areas of the Palouse Hills, the Walla Walla/Blue Mountains, the Channeled Scablands, and the Waterville Plateau; the irrigated wheat areas include the Quincy and Pasco basins. Washington wheat farms have the highest yield per acre in the United States and the Palouse Hills yields per acre lead the world. Production averages 50 to 150 bushels per acre. The world average is an estimated 20 to 30 bushels per acre. Washington's dryland wheat farms range from 640 acres or one section (one square mile) to several thousand acres.

Irrigated wheat fields range from 40 to 160 acre sections. Wheat farming is capital intensive in the 21st century.

What is a typical production cycle for a Washington wheat farmer? Most farmers used a five year crop rotation - wheat, barley, wheat, green peas, and summer fallow. Summer fallowed land is plowed and tilled to remove all plant growth so as to rest the soil and to conserve moisture. The farmer plants seeds either in the fall for winter wheat varieties or in the early spring for spring wheat varieties. The farmer will periodically apply fertilizers and chemical sprays to control weeds, pests, and prevent diseases during the growing season. Harvest begins in late July and continues into September. Harvesting is accomplished by large

mechanized combines. Each combine may cut 100 to 150 acres of wheat each day. Wheat is transferred from the combine to large trucks that haul the wheat to a nearby grain elevator for storage. The farmer will agree to sell his wheat at a market price. The wheat will be transported by either rail, barge, or truck to a major grain port or directly to a domestic market. Each year an estimated 80 percent of the Washington wheat crop is shipped to foreign markets, especially to Asian countries. Recently wheat prices have increased, but so have production costs. Wheat farmers hope to pay debts and have a little bit for the next production years.



## Harvesting Wheat



▲ Bales of straw.



▲ Combine harvesting wheat.



▲ Harvesting wheat with grain elevators in the background.





◀ Construction of the Alaskan Way Viaduct in downtown Seattle in the early 1950s. It was completed by 1953. During the 1950s, road construction expanded rapidly in Washington, including the creation of the Interstate Highway System.



▲ President Dwight Eisenhower

## HIGHWAYS AND ROADS

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, one of the great social changes of the post war period was the growth of suburbs. Suburbs were made possible by the expansion and affordability of automobiles. Yet it was not just for personal use that vehicle use expanded. It was economic as well. Shipping and transportation by trucks became more popular and efficient than by train. Consequently, new road systems were developed to make the transportation of goods and people easier.

In 1956, **President Dwight Eisenhower**, who had succeeded Harry Truman in 1952 and was re-elected in 1956, signed a bill chartering the Interstate Highway System. The **Interstate Highway System** connected all major metropolitan areas throughout the country. The interstate grid system established east-west oriented freeways that were assigned even numbers (I-10 to I-90) and north-south freeways were given odd numbers (I-5 to I-95). In Washington State these freeways were I-5 (Bellingham-Seattle-Vancouver), I-90 (Seattle-Ellensburg-Spokane), and I-82 (Ellensburg-Yakima-Tri Cities).

The national interstate highway system effectively shortened distances, decreased travel time, improved access, handled more vehicular traffic, and increased safety. The system allowed people and goods to flow across the country, thereby aiding economic growth and enhancing domestic and international trade and commerce.



▲ Fully completed Alaskan Way Viaduct, 1953.



▲ The expanded and improved highway system made the transportation of goods, like logs, faster and more efficient.

## SOCIAL TENSIONS AND CONCERNS

In 1954, the United States Supreme Court ruled in the case *Brown vs. Board of Education Topeka, Kansas* that public schools could not constitutionally be segregated. The ruling was a massive victory for the African American community in the United States and propelled a national movement called the **Civil Rights Movement** to end legal discrimination and prejudice.

The significance of *Brown vs. Board of Education* cannot be understated. In many parts of the country, especially the South, legal segregation existed. This segregation meant that African Americans could not eat at the same restaurants, attend the same schools, ride in the same section of the bus, or have many other of the same service as whites. In Washington, the covenant system already discussed was an example of legal segregation. **Legal segregation** is the existence of laws or tolerance of practices that allow people to be separated by race or ethnicity.

In theory, such practices are forbidden by the Constitution, particularly the 14th Amendment. But the United States Supreme Court had allowed legal segregation to exist since 1896 when it ruled that separation of the races was permissible so long as equal services were offered. This principle became commonly referred to as "separate, but equal" and was the legal basis for segregation in the South and other discriminatory practices across the country.

*Brown vs. Board of Education* changed that principle. The Supreme Court ruled that separate was never equal in the case of education. With this victory, the African American community in the United States had a legal basis to challenge other areas of discrimination. The ruling emboldened the African American community to begin a public campaign against segregation, discrimination, and prejudice. The work focused primarily on the American South, where conditions were the worst.

## THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

The most famous leader of the Civil Rights Movement was **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** King led peaceful, non-violent protests throughout the American South, beginning in 1955 and continuing until his assassination in 1968. While King was the foremost spokesperson, other individuals, like Malcolm X, Jesse Jackson, and Jackie Robinson were important to the movement, as well as other groups, such as the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and the Freedom Riders. As a result of King and other Civil Rights leaders, the rest of the country became aware and engrossed in the Civil Rights Movement. This in turn led to major reforms such as the **Civil Rights Act** of 1964.



▲ President John F. Kennedy addresses the nation about the Civil Rights Movement on June 11, 1963. President Kennedy supported the Civil Rights Movement, but it was under his successor, Lyndon Johnson, that the most important reforms were achieved.

*"We are bound for the promised land. We shall taste the milk of freedom and the honey of equality."*

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,  
Speech at a rally, Chicago, August 5, 1966



▲ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his wife, Coretta, pose for a photo in 1964. Dr. King was the most important Civil Rights leader in the country.



## CONNECTING TO AMERICAN HISTORY

From 1955 until 1968, African Americans throughout the United States embarked upon an intensive campaign to gain equal rights and opportunities. In theory, these rights were guaranteed by the principles of the Constitution. In practice, though, many states had laws that created legal segregation between whites and African Americans by offering separate services to them. While these laws were most prevalent in the American South, many states across the country, including Washington, had such laws in some capacity. To combat segregation, as well as prejudice, African American leaders and groups organized public education campaigns and demonstrations to draw attention to the inequity and unfairness of these laws. Their efforts were primarily concentrated in the South, but also spread to other areas of the United States.



▲ A political cartoon in support of the Civil Rights Movement.



▲ Civil Rights leaders Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X awaiting a press conference from President Johnson in 1964.

# CIVIL RIGHTS

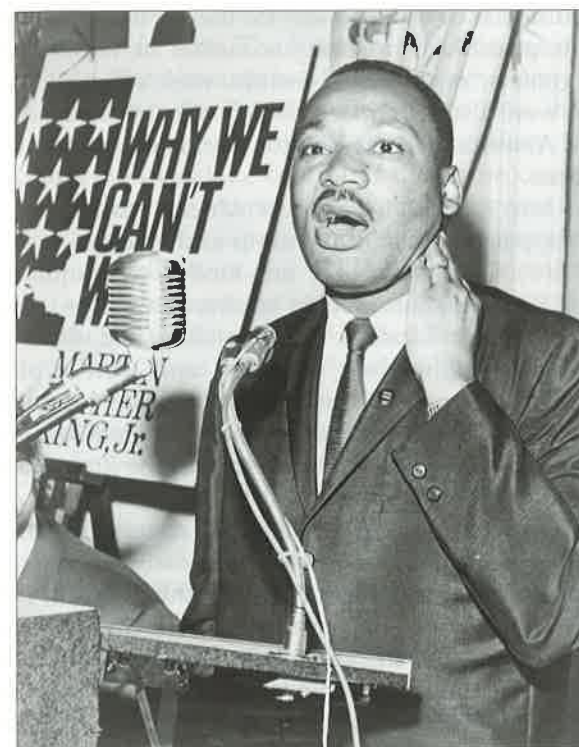
## The National Movement



▲ President Lyndon Johnson, with Martin Luther King Jr. in attendance, signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed most forms of segregation.



▲ President Johnson meets with Martin Luther King, Jr. and other Civil Rights leaders.



▲ Dr. King gives a speech in 1964.

An aerial photograph of the March on Washington ▶



## "I have a dream" ...

*"I say to you today, my friends, that even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal.' I have a dream that one day, on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.*

*I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.*

*I have a dream today.*

*I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers.*

*I have a dream today.*

*I have a dream that one day 'every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plains, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.'*

*This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.*

*And this will be the day. This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning, 'My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring.'*

*And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York... And when this happens, and when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of that old Negro spiritual,*

*Free at last! Free at last! Thank God almighty, we are free at last!"*

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "I Have a Dream" speech, August 28, 1963  
King addressed a crowd of approximately 250,000 at the conclusion of the March on Washington.

1947  
Jackie Robinson breaks baseball's color barrier

1948  
Supreme Court outlaws covenants  
President Harry Truman integrates Armed Forces

1951  
Army begins desegregation

1954  
Supreme Court rules school segregation illegal in Brown vs. Board of Education

1955  
Supreme Court orders school desegregation

Rosa Parks becomes a Civil Rights hero

1957  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. named chairman of Southern Christian Leadership Conference

President Dwight Eisenhower orders National Guard to protect Black students, at Little Rock, Arkansas high school

Civil Rights Act of 1957

1960  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. leads sit-ins in Atlanta, Georgia

1962  
President John F. Kennedy bans segregation in federally funded housing  
Dr. King writes famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"  
March on Washington

1961  
Freedom Riders formed  
Dr. King leads protests in Albany, Georgia

1964  
24th Amendment ends poll tax  
Malcolm X founds Afro-American Unity  
Civil Rights Act of 1964 passed

1945

1950

1950  
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights created

1955

1960

1965

1965  
Malcolm X assassinated

Civil Rights Act of 1968

1968  
Dr. King assassinated in Memphis, TN





▲ An African American woman raises funds for poor black children in Washington.



▲ Demonstrators at Franklin High School organize a sit-in to protest for equal opportunity and the end of prejudice in Washington.



▲ During the years in which the covenant system was legal urban schools were often segregated because of divided neighborhoods, as demonstrated by this classroom.

## CIVIL RIGHTS IN WASHINGTON

The national Civil Rights Movement had a profound impact upon Washington. While discrimination was not as widespread or severe in the state, it did exist. The covenant real estate system effectively created segregation by forcing African Americans and other minority groups to live in specific and confined areas of major cities. The Supreme Court had specifically ruled that these agreements were illegal in 1948, yet they still existed in Washington. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 also made them illegal, but they persisted and were even endorsed by Seattle voters in 1964 through the passage of a proposition endorsing the use of covenants.

One of the effects of covenants was to essentially segregate schools. Schools were strategically located within neighborhoods in order to service the greatest number of students possible. Since neighborhoods in Washington's urban centers, especially in Seattle, were segregated, the schools were also segregated, which was unconstitutional. African Americans in Washington decided to protest these conditions.

On July 1, 1963, a group of African Americans and white supporters organized a sit-in at the Seattle mayor's office. **Sit-ins** were a classic non-violent technique used by Civil Rights leaders. People involved in a sit-in, simply sat at a specific location. They usually had fliers and posters proclaiming their positions, and were typically accompanied by public speakers. Sit-ins were designed to bring public attention to problems considered important by the protestors. The July 1st sit-in was the first of many throughout the state.

Between 1963 and 1968, African American activists and white sympathizers organized numerous campaigns to end racial discrimination in Washington. In 1967, **Stokely Carmichael**, a prominent Civil Rights leader and chairman of the national **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)**, visited Washington to encourage efforts in the state. In March 1968, a large sit-in was conducted at Garfield High School. The efforts of local Civil Rights leaders paid off with the repeal of the covenant system in Seattle in April 1968.

African Americans were not the only minority group to protest conditions in Washington. American Indians also began a campaign for fair and equal treatment in the late 1950s and 1960s. As a result of the Indian New Deal, conditions on Indian reservations had improved, but only marginally, throughout the state. However, Indian treaties were continually violated within Washington State. Particularly upsetting to Indians was the violation of their fishing rights.

Fishing was not only a major economic activity for Indian tribes but also part of their cultural heritage and traditions. Nearly every treaty signed between Washington Territorial negotiators and local Indians guaranteed fishing

rights. Still, the state often did not honor these agreements and frequently subjected tribes to Washington fishing laws and regulations, from which the treaties guaranteed exemption. Indian tribes throughout Washington protested any attempt by local and state governments to regulate native fishing practices. The most famous of these protests occurred in 1964 by the Puyallup Indians. This protest was attended by many Indians and whites.

## THE VIETNAM WAR

The Civil Rights Movement was not the only contentious national social issue to affect Washington. In 1964, the United States officially entered into military operations in Vietnam. The **Vietnam War** was an extension of the Cold War. Vietnam had been a French colony called Indochina. When the French pulled out in 1954, it looked as if communists, who controlled the northern part of the country, would take control of the entire country. To prevent such an occurrence, the United States sent military advisors and offered support to a democratic government. Through the efforts of the United States, Vietnam was divided into two countries, communist North Vietnam and democratic South Vietnam. The United States provided aid to South Vietnam to prevent conquest by North Vietnam and the expansion of communism.

Initial support for South Vietnam was conducted under the Eisenhower Administration. President John F. Kennedy, who was elected in 1960, offered even more assistance to South Vietnam. Following alleged North Vietnamese attacks on American ships in the Gulf of Tonkin, the United States committed the military to protecting South Vietnam in August 1964.

At first, public support for the Vietnam War was quite high. But there was always a vocal opposition to the conflict. The experiences of the Korean War, Cold War tensions, fears of nuclear conflict, a growing distrust of public figures, and real concerns about domestic social problems, led many to question the validity of the conflict. This feeling only intensified and spread as the United States escalated activities in Vietnam. Making the war even more unpopular was the military draft that compelled young American men to serve in the Armed Forces. Many were sent to Vietnam.

Some of the earliest vocal opposition to the war occurred in Washington, particularly in Seattle. Protesters, many of them students and faculty at the University of Washington, organized the first protest against the war on October 16, 1965 in downtown Seattle. Protests continued in Western Washington for the next several years. The early efforts by opponents of the Vietnam War culminated in a large protest of 2,000 individuals on April 26, 1968.



▲ A photograph of Celilo Falls as it appeared before The Dalles Dam construction. The loss of fishing at Celilo Falls was a major blow to Indian culture and tradition in Washington.



▲ Demonstrators protest American involvement in Vietnam. Many Americans were skeptical about American military actions in the country.



## CONTRASTING WEST AND EAST

The Civil Rights and anti-war protest movements of the late 1950s and early 1960s were primarily located in Western Washington, especially in the cities of the Puget Sound. In these urban areas, politics were more liberal and radical than in Eastern Washington where ethnic and racial minorities were less common. Consequently, politics in Washington remained conservative.

The population east of the mountains was overwhelmingly white. Moreover, Spokane was the only large and sizable city in the region, meaning that most people lived in small towns and rural communities. These communities were less involved in the Civil Rights movement or the anti-war campaigns. This is not to suggest that these movements had no impact on people in Eastern Washington, but they rarely experienced them directly. Most of their experience with these movements came from newspapers, radio programs, or television reports.

Thus, life in Eastern Washington revolved around a different rhythm than the more urban Western Washington. Agriculture was the most important industry and defined much of the social and political outlooks of people in Eastern Washington. In particular, the 1950s and 1960s saw the rapid expansion of the fruit industry in Washington.

This expansion was the result of irrigation projects, including the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project, as well as improvements in trees and pesticides. All these transformations allowed fruit farming to better flourish in Washington. However, fruit farming is more labor intensive than dryland or field crops. Mechanization was, and still is, fairly rare in orchards. As a result, Eastern Washington needed a constant supply of workers. Initially, these workers were the **Okie** migrants and their descendants who continued to travel the West Coast harvesting crops.

Eventually more Okies began to stay permanently in Eastern Washington and some even became farm owners themselves. With more Okies remaining in the state, a new source of workers was needed. Many farmers turned to workers from Mexico. These workers were a legacy of the **bracero program** that the federal government sponsored during World War II. As the 1960s and 1970s progressed, Mexican farm labor and immigrants became an important part of Eastern Washington's economy and society.

Fruit was not the only new crop to spread to Eastern Washington as a result of the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project, vegetables and other field crops expanded as well. Vegetables grow well in the fertile soils of Eastern Washington. With the ample supplies of water provided by irrigation programs, vegetable cultivation flourished in Eastern Washington. Among the most important crops were corn, potatoes, and peas.

Sugar beets were another crop that benefited enormously from the expansion of irrigation in Eastern Washington. Sugar beets are refined into sugar and have accounted for about 40 percent of all global sugar in the 20th century. Sugar beets were grown in Western Washington during the early 20th century. Eastern Washington had the perfect soils to grow sugar beets, but inadequate water supplies. Sugar beets require enormous amounts of water to prevent wilting in heat.

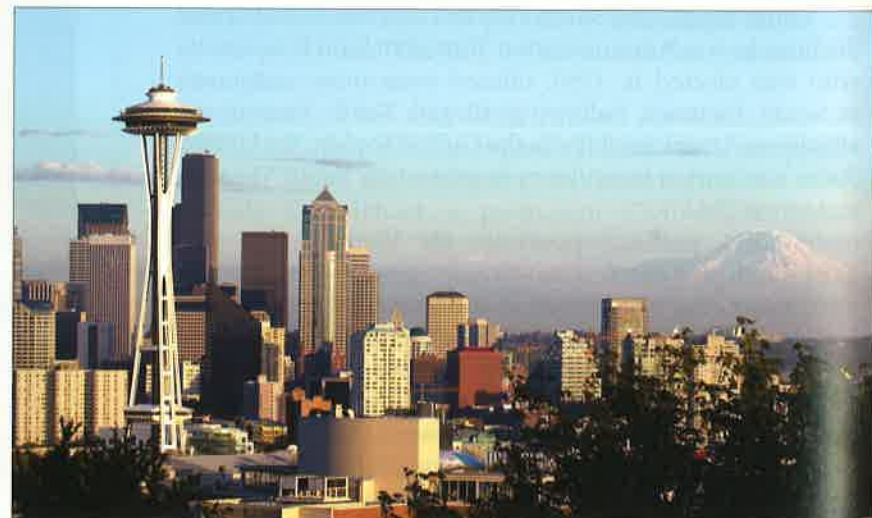
With the arrival of irrigation, sugar beet production in Eastern Washington soared. Approximately 12,500 acres of sugar beets were cultivated throughout the region in the 1950s and 1960s. To process the sugar beet, U & I Sugar, a Utah company, built a plant at Moses Lake. The Moses Lake plant was one of the largest producers of sugar in the United States. Sugar beet farming remained a profitable agriculture product until foreign competition drove down prices in the 1970s.

### FOCUS ON

## Seattle World's Fair '62



▲ The Seattle Space Needle was specially designed for the Seattle World's Fair in 1962.



One of the most ambitious projects in Washington was the Seattle World's Fair "Century 21." This highly successful World's Fair in 1962 attracted more than ten million visitors from April to October. The World's Fair site included the Seattle Center, the Opera House, the Pacific Science Center, the Seattle Coliseum (presently Key Arena), the Seattle Art Museum, and many more permanent structures. The ever prominent Seattle Space Needle was a unique architectural design with a height of 605 feet and a revolving restaurant. The Seattle Center also hosted the King Tut Exhibit in 1978 and the China Exhibit in 1984. Visitors to these exhibits appreciated the rare opportunity to view the beauty and skill of ancient Egyptian and Chinese craftsmen.



In 1974, Spokane organized and held the environmentally oriented Expo '74. A large area in downtown Spokane next to the Spokane River was renovated. The center for Expo '74 activities was the unique Pavilion. The exhibit site later became the Spokane Riverfront Park. The Spokane Exposition made citizens aware of the environment as well as helped promote the city.



## A NEW ERA

As the 1960s closed, Washington entered into a new era. Across the United States, social issues and political activism gripped the nation. As demonstrated earlier, Washington was no exception, possessing a vocal and politically active population. During the 1960s, these movements tended to focus on two issues, African American Civil Rights and the Vietnam War.

This trend matched what was occurring in cities and towns across the United States. However, Washington was a more diverse state than many others in America. African-Americans were just one minority group found in the region and these other groups had historically, and recently, experienced prejudice and discrimination. As Washington entered the 1970s, these other groups began to become politically active.

### Legacy of Civil Rights

By 1968, African Americans in Washington had won a major victory by ending the covenant system in Seattle. Still, African Americans and their supporters continued to fight for more equality. In particular, they wanted to end racial prejudice and discrimination in higher education and employment. Civil Rights leaders also wanted to integrate the Seattle School District which was segregated due to the covenant system that prevented a more equal distribution of racial and ethnic groups across the city.

However, the Civil Rights Movement in Washington and the United States was dealt a heavy blow on April 4, 1968 with the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Across the state people mourned King's death. On April 8, 1968, Seattle Mayor **Dorm Braman** declared a civic day of remembrance. Governor **Dan Evans**, a Republican supporter of the Civil Rights Movement, met with mourners and African American groups, expressing his condolences and promising to help keep King's legacy alive in Washington. In Spokane and Tacoma, people of all races gathered at churches to pray for King's family and to remember his works.

The Civil Rights Movement pressed forward after the death of King. It was conducted not only by people within the state but from outside as well. Groups like the **NAACP** and the **Black Panthers** came to Washington to assist locals in demonstrations and protests. In 1972, activists won another victory with the announcement of the Seattle School District's intent to begin a busing program. Busing was a common practice throughout the United States after the Supreme Court ordered the integration of the schools. Busing involved the

integration of schools by taking children from African American neighborhoods and transporting them to schools in traditionally white districts. Through such a program schools became integrated. The busing policy remained a feature of Seattle School District until 1999.

### American Indians

As already mentioned in the chapter, the Civil Rights Movement also inspired American Indians to protest conditions on reservations and the failure of states and the federal government to uphold treaty obligations. This was a national movement involving Indians from tribes throughout the country.

Like African Americans, Indians formed groups to press their cause, such as the **United Indian People's Council** and the **American Indian Movement**. In Washington, the primary goal of Indians was to reclaim lost lands, to free themselves from state fishing regulations, and to instill a sense of pride in native cultures and traditions across the state. Like African Americans, Indians pursued their agenda through a combination of court cases and public demonstrations.

In 1970, the United Indian People's Council staged a protest at Fort Lawton in Seattle. **Fort Lawton** was a decommissioned military base that was in the process of becoming a park. According to Indian treaties signed in the 1850s, Puget Sound Indians were guaranteed access to surplus military lands and bases. The Indians at Fort Lawton were attempting to enforce this claim. After many demonstrations and arrests, a compromise was reached.

The government turned Fort Lawton into a park, called Discovery Park, but created an Indian cultural center on its grounds to be run by the United Indian People's Council. While Fort Lawton was a substantial victory for Indian groups, their largest victory came in 1974 when Federal Judge **George Boldt** ruled that half of all the fish caught in Washington water belonged to the state's Indians. Known as the "**Boldt Decision**," it impacted not only Indians in the state, but the commercial fishing industry as well.

Prior to the Boldt decision, Indians were subjected to state fishing regulations, which they felt were unfair since Indians had made agreements with the federal government and not Washington State to retain their fishing rights. These state regulations often prevented Indians from fishing at certain times of the year or at traditional fishing sites. Indians protested the regulations to the federal government, which agreed and sided with the Indians. In 1970, the United States Department of Justice filed a lawsuit in federal court on behalf of the Indians. This lawsuit resulted in the "Boldt Decision" of 1974 that was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1979.



▲ A group of Mexican Americans demonstrates against the Vietnam War. The group wanted the government to refocus its attentions on domestic problems rather than a foreign war.

### Other Activist Groups

African Americans and Indians were the most politically vocal activist movements in the late 1960s and 1970s, yet other groups were involved as well. Mexican Americans, often referred to as **Chicanos**, also became politically active. In 1968, a group of Mexican Americans at the University of Washington formed the **United Mexican American Students**, later known as **MEChA**. The group was active in Seattle and the Yakima Valley. They organized public information campaigns, marched with Civil Rights demonstrators, and participated in agricultural strikes to increase wages for Mexican workers.

Asian Americans also formed politically motivated groups to fight discrimination. The same conditions that confronted Washington's African Americans had profound consequences for Asian Americans as well. Covenants, school segregation, employment discrimination, and access to higher education were all issues that Asian American groups faced. They did so by forming political organizations and student groups modeled on those formed by African Americans. These Asian American groups went on to participate in Civil Rights campaigns as well as running their own independent forums.

Another prominent group to also become politically vocal and active in Washington, and the United States, was the **Women's Liberation Movement**. The Women's Liberation Movement was a group of female

organizations that worked to provide women with more social and economic freedom. They wanted to empower women to work outside the home, pursue higher education, become political leaders, and attain equality with their male counterparts. At the national level, women achieved a major victory with the passage of **Title IX**, that federally outlawed gender discrimination and mandated that equal access and opportunities be afforded to women. In Washington, the newfound prominence of women was exemplified by the 1976 election of the first female governor, **Dixy Lee Ray**.

In addition to the expansion of racial and ethnic groups battling for equality, the protest against the Vietnam War continued. By 1968, the Vietnam conflict had escalated. While American forces were winning significant military victories, they were incurring substantial casualties and the American public began to despair of ever attaining victory. As the years passed, public sentiment gradually turned against the conflict.

In Washington, this change of attitude resulted in even more protests. In 1969, a massive protest against the war was conducted in downtown Seattle. Between May 1 and May 5, 1970, protesters launched a widespread public demonstration across Seattle that included vandalizing Army and Air Force facilities on the University of Washington campus and closing down I-5 by marching on the interstate through downtown Seattle.



IMAGES OF THE TIME

The Civil Rights Movement in Washington was not as large or widespread as in the American South. Nonetheless, the Washington Civil Rights Movement was very important and had a profound impact upon the state. At the heart of the Washington movement was the abolishment of the covenant system that legally prevented African Americans and other racial minorities from moving into certain neighborhoods. Once the covenant system was abolished in 1968, African Americans focused on achieving equal rights and opportunities in education, employment, and government programs.

*"If an American, because his skin is dark, cannot eat lunch in a restaurant open to the public; if he cannot send his children to the best public school available; if he cannot vote for the public officials who represent him; if, in short, he cannot enjoy the full and free life which all of us want, then who among us would be content to have the color of his skin changed and stand in his place? Who among us would then be content with the counsels of patience and delay? One hundred years of delay have passed since President Lincoln freed the slaves, yet their heirs, their grandsons, are not fully free. They are not yet freed from the bonds of social and economic oppression. And this nation, for all its hopes and all its boasts, will not be fully free until all its citizens are free."*

— President John F. Kennedy

# CIVIL RIGHTS

## Protests in Washington State

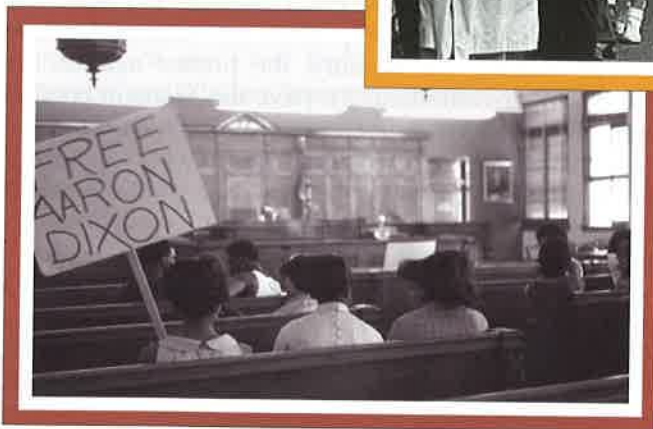


▲ A demonstration in support of Civil Rights organized by the NAACP in Seattle.

*"As citizens of Seattle and members of the Central District Youth Club, we feel humiliated by the slow process of the City of Seattle to adopt open housing. We are past the stage of patience, we also are past the stage of committees and sub committees. We want open housing today."*

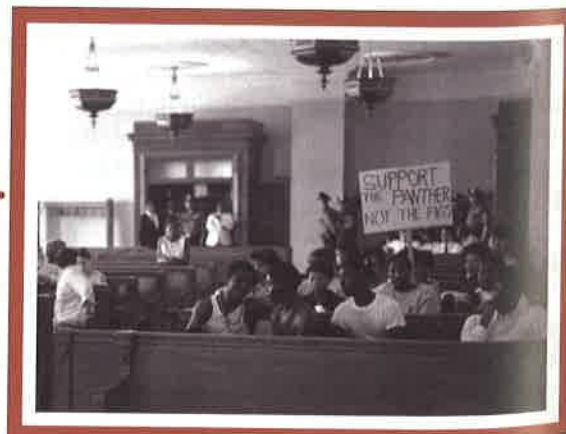
— Seattle demonstration of approximately 300 African Americans and whites at City Hall

1968

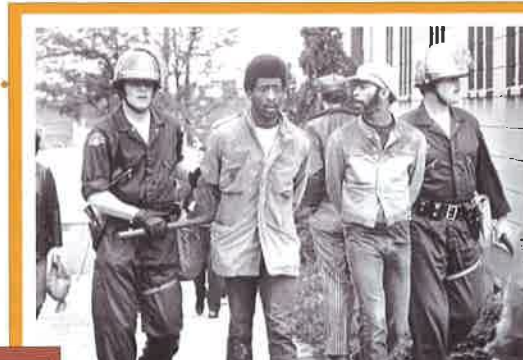


▲ African Americans protest the arrest of Franklin High School students Aaron Dixon, Larry Gossett, and Carl Miller for a sit-in.

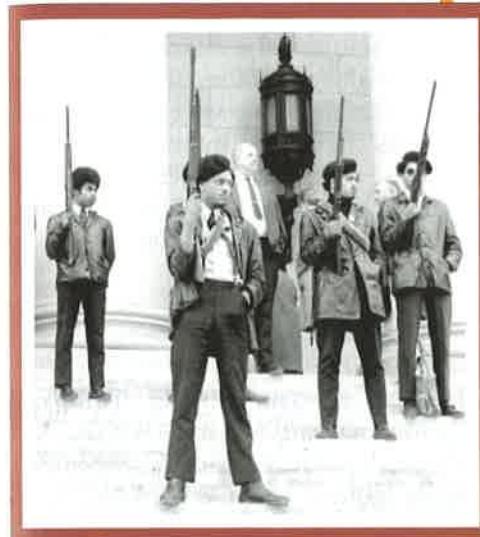
More protestors profess their support for Aaron Dixon, Larry Gossett, and Carl Miller.



The United Construction Workers Association demonstrates against racial inequality in Seattle area business practices in 1969.



1969



▲ The Black Panthers, an African American organization, protest on the steps of the Capitol Building in Olympia.

Tyree Scott leads the United Construction Workers Association demonstration.



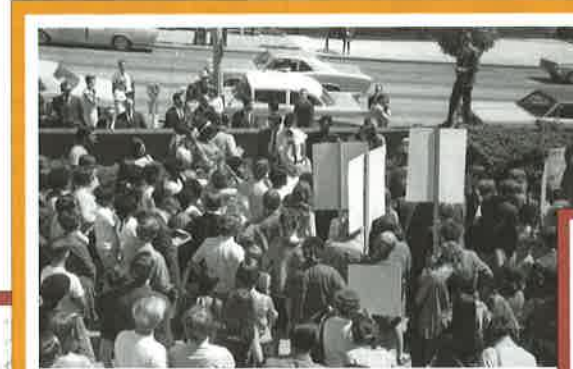
*"No person or persons of Asiatic, African, or Negro blood, lineage or extraction shall be permitted to occupy a portion of said property, or any building thereon, except domestic servant or servants may be actually and in good faith employed by white occupants of said premises."*

— Seattle realtors, Queen Anne Park, Laguna Vista, Rayville, Carleton Park, 1947

*"No person of other than the Caucasian race shall use or occupy any building or lot except as servants domesticated with any owner or tenant."*

— Seattle realtors, Laurelhurst, Victory Heights, Green Lake Circle, 1947

More protests to support the arrested students



▲ Protests outside of a Seattle courthouse in support of Franklin High School students.

White and African American demonstrators alike expressed their solidarity with the arrested Franklin High School students.







▲ Above is the Boeing 747-300. The 747 was the first large commercial passenger jet in the world and could carry over 500 passengers.



▲ As a result of the 747 program in the 1970s, Boeing was able to create the 777 program in the 1980s.



▲ A Boeing 747 in flight.

## ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

Following World War II, Washington's economy became strongly tied to the national economy. As a result, the economy of Washington flourished throughout most of the 1950s and 1960s. These two decades were two of the most prosperous and economically successful in the history of the United States. Washington was part of this economic prosperity. The economy of Washington was assisted by continued strength in most traditional economic industries, as well as the expansion of agriculture, transportation, trade, and airplane manufacturing. However, the success of the 1950s and 1960s was challenged by three economic recessions between 1968 and 1979. These economic depression periods, from 1968 to 1971, 1973 to 1974, and 1979 to 1983, significantly impacted Washington.

### Boeing

Following World War II, **The Boeing Company** continued to manufacture aircraft for the military. But Boeing also introduced other product lines. These included hydrofoils, jet fighters, guided missile systems, and products for the United States active space program. Boeing developed booster rockets for the Saturn launch vehicles and even land rovers for Apollo moon missions.

One of the largest areas of growth for Boeing was in the design and production of passenger airplanes. The first of these was the 707, but it was followed by the Boeing 727 (1963) and Boeing 737 (1969). Boeing was booming with the success of its commercial jets. Boeing expanded its workforce to 110,000 workers in the Seattle area and expanded their facilities. Boeing purchased Paine Field near Everett and constructed a building covering 63 acres under one roof. The new long-range wide body Boeing 747 would be assembled there. With production and assembly plants located in Seattle, Renton, Kent, Auburn, and Everett, Boeing workers lived in King, Snohomish, Pierce and Kitsap counties. These workers commuted daily from nearby residential suburbs. Boeing remained the dominant business in the Puget Sound region. Boeing's strong economic growth resulted in a robust economy in Western Washington.

Times changed in 1968 when the national economy hit a recession and Boeing suffered. Between 1969 and 1971, Boeing did not sell a single commercial aircraft. Boeing also lost important government and military contracts during the same period. Immediately, Boeing reduced its 110,000 plus Seattle workforce down to only 36,000. The end result was the lay off of 74,000 highly paid and skilled Boeing engineers and machinists. These layoffs had a frightful affect on the economy and reputation of Seattle and the Puget Sound area. Seattle, King County, the Puget Sound area, and Washington State had the highest unemployment rates since the darkest years of the Great Depression.

Fortunately, Boeing was able to recover in 1972, by diversifying its product emphasis away from government and military contracts to commercial passenger aircraft. Boeing's popular 707, 727, and 737 sold well in the United States and Europe. However, the long-range wide body Boeing 747 became a super star worldwide. As Boeing adapted, so too did many of its previous employees. Many of those 74,000 unemployed Boeing workers stayed in the Seattle area. These highly skilled and intelligent individuals developed new businesses with an emphasis on high technology and computer related industries.

### Energy

Energy became a major concern both in Washington and the United States during the 1970s. Due to conflicts in the Middle East, many oil producing countries participated in an oil embargo against the United States from 1973-1974. The oil embargo caused gas prices to soar, which in turn ignited inflation and hurt economic growth. As a result Washington and the country plunged into another recession.

The oil embargo caused policy makers to consider alternative fuel sources. One possibility was nuclear energy. Washington was considered a prime location for producing nuclear energy because Hanford already possessed nuclear enrichment capabilities. As a result, the **Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS)** was formed. The Washington Public Power Supply System was a consortium, or large group, of 88 public utility districts. It was given authorization and approval to simultaneously plan, construct, and market electricity generated by five nuclear power plants. Three nuclear power plants were constructed on the Hanford Reservation and two at Satsop located between Olympia and Aberdeen. Construction on these reactors began in 1972 and expanded throughout the 1970s.

### RISE OF ENVIRONMENTALISM

Beginning in the 1970s, Washington's economy faced challenges not only from national economic downturns, but the emergence of a strong environmental and conservationist movement. Throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, there was a growing national movement to protect the natural environment. This movement was motivated by increased concerns about pollution, deforestation, and endangered animals. The environmental movement had strong support in Washington. Washington was one of the first places

in the country to celebrate Earth Day, in 1971, and the **Spokane Expo** of 1974 had a strong environmental theme. In addition, Washington possessed politicians, particularly Republican Governor Dan Evans (1965-1977) and Democratic Senators Warren Magnusson (1945-1981) and Henry Jackson (1953-1983) that were strong protectors of the environment.

As a consequence of supportive politicians and a receptive population, Washington passed several environmental reforms. In 1970, Washington became the first state to create a **Department of Ecology**. The Department of Ecology helped monitor land use, pollution, water quality, animal habitats, wildlife populations, and much more. The Department of Ecology also helped to establish environmental guidelines for the state. In 1976, the Washington legislature helped pass a coastal shoreline protection program that enacted guidelines designed to protect beaches, harbors, and coastal environments from pollution and overdevelopment. The following year, in 1977, Senator Warren Magnusson sponsored an amendment to a bill that banned oil supertankers from docking in Puget Sound.

The environmental reforms enacted in Washington had a profound effect on the economy. Regulations from the Department of Ecology and subsequent acts limited certain types of development and industries. Moreover, natural resource industries, like fishing, logging, and mining, were forced to work under new regulations. Companies in these industries had to adapt business practices to meet Washington's new environmental standards. The regulations also affected international trade. Seattle, Everett, and Tacoma were no longer viable ports for oil companies and shippers. Consequently, oil refining in the Puget Sound was less of an option for the oil companies.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

The events of the period following World War II shaped contemporary Washington in the decades to come. The Cold War had a profound impact upon Washington's society and economy. The construction of highways, expansion of Boeing, creation of the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project, and the development of environmental regulations all defined the modern state economy. Moreover, the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement and reforms has molded Washington society. Finally, the cultural, social, and economic differences between Eastern and Western Washington solidified during this period.