The Simple AP® US History Unit 8 Cheat Sheet

8.2 & 8.7 Cold War Foreign Policy

Containment

Cold War: U.S. vs Soviet Union; arms race and proxy wars, no direct fighting (1947–91).
Containment: stop communism from spreading.

Policy	Year
Truman Doctrine	1947
Marshall Plan	1948
Berlin Airlift	1948
NATO	1949

1949: Soviets get the atomic bomb; China turns communist → fear of communism grows.

Hot Spots

Korean War (1950–53): ends in a stalemate.
Space race: Sputnik (1957) → NASA and more science funding (NDEA); moon landing (1969).
Cuban Missile Crisis (1962): closest to nuclear war → hotline, Test Ban Treaty (1963).
Eisenhower warns of the military-industrial complex in his 1961 farewell speech.

Détente

Nixon visits China; arms limits with the USSR.
1979: Soviets invade Afghanistan → tensions return (U.S. boycotts 1980 Olympics).
Camp David Accords (Carter, 1978): Egypt–Israel peace deal; Israel returns Sinai.

⚠ Containment meant stopping the spread, not ending communism (vs. rollback).

✓ CCOT: trace containment from the Truman Doctrine to Korea, Vietnam and 1970s détente.

8.3 The Red Scare

Fear at Home

Second Red Scare: fear of communist spies in the U.S. government, schools and Hollywood
Loyalty checks for federal workers.
HUAC investigates Hollywood → **blacklists**.
Hollywood Ten jailed for refusing to answer HUAC's questions about communism (1947).

Spy Cases

Case	Outcome
Alger Hiss	Jailed for perjury
Rosenbergs	Executed (1953)
Klaus Fuchs	Confessed spying

McCarthyism

Joseph McCarthy (1950): claims communists in the State Dept.; accuses many with little proof.
Army-McCarthy hearings (1954, televised) → public turns on him; Senate censures him.
McCarran Act (1950): communists must register.

Effects

Fear and conformity; people afraid to speak out.
The Crucible (Arthur Miller, 1953) compares the communist hunt to the Salem witch trials.
"Under God" added to the Pledge (1954).
Gay federal workers fired as "security risks."
Teachers had to sign loyalty oaths.

⚠ Some spying was real (Rosenbergs, Fuchs), but most of McCarthy's claims were false.

✓ Compare with the First Red Scare (1919–20).

8.4–8.5 Postwar Economy & Culture

Boom Years

Prosperity: wages rise; families buy cars, TVs, appliances; U.S. = world's richest nation.
GI Bill: college and home loans for veterans.
Baby boom (1946–64): millions of new children.
Suburbs grow (Levittown: mass-built homes); **redlining** and covenants keep Black families out.
Highways (1956) → car culture.
Sun Belt: people move South and West.
Defense spending creates jobs and new technology in the South and West.
Unions stay strong; AFL and CIO merge (1955).

Culture

Conformity: TV shows the ideal suburban family.
Women expected to stay home, though more and more women hold jobs by 1960.
Religion grows; linked to anti-communism.

Critics	Message
Beat writers	Reject conformity
Rock 'n' roll	Youth rebellion
The Other America	Hidden poverty

White flight: cities lose people and tax money.
Urban renewal tears down poor neighborhoods.
Interstate highways helped suburbs grow and cities shrink (1956 Interstate Highway Act).
Rural poor and many Latino families also left out.

⚠ Not everyone shared in the boom.

✓ Suburbs + highways + GI Bill → white middle class grows vs. urban decline and poverty.

8.6 & 8.10 African American Civil Rights

Early Steps

Military desegregated (Truman, 1948).
Brown v. Board (1954): school segregation unconstitutional; overturns Plessy.
Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955): Rosa Parks arrested; MLK leads 381-day boycott.
Little Rock Nine (1957): Eisenhower sends troops to protect Black students in Arkansas.

1960s

Event	Year
Sit-ins	1960
Freedom Rides	1961
March on Washington	1963
Civil Rights Act	1964
Voting Rights Act	1965
Selma march	1965

Nonviolence: MLK, SCLC, SNCC; TV images (Birmingham 1963) build national support.
24th Amendment: bans poll taxes.
Voting Rights Act ends literacy tests.

Divisions

Malcolm X and **Black Power**: pride and self-defense (Carmichael, Black Panthers).
Riots in cities; MLK killed (1968).
Kerner Report (1968): blames white racism, warns of "two societies, separate and unequal."

⚠ Activists disagreed on goals and methods.

✓ Protest + media + federal laws → change.

8.8 The Vietnam War

Escalation

Domino theory: if Vietnam falls, others will too.
Background: Vietnam split in 1954; U.S. backs the South (Diem) after the French defeat.
Gulf of Tonkin (1964): Congress gives LBJ war power → bombing and ground troops.
By 1968: about 500,000 U.S. troops.
Tet Offensive (1968): shocks Americans; public support drops; "credibility gap" grows.
LBJ decides not to seek reelection (1968).

Opposition

Antiwar protests on campuses and in cities.
Kent State (1970): 4 students killed.
Pentagon Papers: government lied about the war.
1968: MLK and RFK killed; chaos at the Democratic convention in Chicago.

Ending

Step	Year
Vietnamization	1969
Peace accords	1973
Saigon falls	1975

War Powers Act (1973) limits the president.
Costs: about 58,000 Americans and millions of Vietnamese died; public trust falls.
Nixon wins with the "silent majority."

⚠ Tet was a military loss for the North but turned U.S. public opinion against the war.

✓ Vietnam → Americans distrust government.

8.9 The Great Society & Liberalism

Kennedy

JFK: space race, Peace Corps; killed in 1963.
Bay of Pigs (1961): failed invasion of Cuba.

LBJ's Great Society

Goal: end poverty and racial injustice.

Program	Purpose
War on Poverty	Jobs, Head Start
Civil Rights Act	Ends segregation
Medicare/Medicaid	Health care
Education Act	School funding
Immigration Act	Ends quotas

Poverty drops, but Vietnam drains money.
Immigration Act (1965): more immigrants from Asia and Latin America (ends 1920s quotas).

Warren Court

Gideon (1963): free lawyer for poor criminal defendants. **Miranda** (1966): rights read at arrest.
Brown (1954): Warren Court's first landmark.
No school prayer; right to privacy.

Backlash

Conservatives oppose big government.
Goldwater (1964) loses but starts a movement.
Critics: some said too small, others too costly.

⚠ The Great Society was the peak of liberal reform; Vietnam and backlash limited it.

✓ New Deal → Great Society → Reagan.

8.11–8.12 Rights Expand & Youth Culture

Other Movements

Group	Leaders
Women	Betty Friedan, NOW
Latino	César Chávez
Native American	AIM
Gay rights	Stonewall (1969)

Feminism: equal pay, Title IX, Roe v. Wade.
The Feminine Mystique (Betty Friedan, 1963) sparks second-wave feminism → NOW.
ERA passed Congress but was never ratified.
Phyllis Schlafly led the fight against the ERA.
Farmworkers boycott grapes for better pay.
Red Power: activists occupy Alcatraz (1969); **AIM** occupies Wounded Knee (1973).
Chicano students walked out for better schools.

Youth Culture

New Left: students demand change.
Counterculture: hippies, rock music, Woodstock.
Free Speech Movement (Berkeley, 1964).
26th Amendment: voting age 18.
Backlash: the "silent majority."
Religious conservatives push back against the counterculture → rise of the New Right.
Title IX (1972): bans sex bias in schools → equal chances for girls in sports and programs.

⚠ These groups copied civil rights tactics.

✓ Compare two movements' goals and results.

8.13–8.15 Environment, 1970s & Strategy

Environment

Silent Spring (1962): warns about pesticides.
Earth Day and **EPA** (1970, under Nixon); Clean Air (1970) and Clean Water (1972) Acts.
Endangered Species Act (1973).
Three Mile Island (1979): nuclear accident.

The 1970s

Watergate: Nixon resigns (1974).
Oil crisis and **stagflation**: high prices, few jobs.
Factories close in the Rust Belt.
Iran hostage crisis hurts Carter.
Carter's "malaise" speech (1979) backfires.
Nixon created the EPA and opened China.
New Right grows: religious conservatives, tax revolts → helps elect Reagan in 1980.

Key Dates

Year	Event
1947	Truman Doctrine
1954	Brown v. Board
1962	Cuban Missile Crisis
1964	Civil Rights Act
1968	Tet; MLK killed
1974	Nixon resigns

Essay tip: start with WWII for context.
Complexity: rights expand while trust in government falls (Watergate, Vietnam).

⚠ Reagan's presidency is Period 9.

✓ Show liberal gains and conservative backlash.