



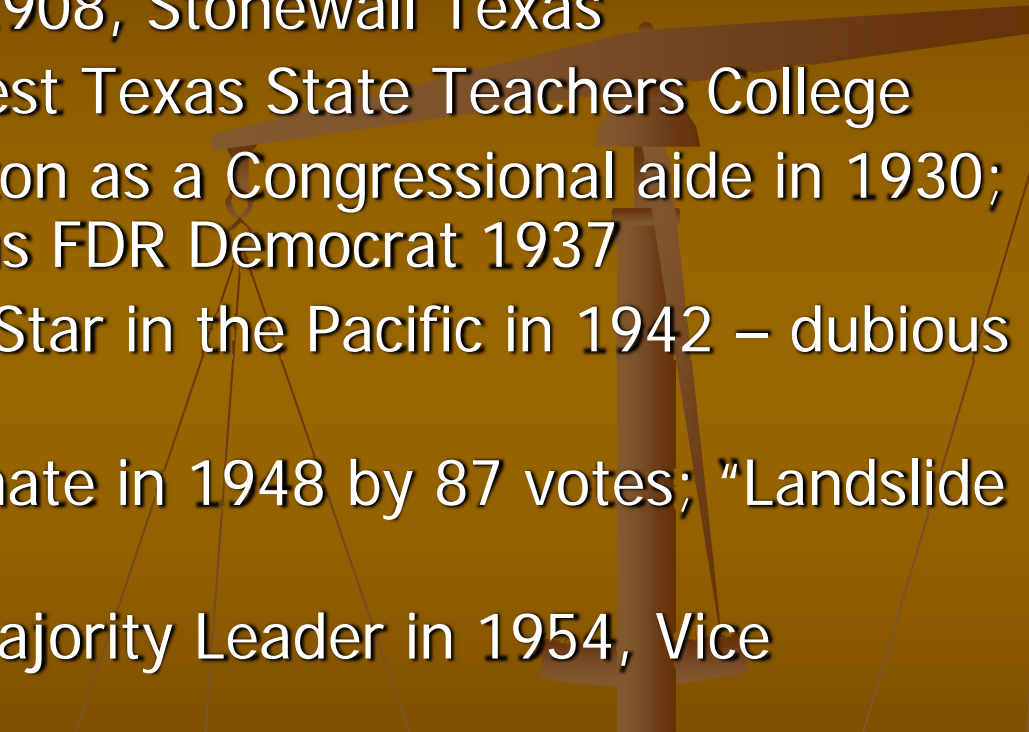
Lyndon Johnson and Vietnam

The Vietnam War and the Great
Society, 1963-1965

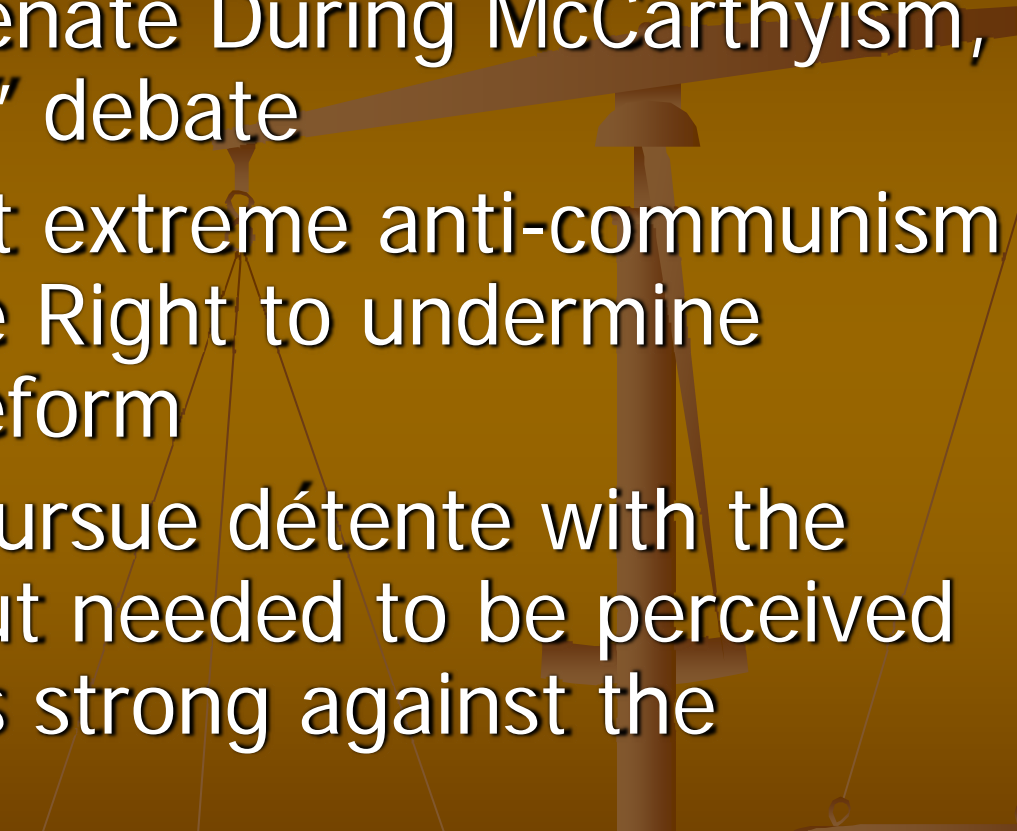
Lyndon Johnson



Lyndon Johnson

- 1.) Born August 27, 1908, Stonewall Texas
 - 2.) Attended Southwest Texas State Teachers College
 - 3.) Went to Washington as a Congressional aide in 1930; elected to Congress as FDR Democrat 1937
 - 4.) Received a Silver Star in the Pacific in 1942 – dubious circumstances
 - 5.) Elected to the Senate in 1948 by 87 votes; "Landslide Lyndon"
 - 6.) Became Senate Majority Leader in 1954, Vice President in 1960
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LBJ and the Domestic Politics of Foreign Policy

- 1.) LBJ in the Senate During McCarthyism, "who lost China" debate
 - 2.) Believed that extreme anti-communism was used by the Right to undermine needed social reform
 - 3.) Wanted to pursue détente with the Soviet Union, but needed to be perceived by Americans as strong against the communists
- 

“Let Us Continue”

- 1.) Johnson wanted to be seen as continuing Kennedy's policies – at home and abroad in conversation with Martin Luther King
 - [WhiteHouseTapes.org Transcript + Audio Clip](#)
- 2.) Political Instability – Frequent Coups
 - Johnson's early worries – talks to Fulbright
 - [WhiteHouseTapes.org Transcript + Audio Clip](#)
- 3.) Deteriorating Military Situation - Johnson Reaffirms commitment in Vietnam – talks to Shriver (disagreed with Diem's ouster)
 - [Digital Classroom Initiative : Template](#)

The Johnson Treatment

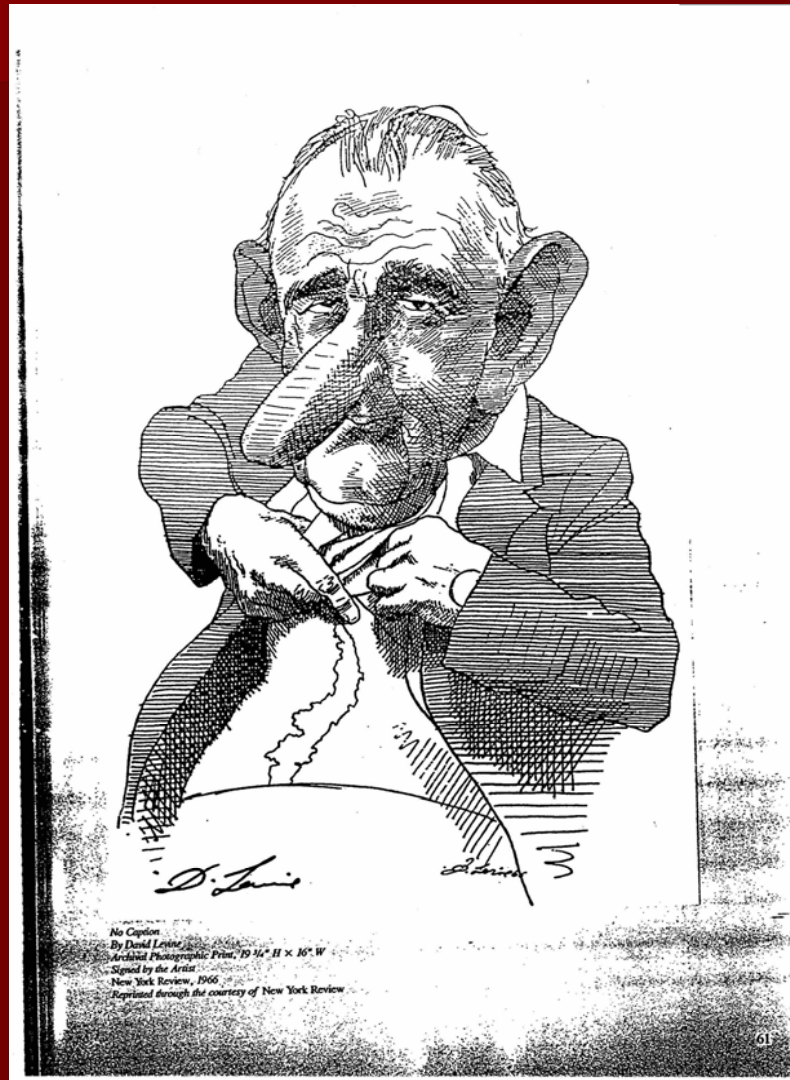
WhiteHouseTapes.org Transcript + Audio Clip



The Scar – Johnson’s “Very Human” Side



The Ugly American



Vietnam in 1964

- 1.) Political Instability – Frequent Coups
- 2.) Deteriorating Military Situation
- 3.) North Vietnamese Decision to Escalate – role of Le Duan, Le Duc Tho and the militants
- 4.) Chinese Support for “People’s War” – support for an increased insurgency vs. the Soviet Union’s “Peaceful coexistence”
- 5.) Perception of Growing Chinese involvement with Indonesia, war in Malaysia, vulnerability of Asia
- 6.) LBJ asks McNamara to explain policy, why aren’t other countries interested? [WhiteHouseTapes.org](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/1964/07/16/1964-07-16-white-house-tapes-1964-07-16)
[Transcript + Audio Clip](#)

The Johnson Treatment, Part II

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3V6anKUmu9Q>
- This is a conversation with Richard Russell in which Johnson “persuades” Russell to accept his appointment to the Warren Commission to investigate President Kennedy’s death.

Johnson's Concerns

- ▶ 1.) Great Society – ambitious program to complete the New Deal; War on Poverty; Medicare; Civil Rights; Voting Rights; Fair Housing – talking to Hubert Humphrey
[WhiteHouseTapes.org Transcript + Audio Clip](#)
- ▶ 2.) No action till election – continuity with Kennedy's policy – Republican pressures – conversation with Bundy, March 1964
[WhiteHouseTapes.org: Transcript+Audio Clip](#)
- ▶ 3.) Avoid confrontation with China – not another Korea (Conversation with Russell), but serious doubts [Digital Classroom Initiative : Template](#)
- ▶ 4.) Warnings to North Vietnam – through Canadian channels

Gulf of Tonkin



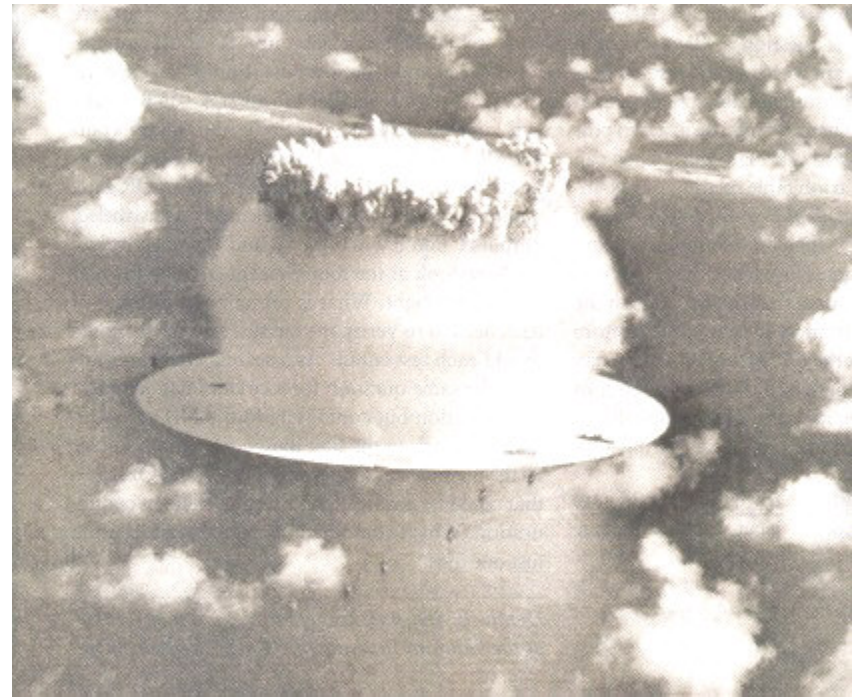
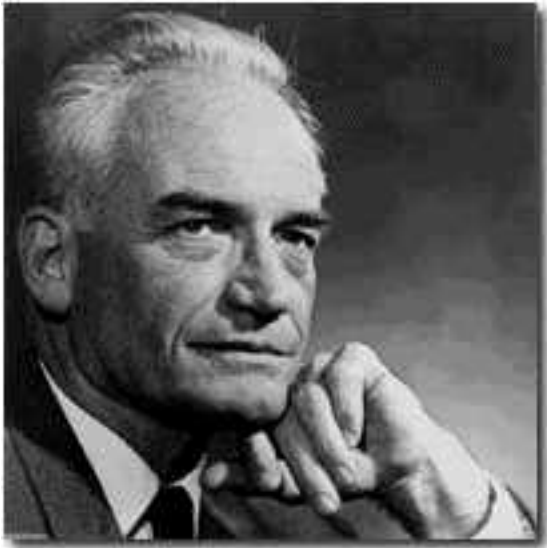
The Gulf of Tonkin Incident

- 1.) First Attack on US ships – August 2, 1964
- Connected to DeSoto missions by South Vietnamese commandos)
[WhiteHouseTapes.org Transcript + Audio Clip](#)
- 2.) Johnson issues warning, but no action – political criticism from Goldwater -
[WhiteHouseTapes.org Transcript + Audio Clip](#)
- 3.) “Attack” of August 4 – didn’t happen
- 4.) LBJ orders bombing, asks for Congressional support – “unprovoked attack” (but North Vietnamese in the South
- 5.) Gulf of Tonkin Resolution – passes 416-0 in House, 88-2 in Senate – LBJ’s anger at Humphrey
[WhiteHouseTapes.org Transcript + Audio Clip](#)
- 6.) Chaos in South Vietnam – protests against Nguyen Khanh government

(The modern day comparison)

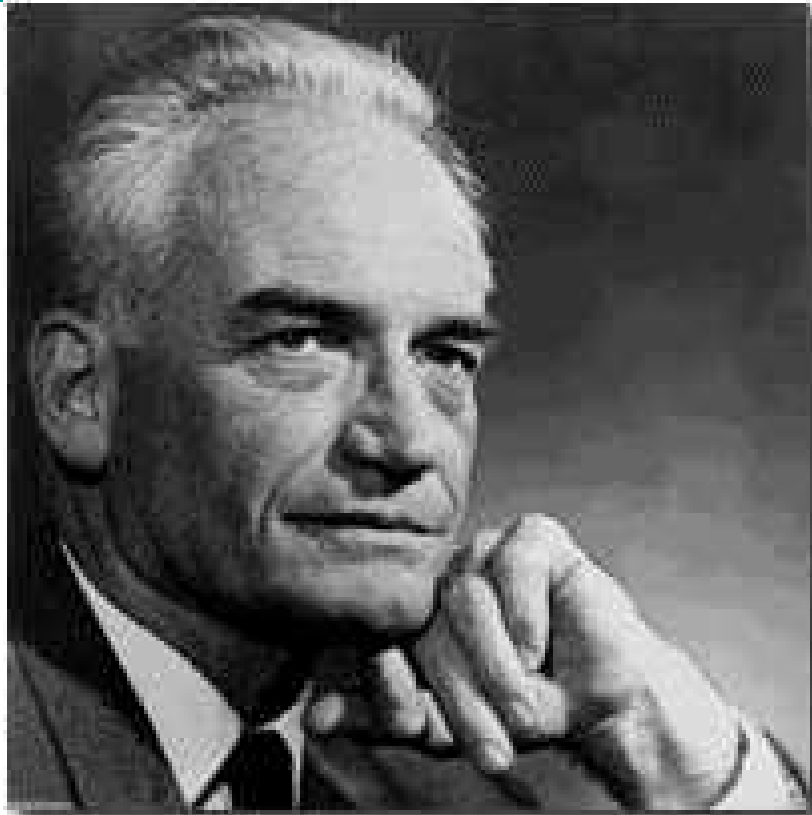


Johnson-Goldwater campaign – the Daisy ad



Goldwater as an Extremist

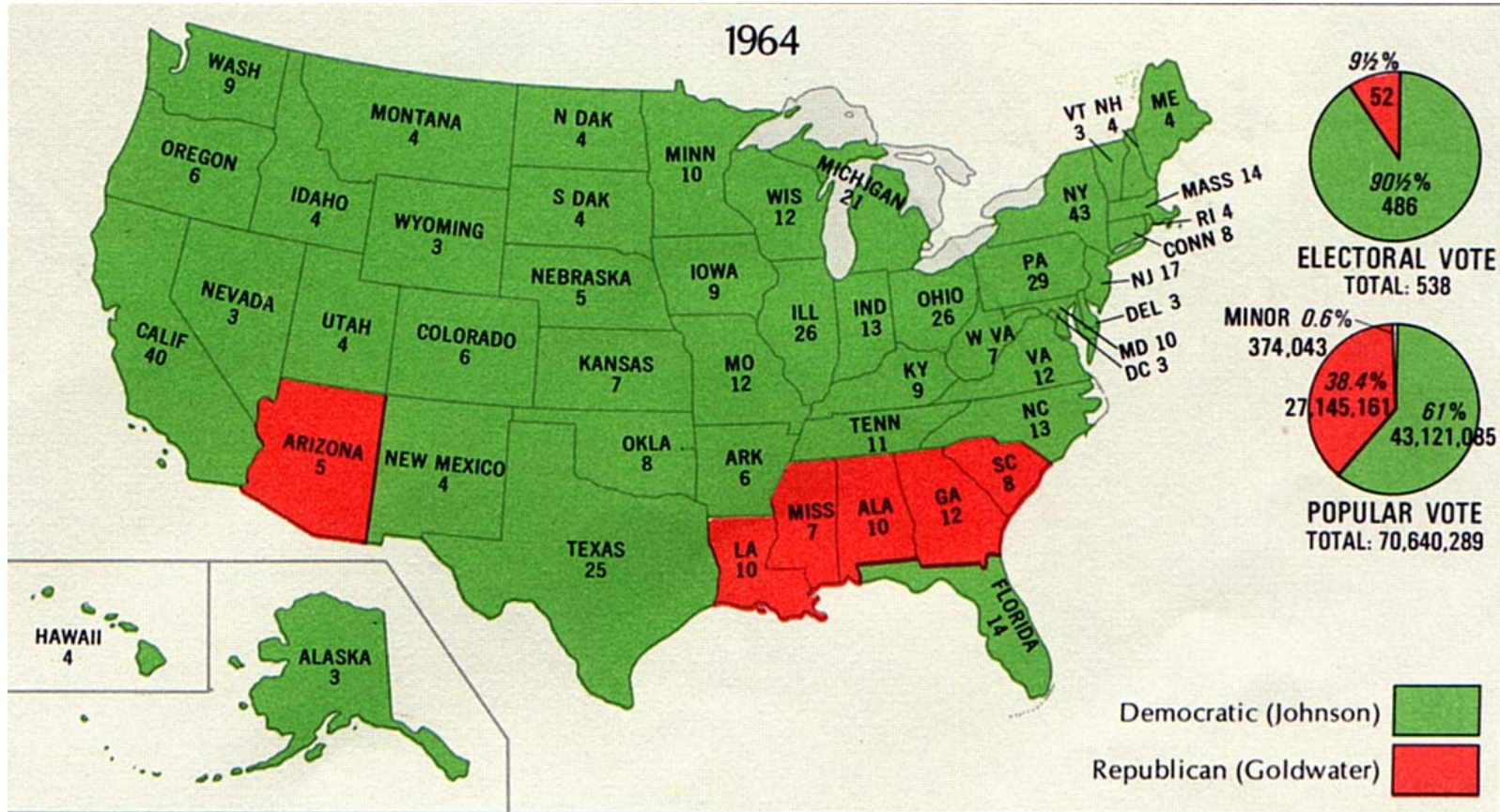
- [YouTube - Lyndon B Johnson 1964 TV Ad - LBJ Goldwater KKK](#)



Goldwater's attacks on Johnson

- [YouTube - Barry Goldwater Tells It Like It Is](#)
- <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1964>
- [YouTube - Goldwater 1964 Presidential TV Spot featuring Raymond Massey](#)

Election Results 1964



THE
GREAT
SOCIETY



Bob Taylor

No Caption
By Bob Taylor
Ink and Grease Pencil on Paper, 12 3/4" H x 10 3/4" W
Dallas Times Herald, January 13, 1965

Early 1965 - Escalation

- 1.) Hanoi launches the Binh Gia campaign – attacks through South Vietnam, Central Highlands – leading to the deterioration of conditions in South Vietnam, politically and militarily – attacks in Saigon, bombing of the Brinks Hotel, embassy -
- 2.) Plei Ku Incident, Feb – Beginning of Operation Rolling Thunder – bombing of North Vietnam – at first below 20th parallel
- 3.) Marines at Da Nang – March 1965 – Russell tells LBJ again it's the biggest mess he's ever seen
- http://web1.millercenter.org/dci/1965_0306_aint_no_daylight.html

LBJ's Johns Hopkins Speech – April 1965

- 1.) Why are we in South Vietnam?
- 2.) Commitment, containment, world order, history
- 3.) Mekong Delta – T.V.A. development

The Domestic Crisis

- 1.) The March on Selma
- 2.) LBJ proposes Voting Rights Act of 1965
- 3.) The “window of opportunity” for domestic social welfare legislation – Medicare, Aid to Education, etc.
- 4.) Outbreak of riots – Watts, 1965 [WhiteHouseTapes.org Transcript + Audio Clip](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/1965/08/16/transcript-1965-08-16)
- 5.) Riots in Los Angeles – 34 killed, 1032 injured, 3438 arrested; 1000 buildings destroyed, \$40 million damage (\$280 million in 2010 dollars)

Racial Disturbances of the 1960s



The Decisions of July 1965 – Just Enough, not More

- 1.) LBJ sends combat forces in July 1965 – immediate increase to 75,000, then more – “do we want to do it out on a limb by ourselves?”
WhiteHouseTapes.org Transcript + Audio Clip
- Republicans: LBJ talks to Gerald Ford:
http://web1.millercenter.org/dci/1965_0617_ford.html
- 2.) Avoid full mobilization – no additional taxes, no calling up National Guard, relies on draft; Why? – political implications of the draft

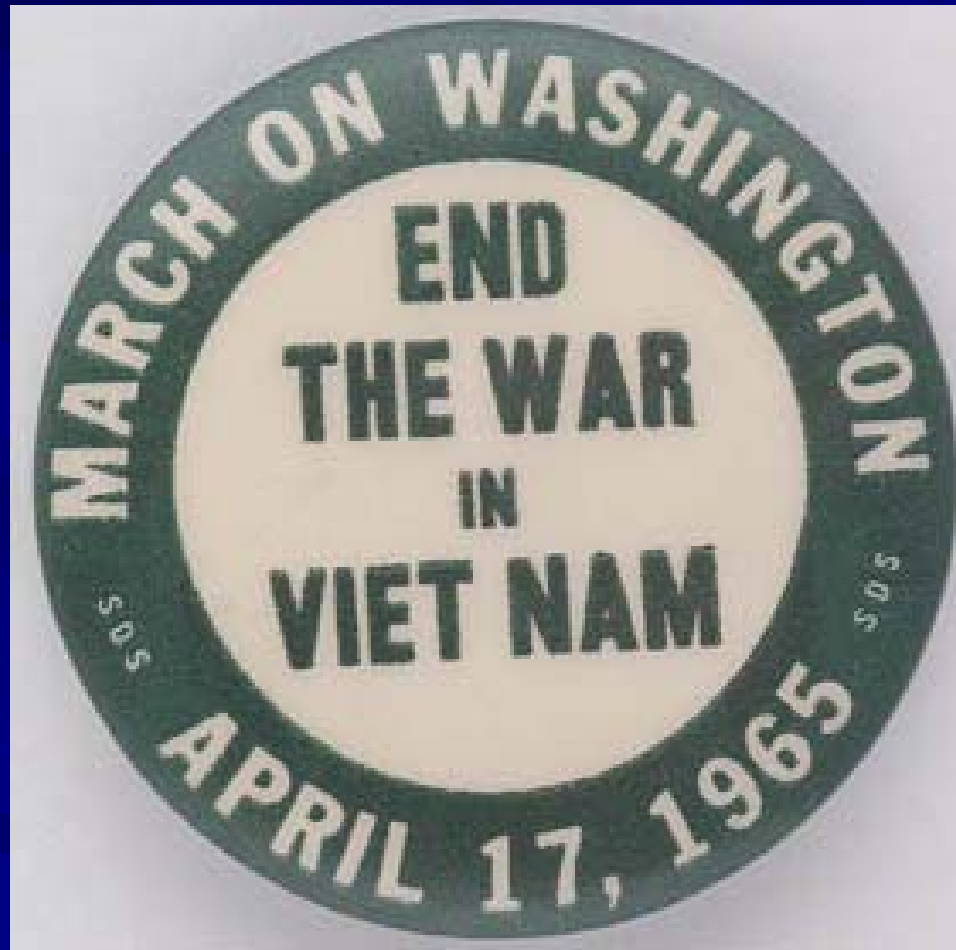
Selective Service System – The Draft

- 1.) Created in 1940; renewed during the Cold War; opposition to Universal Military Training
- 2.) Demographics – Baby Boom Effect – men eligible between 18-26 - Vietnam generation 1964-1973 = 27 million men – 11 million would serve – 8.7 enlisted, 2.3 drafted
- 3.) Deferments; decentralized structure of the system; multiple exemptions

The Debate in July 1965

- 3.) George Ball's Dissent – A losing war, racial issue, fears of a wider war
- 3.) “Moderate” policy – not “bugging out” or dangerous escalation – no war with China or USSR: LBJ explains his policy to Martin Luther King: [WhiteHouseTapes.org](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/1965/07/26/1965-07-26-lbj-explains-policy-to-martin-luther-king)
[Transcript + Audio Clip](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/1965/07/26/1965-07-26-lbj-explains-policy-to-martin-luther-king)

Antiwar Protests



Morley Safer at Cam Ne – August 1965

- [YouTube - Cam ne safer](#)
- Peter Brush website - analysis



Protest Songs

- Draft Dodger Rag [YouTube - The Draft Dodger Rag - Mitchell Trio](#)
- Lyndon Johnson told the nation [Untitled Document](#)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIR96HYFAsk>