
Timeline of Politics

509 B.C.E.

Tarquin, the last king of Rome, is deposed as the empire becomes a republic.

410 B.C.E.

In his comedy, *Lysistrata*, Aristophanes depicts an ancient world in which civil disobedience is prevalent; the women in the warring cities of Athens and Sparta conspire to deprive all men of sexual intercourse for the duration of the war. Moreover, the Athenian women stage one of the first recorded sit-ins by occupying the Parthenon, blocking access to the state treasury where the war chest is housed.

1215

King John signs the Magna Carta, the first document of human rights in English history, and a first step in a centuries-long struggle to end feudalism.

1771

Robert Owen, who would come to be known as the father of British socialism, is born.

1776

Great Britain's 13 North American colonies declare independence, proclaiming to be the United States of America. Britain, who had begun their colonization of North America at Jamestown, Virginia, more than 100

years earlier, did not recognize the American independence until after the Revolutionary War, when the Treaty of Paris affirmed the young nation's independence.

1792

A Vindication of the Rights of Women by Mary Wollstonecraft is published. The book would later inspire women's right activists Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

1793

The division between Jacobins on the left and Girondists on the right in the meetings of the French Legislative Assembly creates the left-right terminology, reflected in later association of the left with radicals and the right with conservatives.

1803

The United States acquires the Louisiana Territory from France for \$15 million. The acquisition, known as the Louisiana Purchase, doubles the geographic extent of the country.

1804

After executing one of his fellow governing consuls for suspicions regarding a plot to assassinate him, Napoleon Bonaparte declares himself emperor of France.

1825

On a visit to the United States, Robert Owen establishes one of the first secular experimental communities, New Harmony, Indiana.

1827

In his “Notes on the State of Virginia,” former U.S. President Thomas Jefferson remarks on the purity of agrarian society: “Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example.”

1840

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, considered the father of modern anarchism, publishes his pamphlet, *What Is Property?*, in which he argues that, “Property is profit stolen from the worker, who is the true source of all wealth.”

1841

George Ripley establishes Brook Farm, a secular community near Boston, Massachusetts. Later, Brook Farm is transformed into a Phalanx, following the ideas of French utopian socialist, Francois Fourier.

1844

The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers, a group consisting of seven socialists, establishes a cooperatively owned venture known as the Rochdale Equitable Co-operative Society Ltd.

1848

Liberal uprisings take place in many German cities, including the capital of Prussia, Berlin. In response to the violence, Prussian King Frederick William IV promises a constitution and an elected assembly.

1848

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels publish *The Communist Manifesto*, which would serve as the inspiration for future communist revolutions.

1849

Henry David Thoreau is credited with theorizing the practice of civil disobedience in his essay “Resistance to Civil Government,” in which he explains his refusal to pay taxes as an act of protest against slavery and the U.S.-Mexican War.

1849

The first challenge to Northern U.S. segregation occurs when a black Bostonian sues the city for the right to

send his daughter to the nearest public school, rather than across town to the all-black school. Despite the case being unsuccessful, it sparks public debate, and six years later the state of Massachusetts passes a law desegregating the state’s public schools.

1853

The American Party, or more commonly known as the Know-Nothings due to its members’ insistence that such a party did not exist, is founded on the basis of removing political power from immigrants and the politicians who court them.

1861

Following the election of Republican Abraham Lincoln, which angered Southerners due to Lincoln’s position on slavery, South Carolinians open fire on Fort Sumter, sparking the American Civil War. Upon the war’s completion, the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution is signed, abolishing slavery. The Fourteenth Amendment extends citizenship to African Americans and the Fifteenth Amendment prohibits the denial of the right to vote on the grounds of race or previous servitude.

1864

Meeting in Paris, labor leaders, Marxists, and various socialists from across Europe create the First International Federation of Working Men, known as the First International. Karl Marx becomes a member of the executive committee of the First International.

1871

Following the transfer of power of France’s capital city, Paris, to the Prussian government, the city undergoes a short-lived communistic transformation known as the Paris Commune.

1883

The first modern government-supported welfare program is created in Germany, where legislation is introduced giving accident insurance to workers.

1889

Two international workers’ congresses convene in Paris, France, one consisting of Marxists and one consisting of non-Marxist labor leaders. They agree to merge, forming the Second International, announced on July 14, on the 100th anniversary of the storming of the Bastille by peasants and workers during the French Revolution.

1890

Wyoming, the second-lowest populated state with nearly 100,000 people, becomes the first U.S. state to grant women's suffrage. As a territory, Wyoming had extended the right to vote to women in 1869.

1895

In a speech that would later come to be known as the Atlanta Compromise, Booker T. Washington suggests that in order to alleviate racial tensions, blacks should assume a subservient role in society, embarking on vocational careers. The proposal was widely accepted between both races, but social activists such as W.E.B. Du Bois challenged it as a form of accommodation.

1898

A 19-year-old Leon Trotsky helps to found the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP). Arrested by the regime in power, he is exiled to Russian Siberia.

1903

At a meeting of the RSDLP, the more elitist branch that holds the party should be open only to dedicated revolutionaries rather than to all sympathetic socialists, led by V.I. Lenin, holds a slim majority. The RSDLP splits into the Bolshevik Party and the minority Menshevik Party.

1905

Russian workers in the city of St. Petersburg protest outside of Tzar Nicholas II's winter palace. The massacre that followed sparked the Revolution of 1905.

1910

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is founded, with W.E.B. Du Bois as executive secretary; he edits its magazine, *Crisis*, for more than 20 years, advocating the extension of civil rights to African Americans.

1911

The most successful American Progressive Party is created, first being named the National Progressive Republican League, and then, under the leadership of former President Theodore Roosevelt, the Progressive Party, or more popularly, the Bull Moose Party.

1912

The South African government passes the Native Lands Act, which forbids blacks from owning or leasing land in white-designated areas. The African National Con-

gress, whose future members would include President Nelson Mandela, launches a petition campaign in protest.

1912

Theodore Roosevelt runs for the presidency of the United States on the Progressive Party ticket, splitting the Republican vote. As a consequence, Woodrow Wilson, Democrat, is elected president. Eugene Debs, the Socialist, wins nearly one million popular votes.

1913

Noble Drew Ali founds the Moorish American Science Temple, which states in its doctrine of beliefs that peace on earth can only come when each racial group has its own religion.

1913

American citizens first begin to pay income taxes, which in time become the largest source of federal government revenues.

1913

The term *protest march* is originated as Mahatma Ghandi and his followers organize a march to protest restrictions imposed on Indians in South Africa.

1914

The Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian Empire, is shot by a group of Serb gunmen in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, an area which was just added to the Austrian Empire. The incident is the spark that set off World War I.

1914

Marcus Garvey founds the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in Jamaica; in 1916, he moves to the United States and extends branches of the organization in many cities; his Black Star shipping line is created to establish black business connections with the Caribbean and Africa.

1915

Activist A. Philip Randolph co-founds *The Messenger*, "the first radical Negro magazine."

1917

In February, the tzar of Russia, Nicholas II, abdicates and a Provisional Government is formed; Alexander Kerensky, a socialist lawyer, emerges as prime minister by the summer.

1917

In October and November, the Bolsheviks stage a coup that throws out the Provisional Government and establishes the Soviet rule; Lenin and Trotsky emerge as the leaders of the new regime.

1919

John Reed publishes *Ten Days That Shook the World*, giving a rare first-hand account of the Bolshevik takeover of Russia in November 1917.

1919

Third International, the third iteration of an international communist movement, is created following the International Communist Conference, in which Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin stresses the importance of worldwide communism.

1919

Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan, and later Germany and the USSR, form the League of Nations at the Paris Peace Conference. The United States does not ratify the treaty or the covenant of the league.

1919

One of the worst race riots in United States history erupts in Chicago when a black swimmer passes an imaginary territorial line in Lake Michigan and floats into the white swimming area, where he is murdered.

1920

The 19th Amendment to the United States is passed; it grants all adult American women the right to vote.

1920

In response to the Red Scare, in which nearly 10,000 suspected communists were detained by the U.S. government, the American Union Against Militarism (AUAM) and other progressive groups band together to form the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

1924

Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin dies following a massive stroke. Josef Stalin succeeds him in power, and by 1928 has outlawed Trotsky and assumed dictatorial powers.

1924

Robert M. La Follette is chosen to be the representative of the Progressive Party in the 1924 U.S. Presidential election. La Follette manages to garner five million votes, or about 4 percent of the voting public, but only

takes the 13 electoral college votes of Wisconsin. La Follette's sons would continue the progressive movement after the election by founding the Wisconsin Progressive Party.

1930

Over a 110-year period, the United States receives approximately 60 percent of all the world's immigrants.

1932

During a visit to Miami, U.S. President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt is shot at by anarchist Giuseppe Zangara. FDR survives the assassination attempt, but the mayor of Chicago, Anton Cermak, is fatally wounded.

1933

Upon his inauguration and as a result of the Great Depression, Franklin Roosevelt enacts his New Deal policies, which become the largest and most liberal restructuring of the U.S. government in history.

1933

Having only been chancellor of Germany for a few months, Adolf Hitler is given the legislative right by the German Parliament, the Reichstag, to rule by decree, making him the absolute ruler of the German people.

1935

The first widespread use of the term *apartheid* emerges during the political campaign of the South African Herenigde Nasionale party, which uses the African-originated word as a slogan. When the party comes into power nearly a decade later, it begins to systematically implement the race restriction policies associated with the term.

1935

In the United States, the National Industrial Recovery Act is declared unconstitutional on the grounds that Congress had delegated law-making authority to non-elected corporate and labor leaders. In response, Franklin Roosevelt and Congress move to the so-called Second New Deal, which attempts reform through regulation reform rather than through direct economic administration.

1935

As the labor movement in the United States gains strength, Congress passes the National Labor Relations Act, requiring that employers bargain with labor unions.

1935

As part of the Second New Deal, the United States Congress enacts the Social Security Act, establishing the retirement system of Social Security as well as national public welfare for dependent children.

1939

The membership of Hitler Youth, an organization created by Hitler three years earlier in order to mold young citizens of the Third Reich, has risen to an estimated eight million young people.

1940

The America First Committee is established with help from aviator Charles Lindbergh. The committee becomes nonexistent within a year, but its message of noninvolvement in World War II had attracted 800,000 members.

1943

Despite being forced out of office due to the failures of Italy in World War II, Benito Mussolini is installed as leader of German-occupied Northern Italy, where he wages a civil war against anti-fascists until the culmination of World War II.

1945

At the end of World War II, Europe falls into Western and Eastern spheres of influence, predicating the decades of Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union.

1948

Zionist leaders declare the state of Israel, thus creating a Jewish nation in British-controlled Palestine, in the center of the Arab Middle East.

1948

Mahatma Gandhi, considered a champion of nonviolent civil disobedience, is murdered by Hindu nationalist extremists as he attends a prayer meeting in the Indian city of New Delhi.

1948

In the United States, former Vice President Henry Wallace runs for president on the Progressive Party ticket; he receives support from the Communist Party of the United States, but wins no electoral college votes. Harry Truman defeats Thomas Dewey in a surprise victory despite the division of the American political left.

1949

Mao Zedong is victorious in his quest to make China a communist nation, defeating the nationalist forces of the Kuomintang.

1952

French intellectual Alfred Sauvy coins the term *third world*, a concept that originated during the worldwide decolonization process that began in the aftermath of World War II.

1953

Nikita Khrushchev replaces Josef Stalin as premier of the Soviet Union. Khrushchev, looking to alleviate the dissent caused by Stalin's brutal regime, denounces Stalin's rule in a speech to a closed meeting of the 20th Party Congress in 1956, leading to uprisings in Poland and Hungary in that year.

1954

Martin Luther King, Jr. begins his career as the leader of the civil rights movement and plans the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott.

1954

In the aftermath of the *Brown vs. Board of Education* ruling, which began desegregation in America's public schools, Robert P. Patterson forms the White Citizen's Council, whose purpose is to preserve segregation regardless of the *Brown* ruling.

1956

Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser attempts to nationalize the Suez Canal in order to fund expansionist policies. In response, Israel, Great Britain, and France attack to seize the canal. A United Nations resolution ends the conflict.

1957

Martin Luther King, Jr., along with a number of black leaders from 10 states, founds the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in response to growing protests among African Americans. The group's main focus is to preach nonviolent civil disobedience.

1960

Ramon Mercader, who had assassinated exiled Soviet leader Leon Trotsky nearly 20 years earlier on Josef Stalin's orders, returns to the Soviet Union following his incarceration in Mexico and is awarded the title of "Hero of the Soviet Union."

1960

The Ba'ath Party, whose members would include future leader Saddam Hussein, seizes power in Iraq after launching a military coup and assuming the title of the National Council of Revolutionary Command.

1961

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, during his final speech as president, draws the world's attention to the concept known as the military-industrial complex. He describes it as the relationship between the military and industrialists who profit by manufacturing arms and selling them to the government.

1962

Tom Hayden founds the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) after he writes the "Port Huron Statement," an essay that called for participatory democracy based on nonviolent civil disobedience.

1964

The Civil Rights Act is passed, which guarantees equal access to commercial establishments, travel facilities, housing, employment, and all government benefits without regard to race.

1964

In response to the widespread loss of power among conservatives in the United States's national political arena, the American Conservative Union (ACU) is founded. Within 10 years, membership would rise to an estimated 45,000 people.

1965

The Voting Rights Act is passed in the United States, providing a system of guarantees to ensure that the right to vote would not be denied on the basis of race, sex, belief, or social status.

1969

Following a series of violent conflicts that occurred between homosexuals and New York City's police department that came to be known as the Stonewall Riots, the Gay Liberation Front is formed.

1970

The Christian Identity Movement (CIM), first founded in 1840, begins to take on a new set of beliefs and adopts the term *Zionist Occupation Government* (ZOG), which CIM members describe as a conspiracy for Jewish world-domination.

1979

Saddam Hussein, who would remain in power for nearly 25 years before an invasion ousted him, becomes the leader of Iraq.

1979

The Islamic Revolution, led by the Ayatollah Khomeini, breaks out in Iran, bringing theocratic reform to the Arab nation.

1984

Ronald Reagan wins a second term of the U.S. presidency over Democratic candidate Walter Mondale with the largest electoral margin in history, signifying the success of rightist politics in America.

1991

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is officially dissolved, having collapsed under the liberal policies of Mikhail Gorbachev.

1993

A member of the anti-abortion group Rescue America kills Dr. David Gunn, an abortion provider at the Pensacola Women's Medical Services Clinic. In response, Congress passes the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE).

2000

In one of the most contested presidential elections in history, Republican George W. Bush is declared the winner of the election over Democrat Al Gore. A split between the left and right in the country is further widened.

2001

Al-Qaeda terrorists hijack and crash four planes in the United States, causing the worst foreign attack on U.S. soil in modern times. President George W. Bush responds with an invasion of Afghanistan, where the terrorists' cells were trained and equipped.

2003

Citing a new doctrine of preemptive war, the United States and Great Britain invade Iraq and topple dictator Saddam Hussein.

2005

George W. Bush is inaugurated for a second term as president, continuing a far-right, conservative U.S. administration.