

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Bush Administration and the War on Terror



Objectives

In this lesson, you will

- learn about the controversy surrounding the 2000 election and the attacks of September 11, 2001.
- describe the war on terror and the conflicts waged as part of it.
- understand the domestic policies of the George W. Bush administration.

2000 Election

The 2000 election was **extraordinarily close**. Al Gore won the national **popular** vote by more than 500,000 votes. However, the results in the **Electoral** College were not as clear. The outcome of the election came down to the result in **Florida**. More than two weeks after Election Day, the Florida Supreme Court ruled **against** a request by the **Gore** campaign to continue recounts.

BUSH V. GORE



- ❖ In early December 2000, the **Florida** Supreme Court ordered a **hand recount** of certain ballots. It also permitted the counting of some ballots that before had not been **certified**. The Bush campaign filed an appeal with the United States Supreme Court. In a 5–4 decision in the case of *Bush v. Gore*, the US Supreme Court **reversed** the ruling from the Florida Supreme Court. It said there wasn't enough **time** to do the recounts. **Bush** would become the next president.

- ❖ The decision created a great deal of controversy. Some people believed the ruling was partisan. The failure of the popular vote winner to win the election caused many to lose faith in the country's electoral process. Calls for abolition of the Electoral College became more common.

SEPTEMBER 11TH ATTACKS

World Trade Center Attacked

At 8:45 a.m., a passenger jet slammed into the north tower New York's World Trade Center near the 80th floor. About 17 minutes later, another plane struck the south tower. Both planes had flown from Boston. Less than one hour after it was hit, the south tower collapsed. At 10:28 a.m., the north tower fell.

The Pentagon Attacked

At 9:37 a.m., a plane that took off from nearby Dulles Airport crashed into the Pentagon, in Arlington, Virginia. The Pentagon is the headquarters of the US Department of Defense. The attackers saw it as a symbol of American power, like the World Trade Center.

Heroes Took Down a Plane

A fourth plane on September 11th crashed in a field near the town of Shanksville in southwestern Pennsylvania. Hijackers took control of the plane and wanted to fly it into the Capitol in Washington, DC, but some of the passengers on the flight overpowered the hijackers who had taken control of the plane and steered it into the ground before it could reach its target.

OSAMA BIN LADEN AND AL QAEDA

Saudi Arabian **Osama bin Laden** and the terrorist organization **al Qaeda** were responsible for the September 11th attacks. Bin Laden created al Qaeda in Afghanistan in the late 1980s. This terrorist organization called for a return to a **radical, traditional form of Islam**. The Taliban, an extreme Islamic **political** and **religious** organization in Afghanistan, supported bin Laden and al Qaeda. The Taliban allowed bin Laden to use **Afghanistan** as a **terrorist training ground** and to plan the September 11th attacks.

Soon Muslims began to receive **death** threats. Others were the victims of **violence**. The number of hate crimes against **Muslims** increased from less than 50 in 2000 to nearly 500 in 2001.

After the attacks, Congress approved the use of **force** to fight the terrorists, and Bush announced a **war** on **terror**. US forces, with help from other countries, attacked **Afghanistan** and drove the **Taliban** government from power.

PRELUDE TO THE IRAQ WAR

Members of the Bush administration did not believe an attack on Afghanistan would be enough to defeat **terrorism**. In a 2002 speech, Cheney said, "We now know that **Saddam** has resumed his efforts to acquire **nuclear** weapons. . . Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of **mass destruction** (WMDs). There is no doubt he is amassing them to use against our friends, against our allies, and against us." **Such weapons were never found.**

THE IRAQ WAR

In March of 2003, the United States, Great Britain, and a small number of other allied troops began an attack on Iraq. In late 2004, they released a report that concluded **Hussein had not possessed WMDs** for more than a decade. In late 2008, President Bush signed an agreement with Iraq to remove, or draw down, all US combat forces from Iraq by the end of 2011. The war had not unfolded as Bush hoped it would. The war had become a nation-building **exercise**, something that Bush had criticized during his campaign in 2000. Although a new democratic republic had been established in Iraq, it was uncertain whether it could stand on its own.

Foreign Policy and National Security

Abroad, the Bush administration embraced the beliefs of neoconservatism and more aggressively intervened in the affairs of other nations. At home, the United States government increased surveillance in an effort to stop terrorist attacks before they could happen.

HOMELAND SECURITY

The US took many steps to improve security in the years following September 11th. **Bush created the Office of Homeland Security to coordinate counterterrorism efforts between local, state, and federal governments.** In 2003, the **Department of Homeland Security** was formed to take on these responsibilities and other duties. It oversees the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), which was established to improve safety of transportation in the United States.

Bush Social and Economic Policy

COMPASSIONATE CONSERVATIVE POLICIES

- ❖ **Tax Cuts:** Bush signed two tax cuts into law during his presidency. The 2001 bill lowered income tax rates across all income levels. The 2003 tax cut focused on businesses and required the changes in the earlier bill to take effect sooner.
- ❖ **Efforts to Change Social Security:** Early in his second term Bush tried to bring change to the Social Security program. He wanted to partially privatize it and allow workers to divert some of the taxes they pay into the program and invest them. Although Republicans had been trying to undo parts of the New Deal for decades, their leaders in Congress never moved a plan forward.

DEREGULATION OF FINANCE



For many years, Republicans had promoted policies of deregulation. They believed that businesses function better when they face fewer government rules and regulations. **George Bush** loosened regulations in **the banking industry.**

Banks started to give loans to people **who previously would not have qualified.** These were called subprime mortgages. A very large number of people defaulted on their loans and lost their homes. Because banks didn't receive the money they were owed, **they lost a lot of money.**

This led to a financial crisis and the Great Recession, the worst recession in the United States since the Great Depression. Many people lost their jobs and the unemployment rate more than doubled.

THE SUPREME COURT



During Bush's presidency, the Supreme Court handed down a number of important decisions.

Hamdan v. Rumsfeld: The Court ruled military courts set up by the Bush administration violated international laws.

Massachusetts v. EPA: The Court ruled the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) could regulate emissions called greenhouse gases that cause climate change.

HURRICANE KATRINA

On August 27, 2005, a major hurricane struck the Gulf Coast, especially devastating the city of New Orleans. Much of the city sits below sea level, so large areas were flooded when the powerful hurricane destroyed the levees that protect the city.

President Bush promised federal funds to help New Orleans rebuild. The levee failure in New Orleans had far reaching consequences. More than a million people were displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

A new levee system was built in New Orleans at a cost of over \$14 billion. Federal engineers also built a storm surge barrier and closed a canal outlet between the Mississippi River and the Gulf waters off the coast of Louisiana.