1968: A Turning Point
Chapter 19 Sect. 3

The Tet Offensive
- **The Tet Offensive**: a series of massive coordinated attacks by the Vietcong in South Vietnam
- They attacked Keh Sahn: a major American military base.
- But the attack was a diversion: The Vietcong really wanted to attack the cities.
- Tet was the Vietnamese New Year.
- The Vietcong attacked 12 military bases in 600 cities.
- They hoped the South Vietnamese would overthrow their government.

Effects of the Tet Offensive
- Showed that no part of South Vietnam was safe from attack.
- Broke the myth that the US was winning the war it would soon be over.
- **Public criticism** of the war grew.
- Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara looked for a way out of the war.
- **3 out of 4 Americans** did not favor the war.
- **Johnson** decided he would not run for another term.
**Essential Questions**

1. What was the Tet Offensive? Who organized it?
2. What was the real goal of the Tet Offensive?
3. What did the Tet Offensive show the American public?
4. What shocking announcement does Johnson make about his reelection?

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**Johnson seeks a Solution**

- General Westmoreland felt the Tet Offensive weakened the Vietcong
- He called for more soldiers to win the war
- The American public was outraged and Johnson refused.
- Johnson believed it was time to negotiate.
- They met in Paris, and the negotiations stalled.
- North Vietnam would not pull its soldiers out or accept a South Vietnam with an American-backed President.

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**The Democratic Primary Fight**

- Hubert Humphrey, Eugene McCarthy, and Robert Kennedy ran for the Democratic nomination.
- **Kennedy** was on his way to winning, but was **assassinated by Sirhan Sirhan** a Jordanian immigrant.
- **Democratic National Convention** was in Chicago. Violence erupted outside the convention.
- Police were brutal: 600 people arrested.
- Showed the generation gap between young and old.
Essential Questions
1. How did the American public feel about sending more soldiers to Vietnam?
2. What did Johnson begin to believe was the way out of the Vietnam war?
3. Who were the 3 Democratic candidates for the party?
4. Who gets assassinated?

Richard Nixon and George Wallace
- Won his party's nomination easily.
- Promised “law and order” as opposed to the chaos of the Democratic National Convention
- He said the Vietnam War must be ended.
- George Wallace: Alabama governor who had become famous for opposing civil rights and school integration in the 60’s.
- He ran as an independent.
- He attracted white southerners and working class whites.

The Election Campaign
- Nixon led most of the way
- Humphrey gained some support when he separated himself from Johnson on the war.
- The popular vote was close, but the electoral vote was a comfortable win for Nixon
- He believed this gave him a mandate to carry out his plans in Vietnam.
- Wallace made one of the strongest showings ever of a 3rd party candidate.
**Essential Questions**

1. What was Richard Nixon’s view on the war?
2. Who was George Wallace? What party was he running for?
3. Who won the election? What did his comfortable victory give him?