

### Political Challenges of the 1970s

#### Gerald Ford (1974-1976)

- I. Only American president who was never elected either Vice-President or President. Appointed to office in 1973 after Vice-President Spiro Agnew resigned under charges of tax evasion and money laundering.
- II. Star athlete, pro offers, Yale Law, Navy, House of Representatives, House Minority Leader, “didn’t have enemies.”
- III. The great bumbler – CLUTZY

#### Jimmy Carter (1976-1980)

- I. Former Governor of Georgia, promised the public “I’ll never tell a lie.” Born-again Christian, former Naval officer and nuclear engineer, turned peanut farmer.
- II. Not a lot of experience – what did voters like about him?

### Despite their best efforts, the nation was a mess in the 1970s.

#### Domestic Policy

- I. **Energy:** the U.S.’ growing dependence on oil (increasing almost 5% annually) was complicated by repeated conflict in the Middle East and the U.S. gov’t’s support of Israel. Problems rose in 1973 and again in 1979.
  - a. The first fuel shortage occurred in 1973 and the second in the summer of 1979. Violence in the Middle East led to skyrocketing oil prices. Which then led inflation to soar from 7.6% to 11.3%.
  - b. Nixon, Ford and Carter’s many attempts to solve the crisis failed.
  - c. What efforts did Nixon take to resolve the oil crisis? (LIST)

d. What efforts did Carter take to resolve the energy crisis? (LIST)

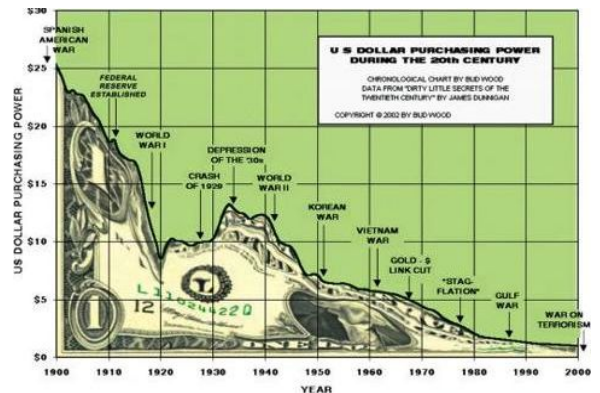
II. Inflation, unemployment, growing deficit all continued to rise over the course of the '70s.

a. How did Ford attempt to stop inflation and how successful was he?

b. DEFINE: "Stagflation"

c. By 1980, inflation had climbed to nearly 14%. The standard of living in the U.S. slipped from first place to fifth place in the world. The presidents suffered for it.

d. High energy costs + foreign competition + computerized production = companies eliminated tens of thousands of jobs.



### Foreign Policy Highs and Lows

I. Policy in SE Asia

- Vietnam became communist in 1975 – Ford was criticized for not doing enough to aid S. Vietnam (despite his efforts to provide aid.)
- 1975 Cambodian govt. seized a U.S. merchant ship, which they claimed was on a spy mission. How did Ford respond?

II. Efforts in the Middle East

- Ford presided over “one of the worst periods in American-Israeli relations.”

b. Middle East Peace – Carter helped forge peace between Israel and Egypt.

i. What was significant about the Camp David Accords?



c. 1979 Iranian Revolution & Hostage Crisis

i. In January 1979, a revolution broke out in Iran.

ii. The Muslim religious leader, Ayatollah \_\_\_\_\_ led rebels to overthrow the Shah of Iran, an ally of the United States.

iii. April 1, 1979: Khomeini established an Islamic republic in Iran, calling it "the first day of the government of God."

1. Under Khomeini's fanatic rule, \_\_\_\_\_ executed the Shah's political allies.

2. Oct. 22, 1979: The Shah was allowed to come to the U.S. for gallbladder surgery, heating up the tensions between the two countries even more. Iran's gov't thought it was a plot by the US gov't. to gain more power.

3. Nov. 4, 1979: His followers seized the American embassy in Tehran, and took 52 hostages. **Why would they go and do a thing like that?** (What did the militants demand in return for the release of the hostages?)

iv. What did Carter do to try to resolve the situation?

v. Negotiations took place from Nov. 1980-Jan. 1981.

vi. An agreement was reached in Dec. but the Iranians waited until the day that the new president, Ronald Reagan was sworn in on January 20, 1981 to release the hostages.