The Nixon Years
Richard Nixon was elected President in 1968. He helped build better relations between the United States and the two countries, China and the Soviet Union.

In 1973, Israel was attacked by Egypt and Syria. Oil-producing countries that supported Egypt and Syria wanted to punish the United States for helping Israel. They produced less oil, so oil prices went up. High oil prices made costs rise for making and shipping goods, so prices rose. This is called inflation.

In 1972, Nixon’s campaign workers broke into the Democratic Party headquarters in the Watergate building to steal information. They were caught. Nixon said he did not know about the break-in. An investigation proved that he had lied and was trying to cover up the crime. Nixon had to resign in 1974. Vice President Gerald Ford became President.

A Time of Change
In the 1970s, many people struggled for equal rights. Women were paid less than men for doing the same job. They wanted equality. By the late 1980s, more women were legislators and 40 states had equal pay laws.

American Indians on reservations did not have good health care or education. Unemployment was high. They wanted help solving problems. They wanted the government to honor treaties. The migrant workers movement forced some employers to improve conditions. Consumers pushed for laws to improve product quality and product safety.

The Carter Years
In 1976, Jimmy Carter was elected President. Carter brought leaders from Israel and Egypt together to sign the Camp David Peace Accord. Carter tried to control inflation by raising taxes and lowering government spending. It did not work. In 1979, armed Iranian students took 52 American hostages. Although Carter worked for their release, he was unable to quickly free them. They were held for 444 days. In 1980, Carter lost the election to Ronald Reagan.