

LYNDON B JOHNSON

City, Tex., the  
Johnson. His  
hill country  
family.  
Texas  
placed high  
children.  
received a B.S.  
Marcos. He  
Washington in 1931 as  
Kleberg.  
of political  
married Claudia  
ambitious  
had two  
in 1947. In  
Johnson greatly  
the National  
held from 1935  
and schooling.  
government  
Congress, where he  
programs. When  
the Allies.  
with the U.S.  
when  
Johnson

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Johnson was born on Aug. 27, 1908, near Johnson  
eldest son of Sam Ealy Johnson, Jr., and Rebekah Baines  
father, a struggling farmer and cattle speculator in the  
of Texas, provided only an uncertain income for his  
Politically active, Sam Johnson served five terms in the  
legislature. His mother had varied cultural interests and  
value on education; she was fiercely ambitious for her  
Johnson attended public schools in Johnson City and  
degree from Southwest Texas State Teachers College in San  
then taught for a year in Houston before going to  
secretary to a Democratic Texas congressman, Richard M.  
During the next 4 years Johnson developed a wide network  
contacts in Washington, D.C. On Nov. 17, 1934, he  
Alta Taylor, known as "Lady Bird." A warm, intelligent,  
woman, she was a great asset to Johnson's career. They  
daughters, Lynda Byrd, born in 1944, and Luci Baines, born  
1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt entered the White House.  
admired the president, who named him, at age 27, to head  
Youth Administration in Texas. This job, which Johnson  
to 1937, entailed helping young people obtain employment  
It confirmed Johnson's faith in the positive potential of  
and won for him a group of supporters in Texas.

In 1937, Johnson sought and won a Texas seat in  
championed public works, reclamation, and public power  
war came to Europe he backed Roosevelt's efforts to aid  
During World War II he served a brief tour of active duty  
Navy in the Pacific (1941-42) but returned to Capitol Hill  
Roosevelt recalled members of Congress from active duty.  
continued to support Roosevelt's military and foreign-

policy programs.  
profitable business  
ran for the  
87 votes.  
Senate and lost to  
fraud and  
unsuccessfully, in

During the 1940s, Johnson and his wife developed ventures, including a radio station, in Texas. In 1948 he U.S. Senate, winning the Democratic party primary by only (This was his second try; in 1941 he had run for the a conservative opponent.) The opposition accused him of tagged him "Landslide Lyndon." Although challenged, the courts, he took office in 1949.

Senator and Vice-President.  
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1953 he won  
easily  
majority leader, a  
attack in  
leader. A  
1957, he  
conservative  
his attention  
compromise.

Johnson moved quickly into the Senate hierarchy. In the job of Senate Democratic leader. The next year he was re-elected as senator and returned to Washington as post he held for the next 6 years despite a serious heart 1955. The Texan proved to be a shrewd, skillful Senate consistent opponent of civil rights legislation until developed excellent personal relationships with powerful Southerners. A hard worker, he impressed colleagues with to the details of legislation and his willingness to

of running for  
conservative,  
association  
others considered  
Either to  
inner conviction,  
issues, especially  
Although  
that he was a

In the late 1950s, Johnson began to think seriously the presidency in 1960. His record had been fairly however. Many Democratic liberals resented his friendly with the Republican president, Dwight D. Eisenhower; him a tool of wealthy Southwestern gas and oil interests. soften this image as a conservative or in response to Johnson moved slightly to the left on some domestic on civil rights laws, which he supported in 1957 and 1960. these laws proved ineffective, Johnson had demonstrated very resourceful Senate leader.

a sectional

To many northern Democrats, however, Johnson remained

Senator John F. Catholic, then Democratic ticket. candidates, margin. Johnson on Equal on behalf of undertook some into

candidate. The presidential nomination of 1960 went to Kennedy of Massachusetts. Kennedy, a northern Roman selected Johnson as his running mate to balance the In November 1960 the Democrats defeated the Republican Richard M. Nixon and Henry Cabot Lodge, by a narrow was appointed by Kennedy to head the President's Committee Employment Opportunities, a post that enabled him to work blacks and other minorities. As vice-president, he also missions abroad, which offered him some limited insights international problems.

#### Presidency

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22, 1963, proved a affairs. In promote launched the skillful in to come it racial and Senator Barry Goldwater was of strong Johnson had from 16,000 at year later. restraint. a low-key Arizonan won

The assassination of President Kennedy on November elevated Johnson to the White House, where he quickly masterful, reassuring leader in the realm of domestic 1964, Congress passed a tax-reduction law that promised to economic growth and the Economic Opportunity Act, which program called the War on Poverty. Johnson was especially securing a strong Civil Rights Act in 1964. In the years proved to be a vital source of legal authority against sexual discrimination. In 1964 the Republicans nominated M. Goldwater of Arizona as their presidential nominee. an extreme conservative in domestic policy and an advocate military action to protect American interests in Vietnam. increased the number of U.S. military personnel there the time of Kennedy's assassination to nearly 25,000 a Contrasted to Goldwater, however, he seemed a model of Johnson, with Hubert H. Humphrey as his running mate, ran campaign and overwhelmed Goldwater in the election. The only his home state and five others in the Deep South.

Great  
responded by  
services to the  
education,  
Department of  
important civil

Johnson's triumph in 1964 gave him a mandate for the  
Society, as he called his domestic program. Congress  
passing the MEDICARE program, which provided health  
elderly, approving federal aid to elementary and secondary  
supplementing the War on Poverty, and creating the  
Housing and Urban Development. It also passed another  
rights law -- the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

U.S.  
planes began  
increased to  
1968. Many  
personal  
military  
led him to  
allegedly to stop a  
who recalled  
thought the

At this point Johnson began the rapid deepening of  
involvement in Vietnam; as early as February 1965, U.S.  
to bomb North Vietnam. American troop strength in Vietnam  
more than 180,000 by the end of the year and to 500,000 by  
influences led Johnson to such a policy . Among them were  
factors such as his temperamental activism, faith in U.S.  
power, and staunch anti-communism. These qualities also  
intervene militarily in the Dominican Republic --  
Communist takeover -- in April 1965. Like many Americans  
the "appeasement" of Nazi Germany in the 1930s, Johnson  
United States must be firm or incur a loss of credibility.

racial tension  
riots between  
rights movement,  
Society  
elections and  
congressional

While the nation became deeply involved in Vietnam,  
sharpened at home, culminating in widespread urban race  
1965 and 1968. The breakdown of the interracial civil  
together with the imperfections of some of Johnson's Great  
programs, resulted in Republican gains in the 1966  
effectively thwarted Johnson's hopes for further  
cooperation.

however, that  
attention  
prompted  
people.

It was the policy of military escalation in Vietnam,  
proved to be Johnson's undoing as president. It deflected  
from domestic concerns, resulted in sharp inflation, and  
rising criticism, especially among young, draft-aged  
Escalation also failed to win the war. The drawn-out

struggle made  
to criticism.

Johnson even more secretive, dogmatic, and hypersensitive  
His usually sure political instincts were failing.

which the  
revealed the  
advisors now  
Confronted by  
announcements on Mar.  
Vietnam and seek  
election.

The New Hampshire presidential primary of 1968, in  
anti-war candidate Eugene McCarthy made a strong showing,  
dwindling of Johnson's support. Some of Johnson's closest  
began to counsel a de-escalation policy in Vietnam.  
mounting opposition, Johnson made two surprise  
31, 1968: he would stop the bombing in most of North  
a negotiated end to the war, and he would not run for re-

to dictate  
supported the war,  
election.  
November 1, he  
the war dragged  
candidate,

Johnson's influence thereafter remained strong enough  
the nomination of Vice-President Humphrey, who had  
as the Democratic presidential candidate for the 1968  
Although Johnson stopped all bombing of the North on  
failed to make real concessions at the peace table, and  
on. Humphrey lost in a close race with the Republican  
Richard M. Nixon.

#### Retirement.

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1969, Johnson  
prepared his  
Point:  
supervised  
Austin. Johnson  
the treaty by

After stepping down from the presidency in January  
returned to his ranch in Texas. There he and his aides  
memoirs, which were published in 1971 as *The Vantage  
Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969*. He also  
construction of the Johnson presidential library in  
died on Jan. 22, 1973, 5 days before the conclusion of  
which the United States withdrew from Vietnam.

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