

HANDOUT

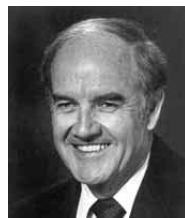
1972 ELECTION



RICHARD NIXON
and Spiro Agnew

POPULAR VOTE: 47,169,911
ELECTORAL VOTE: 520

REPUBLICAN



GEORGE McGOVERN
and Sargent Shriver

POPULAR VOTE: 29,170,383
ELECTORAL VOTE: 17

DEMOCRAT

18-21 year olds voted for President for the first time.



Gerald Ford

Nixon was the **incumbent President**.

The **Vietnam War** continued to be a central issue as Nixon called for "peace with honor." He had quieted protests by replacing most of the U.S. troops with South Vietnamese soldiers, but simultaneously **escalated the air war** and invaded **Cambodia**.

Nixon opened relations with **China** and negotiations with the **Soviet Union**, bolstering his credentials as a **world leader**.

Nixon spent **\$61 million** on the 1972 campaign, many times more than McGovern and the most ever spent up to that time during an election.

Polls indicated that 2/3 of political information came from TV commercials and **sound bites** shown on the news.

Nixon's **Committee to Reelect the President (CREEP)** hired burglars to break into the National Democratic headquarters in the **Watergate** building to install wiretapping devices.

Nixon won an historic **landslide victory** in 1972, winning 49 states.

Nixon's "**dirty tricks**" emerged as a major issue after the election, including the **Watergate scandal**, which led to his **resignation** in 1974.

Gerald Ford, who was named Vice President after Agnew resigned in 1973, then became President.

McGovern was a **Senator from South Dakota**.

McGovern was a leader of the **left wing** of the Democratic Party. He spearheaded changes to the delegate selection process, which resulted in highly visible representation of **women and minorities** at the 1972 Democratic Convention.

McGovern called for an immediate **end to the Vietnam War** and **amnesty** for draft evaders.

McGovern raised over \$12 million through **direct mail marketing** to opponents of the Vietnam War.

McGovern supported **gun control**, the **decriminalization of marijuana**, and **abolition of the Electoral College**.

Labor unions, who traditionally supported Democratic candidates, stayed neutral.

Support for McGovern fell after he abandoned his initial running mate, **Thomas Eagleton**, when it was disclosed that he had been treated for mental illness.

Conservative Democrat **George Wallace** won 5 primaries before being shot and paralyzed at a rally. **Conservative Democrats** then supported Nixon.

"Probably the clearest choice between the candidates for President ever presented to the American people in the twentieth century."

-Richard Nixon speaking about the 1972 election