

CHAPTER 25 Section 1 (pages 818–821)

A Conservative Movement Emerges

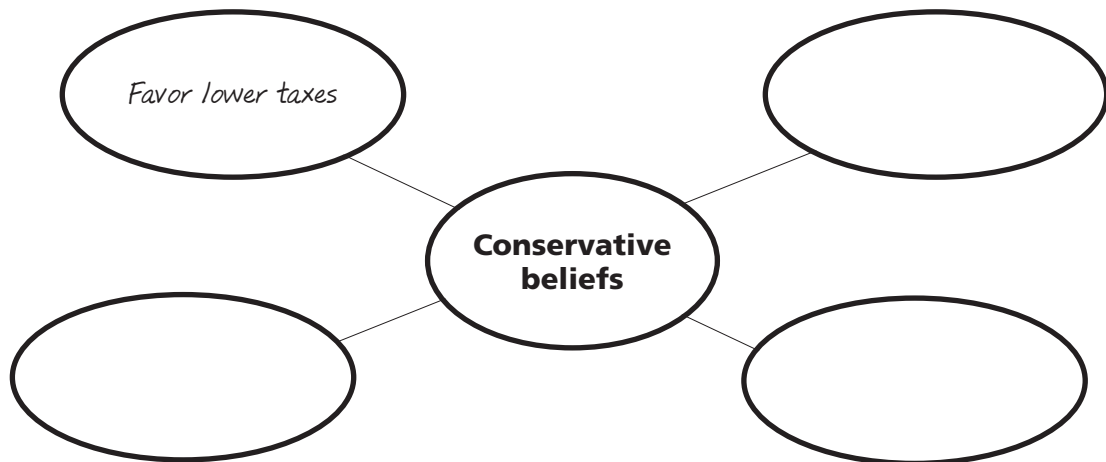
BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about the environmental movement.

In this section, you will learn about the growth of the conservative movement in the 1960s and 1970s.

AS YOU READ

Use the web below to take notes about conservatives and their political beliefs.



TERMS AND NAMES

Ronald Reagan 40th president

entitlement program Program that guarantees benefits to particular people

New Right Alliance of conservative groups to support conservative ideas

reverse discrimination

Discrimination against whites to make up for past discrimination against others

conservative coalition Alliance of business interests, religious people, and dissatisfied middle-class voters to support conservative candidates

Moral Majority Organization formed to fight for traditional values

George Bush 41st president

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The Conservative Movement Builds (pages 818–820)

Why did conservatism grow?

American history has been marked by swings between liberal and conservative policies. During times when liberals held power, the federal government took strong action to reform society. During more conservative times, Americans tried to have less government activity. From the late 1960s onward, conservatives steadily gained power. In 1980, conservatives won a great victory: **Ronald Reagan** was elected president.

Many Americans resented the cost of **entitlement programs**. These are programs that

guaranteed benefits to particular groups. By 1980, one out of every three households was receiving benefits from government programs. Americans were unhappy paying taxes to support these benefits. They were also upset about high inflation.

Some people also became frustrated with the government’s civil rights policies. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was meant to end racial discrimination. But over the years some court decisions extended the act. Some opposed laws that increased minority opportunities in employment or education. They called this **reverse discrimination**, discrimination against white people and specifically white men.

During the 1970s, several conservative groups

formed across the country that opposed liberal programs. They thought these programs hurt the economy and other aspects of life. Together these groups were known as the **New Right**. Some members of the New Right fought any government action at all.

Members of the New Right often promoted one issue that had to do with their own interests. Many members opposed legal abortion and the proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Some called for prayer in public schools.

Right-wing groups tended to vote for the same candidates. These voters formed the **conservative coalition**. This was an alliance of some intellectuals, business interests, and unhappy middle-class voters.

Members of the conservative coalition shared some basic positions. They opposed big government, entitlement programs, and many civil rights programs. They also believed in a return to traditional moral standards.

Religious groups, especially Christian fundamentalists, played an important role in the conservative coalition. Some of these groups were guided by television preachers. Some of them banded together and formed the **Moral Majority**. They interpreted the Bible *literally*. They also believed in absolute standards of right and wrong. The Moral Majority criticized a decline in national morality. They wanted to bring back what they saw as traditional American values.

1. What basic positions did members of the conservative coalition share?

Conservatives Win Political Power (pages 820–821)

Why was Reagan popular?

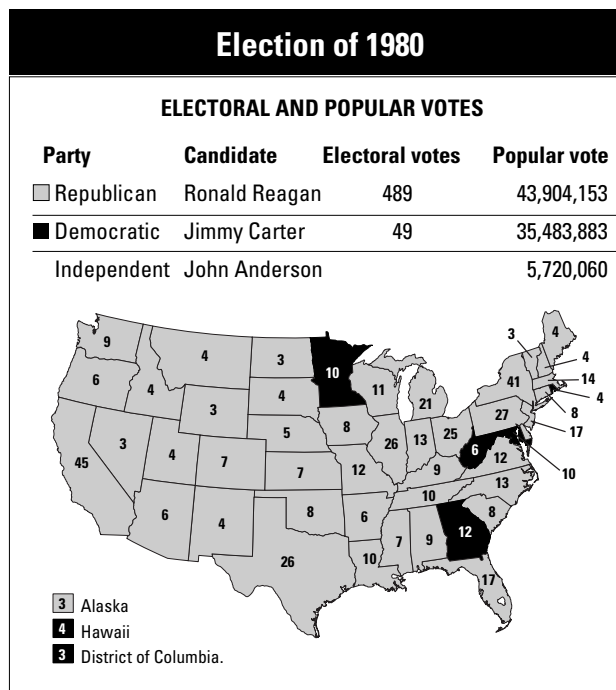
The conservatives found a strong presidential candidate in Ronald Reagan. He won the 1980 nomination and chose **George Bush** as his running mate.

Reagan had been a movie actor and a spokesman for General Motors. He won political fame with a speech for Barry Goldwater during the 1964 presidential campaign. In 1966, Reagan was elected governor of California. He was reelected in 1970.

In the 1980 election, Reagan ran on a number of issues. Supreme Court decisions on abortion, the teaching of evolution, and prayer in public schools all upset conservative voters. Reagan also had a strong anticommunist policy.

Reagan was an extremely effective candidate. High inflation and the Iranian hostage crisis also helped Reagan. Reagan easily won the election. The election also gave Republicans control of the Senate.

2. What factors helped Reagan win the presidential election in 1980?



Skillbuilder

Use the map to answer the questions

1. Did Ronald Reagan win more than 50% of the popular vote?

2. Name three states that Jimmy Carter won.

Answer Key

Chapter 25: The Conservative Tide (pages 816–843)

Section 1: A Conservative Movement Emerges (pages 818–821)

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