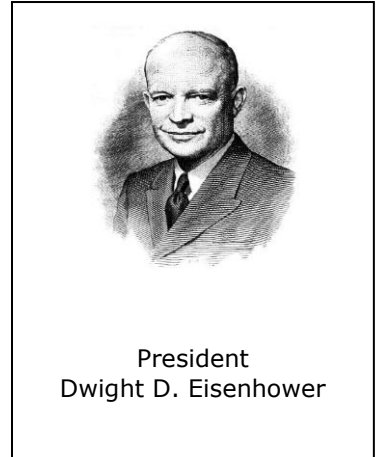


Eighty-Fifth Congress

Jan. 3, 1957-Aug. 4, 1958

Second Administration of Dwight D. Eisenhower

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Historical Background

On January 5, 1957 President Eisenhower sent a special message to Congress asking for authority to extend economic and military aid to any nation or group of nations in the general area of the Middle East that desire such aid. Permissible aid included the use of U.S. military forces to secure and protect the requesting nation's territorial integrity and political independence against armed aggression from any nation controlled by international communism. In March, Congress approved the President's request for authority to aid Middle East nations against armed aggressors, a policy that became known as the Eisenhower Doctrine. During 1957, the President used the authority twice to discourage attacks on Jordan by Syria.

In the State of the Union address delivered on January 10, 1957, Eisenhower claimed "fidelity to principles encompassing regard for human liberty, welfare, and progress had brought the U.S. to an unprecedented peak in economic prosperity and exemplified, in our way of life, the enduring human values of mind and spirit." He said the control of inflation should not only be achieved by prudent Government actions, but also by the actions of individuals and the private sector whom he urged not to ignore the possible results on the U.S. economy of unwise struggles for immediate gain. The President also said he was willing to enter into any reliable agreement for the control of space missile and satellite development. He further urged support from Congress for school construction, enactment of civil rights legislation, and full U.S. participation in the International Atomic Energy Agency.

House	Senate
Majority Party: Democrat (234 seats)	Majority Party: Democrat (49 seats)
Minority Party: Republican (201 seats)	Minority Party: Republican (47 seats)
Other Parties: None	Other Parties: None
Speaker of the House: Sam Rayburn	Majority Leader: Lyndon B. Johnson

Closer cooperation on atomic energy was achieved on June 18, 1957 when the Senate ratified the International Atomic Energy Treaty, providing for the establishment of an International Atomic Energy Agency to be comprised by the United States and 79 other nations. Authorization was given in August for the appointment of an U.S. representatives to the Agency.

On October 5, 1957, the Soviet Union launched the first artificial earth satellite, "Sputnik." A second Soviet satellite, with a dog aboard, was launched on November 3. During July 1958, Congress responded to the Soviet space developments by authorizing the establishment of the civilian-controlled National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and both Houses of Congress organized standing committees on space matters. The Soviet's achievements in space technology prompted Congress to approve the largest commitment to education ever made by the Federal Government. During 1958, Congress showed its support for that initiative by approving the National Defense Education Act, which included a seven-year, \$1 billion program of loans and grants designed to improve the teaching of science, mathematics and foreign languages at all levels of American education.

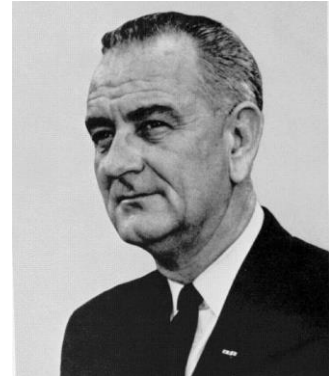
After the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), held that the practice of maintaining separate public school systems for Black and White students violated the fourteenth amendment's equal protection clause, activists in the southern states began a campaign of resistance to integration of the public schools. The Federal government, eager to demonstrate its commitment to protecting the constitutional rights of African Americans, enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1875. The 1957 Civil Rights Act, the first since 1875, created the executive Commission on Civil Rights and empowered the Attorney General to seek injunctions when individuals were denied the right to vote. Advocates of the legislation viewed the vote as the foundation for other civil liberties.

Admission of Alaska to the Union in July 1958 culminated decades of pressure to admit the territory to the Union. Important actions taken in 1958 relating to the Nation's transportation systems included a \$3.26 billion Federal Highway Act, and a \$500 million Transportation Act designed to revive the Nation's failing railroads. Other major laws provided for the establishment of a standard pension for retiring Presidents, reorganization of the military which placed the Army, Navy, and Air Force under the direction and control of the Secretary of Defense, creation of the Office of Civil Defense Mobilization, and a commission to develop recommendations for the Nation's outdoor recreation needs through the year 2000.

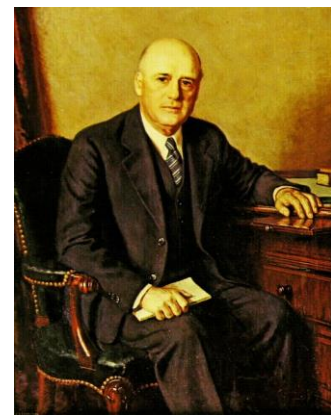
Sources:

Dell, Christopher and Stephen W. Stathis. [*Major Acts of Congress and Treaties Approved by the Senate, 1789-1980*](#). Government Division (CRS), Sept. 1, 1982. 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 82-156 GOV. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1982-GOV-0005

Eisenhower, Dwight D. [*Address of the President of the United States Delivered Before a Joint Session of the Two Houses of Congress Relative to the Middle East Situation*](#), Committee on



Senate Majority Leader
Lyndon B. Johnson



Speaker of the House
Sam Rayburn

Foreign Affairs, House, Jan. 5, 1957, 85th Congress, 1st Session. H.doc.46 (Pr31.1:931). ProQuest Congressional, 12007 H.doc.46

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Eisenhower, Dwight D. [Address of the President of the United States Delivered Before a Joint Session of the Senate and the House of Representatives to the State of the Union](#), House, Jan. 9, 1958, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, H.doc.251. ProQuest Congressional, 12097 H.doc.251

War or Peace?

Interventionism in the Middle East

Before an extraordinary joint session of Congress, President Dwight D. Eisenhower articulated his vision for the next geographical theatre of the Cold War: The Middle East. After the Suez Crisis of 1956, it became clear that Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser was building an important, pan-Arab political base. Nasser's resolute independence and his strident, anti-colonial rhetoric, created opportunities for the Soviet Union to exploit anti-Western sentiment in the Middle East in its bid to increase its sphere of influence globally. In articulating a national policy of readiness to provide military and economic assistance to governments in the region keen to resist the Soviet/Nasserist tide, Eisenhower emphasized the history of Russian attempts to establish itself as a regional policy in the Middle East.

It wasn't long before this new policy framework was tested in the real world. During the summer of 1957, Syrian President Shukri al-Quwatli made some personnel changes in the government in Damascus that were seen by U.S. allies in the region, including Turkey and other members of the Baghdad Pact—Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom—as evidence that there had been a Soviet-inspired communist takeover in Syria. NATO member Turkey responded to the events by amassing its military along the Syrian-Turkish border, prompting the Soviet Union to threaten retaliation in the event of a Turkish invasion. This, in turn, led the United States to warn that an assault against Turkey would necessitate a U.S. response, including direct attacks against Moscow. The crisis was ultimately de-escalated when Turkey withdrew its troops from the Syrian border in response to U.S. pressure.

Then, in July 1958, the threat of civil war loomed in Lebanon after the western-leaning government of Maronite Christian President Camille Chamoun refused to break diplomatic relations with the west during the Suez Canal crisis and began to draw closer to the Baghdad Pact nations. In response, Egypt and Syria united to form the short-lived United Arab Republic, accusing the Baghdad Pact of interfering in the cause of Arab Nationalism.

Exploiting the profound religious differences in Lebanon, Nasser influence Muslims in Lebanon to pressure their government to join the United Arab Republic. Then, on July 14, a group of military leaders in Iraq calling

themselves the Free Officers overthrew the pro-Western Hashemite monarchy of King Faisal, prompting the government in Lebanon to call for American military assistance. President Eisenhower responded by ordering Operation Blue Bat, on July 15, 1958. The operation involved over 14,000 men supported by 70 naval ships. At the same time, Eisenhower sent diplomatic envoy Robert D. Murphy to help negotiate a settlement between the sides, resulting in the election of General Fuad Chehab as President, with Prime Minister Rashid Karami forming a government of national unity.

The Space Race

Perhaps the most uplifting theatre in the history of the Cold War was the Space Race, which was inaugurated with the launch of Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite, on October 4, 1957, from the steppes of Soviet Kazakhstan. The Soviet Union doubled down on their accomplishment with the launch of Sputnik 2 on November 3, which sent the first dog, "Laika," into orbit. The launch of the Sputnik probes caught policymakers in the United States unprepared, giving the domestic space program a degree of urgency unseen since the Manhattan Project to develop the first atomic bomb. Following Moscow's early successes, the United States made their own firsts in early 1958, with the launch of the first U.S. satellite, Explorer 1, in January, and the launch of the first solar-powered satellite, Vanguard 1, in March. The Space Race would come to dominate the public face of the Cold War throughout the coming decades, as the United States and Soviet Union would trade firsts, and even occasionally collaborate on missions into space.

China's Great Leap Forward

The days of cooperation between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China (PRC) came to an end in 1958 as Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong angrily rebuffed Soviet efforts to dominate China the way it did its European communist allies. Though the split was largely over practical, security matters, including countering the U.S. 7th Fleet and border disputes with India, Mao's disenchantment with the Russians was so great he sought to break with the Soviet economic model as well, leading to an ambitious new economic development program called the Great Leap Forward. The plan was conceived as a radical attempt to completely transform China's agrarian economy into a fully developed, industrial socialist model. This was to be brought about through rapid industrialization and forced agricultural collectivization. Though there were some notable successes in the campaign to increase industrialization and promote heavy industries, such as steel production, controversial agricultural experiments and the denial of the right of the peasantry to operate small-scale, independent farms, led to wide-ranging famine throughout China, causing the deaths of between 15 and 45 million people.

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Eisenhower, Dwight D. [Address of the President of the United States Delivered Before a Joint Session of the Senate and the House of Representatives to the State of the Union](#), House, Jan. 9, 1958, 85th Congress, 2nd Session. H.doc.251, ProQuest Congressional, 12097 H.doc.251

Economic Trends and Conditions

At the beginning of 1957, the U.S. was prosperous, with employment, production, and purchasing power at record levels. A significant proportion of national resources were committed to national defense and security related to the threat of Communist aggression, but the outlook was good for expanding the nation's ability to produce goods and services demanded by a population constantly seeking to improve its standard of living.

Despite an economic decline around the end of 1957, that year was an overall prosperous year for the United States with over 65 million people employed (surpassing 1956's employment figures by 300,000), and with both personal income and national output of goods and services showing a 5 percent increase over figures for the same areas recorded in 1956. A considerable part of these increases, however, were caused by price increases. During the fourth quarter of 1958, the gross national product was about 1.5 percent below the peak reached during the third quarter for that year, and the unemployment figure for December was 5.4 percent, which showed an increase in joblessness over September's unemployment figure of 4.3 percent.

An economic contraction began in the latter months of 1957 and continued into 1958; it was sharper than the recession that occurred during 1953-1954. However, the economy began to recover in May 1958, and by the end of the year most of the economic ground that had been lost was regained. By the fourth quarter of 1958 the gross national product was at an annual rate of \$453 billion; in dollars of constant purchasing power that was almost equal to the highest output attained in the pre-recession period. Nearly a million more people were at work in December 1958 than in July, after allowance for seasonal changes. Although during December the number of persons unemployed was above four million, it was one million below the highest unemployment figure reached during the recession. Wage and salary income and consumer spending were at an all-time high, with the index of consumer prices remaining stable for the last six months of 1958, although it was about two percentage points higher than the index of consumer prices recorded for 1957.

Sources:

Patman, John William Wright. [Report of the Joint Economic Committee on the 1957 Economic Report of the President](#). Joint Committee on Economic. Senate, Feb. 28, 1957, 85th Congress, 1st Session. H.rp.175. ProQuest Congressional, 11984 H.rp.175

Eisenhower, Dwight D. [Economic Report of the President transmitted to the Congress](#), House, Jan. 20, 1958, 85th Congress, 2nd Session. H.doc.279 (Pr34.10:958), ProQuest Congressional, 12128 H.doc.279

Eisenhower, Dwight D. [Economic Report of the President Transmitted to the Congress](#), House Jan. 20, 1959, 86th Congress, 1st Session. H.doc.28 (Pr34.10:959). ProQuest Congressional, 12211 H.doc.28

Major Treaties

International Atomic Energy Treaty. Established an International Atomic Energy Agency with a director and board of governors to work toward harnessing the atom for peaceful purposes on a world-wide scale. Signatories (the United States and 79 other member-nations) were authorized to make fissionable material available at their discretion. Concluded Oct. 23, 1956. Ratified by the Senate June 18, 1957. ([8 UST. 1093-1224](#))

* *UST refers to the State Department's multivolume series which began in 1950 entitled: United States Treaties and Other International Agreements.*

Sources:

Dell, Christopher and Stephen W. Stathis. [Major Acts of Congress and Treaties Approved by the Senate, 1789-1980](#). Government Division (CRS), Sept. 1, 1982. 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 82-156 GOV. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1982-GOV-0005

Landmark U.S. Supreme Court Decisions

Reid v. Covert, holding that the civilian wives of soldiers may not be tried under military jurisdiction, 354 U.S. 1 (1957)

Watkins v. U.S., imposing limits—under the First Amendment—on the investigative powers of the House Un-American Activities Committee, which had found a labor leader to be in contempt for refusing to answer questions about his associates' membership in the Communist Party, 354 U.S. 178 (1957)

Sweezy v. New Hampshire, holding that the investigation into a college professor, who was believed to be engaged in Communist acts, was in violation of the man's Fourteenth Amendment rights, 354 U.S. 234 (1957)

Mallory v. U.S., holding that a man arrested on rape charges was unjustly arraigned, since he was not brought to appear before a commissioner prior to questioning. He was also not told of his right to counsel or to remain

silent, which is in violation of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, 354 U.S. 449 (1957)

Alberts v. California, the companion case to *Roth v. U.S.*, the case involved the constitutionality of a provision of the California penal code that made it a misdemeanor to sell or advertise obscene material, 354 U.S. 475 (1957)

Roth v. U.S., establishing obscenity test based on whether an average person, providing contemporary community standards, would find that the dominant theme of the material taken as a whole appeal to prurient interests; case involved a Federal statute banning the mailing of alleged obscene materials, 354 U.S. 476 (1957)

One, Inc. v. Olesen, reversed a lower court decision that supported the position of the Postmaster of Los Angeles that a certain issue of "ONE: The Homosexual Magazine" was obscene and therefore unmailable, 355 U.S. 371 (1958)

Perez v. Brownell, upheld an act of Congress that provided for revocation of citizenship as a consequence of voting in a foreign election, affirming the right of Congress to revoke U.S. citizenship as a result of specific actions such as voting in a foreign election, even in the absence of any intent or desire on the person's part to lose citizenship, 356 U.S. 44 (1958)

Trop v. Dulles, holding that denaturalization as a punishment is barred under the Eighth Amendment and finding that an American stripped of his citizenship for being a deserter in World War II suffered cruel and unusual punishment, 356 U.S. 86 (1958)

Kent v. Dulles and companion case to *Briehl v. Dulles*, holding that the State Department does not have the authority to deny a passport because the applicant refuses to sign an affidavit regarding membership in the Communist Party, and affirming that the right to travel is protected by the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment, 357 U.S. 116 (1958)

Wiener v. U.S., holding that the President does not have the power to remove individuals from commissions that are intended to be free of Executive or Congressional control, 357 U.S. 349 (1958)

N.A.A.C.P. v. Alabama, holding that the constitutional rights of speech and assembly extend to include the right of group association, 357 U.S. 449 (1958)

Speiser v. Randall, holding that a California law requiring veterans sign a loyalty oath to qualify for a property tax exemption was unconstitutional, 357 U.S. 513 (1958)

Cooper v. Aaron, holding that the states are bound by the Supreme Court's decisions, and could not choose to ignore them, 358 U.S. 1 (1958)

Sources:

1957 Events

- **Jan. 5:** [President Eisenhower, in an address to Congress, proposed offering military assistance to Middle Eastern countries so they could resist Communist aggression; this became known as the Eisenhower Doctrine](#)
- **Mar. 6:** *Suez Crisis* – UN troops occupy the Gaza Strip as Israeli forces withdraw from the area
- **Mar. 25:** Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany sign the Treaty of Rome, providing for a Common Market and pooling of nuclear resources
- **Apr. 10:** *Suez Crisis* - [Egypt reopened the Suez Canal to all shipping](#)
- **May 15:** Great Britain conducts its first hydrogen bomb test on Christmas Island
- **May 24:** [Anti-American rioting breaks out in Taipei, Taiwan](#)
- **June 17:** [Tuskegee Boycott begins in protest of municipal voting jurisdictions which strategically placed black votes outside of city limits](#)
- **Aug. 20:** [Final congressional approval is granted for U.S. participation in International Atomic Energy Agency](#)
- **Aug. 21:** The U.S. offers to suspend nuclear testing for two years
- **Aug. 28-29:** [During the debate on the Civil Rights Act, South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond filibusters for 24 hours and 18 minutes, the longest by a single individual](#)
- **Sept. 2:** *Little Rock Nine* - [Arkansas Governor Faubus orders the National Guard to prohibit black students from entering Central High School against the ruling of Federal Judge Davies](#)
- **Sept. 9:** The first civil rights law to pass congress since the Reconstruction era is signed by President Eisenhower
- **Sept. 23:** *Little Rock Nine* - [An angry mob prevents the nine African American students from entering an all-white school](#)
- **Sept. 24:** *Little Rock Nine* - [President Eisenhower sends troops to Little Rock, Ark. to enforce school integration](#)
- **Oct. 4:** *Space Race* - [The Soviet Union successfully launched Sputnik I, the first artificial satellite to orbit the Earth](#)
- **Nov. 3:** *Space Race* - The Soviet Union launches Sputnik II, a satellite carrying a dog named Laika
- **Nov. 27:** *Little Rock Nine* - Army withdraws from Little Rock, Ark. after Central Highschool integration
- **Dec. 6:** *Space Race* - [The first attempt by the U.S. to launch a satellite into Earth orbit fails when the Vanguard rocket carrying the satellite explodes on the ground](#)
- **Dec. 17:** [The U.S. conducts its first successful test launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile](#)

1958 Events

- **Jan 31:** *Space Race* - [the U.S. successfully launches its first Earth-orbiting satellite, Explorer I](#)
- **Feb. 1:** [Egypt and Syria announce the merger of their two countries into the United Arab Republic](#)
- **Mar. 27:** [Nikita Khrushchev becomes premier of the Soviet Union](#)
- **Mar. 31:** [The Soviet Union announces that it is willing to suspend nuclear weapons testing](#)
- **Apr. 2:** *Space Race* - [President Eisenhower recommends creating the National Aeronautics and Space Administration \(NASA\) to oversee U.S. space programs](#)
- **Apr. 3:** Fidel Castro's rebels attack Havana
- **Apr. 2:** *Space Race* - President Eisenhower recommends creating the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to oversee U.S. space programs
- **May 23:** Mao Tse Tung starts his "Great leap forward" movement in China in an attempt to modernize the country
- **June 16:** *Hungarian Rebellion* - [Imre Nagy, former Hungarian premier and symbol of the 1956 uprising against Soviet rule, is hung](#)
- **July 14:** King Faisal II of Iraq is assassinated by rebels who seize control of Iraq's government and proclaim a republic
- **July 29:** *Space Race* - [President Eisenhower signs legislation establishing NASA](#)
- **Aug. 18:** 1st Edition of the novel "Lolita" by Vladimir Nabokov published in the US
- **Aug. 22:** [President Eisenhower expresses willingness of the U.S. to negotiate a nuclear weapons test ban agreement under international control](#)
- **Aug. 23:** The U.S. warns the People's Republic of China that an attack on the Quemoy and Matsu Islands administered by Nationalist China, would constitute a threat to peace
- **Sept. 2:** *Space Race* - [President Eisenhower signed the National Defense Education Act, which provided aid to public and private education to promote learning in such fields as math and science](#)
- **Sept. 4:** The U.S. warns the People's Republic of China that it will use armed force if necessary to protect nationalist China
- **Sept. 7:** The U.S. Navy escorts Nationalist Chinese vessels to Quemoy
- **Sept. 12:** *Little Rock Nine* - U.S. Supreme Court unanimously rules that Arkansas officials who were resisting public school integration could not disregard the high court's ruling in *Cooper v. Aaron*
- **Sept. 15:** The U.S. and the People's Republic of China begin diplomatic meetings in Warsaw, Poland
- **Sept. 23:** The People's Republic of China announces the successful operation of an atomic reactor
- **Oct. 1:** *Space Race* - [NASA begins operations](#)
- **Oct. 3:** The Soviet Union resumes nuclear weapons testing

- **Oct. 31:** In Geneva, the U.S., Great Britain, and the Soviet Union begin talks on banning nuclear weapons tests; Great Britain and the U.S. then initiate a moratorium on such testing
- **Nov. 3:** The Soviet Union joins the moratorium on nuclear weapons testing
- **Nov. 27:** *Berlin Crisis* - The Soviet Union proposes that Berlin be made a free city and demands the withdrawal of Western military forces within six months
- **Dec. 15-18:** *Berlin Crisis* - [At a meeting in Paris, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Council rejects the Soviet ultimatum of Nov. 27 regarding Berlin](#)

Sources:

["The 'Big Stick' Declaration."](#) Congressional Record, 85th Congress, 1st Session (Jan. 7, 1957) Vol. 103, p. 328. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1957-0107

["Civilian Space Agency."](#) Congressional Record, 85th Congress, 2nd Session (Apr. 3, 1958) Vol. 104, p. 6259. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1958-0403

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Committee on Foreign Relations. Senate; Committee on Armed Services. Senate. [President's Proposal on the Middle East. Part 2](#). GPO, Feb. 5-8, 11, 1957. 85th Congress, 1st Session, 85 S1222-5-B. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1957-FOR-0016

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Eisenhower, Dwight D. [Message from the President of the United States relative to space science and exploration](#). Select Committee on Astronautics and Space Exploration. House, Apr. 2, 1958. 85th Congress, 2nd Session, H.doc.365. ProQuest Congressional, 12097 H.doc.365

Eisenhower, Dwight David. [Designating the Preparatory Commission of the International Atomic Energy Agency \[...\] as public international organizations \[...\]](#). Numbered Executive Orders, 1862-Present, Aug. 31, 1957. Executive Order No. 10727. ProQuest Congressional, 1957-EO-10727

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Eisenhower, Dwight David. [Transferring certain functions from the Department of Defense to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration](#). Numbered Executive Orders, 1862-Present, Oct. 1, 1958. Executive Order No. 10783. ProQuest Congressional, 1958-EO-10783

["Loss of Voting Rights at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama."](#) Congressional Record, 85th Congress, 1st Session (July 15, 1957) Vol. 103, pp. 11647-11648. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1957-0715

["Message of President Chiang Kai-shek to the Chinese People on the Taiwan Riots."](#) Appendix to the Congressional Record, 85th Congress, 1st Session (June 10, 1957) Vol. 103, pp. A4522-A4523. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1957-0610

["The President's Dispatch of Federal Troops to Little Rock, Ark."](#) Appendix to the Congressional Record, 85th Congress, 2nd Session (May 29, 1958) Vol. 104, pp. A4950-A4952. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1958-0529

["Report to the People of New York, Autumn 1957."](#) Congressional Record, 85th Congress, 1st Session (Aug. 30, 1957) Vol. 103, pp. 16970-16972. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1957-0830

Special Committee on Space and Astronautics. Senate. [Compilation of Materials on Space and Astronautics. No. 2. Advanced Research Projects Agency Hearings, Reports, Messages, Bills and Resolutions on Outer Space.](#) GPO, Apr. 14, 1958. 85th Congress, 2nd Session, S5325 (Y4.Sp1:Sp1/2/no.2). ProQuest Congressional, CMP-1958-SPA-0002

Special Subcommittee on Radiation; Committee on Atomic Energy. Joint; Subcommittee on Research and Development; Committee on Atomic Energy. Joint. [Technical Aspects of Detection and Inspection Controls of a Nuclear Weapons Test Ban. Part 1 of 2 Parts.](#) GPO, Apr. 19-22, 1960. 86th Congress, 2nd Session, 86 S1409-1-A. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1960-AEJ-0005

Subcommittee Investigating Preparedness; Committee on Armed Services. Senate. [Inquiry into Satellite and Missile Programs. Part 3.](#) GPO, Feb. 26, Apr. 3, July 24, 1958. 85th Congress, 2nd Session, 85 S1305-15. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1958-SAS-0016

Subcommittee on Disarmament; Committee on Foreign Relations. Senate. [Statement of Dr. Edward Teller.](#) Apr. 17, 1958. 85th Congress, 2nd Session, 85 SFO-T.22. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1958-FOR-0021

Major Acts

Middle East Peace and Stability Act. Authorized the President to cooperate with and assist any nation, or group of nations, in the Middle East desiring assistance in developing economic and military strength dedicated to the maintenance of national independence, and protecting themselves against armed aggression from a Communist-dominated country. Approved Mar. 9, 1957. ([71 Stat. 5; PL85-7](#))

International Atomic Energy Participation Act of 1957. Provided for the appointment of United States representatives in the subsidiary bodies of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Approved Aug. 28, 1957. ([71 Stat. 453; PL85-177](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Civil Rights Act of 1957. Created the executive Commission on Civil Rights and established a Civil Rights Division in the Department of Justice. Also empowered the Attorney General to seek court injunctions against the obstruction and deprivation of voting rights. Approved Sept. 9, 1957. ([71 Stat. 634; PL85-315](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1958. Appropriated \$3.26 billion for a Federal road-building program for fiscal years 1959-61. Approved Apr. 16, 1958. ([72 Stat. 89; PL85-381](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Act. Established the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission consisting of members of Congress, Presidential appointees, employees of Federal agencies, and private citizens to study the current status and needs of the Nation for outdoor recreation resources through the year 2000. Approved June 28, 1958. ([72 Stat. 238; PL85-470](#))

Alaska Statehood Act. Provided for the formal acceptance of the Constitution of the State of Alaska adopted on April 24, 1956. Granted to the State the right to select 102,550,000 acres of vacant unreserved public lands and an additional area of 800,000 acres adjacent to communities. Reserved an area in northern and northwestern Alaska for national defense establishments. Entitled the new State to two Senators and one Representative, and ordered Alaskans to vote in a referendum on whether they consented to becoming a State under the conditions specified in the act. Approved July 7, 1958. ([72 Stat. 339; PL85-508](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958. Created the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), a civilian agency charged with directing the Nation's scientific activities relating to all non-military aspects of space. Approved July 29, 1958. ([72 Stat. 426; PL85-568](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958. Authorized the Secretary of Defense to consolidate common supply or service functions for the Army, Navy and Air Force, and to assign responsibility for development and operation of new weapon systems. Also authorized the Secretary to transfer, reassign, abolish, or consolidate established combatant functions of the three services, subject to congressional approval. Approved Aug. 6, 1958. ([72 Stat. 514; PL85-599](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Transportation Act of 1958. Authorized the Interstate Commerce Commission to operate a \$500 million program of guaranteed loans to aid the Nation's railroads. Prohibited railroads from paying any stock dividends while a federally guaranteed loan for maintenance, or interest on the loan, was outstanding. It also gave the ICC full authority to adjust interstate railroad rates and power, regardless of State law, and to permit railroads to discontinue interstate service if it found the service to be an "unduly burden." Approved Aug. 12, 1958. ([72 Stat. 568; PL85-625](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Federal Aviation Act of 1958. Created the Federal Aviation Agency, which would later become the Federal Aviation Administration, to promulgate and enforce safety regulations for air travel, as well as to manage national airspace and air traffic. Approved Aug. 23, 1958. ([72 Stat. 731; PL85-726](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Former Presidents Act of 1958. Provided former Presidents with a taxable annual pension of \$25,000 and an annual allowance of up to \$50,000 for an office staff. Authorized the General Services Administration to provide suitable, furnished office space and free mailing privileges for former

Presidents. Also authorized a \$10,000 annual pension for widows of former Presidents, providing they give up any other Federal annuity or pension. Approved Aug. 25, 1958. ([72 Stat. 838; PL85-745](#))

National Defense Education Act of 1958. Established a \$1 billion program designed to improve the teaching of science, mathematics and foreign languages. Authorized the U.S. Commissioner of Education to lend \$295 million from Federal fiscal year 1959 through fiscal year 1962 to university and college student loan funds to enable needy students to continue their education. Provided matching grants to the States for public schools and 10-year loans to private schools for the purchase of equipment to be used in teaching science, mathematics and foreign languages, or for "minor" remodeling to make room for the equipment. Further authorized 5,500 three-year graduate fellowships, with preference to those students interested in teaching; \$15 million a year for grants to State educational agencies; \$32 million to colleges to create advanced institutes to be used to teach modern foreign languages to public school teachers; \$18 million for grants to public and nonprofit groups and individuals to conduct research into modern teaching aids; and \$60 million in grants to assist the States in vocational education. Approved Sept. 2, 1958. ([72 Stat. 1580; PL85-864](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1958. Created the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization by the merger of the Office of Defense Mobilization and the Federal Civil Defense Administration within the Executive Office of the President. Approved July 1, 1958. (72 Stat.1799-1801) On August 26, 1958, legislation was enacted changing the name of the new agency to the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization. ([72 Stat. 861](#))

Sources:

Dell, Christopher and Stephen W. Stathis. [Major Acts of Congress and Treaties Approved by the Senate, 1789-1980](#), Government Division (CRS), Sept. 1, 1982. 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 82-156 GOV. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1982-GOV-0005

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