The Great Society
President Johnson & his domestic policy

Lyndon B. Johnson
• Assumed the presidency after JFK assassination.
• From Texas.
• Very skilled politician.
• Personality:
  – Combative
  – Overbearing
  – In your face

The Johnson Treatment
• LBJ used intimidation as a way to get what he wanted.
• This was called the Johnson Treatment.
• Involved:
  – Invading personal space.
  – Occupying the highest chair in the room.
  – Researched each issue.
  [Know what you are talking about. And, intimidation works better when you know more than the person being intimidated.]
Johnson's Outrageous Behavior
He picked his nose during an address to Congress.
He would drive around his ranch drinking with his secret service agents.
He would go skinny dipping in the White House pool.
He would pick his dogs up the ears.
Wiped his hands on this tuxedo during his daughter’s wedding.

The Great Society
• Was Kennedy’s domestic agenda successful?
• With Kennedy’s assassination, Johnson was given a lot of “pity” power.
• Johnson was able to create a series of legislative initiatives aimed to aid the poor and beautify the country.

The Great Society • Was Kennedy’s domestic agenda successful? • With Kennedy’s assassination, Johnson was given a lot of “pity” power. • Johnson was able to create a series of legislative initiatives aimed to aid the poor and beautify the country.
The Tax Cut

• To get support in Congress, Johnson needed conservative allies (he was a Democrat)
• He proposed a tax cut.
• The GNP rose 7.1% in 1964, 8.1% in 1965, and 9.5% in 1966.
  – Unemployment fell
  – Inflation stayed in effect
• This was unintentionally successful!

Great Society Programs

• With an improving economy and "pity" from the Kennedy assassination, Johnson enacted multiple programs aimed to help the lower classes of American society.

  LBJ grew up poor, he wanted to help the nation’s poor.

The Economic Opportunity Act

• Created to combat poverty’s causes:
  – Illiteracy
  – Unemployment
• Gave poor people a voice in neighborhood polices concerning:
  – Housing
  – Health Care
  – Education
Head Start
• Head Start – a preschool program for children of low-income families.
• Also includes:
  – Healthcare
  – Nutritional services
  – Other social services

Question: Why do you think Head Start was created to combat poverty?

I love preschool!
I love coloring!
I love Head Start!

Aid to Education
• In 1965, The Elementary and Secondary Education Act provided:
  – 1.3 billion in aid to states based on number of low-income homes.
• Critics argued this allowed the federal government to usurp the state rights of education.
  – No Child Left Behind!

My ya kids, it’s me the Count! Can you count to 1.3 billion? Let’s do it together.
One: ah.
Two: ah, ah.
Three: ah, ah, ah.
Four: ah, ah, ah, ah.
Five: ah, ah, ah, ah, ah….

Medicare/Medicaid
• Medicare – provides hospital and low-cost insurance to Americans 65 and older.
• Medicaid – provides low-cost health insurance to poor Americans of any age who cannot afford their own private insurance.
• Medicare and Medicaid have become American entitlements. Does anyone know what an entitlement is?

“No longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine. No longer will illness crush and destroy the savings that they have so carefully put away.”
– President Lyndon B. Johnson

Medicare and Medicaid have been criticized extensively for the amount of red tape associated with their programs.
Things looked good for Johnson domestically. But remember, we have not yet talked about his foreign policy, i.e. Vietnam.

Critics of the Great Society
- Critics argued that expectations of the G.S. could not be met.
  - Bloody riots happened in many U.S. cities urban core.
- Americans complained their tax dollars were being taken away to pay for the poor.
  - Feared poor people became dependent on government handouts.
- Others argued that it gave too much power to the federal government.
  - Education
  - Healthcare
Those Pesky Entitlements

- Social Security (from the Great Depression), Medicare and Medicaid have become American Entitlements.
  - They make up the majority of the federal government’s budget today.
- However, when politicians are trying to balance the budget they will avoid cutting these programs at all cost.
  - Cutting them will anger lot’s of Americans.

Today in Washington D.C., America's most powerful lawmakers are trying to cut programs to balance the federal budget.

But what part of the budget do you think they are steering clear of?

Medicare and Medicaid Today

2010 Federal Budget

Funny

DISCRETION

Note to self: Try Ahmed.