

The Presidency from Roosevelt to Reagan

The growth of the presidency has depended in a number of factors

1. *The strength of individual presidents*
2. *Circumstances at the time*
3. *Problems of American Society*
4. *Political Beliefs*
5. *Power to persuade Congress*

Some historians have called this the growth of Imperial Presidency whereby more and more power was centralised in the hands of the President.

Franklin D Roosevelt 1933 - 1945 Democrat



- ✓ Extended powers of presidency
- ✓ New Deal Government took more active interest in the economy.
- ✓ Growth of the Welfare State
- ✓ Problems Great Depression and WW II
- ✓ Wartime conferences with Churchill and Stalin
- ✓ Fireside chats on radio and use of television increased his popularity

Harry S Truman 1945 - 1953 Democrat



- ✓ The buck stops here - atomic bombs
- ✓ Foreign policy - **cold war** opposition to the spread of communism
- ✓ Truman Doctrine
- ✓ Marshall Plan
- ✓ Policy of containment
- ✓ NATO
- ✓ Korean War ordered troops to fight even though even though Congress declares war
- ✓ Power limited by congress some how did not want to see federal power expanded
- ✓ Executive orders to end racial discrimination
- ✓ Congress passed bill to limit term to 2 backlash to Roosevelt's 4

Dwight Eisenhower 1953 - 1961 Republican



- ✓ Favoured cutting back big government dynamic conservatism
- ✓ Felt his predecessors had taken over some powers of congress
- ✓ Policies uncontroversial got majority of bills passed.
- ✓ Domino Theory

- ✓ Policy of peaceful coexistence Khrushchev
- ✓ Prestige declined at end some accused him of not making enough of his powers

John F Kennedy 1961 - 1963 Democrat



- ✓ New Frontier policies poverty civil rights, health and education
- ✓ Difficulties with the conservative coalition of Southern Democrats and Republicans in congress
- ✓ Successful space programme

- ✓ US Steel
- ✓ Congress blocked policies
- ✓ Increased involvement in Vietnam
- ✓ Cuban Missile crisis

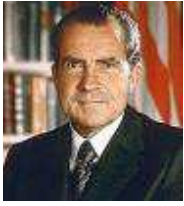
Lyndon Johnson 1963 - 1969 Democrat



- ✓ Great society
- ✓ Centralised control in the Whitehouse skilled negotiator with congress
- ✓ Improve the lives of people
- ✓ Civil rights Act 1964 voting Rights act passed

- ✓ War on poverty
- ✓ Passed a lot of legislation he extended the power of the president
- ✓ First federally funded healthcare system Medicare and Medicaid
- ✓ Tonkin Resolution involved the US heavily in Vietnam
- ✓ His actions in Vietnam led congress to limit presidential power as they felt it was abused

Richard Nixon 1969 - 1974 Republican



- ✓ Difficulty in getting laws passed because of Democratic control of congress
- ✓ Conservative judges to the Supreme Court
- ✓ Paris peace agreement to end US involvement in Vietnam
- ✓ CIA and FBI to spy on others - pentagon papers leaked to press
- ✓ Cover up Watergate break in by republicans into Democrat headquarter
- ✓ Concentrated powers in his hands High point in the growth of imperial presidency
- ✓ He did not want to hand over white house tapes on water gate
- ✓ Congress had to limit the powers of the president by passing laws to ensure government official disclosed their wealth and restore power to congress on declaring war and on the budgets

Gerald Ford 1974 - 1977 Republican



Jimmy Carter 1977 - 1981 Democrat



- ✓ Difficulties with congress
- ✓ Prestige of presidency took a battering during their terms

Ronald Reagan 1981 - 1989 Republican



- ✓ Wanted to improve the prestige
- ✓ Reduce the role of big government
- ✓ Reganomics cut on taxes cut back on spending on healthcare agreements with Gorbachev
- ✓ Iran Contra affair allowed money from arms sales to be given to rebels in Nicaragua against wishes of congress