



The Seventies in America

Volume I

Abortion rights—Food trends

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SALEM PRESS, INC.
Pasadena, California
Hackensack, New Jersey

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Title page photo: *A college student in the early 1970's. Coeducation brought many women to campuses across the United States and Canada.* (Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

Cover images: *Saturday Night Fever* (Hulton Archive/Getty Images)
"Sorry no gas until the 1st" (Hulton Archive/Getty Images)
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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The seventies in America / editor, John C. Super ; managing editor, Tracy Irons-Georges.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-10: 1-58765-228-5 (set : alk. paper)

ISBN-13: 978-1-58765-228-8 (set : alk. paper)

ISBN-10: 1-58765-229-3 (vol. 1 : alk. paper)

ISBN-13: 978-1-58765-229-5 (vol. 1 : alk. paper)

1. United States—Civilization—1970—Encyclopedias. 2. Nineteen seventies—Encyclopedias.

I. Super, John C., 1944- II. Irons-Georges, Tracy.

E169.12.S447 2006

973.924—dc22

2005023549

First Printing

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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■ Cambodia invasion and bombing

The Event During the Vietnam War, U.S. ground forces launched an attack into Cambodia, and the U.S. Air Force bombed communist positions there

Date Invasion occurred April 30-June 29, 1970; bombing occurred March 18, 1969-August 15, 1973

President Richard M. Nixon's decision to authorize U.S. forces to enter Cambodia in order to destroy Vietnamese communist positions there furiously reignited the American an-

tiwar movement. In May, 1970, about one-third of all American colleges closed in face of massive student unrest, and riots turned deadly on two campuses. Bombing communist positions in Cambodia was begun in secret and later met with harsh opposition in the U.S. Congress, which forced its ending.

When Richard Nixon became president of the United States in January, 1969, he owed part of his election to a vague promise to end the Vietnam War without abandoning South Vietnam to the communists. To force communist North Vietnam to accept such a peace, Nixon and his national security ad-



U.S. soldiers are flown into Cambodia during the Vietnam War in May, 1970. (AP/Wide World Photos)

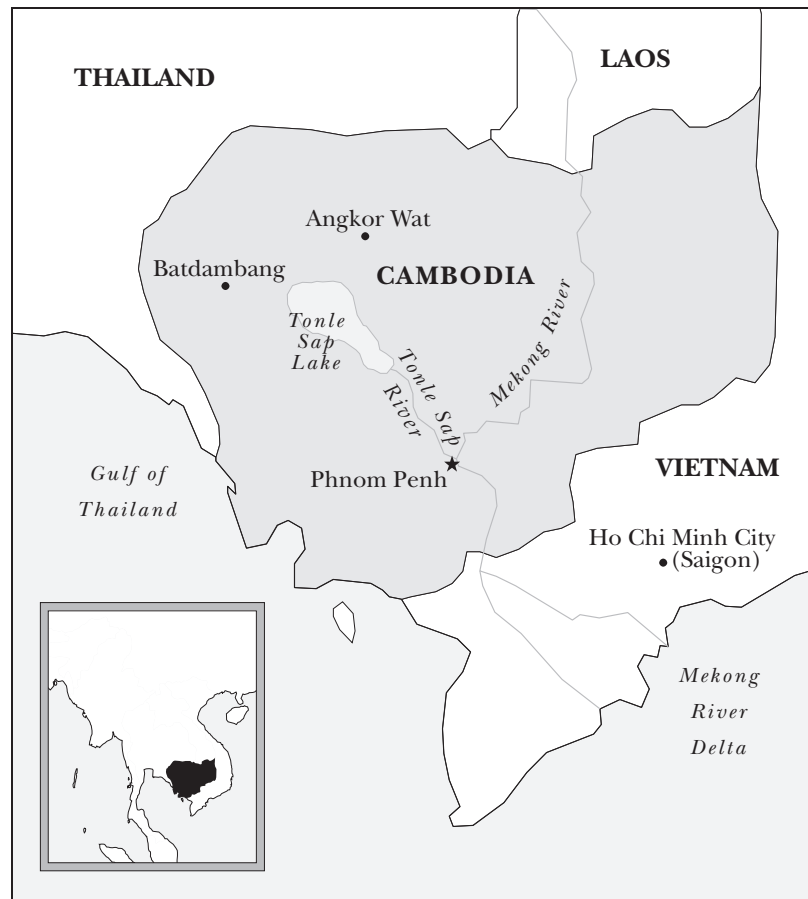
viser, Henry Kissinger, decided to look for new ideas.

Following 1960, North Vietnam had used Laos and Cambodia to infiltrate South Vietnam. Along the Ho Chi Minh trail, it moved troops and supplies to within fifty miles of Saigon. When American combat troops entered South Vietnam in 1965, the North Vietnamese also built sanctuaries in eastern Cambodia. To disrupt them, Nixon approved Operation Breakfast for March 18, 1969. Sixty B-52 bombers struck North Vietnamese Base Area 353 in Cambodia, where American military intelligence erroneously located communist headquarters. Nixon decided to keep this mission secret, as well as the next bombing in April, 1969, which in turn was followed by more strikes one month later. Bombing continued in this form until May, 1970.

Invasion and Reaction By early 1970, the American public believed Nixon was winding down U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. On April 19, 1970, the Vietnam Moratorium Committee announced that it was closing its Washington offices.

On March 18, 1970, General Lon Nol deposed King Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia and ordered communist Vietnamese troops to leave Cambodia. They refused and defeated his troops. In Beijing, Sihanouk allied himself with the communists, including the Khmer Rouge of Cambodia. Communist pressure on Lon Nol led the U.S. military to consider an alternative. On April 22, Nixon approved a South Vietnamese attack into the Parrot's Beak, a Cambodian salient. On April 28, Nixon permitted U.S. ground forces to assault the sanctuaries of Base Areas 353 and 352 and advance up to thirty miles into Cambodia.

The invasion of Cambodia arguably had little military value, but it shocked American and world public opinion. On April 30, Nixon told a stunned American public on television that he had launched



an attack into Cambodia. Immediately, the antiwar movement organized massive protests. Lon Nol, who had not been told of the invasion, was also shocked and surprised.

Nixon and Kissinger had seriously misread the country's mood. Nixon's critics, as well as a majority of American students, angrily denounced the action. About one-third of all American colleges closed as result of riots triggered by the invasion. On May 4, at Kent State University in Ohio, the confrontation turned lethal when state troops opened fire on student protesters, killing four. Outside the White House, more than 75,000 antiwar protesters gathered.

Nixon ultimately gave in. He announced that U.S. troops would withdraw by June 30. After a subdued press conference on May 8, Nixon visited student protesters at the Lincoln Memorial early the next morning, but the two sides did not connect. On June 29, U.S. troops left Cambodia.

Continued Bombing The bombing in Cambodia assumed a new form. The Cooper-Church Amendment of December 22, 1970, forbade U.S. military action in Cambodia except to intercept communist forces bound for South Vietnam. Nixon and Kissinger exploited this loophole.

The U.S. Air Force continued tactical and B-52 air strikes in Cambodia; Lon Nol continued to lose. At the end of 1972, only massive U.S. B-52 strikes prevented total disaster after his failed Chenla II offensive.

The signing of the Paris Peace Accords on January 27, 1973, brought a temporary halt. Article 20 of the treaty called for an end to foreign military activity in Cambodia and for Cambodian peace negotiations, but without a deadline. On February 7, Sihanouk, the Khmer Rouge, and their communist allies declared that they would continue to fight. American bombing started again on February 9.

In the spring of 1973, Congress objected to the bombing in Cambodia. American combat troops had left South Vietnam, and American prisoners of war (POWs) had been released by Hanoi. On May 10, 1973, the House of Representatives voted to block funding for the bombing. Congress passed an amendment to end the bombing on June 30, but Nixon successfully vetoed it. However, Nixon agreed to end the bombing on August 15, 1973, which he did.

The initial bombing did little to disrupt communist Vietnamese operations. Its secrecy came to an end in July, 1973, when the American public also began to learn of the Watergate scandal. An attempt to impeach Nixon for the secret bombing, too, was dropped by the Democratic leadership on July 30, 1974.

From 1970 on, the bombing escalated up to its end. In total, more than one-half million tons of bombs were dropped, almost half from February to August, 1973. Inexplicably, even when the Khmer Rouge learned of the war's imminent end, they continued their offensive against the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh in June and July, 1973, which led to the death of about 25 percent of their troops from American air strikes.

Impact After the bombing stopped, it took the Khmer Rouge until April 17, 1975, to capture Phnom Penh. Until the Vietnamese attacked in December, 1979, the Khmer Rouge ran a genocidal re-

gime responsible for the "killing fields" where about 1.6 million Cambodians were murdered.

The role of the American bombing in the tragedy of Cambodia remains subject to public and academic debate. Some historians have argued that Cambodia became involved in the war just as the United States wanted to exit it and had to pay a terrible price. After 1980, many Cambodian refugees settled in the United States, further augmenting the Asian American population.

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R. C. Lutz

See also Antiwar demonstrations; *Apocalypse Now*; Asian Americans; Central Intelligence Agency (CIA); China and the United States; Cold War; Foreign policy of the United States; Kent State massacre; Kissinger, Henry; Nixon, Richard M.; Paris Peace Accords; Vietnam War; War Powers Resolution of 1973; Watergate.

■ Camp David Accords

Definition Peace agreement between the leaders of Israel and Egypt

Date September 5-17, 1978

As the first international agreement between the state of Israel and an Arab state, the accords marked a milestone in the Middle East peace process.



Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, U.S. president Jimmy Carter, and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin clasp hands in 1979 in celebration of the Camp David Accords. (AP/Wide World Photos)

President Jimmy Carter was laboring against historical precedent when he invited Egyptian president Anwar Sadat and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin to Camp David in order to discuss ways of bringing about peace between the countries, which had a long-ingrained antagonism toward each other.

Major wars between the Arab states and Israel had erupted in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973. Egypt, as the largest of these Arab states, had played a prominent role in all of them, having lost all the Sinai Peninsula up to the Suez Canal to the Israelis as a result of the Six-Day War of 1967. An Egyptian offensive into the Sinai ordered by Sadat during the 1973 Yom Kippur War had been beaten back by Israeli forces. Thereafter, Sadat had moderated his stance and took the dramatic initiative of journeying to Israel and making a conciliatory speech to the Israeli Knesset (parliament). Prime Minister Begin, though previously noted for his hard-line position, responded posi-

tively to what he perceived as recognition of Israel's existence as an independent state.

Encouraged by this moderate thaw in Israeli-Egyptian relations, President Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance suggested on August 7, 1978, that the leaders and delegations meet at Camp David, Maryland, under the auspices of the U.S. government. The summit meeting began on September 5, with President Carter playing the critical role of conciliator and go-between when sticking points were brought up that threatened to sabotage the negotiations, as often occurred. The final agreement was reached in what was considered an amazingly short amount of time, and the Camp David Accords were publicly signed by Sadat and Begin and witnessed by President Carter on September 17, 1978.

The most far-reaching provision of the accords was the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. In its details, the accords

called for a phased withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Sinai Peninsula within three years (Egyptian troops garrisoning the Sinai were limited), the right of Israeli passage through the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran, and a commitment for future negotiations leading to Palestinian self-government in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Impact Though certain issues proved far too divisive to address at the time (notably, the final disposition of Jerusalem), the accords, for all their limitations, opened the gate for future Arab-Israeli talks and agreements, which would eventually bring in the Palestinians themselves, Jordan, and moderate elements on both sides.

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Raymond Pierre Hylton

See also Carter, Jimmy; Foreign policy of the United States; Israel and the United States; Middle East and North America.

■ Canada and the British Commonwealth

Definition Diplomatic, cultural, and economic relations between Canada and Great Britain

Part of Canada's foreign policy during the 1970's was to define itself apart from the United States. Its ties with Britain and the Commonwealth were seen as an element in that definition.

Canada's relationship with the British Commonwealth in the 1970's was still governed by the 1867 British North America Act, when Canada became a Dominion, a self-governing country whose head of state was the British monarch and whose highest legal court was the Privy Council of the British Parliament. Under the act, Canada would promote the interests of the British Empire, which it did, for example, by sending considerable numbers of troops to two World Wars in order to fight alongside British Empire forces. In 1931, the Statute of Westminster formally created the Commonwealth. Each member was deemed equal and independent, sharing allegiance to the British crown. Trade prefer-

ences were formalized at the Ottawa Imperial Conference of 1932.

Redefinition of Goals After World War II, most of the existing British colonies became independent, opting to join the Commonwealth. By 1970, it had grown to thirty-four members, becoming far more diverse culturally, racially, and politically and containing a quarter of the world's population. Although the allegiance to the British queen as head of the Commonwealth remained, many countries had chosen to become republics rather than monarchies. The political and economic aspirations of the new Commonwealth countries caused tensions.

It was in the 1970's particularly that the Commonwealth also sought to redefine itself, and Canadian influence in this move was considerable. A Commonwealth secretariat had been set up in 1965 in London with its first secretary general being a highly regarded Canadian diplomat, Arnold Smith. Two main departments were formed: one to achieve technical cooperation, aid, and training between the more and less advanced members and the other to cover social affairs, such as a youth program, cultural exchanges, and legal reform training and advice.

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGMs) had been held every two years in London, with Britain chairing them. In the 1970's, the CHOGMs moved away from London and were chaired by the host country's head of government. At the first and most significant CHOGM of the decade, the 1971 Singapore Conference, a set of principles put forward by President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia was agreed upon only after much acrimony. These principles established the purposes of the Commonwealth going forward as keeping international peace, upholding democratic processes and individual liberty and dignity, and overcoming racism and poverty. Agreements, rather than decisions, of a nonbinding nature were to be reached. The Commonwealth was to provide a good example of multinational cooperation. In later conferences in the decade, more specific proposals for aid to poorer members and fairer trade agreements were discussed.

Disunity A number of persistent factors worked against such cooperation. Some were of African origin. The Republic of South Africa had left the Commonwealth over the issue of apartheid, but arguments raged over the issue of trade sanctions and

Commonwealth of Nations Members During the 1970's

Listed by year joined:

Canada	Kenya	Samoa
Australia	Malawi	Tonga
New Zealand	Malta	Bangladesh
India	Tanzania	Bahamas
Pakistan (left in 1972, rejoined in 1989)	Zambia	Grenada
Sri Lanka	Rhodesia	Papua New Guinea
Ghana	Gambia	Seychelles
Malaysia	Singapore	Solomon Islands
Nigeria	Guyana	Tuvalu
Cyprus	Botswana	Dominica
Sierra Leone	Lesotho	St. Lucia
Jamaica	Barbados	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Trinidad and Tobago	Mauritius	Kiribati
Uganda	Swaziland	
	Fiji	

Britain's use of naval bases. Most African members did not see the Cold War in the same way as Britain. Later, Uganda, Rhodesia (later called Zimbabwe), and Nigeria, all members, were seen as behaving in undemocratic ways, and there was much agonized discussion as to appropriate responses.

The last CHOGM of the decade, at Lusaka, Zambia, in 1979, produced an important declaration upholding democratic, nonracist principles, applying them specifically to Rhodesia in a Commonwealth bid to restore legal status to that regime.

Other factors that fostered disunity centered round Britain's decision to enter the European Economic Community (EEC), which meant the demise of preferential Commonwealth tariffs, including the exports of Canadian wheat and lumber. Britain and the Commonwealth tried to protect the interests of the poorer nations, especially at the 1975 Lome Convention, but with limited success.

Canada's Role In all the developments of the 1970's, Canada played significant roles. In his distinguished secretariat, Smith used his administrative skills in setting up the various departments and his political skills in keeping Commonwealth heads from losing unity of purpose.

Pierre Trudeau, the Canadian prime minister for practically the entire decade, also made a significant

individual contribution. He had been somewhat skeptical of the usefulness of the Commonwealth as it had evolved away from a political power structure to a cultural and economic one. However, through his friendship with other senior leaders, he saw the Commonwealth as a way for middle-sized powers to exercise influence in a world increasingly dominated by the Cold War superpowers. His mediation at the Singapore Conference won him great respect, and in 1973, he chaired the CHOGM meeting at Ottawa, which was an altogether more relaxed and informal affair. Nonetheless, talk of Canadian leadership replacing British came to nothing. At the Lusaka Conference, Canadian influence was minimal, largely because Trudeau was absent after losing his position in a political defeat at home.

At a government level, Canada supported the secretariat programs financially to the full, seeing them as an appropriate way to channel aid to less developed members. Canada's growing role as world peacekeeper was enhanced by the opportunities given to it by the Commonwealth in order to relate to its African members particularly: Canada was able to back these members in their anti-apartheid stance against South Africa and Rhodesia. Moreover, Canada used its Caribbean connections within the Commonwealth to increase trade and tourism, as well as economic investment. Culturally, many Common-

wealth students from developing countries studied at Canadian universities and law schools. Immigration from Commonwealth countries, especially India and Pakistan, also became significant in the decade.

Impact Former Canadian prime minister John Diefenbaker, who held office from 1957 to 1963, viewed Canada's membership in the Commonwealth as something that had prevented Canada from being absorbed into the United States. It is certainly true that the Commonwealth was one of the enabling institutions that channelled Canada's relations with the rest of the world, giving it a middle-power role independent of the United States and one that gained the confidence of many Third World nations. It was not until 1982 that all legal powers reverted back to Canada, when it became fully independent of Britain.

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David Barratt

See also Commonwealth Games of 1978; Europe and North America; Foreign policy of Canada; Immigration to Canada; International trade of Canada; Trudeau, Pierre.

■ Canada and the United States

Definition Diplomatic relations between Canada and the United States

Although the countries are friends and allies, the relationship between Canada and the United States underwent some difficulty in the 1970's as political divisions emerged over the economy and foreign policy.

Degrees both of continuity and of change existed in the generally friendly relationship between Canada and the United States during the 1970's. In the previous decade, increasing challenges from Canada to that relationship had arisen, and they continued into the 1970's. Canada remained out of Vietnam and attempted in a bout of nationalism to assert its independence in areas beyond foreign policy, particularly the economy.

Trudeau and Nixon These trends of the 1970's were personified in the Canadian prime minister, Pierre Trudeau, who served for almost the entire decade. Trudeau demonstrated a repeated willingness to challenge relations with the United States. To the chagrin of the presidential administration of Richard M. Nixon, his government discussed pulling out of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and raised questions about the development of a U.S. antiballistic missile system that could have been used to shoot down Soviet nuclear missiles over Canadian territory.

In addition, Canada sought to rebuild relations with communist China—Trudeau visited Beijing in 1973—and continued to maintain solid relations with Fidel Castro and Cuba. In the case of China, the Nixon administration quietly welcomed the Canadian move, since it foreshadowed its own efforts at reconciliation.

Growing Friction Although actions by the Trudeau government, including criticism of continued U.S. involvement in Vietnam, contributed to a poisoned relationship with Washington, D.C., Ottawa was not exclusively to blame. According to tapes released as a result of Watergate, Nixon repeatedly employed a

scatological adjective whenever referring to the Canadian prime minister.

Although enmity existed over foreign policy, it was in economic relations between the two countries that friction would grow. Canada's small economy was irrevocably intertwined with that of its neighbor, with nearly 75 percent of its exports going south. That dependency meant that any economic downturn or shift in economic policy in the United States would invariably affect Canada. For example, in 1971, in response to a major recession, the Nixon administration brought in a series of measures designed to right the U.S. economy. Among these changes was a tax on imports. This measure had a profound and negative impact on Canada's economy. Eventually, Trudeau traveled to Washington, D.C., himself and obtained a promise that the United States would drop the tax on Canadian exports. Despite this success, the message was that U.S. economic interests would remain paramount to its traditional friendship with Canada. Nixon reiterated this reality to the Canadian government in an April, 1972, state visit to Ottawa.

The response from Canada came in the form of a growing sense of economic nationalism that translated into concern about U.S. economic domination of Canada. A government report in 1971 called for greater government intervention to regulate foreign control, principally meaning U.S. control, of the economy. This report led to the creation by Ottawa of an agency with the power to block foreign takeovers of Canadian companies. The Trudeau government also made concerted efforts to build up trade ties with Europe and Japan. Canada's natural market, however, existed in the United States, and no real shift in Canadian trade occurred.

Trudeau, Ford, and Carter Some of the animosity between Washington and Ottawa dissipated with the 1974 resignation of Nixon, but by then, a new issue had arisen between the two nations. Price shocks caused by events in the Middle East affected both nations' oil-dependent economies. However, the key factor was that Canada exported oil to the United States. Fears of Canada running out of oil led the Trudeau government to promise a phasing out of oil exports to the United States. Despite some concern, the new presidential administration of Gerald R. Ford consented to the Canadian plan. In part, this response reflected a friendlier relationship between

the two governments. Trudeau enjoyed a better personal relationship with Ford than with Nixon, and Ford, having grown up in a state bordering on Canada, had a more positive attitude toward Canada.

The increasingly optimistic relationship between Washington, D.C., and Ottawa continued even after Ford's defeat at the hands of Jimmy Carter in 1976. Carter and Trudeau developed a friendship and, in turn, the United States offered support to Canada in its struggle with separatist forces in the Province of Quebec. Carter went so far as to express his preference for a united Canada.

In 1979, Trudeau briefly left office when his party lost the election to the Progressive Conservatives under Joe Clark. Only in power for a short time, Clark's minority government had little opportunity to interact with the United States under Carter.

Impact The 1970's represented both continuity and change in the relationship between Canada and the United States. As in the past, the smoothness of the relationship was often determined by the nature of the personal relationship between the Canadian prime minister and the U.S. president. In the 1970's, relations improved with the departure of Nixon. However, the 1970's also demonstrated that economics were at the heart of the interactions between the two countries and could bring them together (as in the growing level of trade) or drive them apart (as with the United States' efforts at improving its own economy).

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