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SOVEREIGNTY

Sovereignty is the supreme power of an individual, country, or state to govern internal affairs without interference from any other comparable authority. Sovereign countries can conduct foreign affairs with other nations, including negotiating treaties, engaging in international commerce, and making war and peace. Sovereignty defines political authority within the modern nation. It first applied to a king's divine right to rule his subjects. Unlimited power was believed to flow from God to the king, enabling him to rule his kingdom. The term evolved through time to represent the power of a state to take every action necessary to regulate itself. In democratic countries the ultimate source of sovereignty or government power lies with the people.

In 1777 the Second Continental Congress of the United States (the political body charged with managing the colonies during the Revolutionary War, 1775–83) adopted the Articles of Confederation, a constitutional document giving Congress a few powers typical of an independent sovereign nation. Congress alone had the power to conduct foreign affairs, negotiate treaties, control a national army, coin money, and operate a national postal system. Nevertheless, the Articles deliberately kept the central government weak by limiting its sovereignty in several important ways. Each state had its own court to settle disputes. All important congressional decisions required the approval of at least nine states, and still these resolutions merely constituted suggestions to the states.

The limited sovereignty granted to Congress proved ineffective, and 10 years later the U.S. Constitution was ratified. It was followed by ratification of the Bill of Rights in 1791. The Tenth Amendment of the Bill of Rights states, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." Although the United States is a sovereign nation in external affairs, the states have certain attributes of internal

sovereignty, such as control over public schools. The U.S. Constitution, the supreme law of the land, is the ultimate determinant of sovereignty.

Throughout U.S. history the term *sovereignty* has been applied to a variety of situations. During the nineteenth century the term "popular sovereignty" referred to the principle of allowing settlers to decide on their own a territory's slavery policy. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which allowed for the settlement of several Western territories, embraced the notion of popular sovereignty. Another application of the concept of sovereignty is to sovereign rights over territorial waters. For example, the United States has sovereign ocean rights extending 12 nautical miles from shore. These rights include fishing, shipping, navigation, and use of natural resources.

SEE ALSO *Articles of Confederation; Continental Congress, Second; Federalism; Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854); Popular Sovereignty; States' Rights*

SPACE RACE

The space race was a political, economic, and technological rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union to claim dominance in space exploration. Conducted from the late 1950s to the early 1970s, the space race was part of the Cold War, a broader ideological conflict between the two countries lasting from the end of World War II (1939–45) to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Because the ability to launch rockets into space was tied to national security, and because dominance in space was an important ideological weapon, the United States and the Soviet Union spent massive sums on the space race. In 1966, for example, the United States spent \$6 billion on the space program—more than 4 percent of the entire federal budget, exceeding the amount spent on housing and community development. By 1972 the space race had become one of the most expensive peacetime national efforts in U.S. history.

During the Cold War the United States competed with the Soviet Union to demonstrate technological and military superiority. The space race, an extension of this battle, had its origins in the development and stockpiling of thermonuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles by both countries after World War II. The technology for the missiles came from Nazi scientists, who developed and built rockets toward the end of the war. The Soviet Union, which excelled in large missile development, stunned Americans in October 1957 when it became the first nation to place a satellite, Sputnik 1, in orbit around the Earth. In response, the United States attempted to launch its own orbiting satellite, the

PRIMARY SOURCE

EXCERPT FROM PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY'S SPEECH
AT RICE UNIVERSITY ABOUT THE NATIONS' SPACE
EXPLORATION PROGRAM

We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win, and the others, too.

It is for these reasons that I regard the decision last year to shift our efforts in space from low to high gear as among the most important decisions that will be made during my incumbency in the office of the Presidency.

In the last 24 hours we have seen facilities now being created for the greatest and most complex exploration in man's history. We have felt the ground shake and the air shattered by the testing of a Saturn C-1 booster rocket, many times as powerful as the Atlas which launched John Glenn, generating power equivalent to 10,000 automobiles with their accelerators on the floor. We have seen the site where five F-1 rocket engines, each one as powerful as all eight engines of the Saturn combined, will be clustered together to make the advanced Saturn missile, assembled in a new building to be built at Cape Canaveral as tall as a 48 story structure, as wide as a city block, and as long as two lengths of this field.

Within these last 19 months at least 45 satellites have circled the earth. Some 40 of them were "made in the United States of America" and they were far more

sophisticated and supplied far more knowledge to the people of the world than those of the Soviet Union.

The Mariner spacecraft now on its way to Venus is the most intricate instrument in the history of space science. The accuracy of that shot is comparable to firing a missile from Cape Canaveral and dropping it in this stadium between the 40-yard lines.

Transit satellites are helping our ships at sea to steer a safer course. Tiros satellites have given us unprecedented warnings of hurricanes and storms, and will do the same for forest fires and icebergs.

We have had our failures, but so have others, even if they do not admit them. And they may be less public.

To be sure, we are behind, and will be behind for some time in manned flight. But we do not intend to stay behind, and in this decade, we shall make up and move ahead....

Many years ago the great British explorer George Mallory, who was to die on Mount Everest, was asked why did he want to climb it. He said, "Because it is there."

Well, space is there, and we're going to climb it, and the moon and the planets are there, and new hopes for knowledge and peace are there. And, therefore, as we set sail we ask God's blessing on the most hazardous and dangerous and greatest adventure on which man has ever embarked.

SOURCE: Kennedy, John F. "Rice University Speech, September 12, 1962." NASA Video. 1962.

Vanguard, in December 1957, but the spacecraft exploded on liftoff. The following month the United States successfully blasted the Explorer 1 satellite into orbit.

During the late 1950s the United States and the Soviet Union increasingly focused on manned space flight. In October 1958 Congress created the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), which took control of matters pertaining to the space race away from the military. The Project Mercury program was initiated during this time with the goal of achieving orbital flight. But in April 1961 the Soviet Union became the first country to place a human, Yury Gagarin (1934–68), in orbit around the Earth. A few weeks later Alan Shepard (1923–98) became the first American in space, and later

in 1961 John Glenn (1921–) became the first American to orbit the Earth.

The Soviet Union's progress caused grave concern within the U.S. government. On May 25, 1961, President John F. Kennedy (in office 1961–63) proclaimed before Congress that the United States should land an astronaut on the moon by the end of the decade. The U.S. lunar program, Project Apollo, was established in late 1966, ultimately costing over \$25 billion and employing more than 400,000 people during its peak. On December 24, 1968, the first manned Apollo rocket orbited the moon, and the following year, on July 20, 1969, Apollo 11 astronauts Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin (1930–) and Neil Armstrong (1930–2012) became the first humans to walk on the moon. With this iconic event, watched on live

television by an estimated half billion people around the world, the United States effectively won the space race propaganda war.

After Apollo 11 public interest in the space program waned, and by the early 1970s many people in the United States questioned the billions of dollars spent on a program of debatable scientific value when there were pressing social and economic issues at home. The Apollo 17 mission in 1972 was the last time the United States sent astronauts to the moon, and funding for the U.S. space program was subsequently curtailed. With the space race over, NASA turned to unmanned exploration, the space shuttle program, and even collaboration with the Soviet Union on the International Space Station program and other related projects.

SEE ALSO *Aerospace Industry; Cold War; National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)*

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SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

The Spanish-American War was a brief 1898 conflict that signaled the end of Spanish colonialism in the Western Hemisphere and the rise of the United States as a world power. Although the war lasted only four months, it had profound implications not only for the United States and Spain but also for Cuba and other Spanish possessions. In what U.S. Secretary of State John Hay (in office 1898–1905) called “a splendid little war,” the United States won a relatively easy victory and demonstrated an intent to protect its economic interests abroad and to promote its own expansion. The brief conflict also marked an increased U.S. involvement and assertiveness in global affairs. Significantly more far-reaching were the war’s effects on Cuba, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Guam, and the Philippines, whose destinies were changed by the events that occurred between April and August of 1898.

The initial impetus of United States for going to war with Spain in 1898 was its interest in Cuba—an interest that

was primarily economic in nature. One of the last and largest remaining colonies of Spain, Cuba had been gearing up for a revolution throughout the nineteenth century; its politically active population craved independence. The United States, which only a hundred years before had gained independence from Great Britain, sympathized with Cuba’s desire to be rid of Spanish control. Already engaged in a guerrilla war with Spain, Cuban rebels looked to their country’s larger neighbor for support. The United States supplied that support for reasons that were clearly apparent: It had \$50 million invested in Cuba, and its annual trade with the sugar-producing island amounted to \$100 million. Moreover, the United States had long opposed Spanish rule in Cuba for humanitarian reasons. However, popular support for U.S. involvement in the situation was garnered stateside through the phenomenon of “yellow journalism,” in which newspaper magnates such as William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer filled their publications with vivid yet biased reporting and editorial pieces that promoted the moral duty of the United States to enter into the fray. This yellow journalism served two purposes: not only did it promote the personal interests of Hearst, Pulitzer, and other business owners and their powerful political allies but it also sold more newspapers. Ultimately, the American public supported the war.

Yellow journalists took particular advantage of the mysterious explosion and sinking of the battleship U.S.S. *Maine* on February 15, 1898, in Havana Harbor, where it apparently had been making a courtesy visit. Although the cause of the sinking, which claimed 266 lives, remains unexplained to this day, a naval investigation at the time surmised that the explosion was external in origin. Hearst and Pulitzer’s newspapers fanned the flames of the incident by suggesting that Spain had been behind the explosion and urging readers to “Remember the *Maine*.” The Spanish government approached the issue in a conciliatory manner, wishing to avoid conflict with the United States. Responding to an angered public, President William McKinley (in office 1897–1901) and Congress took action, ordering the withdrawal of Spanish forces from Cuba on April 19 and officially declaring war on April 25.

The U.S. war strategy included a blockade of Cuba; a naval campaign in the Philippines, which was also Spanish colony; an attack with ground forces in Santiago, Cuba; and a dispatch of troops to San Juan, Puerto Rico, another Spanish possession. Although the United States was victorious, soldiers lacked supplies, sanitary conditions for troops were poor, and rations proved unacceptable. Although by the war’s end only 379 U.S. troops had died in combat, thousands more had perished from disease. The Spanish military suffered from its own insufficiencies, particularly the decrepitude of its fleets, which remained vulnerable to U.S. naval power.