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A Summary of U.S. History

Introduction

When I said I'd do a short summary of U.S. History, I didn't imagine how much work it is. I suppose the people in America think everything which has to do with America is of highest importance. So I have to beg your pardon when some for you important chapters aren't mentioned or only shortly addressed.

The Early America (1620-1789)

After the Discovery of America by Christoph Kolumbus in 1492, it took almost 1 ½ Centurys until the settlement from Europe began. Before this, England started to build up Colonies and founded new Cities in the "New Land". Virgina is the first Colony, named after the Kings daughter. In 1619 the first slaves where brought from the Netherlands to Virginia, after they where ordered for the tobacco industry. In 1620 the so called "Pilgrims" landed in the near of Cape Cod after they emigrated from England to the Netherlands and founded "Plymouth Plantation." On their ship, the "Mayflower" they signed a Compact which says, that Government and laws should follow from common decisions, without giving up the loyalitiy to the British Crown. After this new Colonies are founded in America, which is called New England by the Pilgrims.

Towards 1775 the people in America suffer under the treatment of England. The Crown initializes new laws for dutys, and disturb economy. The desire of an independent land grows, and so the Colonies turn away from their motherland and start to fight against the british regiments. They have got a very bad equipment and almost no chances. When british troups try to rob an armbase, the Americans besiege Boston. The 2nd Continental Congress comes together and declares GEORGE WASHINGTON as supreme Commander. A peace petition to the british King is answered by him with the "Proclamation of an open Rebellion". Now THOMAS JEFFERSON begins to prepare the "Declaration of Independence", which is published first in 1776.
After some battles against Britain were lost the WAR OF INDEPENDENCE turns in the victory of Saratoga (New York). Even if the british troups won a few several times during 1778 and 1780 in the southern states, after the Americans fought them in Yorktown with the help of France, the British had to capitulate. So the War was won for the Americans and King George III. had to acknowledge the peace contract. Canada was still british, and the other states were declared as the United States of America. In 1787 a Convent of Constitution comes together in Philadelphia therefore to create the first written Constitution. GEORGE WASHINGTON becomes President of the convent. On March 4th, 1789 the new system of government starts his activity with GEORGE WASHINGTON as first President of the United States. It is based on the division of powers - the congress builds the legislative and consists of the "House of Represantatives" and the Senate. It has to decide about Peace and war, Military, Contracts with other States, coins, weights, dutys and taxes. The President is the Executive and has to select the civil servants, and takes care of the execution of the Congress decisions. The Judicative is given by the trial Court, which watches over law and constitution. In this year also the Bill of Rights are added to the Constitution. They guarantee the basic rights, as Liberty in faith, media and assembling, of every person etc.

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The Contrast of North & South (1849-1877)

Slavery is the point which is influencing U.S. History during this period. In the North the ethic Criticism against this System grows. In 1852 Harriet E. Beecher Stowes Novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is published and urges on the discussion about the situation.
In the South Slavery is defended with the Constitutional rights of property and the rights of the states. In the argument about the Slavery ABRAHAM LINCOLN becomes a powerful politician as member of the Republican Party which was against Slavery. In 1860 Lincoln is refined as President. South Carolina declares itself in due to antislavic politic as own state. Missisippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Lousiana and Texas build with it the Confederal States of America with an own Constitution, Jefferson Davis becomes President of them.
In answer to it the Civil War developes, the South defends a long time against the more powerful North. In 1863 Lincoln declares all Slaves as free, and wins the sympathy of Europe. In July 1863 the War is won by the Union. Now the unity of the United States is established again. All in all the War cost over 635.000 lifes. In 1864 Lincoln is refined as President again, but on April 14th, 1865 he is assasinated by an fanatic supporter of the Southern States. In the same breath the 13. Amendment to the Constitution removes the Slavery, 1866 the 14. Amendment promises the civil rights to the former slaves and 1869 the 15. Amendment says that nobody should be left out from the right of voting due to his Coulour or his race.

America's role in World War I and Economic Problems (1914-1929)

First the United States declared their neutrality in World War I, but after Britain propagrated against the German Style of War in the USA, and attempts of arrangement failed, the USA broke off the diplomatic connections to Germany on the 3rd of February and declared War against Germany on the 6th of April 1917. In June 1918 the US Troups first took part in fights on the European Mainland. All in all over 2 Million US-Soldiers were sent to France.
In October 1917 the Germans capitulated and the War ended. America lost over 112 thousand lifes.

In 1929 Herbert Hoover becomes President. He seems to start in a land with a great future and stability, but this hope ends with the Crash on the New York Wall Street. Due to too high Speculations the market rates fell over 40 %. It followed the Great Depression with a lower life standard, unemployment, bankruptcy etc. Until spring 1933 the unemployment rate grew onto 15 Million people (1/3). FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT promises a "new deal for the american people" and starts an intensive social-economic reform-program. It helps, and 1938 6 Million people have work again. The business with the World War II (Production of Weapons etc.) helps to catch the last effects of the depression.

America's role in World War II

After America had come over the Great Depression, it concentrated on the World War II.
First of all Americas ambassador in Germany was consulted back, after the Germans did the so called "Kristallnacht". In April 1938 President Roosevelt tries to make an appeal to Hitler and Mussolini to save the peace in Europe with a Non-Attack-Promise. It failed, and the european war broke out. As in World War I the USA first declared their neutrality, but after a USA-Submarine is hit by a German one in 1941, President Roosevelt gives the command to shoot all German submarines. In December Italy and Germany declare war to the USA.

Together with Great Britain, the U.S.S.R., China and 22 other states the USA form the Allies.
On the Conference of Casablanca on January 24th 1943 Roosevelt and Premier Churchill tell that they want to force Germany to Unconditional Surrender. 3 days later the USA start to attack German towns through the Air.
After Sicilia was conquested Italy capitulated and signed a contract about armistice. Together with Stalin and Churchill Roosevelt planned in October 1944 the final stroke. Germany was attacked from Russia, France, Italy and Great Britain and had to capitulate in May 1945. This day is called V-E Day (Victory Europe Day) in the USA.

Interior and exterior Crisises (1945-1974)

While this happened, Japan declared war to USA. With the deployment of 2 Atom Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 Japan was forced to capitulation, before U.S. Troups arrived on the Basic Isles.

The Korea War in 1950 followed from the beginning Cold War : Every Communistic State was declared as enemy, so the USA had to help South Korea which was threatened by the Communstic North Korea.

In 1962 sowjet rocket bases were found on the also communistic Cuba. In reaction to this, President Kennedy commanded to form a blockade on the Sea, so that the U.S.S.R. couldn't deliver any new weapons to Cuba. One month later the blockade is ended, after the U.S.S.R.declared they'd transport the weapons back. On November 22th, 1963 John F. Kennedy is assasinated in Dallas. Vice-President Lyndson B. Johnson becomes President an is more successful in his Reformpolicy than Kennedy.

Although the U.S.A. had made the looking after Racism in Germany to their task, there was still discrimination of black people in their own country. On April 2nd, 1963 blak people demonstrate under leadership of Martin L. King without violence for Race integration. On Reaction on this, over 3300 demonstrators were arrested. In August over 200.000 white and black people demonstrate for new civil rights, which include the same rights for all people. After a march to Washington Martin L. King held his most popular speech
("I have a dream ... ") in front of the Lincoln-Memorial. In Juny 1964 the Congress passes the new Civil-Rights-Law, which guarantees equal rights for all Americans. On April 6th, 1968 Martin Luther King is assasinated in Memphis by an escaped prisoner.

From 1961 to 1973 the United States fight their longest and most senseless war : The Vietnam War. It has been again due to Communism - North Vietnam wanted to force South-Vietnam to become communistic. Many people in America demonstrated against the US policy in this case. 56241 American Soldiers lost their lifes in this war, 1344 are still missing and 303616 Soldiers were injured.

The Cold War seems to calm down - in May 1972 Nixon is the first President who visits the USSR. In Moscow the SALT I (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) were signed.

In Juny 1972 five persons were arrested while they broke into the Election Headquarter of the Democratic Party which was accommodated in the Watergate-Apartments. They wanted to install bugs on behalf of the Petition for Reelection of the President. Civil Servants and

Nixon's assistance try to veil the connections. In 1974 the House of Represantatives wants to achieve a removal Nixon's from office because a few more scandals are uncovered. For example offences against personality rights, misuse of public money etc.
On August 9th, 1974 President Nixon steps back. The following President Gerald R. Ford pardons him, so Nixon cannot be prosecuted.

The Gulf War

After an assault of the Irak under ledaing of Saddam Hussein against Kuweit in August 1990 the USA send troups to Saudi-Arabia. They shall save the country against the Irak and force them to retreat. After the United Nations tried about several months to make peace, after a long economy embargo the "Operation Desertstorm" begins. Together with the USA Saudi Arabia, the United Arabic Emirates, Great Britain, Oman, Egypt, France and Pakistan start a five-weeks taking Air-Offensive. On February 24th, a offensive on the ground is started, about 100 hours later Irak is beaten and has to retreat themselves. But Saddam Hussein is still President of the Irak and isn't very cooperative referring to UN-Resolutions and UN-Weapon Inspectors. Until today there are discussions about the Irak-Problem.