

High School and 5<sup>th</sup> grade

## 1946

- Servicemen return from abroad after World War II.
- Returning GIs participate in a shakeup of political and racial order in Tennessee



H.S.: 4.1, 1.2, 1.1; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.5.spi.8; During the post-war period, servicemen were major agents of change, especially in terms of civil rights. From Looking Back at Tennessee, SU022, DB #11908, ca. 1945, Gallatin, Tennessee. L. Black, dressed in his World War II army uniform, and his wife Eunice.

## Rising Expectations after WWII



- Rising expectations and social mobility generated by World War II
- “How’re you gonna keep ‘em down on the farm?”...and in their place.

H.S.: 4.1, 2.1, 2.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.2.spi.2; As seen on the left, in Tennessee, some farmers were still using mules as late as 1950. On the right, cotton is being picked by hand. White landowners commonly employed African American tenants under the sharecropping system. In Tennessee, sharecropping largely continued without change after Reconstruction, but World War II finally dealt a death blow to this system. After the war, most African Americans were not willing to go back to the old ways. In many cases, they had gained a sense of empowerment after their service in the military. On the right, cotton picking near Memphis, Tennessee, 10/12/1940; Department of Conservation Photograph Collection, Box 1, File 101, DB #5865; RG 82, TSLA. On the left, Blue Book Collection, RG 238.

## Battle of Athens, TN: August 1, 1946



- Ex-GIs and supporters of the entrenched political machine engage in gunbattle on the streets of Athens
- The Battle of Athens in McMinn County leads to the overthrow of the local political machine, one tentacle of the powerful Crump machine

H.S.: 6.1; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2; In the photograph, a soldier on the right (called a G.I., or "Government Issue") is taking part in a siege at the county jail, where the sheriff and fifty deputies were holed up with ballot boxes. The man on the left is a wounded deputy who is being taken away. The G.I.s ran an opposition slate, challenging the dominant political machine in Athens. The G.I.s were unwilling to go along with the traditional boss system, for they had their own candidate that they preferred to support. After going to the local Armory to obtain guns, a tense battle on the streets ensued for about six hours. As a result of this conflict, they were able to successfully overthrow the established order. Photograph from the *Battle of Athens* by C. Stephen Byrum.

### **Racial tensions during the postwar period: Columbia, TN, February 26, 1946**

- The civil rights ferment of the late 1940s and the 1950s is a response to changes after World War II. Racial conflicts arise throughout the country, including one between State Highway Patrol and African-American residents of Columbia's "Mink Slide" neighborhood.

H.S.: 1.2, 6.1; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.5.spi.8; After a disagreement between a shop owner and an African American veteran and his mother over a botched radio repair, a fight developed, leading to an injured store clerk. The violence escalated; the sheriff and deputies eventually moved into the "Mink Slide" neighborhood in order to arrest the G.I. and others involved. The core of the resistance in the Mink Slide neighborhood was led by African-American G.I.s. For an extensive account of this episode, see Gail Williams O'Brian's book, *The Color of the Law: Race, Violence, and Justice in the Post-World War II South*.

## Early Civil Rights Cases



H.S.: 1.2, 6.1; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.5.spi.8; During the gun battle between the African American residents and the sheriff, deputies, and state highway patrol, many black businesses were destroyed. On the left, African American men and women are being arrested by the state highway patrol. On the upper right photograph, Z. Alexander Looby is pictured (on the left) with student protestors in Nashville in 1963, and below, Thurgood Marshall. Both men were involved in defending African-Americans who were trapped by racist policies. TSLA Blue Book Collection, RG 238. (Stamp of Thurgood Marshall from a private collection).

## Clinton, TN: Problems surface after court-mandated desegregation in 1956



The Clinton desegregation lawsuit actually predated the *Brown v. Board of Education* case



H.S.: 1.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.5.spi.8. On the left, a mob intimidates cars that are driving through town. On the right, Clinton High School has been bombed as a consequence of the court-mandated desegregation. TSLA Blue Book Collection, RG 238.

## 1954-1963: The struggle over civil rights merges with Cold War rhetoric

- Segregation had long been part of the American way of life
- Civil Rights movement seen as attack on pillar of Southern society: unAmerican, unChristian, and imported to region by outside agitators



H.S.: 6.1, 6.2, 1.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.5.spi.8, 5.5.spi.7. Documents such as these were issued by white citizens councils, which appealed to a segregationist view of the American way of life. Many believed that outside Northern agitators were coming in to disrupt the local way of life in the South. Such controversies played into paranoid Cold War rhetoric that demonstrated a stand off between the free world and the Soviet bloc. TSLA Broadside Collection.



## Battling against Integration

Some citizens voice their support for segregation in letters to Governor Clement

Box 258  
Folder 15  
Sept. 3, 1956

Dear Governor:

While we still have a little freedom left, I want to express dissatisfaction about your handling of the segregation problem in your state, because it is of great concern to everyone in the South. Since I am out of your state and live in a state where we still have a government in this state to satisfy most of the people, I have no regrets. I would like to ask you the following questions:

Why are the people expected to accept the illegal Supreme Court Decision based on the book "American Balmora" written by sixteen men, sixteen of them belonging to Communist or Communist front organizations according to records of the House Un-American Activities Committee?

Why did men of the Supreme Court are of questionable character because they have kept company with Communist and or testified in their behalf?

Why is the National Association for the Agitation of Colored people (NAACP) designated to enforce the Supreme Court Ruling when it has seventy-eight members of its board known to belong to Communist or Communist front organizations?

Why did you fail to call a special session of the legislature to deal with segregation when the majority of the people wanted it? Don't you get your people in line?

Why have you not altered a single movable in favor of segregation according to reliable reports?

Why have you recently called out the State Highway Patrol and the National Guard to enforce integration when you know it is against the will of both races but is the will of the NAACP?

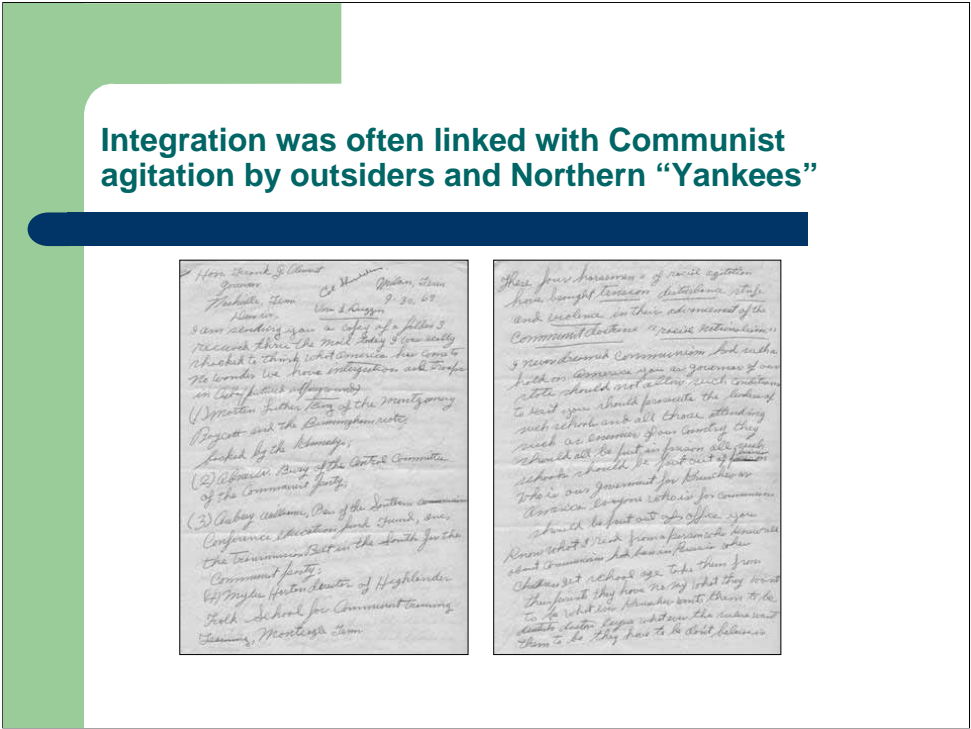
It's all gone to show a New Deal C capitalist will sell out his own blood and race to reap a big profit from the "Lift" or "Look".

Mark my word - Come next election time, you won't be able to get a dog catcher's job in Tennessee.

W. H. Hill

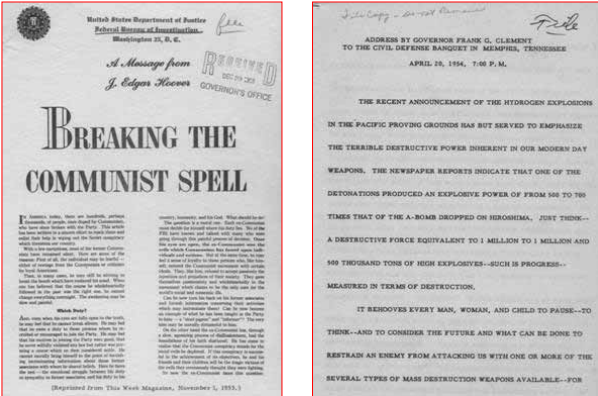
H.S.: 1.2, 6.1, 6.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.5.spi.8, 5.5.spi.7. TSLA Governor Clement Papers. Letter from September 3, 1956, Box 258, Folder 15. Many people who were against desegregation categorized its supporters as Communists. The letter above reads, in part, "Why six men of the Supreme Court are of questionable character because they have kept company with Communist and or testified in their behalf? Why is the National Association for the Agitation of Colored people (NAACP) designated to enforce the Supreme Court Ruling when it has seventy-eight members of its board known to belong to Communist or Communist front organizations."

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H.S.: 1.2, 6.1, 6.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.5.spi.8, 5.5.spi.7; H.S.: 1.2, 6.1, 6.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.5.spi.8, 5.5.spi.7. Governor Clement Papers, Box 540, File 13, Letter from 9/30/63. The letter associates Myles Horton of the Highlander School with Communism (“Myles Horton, director of Highlander Folk School for Communist training”), and three other agitators (including Martin Luther King, backed by the Kennedys) as “four horsemen of racial agitation” that have brought “tension, disturbance, strife, and violence in their advancement of the Communist doctrine.”

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H.S.: 5.1; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.5.spi.7, Governor Clement Papers, Box 34 File 8 and Box 93 File 21, TSLA. These documents played into the public's fear of Communism and its impending threat.

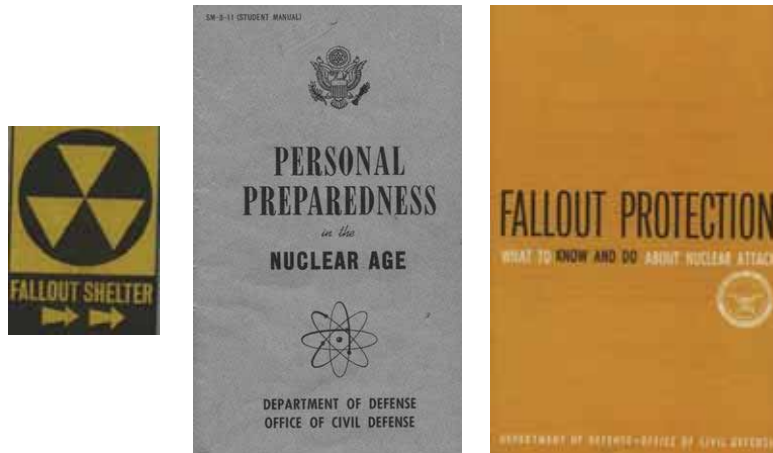
## The post-World War II Nuclear Threat: The Cold War accelerates

- The reality of the nuclear threat was made evident by the Bikini Atoll tests
- In March of 1954, the U.S. tested a hydrogen bomb in Bikini. Later, in September, the Red Army tested an atomic bomb in the Urals
- On May 14, 1955, the communist states signed the Warsaw Pact



H.S.: 5.1, 5.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. Library Collection, Drawer 1, Folder 92, DB #157, 1946, "Helen" of Bikini ("Helen" was the nickname of the atomic bomb and "Bikini" is the island in the Pacific where the tests took place) in action. The thermonuclear arms race had begun. In 1953, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were found guilty and executed for conspiring to commit espionage for plotting to transfer atomic secrets to the Soviet Union during World War II.

## Civil Defense Efforts in America: The government publicizes safety manuals to both ignite and allay America's fears



H.S.: 5.1; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. These publications helped families determine where they could build a “safe haven” that would protect them from a nuclear fallout. These items would educate people about how to survive a nuclear war. On the right, two pamphlet covers from the Governor Clement Papers, Box 524 File 15, and on the left, a sign originally located in the TSLA building, designed as a nuclear fallout shelter.

## The U.S. government prepares its citizens for what to do in case of nuclear attack



*Americans learn to live with fear*

H.S.: 5.1; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. Governor Clement Papers, Box 524, File 15.

## The Cold War moves into Space: Sputnik and the Origins of the Space Race

- On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik I*, the world's first artificial satellite
- Because of *Sputnik*, American leaders feared that the Soviets could launch ballistic missiles with nuclear weapons
- The United States launched the *Explorer* in 1958; the U.S. authorizes the creation of NASA that same year.
- *Apollo 11* reaches the moon in July of 1969; from 1970-1971, an exhibit memorializing the successful mission travels throughout the country, including Nashville



H.S.: 5.1; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. The United States space program was a direct response to the USSR's head start in what came to be known as the "Space Race." Governor Ellington Papers, Box 43, File 2.

### **Anti-communist Inquisition: HUAC, McCarthyism, and the Highlander Folk School**

- The McCarthy Hearings in Congress (1953-1954) were mirrored in Tennessee by the General Assembly's vendetta against the Highlander Folk School
- The hearings were coordinated by the Joint Legislative Committee for the Investigation of the Highlander School in 1959
- During the hearings, the Highlander School was linked with Communism
- The hearings smeared Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, and other Civil Rights leaders

H.S.: 5.1, 6.1; 5.6.spi.1, 5.5.spi.8.



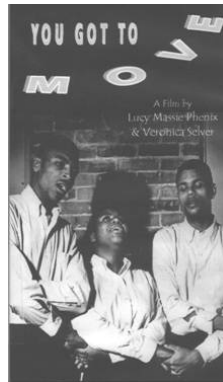
## A 1959 Georgia Department of Education Publication linked the Highlander School with Communism and racial integration



H.S.: 5.1, 4.1; 5.6.spi.1. From RG 114, the 81<sup>st</sup> General Assembly's Special Investigating Committee for the Highlander Folk School, 1959. For more information on the Highlander School, Video #135, and Accession Numbers 1248, 1811, 88-19, 1064.

## The Highlander hearings

- Video clip from a film produced by Lucy Massie Phenix and Veronica Selver, ***You Got To Move***
- This clip documents the Tennessee General Assembly's hearing against the Highlander Folk School that took place in 1959.



H.S.: 5.1, 6.1; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: N/A. TSLA video collection #136

## **TVA and the growth of the Military-Industrial Complex in Tennessee**

- TVA becomes the postwar provider of electrical power for the Department of Defense and Oak Ridge



H.S.: 5.1, 6.3; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2, Blue Book Collection, Record Group 238, the TVA dam at Fontana. President Eisenhower was one significant force behind the development of the military/industrial complex. By the mid-1950s, they were the largest supplier of electrical power to military installations and production in Tennessee.

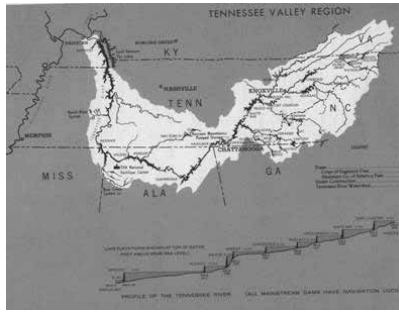
## Nuclear Power in Tennessee

- Y-12 Building at Oak Ridge complex (at right)
- Experimental nuclear reactor with dome, Oak Ridge (below)



H.S.: 5.1, 6.3; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2; Looking Back at Tennessee, CF 100, experimental nuclear reactor with dome in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, from April 1963. On the right, I-C-7, DB #25721, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Accession Number 2000-017, electromagnetic plant, also known as Y-12, operated for the Atomic Energy Commission by Union Carbide Corporation, ca. 1947-1950.

## TVA becomes the largest provider of nuclear power in Free World



H.S.: 5.1, 6.3; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. On the left, an image from *A Short History of the TVA*. TVA was operating 12 hydroelectric dams in the region. Much more electricity was supplied by coal burning plants. On the right, from a 1974 TVA annual report, a model of the Bellafonte nuclear plant is shown. TVA-produced nuclear power increased in use in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

## Enthusiasm for Nuclear Weapons



- Enthusiasm for the power and promise of nuclear bombs sometimes reached the level of the absurd
- U.S. nuclear monopoly before 1955 gave American foreign policy a very 'big stick'

H.S.: 5.1, 6.3; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. This photograph is from the William Ewing Beard Papers, THS 440, although it has been widely published elsewhere. The photograph is from 1946, in which U.S. Navy Admirals Blandy and Lowery, as well as Blandy's wife, slice an "atomic cake" in the Pentagon.

## Fun with nuclear power at Oak Ridge



- Promise of nuclear power often outweighed the threat (accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl had not yet occurred)

H.S.: 5.1, 6.3; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2; Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Box 17, File 91, RG 82, DB #16086. This exhibit in the American Museum of Atomic Energy demonstrates the power when 250,000 volts of static electricity pass through the human body. Such pictures obviously highlighted the positive aspects of nuclear energy rather than its potential dangers.

## Military Installations and Industries in Tennessee



- Arnold Engineering Development Center located in Franklin and Coffee Counties
- U.S. Air Force facility established in 1947 and dedicated by Truman on June 25, 1951
- Truman hoped the facility would help the U.S. become the international leader of aeronautical development

H.S.: 5.1, 2.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. Library Collection, DB# 29021, Drawer 24, Folder 147, Tullahoma, Tennessee, aerial view of Arnold Engineering Development Center, TSLA. Southern senators with political clout were able to promote the growth of the military/industrial complex in Tennessee.



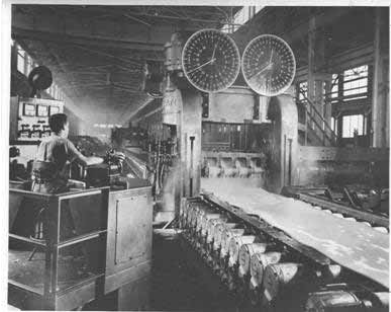
## Military Installations and Industries

- Vultee/AVCO Plant in Nashville
- Raytheon in Kingsport
- Large amounts of military spending came the South's way because of powerful Southern senators
- Milan Arsenal, Millington Naval Base, Fort Campbell



H.S.: 5.1, 2.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2; Library Collection, Drawer 19, Folder 59, DB #3751. The picture shows the Vultee aircraft assembly line. The workers in the foreground are making installations in the forward boom. In the rear, the final assembly conveyor line for the wing and center sections can be seen. Interestingly, approximately one-third of the employees in the factory were women. The Raytheon plant in Kingsport developed the Patriot missile.

## Military Installations and Industries



- ALCOA (Aluminum Corporation of America)
- Produced aluminum for aircraft, which grew in demand during and after World War II
- Plant located in Alcoa, Tennessee
- Company has operated in Tennessee for approximately 90 years

H.S.: 5.1, 2.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. Library Collection, Drawer 1, Folder 44, DB #72, Alcoa, Tennessee, ALCOA Aluminum Plant, TSLA. Once again, TVA power helped to support this industry.

## October, 1962: Cuban Missile Crisis

- The Cuban Missile Crisis followed the 1961 Bay of Pigs incident
- The apex of Cold War tensions; nuclear threat was real, and catastrophic consequences were only narrowly avoided



H.S.: 5.1, 5.2, 3.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. *Jack Knox Papers*. The Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 almost led to a nuclear war between the United States and USSR. In 1961, the Bay of Pigs incident led to increased tensions between the two countries: anti-Castro fighters, bankrolled by the CIA, launched an abortive invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. It was thought that the incident would trigger a widespread uprising against the Communist leader Fidel Castro. This incident proved to be a failure and was a great embarrassment to Kennedy and his administration. Later, in 1962, tensions rose when Americans discovered that the USSR had constructed missile bases in Cuba, supplied with intermediate-range nuclear missiles that were capable of reaching the United States. Kennedy issued an ultimatum and decided to set up a naval blockade. Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev responded defiantly, but after a period of great worldwide tension, the crisis was eventually resolved. The Cuban crisis led to a new period of détente, where opposing parties considered the possibilities of negotiation rather than outright war.

## 1963-1973 The Vietnam War: Conflict abroad and unrest at home



- LBJ and the escalation of the Vietnam War after 1964
- “Domino Theory” as the dominant rationale of American foreign policy

H.S.: 5.1, 5.2, 3.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. *Jack Knox Papers*. Jack Knox was a conservative political cartoonist who worked for the *Nashville Banner*. This political cartoon illustrates the popular Domino Theory, which held that Communism would spread from country to country if it were not stopped in its early stages. The cartoon heading reads, “Another Russian Weapon Moves Into Southeast Asia.” The figure on the left (Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin) is departing the Kremlin with a cart that reads, “BOOO! Berlin to Hanoi, Fear Push.”

## A soldier's letters and photographs from Vietnam

- Protracted and draining struggle against Communist insurgency in Southeast Asia
- Experiences of one Tennessean, Christopher Ammons, when he served in Vietnam while in the U.S. Army from 1967 to 1968 with the First Infantry Division, Company A, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry; later, from 1969 to 1970, he was assigned to the 194<sup>th</sup> MP Company



H.S.: 5.1, 5.2, 3.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. Christopher Ammons Papers, Box 2, Folder 2, VI-B-5v, TSLA. TSLA also has a photograph of one of Ammons' ancestors who fought during the Civil War.

## The Christopher Ammons Papers



Security platoon, 194<sup>th</sup> M.P.,  
Vung Chua Mountain, Dec. 1969



H.S.: 5.1, 5.2, 3.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2; H.S.: 5.1, 5.2, 3.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2.  
Christopher Ammons Papers, Box 2 Folder 30, VI-B-5v. Letter from I-B-4, Box  
1 Folder 8, Christopher Ammons Papers.

## Letters home from Vietnam

"Seven killed 1 wounded"  
 our CO dead  
 Jan 7, 1968  
 Iron Triangle  
 S.U.N.

Dear Family,  
 This afternoon is a sad day for our Company, seven of our men our dead including our Company Commandor, Capt. Tellers. This afternoon while on a company size patrol, the V.C. blew Claymores on the C.P. group. They killed Capt. Tellers, a Capt. from Inteligence, a lieutenant from mortar platoon, 3 ROS's (Ratio Telephone operators) and a medic. One other soldier was wounded.  
 I can't believe in my hurt (sic) that they are all dead, all 7 of them that traveled together during are patrols and Sand D's. Capt. Tellers had taken charge of the Company in Nov., now he's dead. I really like him he was a good officer and a fine man to know. the medic killed always was giving out maleria pills during chow, I can't believe he's dead.

Dear Family,  
 I guess you know it was a year ago today that I graduated from High School. Tim should have finished school by the time this letter reaches you.  
 Last night our squad had ambush about 9:00 motion from the NDR. Our platoon had guarded this since Phases all day and our squad was left out in the woods also everyone else went back to the NDR.  
 The NDR's had a naked out also special hundred motion from the road that the Engineers are building. At about 10:30 their "Bus" stopped 15 VC, moving East toward the NDR. We were intended to keep on the alert when they might come into our sector. We numbered seven men on last night. We spotted the one last night and came back to the perimeter this morning.

H.S.: 5.1, 5.2, 3.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.5.spi.7. *Christopher Ammons Papers*, I-B-4, Box 1 Folder 4 & Box 1 Folder 8

### Transcription of the letter on the left:

"7 men killed 1 wounded"  
1968

Jan 7,

our CO dead

Iron Triangle

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## 1960s Antiwar Protests and Youth Counterculture

- Antiwar protests during the 1960s, largely because of conscription
- Radicalization of college campuses
- San Francisco/Berkeley as an epicenter of youth counterculture
- The Pill approved by the FDA in 1960; Women's Liberation movement
- Widespread experimental drug use
- Hippie culture amongst younger generation

H.S.: 1.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2



## Protestors against the War



H.S.: 1.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. On the left, University of Tennessee protestors from 1970, courtesy the University of Tennessee Special Collections. On the right, protestors in front of the federal building on Broadway in Nashville, from the TSLA Blue Book Collection, Record Group 238.

## Antiwar protest in Nashville during LBJ's visit in 1967



H.S.: 1.2; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2. On the left, Accession number 2003-067, I-J-3, Box 1, DB #26752, President LBJ at the Polk House, 1967, TSLA. On the right, I-J-3, Box 2, Accession number 2003-067, DB #2257, Peace demonstration near the Tennessee State Library and Archives, May 15, 1967, TSLA.

## The Farm as a microcosm of Sixties counterculture

- Hippie commune established near Summertown, Tennessee
- Founded by in 1971 by Steve Gaskin and 250 followers
- Focus on cooperative living, self-sufficiency, pacifism, organic farming, vegetarianism, midwifery, etc.

H.S.: 1.2, 6.1; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 5.1.spi.2

## **ERA 9: 1945-1980** A period of accelerating change in American life



- The sacrifices of Depression and World War II were followed by global uncertainty, alienation, consumerism, and the growing influence of corporations
- The Civil Rights movement, Cold War, Vietnam, and Watergate changed irrevocably American culture and society

H.S.: 6.3, 6.1, 1.2; 5<sup>th</sup> Grade: 5.1.spi.2. On the left, I-F-5, Box 1, Folder 23, Accession number 2001-086, September 27, 1952, DB #25935, California Sen. Richard Nixon, Republican vice-presidential candidate, with his wife, Pat, greeting a crowd after speaking in Nashville. On the right, THS picture collection, Box 3A, Folder 48, THS 193, DB #26085, Chattanooga, Tennessee, ca. 1960.