

and San Diego counties grew phenomenally, and part of the migration to them came from Los Angeles. The population of San Francisco declined slightly but steadily, and in the Bay Area, as in southern California, the growth came in the surrounding communities rather than in the central city.

An important element in the growth of population and wealth in California in the 1950s and 1960s was the tremendous expansion of the aerospace industry, mostly financed by the federal government. Large numbers of immigrants from Mexico and African Americans from the rural south continued to arrive in California during these years, but far more attention was paid to the coming of thousands of highly skilled and highly paid aerospace engineers and scientists. Beginning in 1969, however, federal spending on aerospace was drastically cut, and this coincided with the onset of a long period of economic slowdown, including a major nationwide recession in 1969 to 1970 and an even worse one in 1973 to 1975. Moreover, this period of relative depression in the economy had a cruelly unfamiliar and unwelcome aspect—it was simultaneously a period of severe and continuous inflation.

This strange combination was largely a result of the peculiar economic policies of the federal government during the Vietnam War. The social and psychological consequences of that conflict, as well as its economic consequences, were very different from those of World War II. Pearl Harbor had united the nation, but the war in Southeast Asia became one of the most bitterly divisive issues in American history. In the years before America was plunged into World War II, the country had gone to great lengths to try to avoid an inevitable involvement; in the case of Vietnam many felt that the United States had gone far out of its way to engage in a futile conflict of which the necessity and even the morality were doubtful at best, and the costs tragic and apparently wasted. A quarter of a million young Californians served in the armed forces in Vietnam. More than 5800 were killed, one in ten of all Americans who died in the war.

At the beginning of World War II, the American economy was still in the depression and still operating at a fraction of its productive capacity; it badly needed the injection of huge government expenditures, made psychologically and politically acceptable by unquestioned military demands. During World War II, federal price and wage controls and huge wartime taxes kept some brakes on inflation. At the beginning of major involvement in Southeast Asia, on the other hand, the American economy was already operating close to capacity, and during the great buildup of American forces in Vietnam between 1965 and 1968, involving vast expenditures for the undeclared war, the federal government failed to apply wartime economic controls, and avoided substantial increases in taxes. The result was a massive inflation and overheating of the economy, with dangerously high percentage rates of price increases, compounded from year to year.

In an attempt to halt inflation, the Nixon administration in 1969 began drastic cuts in federal spending. The stock market fell dramatically. Unemployment rose sharply throughout the nation, but California suffered more than the rest of the country because so much of its manufacturing depended on federal spending.

The remarkable economic expansion and population growth of the early 1960s were reversed by the end of the decade. Net migration to California in 1970 was

only 27,000 compared with 356,000 in 1963, the peak year of the previous decade. These were the official figures of the state department of finance. Some unofficial estimates maintained that 25,000 more persons actually *left* the state in 1970 than came into it. The abrupt slowdown in California's growth rate was caused in part by depressed economic conditions, the product of continuing inflation and recession, and also by a fundamental deterioration of the popular image of the state. The traditional picture of California as the land of opportunity, sunshine, and romance was overshadowed by images of a state beset by high unemployment, crowded suburbs, a polluted atmosphere, and campus and racial unrest. A rash of books and articles, with such titles as *How to Kill a Golden State*, *Anti-California*, and *California: The Vanishing Dream*, either mourned or celebrated the alleged demise of the California dream. Although these popular commentaries often suggested corrective measures, they did little to attract newcomers to the state.

Transportation

Transportation was one of the many fields in which California's broader economic and population trends were reflected. The state's "love affair with the automobile" continued. There were three registered automobiles in California for every four persons of driving age, by far the largest ratio in the world. A vast network of freeways spread over the length and breadth of the state, and most communities welcomed their arrival. But in San Francisco a major "freeway revolt" began in 1959 when the new Embarcadero Freeway cut off the view of the lower half of the Ferry Building as seen from Market Street. The public outcry forced the state engineers to leave the freeway half finished, instead of carrying out their plan to extend it all the way around the Embarcadero and the Marina. (Following the disastrous Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989, the offending freeway was eventually torn down.) Such intransigence made San Francisco the despair of both state and federal highway planners, who called the city the worst highway bottleneck in America.

The absence of another form of modernization, that of the port facilities of San Francisco, was more clearly disastrous for the city. In 1960 San Francisco still handled all the foreign imports of the Bay Area. By 1975 it had lost most of its seagoing traffic, largely to the port of Oakland, where the voters had approved bonds to build the massive cranes required for loading and unloading *containers*, truck-size steel or aluminum boxes lifted from a ship directly onto a truck chassis or railroad flatcar. In southern California the port of Long Beach led the way with the introduction of containerized cargo handling in 1962. Meanwhile, airports throughout the state also modernized and expanded their operations. California's air transportation industry doubled its volume in the 1960s, and the air lane between Los Angeles and San Francisco became the most traveled in the world.

While San Francisco was rebelling against freeways, it took the lead in planning an electrified rapid transit system that would have the great advantage of reducing not only traffic congestion but also air pollution from motor vehicle exhausts. In 1962 the voters of San Francisco, Alameda, and Contra Costa counties approved