

Volume 14

Number 093

1968: Retrospective - I

Introduction: *A Moment in Time, 1968:* A special series on the 40th anniversary of a year of upheaval, in a world seemingly out of control.

Content: In the course of 40 episodes during this last year *A Moment in Time* has examined the turbulent and transformative events of 1968. It was a watershed year. Cultural, political, social and military conflict served to alter the course of nations, yet in many ways the world has found itself frozen in place, fighting over and over again the same battles, arguing the same arguments, disputing the same sureties as in those

few brief months of tumult.

The year began like any other and yet quickly it became obvious that powerful forces were at work that would challenge long established verities and institutions. The futility of the Vietnam War was revealed during the Tet Offensive. A decisive destruction of the Vietcong by Allied forces was largely ignored by the American people who had grown weary of sacrificing their treasure and their sons in someone else's Civil War. Soon campuses as far afield as Warsaw, New York and Mexico City and cities such as Prague and Paris came alive with vigorous protests and a rebellion that was both intensely local in the focus of its fury but

somehow an extension of a globe awash with revolution.

Revolt smothered the independent aspirations of oil-rich Nigerian Biafra but in Iraq launched the Baath party to consolidated power and Saddam Hussein on his long and brutal career. Even the Olympics would not be spared. The symbolism of a gloved fist lifted in defiance during the playing of a national anthem served to remind sports fans and politicians alike of the seething resentment percolating just beneath the surface of society. "The tree of liberty," said Thomas Jefferson, "must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants." 1968 would be just his sort of year. Next time: lingering

legacy.

Research assistance by Timothy Litzenberg, at the University of Richmond this is Dan Roberts.

Resources

**See our collection of resources on *1968* at
www.amomentintime.com.**

Copyright by Dan Roberts Enterprises, Inc.