

# MEET THE KEY PLAYERS



## **President Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ)**

*U.S. President, November 1963 -January 1969*

Boy from rural Texas turned behind-the-scenes master of Congress; the “accidental” President was thrust into the public eye with the assassination of John F. Kennedy. At one of the most volatile moments in American history, suddenly politicians, journalists, soldiers, and activists were all asking, “What does LBJ want?”

## **LBJ Loyalists and Allies**

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### **Lady Bird Johnson**

*First Lady*

A shrewd manager of LBJ’s campaigns, she was also a lifelong advocate for beautifying the nation’s cities and highways.



### **Hubert Humphrey**

*Vice President  
Liberal Democrat*

A strong advocate for civil rights and social programs, he ardently supported LBJ, at least in the public eye. Behind the scenes, the two argued about Vietnam War policies.



### **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**

*Civil Rights Leader*

From his 1963 “I Have a Dream” speech to winning the Nobel Peace Prize, King galvanized a nation to fight racial oppression using nonviolent resistance. A master of activism and political strategy, he also advocated for urban poverty relief and was against the war in Vietnam.



### **Ralph Abernathy**

*Civil Rights Leader*

A close associate of MLK, Abernathy helped lead the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the 1968 March on Washington.

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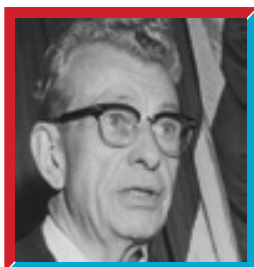
## Fair-Weather Friends

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**J. Edgar Hoover**  
*First Director of the FBI*

Hoover ran the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for 48 years under six presidents. A keeper of personal and political secrets, his agenda was his own.

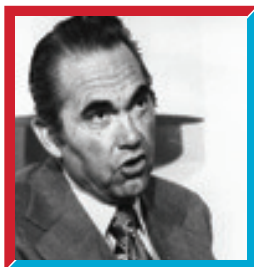


**Everett Dirksen**  
*Senator from Illinois*  
*Conservative Republican*

Though often a political opponent of Johnson's, Dirksen played a crucial role in getting the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to pass. He was an acclaimed orator, and he and Johnson were drinking buddies.

## Staunch Opponents

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**George Wallace**  
*Alabama Governor*  
*Southern Democrat*

Wallace threatened civil rights from the governor's mansion while challenging Johnson in the 1964 Democratic Primary.



**Robert F. Kennedy**  
*Senator from New York*  
*Liberal Democrat*

The younger brother and closest advisor to President John F. Kennedy, Robert was a powerful and charismatic Democratic leader—and no fan of Johnson's.

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Courtesy of ZACH Theatre. Adapted from the Seattle Repertory Theatre.