

Peace Across America Project



The Peace Circle

Peace Across America Project

Building Stability and Security at Home



Why	4
What	12
How	15
About	18





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Dear Friend,

The United States has been undergoing great stress for decades:

- In 2023, a record high of over 50,000 Americans died by suicide
- 80,000 drug overdoses
- social media algorithms reinforcing polarization and hateful online communication

In the first six months of 2025, there have been over:

- 520 acts and plots of political violence that led to 96 deaths and 329 injuries
- 47 school shootings with 19 deaths and more than 77 injuries

To help us explore how we can come together across America and across the political aisle, please read this proposal and contact me.

The *Peace Across America Project* seeks to open peaceful and respectful dialogue.

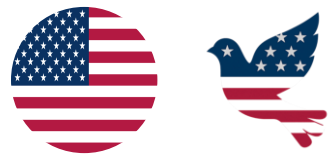
We support the work of many organizations across America seeking to create open dialogue for civility and civic improvement for all.

With appreciation,

Sanford Hinden

Founder, Peace Across America Project

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WHY

The United States of Stress & Strain

Decade of Stress & Strain

1960s – Upheaval & Assassinations

- Civil Rights Movement & racial conflict
- Vietnam War & antiwar protests
- Assassinations: JFK, MLK Jr., Malcolm X, RFK
- Urban riots and polarization over race, war, and culture

1970s – Crisis of Confidence

- Watergate scandal → collapse of trust in government
- Vietnam War ending & national disillusionment
- Oil shocks, stagflation, high unemployment
- Rising crime rates and urban decline

1990s – Cultural Conflicts & New Wars

- Rodney King beating & Los Angeles riots
- Oklahoma City bombing (domestic terrorism)
- Culture conflict: abortion, LGBTQ rights
- First Gulf War and U.S. interventions abroad
- Dot-com boom & growing economic inequality

2000s – Terror & Financial Collapse

- 9/11 terrorist attacks
- Wars in Afghanistan & Iraq (costly, divisive)
- Patriot Act, surveillance
- 2008 financial crisis & Great Recession
- Growing political polarization

2010s – Polarization & Populism

- Tea Party movement & government shutdowns
- Rise of social media → disinformation, culture wars
- Mass shootings and opioid epidemic
- Black Lives Matter & police violence protests
- Extreme polarization, immigration battles
- Climate change disasters intensify

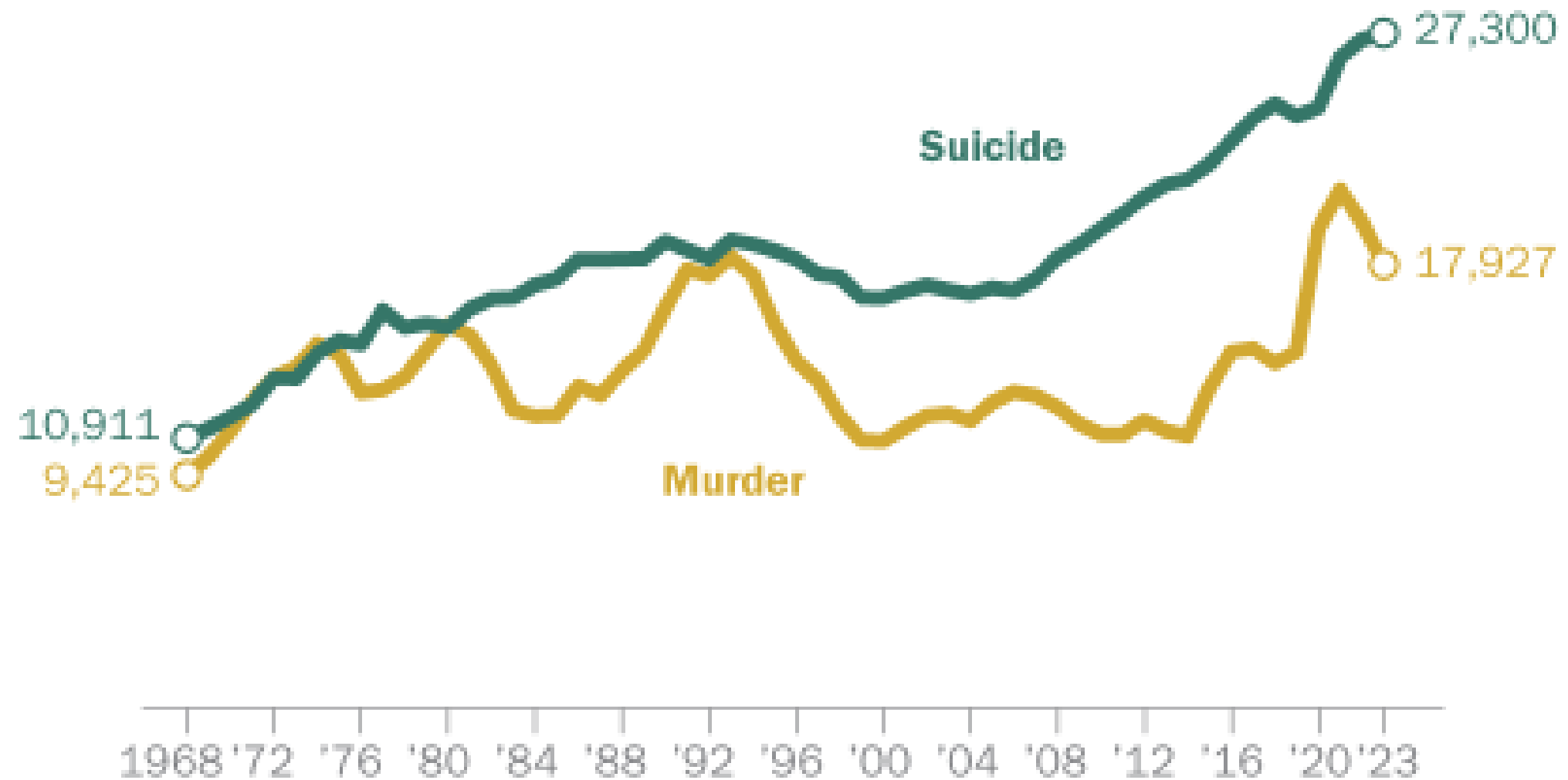
1980s – Inequality & Global Tensions

- Reaganomics: tax cuts, deregulation, weaker safety net
- Widening wealth gap
- AIDS crisis ignored in early years
- Cold War tensions (nuclear arms race)
- Deindustrialization hits working-class communities

2020s – Pandemic & Democracy Under Strain

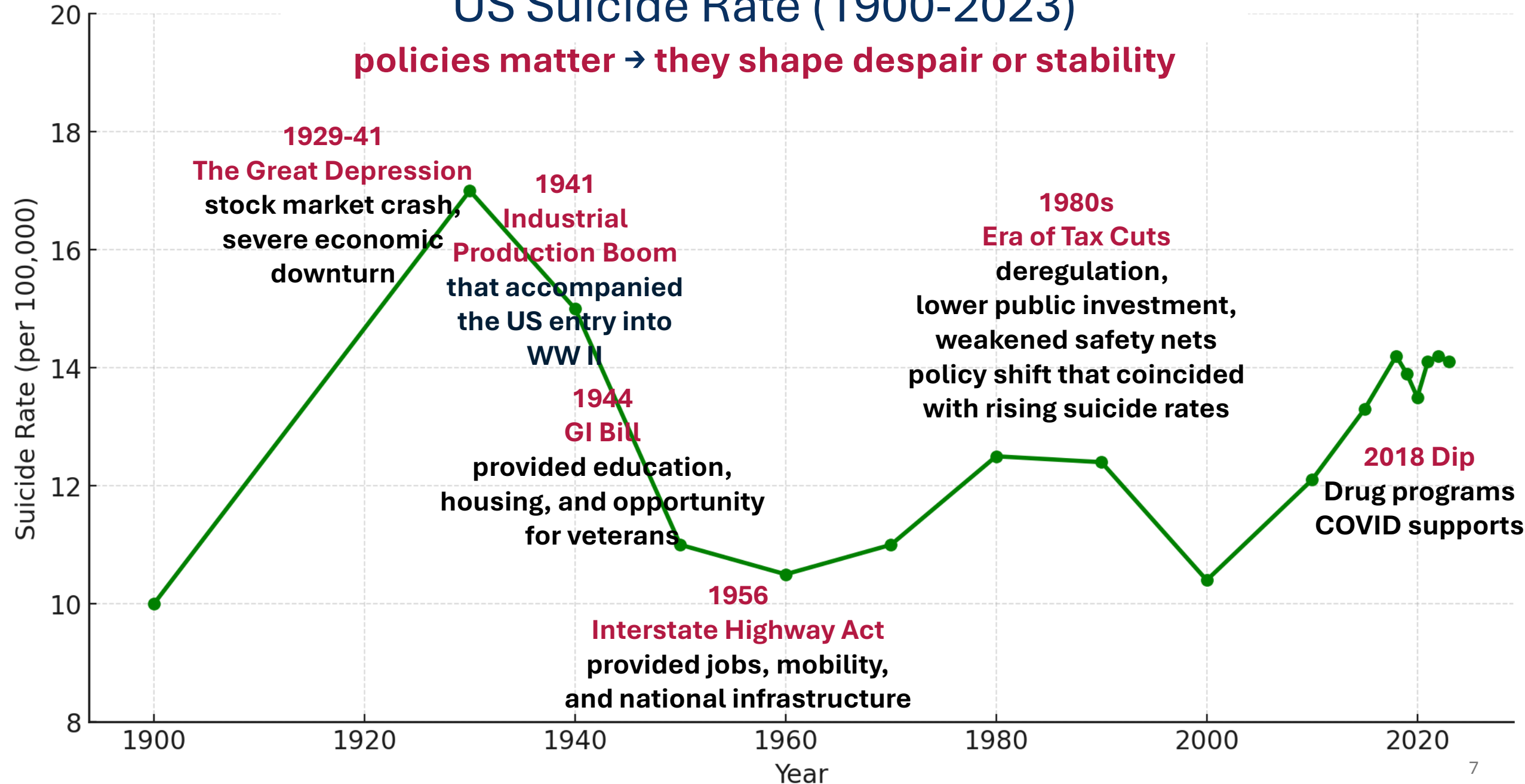
- COVID-19 pandemic → death, economic disruption, mental health crisis
- George Floyd killing → nationwide racial justice protests
- January 6th Capitol challenge to democracy
- Inflation, housing crisis, gun violence epidemic
- Escalating climate disasters (fires, floods, heat waves)

Number of gun suicides and gun murders in U.S.



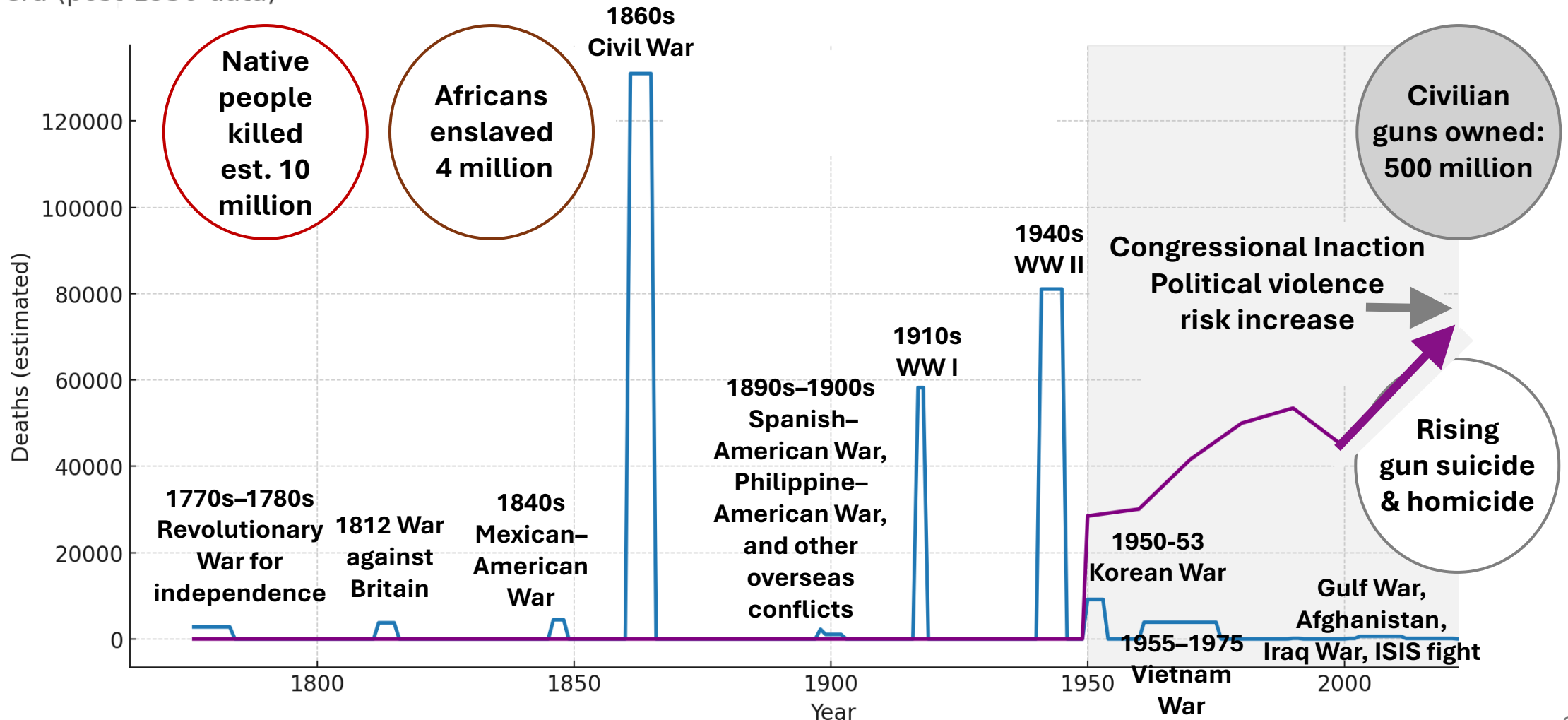
US Suicide Rate (1900-2023)

policies matter → they shape despair or stability



US Violent Deaths per Year (1776-2025)

- War-related deaths
- Gun deaths (Homicides + Suicides)
- Gun era (post-1950 data)

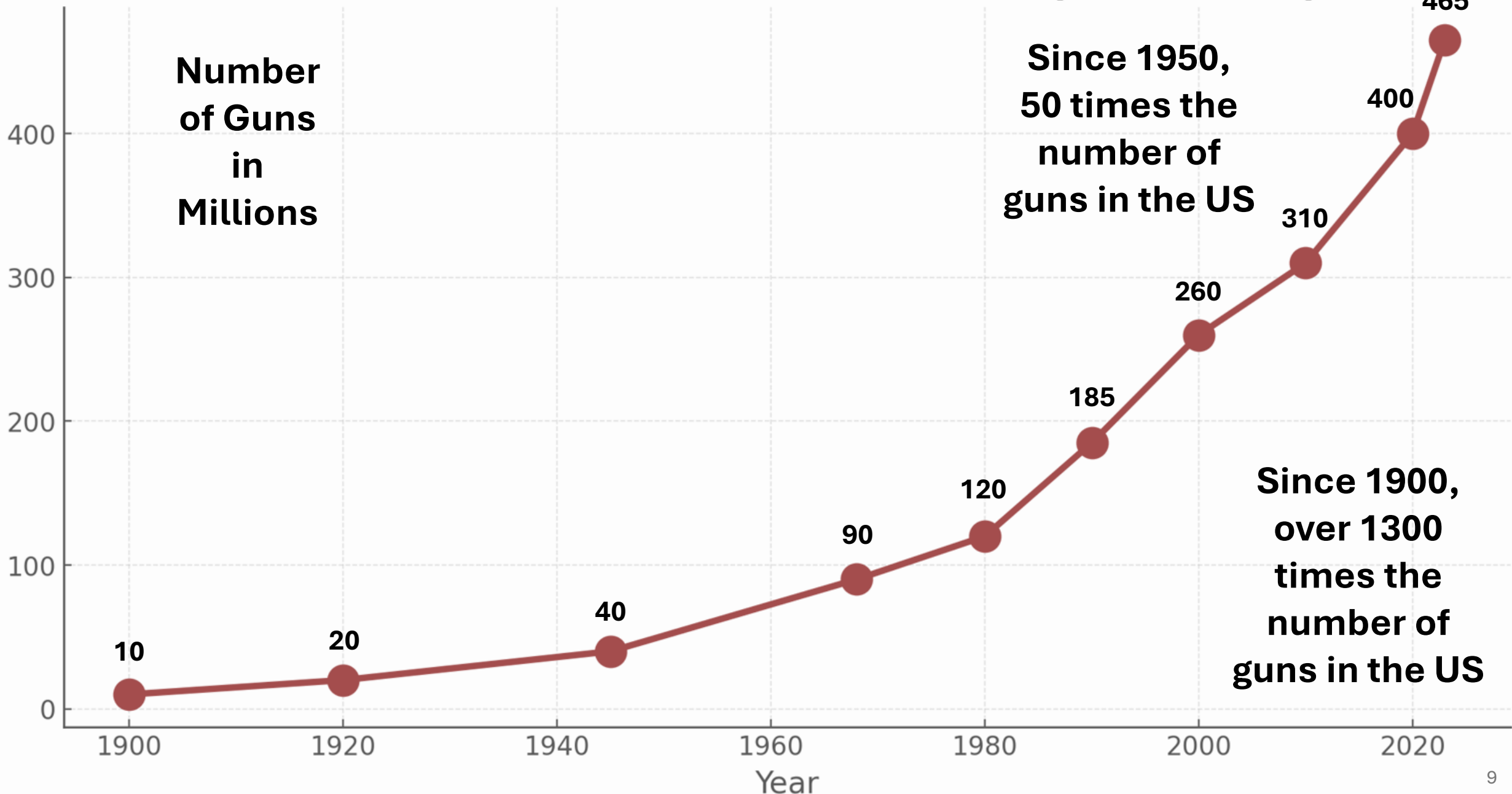


Civilian-Owned Firearms in the U.S. (1900-2023)

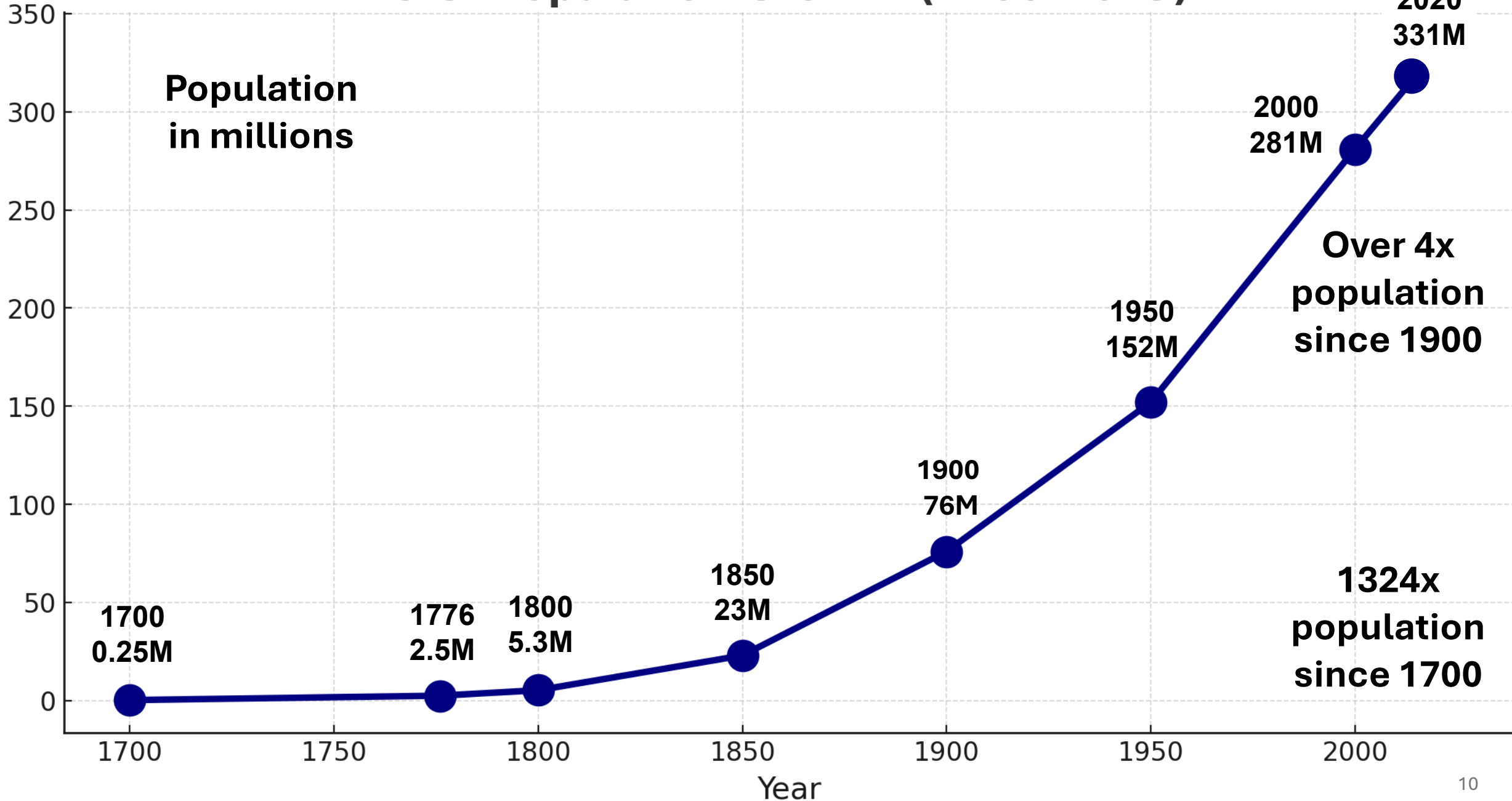
**Number
of Guns
in
Millions**

**Since 1950,
50 times the
number of
guns in the US**

**Since 1900,
over 1300
times the
number of
guns in the US**



U.S. Population Growth (1700-2023)





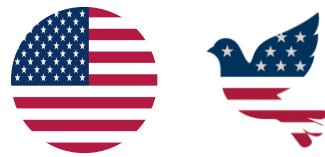
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**In the US,
since 1900,
over 4 times the population,
with
50 times the number of guns.**

**Since 1950,
over 10 times the number of guns.**



WHAT



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Origin & Purpose

America was born in an era of global economic expansion, was founded on displacement of Native peoples and enslavement of Africans, has gone through numerous periods of war, both internally and with other countries, has built a large military and war capability and exists in a world of war.

Weapons and gun manufacturing became highly profitable.

It has experienced social and political violence.

We are here to explore the possibility
of peace across America.

The Peace Circles

Local conversation and national dialogue for
compassion, healing, and policy exploration to support stability and security.



Stability

– creates steadiness in daily life.



Security

– ensures economic and social safety.

Opportunity

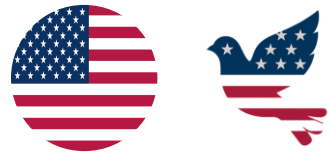
– opens doors through policy and investment.

Support

– provides direct, practical help when needed.

Strong & Peaceful Families & Communities

– are the foundation for wellbeing and progress.



HOW



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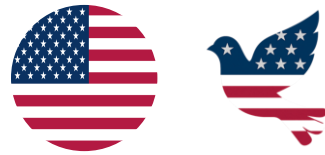


What You Can Do

- 1 Create a local Peace Circle dialogue group to discuss Peace Across America.
- 2 Join the monthly national conversation on Zoom.
- 3 Send this Peace Across America Project proposal to family and friends.
- 4 Join a national dialogue organization. See the next page.

Dialogue Organizations

Organization	Focus Area	Website
Braver Angels	Political depolarization	https://braverangels.org
Living Room Conversations	Community dialogue	https://livingroomconversations.org
National Institute for Civil Discourse (NICD)	Civility & politics	https://nicd.arizona.edu
Listen First Project	Coalition for dialogue	https://listenfirstproject.org
Bridge Alliance	Civic bridgebuilding	https://bridgealliance.us
Better Arguments Project	Productive disagreements	https://betterarguments.org
American Values Coalition	Faith-based civic dialogue	https://americanvaluescoalition.org
Everyday Democracy	Community equity & race dialogues	https://everyday-democracy.org
National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (NCDD)	Dialogue & deliberation practitioners	https://ncdd.org
The Village Square	Civic & cultural discourse	https://villagesquare.us
Essential Partners	Campus & community dialogue	https://whatisessential.org
Facing History and Ourselves	Education & history dialogue	https://facinghistory.org
Interfaith America (formerly IFYC)	Interfaith & youth bridgebuilding	https://interfaithamerica.org
National Issues Forums Institute	Deliberation on public issues	https://nifi.org
Religions for Peace USA	Interfaith cooperation	https://rfpusa.org
Parliament of the World's Religions	Global interfaith dialogue	https://parliamentofreligions.org



ABOUT



Biography



Sanford Hinden

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Sanford Hinden is the founder of Wisocracy, a movement for wise democracy, wise leaders, wise systems, peace, and sustainability.

He has served as an administrator, fundraiser, and creator of peace gardens, peace museums, and global initiatives.

His leadership extends from local peace circles to international collaborations, including support for the UN University for Peace, the International Network of Museums for Peace, and the Pentagon Meditation Club's global outreach

Sandy is the founder of the Peace Across America Project.

Sanford's peace contributions have been widely recognized:

“Sanford Hinden has inspired my UN work for decades with his ceaseless ideas and encouragement.”

— **Dr. Robert Muller**, UN Assistant Secretary-General & Cofounder, UN University for Peace

“No one works harder for peace than Sanford Hinden.”

— **Barbara Gaughen-Muller**, United Nations Association

*“Sanford is one of the most compassionate people I know,
speaking from deep wisdom about human and global needs.”*

— **Ronald Gross**, Columbia University

*“Sandy brought clarity and grassroots vision to UN projects.
He is a trusted collaborator with a proven record under pressure.”*

— **Mairuth Sarsfield**, UN Environment Program

“His communication and development plans continue to strengthen global peace education.”

— **Dr. Peter van den Dungen**, International Network of Museums for Peace

“He remains a trusted adviser and true friend.”

— **Edward E. Winchester**, Pentagon Meditation Club & PeaceMakers Institute

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