

PROGRESSIVISM 1901-1917

Reform in America tends to be moderate and/or liberal, is led by the middle class, and is both idealistic and pragmatic.

The Progressives include Populists (the farmers of the South and West, blue collar workers of Eastern cities) and are led by young, liberal, urban, middle and upper class well-educated professionals with a social conscience.

Progressivism cuts across party lines and appealed to the small businessmen, farmer, intellectual, writer, humanitarians and "do-gooders".

Two Goals of Progressive Reformers:

- make the governments at the local, state and national levels more democratic
- correct the abuses and injustices in our economic system

Characteristics of U.S. Society from 1900-1920

1. Our population increases , gross national product and per capita product increases (but wealth in the U.S. is unequal as 2% of the people control 60% of the wealth) and
2. There's continued urbanization.
3. The death rate went down due to medicine and public health improvements.
4. There's more business consolidation or mergers within an industry under professional management.
5. Most of the wealthy were still for laissez-faire; only a minority wanted improvements in labor conditions.
6. Labor Unions:

The goal of progressives was to organize labor unions. Though there was progress in forming unions, there were 3 problems:

- Ninety Percent of factory workers were still unorganized
- Those in craft or skilled unions like the A.F.L. were not against big business but distrusted the national government so they opposed laws on wages and hours.
- Many unions looked down on the unskilled especially women, blacks and new immigrants.

7. Blacks:

Ninety percent still lives in the South, one-third were illiterate, public facilities for them were segregated, lynchings and race riots

increased, William DuBois sought immediate action to get political and economic equality for blacks and formed the Niagara Movement in 1905 and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909.

#### 8. Women:

Women's Clubs for middle class women were formed under the leadership of Sarah Platt Decker and hoped to improve factory work for women and children.

International Ladies Garment Workers were involved in a strike in 1909 against the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in New York City; a major fire there in 1911 caused the deaths of 146 employees and led to new factory laws.

Many women became social activists in the following areas:

- a. To Fight Poverty, halfway houses were set up by social workers in slum areas of major cities. Two notable examples were Jane Addams' Hull House in Chicago and Lillian Wald's Henry Street in New York City.
- b. In their Campaign Against Alcohol, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was formed and in the 1920's the group switched from a goal of temperance to total prohibition. This Prohibition Movement was basically rural, native-born, fundamentalist and against urban, immigrants, and Catholics.
- c. Charlotte Perkins Gilman led the movement for Child Care.
- d. The National Birth Control League was set up in 1915 by Emma Goldman and Margaret Sanger and fought for free and open instructions in birth control methods.
- e. In the fight for a woman's right to vote Carrie Chapman Catt formed the American Women's Suffrage Association, and Alice Paul set up the Congressional Union which was a more militant group. Women suffrage rights were gained in six states by 1914.

#### 9. Farmers:

Farmers experienced prosperity as the price of farm products went up and the value of farm land doubled in ten years.

Farm organizations pressed for political reforms, for a more democratic government and antitrust law enforcement.

#### 10. Radicals:

Socialism was attractive to urban, middle class, native American intellectuals.

Eugene Debs was the leader of the moderate socialists, a presidential candidate 4 different times; getting 1 million votes in 1912.

William "Big Bill" Haywood, a radical socialist, created the I.W.W.,

the Industrial Workers of the World, which was a radical or violent labor union.

11. Experts and Intellectuals:

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. preached against prejudice being a factor in the decisions of judges and juries in court cases.

William James, a psychologist and pragmatist spoke out against limits being placed on intellectual creativity.

John Dewey, an educator and pragmatist, was for experiments in education and the involvement of students in the educational process.

Thorstein Veblen was critical of America's monopolistic practices which he felt discouraged man's creativity.

12. Progressive Writers:

These writers were nicknamed "muckrakers" by TR. They wrote in order to expose the bad conditions in our society in order to inform the public and hopefully bring about political and/or economic changes.

Theodore Dreiser's novels described the human tragedy of the poor.

Jacob Riis's How the Other Half Lives described the bad conditions in New York City tenements.

Frank Norris's The Octopus was about discriminatory practices of railroad companies.

Upton Sinclair's The Jungle exposed the unsanitary conditions in the meat-packing industry and described the exploitation of the workers there.

John Spargo's The Bitter Cry of the Children spoke out against both child abuse and child labor.

Ray Stannard Baker's Following the Color Line was an expose on the evils of black segregation laws.

Lincoln Steffens' The Shame of the Cities dealt with all the problems of inner cities in America.

Ida Tarbell's History of the Standard Oil Company was an indictment of John D. Rockefeller's oil empire.

13. Progressive State Governors:

Progressive people at the state level generally distrusted the legislature and courts but trusted the people to elect good governors.

Wisconsin's Robert M. LaFollette was governor in 1900, U.S. Senator in 1906. According to TR, Wisconsin was the "laboratory of democracy" as many reforms were begun there:

### REFORMS OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

1. Problem: U.S. Senators were appointed by state governors; undemocratic  
 Solution: Seventeenth Amendment (1913) - voters in each state elect their own U.S. Senators
2. Problem: women were not allowed to vote or run for any gov't office; undemocratic  
 Solution: Nineteenth Amendment (1920) - women were allowed to vote and run for government office.

### REFORMS OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

1. Problem in Voting: voting was done in an open area  
                           separate ballots for each candidate and/or political party  
                           expensive for candidates to print own ballots and pay election costs  
 Solution: Australian Ballot - voting was done in secret  
   all candidates' names appear on one ballot  
   ballots are printed at gov't expense and taxes  
   pay for election costs
2. Problems with Congress: slow in responding to the desires of the voters in making new laws  
 Solutions: Use of Initiative - voters sign a petition to force Congress to discuss or debate a new law  
   Use of Referendum - voters sign a petition to allow voters to actually vote for or against a proposed law at election time
3. Problem with Fixed Terms of Office for Gov't Officials: difficult to get rid of incompetent or corrupt officials  
 Solution: Recall - voters sign a petition to hold a special election to vote to retain or fire an elected official before the term ends
4. Problem with Political Bosses Nominating Candidates for Office: undemocratic  
 Solution: Direct Primary - voters actually nominate 2 candidates for each office for the general election

### REFORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

1. Problems in the election of mayor and city council or selectmen where politics is involved  
 Problem: Each position requires general knowledge in all areas  
 Problem: There's a lack of accountability  
 Solutions: Non-Partisan Elections  
                   City/Town Commissions - several commissioners are elected to each perform a specific and special job  
                   City Manager - a qualified person is hired who is an expert in business administration

Reforms=direct primary, civil service, conservation, state control of railroads and banks, income tax, high corporation taxes

New Jersey's Woodrow Wilson was a Democrat elected in 1910.

Massachusetts' Murray Crane was a Republican elected in 1900.

14. Progressive Presidents of the United States:

THEODORE ROOSEVELT  
1901-1909

This dynamic and influential politician became the youngest President ever at age 42 when President William McKinley was assassinated in September, 1901.

Known as TR or Teddy, he was born into a wealthy New York family, a Harvard graduate, historian, Republican politician, assemblyman, Civil Service Commissioner, Police Commissioner in New York City, Mayor of New York City, Assistant Secretary of the Navy under President McKinley, Colonel of the Rough Riders in the Spanish-American War, Governor of New York, Vice President and President from 1901-1909.

TR was a skilled campaigner and politician, a goal-oriented individual who made the office of the President strong, used patronage to take power away from the "Old Guard" and get his own party in control, and chose excellent advisors:

- Secretary of State Elihu Root
- Secretary of War William Howard Taft
- Forest Chief Gifford Pinchot
- Secretary of Interior James Garfield

Domestic Policies

1. TR was a "trustbuster". His belief with regard to business regulation was that government regulation was necessary to prevent abuses, and responsible businesses should be encouraged.
  - a. In the Northern Securities Case of 1902, TR had his Attorney General Philander Knox sue a railroad holding company under J.P. Morgan, J.D. Rockefeller, James Hill, E.H. Harriman claiming it was a violation of the Sherman AntiTrust Act of 1890. In 1904 the Supreme Court ordered the Company dissolved.
  - b. The Justice Department sued 44 trusts in court, and all were broken up by court order.
  - c. The Expedition Act of 1903 speeded up anti-trust prosecutions.
2. The Department of Commerce and Department of Labor were created in the President's Cabinet to give both business and workers a voice in the national gov't, & a way gov't could advise & get information to regulate.

3. In the Anthracite Coal Strike of May-October, 1902 TR was sympathetic to workers and worried about the effects of a coal shortage on the country and the economy.

TR personally mediated the strike between union and owners. When the owners refused arbitration TR threatened the use of troops to take over the mines. Thus, a compromise settlement was reached whereby the miners returned to work and a commission was set up to arbitrate.

In Labor Disputes TR rejected radical unionism & the union shop.

#### 4. Election of 1904

TR ran on his reform record and named his new administrative program the "Square Deal" pledging fair treatment to both sides and opportunity to every man.

TR got 57.4% of the popular vote and defeated conservative Democrat Alton Parker 336-140 in a landslide victory, where he carried every state outside the "Solid South".

#### 5. Progressive Reforms 1904-1908:

a. The Interstate Commerce Commission was given new powers:

Hepburn Act of 1906 allowed the I.C.C. to regulate transportation areas and fix rates (TR got Old Guard support for this in exchange for tariff reform)

Mann-Elkins Act of 1910 allowed the I.C.C. to regulate communication areas and fix rates.

The procedure to "fix rates" provided:

1. The business must apply to the I.C.C. for a rate change.
2. The I.C.C. holds public hearings in the area to be affected.
3. The I.C.C. makes a decision by majority vote.

b. Laws were passed to protect the Public Health:

Meat Inspection Act of 1906 passed Congress due to Sinclair's book, The Jungle, and allowed the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture to inspect and grade all meat shipped between states.

Problem=little money to enforce law at the time.

Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 set up the Food and Drug Administration, forbade the manufacture, sale and transportation of adulterated or poisoned patent medicines and food, and stated labels on products must specify contents.

c. TR encouraged the Conservation of our Natural Resources, and in so doing split with the Old Guard.

The U.S. Forest Service was created to conserve America's timber.

The National Park Service was set up to preserve our public lands.

The Newland's Reclamation Act provided money for irrigation, flood control, hydroelectric power to reclaim wasteland.

A White House Commission of Conservation was called in 1908 to set up the National Conservation Commission in order to develop future conservation projects.

d. TR proposed the abolition of child labor and workman's compensation laws though he was unable to get Congressional action on these ideas.

In 1908 TR set more radical goals intended to cut business speculation and help labor.

6. Panic of 1907 and the Depression that followed was blamed on TR by businessmen yet it was really due to U.S. production exceeding consumption.

J.P. Morgan helped the U.S. economy by pooling funds of American major banks in Manhattan, and the U.S. Treasury Department moved government deposits into N.Y. banks which had a cash problem.

This Depression pointed out the need for reform of both our banks and our money system so the U.S. Monetary and Banking Commission was set up and led by Senator Nelson Aldrich.

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

Republican, Ohio

1909-1913

Election of 1908

In 1904 TR announced he'd not seek another term.

The Republicans nominated William Howard Taft (TR's personal choice).

The Democrats nominated William Jennings Bryan and this time he had organized labor's support; was against the tariff.

The vote was 321-112 for Taft, but this victory was viewed as a victory for TR's popularity and for the coalition of urban progressives, the West and Midwest and conservative businessmen.

Taft's Political Background:

a lawyer and judge in Ohio, the first Governor of the Philippines 1898-1901, served as Secretary of War 1901-1908 and was TR's "troubleshooter"; a one term Republican President and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1921.

Taft was a progressive who saw the need for further social reform and wanted to curb big business and promote conservation.

But he was more conservative or cautious than most progressives-he believe the President should not attempt to influence Congress, and he appointed a conservative Cabinet.

For Taft, TR was "a tough act to follow" because:

1. Taft lacked the style or charisma and couldn't enlist public support
2. Taft lost the support of TR and the Progressives over 3 issues: tariff, conservation and foreign policy.

Domestic Policies

1. Payne-Aldrich Tariff of 1908 was not the low tariff the Progressives wanted which would lower consumer prices. Taft didn't veto this high protectionist tariff that benefitted manufacturers as it did include corporation and personal income taxes which the Progressives also wanted.

2. The Ballinger Conservation Scandal caused Progressives to condemn Taft "for selling out the public interest".

Taft withdrew 59 million acres of mineral lands and water power sites from public sale.

Secretary of Interior Richard Ballinger secretly restored some water power sites and coal lands withdrawn under TR to public sale.

Forestry Chief Gifford Pinchot found out, claimed this was fraud, went to the newspapers, instead of President Taft.

Taft fired Pinchot, incurring the wrath of the Progressives.

3. Progressive Reforms under Taft:

- withdrawal of 59 million acres of land for water power
- extension of Civil Service jobs
- establishment of the Children's Bureau in the Department of Labor
- set up a postal savings system
- adoption of an 8 hour work day for U.S. Government employees
- extended I.C.C. control (after a compromise with Democrats was reached whereby Arizona and New Mexico were admitted as states and elected Democratic Congressmen)
- prosecuted 90 antitrust actions following the 1911 Supreme Court's ruling "Rule of reason" whereby the Court stated only "unreasonable restraint of trade is unlawful". When Taft ordered U.S. Steel prosecuted as a holding company, TR opposed it. The Court found the corporation not guilty.
- curbed the power of Speaker of the House Joseph Cannon over appointment of committee members (The Insurgents or Reform wing of the Republican Party joined with the Democrats to allow this.)

Congressional Election of 1910

TR returned from Africa and stated, "Taft is utterly hopeless."

Believing he's not progressive enough, TR went on a speaking tour and announced his New Nationalism program. As a result of these actions, the Democratic Party gained positions in Congress and in 1911 the

National Progressive Republican League led by Robert LaFollette paved the way in 1912 for TR's Presidential candidacy:  
"My hat is in the ring."

The Election of 1912= a triumph for Progressives

| <u>Party</u>                 | <u>Candidate</u>    | <u>Supporters</u>  | <u>Platform</u>                   | <u>Results</u>        |
|------------------------------|---------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Republican                   | William Howard Taft | "Old Guard"  | status quo                        | 3 1/2 mil. (23%) = 8  |
| "Bull Moose"<br>Progressives | Theodore Roosevelt  | intellectuals<br>social workers<br>feminists<br>industrialists | "New Nationalism"                 | 4 mil. (27%) = 88     |
| Democrat                     | Woodrow Wilson      | middle class<br>farmers<br>unions                              | "New Freedom"                     | 6 mil. (42%) = 43 1/2 |
| Socialist                    | Eugene Debs         | socialists   | gov't ownership of all businesses | 1 mil. = 0            |

Differences between TR's "New Nationalism" and Wilson's "New Freedom"

|   |   |
|---|---|
| for big business and big gov't=<br>"regulated monopolies" | for small, new business=<br>"regulated competition" |
| for social welfare  | no social welfare                                   |
| for a protective tariff                                   | for a low tariff                                    |
| U.S. Gov't regulatory agencies                            | state regulatory agencies                           |

both wanted to limit court injunctions against unions

WOODROW WILSON

(10)

Democrat, N.J.

1913-1921

Wilson was taught at home by his father, a Presbyterian Minister until he was 13. He earned a doctorate at Johns Hopkins University, taught history and political science at Bryn Mawr, Wesleyan, and Princeton. In 1902 as President of Princeton University he fought a "snobbish" Ivy League influence on campus. In 1910 he was elected Governor of New Jersey as a progressive and fought against the party bosses and special interests. In 1912 he was elected President as a Democrat (only the second Dem. elected since the Civil War)

Personally, Wilson was a workaholic, an intellectual, an idealistic reformer who was stubborn and often unwilling to compromise.

He became a strong leader of his party and of the entire country and a force for moral leadership.

His first wife Ellen died in 1914. They had three daughters: Margaret, Jessie, Eleanor.

Mrs. Edith Galt became his second wife in 1915. She's called our "first woman President" because of her actions in the White House when Wilson suffered a paralytic stroke in 1919 and was disabled.

Wilson chose Skilled Advisors:

Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan  
Postmaster General Albert Burleson  
Secretary of the Treasury William McAdoo  
Private Secretary Joseph Tumulty  
"Second Personality" Colonel Edward House (was the liason between the President and Party Leaders)  
Chief Aide Louis D. Brandeis of Ma. until 1916 when Wilson appointed him to the U.S. Supreme Court (first Jew on the Court)

Domestic Policies

The "New Freedom" Reforms

1. Underwood-Simmons Tariff of 1913

Wilson personally appeared before Congress (the first President since Jefferson) to request this low tariff on 958 articles, but it didn't abandon protection or harm U.S. business yet still helped consumers.

2. Federal Reserve Act of 1913

This was Wilson's most important piece of legislation as banking and currency reform was needed because there was no cooperation between banks during a crisis, money and credit was not flexible so there was no way to increase or decrease the amount of money circulating, and there was no central control of banking since Andrew Jackson, and not enough banks in the West.

The act set up 12 Federal Reserve Districts in the country each with a Federal Reserve Bank which is a "banker's bank" to increase, decrease money issued and grant loans to all national banks which service the people.

Monetary decisions are made by 7 members of the Federal Reserve Board which is based in Washington, D.C. and its members are appointed by the President.

The Board controls the amount of money circulating and amount of lending by their setting of the Rediscount Rate:

A raise in this rate would decrease lending and lead to less money circulating (create some deflation)

A lowering of this rate would increase lending and lead to more money circulating (create some inflation)

Government money is issued in the form of Federal Reserve Notes today.

3. Business Regulation

a. Clayton Anti-Trust Act of 1914

- declared business practices illegal if they created a monopoly
- helped labor unions and farm organizations by making them legal
- legalized strikes, picketing, boycotts

b. Federal Trade Commission Act of 1914 set up a 5 person commission (F.T.C.) which could:

- require annual reports from corporations
- investigate business practices
- report findings
- order corporations to stop unfair practices

(Weaknesses in these 2 laws came in court interpretations of language used)

4. Smith-Lever Act of 1914 provided national tax money for rural education.

5. Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 provided national tax money for vocational education in both rural and urban areas.

6. Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916 established 12 Farm Loan Banks in 12 agricultural districts of the U.S.
7. Adamson Act established an 8 hour day at 10 hour pay for all U.S. railroad workers.
8. Federal Highway Act gave national money to states for road building.
9. Keating-Owens Labor Act prohibited employment of a child under age 14 in interstate businesses.