

Chapter 24

I. Progressivism

A. General features

1. Against the abuses of the Gilded-Age bosses; **goal**: greater democracy, honest/efficient gov't
2. More businesslike and efficient than populism; leaders better
3. Paradox of regulation of business by business leaders; no unregulated chaos of competition
4. Not an organized group or party

B. Antecedents

1. **Populism** – populist platform of 1892 outlined most reforms of Progressive Era
2. **Mugwumps** – reformers against spoils system; civil service based on merit
3. Socialist critiques – socialist remedies unacceptable (too radical)
4. **Muckrakers** – writers who exposed problems in society (raking up muck...)
 - a. **Henry Demarest Lloyd** – 1st muckraker, examination of Standard Oil Co. & monopolies; *Wealth against Commonwealth* (1894)
 - b. **Jacob Riis** – NY journalist; slum conditions; *How the Other Half Lives* (1890)
 - c. Golden Age of Muckraking – published in popular magazines; **Lincoln Steffens** on municipal corruption
 - d. Popular support for reform b/c of muckrakers
 - e. Diagnosis more than remedy; reformers assumed informed, active democracy would correct problems

C. Themes of progressivism

1. Democratizing government
 - a. **Direct primaries** (everybody elects people to go to national conventions); previously only certain leaders (SC 1st to adopt)
 - b. **Initiative** – voters can petition to have idea put on ballot
 - c. **Referendum** – voting public can then vote on the idea
 - d. **Recall** – public officials could remove initiative or referendum
 - e. Direct election of senators – **17th amendment** ratified in 1913 allowed for this
2. Efficiency and good government
 - a. **Frederick W. Taylor** – “efficiency expert”; efficient management of time/costs; standardization of equipment; created **scientific management**;
 - b. City Government
 - i. **Commission** – authority in board of directors of city depts.
 - ii. **City-manager plan** – professional ran the gov't based on policies by elected council & mayor (new profession)
 - c. Use of specialists – Gov. **Robert M. La Follette** (Wisc.); idea of government by experts
3. Regulation of giant corporations
 - a. Complete laissez-faire – no regulation (extreme w/ little support)
 - b. Public ownership – socialist; little support except for public utilities (water, transportation in cities)
 - c. Trust-busting – attempt to break companies up to promote competition (difficult)
 - d. Regulation of big business – stabilized; reduced competition; some acceptance by business leaders (winner)
 - e. Problem of regulating the regulators b/c insiders know more than commissions → advantage for business leaders
4. Social justice
 - a. Private charities lend much aid → social workers but too much, needs state power

- b. Child labor – **National Child Labor Committee** (1904); evils exposed by Lewis W. Hine (photographer); most states labor had min. age w/ limits on working hours for rest of kids
- c. **Night work and dangerous occupations** banned for women/children in many states
- d. Erratic Supreme Court – different decisions; *Lochner v. New York* (1905) voided 10 hr. workday (violates right of contract); *Muller v. Oregon* (1908) upholds 10 hr. workday for women; *Bunting v. Oregon* (1917) upholds 10 hr. workday for men & women
- e. Stricter building codes and factory inspection acts after Triangle Shirtwaist Co. (NY, 1911)
- f. **Workmen’s compensation** – accident insurance for injured worker
- g. Prohibition – most successful: **Anti-Saloon League** (1893); single-issue pressure group

II. Roosevelt’s Progressivism

- A. Activism and the art of the possible – Roosevelt avoided bank regulation/tariff issues; skilled politician
- B. Trust regulation; Roosevelt can do anything not forbidden by Constitution
 1. “**square deal**” – enforcement of antitrust laws, stricter control on big business
 2. Opposition to trustbusting b/c regulation more effective
 3. *United States v. E.C. Knight and Company* (1895) – manufacturing intrastate; can’t be regulated
 4. *Northern Securities* case (1904) – monopoly of RR; 1904 dissolved by supreme court
- C. **Coal strike of 1902**
 1. Cause of strike – union demands: 20% wage ↑; daily hours ↓; union recognition by mine owners
 2. Roosevelt and arbitration – conference at White House → failure; strike ends & Roosevelt’s commission sets terms
 3. Effects of strike and settlement – Roosevelt’s prestige ↑; 9 hr. workday (from 10); 10% wage ↑
- D. Further regulation of business
 1. More antitrust suits – 25 during administration
 2. Expedition and **Elkins Acts** – illegal for RR to give secret rebates
 3. **Bureau of Corporations** – study & report activities of corps. help correct malpractices
 4. **Standard Oil, American Tobacco** went to court b/c didn’t comply with **Bureau of corps.**
- E. Election of 1904
 1. Republican nomination – Roosevelt
 2. Democratic candidate and positions – **Alton B. Parker**; “safe conservative”; wins South
 3. Roosevelt wins most states outright; wins election
- F. Reforms in second term
 1. **Hepburn Act** – gives **ICC (Interstate Commerce Commission)** power to set max. freight rates; power over pipelines, express co., sleeping-car co., bridges, ferries
 2. Regulation of food and drugs
 - a. **Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle*** – terrible conditions in Chicago’s meat-packing industry
 - b. **Meat Inspection Act** (1906) – fed. inspection of meat; sanitation standards
 - c. **Pure Food and Drug Act** – restrictions on prepared foods/medicines; can’t sell/make harmful/misbranded food, drugs, liquor
 3. Conservation – halt destruction of environment by fed. Regulation & protection: **National Park Service** (1916); **Gifford Pinchot & Division of Forestry**; **Forest Reserve Act** (1891)

III. Taft’s Administration

- A. Successor to Theodore Roosevelt in 1908
 1. **William Howard Taft** – handpicked by **Roosevelt**; Sec. of War; really wanted to be a judge
 2. Democrats and **Bryan** – portrayed as a conservative
 3. Election outcome – Taft “sweeps” electoral college
- B. Taft’s background and character
 1. Not suited to presidency; not comfortable; detested politics; Supreme Court Justice (1921-1930)
- C. **Tariff reform**
 1. Preference for lower rates – contrary to Republican tradition
 2. Problems in Senate – **Nealson W. Aldrich** (Senate Finance Committee) revises bill (800 changes)

3. Reactions to compromise – some say it's corrupt; some progressive repb. join Democrats to defeat bill; Taft backs bill to avoid party split

D. **Ballinger-Pinchot controversy**

1. **Ballinger's** actions to undo **Roosevelt** policies - uses reserved land for ranger stations as commercial water power sites
2. Impact of the affair – **Pinchot** fired; all congressional committees elected

E. Elections of 1910

F. Roosevelt's response on his return to the United States

1. **New Nationalism** – new fed. regulatory laws, social-welfare program, more direct democracy (initiative, recall, referendum), save America from threat of revolution
2. Clash over the **U.S. Steel** suit – Roosevelt attacks Taft for trust busting to increase competition
3. TR enters the race in 1912

G. Taft's achievements

1. In conservation – **Appalacian Forest Reserve Act** (1911), new conservationists, congress's power to protect public lands
2. **Mann-Elkins Act** – ICC to initiate rate changes; Commerce Court for ICC appeals;
3. Other laws – **Bureau of Mines, Federal Children's Bureau** (1912)
4. Constitutional amendments – **16th** (1913) federal income tax; **17th** (1913) popular election of senators

H. The **election of 1912**

1. The Republican nomination of 1912
 - a. Roosevelt's primary victories
 - b. **Taft's** nomination b/c party leaders & **Taft** was pres.
2. Creation of the Progressive party b/c Roosevelt leaves Repb. party; he is "**Bull Moose**" candidate; he does *not* run for president

IV. **Wilson's Progressivism**

A. **Wilson's** rise to power

1. His background – ambition to serve humankind; **Princeton, Johns Hopkins University**; history & poli-sci; politicians should promote general welfare
2. President of Princeton b/c good debate skills, lectures
3. Governor of **New Jersey** (1910) – progressive reform brought national attention
4. His nomination – Speaker of house **Bennett Clark & Oscan Underwood** split votes; eventually support goes to **Wilson**

B. Election of 1912

1. **New Nationalism** versus **New Freedom** – **New Freedom** believes fed. gov't should restore competition among small economic units, not regulate monopolies
2. **Wilson's** election – **Roosevelt & Taft** split votes; **Wilson** Wins
3. Significance of the election – 1st pres. primaries; debate basic issues of progressivism
 - a. High mark for progressivism
 - i. First presidential primaries
 - ii. Focus on alternatives & debate of issues of progressivism
 - b. Democrats back into office: control both houses of congress
 - c. Southerners into control
 - d. Republican party become more conservative when they return in 1920s; progressives left

C. Wilsonian reform

1. Wilson's style – strong pres.; courted public opinion; used patronage power to reward friends/punish enemies
2. Tariff reform
 - a. Appearance before Congress – forced them to do something
 - b. Tariff changes in the **Underwood-Simmons Act** (1913) – lowered tariff rates (37%→29% avg.); introduced graduated federal tax to increase revenue

3. Banking and currency reform
 - a. **Glass-Owen Federal Reserve Act (1913)** – regional reserve banks deals with Federal Reserve Bank; regional ones deal with local banks; a.k.a. **Federal Reserve System**
 - i. Expand money supply & bank credit
 - b. **Defects corrected by the new system**
 - i. (1) greater security, (2) currency & bank credit more flexible, (3) concentration of reserves in NY reduced
4. Efforts for new antitrust laws
 - a. **Federal Trade Commission** – replaces Bureau of Corporations; define unfair trade; order companies to stop when evidence of unfair competition
 - b. **Clayton Anti-Trust Act (1914)**
 - i. Practices outlawed – price discrimination; preventing a dealer from selling competitors products; corporations’ buying stock in competitors; connecting corps. w/ capital >\$1 mil
 - ii. Labor and farm groups – farm labor organizations except from antitrust laws
 - c. Disappointments with administration of the new laws – not as much as some wanted
5. The limits of Wilson’s progressivism
 - a. Social justice – state suffrage for women, not federal; state support for child-labor, not federal; opposed rural credits;
 - b. African Americans – Wilson is racist; he thinks racial segregation is to eliminate “friction”
6. Wilson’s return to reform
 - a. **La Follette Seamen’s Act (1915)** - ↑ ship safety, reduced power of captains; min. food standards,
 - b. Support for land banks and long-term farm loans – **Federal Farm Loan Act (1916)**
 - c. **Warehouse Act of 1916** – fed. backing of receipts in private warehouses → stored produce as short-term bank loans for farmers
 - d. Farm demonstration agents (**Smith-Lever Act of 1914**) and agricultural education (**Smith-Hughes Act of 1917**)
 - e. **Federal Highways Act** of 1916 – grants to states if highway dept. met standards
 - f. Labor reform legislation
 - i. **Keating-Owen Child Labor Act**, no interstate trade of goods manufactured by <14 year olds, over turned by supreme court
 - ii. **Adamson Act of 1916** – 8 hr workday for RR workers w/ 1 ½ pay for overtime

V. The limits of Progressivism

- A. Acceptance of the public-service concept of the state
- B. Elements of paradox
 1. Disfranchisement of southern African Americans, immigrant prejudice
 2. Manipulation of democratic reforms by well-financed public campaigns
 3. Decisions by faceless bureaucratic experts w/o public interaction
 4. Decline of voter participation b/c new politics/leaders not as effective as bosses & party orgs.
 5. Europe already in war; America enters soon