

# UNIT 7 — Period 7: 1890–1945

## Topic 7.1

### Contextualizing Period 7

**Learning Objective:** Explain the context in which America grew into the role as a world power.

In the 55 years from 1890 to 1945, Americans went from horses and buggies to automobiles and airplanes. Within these decades, the United States fought in two horrific world wars, experienced the worst depression in its history, and emerged a world leader. Altogether, this period brought dramatic changes to how Americans lived and the role of their government.

By 1890 the United States had surpassed Great Britain as the leading industrial power in the world, and it would increase that economic leadership through World War II. A strong economy also provided the foundation for America's expanding role in international affairs and its emergence in 1945 as the world's leading political and military power. Industrialization, urbanization, and immigration continued to shape events during these years.

**Economic Growth** U.S. *economic expansion* continued during this period as the nation continued the transition from a rural, agricultural economy to an urban, industrial one. This development included the growth of *large corporations* and the repetition of earlier cycles of economic booms and busts, culminating in severe hardship during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

**Stability and Democracy** Economic changes along with political and social issues resulted in two significant *reform periods*, the time of the *Progressives* and the New Deal. Progressives in the first two decades of the 20th century turned to *government action* to address *economic instability* through the creation of the Federal Reserve to regulate banking and the business cycle. Progressives also responded to *political corruption* by reforming election practices, such as instituting the direct elections of U.S. senators by voters. *Social reforms* included a constitutional amendment that gave women the right to vote, a landmark in the struggle for gender equality that would continue into the present.

**Responding to an Economic Crisis** The economic collapse and mass unemployment of the *Great Depression* challenged the *laissez-faire* economic policies of the 1920s. In response, the Democrats' *New Deal* created a *limited welfare state* to address mass unemployment, to reduce poverty among the elderly, and to help others experiencing economic hardships. Congress

passed laws regulating banks and the stock market, guaranteeing a minimum wage, creating Social Security and protecting workers in labor unions. The increasing role and size of government to meet problems caused by industrialization fostered the emerging ideology of *American liberalism*.

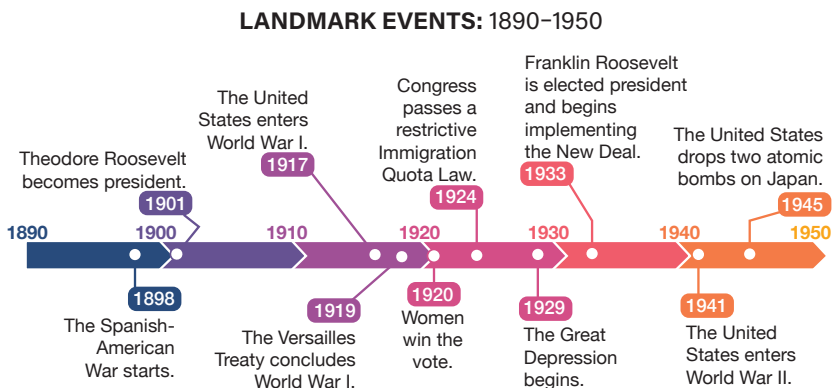
**Conflicts in Culture and Society** *Popular culture* grew dramatically with the introduction of new *mass media*, such as radio and motion pictures. Changes in popular culture sparked *value conflicts* over morals, education, religion and science. Some churches objected to the science of evolution being taught in public schools. Reactions to the growth of immigration and internal migration resulted in debates over *national identity* and the passage of federal *restrictions on immigration* based on one’s ethnicity or national origin. A resurgent Ku Klux Klan attacked, both politically and physically, African Americans, Roman Catholics, Jews, and immigrants.

**Shifts in Foreign Relations** The conflicts over imperialism and two world wars renewed debate over America’s *role in the world*. The acquisition of new territories after the Spanish-American War caused some people to question its commitment to traditional *national values* of freedom, independence, and self-government. In World War I, Americans disagreed over the degree of *American interests* in the conflict and the best approach to insure *national security*. After the war, Congress and voters rejected membership in the League of Nations.

However, World War II thrust the United States, with its unrivaled economic, political, and military power, into a *leadership role* in the world. In 1945, the United States embraced the concept of *collective security* and played a leading role in creating the United Nations. Decisions made after the war, such as the nation’s close alliance with western Europe and its commitment to anti-communism, shaped American foreign policy through the end of the century.

## ANALYZE THE CONTEXT

1. Explain a historical context for the increased role of the federal government in the U.S. economy during the period from 1890 to 1945.
2. Explain a historical context for the increased role of the United States in world affairs during the period from 1890 to 1945.



# Imperialism: Debates

*Our form of government, our traditions, our present interests, and our future welfare, all forbid our entering upon a career of conquest.*

William Jennings Bryan, December 13, 1898

**Learning Objective:** Explain the similarities and differences in attitudes about the nation's proper role in the world.

After the 1790s, U.S. foreign policy had centered on expanding westward, protecting U.S. interests abroad, and limiting foreign influences in the Americas. After the Civil War, with a booming industrial economy, the United States showed increasing interest not only in overseas trade, but also in establishing bases and territories in the Caribbean Sea and across the Pacific Ocean. After 1890, the nation carried on a growing debate over whether it should join the competition for overseas territories with imperialist nations of the world or remain true to its anti-colonial traditions.

## Expansion after the Civil War

**William H. Seward** of New York served as secretary of state (1861–1869) under both Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson. Seward was the most influential secretary of state since John Quincy Adams (who formulated the **Monroe Doctrine** in 1823). During the Civil War, Seward helped prevent Great Britain and France from entering the war on the side of the Confederacy. He led the drive to annex Midway Island in the Pacific, gained rights to build a canal in Nicaragua, and purchased the vast territory of Alaska. Despite his powerful advocacy for expansionism, Seward failed to convince Congress to annex Hawaii and to purchase the Danish West Indies.

**The Purchase of Alaska** For decades, Russia and Great Britain both claimed the vast territory of Alaska. Russia finally assumed control and established a small colony for seal hunting, but the territory soon became an economic burden because of the threat of a British takeover. Seeking buyers, Russia found Seward to be an enthusiastic champion of the idea of the United States purchasing Alaska. As a result of Seward's lobbying, and also in appreciation of Russian support during the Civil War, Congress in 1867 agreed to buy Alaska for \$7.2 million. However, for many years Americans saw no value in Alaska and referred to it derisively as “Seward’s Folly” or “Seward’s Icebox” and ignored its development.

**Hawaiian Islands** Since the mid-1800s, American missionaries and entrepreneurs had settled in the Pacific islands of **Hawaii**. Later, a U.S. commission explored the use of **Pearl Harbor** in Hawaii, or the Sandwich Islands, which lay astride the sea-lanes from California to China. In 1870, Ulysses S. Grant sought control of Pearl Harbor on Oahu and new trade treaties with the native kingdom. Hawaiians agreed to a treaty in 1875 giving the United States exclusive rights to Hawaiian sugar. In 1893, American settlers aided in the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarch, **Queen Liliuokalani** and then petitioned for annexation by the United States. If Hawaii became part of the United States, Hawaiian sugar would not be subject to the high U.S. tariffs on imports. However, President **Grover Cleveland** opposed imperialism and blocked Republican efforts to annex Hawaii.

## The Era of “New Imperialism”

The conquest and division of many parts of Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Islands by more industrialized nations during the 19th century marked a renewed interest in imperialism. Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Japan, and other nations, some as small as Belgium, gained control by arms or by economic dominance. The United States also participated in this contest. Most U.S. advocates of expansionism hoped to succeed through economic and diplomatic means, without resorting to military action. Expansion into new territories continued a long pattern in U.S. history, but adding land overseas was a change from the past. People supported expansion for different combinations of reasons.

**Economic Interests** The country’s growing industries were strong supporters of expanding U.S. economic interests around the world. Foreign countries offered both valuable raw materials, including minerals, oil, and rubber, and provided markets for products. Many in the Republican Party were closely allied with business leaders and therefore generally endorsed an imperialist foreign policy. Like industrialists, farmers were eager to sell overseas. They saw the growing populations of cities, both in the United States and internationally, as potential markets for wheat, corn, and livestock.

**Political and Military Power** Some people believed that the United States needed to compete with the imperialistic nations or it would be sidelined as a second-class power in world affairs. Chief among these was U.S. Navy Captain **Alfred Thayer Mahan**. He shaped the debate over the need for naval bases with his book *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* (1890). He argued that a strong navy was crucial to a country’s ambitions of securing foreign markets and becoming a world power. Mahan’s book was widely read by prominent American citizens as well as by political leaders in Europe and Japan.

Using arguments in Mahan’s book, U.S. naval strategists persuaded Congress to finance the construction of modern steel ships and encouraged the acquisition of overseas islands. Among these islands were Samoa and others in the Pacific Ocean that provided coaling and supply stations so that the new fleet could project power globally. By 1900, the U.S. Navy was the third largest in the world. Among politicians, Assistant Secretary of the Navy and

later President Theodore Roosevelt and Senator Henry Cabot Lodge were the leading proponents of expanding U.S. naval power and influence in the world.

**Social Fears** The Panic of 1893, the violence of labor-management conflicts, and the perception that the country no longer had a frontier in the 1890s caused fear of increasing social turmoil. Overseas territories and adventures offered the country a possible safety valve for dissatisfied urban workers and farmers.

**Darwinism and Religion** Some saw expansion into the Caribbean, Central America, and the Pacific Ocean as an extension of the idea of Manifest Destiny that had long fostered westward expansion. In addition, they applied Darwin's concept of the survival of the fittest not only to competition in business but also to competition among countries. Therefore, to demonstrate strength in the international arena, **expansionists** wanted to acquire territories overseas. In his book *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Present Crisis* (1885), the Reverend **Josiah Strong** wrote that people of Anglo-Saxon stock were "the fittest to survive." He believed that Protestant Americans had a religious duty to colonize other lands in order to spread Christianity and the benefits of their "superior" civilization (medicine, science, and technology) to "less fortunate" peoples of the world. Many missionaries who traveled to Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Islands believed in the racial superiority of White people, although some went more for humanitarian reasons. To support these missionaries, many Americans called for active U.S. government involvement in foreign affairs.

**Popular Press** Newspaper and magazine editors found that they could increase circulation by printing adventure stories about distant places exotic to their readers. Stories in the popular press increased public interest and stimulated demands for a larger U.S. role in world affairs.

## Opposition to Imperialism

Many people in the United States strongly opposed imperialism. They did so for a combination of reasons:

- They believed in self-determination. One of the founding principles of the United States was that people should govern themselves. They believed that this principle applied to people everywhere, not just in the United States. They felt that imperialism was morally wrong.
- They rejected imperialist racial theories. Some denied that Whites were biologically superior to people of Asia or Africa, and so Whites had no right to rule others. However, many Americans feared adding nonwhite people to the country.
- They supported isolationism. George Washington had advised the country to avoid involvement in foreign affairs. Anti-imperialists argued that this was still good advice.
- They opposed the expense of imperialism. Building a large navy and controlling foreign territories would cost more than they were worth.

## Latin America

Beginning with the Monroe Doctrine in the 1820s, the United States had taken a special interest in problems of the Western Hemisphere and had assumed the role of protector of Latin America from European ambitions. Benjamin Harrison's Secretary of State **James G. Blaine** of Maine played a principal role in extending this tradition.

**Pan-American Diplomacy** Blaine's repeated efforts to establish closer ties between the United States and its southern neighbors bore fruit in 1889 with the meeting of the first **Pan-American Conference** in Washington. Representatives from various nations of the Western Hemisphere decided to create a permanent organization to promote cooperation on trade and other issues. Blaine had hoped to reduce tariff rates. Although this goal was not achieved, the foundation was established for the larger goal of hemispheric cooperation on both economic and political issues. The Pan-American Union continues today as part of the Organization of American States, which was established in 1948.

**Cleveland, Olney, and the Monroe Doctrine** One of the most important uses of the Monroe Doctrine in the late 19th century concerned a boundary dispute between Venezuela and its neighbor—the British colony of Guiana. In 1895 and 1896, President Cleveland and Secretary of State **Richard Olney** insisted that Great Britain agree to arbitrate the dispute. The British initially said the matter was not the business of the United States. However, the United States argued that the Monroe Doctrine applied to the situation. If the British did not arbitrate, the United States would back up its argument with military force.

Deciding that U.S. friendship was more important to its long-term interests than a boundary dispute in South America, the British agreed to U.S. demands. As it turned out, the arbitrators ruled mainly in favor of Britain, not Venezuela. Even so, Latin American nations appreciated U.S. efforts to protect them from European domination. The **Venezuela boundary dispute** marked a turning point in U.S.–British relations. From 1895 on, the two countries cultivated a friendship rather than continuing their former rivalry. The friendship would prove vital for both nations in the 20th century.

**Growing Conflict over Imperialism** The precedent of the Monroe Doctrine provided expansionists an open invitation to interfere in the other nations of the Americas. This was the beginning of a fierce political battle over the future of the country. One side represented the anti-colonial and self-government traditions of the nation rooted in the struggle for independence against Great Britain. The other side expressed the interests of those committed to economic and global power. The conflict between imperialists and anti-imperialists over controlling overseas territories intensified in the debate over the Spanish-American War and the colonization of the Philippines (see Topic 7.3).

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

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1. Explain two differences between American imperialists and anti-imperialists.

### KEY TERMS BY THEME

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#### Overseas Involvement (WOR)

William H. Seward

Monroe Doctrine

purchase of Alaska (1867)

Hawaii

Pearl Harbor

Queen Liliuokalani

Grover Cleveland

James G. Blaine

Pan-American Conference (1889)

Richard Olney

Venezuela boundary dispute

#### Causes of U.S. Imperialism (WOR)

"New Imperialism"

Alfred Thayer Mahan

Darwinism

expansionists

Josiah Strong

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

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Questions 1–2 refer to the following excerpt.

"We hold that the policy known as imperialism is hostile to liberty and tends toward militarism, an evil from which it has been our glory to be free. We regret that it has become necessary in the land of Washington and Lincoln to reaffirm that all men, of whatever race or color, are entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. . . .

"We earnestly condemn the policy of the present national administration in the Philippines. It seeks to extinguish the spirit of 1776 in those islands. . . . We denounce the slaughter of the Filipinos as a needless horror. We protest against the extension of American sovereignty by Spanish methods. We demand the immediate cessation of the war against liberty, begun by Spain and continued by us. We urge that Congress be promptly convened to announce to the Filipinos our purpose to concede to them the independence for which they have so long fought and which of right is theirs."

Platform of the American Anti-Imperialist  
League, October 17, 1899

1. Supporters of this excerpt would most likely agree with which of the following beliefs?
  - (A) The peoples of Asia had a right to govern themselves without outside interference.
  - (B) The United States had a duty to bring the benefits of civilization and religion to others.
  - (C) The people of underdeveloped countries were unprepared and unfit to govern themselves.
  - (D) The United States should take over weak countries that might fall to other great powers.
  
2. Which of the following most directly contributed to the sentiments expressed in the excerpt?
  - (A) The sensationalism of the popular press of the time
  - (B) The values expressed in the Declaration of Independence
  - (C) The views of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge
  - (D) The changing interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine

### SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION

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Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

1. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
  - (a) Briefly explain ONE difference between the position of imperialists and anti-imperialists on the acquisition of overseas territories in the period of the Spanish-American War.
  - (b) Briefly describe ONE controversial territorial acquisition and why expansionists favored it in the period from 1865 to 1900.
  - (c) Briefly describe ONE controversial territorial acquisition and why anti-imperialists opposed it in the period from 1865 to 1900.



# The Spanish-American War and U.S. Foreign Policy to 1917

*We are Anglo-Saxons, and must obey our blood and occupy new markets, and, if necessary, new lands.*

Senator Albert Beveridge, April 27, 1898

**Learning Objective:** Explain the causes and effects of the Spanish-American War.

The first targets of American imperialism were nearby Caribbean islands. Expansionists from the South had coveted Cuba as early as the 1850s. Now, in the 1890s, large American investments in Cuban sugar, Spanish misrule of Cuba, and the Monroe Doctrine all provided reasons for U.S. intervention in the Caribbean's largest island. Connected to U.S. involvement on Cuba, an island only 90 miles south of mainland United States, came involvement in the Philippines, islands over 7,000 miles to the west.

## Spanish-American War

In the 1890s, American public opinion was being swept by a growing wave of **jingoism**—an intense form of nationalism calling for an aggressive foreign policy. Expansionists demanded that the United States take its place with the imperialist nations of Europe as a world power. Not everyone favored such a policy. Presidents Cleveland and McKinley were among many who thought military action abroad was both morally wrong and economically unsound. Nevertheless, specific events combined with background pressures led to overwhelming popular demand for war against Spain.

### *Causes of the War*

A combination of jingoism, economic interests, and moral concerns made the United States more willing to go to war than it had been. These factors came together in 1898.

**Cuban Revolt** Cuban nationalists fought but failed to overthrow Spanish colonial rule between 1868 and 1878. They renewed the struggle in 1895. Through sabotage and attacks on Cuban plantations, they hoped to either push Spain out or pull the United States in as an ally. In response, Spain sent

autocratic General Valeriano Weyler and 100,000 troops to crush the revolt. Weyler forced civilians into camps, where tens of thousands died of starvation and disease. This action gained him the title of “the Butcher” in the U.S. press.

**Yellow Press** Actively promoting war fever in the United States was “**yellow journalism**,” sensationalistic reporting that featured bold and lurid headlines of crime, disaster, and scandal. Among the most sensationalistic newspapers were Joseph Pulitzer’s *New York World* and William Randolph Hearst’s *New York Journal*. These papers printed exaggerated and false accounts of Spanish atrocities in Cuba. Believing what they read daily in their newspapers, many Americans urged Congress and the president to intervene in Cuba for humanitarian reasons and put a stop to the atrocities and suffering.

**De Lôme Letter (1898)** One story that caused a storm of outrage was a Spanish diplomat’s letter that was leaked to the press and printed on the front page of Hearst’s *Journal*. Written by the Spanish minister to the United States, Dupuy de Lôme, the letter was highly critical of President McKinley. Many considered it an official Spanish insult against the U.S. national honor.

**Sinking of the *Maine*** Less than one week after the de Lôme letter made headlines, a far more shocking event occurred. On February 15, 1898, the U.S. battleship USS *Maine* was at anchor in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, when it suddenly exploded, killing 260 Americans on board. The yellow press accused Spain of deliberately blowing up the ship. However, experts later concluded that the explosion was probably an accident.

**McKinley’s War Message** Following the sinking of the USS *Maine*, President McKinley issued an ultimatum to Spain demanding that it agree to a ceasefire in Cuba. Spain agreed to this demand, but U.S. newspapers and a majority in Congress kept clamoring for war. McKinley yielded to the public pressure in April by sending a war message to Congress. He offered four reasons why the United States should support the Cuban rebels:

1. “Put an end to the barbarities, bloodshed, starvation, and horrible miseries” in Cuba
2. Protect the lives and property of U.S. citizens living in Cuba
3. End “the very serious injury to the commerce, trade, and business of our people”
4. End “the constant menace to our peace” arising from disorder in Cuba

**Teller Amendment** Responding to the president’s message, Congress passed a joint resolution on April 20, 1898, authorizing war. Part of the resolution, the **Teller Amendment**, declared that the United States had no intention of taking political control of Cuba and that, once peace was restored to the island, the Cuban people would control their own government.

## *Fighting the War*

The first shots of the Spanish-American War were fired in Manila Bay in the Philippines, over 9,000 miles from Cuba. The last shots were fired only a few months later in August. So swift was the U.S. victory that Secretary of State John Hay called it “**a splendid little war.**”

**The Philippines** Theodore Roosevelt, McKinley’s assistant secretary of the navy, was an expansionist eager to show off the power of his country’s new, all-steel navy. Anticipating war, and recognizing the strategic value of Spain’s territories in the Pacific, Roosevelt had ordered a fleet commanded by Commodore **George Dewey** to go to the Philippines. This large group of islands had been under Spanish control ever since the 1500s.

On May 1, shortly after war was declared, Commodore Dewey’s fleet fired on Spanish ships in Manila Bay. The Spanish fleet was soon pounded into submission by U.S. naval guns. The fight on land took longer. Allied with Filipino rebels, U.S. troops captured the city of Manila on August 13.

**Invasion of Cuba** More difficult than the Philippines was Cuba. An ill-prepared, largely volunteer U.S. force landed in Cuba in June. The most lethal foe proved to be not Spanish bullets but tropical diseases. Fewer than 500 U.S. soldiers died in battle, but at least 5,000 died of malaria, typhoid, and dysentery.

Attacks by both American and Cuban forces succeeded in defeating the much larger, but poorly led, Spanish army. Next to Dewey’s victory in Manila Bay, the most celebrated event of the war was a cavalry charge up San Juan Hill in Cuba by the Rough Riders, a regiment of volunteers led by Theodore Roosevelt, who had resigned his navy post to take part in the war. Roosevelt’s volunteers were aided in victory by veteran regiments of African Americans. Less dramatic but more important than the taking of San Juan Hill was the success of the U.S. Navy in destroying the Spanish fleet at Santiago Bay on July 3. Without a navy, Spain realized that it could not continue fighting, and in early August 1898 asked the U.S. for terms of peace.

## *Annexation of Hawaii*

The outbreak of war in the Philippines gave Congress and President McKinley the pretext to complete the annexation of Hawaii in July 1898. The Hawaiian Islands became a U.S. territory in 1900 and the fiftieth state in the Union in August 1959 (Topic 7.2).

## *Controversy over the Treaty of Peace*

More controversial than the war itself was the peace treaty signed in Paris on December 10, 1898. It provided for (1) recognition of Cuban independence, (2) U.S. acquisition of two Spanish islands—**Puerto Rico** in the Caribbean and **Guam** in the Pacific, and (3) U.S. control of the Philippines in return for a \$20 million payment to Spain. Since the avowed purpose of the U.S. war effort was to liberate Cuba, Americans accepted this provision of the treaty. However, many opposed taking over the Philippines, a large island nation, as a colony.

**The Philippine Question** Controversy over the Philippine question took many months longer to resolve than the brief war with Spain. Opinion both in Congress and with the public at large became sharply divided between imperialists who favored annexing the Philippines and anti-imperialists who opposed it. In the Senate, where a two-thirds vote was required to ratify the **Treaty of Paris**, anti-imperialists were determined to defeat the treaty because of its provision for acquiring the Philippines. Anti-imperialists argued that the United States would be taking possession of a heavily populated territory whose people were of a different race and culture. Such action, they thought, violated the principles of the Declaration of Independence by depriving Filipinos of the right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Further, annexation would entangle the United States in the political conflicts of Asia.

On February 6, 1899, the Treaty of Paris (including Philippine annexation) came to a vote in Congress. The treaty was approved 57 to 27, just one vote more than the two-thirds majority required by the Constitution for ratification. The anti-imperialists fell just two votes short of defeating the treaty.

The people of the Philippines were outraged that their hopes for national independence from Spain were now being denied by the United States. Filipino nationalist leader **Emilio Aguinaldo** had fought alongside U.S. troops during the Spanish-American War. Now he led bands of guerrilla fighters in a war against U.S. control. It took U.S. troops three years to defeat the insurrection. The conflict resulted in the deaths of about 5,000 people from the United States and several hundred thousand Filipinos—mostly civilians who died from diseases.

### **Other Results of the War**

Imperialism remained a major issue in the United States even after ratification of the Treaty of Paris. The American **Anti-Imperialist League** led by William Jennings Bryan rallied opposition to further acts of expansion in the Pacific.

**Insular Cases** One question concerned the constitutional rights of the Philippine people: Did the Constitution follow the flag? In other words, did the provisions of the U.S. Constitution apply to whatever territories fell under U.S. control, including the Philippines and Puerto Rico? Bryan and other anti-imperialists argued in the affirmative, while leading imperialists argued in the negative. The issue was resolved in favor of the imperialists in a series of Supreme Court cases (1901–1903) known as the Insular (island) Cases. The Court ruled that constitutional rights were not automatically extended to territorial possessions and that the power to decide whether or not to grant such rights belonged to Congress.

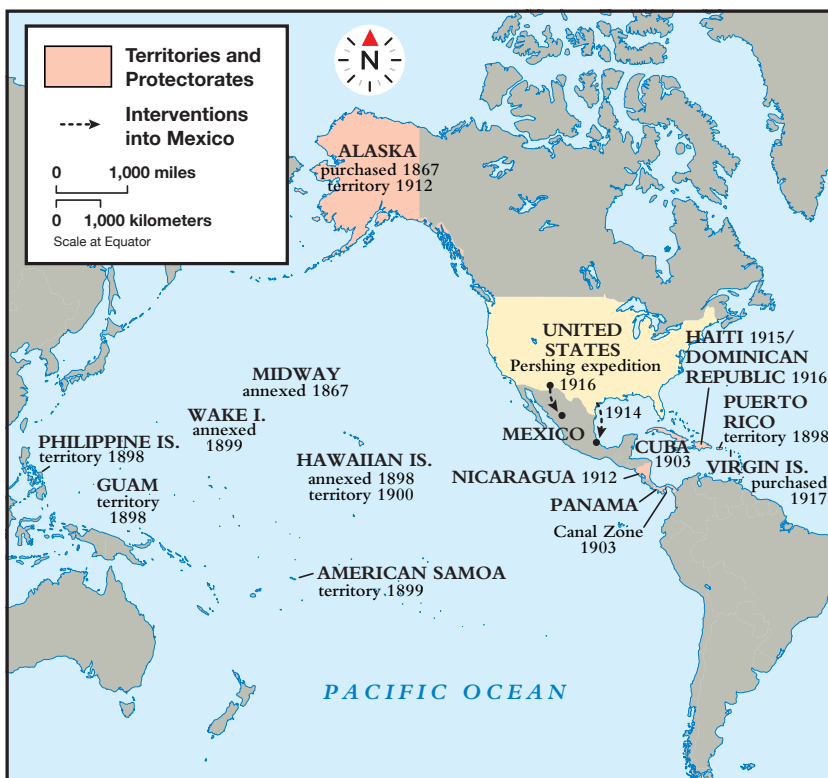
**Cuba and the Platt Amendment (1901)** Previously, the Teller Amendment to the war resolution of 1898 had guaranteed U.S. respect for Cuba’s sovereignty as an independent nation. Nevertheless, U.S. troops remained in Cuba from 1898 until 1901. In the latter year, Congress made withdrawal of troops conditional upon Cuba’s acceptance of terms included in an amendment to an

army appropriations bill—the **Platt Amendment**. Bitterly resented by Cuban nationalists, the Platt Amendment required Cuba to agree (1) to never sign a treaty with a foreign power that impaired its independence, (2) to permit the United States to intervene in Cuba’s affairs to preserve its independence and maintain law and order, and (3) to allow the U.S. to maintain naval bases in Cuba, including one permanent base at Guantanamo Bay.

A Cuban convention reluctantly accepted these terms, adding them to its country’s new constitution. In effect, the Platt Amendment made Cuba a U.S. protectorate. As a result, Cuba’s foreign policy would, for many years, be subject to U.S. oversight and control.

**Election of 1900** The Republicans re-nominated President McKinley, along with war hero and New York Governor Theodore Roosevelt for vice president. The Democrats, as in 1896, nominated William Jennings Bryan. He again argued for free silver and vigorously attacked American imperialism. However, most voters accepted the recently enacted gold standard and the acquisition of new territory, including the Philippines, and felt the economy was recovering. McKinley won by a larger margin of victory than in 1896.

### U.S. TERRITORIES AND PROTECTORATES, 1917



**Recognition of U.S. Power** One consequence of the Spanish-American War was its effect on how Americans and Europeans thought about U.S. power. The decisive U.S. victory in the war filled Americans with national pride. Southerners shared in this pride and became more attached to the Union after their bitter experience in the 1860s. At the same time, France, Great Britain, and other European nations recognized that the United States was a first-class power with a strong navy and a new willingness to act in international affairs.

## Open Door Policy in China

Europeans were further impressed by U.S. involvement in global politics as a result of **John Hay's** policies toward China. As McKinley's secretary of state, Hay was alarmed that the Chinese empire, weakened by political corruption and failure to modernize, was falling under the control of various outside powers. In the 1890s, Russia, Japan, Great Britain, France, and Germany had all established **spheres of influence** in China, meaning that they could dominate trade and investment within their sphere (a particular port or region of China) and shut out competitors.

To prevent the United States from losing access to the lucrative China trade, Hay dispatched a diplomatic note in 1899 to nations controlling spheres of influence. He asked them to accept the concept of an Open Door, by which all nations would have equal trading privileges in China. The replies to Hay's note were evasive. However, because no nation rejected the concept, Hay declared that all had accepted the **Open Door policy**. The press hailed Hay's initiative as a diplomatic triumph.

**Boxer Rebellion (1900)** As the 19th century ended, nationalism and *xenophobia* (hatred and fear of foreigners) were on the rise in China. In 1900, a secret society of Chinese nationalists—the Society of Harmonious Fists, or Boxers—attacked foreign settlements and murdered dozens of Christian missionaries. To protect American lives and property, U.S. troops participated in an international force that marched into Peking (Beijing) and quickly crushed the rebellion of the Boxers. The countries forced China to pay a huge indemnity, which further weakened the imperial regime.

**Hay's Second Round of Notes** Hay feared that the expeditionary force in China might attempt to occupy the country and destroy its independence. In 1900, therefore, he wrote a second note to the imperialistic powers stating U.S. commitment to (1) preserve China's territorial integrity as well as (2) safeguard "equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese empire." Hay's first and second notes set U.S. policy on China not only for the administrations of McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt but also for future presidents. In the 1930s, this Open Door policy for China would strongly influence U.S. relations with Japan.

Hay's notes in themselves did not deter other nations from exploiting the situation in China. For the moment, European powers were kept from grabbing larger pieces of China by the political rivalries among themselves.

## Theodore Roosevelt's "Big Stick" Policy

In 1901, only a few months after being inaugurated president for a second time, McKinley was fatally shot by an anarchist (a person who opposes all government). Succeeding him in office was the Republican vice president—the young expansionist and hero of the Spanish-American War, **Theodore Roosevelt**. Describing his foreign policy, the new president had once said that it was his motto to “speak softly and carry a big stick.” The press therefore applied the label “big stick” to Roosevelt’s aggressive foreign policy. By acting boldly and decisively in a number of situations, Roosevelt attempted to build the reputation of the United States as a world power. Imperialists applauded his every move, but critics disliked breaking the tradition of nonentanglement in global politics.

### *The Panama Canal*

As a result of the Spanish-American War, the new American empire stretched from Puerto Rico in the Caribbean to the Philippines in the Pacific. As a strategic necessity for holding on to these far-flung islands, the United States desired a canal through Central America to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. However, building a canal would be difficult. The French had already failed to complete a canal through the tropic jungles. And before the United States could even try, it needed to negotiate an agreement with the British to abrogate (cancel) the 1850 Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, which stated that any canal in Central America was to be under joint British-U.S. control. This new agreement, called the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, was signed in 1901. With the British agreement to let the United States build a canal alone, the young and activist President Roosevelt took charge.

**Revolution in Panama** Roosevelt was eager to begin the construction of a canal through the narrow but rugged terrain of the isthmus of Panama. He was frustrated, however, by Colombia’s control of this isthmus and its refusal to agree to U.S. terms for digging the canal through its territory. Losing patience with Colombia’s demands of more money and sovereignty over the canal, Roosevelt orchestrated a revolt for Panama’s independence in 1903. With the support of the U.S. Navy, the rebellion succeeded immediately and almost without bloodshed. However, the new government of an independent Panama had to sign the **Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty** of 1903 granting the United States all rights over the 51-mile-long and 10-mile-wide Canal Zone as “if it were sovereign . . . in perpetuity” to keep U.S. protection. Years later, Roosevelt boasted, “I took the Canal Zone and let Congress debate.”

**Building the Canal** Started in 1904, the **Panama Canal** was completed in 1914. Hundreds of laborers lost their lives in the effort. The work was completed thanks in great measure to the skills of two Army colonels—George Goethals, the chief engineer of the canal, and Dr. William Gorgas, whose efforts eliminated the mosquitoes that spread deadly yellow fever.

Most Americans approved of Roosevelt's determination to build the canal, but many were unhappy with his high-handed tactics to secure the Canal Zone. Latin Americans were especially resentful. To compensate, Congress finally voted in 1921 to pay Colombia an indemnity of \$25 million for its loss of Panama. In 1999, the United States returned the Canal Zone to the Republic of Panama to end the bitterness over the original treaty.

### ***The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine***

Another application of Roosevelt's big stick diplomacy involved Latin American nations that were in deep financial trouble and could not pay their debts to European creditors. For example, in 1902, the British dispatched warships to Venezuela to force that country to pay its debts.

In 1904, it appeared that European powers stood ready to intervene in **Santo Domingo** (the Dominican Republic) for the same reason. Rather than let Europeans intervene in Latin America—a blatant violation of the Monroe Doctrine—Roosevelt declared in December 1904 that the United States would intervene instead, whenever necessary. This policy became known as the **Roosevelt Corollary** to the Monroe Doctrine. It meant, for example, that the United States would send gunboats to a Latin American country that was delinquent in paying its debts. U.S. sailors and marines would then occupy the country's major ports to manage the collection of customs taxes until European debts were satisfied.

Over the next 20 years, U.S. presidents used the Roosevelt Corollary to justify sending U.S. forces into Haiti, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua. One long-term result of such interventions was poor U.S. relations with the entire region of Latin America.

## **Roosevelt and Asia**

As the 20th century began, Japan and the United States were both relatively new imperialist powers in East Asia. Their relationship during Theodore Roosevelt's presidency, though at first friendly, grew increasingly competitive.

**Russo-Japanese War** Imperialist rivalry between Russia and Japan led to war in 1904, a war Japan was winning. To end the conflict, Roosevelt arranged a diplomatic conference between the two foes at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1905. Although both Japan and Russia agreed to the **Treaty of Portsmouth**, Japanese nationalists blamed the United States for not giving their country all that they believed they deserved from Russia.

**“Gentlemen's Agreement”** A major cause of friction between Japan and the United States were laws in California that discriminated against Japanese Americans. San Francisco's practice of requiring Japanese American children to attend **segregated schools** was considered a national insult in Japan. In 1908, President Roosevelt arranged a compromise by means of an informal understanding, or **“gentlemen's agreement.”** The Japanese government secretly



agreed to restrict the emigration of Japanese workers to the United States in return for Roosevelt persuading California to repeal its discriminatory laws.

**Great White Fleet** To demonstrate U.S. naval power to Japan and other nations, Roosevelt sent a fleet of battleships on an around-the-world cruise (1907–1909). The great white ships made an impressive sight, and the Japanese government warmly welcomed their arrival in Tokyo Bay.

**Root-Takahira Agreement (1908)** The United States and Japan concluded an important executive agreement in 1908. Secretary of State Elihu Root and Japanese Ambassador Takahira pledged mutual respect for each nation's Pacific possessions and support for the Open Door policy in China.

**Peace Efforts** Roosevelt saw his big stick policies as a way to promote peaceful solutions to international disputes. For his work in settling the Russo-Japanese War, Roosevelt was awarded the **Nobel Peace Prize** in 1906. In the same year, he helped arrange the **Algeciras Conference** in Spain, which succeeded in settling a conflict between France and Germany over claims to Morocco. The president also directed U.S. participation at the **Second International Peace Conference** at The Hague in 1907, which discussed rules for limiting warfare. As an expansionist, an interventionist, and finally as an internationalist, Theodore Roosevelt embodied the vigor of a youthful nation arriving on the world stage.

## William Howard Taft and Dollar Diplomacy

Roosevelt's successor, **William Howard Taft** (1909–1913), did not carry the same “big stick.” He adopted a foreign policy that was mildly expansionist but depended more on investors' dollars than on the navy's battleships. His policy of promoting U.S. trade by supporting American enterprises abroad was known as “**dollar diplomacy**.”

**American Investors** Taft believed that private American financial investment in China and Central America would lead to greater stability there, while at the same time promoting U.S. business interests. His policy, however, was thwarted by one major obstacle: growing **anti-imperialism** both in the United States and overseas.

**Railroads in China** Taft first tested his policy in China. Wanting U.S. bankers to be included in a British, French, and German plan to invest in railroads in China, Taft succeeded in securing American participation in an agreement signed in 1911. In China's northern province of **Manchuria**, however, the United States was excluded from an agreement between Russia and Japan to build railroads. In defiance of the U.S. Open Door policy, Russia and Japan agreed to treat Manchuria as a jointly held sphere of influence.

**Intervention in Nicaragua** To protect American investments, the United States intervened in Nicaragua's financial affairs in 1911 and sent in marines when a civil war broke out in 1912. The marines remained, except for a short period, until 1933.

## U.S. INTERVENTION IN THE CARIBBEAN, 1898 TO 1917



### Woodrow Wilson and Foreign Affairs

In his campaign for president in 1912, the Democratic candidate **Woodrow Wilson** promised a *New Freedom* for the country, part of which was a moral approach to foreign affairs. Wilson said he opposed imperialism and the big stick and dollar diplomacy policies of his Republican predecessors.

#### *Wilson's Moral Diplomacy*

In his first term as president (1913–1917), Wilson had limited success applying a high moral standard to foreign relations. He and Secretary of State **William Jennings Bryan** attempted to show that the United States respected other nations' rights and supported the spread of democracy. Hoping to demonstrate that his presidency was opposed to self-interested imperialism, Wilson took steps to correct what he viewed as wrongful policies of the past.

**The Philippines** Wilson won passage of the **Jones Act** of 1916, which (1) granted full territorial status to the Philippines, (2) guaranteed a bill of rights and universal male suffrage to Filipino citizens, and (3) promised independence for the Philippines as soon as a stable government was established. Philippine independence was delayed by the events surrounding World War II until July 4, 1946.

**Puerto Rico** An act of Congress in 1917 granted U.S. citizenship to all Puerto Ricans and also provided for limited self-government.

**The Panama Canal** Wilson persuaded Congress in 1914 to repeal an act that had granted U.S. ships an exemption from paying the standard canal tolls charged other nations. Wilson's policy on Panama Canal tolls angered American nationalists such as Roosevelt and Lodge but pleased the British, who had strongly objected to the U.S. exemption.

**Conciliation Treaties** Wilson's commitment to the ideals of democracy and peace was fully shared by his famous secretary of state, William Jennings Bryan. Bryan's pet project was to negotiate treaties in which nations pledged to (1) submit disputes to international commissions and (2) observe a one-year cooling-off period before taking military action. Bryan arranged, with Wilson's approval, 30 such **conciliation treaties**.

### ***Military Intervention Under Wilson***

Wilson's commitment to democracy and anti-colonialism had a blind spot with respect to Mexico and countries of Central America and the Caribbean. He went far beyond both Roosevelt and Taft in his use of U.S. marines in response to financial and political troubles in the region. He kept marines in Nicaragua and ordered U.S. troops into Haiti in 1915 and the Dominican Republic in 1916. He argued that such intervention was necessary to maintain stability in the region and protect the Panama Canal.

Wilson's moral approach to foreign affairs was severely tested by a revolution and civil war in Mexico. As a supporter of democracy, Wilson refused to recognize the military dictatorship of General Victoriano Huerta, who had seized power in 1913 after having the democratically elected president killed.

**Tampico Incident** To aid revolutionaries fighting Huerta, Wilson called for an arms embargo against the Mexican government and sent a fleet to blockade the port of Vera Cruz. In 1914, several U.S. sailors went ashore at Tampico where they were arrested by Mexican authorities. They were soon released. However, Huerta refused to apologize as demanded by a U.S. naval officer. Wilson retaliated by ordering the U.S. Navy to occupy Veracruz. War seemed imminent. It was averted, however, when South America's ABC powers—Argentina, Brazil, and Chile—offered to mediate the dispute. This was the first dispute in the Americas to be settled through joint mediation.

**Pancho Villa and the U.S. Expeditionary Force** Huerta fell from power in late 1914. Replacing him was a more democratic regime led by Venustiano Carranza. Almost immediately, the new government was challenged by a band of rebels loyal to **Pancho Villa**. Hoping to destabilize his opponent's government, Villa led raids across the U.S.–Mexican border and murdered several people in Texas and New Mexico. In March 1916, President Wilson ordered General **John J. Pershing** and an “**expeditionary force**” to pursue Villa into northern Mexico. They failed to capture Villa. President Carranza protested the U.S. presence in Mexico. In January 1917, the growing possibility of U.S. entry into World War I caused Wilson to withdraw Pershing's troops.

**Uncertain Rise to Power** The Spanish-American War debuted the United States as a rising power in the international arena. However, most Americans were more concerned with domestic matters than foreign affairs during the Progressive era from 1900 to 1917 (Topic 7.4). American reluctance to get involved in World War I and to take a leadership role after the war reflected a long held and deep concern over the dangers of entanglement in overseas conflicts (Topic 7.5).

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1. Explain two effects of the Spanish-American War on American foreign policy.

### KEY TERMS BY THEME

#### Spanish-American War (WOR, PCE)

"jingoism"  
 Cuban revolt  
 "yellow journalism"  
 de Lôme Letter  
 sinking of the *Maine*  
 Teller Amendment  
 "a splendid little war"  
 the Philippines  
 George Dewey  
 Rough Riders  
 Puerto Rico  
 Guam  
 Treaty of Paris  
 Emilio Aguinaldo  
 Anti-Imperialist League  
 Insular Cases  
 Platt Amendment (1901)

#### China Policy (WOR)

John Hay  
 spheres of influence  
 Open Door policy  
 Boxer Rebellion

#### TR Policies (WOR)

"big stick" policy  
 Theodore Roosevelt  
 Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty (1903)  
 Panama Canal

Santo Domingo  
 Roosevelt Corollary  
 Russo-Japanese War  
 Treaty of Portsmouth (1905)  
 segregated schools  
 "gentlemen's agreement"  
 Great White Fleet  
 Root-Takahira Agreement (1908)  
 Noble Peace Prize (1906)  
 Algeciras Conference (1906)  
 International Peace Conference (1907)

#### Dollar Diplomacy (WOR, WXT)

William Howard Taft  
 "dollar diplomacy"  
 railroads in China  
 Manchuria  
 intervention in Nicaragua

#### Moral Diplomacy (WOR)

anti-imperialism  
 Woodrow Wilson  
 William Jennings Bryan  
 Jones Act (1916)  
 conciliation treaties  
 military intervention  
 Pancho Villa  
 John J. Pershing  
 expeditionary force

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1–3 refer to the newspaper below.

**\$50,000 REWARD.—WHO DESTROYED THE MAINE?—\$50,000 REWARD.**

The Journal will give \$50,000 for information furnished to its readers by whom the name of the person or persons who were the authors of the explosion of the Maine is ascertained.

**NEW YORK JOURNAL AND ADVERTISER.** FIRST EDITION.

NO. 2425. City, N. Y. NEW YORK, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1898. PRICE ONE CENT.

**DESTRUCTION OF THE WAR SHIP MAINE WAS THE WORK OF AN ENEMY**

**\$50,000!** Assistant Secretary Roosevelt Convinced the Explosion of the War Ship Was Not an Accident.

**\$50,000 REWARD!** For the Detection of the Perpetrator of the Maine Outrage!

The Journal offers \$50,000 for the conviction of the criminals who sent 258 American sailors to their death. Naval officers unanimous that the ship was destroyed on purpose.

**\$50,000!** For the Detection of the Perpetrator of the Maine Outrage!

The Journal offers \$50,000 for the conviction of the criminals who sent 258 American sailors to their death. Naval officers unanimous that the ship was destroyed on purpose.

**NAVAL OFFICERS THINK THE MAINE WAS DESTROYED BY A SPANISH MINE**

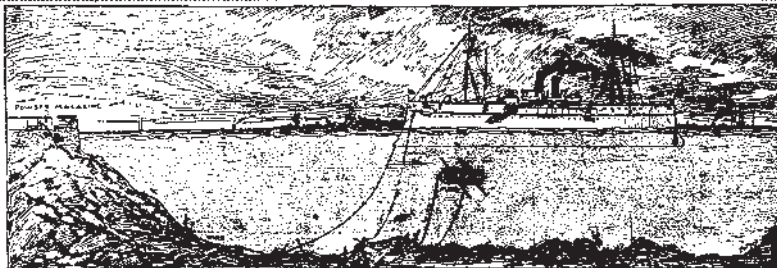
Hidden Mine or a Sunken Torpedo Believed to Have Been the Weapon Used Against the American Man-of-War—Officers and Men Tell Thrilling Stories of Being Blown Into the Air Amid a Mass of Shattered Steel and Exploding Shells—Survivors Brought to Key West Scout the Idea of Accident—Spanish Officials Protest Too Much—Our Cabinet Orders a Searching Inquiry—Journal Sends Divers to Havana to Report Upon the Condition of the Wreck. Was the Vessel Anchored Over a Mine?

Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt says he is convinced that the destruction of the Maine in Havana Harbor was not an accident. The Journal offers a reward of \$50,000 for exclusive evidence that will convict the person, persons or Government criminally responsible for the destruction of the American battleship and the death of 258 of its crew.

The suspicion that the Maine was deliberately blown up grows stronger every hour. Not a single fact to the contrary has been produced. Captain Sigsbee, of the Maine, and Consul-General Lee both urge that public opinion be suspended until they have completed their investigation by asking the course of tactical men who are convinced that there has been treachery.

Spanish Government officials are pressing forward all sorts of explanations of how it could have been an accident. The facts show that there was no explosion before the ship exploded, and that, had her magazine exploded, she would have sunk immediately.

Every naval expert in Washington says that if the Maine's magazine had exploded the whole vessel would have been blown to atoms.



Source: *New York Journal*, February 17, 1898. The Granger Collection, NYC

- Newspaper headlines such as those above most directly contributed to which of the following?
  - The capture of the terrorists by American authorities
  - The selection of Roosevelt as a vice presidential candidate
  - The declaration of war against Spain by the U.S. Congress
  - The attack by the U.S. Navy on Manila Bay

2. Which of the following groups would most strongly support the sentiments in these headlines?
  - (A) Members of Protestant missionary societies
  - (B) Midwestern and western Democrats
  - (C) Humanitarians opposed to Spanish rule
  - (D) Expansionists who were interested in overseas markets
3. The point of view of this newspaper most clearly reflects
  - (A) the theory of the safety valve
  - (B) the concept of jingoism
  - (C) the idea of isolationism
  - (D) the views of the Anti-Imperialist League

### SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

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1. “Theodore Roosevelt, who was widely traveled, easily ranks as the most internationally minded President of his generation. He understood the role of the United States in the world of power politics more clearly than any of his predecessors and most of his successors. . . . He is far better known for his efforts at peacemaking than at warmaking. And, what is more, he deserved this acclaim.”

Thomas B. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, 1974

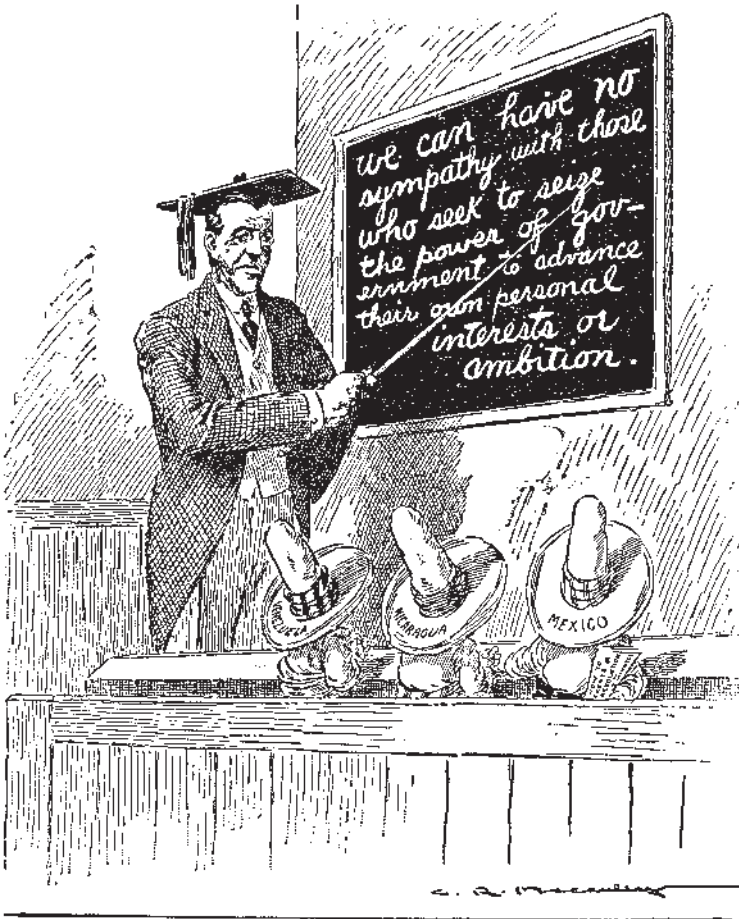
“[Theodore Roosevelt was] a person of his times. . . . He hailed the advance of Western and especially Anglo-Saxon civilization as a world movement, the key to peace and progress. . . . He viewed “barbaric” people as the major threat to civilization and had no difficulty rationalizing the use of force to keep them in line. . . . He was less clear how to keep peace among the so-called civilized nations.”

George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 2008

Using the excerpts, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- (a) Briefly describe ONE major difference between Bailey’s and Herring’s historical interpretation of Roosevelt’s foreign policy.
- (b) Briefly explain ONE specific historical event or development that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts that could be used to support Bailey’s interpretation of Roosevelt’s foreign policy.
- (c) Briefly explain ONE specific historical event or development that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts that could be used to support Herring’s interpretation of Roosevelt’s foreign policy.

2.



WOODROW WILSON, THE SCHOOL TEACHER.

Source: 1914, The Granger Collection, NYC

Using the cartoon, answer (a), (b), and (c). The teacher represents Woodrow Wilson. The board says, “We can have no sympathy with those who seek to seize the power of government to advance their own personal interests or ambition.” The hats say Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Mexico.

- (a) Briefly explain ONE perspective expressed by the artist about Woodrow Wilson’s foreign policy.
- (b) Briefly explain ONE specific event or development that contributed to this perspective during the Woodrow Wilson administration.
- (c) Briefly explain ONE difference or similarity between the policies of Wilson and either Theodore Roosevelt or William Howard Taft.

# The Progressives

*I am, therefore, a Progressive because we have not kept up with our own changes of conditions, either in the economic field or in the political field.*

Woodrow Wilson, campaign speech, 1912

**Learning Objective:** Compare the goals and effects of the Progressive reform movement.

Like the Gilded Age reformers, those of the Progressive period in the early 20th century advocated for a larger role for government and greater democracy. Unlike the earlier reformers, though, the Progressives were more successful. The four constitutional amendments passed during this era illustrate its range and complexity: a graduated income tax that first affected the wealthy, direct election of senators to reform Congress, the right to vote for women, and an effort to improve society through the prohibition of alcohol. The Progressive movement's successes and failures remain controversial, but its lasting impact on American politics is undisputed.

## Origins of Progressivism

As America entered the 20th century, the rapid and transforming changes of industrialization were unsettling for many. For decades, middle-class Americans had been alarmed by the power of big business, the uncertainties of business cycles, the increasing gap between rich and poor, the violent conflict between labor and capital, and the dominance of corrupt political machines in cities. Most disturbing to minorities were the racist Jim Crow laws in the South that relegated African Americans to the status of second-class citizens. Crusaders for women's suffrage added their voices to the call for greater democracy.

The Progressive movement built on the work of populist reformers and union activists of the Gilded Age. However, it acquired additional national momentum with the unexpected swearing into office of a young president, Theodore Roosevelt, in 1901. The Progressive era lasted through the presidencies of Republicans Theodore Roosevelt (1901–1909) and William Howard Taft (1909–1913) and the first term of the Democrat Woodrow Wilson (1913–1917). U.S. entry into World War I in 1917 diverted public attention away from domestic issues and brought the era to an end. By then, though, Congress and state legislatures had enacted major regulatory laws.



## Who Were the Progressives?

A diverse group of reformers were loosely united in the Progressive movement. Protestant church leaders, African Americans, union leaders, and feminists each lobbied for different specific reforms. However, they shared some basic beliefs:

- Society badly needed changes to limit the power of big business, improve democracy, and strengthen social justice.
- Government, whether at the local, state, or federal level, was the proper agency for making these changes.
- Moderate reforms were usually better than radical ones.

**Urban Middle Class** Unlike the Populists of the 1890s, whose strength came from rural America, most Progressives were middle-class men and women who lived in cities. The urban middle class had steadily grown in the final decades of the 19th century. In addition to doctors, lawyers, ministers, and storekeepers (who were once the heart of the middle class), the economy now employed an increasing number of white-collar office workers and middle managers employed in banks, manufacturing firms, and other businesses.

**Professional Class** Members of this business and professional middle class took their civic responsibilities seriously. Some were versed in scientific and statistical methods and the findings of the new social sciences. They belonged to the hundreds of national business and **professional associations** that provided platforms to address corrupt business and government practices and urban social and economic problems.

**Religion** A missionary spirit inspired some middle-class reformers. Protestant churches preached against vice and taught a code of social responsibility, which emphasized caring for the less fortunate and promoting honesty in public life. The Social Gospel popularized by Walter Rauschenbusch (see Topic 6.11) was an important element in Protestant Christians' response to the problem of urban poverty. Most of these **Protestants** were native-born and **older stock** Americans, often from families of older elites who felt that their central role in society had been replaced by wealthy industrialists and urban political machines.

**Leadership** Without strong leadership, the diverse forces of reform could not have overcome conservatives' resistance to change. Fortunately for the Progressives, a number of dedicated and able leaders entered politics at the turn of the century to challenge the status quo. Theodore Roosevelt and Robert La Follette in the Republican Party and William Jennings Bryan and Woodrow Wilson in the Democratic Party demonstrated vigorous political leadership that had been lacking in national politics during the Gilded Age.

**The Progressives' Philosophy** The reform impulse was hardly new. In fact, many historians see progressivism as just one more phase in a reform tradition going back to the Jeffersonians in the early 1800s, the Jacksonians

in the 1830s, and the Populists in the 1890s. The Progressives—like American reformers before them—were committed to democratic values and shared in the belief that honest government and just laws could improve peoples' lives.

**Pragmatism** A revolution in thinking occurred at the same time as the Industrial Revolution. Charles Darwin, in his *On the Origin of Species* (1859), presented the concept of evolution by natural selection. Though Darwin was writing about the natural world, others applied his concepts to human society to justify accumulating great wealth and laissez-faire capitalism (Topic 6.6).

Others challenged the prevailing philosophy of romantic transcendentalism with what became called **pragmatism**. In the early 20th century, **William James** and **John Dewey**, two leading American advocates of this new philosophy, argued that “truth” should be able to pass the public test of observable results in an open, democratic society. In a democracy, citizens and institutions should experiment with ideas and laws and test them in action until they found something that would produce a well-functioning democratic society.

Progressive thinkers adopted the new philosophy of pragmatism because it enabled them to challenge fixed ideas and beliefs that stood in the way of reform. For example, they rejected the laissez-faire theory as impractical. The old standard of rugged individualism no longer seemed viable in a modern society dominated by complex business organizations.

**Scientific Management** Another idea that gained widespread acceptance among Progressives came from the practical studies of **Frederick W. Taylor**. By using a stopwatch to time the tasks performed by factory workers, Taylor discovered ways of organizing people in the most efficient manner—the **scientific management** system, also known as Taylorism. Many Progressives believed that government too could be made more efficient if placed in the hands of experts and scientific managers. They objected to the corruption of political bosses partly because it was antidemocratic and partly because it was an inefficient way to run things.

## The Muckrakers

Before the public could be roused to action, it first had to be well-informed about the scandalous realities of politics, factories, and slums. Publishers found that their middle-class readers were attracted to reports about corruption in business and politics. Investigative journalists created in-depth articles about child labor, corrupt political bosses and monopolistic business practices. President Theodore Roosevelt criticized writers who focused on negative stories as “muckrakers.” The term caught on.

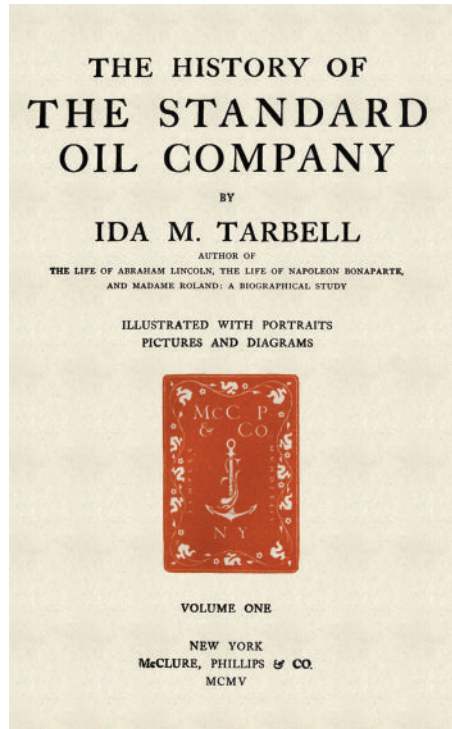
**Origins** One of the earliest muckrakers was Chicago reporter **Henry Demarest Lloyd**, who in 1881 wrote a series of articles for the *Atlantic Monthly* attacking the practices of the **Standard Oil Company** and the railroads. Published in book form in 1894, Lloyd's *Wealth Against Commonwealth* fully exposed the corruption and greed of the oil monopoly but failed to suggest how to control it.

**Magazines** An Irish immigrant, Samuel Sidney McClure, founded *McClure's Magazine* in 1893, which became a major success by running a series of muckraking articles by **Lincoln Steffens** (*Tweed Days in St. Louis*, 1902) and another series by **Ida Tarbell** (*The History of the Standard Oil Company*, also in 1902). Combining careful research with sensationalism, these articles set a standard for the deluge of muckraking that followed. Popular 10- and 15-cent magazines such as *McClure's*, *Collier's*, and *Cosmopolitan* competed fiercely to outdo their rivals with shocking exposés of political and economic corruption.

**Books** The most popular series of muckraking articles were usually collected and published as best-selling books. Articles on tenement life by **Jacob Riis**, one of the first photojournalists, were published as *How the Other Half Lives* (1890). Lincoln Steffens' *The Shame of the Cities* (1904) also caused a sensation by describing in detail the corrupt deals that characterized big-city politics from Philadelphia to Minneapolis.

Several muckraking books were novels. Two of **Theodore Dreiser's** novels, *The Financier* and *The Titan*, portrayed the avarice and ruthlessness of an industrialist. Fictional accounts such as Frank Norris' *The Octopus* (about the tyrannical power of railroad companies) and *The Pit* (about the impact of grain speculation) stirred up public demands for government regulations. One of the most powerful novels that portrayed the difficult life of immigrants and horrendous sanitary conditions of the meat packing industry was *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair (see more later in this topic). These novels were more influential than many journalistic accounts.

**Decline of Muckraking** The popularity of muckraking books and magazine articles began to decline after 1910 for several reasons:



After Ida Tarbell published her account of the rise of the Standard Oil Company in magazine articles, she turned it into a best-selling book.

**Source:** Library of Congress.

- Writers found it more and more difficult to top the sensationalism of the last story.
- Publishers were expanding and faced economic pressures from banks and advertisers to tone down their treatment of business.
- By 1910, corporations were becoming more aware of their public image and developing a new specialty: the field of public relations.

Nevertheless, muckraking had a lasting effect on the Progressive era. It exposed inequities, educated the public about corruption in high places, and prepared the way for corrective action.

## Political Reforms in Cities and States

A cornerstone of Progressive ideology was faith in efficient government. However, Progressives expressed this ideology differently. Some looked to professional and technical experts for objective, pragmatic advice. Often, these Progressives distrusted the urban political machines that relied on immigrants for support, so they supported restrictions on immigration.

Other Progressives placed more trust in common people. They opposed immigration restrictions, in part because they believed that, given a chance, the majority of voters would elect honest officials. Progressives advocated a number of reforms for increasing the participation of the average citizen in political decision-making.

**Australian, or Secret, Ballot** Political parties could manipulate and intimidate voters by printing lists (or “tickets”) of party candidates and watching voters drop them into the ballot box on election day. In 1888, Massachusetts was the first state to adopt a system successfully tried in Australia of issuing ballots printed by the state and requiring voters to mark their choices secretly within a private booth. By 1910, all states had adopted the **secret ballot**.

**Direct Primaries** In the late 19th century, Republicans and Democrats commonly nominated candidates for state and federal offices in state conventions controlled by party bosses. In 1903, the Progressive governor of Wisconsin, **Robert La Follette**, introduced a new system for bypassing politicians and placing the nominating process directly in the hands of the voters—the **direct primary**. By 1915, some form of the direct primary was used in every state. The system’s effectiveness in overthrowing boss rule was limited, as politicians devised ways of confusing the voters and splitting the anti-political machine vote. Since primaries were run for the parties rather than for the general population, some Southern states used White-only primaries to exclude African Americans from voting.

**Direct Election of U.S. Senators** Under the original Constitution, U.S. senators had been chosen by the state legislatures rather than by direct vote of the people. Progressives believed this was a principal reason that the Senate had become a millionaires’ club dominated by big business. Nevada in 1899 was the first state to give the voters the opportunity to elect U.S. senators directly. By

1912, a total of 30 states had adopted this reform, and in 1913, ratification of the **17th Amendment** required that all U.S. senators be elected by popular vote.

**Initiative, Referendum, and Recall** If politicians in the state legislatures balked at obeying the “will of the people,” then Progressives proposed two methods for forcing them to act. Amendments to state constitutions offered voters (1) the *initiative*—a method by which voters could compel the legislature to consider a bill and (2) the *referendum*—a method that allowed citizens to vote on proposed laws printed on their ballots. A third Progressive measure, the *recall*, enabled voters to remove a corrupt or unsatisfactory politician from office by majority vote before that official’s term had expired.

### **Municipal Reforms**

City bosses and their corrupt alliances with local businesses (trolley lines and utility companies, for example) were among the first targets of Progressive leaders. In Toledo, Ohio, in 1897, a self-made millionaire with strong memories of his origins as a workingman became the Republican mayor. Adopting “golden rule” as both his policy and his middle name, Mayor Samuel M. “Golden Rule” Jones delighted Toledo’s citizens by introducing a comprehensive program of **municipal reform**, including free kindergartens, night schools, and public playgrounds. Another Ohioan, Tom L. Johnson, devoted himself to tax reform and three-cent trolley fares for the people of Cleveland. As Cleveland’s mayor from 1901 to 1909, Johnson fought hard—but without success—for public ownership and operation of the city’s public utilities and services (water, electricity, and trolleys).

**Controlling Public Utilities** Reform leaders arose in other cities throughout the nation seeking to break the power of the city bosses and take utilities out of the hands of private companies. By 1915, fully two-thirds of the nation’s cities owned their own water systems. As a result of the Progressives’ efforts, many cities also came to own and operate gas lines, electric power plants, and urban transportation systems.

**Commissions and City Managers** New types of municipal government were another Progressive innovation. In 1900, Galveston, Texas, was the first city to adopt a **commission plan** of government, in which voters elected the heads of city departments (fire, police, and sanitation), not just the mayor. Ultimately proving itself more effective than the commission plan was a system first tried in Dayton, Ohio, in 1913. An elected city council there hired an expert manager to direct the work of the various departments of city government. By 1923, more than 300 cities had adopted the **manager-council plan** of municipal government.

### **State Reforms**

At the state level, reform governors battled corporate interests and championed such measures as the initiative, the referendum, and the direct primary to give common people control of their own government. In New York, **Charles Evans**

**Hughes** battled fraudulent insurance companies. In California, **Hiram Johnson** successfully fought against the economic and political power of the Southern Pacific Railroad. In Wisconsin, Robert La Follette established a strong personal following as the governor (1900–1904) who won passage of the “**Wisconsin Idea**”—a series of Progressive measures that included a direct primary law, tax reform, and state **regulatory commissions** to monitor railroads, utilities, and businesses such as insurance.

**Temperance and Prohibition** Whether or not to shut down saloons and prohibit the drinking of alcohol sharply divided reformers. While urban Progressives recognized that saloons were often the neighborhood headquarters of political machines, they generally had little sympathy for the temperance movement. Rural reformers, on the other hand, thought they could clean up morals and politics in one stroke by abolishing liquor. The dries (prohibitionists) were determined and well-organized. Among their leaders was Carrie Nation, whose blunt language and attack on taverns with a hatchet made her famous. By 1915, the dries had persuaded the legislatures of two-thirds of the states to prohibit the sale of alcoholic beverages.

**Social Welfare** Urban life in the Progressive era was improved not only by political reformers but also by the efforts of settlement house workers and other civic-minded volunteers. Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, and other leaders of the social justice movement found that they needed political support in the state legislatures for meeting the needs of immigrants and the working class (see Topic 6.9). They lobbied vigorously and with considerable success for better schools, juvenile courts, liberalized divorce laws, and safety regulations for tenements and factories. Believing that criminals could learn to become effective citizens, reformers fought for such measures as a system of parole, separate reformatories for juveniles, and limits on the death penalty.

**Child and Women Labor** Progressives were most outraged by the treatment of children by industry. The **National Child Labor Committee** proposed model state child labor laws that were passed by two-thirds of the states by 1907. Ultimately, state **compulsory school attendance** laws proved most effective in keeping children out of the mines and factories.

**Florence Kelley** and the **National Consumers’ League** organized to pass state laws to protect women from long working hours. In *Lochner v. New York* (1905) the Supreme Court ruled against a state law limiting workers to a ten-hour workday. However, in *Muller v. Oregon* (1908) the high court ruled that the health of women needed special protection from long hours. The **Triangle Shirtwaist fire** (1911) in a New York City high-rise garment factory took 146 lives, mostly women. The tragedy sparked greater women’s activism and pushed states to pass laws to improve safety and working conditions in factories.

One consequence of efforts to protect women in the workplace was that the legislation kept women out of physically demanding but higher paying jobs in industry and mining. Later, many in the women’s movement wanted these restrictions lifted so that women could compete as equals with men.

## Political Reform in the Nation

While Progressive governors and mayors were battling conservative forces in the state houses and city halls, three presidents—Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson—sought broad reforms and regulations at the national level.

### *Theodore Roosevelt's Square Deal*

Following President McKinley's assassination in September 1901, Theodore Roosevelt became, at the age of 42, the youngest president in U.S. history. He was also one of the most athletic. He was unusual not simply because of his age and vigor but also because he believed that the president should do much more than lead the executive departments. He thought it was the president's job to set the legislative agenda for Congress as well. Thus, by the accident of McKinley's death, the Progressive movement suddenly shot into high gear under the dynamic leadership of a reform-minded president.

**“Square Deal” for Labor** Presidents in the 19th century had consistently taken the side of owners in conflicts with labor (most notably Hayes in the railroad strike of 1877 and Cleveland in the Pullman strike of 1894).

However, in the first economic crisis in his presidency, Roosevelt quickly demonstrated that he favored neither business nor labor but insisted on a **“Square Deal”** for both. Pennsylvania coal miners had been on strike through much of 1902. If the strike continued, many Americans feared that, without coal, they would freeze to death in winter. Roosevelt took the unusual step of trying to mediate the labor dispute by calling a union leader and mine owners to the White House. The owners' stubborn refusal to compromise angered the president. To ensure the delivery of coal to consumers, he threatened to take over the mines with federal troops. The owners finally agreed to accept the findings of a commission: a 10 percent wage increase and a nine-hour workday. However, the owners did not have to recognize the union.

Voters seemed to approve of Roosevelt and his Square Deal. They elected him by a landslide in 1904.

**Trust-Busting** Roosevelt further increased his popularity by being the first president since the passage of the Sherman Antitrust Act in 1890 to enforce that poorly written law. The trust that he most wanted to bust was a combination of railroads known as the Northern Securities Company. Reversing its position in earlier cases, the Supreme Court in 1904 upheld Roosevelt's action in breaking up the railroad monopoly. Roosevelt later directed his attorney general to take antitrust action against Standard Oil and more than 40 other large corporations. Roosevelt did make a distinction between breaking up **“bad trusts,”** which harmed the public and stifled competition, and regulating **“good trusts,”** which through efficiency and low prices dominated a market.

**Railroad Regulation** President Roosevelt also took the initiative in persuading a Republican majority in Congress to pass two laws that significantly strengthened the regulatory powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC). Under the **Elkins Act** (1903), the ICC had greater authority to stop

railroads from granting rebates to favored customers. Under the **Hepburn Act** (1906), the commission could fix “just and reasonable” rates for railroads.

**Consumer Protection** *The Jungle*, a muckraking book by **Upton Sinclair**, described in horrifying detail the conditions in the Chicago stockyards and meatpacking industry. The public outcry following the publication of Sinclair’s novel caused Congress to enact two regulatory laws in 1906: first, the **Pure Food and Drug Act** forbade the manufacture, sale, and transportation of adulterated or mislabeled foods and drugs, and then the **Meat Inspection Act** provided that federal inspectors visit meatpacking plants to ensure that they met minimum standards of sanitation.

**Conservation** As a lover of the wilderness and outdoor life, Roosevelt enthusiastically championed the cause of conservation. In fact, Roosevelt’s most original and lasting contribution in domestic policy may have been his efforts to protect the nation’s natural resources. Three actions were particularly important:

1. Roosevelt made repeated use of the Forest Reserve Act of 1891 to set aside 150 million acres of federal land as national reserves that could not be sold to private interests.
2. In 1902, Roosevelt won passage of the **Newlands Reclamation Act**, a law providing money from the sale of public land for irrigation projects in western states.
3. In 1908, the president publicized the need for conservation by hosting a **White House Conference** of Governors to promote coordinated conservation planning by federal and state governments. Following this conference, a National Conservation Commission was established under **Gifford Pinchot** of Pennsylvania, whom Roosevelt had earlier appointed to be the first director of the U.S. Forest Service.

## **Taft’s Presidency**

The good-natured William Howard Taft had served in Roosevelt’s cabinet as secretary of war. Honoring the two-term tradition, Roosevelt refused to seek reelection and picked Taft to be his successor. The Republican Party readily endorsed Taft as its nominee for president in 1908 and, as expected, defeated for a third time the Democrats’ campaigner, William Jennings Bryan.

**Progressive Economic Policies** Taft built on many of Roosevelt’s accomplishments. As a trust-buster, Taft ordered the prosecution of almost twice the number of antitrust cases as his predecessor. However, among these cases was one against U.S. Steel, which included a merger approved by then-President Theodore Roosevelt. An angry Roosevelt viewed Taft’s action as a personal attack on his integrity.

Two other Progressive measures were at least equal in importance to legislation enacted under Roosevelt. The **Mann-Elkins Act** of 1910 gave the Interstate Commerce Commission the power to suspend new railroad rates and



to oversee telephone and telegraph companies. The **16th Amendment**, ratified by the states in 1913, authorized the U.S. government to collect an **income tax**. Progressives heartily approved the new tax, which applied only to the wealthy.

**Controversy over Conservation** Like Roosevelt, Taft sided more with the conservationists than the preservationists in the debate over using natural resources that began in the 1890s (see Topic 6.3). Taft established the Bureau of Mines, added large tracts in the Appalachians to the national forest reserves, and set aside federal oil lands (the first president to do so). However, when Roosevelt ally Gifford Pinchot criticized a Taft cabinet member for opening public lands in Alaska for development, Taft supported firing Pinchot.

**Split in the Republican Party** The **firing of Pinchot** was just one reason some Progressives accused Taft of betraying their cause and joining the conservative wing of the party. Taft had promised to lower the tariff. Instead, he signed the conservative **Payne-Aldrich Tariff** in 1909, which raised the tariff on most imports. In the mid-term elections of 1910, Taft openly supported conservative candidates for Congress. Progressive Republicans from the Midwest easily defeated the candidates endorsed by Taft. After this election, the Republican Party split wide open between a conservative faction loyal to Taft and a Progressive faction who hoped Theodore Roosevelt would run again in 1912.

### ***Rise of the Socialist Party***

A third party, the Socialists, emerged in the early 1900s to advocate for the working class. Unlike the Progressives, who called for moderate regulation, the Socialists called for public ownership of the railroads, utilities, and major industries such as oil and steel. One of the party's founders, **Eugene V. Debs**, a former railway union leader, became a socialist while in jail for supporting the Pullman strike. Debs was the party's candidate for president in five elections from 1900 to 1920 and gained up to a million votes in those campaigns. Eventually, some ideas championed by Debs and the Socialists were accepted: public ownership of utilities, worker's compensation insurance, minimum wage laws, the eight-hour workday, and pensions for employees.

### ***The Election of 1912***

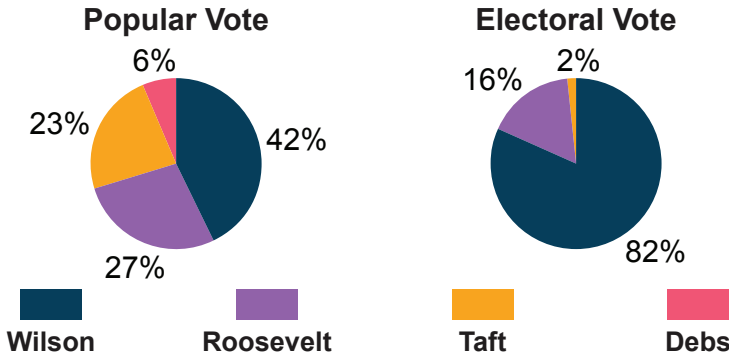
President Taft was nominated by the Republicans after his supporters excluded Theodore Roosevelt's delegates from the party's convention. Progressive Republicans met and nominated Roosevelt. Their party became known as the **Bull Moose Party** after one of Roosevelt's nicknames. After lengthy balloting, Democrats united behind Woodrow Wilson, a political newcomer who had first been elected to office in 1910 as governor of New Jersey.

**Campaign** The election came down to a battle between Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. Roosevelt's plan, called **New Nationalism**, included more government regulation of business and unions, more social welfare programs, and women's suffrage. Wilson's plan, called **New Freedom**,

would limit both big business and big government, bring about reform by ending corruption, and revive competition by supporting small business.

Wilson won less than a majority of the popular vote, but with the Republicans split, he won a landslide in the Electoral College, and the Democrats gained control of Congress. The overwhelming support for two Progressive presidential candidates proved that reformers had strong support. Roosevelt lost, but his New Nationalism had a lasting influence on later Democratic Party reforms such as the New Deal of the 1930s.

### PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, 1912



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*

### Woodrow Wilson's Progressive Program

Wilson, who grew up in Virginia during the Civil War, was only the second Democrat elected president since the war (Cleveland was the other). He was the first southerner to occupy the White House since Zachary Taylor (1849–1850). Wilson was idealistic, intellectual, righteous, and inflexible. Like Roosevelt, he believed that a president should actively lead Congress and, as necessary, appeal directly to the people to rally support for his legislative program.

In his inaugural address in 1913, the Democratic president pledged again his commitment to a New Freedom. To bring back conditions of free and fair competition in the economy, Wilson attacked “the triple wall of privilege”: tariffs, banking, and trusts.

**Tariff Reduction** Wasting no time to fulfill a campaign pledge, Wilson on the first day of his presidency called a special session of Congress to lower the tariff. Past presidents had always sent written messages to Congress, but Wilson broke this longstanding tradition by addressing Congress in person about the need for lower tariff rates to bring consumer prices down. Passage of the **Underwood Tariff** in 1913 substantially lowered tariffs for the first time in over 50 years. To compensate for the reduced tariff revenues, the Underwood bill included a graduated income tax with rates from 1 to 6 percent.

**Banking Reform** Wilson then focused on the banking system and the money supply. He was persuaded that the gold standard was inflexible and that banks, rather than serving the public interest, were too much influenced by stock speculators on Wall Street. He proposed a national banking system with 12 district banks supervised by a **Federal Reserve Board** appointed by the president. Congress approved his idea and passed the **Federal Reserve Act** in 1914. The Federal Reserve was designed to provide stability and flexibility to the U.S. financial system by regulating interest rates and the capital reserves required of banks.

**Additional Economic Reforms** Wilson initially was opposed to any legislation that seemed to favor special interests, such as farmers or unions. However, he shifted his position to support a variety of laws and new agencies:

- The **Federal Trade Commission** was to protect consumers by investigating and taking action against any “unfair trade practice” in any industry except banking and transportation. (Those two industries were already regulated by other agencies.)
- The **Clayton Antitrust Act** strengthened the Sherman Antitrust Act’s power to break up monopolies. Most important for organized labor, the new law contained a clause exempting unions from being prosecuted as trusts.
- The **Federal Farm Loan Act** created 12 regional federal farm loan banks established to provide farm loans at low interest rates.
- The **Child Labor Act**, long favored by settlement house workers and labor unions alike, was enacted in 1916. It prohibited the shipment in interstate commerce of products manufactured by children under 14 years old. However, a conservative Supreme Court found this act to be unconstitutional.

## African Americans in the Progressive Era

Racial equality was, for the most part, ignored by Progressive leaders and politicians. Some Progressives actively supported the tradition of segregation in the South. Others simply ignored its existence. For example, President Wilson, with a strong southern heritage and many of the racist attitudes of the times, agreed with the segregation of federal workers and buildings.

The status of African Americans had declined steadily since Reconstruction. With the Supreme Court’s “separate but equal” decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), **racial segregation** had been the rule in the South and, unofficially, in much of the North. Ironically and tragically, the Progressive era coincided with years when thousands of Black men and women were lynched by racist mobs. Few White Progressives did anything about segregation, and **lynchings** continued at an average rate of almost two per week between 1900 and 1914. Activist Ida B. Wells led the battle to end lynching (see Topic 6.4).

## **Two Approaches: Washington and Du Bois**

Though lacking widespread White support, African Americans took action to alleviate poverty and discrimination. Economic deprivation and exploitation were one problem; denial of civil rights was another. Which of these problems should take precedence became the focus of a debate between two African American leaders: **Booker T. Washington** and **W. E. B. Du Bois**.

**Washington's Stress on Economics** Washington, the leader of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, argued that Black youths' needs for education and economic progress were of foremost importance, and that they should concentrate on learning industrial skills for better wages. Only after establishing a secure economic base, said Washington, could African Americans hope to realize their other goals of political and social equality (Topic 6.4).

**Du Bois's Stress on Civil Rights** Unlike Washington, who had been born into an enslaved family on a southern plantation, W. E. B. Du Bois was a northerner from a free family. He was the first African American to earn a doctorate from Harvard University and became a distinguished scholar and writer. In his book *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Du Bois criticized Booker T. Washington's approach and demanded equal rights for African Americans. He argued that political and social rights were a prerequisite for economic independence.

In their public statements, Washington's focus on economic advancement and accommodation to White racism contrasted with Du Bois's more confrontational demands for equal civil rights. Their two approaches framed a debate in the African American community that continued throughout the 20th century. Behind the scenes, though, their differences were less dramatic. Washington quietly helped pay legal fees for court cases challenging segregation.

## **New Civil Rights Organizations**

Racial discrimination prompted Black leaders to found three powerful civil rights organizations in just six years. In 1905, W. E. B. Du Bois met with a group of Black intellectuals in Niagara Falls, Canada, to discuss a program of protest and action aimed at securing equal rights for African Americans. They and others who later joined them became known as the *Niagara Movement*.

On Lincoln's birthday in 1908, Du Bois, other members of the Niagara Movement, and a group of White Progressives founded the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People** (NAACP). Their mission was no less than to abolish all forms of segregation and to increase educational opportunities for African American children. By 1920, the NAACP was the nation's largest civil rights organization, with over 100,000 members.

Another organization, the **National Urban League**, was formed in 1911 to help people migrating from the South to adjust to northern cities. The league's motto, "Not Alms But Opportunity," reflected its emphasis on self-reliance and economic advancement.

## Women and the Progressive Movement

The Progressive era was a time of increased activism and optimism for a new generation of feminists. By 1900, the older generation of suffrage crusaders led by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton had passed the torch to younger women. The new leaders sought allies among male Progressives, but not always with success. For example, President Wilson refused to support the suffragists' call for a national amendment until late in his presidency.

### *The Campaign for Women's Suffrage*

**Carrie Chapman Catt**, an energetic reformer from Iowa, became the new president of the **National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA)** in 1900. Catt argued for the vote as a broadening of democracy that would empower women, thus enabling them to more actively care for their families in an industrial society. At first, Catt continued NAWSA's drive to win votes for women at the state level before changing strategies and seeking a suffrage amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

**Militant Suffragists** A more assertive approach to gaining the vote was adopted by some women, who took to the streets with mass pickets, parades, and hunger strikes. Their leader, **Alice Paul** of New Jersey, broke from NAWSA in 1916 to form the **National Woman's Party**. From the beginning, Paul focused on winning the support of Congress and the president for an amendment to the Constitution.

**Nineteenth Amendment (1920)** The dedicated efforts of women on the home front in World War I finally persuaded a two-thirds majority in Congress to support a women's suffrage amendment. Its ratification as the 19th Amendment in 1920 guaranteed women's right to vote in all elections at the local, state, and national levels. Following the victory of her cause, Carrie Chapman Catt organized the **League of Women Voters**, a civic organization dedicated to keeping voters informed about candidates and issues.

**Other Issues** In addition to winning the right to vote, Progressive women worked on other issues. **Margaret Sanger** advocated birth control education, especially among the poor. Over time, the movement developed into the Planned Parenthood organization. Women made progress in securing educational equality, liberalizing marriage and divorce laws, reducing discrimination in business and the professions, and recognizing women's rights to own property.

### REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

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1. Compare the goals and effects of two Progressive reforms.

## KEY TERMS BY THEME

### **Progressive Movement (SOC, ARC)**

urban middle class  
professional associations  
Protestants  
older stock  
pragmatism  
William James  
John Dewey  
Frederick W. Taylor  
scientific management

### **Muckrakers (SOC)**

Henry Demarest Lloyd  
Standard Oil Company  
Lincoln Steffens  
Ida Tarbell  
Jacob Riis  
Theodore Dreiser

### **Voting Rights (PCE)**

secret ballot  
Robert La Follette  
direct primary  
direct election of U.S. senators  
17th Amendment  
initiative, referendum, and recall

### **City and State Government (PCE)**

municipal reform  
commission plan  
manager-council plan  
Charles Evans Hughes  
Hiram Johnson  
"Wisconsin Idea"  
regulatory commissions

### **Social and Labor Reform (PCE)**

temperance and prohibition  
National Child Labor Committee  
compulsory school attendance  
Florence Kelley  
National Consumers' League  
*Lochner v. New York*  
*Muller v. Oregon*  
Triangle Shirtwaist fire

### **Theodore Roosevelt Presidency (PCE, GEO)**

"Square Deal"  
trust-busting  
"bad trusts" and "good trusts"

Elkins Act (1903)  
Hepburn Act (1906)  
*The Jungle*  
Upton Sinclair  
Pure Food and Drug Act (1906)  
Meat Inspection Act (1906)  
conservation  
Newlands Reclamation Act (1902)  
White House Conference  
Gifford Pinchot

### **William Howard Taft Presidency (PCE)**

Mann-Elkins Act (1910)  
16th Amendment; income tax  
firing of Pinchot  
Payne-Aldrich Tariff (1909)

### **Election of 1912 (PCE)**

Socialist Party  
Eugene V. Debs  
Bull Moose Party  
New Nationalism  
New Freedom

### **Woodrow Wilson Presidency (PCE)**

Underwood Tariff (1913)  
Federal Reserve Act (1914)  
Federal Reserve Board  
Clayton Antitrust Act (1914)  
Federal Trade Commission  
Federal Farm Loan Act (1916)  
Child Labor Act (1916)

### **African Americans (NAT)**

racial segregation  
lynchings  
Booker T. Washington  
W. E. B. Du Bois  
National Association for the Advancement  
of Colored People (NAACP)  
National Urban League

### **Women's Movement (NAT, PCE)**

Carrie Chapman Catt  
National American Woman Suffrage  
Association  
Alice Paul  
National Woman's Party  
19th Amendment  
League of Women Voters  
Margaret Sanger

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

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Questions 1–3 refer to the following excerpt.

“Worst of any, however, were the fertilizer men, and those who served in the cooking rooms. These people could not be shown to the visitor— for the odor of a fertilizer man would scare any ordinary visitor at a hundred yards, and as for other men, who worked in tank rooms full of steam, their peculiar trouble was that they fell into the vats; and when they were fished out, there was never enough of them left to be worth exhibiting — sometimes they would be overlooked for days, till all but the bones of them has gone out to the world as Durham’s Pure Leaf Lard!”

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*, 1906

1. Which group of Progressives is most closely associated with the perspective promoted in the above excerpt?
  - (A) Politicians who supported state regulatory commissions to curtail abuses in business
  - (B) Reformers who fought to break up monopolies and trusts
  - (C) Investigative journalists and authors known as “muckrakers”
  - (D) The union movement associated with the American Federation of Labor
2. This excerpt is from a book that most directly contributed to
  - (A) federal regulations to promote safety and health protection for industrial workers
  - (B) a federal inspection system to ensure minimum standards for processed meats and food
  - (C) the shutdown of Chicago meatpacking factories by the state of Illinois
  - (D) pressure on publishers to reduce sensational articles and books attacking businesses
3. Which of the following most effectively provided a way to address Sinclair’s view about working conditions for people in industrial jobs?
  - (A) Legislation in some states that limited the hours and working conditions for children
  - (B) President Theodore Roosevelt’s promise for an impartial set of rules, or a “Square Deal,” for labor
  - (C) Legislation passed during the Wilson presidency to protect unions from being prosecuted under laws designed to break up trusts
  - (D) The election of William Howard Taft and Republicans in 1908

## SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

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Question 1 is based on the excerpts below.

1. “According to the liberal view of the Progressive Era, the major political innovations of reform involved the equalization of political power through the primary, the direct election of public officials, and the initiative, referendum, and recall. . . . But they provided at best only an occasional and often incidental process of decision-making. Far more important in continuous, sustained, day-to-day processes of government were those innovations which centralized decision-making in the hands of fewer and fewer people.”

Samuel L. Hays, *The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era*, 1964

“Progressivism owed much of its success to a distinctive method of reform. . . . They typically began by organizing voluntary associations, investigating a problem, gathering relevant facts, and analyzing them. From such analysis a proposed solution would emerge, be popularized through campaigns of education and moral suasion, and . . . to be taken over by some level of government as a public function. . . . These tactics were pioneered in many cases by women. . . . It fell to women to invent their own means to improve the world.”

Richard L. McCormick, *Public Life in Industrial America, 1877–1917*, 1997

Using the excerpts, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- (a) Briefly describe ONE major difference between Hays’ and McCormick’s historical interpretation of the Progressive Era.
  - (b) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Hays’ interpretation of the Progressive Era.
  - (c) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support McCormick’s interpretation of the Progressive Era.
2. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
    - (a) Briefly explain ONE specific way the Wilson administration fulfilled the goals of reforming the United States banking system.
    - (b) Briefly explain ONE specific way the Wilson administration fulfilled the goals of reforming federal tariffs and taxation.
    - (c) Briefly explain how ONE reform identified above either reflected or violated Wilson’s New Freedom policies.



# World War I: Military and Diplomacy

*It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,  
That all his hours of travail here for men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace  
That he may sleep upon his hill again?*

Vachel Lindsay, "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight," 1914

**Learning Objective:** Explain the causes and consequences of U.S. involvement in World War I.

**W**orld War I broke out with stunning rapidity after a Serbian nationalist assassinated Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and his wife. Within a week, before calm minds could prevail, Austria-Hungary and Germany were in a full-scale war against Russia, France, and Great Britain. The assassination of the archduke sparked the war, but the underlying causes were (1) nationalism, (2) imperialism, (3) militarism, and (4) a combination of public and secret alliances. It was a tragedy that haunted generations of future leaders and that motivated President Woodrow Wilson to search for a lasting peace.

## Neutrality

President Wilson's first response to the outbreak of the European war was a declaration of U.S. **neutrality**, in the tradition of noninvolvement started by Washington and Jefferson. He called upon the American people to support his policy by not taking sides. However, Wilson found it difficult—if not impossible—to both steer a neutral course that favored neither the **Allied powers** (Great Britain, France, and Russia) nor the **Central powers** (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire of Turkey) and still protected U.S. trading rights. During a relatively short period (1914–1919), the United States and its people rapidly moved through a wide range of roles: first as a contented neutral country, next as a country waging a war for peace, then as a victorious world power, and finally as an alienated and isolationist nation.

**Freedom of the Seas** In World War I (as in the War of 1812), the trouble for the United States arose as belligerent powers tried to stop supplies from reaching a foe. Having the stronger navy, Great Britain was the first to declare

a naval blockade against Germany. Britain mined the North Sea and seized ships—including U.S. ships—attempting to run the blockade. Wilson protested British seizure of U.S. ships as violating a neutral nation’s right to freedom of the seas.

**Submarine Warfare** Germany’s one hope for challenging British power at sea lay with a new naval weapon, the submarine. In February 1915, Germany answered the British blockade by announcing a blockade of its own and warned that ships attempting to enter the “war zone” (waters near the British Isles) risked being sunk on sight by German submarines.

**Lusitania Crisis** The first major crisis challenging U.S. neutrality occurred on May 7, 1915, when German torpedoes hit and sank a British passenger liner, the *Lusitania*. Most of the passengers drowned, including 128 Americans. In response, Wilson sent Germany a strongly worded diplomatic message warning that Germany would be held to “strict accountability” if it continued its policy of sinking unarmed ships. Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan objected to this message as too warlike and resigned from the president’s cabinet.

**Other Sinkings** In August 1915, two more Americans lost their lives at sea as the result of a German submarine attack on another passenger ship, the *Arabic*. This time, Wilson’s note of protest prevailed upon the German government to pledge that no unarmed passenger ships would be sunk without warning, which would allow time for passengers to get into lifeboats.

Germany kept its word until March 1916, when a German torpedo struck an unarmed merchant ship, the *Sussex*, injuring several American passengers. Wilson threatened to cut off U.S. diplomatic relations with Germany—a step preparatory to war. Once again, rather than risk U.S. entry into the war on the British side, Germany backed down. Its reply to the president, known as the **Sussex pledge**, promised not to sink merchant or passenger ships without giving due warning. For the remainder of 1916, Germany was true to its word.

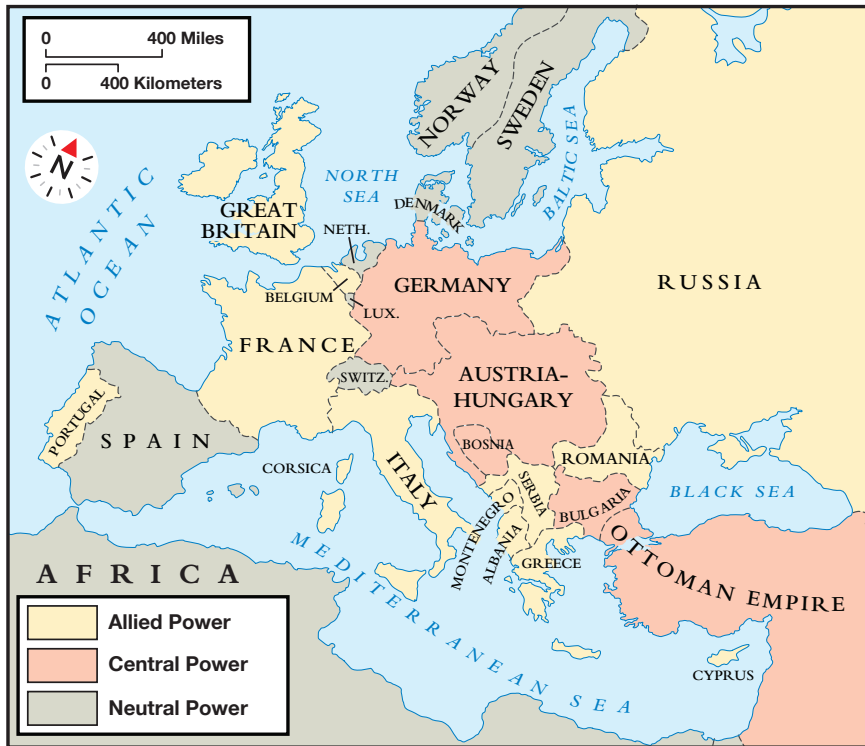
## Economic Links with Britain and France

Even though the United States was officially a neutral nation, its economy became closely tied to those of the Allied powers of Great Britain and France. In early 1914, before the war began, the United States had been in an economic recession. Soon after the outbreak of war, the economy rebounded in part because of orders for war supplies from the British and the French. By 1915, U.S. businesses had never been so prosperous.

In theory, U.S. manufacturers could have shipped supplies to Germany as well, but the British blockade effectively prevented such trade. Wilson’s policy did not deliberately favor the Allied powers. Nevertheless, because the president more or less tolerated the British blockade while restricting Germany’s submarine blockade, U.S. economic support was going to one side (Britain and France) and not the other. Between 1914 and 1917, U.S. trade with the Allies quadrupled while its trade with Germany dwindled to the vanishing point.

**Loans** When the Allies could not purchase everything they needed, the U.S. government permitted U.S. bankers (particularly the bank of J. Pierpont Morgan) to extend as much as \$3 billion in credit to Britain and France. These loans promoted U.S. prosperity as they sustained the Allies' war effort.

### OPPOSING SIDES IN WORLD WAR I



### Public Opinion

If Wilson's policies favored Britain, so did the attitudes of most Americans. In August 1914, as Americans read in their newspapers about German armies marching ruthlessly through Belgium, they perceived Germany as a cruel bully whose armies were commanded by a mean-spirited autocrat, Kaiser Wilhelm. The sinking of the *Lusitania* reinforced this negative view of Germany.

**Ethnic Influences** In 1914, first- and second-generation citizens made up more than 30 percent of the U.S. population. They were glad to be out of the fighting and strongly supported neutrality. Even so, their sympathies reflected their ancestries. For example, German Americans strongly identified with the struggles of their "homeland." And many Irish Americans, who hated Britain because of its oppressive rule of Ireland, openly backed the Central powers. On the other hand, when Italy joined the Allies in 1915, Italian Americans began cheering on the Allies in their desperate struggle to fend off German assaults on the Western Front (entrenched positions in France).

Overall, though, most native-born Americans supported the Allies. Positive U.S. relations with France since the Revolutionary War bolstered public support for the French. Americans also tended to sympathize with Britain and France because of their democratic governments. President Wilson himself, a person of Scottish-English descent, had long admired the British political system.

**British War Propaganda** Not only did Britain command the seas, it also commanded the war news that was cabled daily to U.S. newspapers and magazines. Fully recognizing the importance of influencing U.S. public opinion, the British government made sure the American press was well supplied with stories of German soldiers committing atrocities in Belgium and the German-occupied part of eastern France.

## The War Debate

After the *Lusitania* crisis, a small but vocal minority of influential Republicans from the East—including Theodore Roosevelt—argued for U.S. entry into the war against Germany. Foreign policy realists believed that a German victory would change the balance of power and that the United States needed a strong British navy to protect the status quo. However, the majority of Americans remained thankful for a booming economy and peace.

**Preparedness** Eastern Republicans such as Roosevelt were the first to recognize that the U.S. military was hopelessly unprepared for a major war. They clamored for “**preparedness**” (greater defense expenditures) soon after the European war broke out.

At first, President Wilson opposed the call for preparedness, but in late 1915 he changed his policy. Wilson urged Congress to approve an ambitious expansion of the armed forces. The president’s proposal provoked a storm of controversy, especially among Democrats, who until then were largely opposed to military increases. After a nationwide speaking tour on behalf of preparedness, Wilson finally convinced Congress to pass the National Defense Act in June 1916, which increased the regular army to a force of nearly 175,000. A month later, Congress approved the construction of more than 50 warships (battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and submarines) in just one year.

**Opposition to War** Many Americans, especially in the Midwest and West, were adamantly opposed to preparedness, fearing that it would soon lead to U.S. involvement in the war. The antiwar activists included Populists, Progressives, and Socialists. Leaders among the peace-minded Progressives were William Jennings Bryan, Jane Addams, and **Jeannette Rankin**—the latter the first woman to be elected to Congress. Women suffragists actively campaigned against any military buildup (although after the U.S. declaration of war in 1917, they supported the war effort).

## The Election of 1916

President Wilson was well aware that, as a Democrat, he had won election to the presidency in 1912 only because of the split in Republican ranks between Taft

conservatives and Roosevelt Progressives. Despite his own Progressive record, Wilson's chances for reelection did not seem strong after Theodore Roosevelt declined the Progressive Party's nomination for president in 1916 and rejoined the Republicans. (Roosevelt's decision virtually destroyed any chance of the Progressive Party surviving.) Charles Evans Hughes, a Supreme Court justice and former governor of New York, became the presidential candidate of a reunited Republican Party.

**“He Kept Us Out of War”** The Democrats adopted as their campaign slogan “He kept us out of war.” The peace sentiment in the country, Wilson's record of Progressive leadership, and Hughes' weakness as a candidate combined to give the president the victory in an extremely close election. Democratic strength in the South and West overcame Republican power in the East.

## Peace Efforts

Wilson made repeated efforts to fulfill his party's campaign promise to keep out of the war. Before the election, in 1915, he had sent his chief foreign policy adviser, Colonel **Edward House** of Texas, to London, Paris, and Berlin to negotiate a peace settlement. This mission, however, had been unsuccessful. Other efforts at mediation also were turned aside by both the Allies and the Central powers. Finally, in January 1917, Wilson made a speech to the Senate declaring U.S. commitment to his idealistic hope for “peace without victory.”

## Decision for War

In April 1917, only one month after being sworn into office a second time, President Wilson went before Congress to ask for a declaration of war against Germany. What had happened to change his policy from neutrality to war?

### *Unrestricted Submarine Warfare*

Most important in the U.S. decision for war was a sudden change in German military strategy. The German high command had decided in early January 1917 to resume unrestricted submarine warfare. Germany recognized the risk of the United States entering the war but believed that, by cutting off supplies to the Allies, they could win the war before Americans could react. Germany communicated its decision to the U.S. government on January 31. A few days later, Wilson broke off U.S. diplomatic relations with Germany.

### *Immediate Causes*

Wilson still hesitated, but a series of events in March 1917, as well as the president's hopes for arranging a permanent peace in Europe, convinced him that U.S. participation in the war was now unavoidable.

**Zimmermann Telegram** On March 1, U.S. newspapers carried the shocking news of a secret offer made by Germany to Mexico. Intercepted by British intelligence, a telegram to Mexico from the German foreign minister, Arthur Zimmermann, proposed that Mexico ally itself with Germany in

return for Germany's pledge to help Mexico recover lost territories: Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Mexico never considered accepting the offer. However, the Zimmermann Telegram aroused the nationalist anger of the American people and convinced Wilson that Germany fully expected a war with the United States.

**Russian Revolution** Applying the principle of moral diplomacy, Wilson wanted the war to be fought for a worthy purpose: the triumph of democracy. It bothered him that one of the Allies was Russia, a nation governed by an autocratic czar. This barrier to U.S. participation was suddenly removed on March 15, when Russian revolutionaries overthrew the czar's government and proclaimed a republic. (Only later, in November, would the revolutionary government be taken over by Communists.)

**Renewed Submarine Attacks** In the first weeks of March, German submarines sank five unarmed U.S. merchant ships. Wilson was ready for war.

### ***Declaration of War***

On April 2, 1917, President Wilson stood before a special session of senators and representatives and called upon them to defend humanitarian and democratic principles. Wilson solemnly asked Congress to recognize that a state of war existed between Germany and the United States. His speech condemned Germany's submarine policy as "warfare against mankind" and declared that "The world must be made safe for democracy." On April 6, an overwhelming majority in Congress voted for a declaration of war, although a few pacifists, including Robert La Follette and Jeanette Rankin, defiantly voted no.

## **Fighting the War**

By the time the first U.S. troops shipped overseas in late 1917, millions of European soldiers on both sides had already died in three years of fighting. The Allies hoped that fresh troops would be enough to bring victory. The conflict's trench warfare was made more deadly in the industrial age by heavy artillery, machine guns, poison gas, tanks, and airplanes. A second revolution in Russia by **Bolsheviks** (or Communists) took that nation out of the war. With no Eastern Front to divide its forces, Germany concentrated on one all-out push to break through Allied lines in France.

### ***Naval Operations***

Germany's policy of unrestricted submarine warfare was having its intended effect. Merchant ships bound for Britain were being sunk at a staggering rate: 900,000 tons of shipping were lost in just one month (April 1917). U.S. response to this Allied emergency was to undertake a record-setting program of ship construction. The U.S. Navy also implemented a convoy system of armed escorts for groups of merchant ships. By the end of 1917, the system was working well enough to ensure that Britain and France would not be starved into submission.

## American Expeditionary Force

Unable to imagine the grim realities of trench warfare, U.S. troops were eager for action. The idealism of both the troops and the public is reflected in the popular song of George M. Cohan that many were singing:

Over there, over there,  
Send the word, send the word over there  
That the Yanks are coming,  
The Yanks are coming,  
The drums rum-tumming ev'ry where—

The **American Expeditionary Force** (AEF) was commanded by General **John J. Pershing**. The first U.S. troops to see action were used to plug weaknesses in the French and British lines. But by the summer of 1918, as American forces arrived by the hundreds of thousands, the AEF assumed independent responsibility for one segment of the **Western Front**.

**Last German Offensive** Enough U.S. troops were in place in spring 1918 to hold the line against the last ferocious assault by German forces. At Château-Thierry on the Marne River, Americans stopped the German advance (June 1918) and struck back with a successful counterattack at Belleau Wood.

**Drive to Victory** In August, September, and October, an Allied offensive along the Meuse River and through the Argonne Forest (the Meuse–Argonne offensive) succeeded in driving an exhausted German army backward toward the German border. U.S. troops participated in this drive at St. Mihiel—the southern sector of the Allied line. On **November 11, 1918**, the Germans signed an armistice in which they agreed to surrender their arms, give up much of their navy, and evacuate occupied territory.

**U.S. Casualties** After only a few months of fighting, U.S. combat deaths totaled nearly 49,000. Many more thousands died of disease, including a flu epidemic in the training camps, bringing total U.S. fatalities in World War I to 112,432. Total deaths in the war were around 20 million people, most of whom were civilians.

## Making the Peace

During the war, Woodrow Wilson never lost sight of his ambition to shape the peace settlement when the war ended. In January 1917, he had said that the United States would insist on “**peace without victory**.” A year later he presented to Congress a detailed list of war aims, known as the Fourteen Points, designed to address the causes of World War I and prevent another world war.

### The Fourteen Points

Several of the president’s **Fourteen Points** related to specific territorial questions. For example, Wilson called on Germany to return the regions of Alsace and Lorraine to France and to evacuate Belgium in the west and Romania

and Serbia in the east. Of greater significance were the broad principles for securing a lasting peace:

- Recognition of freedom of the seas
- An end to the practice of making secret treaties
- Reduction of national armaments
- An “impartial adjustment of all colonial claims”
- Self-determination for the various nationalities
- Removal of trade barriers
- “A general association of nations . . . for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike”

The last point was the one that Wilson valued the most. The international peace association that he envisioned would soon be named the League of Nations.

## The Treaty of Versailles

The peace conference following the armistice took place in the Palace of Versailles outside Paris, beginning in January 1919. Every nation that had fought on the Allied side in the war was represented. No U.S. president had ever traveled abroad to attend a diplomatic conference, but President Wilson decided that his personal participation at Versailles was vital to defending his Fourteen Points. Republicans criticized him for being accompanied to Paris by several Democrats but only one Republican, whose advice was never sought.

**The Big Four** Other heads of state at Versailles made it clear that their nations wanted both revenge against Germany and compensation in the form of indemnities and territory. They did not share Wilson’s idealism, which called for peace without victory. David Lloyd George of Great Britain, Georges Clemenceau of France, and Vittorio Orlando of Italy met with Wilson almost daily as the **Big Four**. After months of argument, the president reluctantly agreed to compromise on most of his Fourteen Points. He insisted, however, that the other delegations accept his plan for a League of Nations.

**Peace Terms** When the peace conference adjourned in June 1919, the **Treaty of Versailles** included the following terms:

1. To punish Germany, Germany was disarmed and stripped of its colonies in Asia and Africa. It was also forced to admit guilt for the war, accept French occupation of the Rhineland for 15 years, and pay a huge sum of money in reparations to Great Britain and France.
2. To apply the principle of **self-determination**, territories once controlled by Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia were taken by the Allies; independence was granted to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, and Poland; and the new nations of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia were established.



3. To maintain peace, signers of the treaty joined an international peacekeeping organization, the **League of Nations**. **Article X** of the covenant (charter) of the League called on each member nation to stand ready to protect the independence and territorial integrity of other nations.

### EUROPE AFTER WORLD WAR I (1919)



## The Battle for Ratification

Returning to the United States, President Wilson had to win approval of two-thirds of the Senate for all parts of the Treaty of Versailles, including the League of Nations covenant. Republican senators raised objections to the League, especially to Article X. They argued that U.S. membership in such a body might interfere with U.S. sovereignty and might also cause European nations to interfere in the Western Hemisphere (a violation of the Monroe Doctrine).

**Increased Partisanship After the War** Wilson made winning Senate ratification difficult. In October 1918, he had asked voters to support Democrats in the midterm elections as an act of patriotism. This appeal had backfired badly. In the 1918 election, Republicans had won a solid majority in the House and a majority of two in the Senate. In 1919, Wilson needed Republican votes in the Senate to ratify the Treaty of Versailles. Instead, he faced the determined hostility of a leading Senate Republican, **Henry Cabot Lodge**.

**Opponents: Irreconcilables and Reservationists** Senators opposed to the Treaty of Versailles formed two groups. The **Irreconcilable** faction could not accept U.S. membership in the League, no matter how the covenant was worded. The **Reservationist** faction, a larger group led by Senator Lodge, said it could accept the League if certain reservations were added to the covenant. Wilson had the option of either accepting Lodge’s reservations or fighting for the treaty as it stood. He chose to fight.

**Wilson’s Western Tour and Breakdown** Wilson believed he could personally rally enough public support to prevail and push ratification of the League through Congress. With confidence, he undertook an arduous speaking tour by train of the West. On September 25, 1919, he collapsed after a speech in Colorado. He returned to Washington. A few days later he suffered a massive stroke from which he never fully recovered.

**Rejection of the Treaty** The Senate defeated the treaty without reservations. When it came up with reservations, the ailing Wilson directed his Senate allies to reject the compromise, and they joined with the Irreconcilables in defeating the treaty a second time. After Wilson left office in 1921, the United States officially made peace with Germany. However, it never ratified the Versailles Treaty nor joined the League of Nations.

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1. Explain two causes and two effects of U.S. involvement in World War I.

### KEY TERMS BY THEME

#### Causes of WWI (WOR)

neutrality  
 Allied powers  
 Central powers  
 submarine warfare  
*Lusitania*  
 Sussex pledge  
 propaganda  
 ethnic influences

#### Debate over War (WOR)

preparedness  
 election of 1916  
 Jeannette Rankin  
 Edward House  
 Zimmermann Telegram  
 Russian Revolution  
 declaration of war

#### Fighting in Europe (WOR)

Bolsheviks  
 American Expeditionary Force  
 John J. Pershing  
 Western Front  
 November 11, 1918

#### Peace Treaty (WOR)

“peace without victory”  
 Fourteen Points  
 Big Four  
 Treaty of Versailles  
 self-determination  
 League of Nations  
 Article X

#### Debate over Treaty (PCE)

Henry Cabot Lodge  
 Irreconcilables  
 Reservationists  
 rejection of the treaty

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

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Questions 1–3 refer to the following excerpt.

“On the first of February, we intend to begin submarine warfare unrestricted. In spite of this it is our intention to keep neutral the United States of America.

“If this attempt is not successful we propose an alliance on the following basis with Mexico: that we shall make war together and together make peace. We shall give financial support, and it is understood that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in New Mexico, Texas and Arizona. The details are left for your settlement.”

Arthur Zimmermann, German Foreign Minister,  
January 19, 1917

1. Which of the following possible causes of U.S. entry into World War I could best be supported using the excerpt as evidence?
  - (A) The U.S. reaction to Germany’s policy of unrestricted submarine warfare
  - (B) The opportunity to promote democracy, particularly after the overthrow of the czar in Russia
  - (C) The ethnic ties between many Americans and the European country their ancestors had left
  - (D) The economic links connecting U.S. businesses with Great Britain and France
2. When the Zimmermann message was made public, most people in the United States
  - (A) viewed it as a threat by Germany against Mexico
  - (B) feared that a German victory would split the United States
  - (C) expressed nationalist anger against Germany
  - (D) assumed it was the result of Allied propaganda
3. The issue of freedom of the seas in World War I most closely resembles the cause of which of the following conflicts?
  - (A) War of 1812
  - (B) Mexican War of 1846
  - (C) The American Civil War
  - (D) Spanish-American War of 1898

## SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

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Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

1. “The League of Nations failed to take hold in America because the country was not yet ready for so global a role. Nevertheless, Wilson’s intellectual victory proved more seminal than any political victory could have been. For, whenever America has faced the task of constructing a new world order, it has returned in one way or another to Woodrow Wilson’s precepts.”

Henry Kissinger, former secretary of state, *Diplomacy*, 1994

“The United States would never ratify the treaty and would never join the League of Nations. Many newspapers and commentators expressed regret at the outcome, and most laid the blame on Wilson—properly so. [Connecticut Senator] Brandegee’s cruel remark about Wilson’s strangling his own child was not far off the mark. Wilson had blocked every effort at compromise.”

John Milton Cooper Jr., historian, *Woodrow Wilson*, 2009

Using the excerpts, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- (a) Briefly describe ONE major difference between Kissinger’s and Cooper’s interpretations about the Versailles Treaty and the League of Nations.
- (b) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Kissinger’s interpretation.
- (c) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Cooper’s interpretation.



# World War I: Home Front

*When a nation is at war many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its efforts that their utterance will not be endured as long as men fight.*

Supreme Court, *Schenck v. United States*, 1919

**Learning Objective:** Explain the causes and effects of international and internal migration patterns over time.

## Mobilization

U.S. mobilization for war in 1917 was a race against time. Germany was preparing to deliver a knockout blow to end the war on German terms. Could the United States mobilize its vast economic resources fast enough to make a difference? That was the question Wilson and his advisers confronted in the critical early months of U.S. involvement in the war.

**Industry and Labor** The Wilson administration, with Progressive efficiency, created hundreds of temporary wartime agencies and commissions staffed by experts from business and government. The legacy of this mobilization of the domestic economy under governmental leadership proved significant in the New Deal programs enacted during Great Depression in the 1930s. For example:

- Bernard Baruch, a Wall Street broker, volunteered to use his extensive contacts in industry to help win the war. Under his direction, the War Industries Board set production priorities and established centralized control over raw materials and prices.
- Herbert Hoover, a distinguished engineer, took charge of the **Food Administration**, which encouraged American households to eat less meat and bread so that more food could be shipped abroad for the French and British troops. The conservation drive paid off. In two years, U.S. shipment of food overseas tripled.
- Harry Garfield volunteered to head the Fuel Administration, which directed efforts to save coal. Nonessential factories were closed, and daylight saving time went into effect for the first time.
- Treasury Secretary William McAdoo headed the **Railroad Administration** which took public control of the railroads to coordinate traffic and promote standardized railroad equipment.

- Former President William Howard Taft helped arbitrate disputes between workers and employers as head of the **National War Labor Board**. Labor won concessions during the war that had earlier been denied. Wages rose, the eight-hour work day became more common, and union membership increased.

**Finance** Paying for the costly war presented a huge challenge. Wilson’s war government managed to raise \$33 billion in two years through a combination of loans and taxes. It conducted four massive drives to convince Americans to put their savings into federal government **Liberty Bonds**. Congress also increased personal income and corporate taxes, and placed a new tax on luxury goods.

## Public Opinion

The U.S. government used techniques of both patriotic persuasion and legal intimidation to ensure public support for the war effort. Journalist **George Creel** took charge of a propaganda agency called the **Committee on Public Information**, which enlisted the voluntary services of artists, writers, vaudeville performers, and movie stars to depict the heroism of the “boys” (U.S. soldiers) and the villainy of the kaiser. They created films, posters, and pamphlets and organized volunteer speakers—all urging Americans to watch out for German spies and to “do your bit” for the war.



**Source:** Frederick Strothmann, 1918. Poster from the Third Liberty Loan Drive. Library of Congress

## Civil Liberties

War hysteria and patriotic enthusiasm provided an excuse for nativist groups to express their prejudices by charging minorities with disloyalty. One such group, the American Protective League, mounted “Hate the Hun” campaigns and used vigilante actions to attack all things German—from performing Beethoven’s music to cooking sauerkraut. Under the order of the U.S. Secretary of Labor, manufacturers of war materials could refuse to hire and could fire American citizens of German extraction.

**Limits on Immigration** More generally, the Barred Zone Act (the Immigration Act of 1917) prohibited anyone residing in a region from the Middle East to southeast Asia from entering the United States. It also included a literacy test designed to prevent immigration from southern and eastern Europe. This act set the stage for sharp restrictions on immigration in the 1920s.

**Espionage and Sedition Acts** A number of socialists and pacifists bravely criticized the government’s war policy even as Congress passed laws restricting free speech. The **Espionage Act** (1917) provided for imprisonment of up to 20 years for persons who tried to incite rebellion in the armed forces or obstructed the draft. The **Sedition Act** (1918) went much further by prohibiting anyone from making “disloyal” or “abusive” remarks about the U.S. government. Approximately 2,000 people were prosecuted under these laws, half of whom were convicted and jailed. Among them was the Socialist leader **Eugene Debs**, who was sentenced to ten years in federal prison for speaking against the war.

**Schenck v. United States (1919)** The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Espionage Act in a case involving a man who had been imprisoned for distributing pamphlets against the draft. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes concluded that the right to free speech could be limited when it represented a “clear and present danger” to public safety.

## Armed Forces

As soon as war was declared, thousands of young men voluntarily enlisted for military service. Still, the military thought it needed more soldiers and sailors.

**Selective Service Act (1917)** To meet this need, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker devised a “selective service” system to conscript (draft) men into the military. He wanted a democratic method run by local boards for ensuring that all groups in the population would be called into service. The government required all men between 21 and 30 (and later between 18 and 45) to register for possible induction into the military. Under the **Selective Service Act**, about 2.8 million men were eventually called by lottery, in addition to the almost 2 million who volunteered to serve. About half of all those in uniform made it to the Western Front.

**African Americans** Racial segregation applied to the army as it did to civilian life. Almost 400,000 African Americans served in World War I in segregated units. Only a few were permitted to be officers, and all were



barred from the Marine Corps. Nevertheless, W. E. B. Du Bois believed that the record of **service by African Americans**, fighting to “make the world safe for democracy,” would earn them equal rights at home when the war ended. However, he would be bitterly disappointed.

## Effects on American Society

All groups in American society—business and labor, women and men, immigrants and native-born—had to adjust to the realities of a wartime economy. As factories needed workers to replace those in the military and to increase production of war goods, people moved from rural areas across the country to urban areas to take jobs.

**More Jobs for Women** As men were drafted into the military, the jobs they vacated were often taken by women, thousands of whom entered the workforce for the first time. Women’s contributions to the war effort, both as volunteers and wage earners, finally convinced Wilson and Congress to support the 19th Amendment, which protected the right of women to vote.

**Migration of Mexicans** Job opportunities in wartime America, together with the upheavals of a revolution in Mexico, caused thousands of Mexicans to cross the border to work in agriculture and mining. Most were employed in the Southwest, but a significant number also traveled to the Midwest for factory jobs.

**The Great Migration** The largest movement of people consisted of African Americans who migrated north in the **Great Migration** (a term also used for 17th century movement of Puritans). At the close of the 19th century, about 90 percent of African Americans lived in southern states. This internal migration began in earnest between 1910 and 1930 when about 1 million people traveled north to seek jobs in the cities. Motivating their decision to leave the south were (1) deteriorating race relations marked by segregation and racial violence, (2) destruction of their cotton crops by the boll weevil, and (3) limited economic opportunities. In the face of these problems, job in northern factories were a tremendous attraction.

Migration slowed down in the 1930s because of the economic collapse known as the Great Depression, but it resumed during World War II (1941–1945). Between 1940 and 1970, over 4 million African Americans moved north. Although many succeeded in improving their economic conditions, the newcomers to northern cities also faced racial tension and discrimination.

AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION, 1900 TO 1960			
Region	1900	1930	1960
South	7,923,000	9,362,000	11,312,000
Northeast	385,000	1,147,000	3,028,000
Midwest	496,000	1,262,000	3,446,000
West	30,000	120,000	1,086,000

**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*. All numbers in the above table are rounded.

## Postwar Problems

Americans had trouble adjusting from the patriotic fervor of wartime to the economic and social stresses of postwar uncertainties. America's postwar recovery was troubled by a series of social and economic upheavals.

**1918 Pandemic** The same year that World War I ended, the most severe influenza outbreak of the 20th century started. It infected an estimated 500 million people worldwide and claimed an estimated 50 million lives. In the United States, it was first discovered in crowded military camps in the spring of 1918. Surprisingly, the pandemic had some of the highest mortality rates among 20 to 40 year olds. At the time there were no effective drugs to treat the virus, which killed 500,000 to 675,000 Americans. The rapid spread of the pandemic was underreported by the limited media coverage and government efforts to keep up morale during wartime.

**Demobilization** During the war, 4 million American men had been taken from civilian life and the domestic economy. Not all the returning soldiers could find jobs right away, but many who did took employment from the women and African Americans who, for a short time, had thrived on war work. The business boom of wartime also went flat, as factory orders for military products fell off. With European farm products back on the market, farm prices fell, which hurt U.S. farmers. In the cities, consumers went on a buying spree, leading to inflation and a short boom in 1920. The spree did not last. In 1921, the economy plunged into a **recession**, and 10 percent of the American workforce was unemployed.

**The Red Scare** In 1919, the country suffered from a volatile combination of unhappiness with the peace process, fears of communism fueled by the Communist takeover in Russia, and worries about labor unrest at home. The **anti-German hysteria** of the war years turned quickly into **anti-Communist hysteria** known as the Red Scare. These anti-Communist fears also fueled **xenophobia** that resulted in restrictions on immigration in the 1920s.

**Palmer Raids** A series of unexplained bombings caused Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer to establish a special office under J. Edgar Hoover to gather information on radicals. Palmer also ordered mass arrests of anarchists, socialists, and labor agitators. From November 1919 through January 1920, more than 6,000 people were arrested based on limited criminal evidence. Most of the suspects were foreign born, and 500 of them, including the outspoken radical Emma Goldman, were deported. The scare faded almost as quickly as it arose. Palmer warned of huge riots on May Day, 1920, but they never took place. His loss of credibility, coupled with rising concerns about civil liberties, caused the hysteria to recede.

**Labor Conflict** In a nation that valued free enterprise and rugged individualism, a large part of the American public regarded unions with distrust. Antiunion attitudes had softened during the Progressive Era. Factory workers and their unions were offered a "Square Deal" under Theodore Roosevelt and

protection from lawsuits under the Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914. During the war, unions made important gains. Afterwards, however, a series of strikes in 1919 as well as fear of revolution turned public opinion against unions.

**Strikes of 1919** The first major strike of 1919 was in Seattle in February. Some 60,000 unionists joined shipyard workers in a peaceful strike for higher pay. Troops were called out, but there was no violence. In September, Boston police went on strike to protest the firing of a few officers who tried to unionize. Massachusetts Governor Calvin Coolidge sent in the National Guard to break the strike. Also in September, workers for the U.S. Steel Corporation struck. State and federal troops were called out, and after considerable violence and the death of 18 workers, the strike was broken in January 1920.

**Racial Violence** The decades after 1900 saw acute racial tension over the Jim Crow oppression in the South, the rapid growth of the Ku Klux Klan, the continued lynching of African Americans, and the Great Migration to northern cities. Whites resented the increased competition for jobs and housing. During the war, **race riots** had erupted, the largest in East St. Louis, Illinois, in 1917. In 1919, racial tensions led to violence in many cities. In Chicago, 40 people were killed and 500 were injured in a riot that started over the use of a beach.

What has been called “the single worst incident of racial violence in American history” happened in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1921. The Tulsa Race Massacre began after African Americans thwarted the lynching of a Black man. White mobs destroyed more than 1,000 Black-owned homes and businesses in the neighborhood known for its prosperity as the Black Wall Street and killed 50 to 300 people. The man whose lynching was prevented was later exonerated.

**Confederate Monuments** Another part of the resurgence of Southern White pride and racial tensions was the spike in building public monuments between 1900 and the 1920s to honor Jefferson Davis and top Confederate generals throughout the South. Many African American and human rights reformers believe that, unlike earlier memorials in cemeteries to veterans, these were built to glorify the traditions of the “Lost Cause” interpretation of the Confederacy, which included defending White supremacy and slavery.

**Decline of the Progressive Impulse** America’s sacrifices and casualties suffered during World War I drained the last of the Progressive idealism in the crusade “to make the world safe for democracy.” Instead, the majority of the nation wanted to return to a less complicated period, or what the next, more conservative president called “normalcy.” The 1920s provided prosperity, automobiles, radio, jazz, and movie and sport heroes along with reactionary efforts to stop change by restricting immigration, denying science, and retreating from international commitments.

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

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1. Explain two effects of World War I mobilization on international and internal migration over time.

## KEY TERMS BY THEME

### Mobilization (PCE)

Food Administration  
Railroad Administration  
National War Labor Board  
Liberty Bonds  
Selective Service Act  
service by African Americans

### Civil Liberties (PCE)

George Creel  
Committee on Public Information  
Espionage Act (1917)  
Sedition Act (1918)  
Eugene Debs  
*Schenck v. United States*

anti-German hysteria

### Social Impact of the War (MIG, WXT)

jobs for women  
migration of Mexicans  
Great Migration

### Aftermath of War (WXT, PCE, MIG)

1918 pandemic  
recession  
Red Scare  
anti-Communist hysteria  
xenophobia  
Palmer raids  
strikes of 1919  
race riots

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1–3 refer to the following excerpt.

“I think all men recognize that in time of war the citizen must surrender some rights for the common good which he is entitled to enjoy in time of peace. But sir, the right to control their own government, according to constitutional forms, is not one of the rights that the citizens of this country are called upon to surrender in time of war. . . .

“Mr. President, our Government, above all others, is founded on the right of the people freely to discuss all matters pertaining to their Government, in war not less than in peace. . . . How can the popular will express itself between elections except by meetings, by speeches, by publications, by petitions, and by addresses to the representatives of the people?

“Any man who seeks to set a limit upon these rights, whether in war or peace, aims a blow at the most vital part of our Government.”

Robert M. La Follette, *Congressional Record*, October 6, 1917

1. What does the author imply by the phrase “not one of the rights that the citizens of this country are called upon to surrender in time of war”?
  - (A) Citizens do not lose their freedom of speech during war.
  - (B) Citizens should not have to pay taxes during war.
  - (C) The Constitution protects the rights of people to disrupt the draft.
  - (D) The Constitution allows people to fight for the opponent in a war.

2. Which of the following during World War I proved the most direct threat to the perspective on civil rights in this excerpt?
  - (A) Spread of the Bolshevik Revolution
  - (B) The Espionage and Sedition Acts
  - (C) The Committee for Public Information
  - (D) *Schenck v. United States*
  
3. Which of the following conflicts raised the most similar concerns about the violation of civil rights as did World War I?
  - (A) War of 1812
  - (B) Mexican War of 1846
  - (C) American Civil War
  - (D) Spanish-American War of 1898

### SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

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Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

1. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
  - (a) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how the federal government mobilized industry or labor during World War I.
  - (b) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how the federal government restricted freedom of speech during World War I.
  - (c) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how World War I affected either women or African Americans during this period.
  
2. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
  - (a) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how the Red Scare was related to World War I.
  - (b) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how the postwar labor problems were related to World War I.
  - (c) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how the racial conflicts of 1917 to 1919 were related to World War I.

# 1920s: Innovations in Communication and Technology

*Why does this magnificent applied science which saves work and makes life easier bring us so little happiness?*

Albert Einstein, address to California Institute of Technology, 1931

**Learning Objective:** Explain the causes and effects of the innovations in communications and technology in the United States over time.

Politics took a backseat in the 1920s as Americans adapted to economic growth and social change. The decade began with a brief postwar recession (1921), included a lengthy period of **economic prosperity** (1922–1928), and ended in economic disaster (October 1929) with the nation’s worst stock market crash to that time. During the boom years, unemployment was usually below 4 percent. The **standard of living** for most Americans improved significantly. Indoor plumbing and central heating became commonplace. By 1930, two-thirds of all homes had electricity. Real income for both the middle class and the working class increased substantially.

The prosperity, however, was far from universal. In fact, during the 1920s, as many as 40 percent of U.S. families in both rural and urban areas had incomes in the poverty range—they struggled to live on less than \$1,500 a year. Farmers in particular did not share in the booming economy.

## Causes of Economic Prosperity

The economic boom—led by a spectacular rise of 64 percent in manufacturing output between 1919 and 1929—resulted from several factors.

**Increased Productivity** Companies made greater use of research, expanding their use of Frederick W. Taylor’s time-and-motion studies and principles of **scientific management**. The manufacturing process was made more efficient by the adoption of improved methods of mass production. In 1914, **Henry Ford** had perfected a system for manufacturing automobiles by means of an **assembly line**. Instead of losing time moving around a factory as in the past, Ford’s workers remained at one place all day and performed the same simple operation over and over again at rapid speed. In the 1920s, most major industries adopted the assembly line and realized major gains in worker productivity.

**Energy Technologies** Another cause of economic growth was the increased use of oil and electricity, although coal was still used for railroads and to heat homes. Increasingly, oil was used to power factories and to provide gasoline for the rapidly increasing numbers of automobiles. By 1930, oil would account for 23 percent of U.S. energy consumption (up from 3 percent in 1900). Electric motors in factories and new appliances at home increased electrical generation more than 300 percent during the decade.

**Government Policy** Government at all levels in the 1920s favored the growth of big business by offering corporate tax cuts and doing almost nothing to enforce the antitrust laws of the Progressive Era. Large tax cuts for higher-income Americans also contributed to the imbalance in incomes and increased speculation in markets. The Federal Reserve contributed to the overheated economic boom through low interest rates and relaxed regulation of banks. Then, it began tightening the money supply as the economy began to decline—precisely the wrong time, according to economists today.

**Consumer Economy** Adding electricity in their homes enabled millions of Americans to purchase the new **consumer appliances** of the decade—refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, and washing machines. Automobiles became more affordable and sold by the millions, making the horse-and-buggy era a thing of the past. Advertising expanded as businesses found that they could increase consumers' demand for new products by appealing to desires for status and popularity. Stores increased sales of the new appliances and automobiles by allowing customers to buy on credit. Later, as consumers faced more “easy monthly payments” than they could afford, they curtailed buying, contributing to the collapse of the economic boom. Chain stores, such as Woolworth's and A & P, proliferated. Their greater variety of products were attractively displayed and often priced lower than the neighborhood stores, which they threatened to displace.

**Impact of the Automobile** More than any other new technology, the automobile changed society. In 1913, Americans owned 1.2 million automobiles. In 1929, that number reached 26.5 million, an average of almost one per family. Auto production replaced the railroad industry as the key promoter of economic growth. Other industries—steel, glass, rubber, gasoline, and highway construction—depended on automobile sales.

In social terms, the automobile affected all that Americans did: commuting to work, traveling for pleasure, shopping, even dating. Some changes were negative, such as traffic jams in cities and injuries and deaths on roads. Many people disliked the independence cars gave young people. They blamed the automobile, “a bordello on wheels,” for a breakdown of morals.

## Farm Problems

Many farmers did not share in the prosperity of the 1920s. Their best years had been 1916–1918, when crop prices had been kept high by (1) wartime demand in Europe and (2) the U.S. government's wartime policy of

guaranteeing a minimum price for wheat and corn. When the war ended, so did farm prosperity. Farmers who had borrowed heavily to expand during the war were left with a heavy burden of debt. New technologies (such as chemical fertilizers and gasoline tractors) helped farmers increase their production in the 1920s but did not solve their problems. Increased productivity only added to the financial problems of farmers, as the resulting surpluses produced falling prices.

## Labor Unions Struggle

Wages rose during the 1920s, but membership in unions declined 20 percent, partly because most companies insisted on an **“open shop”** (keeping jobs open to nonunion workers). Some companies also began to practice **welfare capitalism**—voluntarily offering their employees improved benefits and higher wages in order to reduce their interest in organizing unions. In the South, companies used police, state militia, and local mobs to violently resist efforts to unionize the textile industry.

In an era that so strongly favored business, strikes usually failed. The United Mine Workers, led by John L. Lewis, suffered setbacks in a series of violent and ultimately unsuccessful strikes in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky. Conservative courts routinely issued injunctions against strikes and nullified labor laws aimed at protecting workers’ welfare.

## Technology and Culture

The Census of 1920 reported that, for the first time, more than half of the American population lived in urban areas, defined as communities of 2,500 people or more. Many city residents had tastes, morals, and habits of mass consumption that were increasingly at odds with the religious and moral codes of many rural Americans.

### Architecture and Industrial Design

The fusion of art and technology during the 1920s and 1930s created a new profession of industrial designers. Influenced by Art Deco and streamlining styles, they created functional products from toasters to locomotives that had aesthetic appeal. Many skyscrapers, such as the Chrysler and Empire State buildings in New York, were built in the **Art Deco** style, which captured modernist simplification of forms while using machine age materials.



The Chrysler Building, New York City  
Source: Carol M. Highsmith / Library of Congress



**Mass Media** Newspapers had once been the only medium of mass communication and entertainment. In the 1920s, a new medium—the **radio**—suddenly appeared. The first commercial radio station went on the air in 1920 and broadcast music to just a few thousand listeners. By 1930, there were more than 800 stations broadcasting to 10 million radios—about a third of all U.S. homes. The organization of the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in 1924 and the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) in 1927 provided **networks** of radio stations that enabled people from coast to coast to listen to the same programs: news broadcasts, sporting events, soap operas, quiz shows, and comedies. They also provided national exposure to regional cultures. For example, the National Barn Dance show, later renamed the Grand Ole Opry, featured music from the southeastern United States, a style that evolved into today’s country music.

**Movie Business** The **movie industry** centered in **Hollywood**, California, became big business in the 1920s. Going to the movies became a national habit in cities, suburbs, and small towns. Glamorous movie stars such as Greta Garbo and Rudolf Valentino were idolized by millions. Elaborate movie theater “palaces” were built for the general public. With the introduction of talking (sound) pictures in 1927, the movie industry reached new heights. By 1929, more than 80 million tickets to Hollywood movies were sold weekly.

**Popular Music** High school and college youth rebelled against their elders’ culture by dancing to jazz music. Brought north by African American musicians, jazz became a symbol of the “new” and “modern” culture of cities. Like radio, **phonographs** made this new style of music available to a huge (and youthful) public. Other forms of music that spread in popularity were blues, classical, and “American standards” by composers such as Irving Berlin.

**Aviation** The improving technology of airplanes in the 1920s created the opportunity for aviators to set and break speed and distance records. Crowds would greet pilots after epic flights, and communities would hold huge street parades to honor them. The most celebrated hero was **Charles Lindbergh**, a young aviator who thrilled the entire world by flying nonstop across the Atlantic from Long Island to Paris in 1927. Americans listened to the radio for news of his flight and welcomed his return to the United States with ticker tape parades larger than the welcome given to the returning soldiers of World War I.

**Popular Heroes** In an earlier era, people admired politicians such as William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson as heroic figures. In the new age of radio and movies, Americans radically shifted their viewpoint and adopted as role models the larger-than-life personalities celebrated on the sports page and the movie screen. Every sport had its superstars who were nationally known. In the 1920s, people followed the knockouts of heavyweight boxer Jack Dempsey, the swimming records of Gertrude Ederle, the touchdowns scored by Jim Thorpe, the home runs hit by Babe Ruth, and the golf tournaments won by Bobby Jones.

**Increasing Tension** The prosperity and technological developments of the 1920s accompanied growing conflicts over cultural and political issues, such as immigration, Prohibition, and the roles of science and religion, which is the next topic.

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1. Explain two effects of the innovations in communications and technology during the 1920s in the United States.

### KEY TERMS BY THEME

#### 1920s Economy (WXT)

economic prosperity  
 standard of living  
 scientific management  
 Henry Ford  
 assembly line  
 consumer appliances  
 impact of the automobile

“open shop”

welfare capitalism

#### Technology and Culture (WXT, ARC)

industrial design  
 Art Deco  
 mass media  
 radio

networks

movie industry

Hollywood

popular music

phonographs

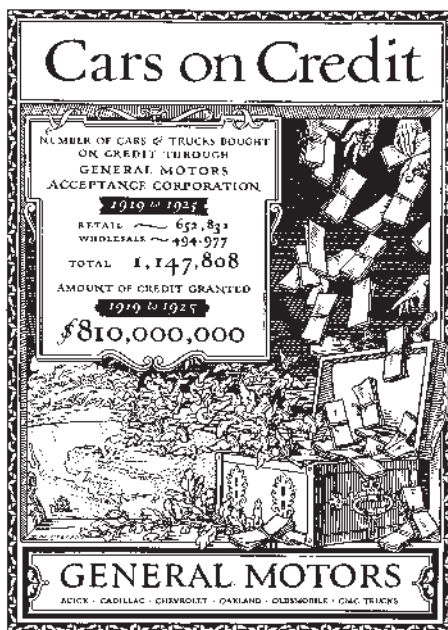
popular heroes

aviation

Charles Lindberg

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1–3 refer to the advertisement below.



Source: General Motors, 1925, The Granger Collection, NYC

1. Which of the following trends of the 1920s is most clearly portrayed in this advertisement?
  - (A) The expansion of auto dealers throughout the country
  - (B) The use of extended payment plans to purchase consumer goods
  - (C) The emergence of General Motors as the largest company
  - (D) The growth of middle-class incomes
2. Which of the following statements best supports the argument of historians who criticize the economy that developed during the 1920s?
  - (A) Consumerism weakened the moral character of the nation.
  - (B) The growth of the auto industry badly hurt the railroads.
  - (C) Advertising was based on gaining status and popularity.
  - (D) The boom was based on speculation and borrowed money.

### SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

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1. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
  - (a) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how the automobile influenced American culture and society during the 1920s.
  - (b) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how innovation and technology affected mass media during the 1920s.
  - (c) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how innovation and technology produced heroes who came to dominate the culture during the 1920s.
2. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
  - (a) Briefly describe ONE difference between the technological innovations of the 1920s and of the period from 1865 to 1900.
  - (b) Briefly describe ONE similarity between the technological innovations of the 1920s and of the period from 1865 to 1900.
  - (c) Briefly explain ONE reason for the difference between the technological innovations of the 1920s and of the period from 1865 to 1900.

# 1920s: Cultural and Political Controversies

*My candle burns at both ends;  
It will not last the night;  
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends—  
It gives a lovely light!*

Edna St. Vincent Millay, "First Fig." First published in *First Figs from Thistles* (Harper and Bros., 1922)

**Learning Objective 1:** Explain the causes and effects of international and internal migration patterns over time.

**Learning Objective 2:** Explain the causes and effects of the developments in popular culture in America.

The dominant social and political issues of the 1920s expressed sharp divisions in U.S. society between the young and the old, religious modernists and religious fundamentalists, prohibitionists and anti-prohibitionists, and nativists and the foreign born. Because of the steady flow in previous decades of people from rural to urban areas in search of jobs, by 1920 most people lived in urban areas, then defined as places with more than 2,500 residents.

## Religion, Science, and Politics

Divisions among Protestants reflected the tensions in society between the traditional values of rural areas and the modernizing forces of the cities.

**Modernism** A range of influences, including the changing role of women, the Social Gospel movement, and scientific knowledge, caused large numbers of Protestants to define their faith in new ways. Modernists took a historical and critical view of certain passages in the Bible and believed they could accept Darwin's theory of evolution without abandoning their religious faith.

**Fundamentalism** Protestant preachers, mostly in rural areas, condemned the modernists and taught that every word in the Bible was true literally. A key fundamentalist doctrine was that creationism (the belief that God had created the universe in seven days, as stated in the Bible) explained the origin of all life. Fundamentalists blamed modernists for causing a decline in morals.

**Revivalists on the Radio** Ever since the Great Awakening of the early 1700s, religious revivals periodically swept through America. **Revivalists** of the 1920s preached a fundamentalist message but did so for the first time making full use of the new tool of mass communication, the radio. One leading radio evangelist was **Billy Sunday**, who drew large crowds as he attacked drinking, gambling, and dancing. Another was **Aimee Semple McPherson**, who condemned the twin evils of communism and jazz music from her pulpit in Los Angeles.

## ***Fundamentalism and Science***

More than any other single event, a much-publicized trial in Tennessee focused the debate between religious fundamentalists in the rural South and modernists of the northern cities. Tennessee, like several other southern states, outlawed the teaching of Darwin's theory of evolution in public schools. To challenge the constitutionality of these laws, the American Civil Liberties Union persuaded a Tennessee biology teacher, John Scopes, to teach the theory of evolution to his high school class. For doing so, Scopes was arrested and tried in 1925.

**The Trial** The entire nation followed the **Scopes trial** both in newspapers and by radio. Defending Scopes was a famous lawyer from Chicago, **Clarence Darrow**. Representing the fundamentalists was three-time Democratic candidate for president William Jennings Bryan, who testified as an expert on the Bible. The courtroom clash between Darrow and Bryan dramatized that the debate on evolution symbolized a battle between two opposing views of the world.

**Aftermath** As expected, Scopes was convicted, but the conviction was later overturned on a technicality. Laws banning the teaching of evolution remained on the books for years, although they were rarely enforced. The northern press asserted that Darrow and the modernists had thoroughly discredited fundamentalism. However, to this day, questions about the relationship between religion and public schools remain controversial and unresolved.

## ***Prohibition***

Another controversy that helped define the 1920s concerned people's conflicting attitudes toward the 18th Amendment. Wartime concerns to conserve grain and maintain a sober workforce moved Congress to pass this amendment, which strictly prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages, including liquors, wines, and beers. It was ratified in 1919. The adoption of the Prohibition amendment and a federal law enforcing it (the **Volstead Act**, 1919) were the culmination of many decades of crusading by temperance forces.

**Defying the Law** Prohibition did not stop people from drinking alcohol either in public places or at home. Especially in the cities, it became fashionable to defy the law by going to clubs or bars known as speakeasies, where bootleg (smuggled) liquor was sold. City police and judges were paid to look the other way. Even elected officials such as President Harding served alcoholic drinks to

guests. Liquors, beers, and wines were readily available from bootleggers who smuggled them from Canada or made them in their garages or basements.

Rival groups of gangsters, including a Chicago gang headed by **Al Capone**, fought for control of the lucrative bootlegging trade. **Organized crime** became big business. The millions made from the sale of illegal booze allowed the gangs to expand other illegal activities: prostitution, gambling, and narcotics.

**Political Discord and Repeal** Most Republicans publicly supported the “noble experiment” of Prohibition (although in private, many politicians drank). Democrats were divided on the issue, with southerners supporting it and northern city politicians calling for repeal. Supporters of the 18th Amendment pointed to declines in alcoholism and alcohol-related deaths. However, support weakened in the face of growing public resentment and clear evidence of increased criminal activity. With the coming of the Great Depression, economic arguments for repeal were added to the others. In 1933, the **21st Amendment**, which repealed the 18th Amendment, was ratified, and millions celebrated the new year by toasting the end of Prohibition.

## Opposition to Immigration

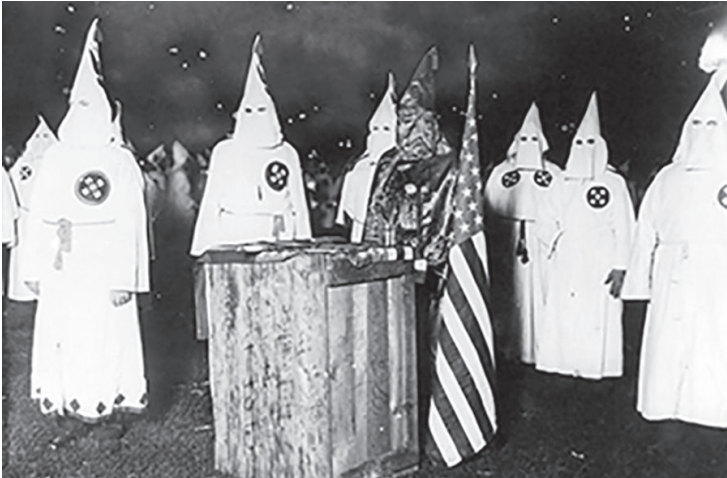
The world war had interrupted the flow of immigrants to the United States, but as soon as the war ended, immigration shot upward. More than a million foreigners entered the country between 1919 and 1921. Like the immigrants of the prewar period, the new arrivals were mainly Catholics and Jews from eastern and southern Europe. Once again, nativist prejudices of native-born Protestants were aroused. Workers feared competition for jobs. Isolationists wanted minimal contact with Europe and feared that immigrants might foment revolution. In response to public demands for restrictive legislation, Congress acted quickly.

**Quota Laws** Congress passed two laws that severely limited immigration by setting quotas based on nationality. The first quota act of 1921 limited immigration to 3 percent of the number of foreign-born persons from a given nation counted in the 1910 Census (a maximum of 357,000). To reduce the number of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, Congress passed a second quota act in 1924 that set quotas of 2 percent based on the Census of 1890 (before the arrival of most of the “new” immigrants). Although there were quotas for all European and Asian nationalities, the law chiefly restricted those groups considered “undesirable” by the nativists. By 1927, the quotas for all Asians and eastern and southern Europeans had been limited to 150,000, with all Japanese immigrants barred. With these acts, the traditional United States policy of unlimited immigration ended.

Canadians and Latin Americans were exempt from restrictions. Almost 500,000 Mexicans migrated legally to the Southwest during the 1920s.

**Case of Sacco and Vanzetti** Although liberal American artists and intellectuals were few in number, they loudly protested against racist and nativist prejudices. They rallied to the support of two Italian immigrants,

Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, who in 1921 had been convicted in a Massachusetts court of committing robbery and murder. Liberals protested that the two men had not received a fair trial and that they had been accused, convicted, and sentenced to die simply because they were poor Italians and anarchists (who rejected all government). After six years of appeals and national and international debates over the conduct of their trial, Sacco and Vanzetti were executed in 1927.



Nearly 30,000 Klan members gathered for a rally in Chicago around 1920.  
**Source:** Library of Congress.

## Ku Klux Klan

The most extreme expression of nativism in the 1920s was the resurgence of the **Ku Klux Klan**. Unlike the original Klan of the 1860s and 1870s, the new Klan founded in 1915 was as strong in the Midwest as in the South. The Klan attracted new members because of the popular silent film *Birth of a Nation*, which portrayed the KKK during Reconstruction as the heroes, and the White backlash to the race riots of 1919. The new Klan used modern advertising techniques to grow to 5 million members by 1925. It drew most of its support from lower-middle-class White Protestants in small cities and towns. This revival of the KKK directed hostility not only against African Americans but also against Catholics, Jews, foreigners, and suspected Communists.

**Tactics** The Klan employed various methods for terrorizing and intimidating anyone targeted as “un-American.” Dressed in white hoods to disguise their identity, Klan members would burn crosses and apply vigilante justice, punishing their victims with whips, tar and feathers, and lynching. The overwhelming number of those killed were African American men. In its heyday in the early 1920s, the Klan developed strong political influence. In Indiana and Texas, its support became crucial for candidates hoping to win elections to state and local offices.

**Decline** At first, the majority of native-born White Americans appeared to tolerate the Klan because it vowed to uphold high standards of Christian morality and drive out bootleggers, gamblers, and adulterers. Beginning in 1923, however, investigative reports in the northern press revealed that fraud and corruption in the KKK were rife. In 1925, the leader of Indiana's Klan, Grand Dragon David Stephenson, was convicted of murder. After that, the Klan's influence and membership declined rapidly. Nevertheless, it and other White nationalist groups continued to exist and advocate for White supremacy into the 21st century.

## Arts and Literature

Scorning religion as hypocritical and bitterly condemning the sacrifices of wartime as fraud perpetrated by money interests were two dominant themes of the leading writers of the postwar decade. This disillusionment caused the writer **Gertrude Stein** to call these writers a “**lost generation.**” The novels of **F. Scott Fitzgerald**, **Ernest Hemingway**, and **Sinclair Lewis**; the poems of **Ezra Pound** and **T. S. Eliot**; and the plays of **Eugene O'Neill** expressed disillusionment with the ideals of an earlier time and with the materialism of a business-oriented culture. Fitzgerald and O'Neill took to a life of drinking, while Eliot and Hemingway expressed their unhappiness by moving into exile in Europe.

Painters such as **Edward Hopper** were inspired by the architecture of American cities to explore loneliness and isolation of urban life. **Regional artists** such as **Grant Wood** and **Thomas Hart Benton** celebrated the rural people and scenes of the heartland of America.

Musical theater changed in the 1920s with the Broadway premiere of *Show Boat*. It proved a radical departure in musical storytelling with a serious treatment of prejudice and race. Jewish immigrants played a major role in the development of the American musical theatre during this era. For example, composer **George Gershwin**, the son of Russian-Jewish immigrants, blended jazz and classical music in his symphonic *Rhapsody in Blue* and the folk opera *Porgy and Bess*.

## Women, Family, and Education

Ratification of the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote, but it did not change either women's lives or U.S. politics as much as reformers had hoped. Voting patterns in the election of 1920 showed that women did not vote as a bloc but usually shared the party preferences of their husbands or fathers.

**Women at Home** The traditional separation of labor between men and women continued into the 1920s. Most middle-class women expected to spend their lives as homemakers and mothers. The introduction into the home of such labor-saving devices as the washing machine and vacuum cleaner eased but did not substantially change the daily routines of the homemaker.



**Women in the Labor Force** Participation of women in the workforce remained about the same as before the war. Employed women usually lived in the cities; were limited to certain categories of jobs as clerks, nurses, teachers, and domestics; and received lower wages than men.

**Revolution in Morals** Probably the most significant change in the lives of young men and women of the 1920s was their revolt against sexual taboos. Some were influenced by the writings of the Austrian psychiatrist **Sigmund Freud**, who stressed the role of sexual repression in mental illness. Others, who perhaps had never heard of Freud, took to premarital sex as if it were—like radio and jazz music—one of the inventions of the modern age. Movies, novels, automobiles, and new dance steps (the foxtrot and the Charleston) also encouraged greater promiscuity. The use of contraceptives for birth control was still against the law in almost every state. Even so, because of the work of **Margaret Sanger** and other advocates of birth control, it achieved growing acceptance in the 1920s.

A special **fashion** that set young people apart from older generations was the flapper look. Influenced by movie actresses as well as their own desires for independence, young women shocked their elders by wearing dresses hemmed at the knee (instead of the ankle), “bobbing” (cutting short) their hair, smoking cigarettes, and driving cars. High school and college graduates also took office jobs until they married. Then, as married women, they were expected to abandon the flapper look, quit their jobs, and settle down as wives and mothers.

**Divorce** As a result of women’s suffrage, state lawmakers were now forced to listen to feminists, who demanded changes in the divorce laws to permit women to escape abusive and incompatible husbands. Liberalized divorce laws were one reason that one in six marriages ended in divorce by 1930—a significant increase over the one-in-eight ratio of 1920.

**Education** Widespread belief in the value of education, together with economic prosperity, stimulated more state governments to enact compulsory school laws. Universal **high school education** became the new American goal. By the end of the 1920s, the proportion of high school graduates had doubled to over 25 percent of school-age young adults.

## African American Cultural Renaissance

By 1930, almost 20 percent of African Americans lived in the North, as migration **from the South** continued. In the North, African Americans still faced discrimination in housing and jobs, but they found at least some improvement in their earnings and material standard of living. The largest African American community developed in the Harlem section of New York City. With a population of almost 200,000 by 1930, Harlem became famous in the 1920s for its concentration of talented actors, artists, musicians, and

writers. Because of their artistic achievements, this period is known as the “**Harlem Renaissance.**”

**Poets and Musicians** The leading Harlem poets included **Countee Cullen**, **Langston Hughes**, **James Weldon Johnson**, and **Claude McKay**. Commenting on African American heritage, their poems expressed a range of emotions, from bitterness and resentment to joy and hope.

African American jazz musicians such as **Duke Ellington** and **Louis Armstrong** were so popular among people of all races that the 1920s is often called the Jazz Age. Other great performers included blues singer **Bessie Smith** and the multitalented singer and actor **Paul Robeson**. While these artists sometimes performed before integrated audiences in Harlem, they often found themselves and their audiences segregated in much of the rest of the nation.

**Marcus Garvey** In 1916, the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) was brought to Harlem from Jamaica by a charismatic immigrant, **Marcus Garvey**. Garvey advocated individual and racial pride for African Americans and developed political ideas of Black nationalism. Building on W. E. B. Du Bois’s pride in Black culture, Garvey established an organization for Black separatism, economic self-sufficiency, and a **back-to-Africa movement**. Garvey’s sale of stock in the Black Star Steamship line led to federal charges of fraud. In 1925, he was tried, convicted, and jailed. Later, he was deported to Jamaica, and his movement collapsed.

W. E. B. Du Bois and other African American leaders disagreed with Garvey’s back-to-Africa idea but endorsed his emphasis on racial pride and self-respect. In the 1960s, Garvey’s thinking helped to inspire a later generation to embrace the cause of **Black pride** and nationalism.

## Republican Majority

Through the 1920s, three Republican presidents would control the executive branch. Congress was also solidly Republican through a decade in which U.S. business boomed.

The great leader of the progressive wing of the Republican Party, Theodore Roosevelt, died in 1919. This loss, combined with public disillusionment over the war, allowed the return of the old-guard (conservative) Republicans. Unlike the Republicans of the Gilded Age, however, Republican leadership in the 1920s did not preach laissez-faire economics. Instead, Republicans accepted the idea of limited government regulation as an aid to stabilizing business. The regulatory commissions established in the Progressive Era were now administered by appointees who were more sympathetic to business than to the general public. The prevailing idea of the Republican Party was that the nation would benefit if business and the pursuit of profits took the lead in developing the economy.

## *The Presidency of Warren Harding*

**Warren Harding** had been a newspaper publisher in Ohio before entering politics. He was handsome and well liked among the Republican political cronies with whom he regularly played poker. His abilities as a leader, however, were less than presidential. When the Republican National Convention of 1920 deadlocked, the party bosses decided “in a smoke-filled room” to deliver the nomination to Harding as a compromise choice.

**A Few Good Choices** Harding recognized his limitations and hoped to make up for them by appointing able men to his cabinet. He appointed the former presidential candidate and Supreme Court justice **Charles Evans Hughes** to be secretary of state, the greatly admired former mining engineer and Food Administration leader Herbert Hoover to be secretary of commerce, and the Pittsburgh industrialist and millionaire **Andrew Mellon** to be secretary of the treasury. When the Chief Justice’s seat on the Supreme Court became vacant, Harding filled it by appointing former President William Howard Taft.

**Domestic Policy** Harding did little more than sign into law the measures adopted by the Republican Congress. He approved (1) a reduction in the income tax, (2) an increase in tariff rates under the **Fordney-McCumber Tariff Act** of 1922, and (3) the establishment of the **Bureau of the Budget**, with procedures for all government expenditures to be placed in a single budget for Congress to review and vote on.

Harding did surprise many people, particularly his conservative allies, by pardoning and releasing from federal prison Socialist leader Eugene Debs. Debs had been convicted of violating the Espionage Act during World War I. While imprisoned, Debs received 920,000 votes in the 1920 presidential election. Harding’s decision to pardon Debs was prompted by the president’s generous spirit.

**Scandals and Death** Harding’s postwar presidency was marked by scandals and corruption similar to those that had occurred under an earlier postwar president, Ulysses S. Grant. Having appointed some excellent officials, Harding also selected a number of incompetent and dishonest men to fill important positions, including Secretary of the Interior **Albert B. Fall** and Attorney General **Harry M. Daugherty**. In 1924, Congress discovered that Fall had accepted bribes for granting oil leases near **Teapot Dome**, Wyoming. Daugherty also took bribes for agreeing not to prosecute certain criminal suspects.

However, in August 1923, shortly before these scandals were uncovered publicly, Harding died of a heart attack in California after traveling to Alaska. He was never implicated in any of the scandals.

## *The Presidency of Calvin Coolidge*

Harding’s vice president and successor, **Calvin Coolidge**, had won popularity in 1919 as the Massachusetts governor who broke the Boston police strike.

He was a man of few words who richly deserved the nickname “Silent Cal.” Coolidge once explained why silence was good politics. “If you don’t say anything,” he said, “you won’t be called on to repeat it.” Also unanswerable was the president’s sage comment “When more and more people are thrown out of work, unemployment results.” Coolidge summarized both his presidency and his era in the phrase “The business of America is business.”

**The Election of 1924** After less than a year in office, Coolidge was the overwhelming choice of the Republican Party as their presidential nominee in 1924. The Democrats nominated a conservative lawyer from West Virginia, John W. Davis, and tried to make an issue of the Teapot Dome scandal. Unhappy with conservative dominance of both parties, liberals formed a new Progressive Party led by its presidential candidate, Robert La Follette of Wisconsin. Coolidge won the election easily, but the Progressive ticket did extremely well for a third party in a conservative era. La Follette received nearly 5 million votes, chiefly from discontented farmers and laborers.

**Vetoes and Inaction** Coolidge believed in limited government that stood aside while business conducted its own affairs. Little was accomplished in the White House except keeping a close watch on the budget. Cutting spending to the bone, Coolidge vetoed even the acts of the Republican majority in Congress. He would not allow bonuses for World War I veterans and vetoed a bill (the McNary-Haugen Bill of 1928) to help farmers as crop prices fell.

### ***Hoover, Smith, and the Election of 1928***

Coolidge declined to run for the presidency a second time. The Republicans therefore turned to an able leader with a spotless reputation, self-made millionaire and Secretary of Commerce **Herbert Hoover**. Hoover had served three presidents (Wilson, Harding, and Coolidge) in administrative roles but had never before campaigned for elective office. Nevertheless, in 1928, he was made the Republican nominee for president.

Hoover’s Democratic opponent was the governor of New York, **Alfred E. Smith**. As a Roman Catholic and an opponent of Prohibition, Smith appealed to many immigrant voters in the cities. Many Protestants, however, were openly prejudiced against Smith.

Republicans boasted of “Coolidge prosperity,” which Hoover promised to extend. He even suggested that poverty would soon be ended altogether. Hoover won in a landslide and even took a large number of the electoral votes in the South. In several southern states—including Texas, Florida, and Virginia—the taste of prosperity and general dislike for Smith’s religion outweighed the voters’ usual allegiance to the Democratic Party.

Hoover’s dreams to end poverty quickly proved bitterly ironic. The prosperity of the 1920s turned into a deep economic depression starting in the fall of 1929. Topic 7.9 explores its causes and its chilling impact on the lives of all classes of Americans.



## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: HOW CONSERVATIVE WERE THE 1920S?

By the 1930s, the 1920s seemed to be a unique decade. It looked like a period of social fun and booming business wedged between the calamities of military conflict (World War I) and economic crisis (the Great Depression).

**Conservative Ideas** In his popular history *Only Yesterday* (1931), **Frederick Lewis Allen** gave support to the ideas of the leading social critics of the 1920s, H. L. Mencken and Sinclair Lewis. He portrayed the period as one of narrow-minded materialism in which the middle class abandoned Progressive reforms, embraced conservative Republican policies, and either supported or condoned nativism, racism, and fundamentalism. Historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. generally accepted this view of the twenties, seeing it within the framework of his cyclical view of history. He argued that the politics of the decade represented a conservative reaction to the liberal reforms of the Progressive Era.

**Dissenting Views** Revisionist historians of the 1950s questioned whether the 1920s truly broke with the Progressive past. They argued that the period continued earlier protest movements such as Populism. Richard Hofstadter and other “consensus” writers distinguished between two middle classes: a new urban group with modern values and an older middle class with traditional values. William Leuchtenburg in *The Perils of Prosperity* (1958) portrayed the traditionalists as threatened by cultural pluralism and modern ideas.

**Local Power** A third assessment took a more positive view of the traditionalists. Some historians, including Alan Brinkley in the 1980s, argued that people in the “old” middle class, including fundamentalists and nativists, were understandably trying to protect their own economic and social self-interests. At the same time, they were seeking to preserve individual and community freedom in face of the modernist movement toward centralized bureaucratic and national control. This effort to maintain local control and independence from big government is seen as continuing from the 1920s to the present.

**Importance of Materialism** Given the extreme and deeply felt differences between the modernists and the traditionalists, some historians have wondered why there was not more conflict in the twenties. One explanation is the importance of the **consumer culture**. Some historians have shown how the influence of growing materialism and prosperity caused people to accept increased corporate and bureaucratic control of their lives. Others have placed varying emphasis on the ways in which material affluence, consumer goods, advertising, and a homogeneous mass culture redefined U.S. social and political values. In one way, by focusing on materialism and consumption, historians have returned to the views of Mencken, Lewis, and Allen.

**Support an Argument** *Explain two perspectives on the conservatism of the 1920s.*

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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1. Explain two causes for the reduction of international migration to the United States during the 1920s.
2. Explain the effects of two developments in popular culture in America during the 1920s.

### KEY TERMS BY THEME

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#### **Conflict over Religion (ARC)**

modernism  
fundamentalism  
revivalists  
Billy Sunday  
Aimee Semple McPherson  
Scopes trial  
Clarence Darrow

#### **Conflict over Prohibition (ARC)**

Volstead Act (1919)  
Al Capone  
organized crime  
21st Amendment

#### **Conflict over Immigration (MIG)**

quota laws  
Sacco and Vanzetti  
Ku Klux Klan  
*Birth of a Nation*  
African Americans  
foreigners  
suspected Communists

#### **Literature and the Arts (ARC)**

Gertrude Stein  
"lost generation"  
F. Scott Fitzgerald  
Ernest Hemingway  
Sinclair Lewis  
Ezra Pound  
T. S. Eliot  
Eugene O'Neill  
Edward Hopper  
regional artists  
Grant Wood  
George Gershwin

#### **Cultural Changes (ARC)**

morals  
Sigmund Freud  
Margaret Sanger  
fashion  
high school education  
consumer culture  
Frederick Lewis Allen  
*Only Yesterday*

#### **African American Identity (SOC)**

migration from the South  
"Harlem Renaissance"  
Countee Cullen  
Langston Hughes  
James Weldon Johnson  
Claude McKay  
Duke Ellington  
Louis Armstrong  
Bessie Smith  
Paul Robeson  
Back-to-Africa movement  
Marcus Garvey  
Black pride

#### **1920s Politics (PCE)**

Warren Harding  
Charles Evans Hughes  
Andrew Mellon  
Fordney-McCumber Tariff Act  
Bureau of the Budget  
Harry M. Daugherty  
Albert B. Fall  
Teapot Dome  
Calvin Coolidge  
Herbert Hoover  
Alfred E. Smith

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

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Questions 1–3 refer to the following excerpt.

“A widely held view of the Republican administrations of the 1920s is that they represented a return to an older order that had existed before Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson became the nation’s chief executives. Harding and Coolidge especially are seen as latter-day McKinleys, political mediocrities who peopled their cabinets with routine, conservative party hacks of the kind almost universal in Washington from the end of the Civil War until the early 20th century. In this view, the 1920s politically were an effort to set back the clock.”

David A. Shannon, historian, *Between the Wars: America, 1919–1941*, 1965

1. Which of the following groups from the 1920s would have been most likely to express the “widely held view” described in this excerpt?
  - (A) Leaders of business and finance
  - (B) Individuals who supported Progressive reforms
  - (C) Supporters of reduced government spending and tax cuts
  - (D) Native-born and older Americans with traditional values
2. Which of the following actions from the 1920s most clearly challenges the description of Harding and Coolidge given in the excerpt?
  - (A) The disarmament agreement among the great powers to discourage military aggression
  - (B) The passage of legislation to increase tariff rates and cut income taxes
  - (C) The leasing of public lands to private oil companies
  - (D) The reduction of federal regulations for businesses and the banking system
3. Which of the following groups of politicians from between 1865 and 1900 most closely resemble the corrupt politicians during the Harding administration?
  - (A) Politicians who failed to protect the freedmen and freedwomen in the South
  - (B) Politicians who accepted shares of railroad stock in return for government subsidies
  - (C) Politicians who bribed election officials to help them win elections
  - (D) Politicians who violated the temperance laws and their professed moral beliefs

## SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

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Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

1. “Nor was this new material advance essentially gross and philistine [unsophisticated], as the popular historiography of the 1920s has it, ‘a drunken fiesta.’ . . . Intellectuals are a little too inclined to resent poorer people acquiring for the first time material possessions, and especially luxuries. . . . During the 1920s, in fact, America began suddenly to acquire a cultural density . . . which it had never before possessed.”

Paul Johnson, historian, *A History of the American People*, 1997

“Never was a decade snuffed out so quickly as the 1920s. The stock market crash was taken as a judgment pronounced on the whole era, and, in the grim days of the depression, the 1920s were condemned as a time of irresponsibility and immaturity.”

William E. Leuchtenburg, historian,  
*The Perils of Prosperity*, 1959

Using the excerpts, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- (a) Briefly describe ONE major difference between Leuchtenburg’s and Johnson’s historical interpretations of the 1920s in the United States.
  - (b) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Leuchtenburg’s interpretation.
  - (c) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Johnson’s interpretation.
2. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
    - (a) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how religion and science were a source of conflict in American society during the 1920s.
    - (b) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how Prohibition was a source of conflict in American society during the 1920s.
    - (c) Briefly explain ONE specific difference in the immigrant legislation of the 1920s in comparison to the period from 1865 to 1914.



# The Great Depression

*Once I built a tower, to the sun,  
Brick and rivet and lime,  
Once I built a tower,  
Now it's done,  
Brother, can you spare a dime?*

E. Y. Harburg and Jay Gorney, "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" 1932

**Learning Objective:** Explain the causes of the Great Depression and its effects on the economy.

The natural rhythm of the business cycle in a free market economy includes periods of growth, recession, and depression that typically last only a few years. However, the depressions beginning in 1837, 1873, and 1893 were unusual. Each included widespread bank failures and the collapse of investment and credit systems. The result was a depression that was severe and extended several years.

## Causes of the 1929 Crash

This depression of the 1930s was even worse than the preceding ones. It lasted far longer, caused more **business failures** and **unemployment**, and affected more people—both middle class and working class—than any preceding period of hard times. This was in fact not just an ordinary depression, but the *Great Depression*. Before it was over, two presidents—**Herbert Hoover** and Franklin Roosevelt—would devote 12 years to seeking the elusive path toward recovery. What caused the spectacular business boom of the 1920s to collapse dramatically in October 1929?

**Wall Street Crash** The ever-rising stock prices had become both a symbol and a source of wealth during the prosperous 1920s. A “boom” was in full force both in the United States and in the world economy in the late 1920s. On the stock exchange on Wall Street in New York City, stock prices had kept going up and up for 18 months, from March 1928 to September 1929. On September 3, the Dow Jones Industrial Average of major stocks had reached an all-time high of 381. An average investor who bought \$1,000 worth of such stocks at the time of Hoover’s election (November 1928) would have doubled his or her money in less than a year. Millions of people did invest in the boom market of 1928—and millions lost their money in October 1929, when it collapsed.

**Black Thursday and Black Tuesday** Although stock prices had fluctuated greatly for several weeks preceding the crash, the true panic did not begin until a Thursday in late October. On this Black Thursday—October 24, 1929—there was an unprecedented volume of selling on Wall Street, and stock prices plunged. The next day, hoping to stave off disaster by stabilizing prices, a group of bankers bought millions of dollars of stocks. The strategy worked for only one business day, Friday. The selling frenzy resumed on Monday. On **Black Tuesday**, October 29, the bottom fell out, as millions of panicky investors ordered their brokers to sell—but almost no buyers could be found.

Prices on Wall Street steadily decreased. By late November, the **Dow Jones index** had fallen from its September high of 381 to 198. Three years later, stock prices would finally hit bottom at 41, less than one-ninth of their peak value.

## Underlying Causes of the Great Depression

While the collapse of the stock market in 1929 may have triggered economic turmoil, it alone was not responsible for the Great Depression. The depression throughout the nation and the world was the result of a combination of factors.

**Uneven Distribution of Income** Wages had risen little compared to the large increases in productivity and corporate profits. Economic success was not shared by all, as the top 5 percent of the richest Americans received over 33 percent of all income. Once demand for their products declined, businesses laid off workers, contributing to a downward spiral in demand and more layoffs.

**Stock Market Speculation** Many people in all economic classes believed that they could get rich by “playing the market.” Instead of investing money in order to share in the earnings of a company, people were speculating that the price of a stock would go up and that they could sell it for a quick profit. **Buying on margin** allowed people to borrow most of the cost of the stock, making down payments as low as 10 percent. Investors depended on the price of the stock increasing so that they could repay the loan. When stock prices dropped, the market collapsed, and many lost everything they had borrowed and invested.

**Excessive Use of Credit** Low interest rates and a belief of both consumers and business that the economic boom was permanent led to increased borrowing and installment buying. This over-indebtedness would result in defaults on loans and bank failures.

**Overproduction of Consumer Goods** Business growth, aided by increased productivity and use of credit, had produced a volume of goods that workers with stagnant wages could not continue to purchase.

**Weak Farm Economy** The prosperity of the 1920s never reached farmers, who had suffered from overproduction, high debt, and low prices since the end of World War I. As the depression continued through the 1930s, severe weather and a long drought added to farmers’ difficulties.

**Government Policies** During the 1920s, the government had complete faith in business and did little to control or regulate it. Congress enacted **high tariffs** that protected U.S. industries but hurt farmers and international trade.

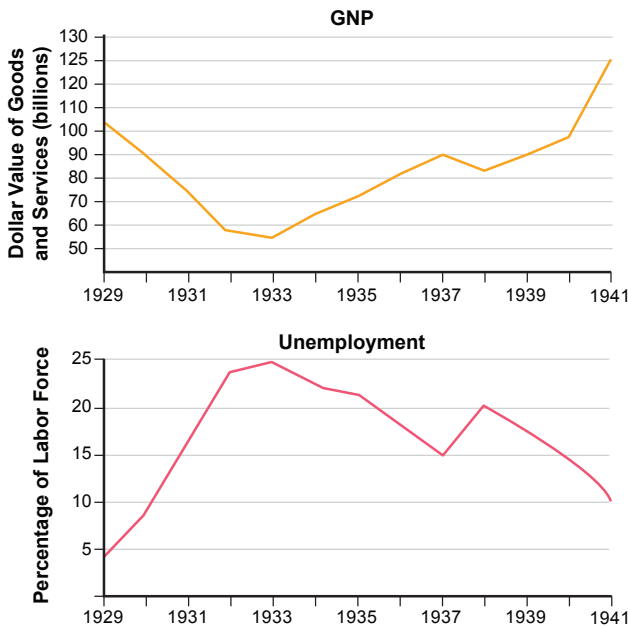
Some economists have concentrated blame on the **Federal Reserve** for its tight money policies, as hundreds of banks failed. Instead of trying to stabilize banks, the money supply, and prices, the Federal Reserve tried to preserve the gold standard. Without depositors' insurance, people panicked and sought to get their money out of the banks, which caused more **bank failures**.

**Global Economic Problems** Nations had become more interdependent because of international banking, manufacturing, and trade. Europe had never recovered from World War I, but the United States failed to recognize Europe's postwar problems. Instead, U.S. insistence on loan repayment in full and high tariff policies weakened Europe and contributed to the worldwide depression.

## Effects of the Great Depression

The pervasive impact of the Great Depression is evident in several statistics:

- The U.S. **gross national product**—the value of all the goods and services produced by the nation in one year—dropped from \$104 billion to \$56 billion in just four years (1929 to 1932).
- The nation's income declined by over 50 percent.
- Approximately 20 percent of all banks closed, wiping out 10 million savings accounts.
- The money supply contracted by 30 percent.
- By 1933, the number of unemployed had reached 13 million people, or 25 percent of the workforce, not including farmers.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*

**Social Effects** The social effects of the depression were felt by all classes. Those who had never fully shared in the prosperity of the 1920s, such as farmers and African Americans, had increased difficulties. **Poverty and homelessness** increased, as did the stress on families, as people searched for work. People continued to move from rural to urban areas, hoping that jobs would be more plentiful in cities. Mortgage foreclosures and evictions became commonplace. The homeless traveled in box cars and lived in shantytowns, named “Hoovervilles,” in mock honor of their president.

## President Hoover’s Policies

At the time of the **stock market crash**, nobody could foresee how long the downward slide would last. President Hoover was wrong—but hardly alone—in thinking that prosperity would soon return. The president believed the nation could get through the difficult times if the people took his advice about exercising voluntary action and restraint. Hoover urged businesses not to cut wages, unions not to strike, and private charities to increase their efforts for the needy and the jobless. Until the summer of 1930, he hesitated to ask Congress for legislative action on the economy, afraid that government assistance to individuals would destroy their **self-reliance**.

Gradually, President Hoover came to recognize the need for more direct government action. However, he took the traditional view that public relief should come from state and local governments, not the federal government.

### *Responding to a Worldwide Depression*

Repercussions from the crash on Wall Street were soon felt in the financial centers of Europe. Through trade and the Dawes Plan for the repayment of war debts, European prosperity was closely tied to that of the United States. Hoover’s first major decision concerning the international situation was one of the worst mistakes of his presidency.

**Hawley-Smoot Tariff (1930)** In June 1930, the president signed into law a schedule of tariff rates that was the highest in history. The **Hawley-Smoot Tariff** (or Smoot-Hawley Tariff) passed by the Republican Congress set tax increases ranging from 31 percent to 49 percent on foreign imports. In retaliation for the U.S. tariff, European countries enacted higher tariffs of their own against U.S. goods. International trade was already declining because economic activity was slowing down in most countries, and the higher tariffs made the decline even sharper. Economies around the world sank further into depression.

**Debt Moratorium** By 1931, conditions became so bad both in Europe and the United States that the Dawes Plan for collecting war debts could no longer continue. Hoover therefore proposed a moratorium (suspension) on the payment of international debts. Britain and Germany readily accepted, but France balked. The international economy suffered from massive loan defaults, and banks on both sides of the Atlantic scrambled to meet the demands of the many depositors withdrawing their money.

## *Domestic Programs: Too Little, Too Late*

By 1931, Hoover was convinced that some federal action was needed to pull the U.S. economy out of its doldrums. He therefore supported and signed into law programs that offered assistance to indebted farmers and struggling businesses.

**Federal Farm Board** The **Farm Board** was actually created in 1929, before the stock market crash, but its powers were later enlarged to meet the economic crisis. The board was authorized to help farmers stabilize prices by temporarily holding surplus grain and cotton in storage. The program, however, was far too modest to handle the continued overproduction of farm goods.

**Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC)** This federally funded, government-owned corporation was created by Congress early in 1932 as a measure for propping up faltering railroads, banks, life insurance companies, and other financial institutions. It marked an attempt by the federal government to become more active in financial markets. The president reasoned that emergency loans from the RFC would help to stabilize these key businesses. The benefits would then “trickle down” to smaller businesses and ultimately bring recovery. Democrats scoffed at this measure, saying it would help only the rich.

## *Despair and Protest*

By 1932, millions of unemployed workers and impoverished farmers were bordering on desperation. Some decided to take direct action to battle the forces that seemed to be crushing them.

**Unrest on the Farms** In many communities, farmers banded together to stop banks from foreclosing on farms and evicting people from their homes. Farmers in the Midwest formed the Farm Holiday Association, which attempted to reverse the drop in prices by stopping the entire 1932 grain crop from reaching the market. The effort collapsed after some violence.

**Bonus March** Also in the desperate summer of 1932, a thousand unemployed World War I veterans marched to Washington, D.C., to demand immediate payment of the bonuses promised them at a later date (1945). They were eventually joined by thousands of other veterans who brought their wives and children and camped in improvised shacks near the Capitol. Congress failed to pass the bonus bill they sought. After two veterans were killed in a clash with police, General Douglas MacArthur, the army’s chief of staff, used tanks and tear gas to destroy the shantytown and drive the veterans from Washington. The incident caused many Americans to regard Hoover as heartless and uncaring.

## **Changing Directions**

In retrospect, the economic decline reached bottom in the winter of 1932–1933, although full recovery occurred only with the beginning of another world war, in 1939. The enduring crisis of the Great Depression had long-term influence

on American thinking and policies. People accepted dramatic changes in policies and the expansion of the federal government. But in the short-term, it ended Republican domination of government. The growing discontent over the Depression and the Hoover administration resulted in a landslide victory for the Democrats in the presidential election of 1932. The confident and reassuring voice of the new president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the actions of the Democratic Congress helped to restore hope for the long march to recovery (Topic 7.10).

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1. Explain two causes of the Great Depression and two effects on the economy.

### KEY TERMS BY THEME

#### Causes of the Depression (WXT)

Black Tuesday  
 Dow Jones index  
 buying on margin  
 uneven distribution of income  
 excessive use of credit  
 overproduction  
 high tariffs

Federal Reserve  
 stock market crash

#### Effects of the Depression (WXT)

business failures  
 unemployment  
 bank failures  
 gross national product  
 poverty and homelessness

#### Hoover Administration (PCE)

Herbert Hoover  
 self-reliance  
 Hawley-Smoot Tariff (1930)  
 debt moratorium  
 Farm Board  
 Reconstruction Finance Corporation  
 bonus march (1932)

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1–3 refer to the following excerpt.

“The farmers are being pauperized by the poverty of industrial populations and the industrial populations are being pauperized by the poverty of the farmers. Neither has the money to buy the product of the other, hence we have overproduction and under consumption at the same time and in the same country.

“I have not come here to stir you in a recital of the necessity for relief for our suffering fellow citizens. However, unless something is done for them and done soon, you will have a revolution on hand. . . .

“There is a feeling among the masses that something is radically wrong. . . . they say that this government is a conspiracy against the common people to enrich the already rich.”

Oscar Ameringer, editor of the *Oklahoma Daily Leader*,  
 testimony to the House Committee on Labor, February, 1932

1. Which of the following statements most clearly supports the author's analysis?
  - (A) The Dow Jones index fell from 381 in 1929 to 41 in 1932.
  - (B) Bank assets fell from \$72 billion in 1929 to \$51 billion in 1932.
  - (C) Farm income fell from \$11.4 billion in 1929 to \$6.3 billion in 1932.
  - (D) Government spending rose from \$3.2 billion in 1929 to \$4.6 billion in 1932.
  
2. Which of the following was most directly related to the phrase in the testimony "the necessity for relief for our suffering fellow citizens"?
  - (A) Twenty percent of the banks were closed.
  - (B) The Dawes Plan was suspended.
  - (C) The Federal Farm Board was created.
  - (D) Twenty-five percent of the workforce was unemployed.
  
3. Which of the following actions would most clearly support the statement in the excerpt that "this government is a conspiracy against the common people to enrich the already rich"?
  - (A) President Hoover's attempt to help workers by asking companies not to cut wages
  - (B) The army's response to veterans living in shacks through its treatment of the Bonus Marchers
  - (C) The Federal Farm Board's efforts to support farmers by stabilizing farm prices
  - (D) The Dawes Plan to assist Germany in repaying its war debts

### SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION

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Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

1. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
  - (a) Briefly explain ONE specific underlying cause of the Great Depression.
  - (b) Briefly explain ONE specific effect of the Great Depression on U.S. banking.
  - (c) Briefly explain ONE specific action or policy of the Hoover administration that contributed to the depth of the depression.

# The New Deal

*Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—namely, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.*

Franklin D. Roosevelt, First Inaugural Address, March 1933

**Learning Objective:** Explain how the Great Depression and the New Deal impacted American political, social, and economic life over time.

When the new Democratic president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, said in his 1933 inaugural address, “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself,” he struck a note that the millions who listened to him on the radio could well understand. In 1933, after having experienced nearly four years of the worst economic depression in U.S. history, Americans were gripped by fear for their survival.

## The Election of 1932

The depression’s worst year, 1932, happened to be a presidential election year. The disheartened Republicans renominated Hoover, who warned that a Democratic victory would only result in worse economic problems.

**Democrats** At their convention, the Democrats nominated New York Governor **Franklin D. Roosevelt** for president and Speaker of the House John Nance Garner of Texas for vice president. As a candidate, Roosevelt pledged a “new deal” for the American people, the repeal of Prohibition, aid for the unemployed, and cuts in government spending.

**Results** In voters’ minds, the only real issue was the depression, and whether Hoover or Roosevelt could do a better job of ending the hard times. Almost 60 percent of them concluded that it was time for a change. The Roosevelt-Garner ticket carried all but six states, Republican strongholds in the Northeast. Desperate for change, many Socialists deserted their candidate, Norman Thomas, to support Roosevelt. Not only was the new president a Democrat but both houses of Congress had large Democratic majorities.

**Hoover as “Lame-Duck” President** For the four months between Roosevelt’s election and his inauguration in March 1933, Hoover was still president. However, he was a “lame duck,” a person holding a position during the period when a successor had been elected but not yet taken office. Hoover was powerless to cope with the depression, which continued to get worse. He



offered to work with the president-elect through the long period, but Roosevelt declined, not wanting to be tied to any of the Republican president's ideas. The 20th Amendment (known as the *lame-duck amendment*), passed in February 1933 and ratified by October 1933, shortened the period between presidential election and inauguration. The amendment set the start of each president's term for January 20.

## Franklin D. Roosevelt as President

The new president was a distant cousin of President Theodore Roosevelt and was married to Theodore's niece, Eleanor. More than any other president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt—popularly known by his initials, FDR—expanded the size of the federal government, altered its scope of operations, and greatly enlarged presidential powers. He would dominate the nation and the government for an unprecedented stretch of time, 12 years and two months. FDR became one of the most influential world leaders of the 20th century.

### *FDR: The Man*

Franklin Roosevelt was the only child of a wealthy New York family. He personally admired cousin Theodore and followed in his footsteps as a New York state legislator and then as U.S. assistant secretary of the navy. Unlike Republican Theodore, however, Franklin was a Democrat. In 1920, he was the Democratic nominee for vice president. He and James Cox, the presidential candidate, lost badly in Warren G. Harding's landslide victory.

**Disability** In the midst of a promising career, Roosevelt was paralyzed by polio in 1921. Although he was wealthy enough to retire, he labored instead to resume his career in politics and eventually regained the full power of his upper body, even though he could never again walk unaided and required the assistance of crutches, braces, and a wheelchair. Roosevelt's greatest strengths were his warm personality, his gifts as a speaker, and his ability to work with and inspire people. In 1928, campaigning from a car and in a wheelchair, FDR was elected governor of New York. In this office, he instituted a number of welfare and relief programs to help the jobless.

**Eleanor Roosevelt** Roosevelt's wife, Eleanor, emerged as a leader in her own right. She became the most active first lady in history, writing a newspaper column, giving speeches, and traveling the country. Though their personal relationship was strained, Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt had a strong mutual respect. She served as the president's social conscience and influenced him to support minorities and the less fortunate.

### *The New Deal Philosophy*

In his campaign for president in 1932, Roosevelt offered vague promises but no concrete programs. He did not have a detailed plan for ending the depression, but he was committed to action and willing to experiment with political solutions to economic problems.

**The Three R's** In his acceptance speech at the Democratic convention in 1932, Roosevelt had said: "I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people." He had further promised in his campaign to help the "forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid." During the early years of his presidency, it became clear that his **New Deal** programs were to serve **three R's**: *relief* for people out of work, *recovery* for business and the economy as a whole, and *reform* of American economic institutions.

**Brain Trust and Other Advisers** In giving shape to his New Deal, President Roosevelt relied on a group of advisers who had assisted him while he was governor of New York. Louis Howe was to be his chief political adviser. For advice on economic matters, Roosevelt turned to a group of university professors, known as the **Brain Trust**.

The people that Roosevelt appointed to high administrative positions were the most diverse in U.S. history to that time, with a record number of African Americans, Catholics, Jews, and women. For example, his secretary of labor was **Frances Perkins**, the first woman ever to serve in a president's cabinet.

### ***The First Hundred Days***

With the nation desperate and close to the brink of panic, the Democratic Congress looked to the new president for leadership, which Roosevelt was eager to provide. Immediately after being sworn into office on March 4, 1933, Roosevelt called Congress into a hundred-day-long special session. During this brief period, Congress passed into law every request of President Roosevelt, enacting more major legislation than any single Congress in history. Most of the new laws and agencies were commonly referred to by their initials: WPA, AAA, CCC, NRA.

**Bank Holiday** In early 1933, banks were failing at a frightening rate, as depositors flocked to withdraw funds. As many banks failed in 1933 (over 5,000) as had failed in all the previous years of the depression. To restore confidence in those banks that were still solvent, the president ordered the banks closed for a bank holiday on March 6, 1933. He went on the radio to explain that the banks would be reopened after allowing enough time for the government to reorganize them on a sound basis. Congress passed the Emergency Banking Act on March 9, and the banks reopened on March 13.

**Repeal of Prohibition** The new president kept a campaign promise to repeal Prohibition. He first had Congress pass the Beer-Wine Revenue Act, which legalized the sale of beer and wine, as a means of raising needed tax money. Later in 1933, the ratification of the 21st Amendment repealed the 18th Amendment, bringing Prohibition to an end.

**Fireside Chats** Roosevelt went on the radio on March 12, 1933, to present the first of many fireside chats to the American people. The president assured his listeners that the banks which reopened after the bank holiday were safe. The public responded as hoped, and the money deposited in the reopened banks exceeded the money withdrawn.

**Relief for the Unemployed** A number of programs created during the Hundred Days addressed the needs of the millions of unemployed workers. These plans created jobs with government stimulus dollars to provide both relief and to create more demand for goods and services. Roosevelt hoped that this would create more jobs in the private sector.

- The Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) offered outright grants of federal money to states and local governments that were operating soup kitchens and other forms of relief for the jobless and homeless. The director of FERA was Harry Hopkins, one of the president's closest friends and advisers.
- The **Public Works Administration** (PWA), directed by Secretary of the Interior **Harold Ickes**, allotted money to state and local governments for building roads, bridges, dams, and other public works. Such construction projects were a source of thousands of jobs.
- The **Civilian Conservation Corps** (CCC) employed young men on projects on federal lands and paid their families small monthly sums.
- The **Tennessee Valley Authority** (TVA) was a huge experiment in regional development and public planning. As a government corporation, it hired thousands of people in one of the nation's poorest regions, the Tennessee Valley, to build dams, operate electric power plants, control flooding and erosion, and manufacture fertilizer. The TVA sold electricity to residents of the region at rates well below those previously charged by a private power company.

**Financial Recovery and Reform Programs** As the financial part of his New Deal, FDR persuaded Congress to enact the following measures:

- The **Emergency Banking Relief Act** authorized the government to examine the finances of banks closed during the bank holiday and reopen those judged to be sound.
- The **Glass-Steagall Act** increased regulation of the banks and limited how banks could invest customers' money.
- The **Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation** (FDIC) guaranteed individual bank deposits.
- The gold standard was restricted to international transactions, and Americans could no longer exchange their dollars for gold.
- The Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) provided refinancing of small homes to prevent foreclosures.
- The Farm Credit Administration provided low-interest loans and mortgages to prevent foreclosures on the property of farmers.

**Industrial Recovery Program** The key measure in 1933 to combine immediate relief and long-term reform was the **National Recovery**

**Administration** (NRA). Directed by Hugh Johnson, the NRA was an attempt to guarantee reasonable profits for business and fair wages and hours for labor. With the antitrust laws temporarily suspended, the NRA could help each industry (such as steel, oil, and paper) set codes for wages, hours of work, levels of production, and prices of finished goods. The law creating the NRA also gave workers the right to organize and bargain collectively. The complex program operated with limited success for two years before the Supreme Court declared the NRA unconstitutional (*Schechter v. U.S.*) in 1935.

**Farm Production Control Program** Farmers were offered a program similar in concept to what the NRA did for industry. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) encouraged farmers to reduce production (and thereby boost prices) by offering to pay government subsidies for every acre they plowed under. The AAA met the same fate as the NRA. It was declared unconstitutional in a 1935 Supreme Court decision.

### ***Other Programs of the First New Deal***

Congress adjourned briefly after its extraordinary legislative record in the first Hundred Days of the New Deal. Roosevelt, however, was not finished devising new remedies for the nation's ills. In late 1933 and through much of 1934, the Democratic Congress was easily persuaded to enact the following:

- The Civil Works Administration (CWA) was added to the PWA and other programs for creating jobs. This agency hired laborers for temporary construction projects sponsored by the federal government.
- The **Securities and Exchange Commission** (SEC) was created to regulate the stock market and to place strict limits on the kind of speculative practices that had led to the Wall Street crash in 1929. The SEC also required full audits of, and financial disclosure by, corporations to protect investors from fraud and insider trading.
- The **Federal Housing Administration** (FHA) gave both the building industry and homeowners a boost by insuring bank loans for building, repairing, and purchasing houses. It provided many families their first chance to buy a home and build wealth that they could pass on to their children. However, the FHA used “redlining” to define neighborhoods where African Americans lived, and did not make loans in those areas. Nearly all FHA loans made during the first thirty years of the program went to White applicants.
- A new law took the United States off the gold standard in an effort to halt deflation (falling prices). The value of the dollar was set at \$35 per ounce of gold, but paper dollars were no longer redeemable in gold.

## **The Second New Deal**

Roosevelt's first two years in office were largely focused on achieving one of the three R's: recovery. Democratic victories in the congressional elections of 1934

gave the president the popular mandate he needed to seek another round of laws and programs. In the summer of 1935, he launched the second New Deal, which concentrated on the other two R's: relief and reform. **Harry Hopkins** became even more prominent in Roosevelt's administration with the creation in 1935 of a new and larger relief agency.

**Works Progress Administration (WPA)** Much bigger than the relief agencies of the first New Deal, the WPA spent billions of dollars between 1935 and 1940 to provide people with jobs. After its first year of operation under Hopkins, it employed 3.4 million men and women who had formerly been on the relief rolls of state and local governments. It paid them double the relief rate but less than the going wage for regular workers. Most WPA workers were put to work constructing new bridges, roads, airports, and public buildings. Unemployed artists, writers, actors, and photographers were paid by the WPA to paint murals, write histories, and perform in plays.

One part of the WPA, the National Youth Administration (NYA), provided part-time jobs to help young people stay in high school and college or until they could get a job with a private employer.

**Resettlement Administration (RA)** Placed under the direction of one of the Brain Trust, Rexford Tugwell, the Resettlement Administration provided loans to sharecroppers, tenants, and small farmers. It also established federal camps where migrant workers could find decent housing.



**Source:** Carl Morris, Eugene, Oregon, Post Office, c. 1939, WPA Federal Arts Project. Oregon Scenic County Images

**Reforms** The reform legislation of the second New Deal reflected Roosevelt's belief that industrial workers and farmers needed to receive more government help than members of the business and privileged classes.

**National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act (1935)** This major labor law of 1935 replaced the labor provisions of the National Industrial Recovery Act, after that law was declared unconstitutional. The Wagner Act guaranteed a worker's right to join a union and a union's right to bargain collectively. It also outlawed business practices that were unfair to labor. A new agency, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), was empowered to enforce the law and make sure that workers' rights were protected.

**Rural Electrification Administration (REA)** This new agency provided loans for electrical cooperatives to supply power in rural areas.

**Federal Taxes** A revenue act of 1935 sharply increased the tax on incomes of the wealthy few. It also increased the tax on large gifts from parent to child and on capital gains (profits from the sale of stocks or other properties).

### ***The Social Security Act***

The reform that, for generations afterward, would affect the lives of nearly all Americans was the passage in 1935 of the **Social Security Act**. It created a federal insurance program based upon the automatic collection of payments from employees and employers throughout people's working careers. The Social Security trust fund would then be used to make monthly payments to retired persons over the age of 65. Also receiving benefits under this law were workers who lost their jobs (unemployment compensation), persons who were blind or otherwise disabled, and dependent children and their mothers.

### ***Evaluating Roosevelt's First Term***

In response to public demands for government action, the New Deal transformed the role of the federal government. Since the days of Alexander Hamilton, and under presidents as different as Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson, the federal government often intervened in the economy to promote growth. In addition, though, the government under Roosevelt created a **limited welfare state**, a government that regulated economic activity and aided the poor and unemployed in order to provide economic security for everyone. This view of government became the basis for **modern American liberalism**.

## **The Election of 1936**

The economy was improving but was still weak and unstable in 1936 when the Democrats nominated Roosevelt for a second term. Because of his New Deal programs and active style of personal leadership, the president had become enormously popular among workers and small farmers. Business, however, generally disliked and even hated him because of his regulatory programs and pro-union measures such as the Wagner Act.

**Alf Landon** Challenging Roosevelt was the Republican nominee for president, Alfred (Alf) Landon, the progressive-minded governor of Kansas. Landon criticized the Democrats for spending too much money but in general accepted most of the New Deal legislation.

**Political Realignment and the New Deal Coalition** Roosevelt swamped Landon, winning every state except Maine and Vermont and more than 60 percent of the popular vote. Behind their president's New Deal, the Democratic Party could now count on the votes of a new coalition of popular support. Through the 1930s and into the 1960s, the Democratic or New Deal coalition would consist of the Solid South, White ethnic

groups in the cities, Midwestern farmers, labor unions, and liberals. In addition, new support for the Democrats came from African Americans, mainly in northern cities, who left the Republican Party of Lincoln because of Roosevelt's New Deal.

## Opponents of the New Deal

Opinion polls and election results showed that a large majority of Americans supported Roosevelt. Nevertheless, his New Deal programs were extremely controversial and became the target of vitriolic attacks by liberals, conservatives, and demagogues.

**Critics from the Left** Socialists, some unions, and more liberal members of the Democratic Party criticized the New Deal (especially the first New Deal of 1933–1934) for doing too much for business and too little for the unemployed and the working poor. They charged that the president failed to address the problems of ethnic minorities, women, and the elderly. The more radical of these critics charged that the New Deal was a way to save capitalism from a revolution. Roosevelt agreed with this view, although he did not consider it a criticism. He wanted to reform the system, not replace it.

**Critics from the Right** More numerous were conservatives in Congress and on the Supreme Court. Many Republicans and some Democrats attacked the New Deal for giving the federal government too much power. These critics charged that relief programs such as the WPA and labor laws such as the Wagner Act bordered on socialism or even communism. Business leaders were alarmed by (1) increased regulations, (2) the second New Deal's pro-union stance, and (3) the financing of government programs by means of borrowed money—a practice known as *deficit financing*.

Conservative Democrats, including former presidential candidates Alfred E. (Al) Smith and John W. Davis, joined with leading Republicans in 1934 to form an anti-New Deal organization called the American Liberty League. Its avowed purpose was to stop the New Deal from “subverting” the U.S. economic and political system.

### Demagogues

Several critics played upon the American people's desperate need for immediate solutions to their problems. Using the radio to reach a mass audience, they proposed simplistic schemes for ending “evil conspiracies” (Father Coughlin), guaranteeing economic security for the elderly (Dr. Townsend), and redistributing wealth (Huey Long).

**Father Charles E. Coughlin** This Catholic priest attracted a huge popular following in the early 1930s through his weekly radio broadcasts. Father Coughlin founded the National Union for Social Justice, which called for issuing an inflated currency and nationalizing all banks. His attacks on the New Deal became increasingly anti-Semitic and fascist until his superiors in the Catholic Church ordered him to stop his broadcasts.

**Dr. Francis E. Townsend** Before the passage of the Social Security Act, a retired physician from Long Beach, California, became an instant hero to millions of senior citizens by proposing a simple plan for guaranteeing a secure income. Dr. Francis E. Townsend proposed that a 2 percent federal sales tax be used to create a special fund, from which every retired person over 60 years old would receive \$200 a month. By spending their money promptly, Townsend argued, recipients would stimulate the economy and soon bring the depression to an end. The popularity of the Townsend Plan persuaded Roosevelt to substitute a more moderate plan of his own, which became the Social Security system.

**Huey Long** From Roosevelt's point of view, the most dangerous of the depression demagogues was the "Kingfish" from Louisiana, Senator Huey Long. Immensely popular in his own state, Long became a prominent national figure by proposing a "Share Our Wealth" program that promised a minimum annual income of \$5,000 for every American family, to be paid for by taxing the wealthy. In 1935, Huey Long challenged Roosevelt's leadership of the Democratic Party by announcing his candidacy for president. Both his candidacy and his populist appeal were abruptly ended when he was assassinated by a local political rival.

## The Supreme Court

Of all the challenges to Roosevelt's leadership in his first term in office, the conservative decisions of the U.S. **Supreme Court** proved the most frustrating. In two cases in 1935, the Supreme Court effectively killed both the NRA for business recovery and the AAA for agricultural recovery by deciding that the laws creating them were unconstitutional. Roosevelt interpreted his landslide reelection in 1936 as a mandate to end the obstacles posed by the Court.

**Court Reorganization Plan** President Roosevelt did not have an opportunity to appoint any justices to the Supreme Court during his first term. He hoped to remove the Court as an obstacle to the New Deal by proposing a judicial-reorganization bill in 1937. It proposed that the president be authorized to appoint to the Supreme Court an additional justice for each current justice who was older than a certain age (70 ½ years). In effect, the bill would have allowed Roosevelt to add up to six more justices to the Court—all of them presumably of liberal persuasion. Critics called it a "Court-packing" bill.

**Reaction** Republicans and many Democrats were outraged by what they saw as an attempt to tamper with the system of checks and balances. They accused the president of wanting to give himself the powers of a dictator. Roosevelt did not back down—and neither did the congressional opposition. For the first time in Roosevelt's presidency, a major bill that he proposed went down to decisive defeat by a defiant Congress. Even a majority of Democratic senators refused to support him on this controversial measure.



**Aftermath** Ironically, while Roosevelt was fighting to “pack” the Court, the justices were already backing off their former resistance to his program. In 1937, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of several major New Deal laws, including the Wagner (Labor) Act and the Social Security Act. Also, as it happened, several justices retired during Roosevelt’s second term, enabling him to appoint new justices who were more sympathetic to his reforms.

## Labor Unions and Workers’ Rights

Two New Deal measures—the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 and the Wagner Act of 1935—caused a lasting change in labor-management relations by legalizing labor unions. Union membership, which had slumped badly under the hostile policies of the 1920s, shot upward. It went from less than 3 million in the early 1930s to over 10 million (more than one out of four nonfarm workers) by 1941.

**Formation of the CIO.** As unions grew in size, so did tensions among them. The many different unions that made up the American Federation of Labor (AFL) were dominated by skilled White male workers and were organized according to crafts. A group of unions within the AFL wanted union membership to be extended to all workers in an industry regardless of their race and sex, including those who were unskilled. In 1935, the industrial unions, as they were called, joined together as the Committee of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Their leader was **John L. Lewis**, president of the United Mine Workers union. In 1936, the AFL suspended the CIO unions. Renamed the **Congress of Industrial Organizations**, the CIO broke away from the AFL and became its chief rival. It concentrated on organizing unskilled workers in the automobile, steel, and southern textile industries.

**Automobile Strikes** Even though collective bargaining was now protected by federal law, many companies still resisted union demands. Strikes were therefore a frequent occurrence in the depression decade. At the huge General Motors plant in Flint, Michigan, in 1937, the workers insisted on their right to join a union by participating in a **sit-down strike** (literally sitting down at the assembly line and refusing to work or even leave the factory). Neither the president nor Michigan’s governor agreed to the company’s request to intervene with troops. Finally, the company yielded to striker demands by recognizing the United Auto Workers union (UAW). Union organizers at the Ford plant in Michigan, however, were beaten and driven away.

**Steel Strikes** In the steel industry, the giant U.S. Steel Corporation voluntarily recognized one of the CIO unions, but smaller companies resisted. On Memorial Day, 1937, a demonstration by union picketers at Republic Steel in Chicago ended in four deaths, as the police fired into the crowd. However, eventually almost all the smaller steel companies agreed to deal with the CIO by 1941.



During the sit-down strike in Flint, workers remained in the factory so they could not be replaced by strike-breakers.  
**Source:** Library of Congress.

### **Fair Labor Standards Act**

A final political victory for organized labor in the 1930s was also the last major reform of the New Deal. In 1938, Congress enacted the **Fair Labor Standards Act**, which established several regulations on businesses in interstate commerce:

- A **minimum wage**, initially fixed at 40 cents an hour
- A maximum standard workweek of 40 hours, with extra pay (“time-and-a-half”) for overtime
- Child labor restrictions on hiring people under 16 years old

Previously, the Supreme Court had declared unconstitutional a 1916 law prohibiting child labor. However, in the 1941 case of *United States v. Darby Lumber Co.*, the Supreme Court reversed its earlier ruling, upholding the child labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Passage of this act was not only the last but also the only major reform of Roosevelt’s second term. The New Deal lost momentum in the late 1930s for both economic and political reasons.

### **Recession, 1937–1938**

From 1933 to 1937 (Roosevelt’s first term), the economy showed signs of gradually pulling out of its nosedive. Banks were stabilizing, business earnings were increasing, and unemployment, though still high at 15 percent, had declined from the 25 percent figure in 1933. In the winter of 1937, however, the economy once again had a backward slide and entered into a recessionary period.

**Causes** Government policy was at least partly to blame. The new Social Security tax reduced consumer spending at the same time that Roosevelt was curtailing expenditures for relief and public works. In reducing spending for relief, the president hoped to balance the budget and reduce the national debt.

**Keynesian Economics** The writings of the British economist **John Maynard Keynes** taught Roosevelt that he had made a mistake in attempting to balance the budget. According to Keynesian theory, deficit spending was helpful in difficult times because the government needed to spend well above its tax revenues in order to initiate economic growth. Deficit spending “primed the pump” to increase investment and create jobs. Roosevelt’s economic advisers adopted this theory in 1938 with positive results. As federal spending on public works and relief went up, so too did employment and industrial production.

**Weakened New Deal** Although the economy improved, there was no boom, and problems remained. After the Court-packing fight of 1937, the people and Congress no longer automatically followed FDR, and the 1938 elections brought a reduced Democratic majority in Congress. A **coalition** of Republicans and conservative Democrats blocked further New Deal reform legislation. Also, beginning in 1938, fears about the aggressive acts of Nazi Germany diverted attention from domestic concerns toward foreign affairs.

## Life During the Depression

Millions of people who lived through the Great Depression and the hard times of the 1930s never got over it. They developed a “**depression mentality**”—an attitude of insecurity and economic concern that would always remain, even in times of prosperity.

**Dust Bowl Farmers** As if farmers did not already have enough problems, a severe **drought** in the early 1930s ruined crops in the Great Plains. This region became a **dust bowl**, as poor farming practices coupled with high winds blew away millions of tons of dried topsoil. With their farms turned to dust, and their health often compromised, thousands of “**Okies**” from Oklahoma and surrounding states migrated westward to California in search of farm or factory work that often could not be found. The novelist **John Steinbeck** wrote about their hardships in his classic study of economic heartbreak, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939).

In response to one of the worst ecological disasters in American history, the federal government created the Soil Conservation Service in 1935. It taught the plains farmers who remained on their land to rotate crops, terrace fields, use contour plowing, and plant trees to stop soil erosion and conserve water. With the help of federal subsidies, the region recovered, but environmental issues remained.

**Women** The Great Depression increased pressures on many families in which an unemployed father searched for work while the mother struggled to feed and clothe the children on a reduced income. To supplement the family income, more women sought work, and their percentage of the total labor force

increased. Critics accused women of taking jobs from men. However, women did not get factory jobs, and most men did not seek the types of jobs available to women. Even with Eleanor Roosevelt championing women's equality, many New Deal programs allowed women to receive lower pay than men.

**African Americans** Racial discrimination continued in the 1930s with devastating effects on African Americans, who were the last hired, first fired. Their unemployment rate was higher than the national average. Black sharecroppers were forced off the land in the South because of cutbacks in farm production. Often, despite their extreme poverty, jobless African Americans were excluded from state and local relief programs. Hard times increased racial tensions, particularly in the South where lynchings continued, though less frequently than in the 1890s. Civil rights leaders could get little support from President Roosevelt, who feared the loss of White southern Democratic votes.

Some New Deal programs, such as the WPA and the CCC did provide low-paying jobs for African Americans, though these jobs were often segregated. African Americans also received moral support from Eleanor Roosevelt and Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes in a famous incident in 1939. The distinguished African American singer **Marian Anderson** had been refused the use of Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., by the all-White Daughters of the American Revolution. Eleanor Roosevelt and Ickes promptly arranged for Anderson to give a special concert at the Lincoln Memorial.

Over one hundred African Americans were appointed to middle-level positions in federal departments by President Roosevelt. One of them, **Mary McLeod Bethune**, had been a longtime leader of efforts for improving education and economic opportunities for women. Invited to Washington to direct a division of the National Youth Administration, she established the Federal Council on Negro Affairs for the purpose of increasing African American involvement in the New Deal.

An executive order in 1941 set up a **Fair Employment Practices Committee** to assist minorities in gaining jobs in defense industries. President Roosevelt took this action only after **A. Philip Randolph**, head of the Railroad Porters Union, threatened a march on Washington to demand equal job opportunities for African Americans.

**American Indians** John Collier, a long-time advocate of American Indian rights, was appointed commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1933. He established conservation and CCC projects on reservations and gained American Indian involvement in the WPA and other New Deal programs.

In 1934, the **Indian Reorganization (Wheeler-Howard) Act** dramatically changed federal policies toward Native Americans. Congress first repealed the Dawes Act of 1887, which had encouraged American Indians to be independent farmers, and replaced it with a new act that returned former reservation lands to the control of tribes. The act also encouraged tribal organization and supported preservation of Native American cultures. Despite this major reform, critics later accused the New Deal of being paternalistic and withholding control from American Indians.

**Mexican Americans** In California and the Southwest, Mexican Americans had been an important source of agricultural labor in the 1920s. In response to difficult working conditions, many attempted to form unions to improve their situation. However, during the depression, high unemployment and drought in the Plains and the Midwest caused a dramatic growth in White migrant workers who pushed west in search of work. These White migrants made it easy for growers to replace their Mexican American workers.

In addition, President Hoover’s administration, with the strong support of state and local governments, increased border patrols and began mass deportations of Mexican Americans. These repatriation efforts reflected the desire of many Americans for jobs to go to White workers, a sign of the long-standing prejudice against people of Mexican ancestry. The government forced at least 400,000 people, including many naturalized and native-born U.S. citizens, to move to Mexico in the 1930s

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1. Explain two effects that the New Deal had on each area of American life: politics, the economy, and society.

### KEY TERMS BY THEME

#### Roosevelt Administration (PCE)

Franklin D. Roosevelt  
 Eleanor Roosevelt  
 New Deal  
 three R’s (relief, recovery, reform)  
 Brain Trust  
 Frances Perkins  
 Hundred Days  
 bank holiday  
 repeal of Prohibition  
 fireside chats  
 Public Works Administration  
 Harold Ickes  
 Civilian Conservation Corps  
 Tennessee Valley Authority  
 Emergency Banking Relief Act  
 Glass-Steagall Act  
 Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

National Recovery Administration  
*Schechter v. U.S.*  
 Securities and Exchange Commission  
 Federal Housing Administration

#### Second New Deal (PCE)

Harry Hopkins  
 Works Progress Administration  
 National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act (1935)  
 Social Security Act (1935)  
 limited welfare state  
 modern American liberalism  
 election of 1936  
 New Deal coalition  
 recession, 1937–1938  
 John Maynard Keynes

#### New Deal Opponents (PCE)

Father Charles E. Coughlin  
 Francis E. Townsend

Huey Long  
 Supreme Court reorganization plan

#### Rise of Unions (WXT)

John L. Lewis  
 Congress of Industrial Organizations  
 sit-down strike  
 Fair Labor Standards Act  
 minimum wage

#### Impact on Americans (MIG)

“depression mentality”  
 drought  
 dust bowl  
 “Okies”  
 John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*  
 Marian Anderson  
 Mary McLeod Bethune  
 Fair Employment Practices Committee  
 A. Philip Randolph  
 Indian Reorganization (Wheeler-Howard) Act

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

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Questions 1–3 refer to the following excerpt.

“Illumined by the stern-lantern of history, the New Deal can be seen to have left in place a set of institutional arrangement that constituted a more coherent pattern than is dreamt of in many philosophies. That pattern can be summarized in a single word: security—security for vulnerable individuals, to be sure, as Roosevelt famously urged in his campaign for the Social Security Act of 1935, but security for capitalists and consumers, for workers and builders as well. Job-security, life-cycle security, financial security, market security—however it might be defined, achieving security was the leitmotif of virtually everything the New Deal attempted.”

David M. Kennedy, historian, *Freedom From Fear*, 1999

1. Which of the following groups would most likely oppose the philosophy of the New Deal as explained in this excerpt?
  - (A) Economists who wanted unregulated markets and balanced budgets
  - (B) Social scientists who wanted to use data to support a public policy
  - (C) Critics who wanted the New Deal to go farther to address poverty and inequality
  - (D) Consumers who wanted greater confidence in the banking system and the stock markets
2. Which of the following New Deal policies most directly addressed “security for capitalists”?
  - (A) Employment of young men in conservation jobs on federal lands
  - (B) Allocation of federal funds for construction projects that pumped money into the economy
  - (C) Regulation to curtail fraud in investment banking and the stock markets
  - (D) Collection of funds to help people who were retired, unemployed, or hurt on the job
3. Which of the following New Deal policies most clearly addressed “job security” for workers?
  - (A) Creation of an agency to insure loans for building, repairing, and purchasing houses
  - (B) Passage of laws to guarantee worker rights to collective bargaining
  - (C) Regulation of banks to limit how they could invest money
  - (D) Declaration by Roosevelt of a “bank holiday” to allow for examination of banks’ records

## SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

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Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

1. “When the New Deal was over, capitalism remained intact. The rich still controlled the nation’s wealth, as well as its laws, courts, police, newspapers, churches, colleges. Enough help had been given to enough people to make Roosevelt a hero to millions, but the same system that had brought depression and crisis—the system of waste, of inequality, of concern for profit over human need—remained.”

Howard Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States*, 1999

“Most of Roosevelt’s solutions did little. The public hoopla of ‘job programs’ barely dented unemployment numbers. . . . Stephen DeCanio has shown that the minimum wage law slammed the door on new hiring by substantially raising the cost of every employee. . . . Most financial economists agree that the Glass-Steagall Act . . . harmed American banking and made us less competitive than we could be. . . . Again, most modern economists are almost unanimous that the New Deal programs hindered recovery.”

Larry Schweikart, *48 Liberal Lies about American History*, 2008

Using the excerpts, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- (a) Briefly describe ONE major difference between Zinn’s and Schweikart’s historical interpretation about the effectiveness of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal.
  - (b) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Zinn’s interpretation.
  - (c) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Schweikart’s interpretation.
2. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
    - (a) Briefly explain ONE specific program from the New Deal and its impact on working-class Americans.
    - (b) Briefly explain ONE specific way the New Deal caused a long-term realignment in U.S. politics.
    - (c) Briefly explain ONE specific political challenge to the New Deal or Franklin Roosevelt.

# Interwar Foreign Policy

*Only one thing holds this country from war today; that is the rising opposition of the American people. Our system of democracy . . . is on test today as it has been never before.*

Charles Lindbergh, Des Moines, Iowa, September 1, 1941

**Learning Objective:** Explain the similarities and differences in attitudes about the nation's proper role in the world.

**D**uring the 1920s and 1930s, widespread disillusionment with World War I, Europe's postwar problems, and communism in the Soviet Union (as Russia was renamed) made Americans fearful of being pulled into another European conflict. Hence, Congress refused to join the League of Nations, marking a retreat into a type of isolationism. However, the country did not return to the policies of the Gilded Age. Instead, the United States followed a policy of unilateralism, in which the United States often acted on its own through military interventions, private investment overseas, and occasionally signing a treaty. Ultimately, though, the efforts to remain out of another world war failed.

## Post-World War I Agreements

The Republican presidents of the 1920s tried to promote peace and also scale back expenditures on defense by arranging treaties of **disarmament**. The most successful disarmament conference—and the greatest achievement of Harding's presidency—was held in Washington, D.C., in 1921.

**Washington Conference (1921)** Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes initiated talks on naval disarmament, hoping to stabilize the size of the U.S. Navy relative to that of other powers and to resolve conflicts in the Pacific. Representatives to the **Washington Conference** came from Belgium, China, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, and Portugal. Three agreements to relieve tensions resulted from the discussions:

- **Five-Power Treaty** Nations with the five largest navies agreed to maintain the following ratio with respect to their largest warships, or battleships: the United States, 5; Great Britain, 5; Japan, 3; France, 1.67; Italy, 1.67. Britain and the United States also agreed not to fortify their possessions in the Pacific, while no limit was placed on the Japanese.
- **Four-Power Treaty** The United States, France, Great Britain, and Japan agreed to respect one another's territory in the Pacific.



- **Nine-Power Treaty** All nine nations represented at the conference agreed to respect the Open Door policy by guaranteeing the territorial integrity of China.

**Kellogg-Briand Pact** American women took the lead in a peace movement committed to outlawing future wars. (For her efforts on behalf of peace, Jane Addams won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931.) The movement achieved its greatest success in 1928 with the signing of a treaty arranged by U.S. Secretary of State Frank Kellogg and French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand. Almost all the nations of the world signed the **Kellogg-Briand Pact**, which renounced the aggressive use of force to achieve national ends. This international agreement would prove ineffective, however, since it (1) permitted defensive wars and (2) failed to provide for taking action against violators of the agreement.

## Business and Diplomacy

Republican presidents believed that pro-business policies brought prosperity at home and at the same time strengthened U.S. dealings with other nations. Thus, they found it natural to use diplomacy to advance American business interests in Latin America and other regions.

**Latin America** Mexico's constitution of 1917 mandated government ownership of all that nation's mineral and oil resources. U.S. investors in Mexico feared that the government might confiscate their properties. A peaceful resolution protecting their interests was negotiated by Coolidge's ambassador to Mexico, Dwight Morrow, in 1927.

Elsewhere in Latin America, Coolidge kept U.S. troops in Nicaragua and Haiti but withdrew them from the Dominican Republic in 1924. While American military influence declined, American economic impact increased. U.S. investments in Latin America doubled between 1919 and 1929.

**Middle East** The oil reserves in the Middle East were becoming recognized as a major source of potential wealth. British oil companies had a large head start in the region, but Secretary of State Hughes succeeded in winning oil-drilling rights for U.S. companies.

**Tariffs** Passed by Congress in 1922, the Fordney-McCumber Tariff increased the duties on foreign manufactured goods by 25 percent. It was protective of U.S. business interests in the short run but destructive in the long run. Because of it, European nations were slow to recover from the war and had difficulty repaying their **war debts** to the United States. They responded to the high U.S. tariffs by imposing tariffs of their own on American imports. Ultimately, these obstacles to international trade weakened the world economy and were one reason for the Great Depression of the 1930s.

## War Debts and Reparations

Before World War I, the United States had been a debtor nation, importing more than it exported. It emerged from the war as a creditor nation, having

lent more than \$10 billion to the Allies. Harding and Coolidge insisted that Britain and France pay back every penny of their war debts. The British and French objected. They pointed out that they suffered much worse losses than the Americans during the war, that the borrowed money had been spent in the United States, and that high U.S. tariffs made it more difficult to pay the debts. To be sure, the Treaty of Versailles required Germany to pay \$30 billion in **reparations** to the Allies. But how were Britain and France to collect this money? Germany was bankrupt, had soaring inflation, and was near anarchy.

**Dawes Plan** Charles Dawes, an American banker who would become Coolidge's vice president, negotiated a compromise that was accepted by all sides in 1924. The **Dawes Plan** established a cycle of payments flowing from the United States to Germany and from Germany to the Allies. U.S. banks would lend Germany huge sums to rebuild its economy and pay reparations to Britain and France. In turn, Britain and France would use the reparations money to pay their war debts to the United States. This cycle helped to ease financial problems on both sides of the Atlantic. After the stock market crash of 1929, however, U.S. bank loans stopped and the prosperity propped up by the Dawes Plan collapsed.

**Legacy** Ultimately, Finland was the only nation to repay its war debts in full. The unpaid debts of the other nations left bad feelings on all sides. Many Europeans resented what they saw as American greed, while Americans saw new reasons to follow an isolationist path in the 1930s.

## Herbert Hoover's Foreign Policy

Hoover concurred with the prevailing opinion of the American people that the United States should not enter into firm commitments to preserve the security of other nations. Such an opinion, in the 1930s, would be labeled "isolationism."

**Latin America** Hoover actively pursued friendly relations with the countries of Latin America. In 1929, even before being inaugurated, the president-elect went on a goodwill tour of the region. As president, he ended the interventionist policies of Taft and Wilson by (1) arranging for U.S. troops to leave Nicaragua by 1933 and (2) negotiating a treaty with Haiti to remove all U.S. troops by 1934.

**Japanese Aggression in Manchuria** In the early 1930s, Japan posed the greatest threat to world peace. Defying both the Open Door policy and the covenant of the League of Nations, Japanese troops marched into Manchuria, a region of northeastern China, in September 1931. They renamed the territory Manchukuo and established a puppet government. This was part of a series of conflicts between Japan and China that began in the late 1800s.

Despite its commitment to resist blatant aggression, the League of Nations did nothing except to pass a resolution condemning Japan for invading Manchuria. The Japanese delegation then walked out of the League, never to

return. In the Manchuria crisis, the League showed it was too weak to maintain peace. Its warnings would never be taken seriously by potential aggressors.

**Stimson Doctrine** U.S. response to Japan’s violation of the Open Door policy was somewhat stronger than the League’s response—but no more effective in deterring further aggression. Secretary of State Henry Stimson declared in 1932 that the United States would honor its treaty obligations under the Nine-Power Treaty (1922) by refusing to recognize the legitimacy of any regime like “Manchukuo” that had been established by force. The League of Nations readily endorsed the Stimson Doctrine and issued a similar declaration.

### JAPANESE AGGRESSION IN ASIA IN THE 1930s



## Franklin Roosevelt's Policies, 1933–1939

In his first term, Roosevelt concentrated on the economic crisis at home and gave little thought to foreign policy. He did, however, extend Hoover's efforts to improve U.S.-Latin America relations by initiating a good-neighbor policy.

### *Good-Neighbor Policy*

In his first inaugural address in 1933, Roosevelt promised a “policy of the good neighbor” toward other nations of the Western Hemisphere. First, interventionism in support of dollar diplomacy no longer made economic sense, because U.S. businesses during the depression lacked the resources to invest in foreign operations. Second, the rise of militarist regimes in Germany and Italy prompted Roosevelt to seek Latin America's cooperation in defending the region from potential danger.

**Pan-American Conferences** At Roosevelt's direction, the U.S. delegation at the Seventh Pan-American Conference in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1933, pledged never again to intervene in the internal affairs of a Latin American country. In effect, Franklin Roosevelt repudiated the policy of his older cousin, Theodore, who had justified intervention as a corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. Another Pan-American conference was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1936. Roosevelt himself attended the conference. He personally pledged to submit future disputes to arbitration and warned that if a European power such as Germany attempted “to commit acts of aggression against us,” it would find “a hemisphere wholly prepared to consult together for our mutual safety and our mutual good.”

**Cuba** Cubans had long resented the Platt Amendment, which had made their country's foreign policy subject to U.S. approval. In 1934, President Roosevelt persuaded Congress to nullify the Platt Amendment, retaining only the U.S. right to keep its naval base at Guantanamo Bay.

**Mexico** In 1938, Mexico tested U.S. patience and commitment to the good-neighbor policy when its president, Lázaro Cárdenas, seized oil properties owned by U.S. corporations. Roosevelt rejected corporate demands to intervene and encouraged American companies to negotiate a settlement.

### *Depression Diplomacy*

Helping the U.S. economy was the chief motivation for Roosevelt's policies toward other foreign policy issues in his first term.

**Recognition of the Soviet Union** The Republican presidents of the 1920s had refused to grant diplomatic recognition to the Communist regime that ruled the Soviet Union. Roosevelt promptly changed this policy by granting recognition in 1933. His reason for doing so, he said, was to increase U.S. trade and thereby boost the economy.

**Philippines** Governing the Philippines cost money. As an economic measure, Roosevelt persuaded Congress to pass the Tydings-McDuffie Act in

1934, which provided for the **independence of the Philippines** by 1946 and the gradual removal of U.S. military presence from the islands.

**Reciprocal Trade Agreements** Acting in the tradition of Progressive Democrats such as William Jennings Bryan and Woodrow Wilson, President Roosevelt favored lower tariffs as a means of increasing international trade. In 1934, Congress enacted a plan suggested by Secretary of State Cordell Hull that gave the president power to reduce U.S. tariffs up to 50 percent for nations that reciprocated with comparable reductions for U.S. imports.

### ***The Rise of Fascism and Militarism***

The worldwide depression soon proved to have alarming repercussions for world politics. Combined with nationalist resentments after World War I, economic hardships gave rise to dictatorships in Italy in the 1920s and Japan and Germany in the 1930s. Eventually, in 1940, Japan, Italy, and Germany signed a treaty of alliance. Together, they became known as the **Axis powers**.

**Italy** A new regime seized power in Italy in 1922. **Benito Mussolini** led Italy's **Fascist Party**, which attracted dissatisfied war veterans, nationalists, and those afraid of rising communism. Dressed in black shirts, the Fascists marched on Rome and installed Mussolini in power as "Il Duce" (the Leader). **Fascism**—the idea that people should glorify their nation and their race through aggressive shows of force—became the dominant ideology in European dictatorships in the 1930s.

**Germany** The **Nazi Party** was the German equivalent of Italy's Fascist Party. It arose in the 1920s in reaction to deplorable economic conditions after the war and national resentments over the Treaty of Versailles. The Nazi leader, **Adolf Hitler**, used bullying tactics against Jews as well as Fascist ideology to increase his popularity with disgruntled, unemployed German workers. Hitler seized the opportunity presented by the depression to play upon anti-Semitic hatreds. With his personal army of "brown shirts," Hitler gained control of the German legislature in early 1933.

**Japan** Nationalists and militarists in Japan increased their power in the 1920s and 1930s. As economic conditions worsened, they persuaded Japan's nominal ruler, the emperor, that the country needed to invade China and Southeast Asia to seize raw materials (oil, tin, and iron). Doing so would give Japan control over what their leaders called the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere. Full-scale war erupted when Japan invaded China on July 7, 1937. In this conflict, called the Second Sino-Japanese War, the Japanese committed atrocities included the Nanjing Massacre in 1937, in which they killed around 300,000 Chinese residents. The eight-year war resulted in millions of deaths.

### ***American Isolationists***

Public opinion in the United States was also nationalistic but expressed itself in an opposite way from fascism and militarism. Disillusioned with the results

of World War I, American isolationists wanted to make sure that the United States would never again be drawn into a foreign war. Japanese aggression in Manchuria and the rise of fascism in Italy and Germany only increased the determination of isolationists to avoid war at all costs. Isolationist sentiment was strongest in the Midwest and among Republicans.

**The Lesson of World War I** In the early 1930s, Americans commonly felt that U.S. entry into World War I had been a terrible mistake. An investigating committee led by Senator **Gerald Nye** of North Dakota bolstered this view when it concluded in 1934 that the main reason for U.S. participation in the world war was to serve the greed of bankers and arms manufacturers. This committee's work influenced isolationist legislation in the following years.

**Neutrality Acts** Isolationist senators and representatives in both parties held a majority in Congress through 1938. To ensure that U.S. policy would be strictly neutral if war broke out in Europe, Congress adopted a series of neutrality acts, which Roosevelt signed with some reluctance. Each law applied to belligerent nations, ones that the president proclaimed to be at war.

- The *Neutrality Act of 1935* authorized the president to prohibit all arms shipments and to forbid U.S. citizens from travel on the ships of belligerents.
- The *Neutrality Act of 1936* forbade the extension of loans and credits to belligerents.
- The *Neutrality Act of 1937* forbade the shipment of arms to the opposing sides in the civil war in Spain.

**Spanish Civil War** The outbreak of civil war in Spain in 1936 was viewed in Europe and the United States as an ideological struggle between the forces of fascism, led by General **Francisco Franco**, and the forces of republicanism, called Loyalists. Roosevelt and most Americans sympathized with the Loyalists but, because of the Neutrality Acts, could not aid them. Ultimately, in 1939, Franco's Fascists prevailed and established a military dictatorship.

**America First Committee** In 1940, after World War II had begun in Asia and Europe, isolationists became alarmed by Roosevelt's pro-British policies. To mobilize American public opinion against war, they formed the **America First Committee** and engaged speakers such as **Charles Lindbergh** to travel the country warning against reengaging in Europe's troubles.

## Prelude to Another War

In the years 1935 to 1938, a series of aggressive actions by the Fascist dictatorships made democratic governments in Britain and France extremely nervous. It was known that Hitler was creating an air force more powerful than anything they could match. Hoping to avoid open conflict with Germany, the democracies adopted a policy of appeasement—allowing Hitler to get away with relatively small acts of aggression and expansion. The United States went along with

the British and French policy. Events in Africa, Europe, and Asia showed how unwilling western democracies were to challenge Fascist aggression.

- **Ethiopia, 1935** In a bid to prove fascism's military might, Mussolini ordered Italian troops to invade **Ethiopia**. The League of Nations and the United States objected but did nothing to stop the Italian aggressor, who succeeded in conquering the African country after a year of bitter fighting.
- **Rhineland, 1936** This region in western Germany was supposed to be permanently demilitarized, according to the Versailles Treaty. Hitler openly defied the treaty by ordering German troops to march into the **Rhineland**.
- **China, 1937** Full-scale war between Japan and China erupted in 1937 as Japan's troops invaded its weaker neighbor. A U.S. gunboat in China, the *Panay*, was bombed and sunk by Japanese planes. The U.S. government quickly accepted Japan's apology for the sinking.
- **Sudetenland, 1938** In Europe, Hitler insisted that Germany had a right to take over a strip of land in Czechoslovakia, the **Sudetenland**, where most people were German-speaking. To maintain peace, the British prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, and the French president, Édouard Daladier, with Roosevelt's support, met with Hitler and Mussolini in **Munich**. At this conference in September 1938, the British and French leaders agreed to allow Hitler to take the Sudetenland unopposed. The word *Munich* has since become synonymous with **appeasement**.

**Quarantine Speech** Roosevelt recognized the dangers of Fascist aggression but was limited by the isolationist feelings of the majority of Americans. When Japan invaded China in 1937, he tested public opinion by making a speech proposing that the democracies act together to “quarantine” the aggressor. Public reaction to the speech was overwhelmingly negative, and Roosevelt dropped the quarantine idea as politically unwise.

**Preparedness** Like Wilson in 1916, Roosevelt argued for neutrality and an arms buildup at the same time. Congress went along with his request in late 1938 by increasing the military and naval budgets by nearly two-thirds. Some isolationists accepted the increased defense spending, thinking it would be used only to protect against possible invasion of the Western Hemisphere.

## Outbreak of World War II in Europe

In March 1939, Hitler broke the Munich agreement by sending troops to occupy all of Czechoslovakia. After this, it became clear that Hitler's ambitions had no limit and that war was probably unavoidable.

Recognizing the failure of appeasement, Britain and France pledged to fight if Poland was attacked. They had always assumed that they could count on the Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, to oppose Hitler, since communism and

fascism were ideological enemies. The democracies were therefore shocked in August 1939 when Stalin and Hitler signed a nonaggression pact. Secretly, the Soviet and German dictators agreed to divide Poland between them.

**Invasion of Poland** On September 1, 1939, German tanks and planes began a full-scale invasion of **Poland**. Keeping their pledge, Britain and France declared war against Germany—and soon afterward, they were also at war with its Axis allies, Italy and Japan. World War II in Europe had begun.

Poland was the first to fall to Germany’s *blitzkrieg* (lightning war), an overwhelming use of air power and fast-moving tanks. After a relatively inactive winter, the war was resumed in the spring of 1940 with Germany attacking its Scandinavian neighbors to the north and its chief enemy, France, to the west. Denmark and Norway surrendered in a few days, France in only a week. By June 1940, the only ally that remained free of German troops was Great Britain.

### AXIS AGGRESSION IN THE 1930s





## Roosevelt Changes Policies

President Roosevelt countered **isolationism** in the United States by gradually giving aid to the Allies, especially Great Britain. Now that war had actually begun, most Americans were alarmed by news of Nazi tanks, planes, and troops conquering one country after another. They were strongly opposed to Hitler but still hoped to keep their country out of the war. President Roosevelt believed that British survival was crucial to U.S. security. The relationship that was built over the coming years between British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and FDR proved one of the keys to Allied success in the war. The president chipped away at the restrictive neutrality laws until practically nothing remained to prevent him from giving massive aid to Britain. After the surrender of France to the Germans in 1940, most Americans accepted the need to strengthen U.S. defenses, but giving direct aid to Britain was controversial.

**“Cash and Carry”** The British navy still controlled the seas. Therefore, if the United States ended its arms embargo, it would help only Britain, not Germany. Roosevelt persuaded Congress in 1939 to adopt a less restrictive Neutrality Act, which provided that a belligerent could buy U.S. arms if it used its own ships and paid cash. Technically, **“cash and carry”** was neutral, but in practice, it strongly favored Britain.

**Selective Service Act (1940)** Without actually naming Germany as the potential enemy, Roosevelt pushed neutrality back one more step by persuading Congress to enact a law for compulsory military service. The **Selective Training and Service Act** of September 1940 provided for the registration of all American men between the ages of 21 and 35 and for the training of 1.2 million troops in just one year. There had been a military draft in the Civil War and World War I but only when the United States was officially at war. Isolationists strenuously opposed the peacetime draft, but they were now outnumbered as public opinion shifted away from strict neutrality.

**Destroyers-for-Bases Deal** In September 1940, Britain was under constant assault by German bombing raids. German submarine attacks threatened British control of the Atlantic. Roosevelt knew that selling U.S. destroyers to the British outright would outrage the isolationists. He therefore cleverly arranged a trade. Britain received 50 older but still serviceable U.S. destroyers and gave the United States the right to build military bases on British islands in the Caribbean.

## The Election of 1940

Adding to suspense over the war was uncertainty over a presidential election. Might Franklin Roosevelt be the first president to break the two-term tradition and seek election to a **third term**? For months, the president gave an ambiguous reply, causing frenzied speculation in the press. At last, he announced that, in those critical times, he would not turn down the Democratic nomination if it were offered. Most Democrats were delighted to renominate their most effective

campaigner. During the campaign, Roosevelt made the rash pronouncement: “Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars.”

**Wendell Willkie** The Republicans had a number of veteran politicians who were eager to challenge the president. Instead, they chose a newcomer to public office: **Wendell Willkie**, a lawyer and utility executive with a magnetic personality. Although he criticized the New Deal, Willkie largely agreed with Roosevelt on preparedness and giving aid to Britain short of actually entering the war. His strongest criticism of Roosevelt was the president’s decision to break the two-term tradition established by George Washington.

**Results** Roosevelt won with 54 percent of the popular vote—a smaller margin than in 1932 and 1936. Important factors in the president’s reelection were (1) a strong economic recovery enhanced by defense purchases and (2) fear of war, which caused voters to stay with the more experienced leader.

## Arsenal of Democracy

Roosevelt viewed Germany’s conquest of most of Europe as a direct threat both to U.S. security and to the future of democratic governments everywhere. After his reelection, he believed that he was in a stronger position to end the appearance of U.S. neutrality and give material aid to Britain. In a December 1940 fireside chat to the American people, he explained his thinking and concluded: “We must be the great arsenal of democracy.”

**Four Freedoms** Addressing Congress on January 6, 1941, the president delivered a speech that proposed lending money to Britain for the purchase of U.S. war materials. He justified such a policy by arguing that the United States must help other nations defend “**four freedoms**”: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

**Lend-Lease Act** Roosevelt proposed ending the cash-and-carry requirement of the Neutrality Act and permitting Britain to obtain all the U.S. arms it needed on credit. The president said it would be like lending a neighbor a garden hose to put out a fire. Isolationists in the America First Committee campaigned vigorously against the lend-lease bill. By now, however, majority opinion had shifted toward aiding Britain, and the **Lend-Lease Act** was signed into law in March 1941.

**Atlantic Charter** With the United States actively aiding Britain, Roosevelt knew that the United States might soon enter the war. He arranged for a secret meeting in August 1941 with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill aboard a ship off the coast of Newfoundland. The two leaders drew up a document known as the **Atlantic Charter** that affirmed that the general principles for a sound peace after the war would include self-determination for all people, no territorial expansion, and free trade.

**Shoot-on-Sight** In July 1941, the president extended U.S. support for Britain even further by protecting its ships from submarine attack. He ordered the U.S. Navy to escort British ships carrying lend-lease materials

from U.S. shores as far as Iceland. On September 4, the American destroyer *Greer* was attacked by a German submarine it had been hunting. In response, Roosevelt ordered the navy to attack all German ships on sight. In effect, the United States was now fighting an undeclared naval war against Germany.

## Disputes with Japan

Meanwhile, through 1940 and 1941, U.S. relations with Japan were becoming increasingly strained as a result of Japan's invasion of China and ambitions to extend its conquests to Southeast Asia. Beginning in 1940, Japan was allied with Germany and Italy as one of the Axis powers. Hitler's success in Europe enabled Japanese expansion into the Dutch East Indies, British Burma, and French Indochina—territories still held as European colonies.

**U.S. Economic Action** When Japan joined the Axis powers in September 1940, Roosevelt responded by prohibiting the export of steel and scrap iron to all countries except Britain and the nations of the Western Hemisphere. His action was aimed at Japan, which protested that it was an “unfriendly act.” In July 1941, Japanese troops occupied French Indochina. Roosevelt then froze all Japanese credits in the United States and also cut off Japanese access to vital materials, including U.S. oil.

**Negotiations** Both sides realized that Japan needed oil to fuel its navy and air force. If the U.S. embargo on oil did not end, Japan would likely seize the oil resources in the Dutch East Indies. At the same time, Japan's invasion of China was a blatant violation of the Open Door policy, to which the United States was still committed. Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull insisted that Japan pull its troops out of China, which Japan refused to do. The Japanese ambassador to the United States tried to negotiate a change in U.S. policy on oil. Agreement, however, seemed most unlikely. In October, a new Japanese government headed by General Hideki Tojo made a final attempt at negotiating an agreement. Neither side, however, changed its position.

U.S. military leaders hoped to delay armed confrontation with Japan until U.S. armed forces in the Pacific were strengthened. Japan, on the other hand, believed that quick action was necessary because of its limited oil supplies.

**Pearl Harbor** The U.S. fleet in the Pacific was anchored at **Pearl Harbor**, Hawaii. On Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, while most American sailors were still asleep in their bunks, Japanese planes from aircraft carriers flew over Pearl Harbor bombing every ship in sight. The surprise attack lasted less than two hours. In that time, Japan killed 2,400 Americans (including over 1,100 when the battleship *Arizona* sank), wounded almost 1,200 people, sank or severely damaged 20 warships, and destroyed approximately 150 airplanes.

**Partial Surprise** The American people were stunned by the attack on Pearl Harbor. High government officials, however, knew that an attack somewhere in the Pacific was imminent because they had broken the Japanese codes. They did not know the exact target and date for the attack, which many felt would be in the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, or Malaya.

**Declaration of War** Addressing Congress on the day after Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt described December 7th as “a date which will live in infamy.” He asked Congress to declare “that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on December 7, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.” On December 8, Congress declared war, with only one dissenting vote. Three days later, Germany and Italy honored their treaty with Japan by declaring war on the United States.

## The War in Europe in 1941–1942

By the time the United States entered the war in December 1941, Europeans had been fighting for two years. On June 22, 1941, Hitler had broken his nonaggression pact with Stalin and ordered his troops to invade the Soviet Union. This shifted the main battlefield in Europe from the west to the east. The principal Allies fighting Nazi Germany from 1942 to 1945, then, were Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union. The three Allied leaders—Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin—agreed that they should concentrate on the European war against the aggressive militarism and fascism of the Nazis before shifting their resources to counter Japanese advances in the Pacific.

### REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1. Explain two similarities or differences in attitudes about the nation’s proper role in the world during the 1920s and 1930s.

#### KEY TERMS BY THEME

##### Foreign Policy (WOR)

disarmament  
 Washington Conference (1921)  
 Five-Power (naval) Treaty  
 Nine-Power (China) Treaty  
 Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928)  
 war debts  
 reparations  
 Dawes Plan (1924)  
**Hoover-FDR Policies (WOR)**  
 Good Neighbor policy  
 Pan-American conferences  
 recognition of the Soviet Union  
 Independence of the Philippines  
 reciprocal trade agreements

##### Militarist/Fascist Aggression (WOR)

Japanese aggression in Manchuria  
 Stimson Doctrine  
 Axis powers  
 Benito Mussolini  
 Fascist Party  
 fascism  
 Nazi Party  
 Adolf Hitler  
 Spanish Civil War  
 Francisco Franco  
 Ethiopia  
 Rhineland  
 Sudetenland  
 Munich  
 appeasement  
 Poland  
*blitzkrieg*

##### Isolationist Response (WOR)

Gerald Nye  
 Neutrality Acts  
 America First Committee  
 Charles Lindbergh  
 isolationism  
**FDR’s Response (WOR)**  
 quarantine speech  
 “cash and carry”  
 Selective Training and Service Act (1940)  
 destroyers-for-bases deal  
 third term (FDR)  
 Wendell Willkie  
 “four freedoms”  
 Lend-Lease Act (1941)  
 Atlantic Charter  
 Pearl Harbor

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1–3 refer to the cartoon below.



1. Which of the following attitudes most directly contributed to the perspective of this cartoon?
  - (A) The priority of Roosevelt to protect Latin American nations
  - (B) The strong opposition to helping the Soviet Union under Stalin
  - (C) The isolationist sentiment that developed after World War I
  - (D) The antiwar policies of the Franklin Roosevelt administration
2. Which of the following events most directly conflicted with the perspective of this cartoon?
  - (A) Congressional hearings into the U.S. entry into World War I
  - (B) The Spanish Civil War between the fascist and the republican forces
  - (C) Passage of laws prohibiting arms sales, bank loans, and travel to nations at war
  - (D) Roosevelt's call for democracies to "quarantine" aggressive nations
3. Which of the following individuals and groups most strongly supported the perspective of this cartoon?
  - (A) Henry Stimson and advocates of the Stimson Doctrine
  - (B) Charles Lindbergh and many newspaper editors in rural areas
  - (C) Franklin Roosevelt and other leaders of the Democratic Party
  - (D) Wendell Willkie and the progressive wing of the Republican Party

## SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

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Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

1. “Each of the tiny steps [Roosevelt] took was designed to keep the US out of the war... The only conclusion to be reached is [that] Britain in 1940 and 1941 survived with no significant outside help except that freely given by the Dominions, especially Canada. . . . The defender of liberal democracy in 1940–41 was not Britain along with the United States. . . . They fought freedom’s battle while the largest democracy on earth occasionally threw them some crumbs.”

Robin Prior, historian, *When Britain Saved the West*, 2015

“Roosevelt took the lead in educating Americans to this new perspective on world affairs. He has been criticized for his timidity. . . . But he had vivid memories of Wilson’s defeat and feared getting too far out in front of public opinion. . . . Step by step between 1939 and 1941, he abandoned neutrality and, through aid to Britain and other nations fighting Hitler, took the United States to the brink of war. . . . He set forth the intellectual underpinnings for an American globalism that would take form in World War II and flourish in the postwar years.”

George C. Herring, historian, *From Colony to Superpower*, 2008

Using the excerpts, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- (a) Briefly describe ONE major difference between Prior’s and Herring’s historical interpretation about Roosevelt’s role in World War II.
  - (b) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Prior’s interpretation.
  - (c) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Herring’s interpretation.
2. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
    - (a) Briefly explain ONE specific difference between the foreign policies of the Republican administrations and the Franklin Roosevelt administration during the 1920s and 1930s.
    - (b) Briefly explain ONE specific similarity between the foreign policies of the Republican administrations and the Franklin Roosevelt administration during the 1920s and 1930s.
    - (c) Briefly explain ONE specific similarity between the U.S. entry into World I and into World War II.

# World War II Mobilization

*There is one front and one battle where everyone in the United States—every man, woman, and child—is in action, and will be privileged to remain in action throughout this war. That front is right here at home, in our daily lives, and in our daily tasks.*

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, April 28th, 1942

**Learning Objective:** Explain how and why U.S. participation in World War II transformed American society.

The success of U.S. and Allied armed forces depended on mobilizing America's people, industries, and creative and scientific communities. The role of the federal government expanded well beyond anything in World War I or the New Deal.

## The Federal Government Takes Action

As in World War I, the U.S. government organized a number of special agencies to mobilize U.S. economic and military resources for the wartime crisis. Early in 1942, the **War Production Board** (WPB) was established to manage war industries. Later, the Office of War Mobilization (OWM) set production priorities and controlled raw materials. The government used a cost-plus system, in which it paid war contractors the costs of production plus a certain percentage for profit. One federal agency, the **Office of Price Administration** (OPA), regulated almost every aspect of civilians' lives by freezing prices, wages, and rents, and by rationing such commodities as meat, sugar, gasoline, and auto tires, primarily to fight wartime inflation. However, rationing led to a black market, where people bought and sold these items illegally.

Deficit spending during the depression was dwarfed by the deficits incurred during the war. **Federal spending** increased 1,000 percent between 1939 and 1945. As a result, the gross national product grew by 15 percent or more a year. World War II proved what the New Deal did not, that the government could spend its way out of a depression. By war's end, the national total **accumulated debt** had reached the then staggering figure of \$250 billion, five times what it had been in 1941. This was 120 percent of the total economic output of the country for 1946.

**Business and Industry** Stimulated by wartime demand and government contracts, U.S. industries did a booming business, far exceeding their

production and profits of the 1920s. The depression was over, vanquished at last by the coming of war. By 1944, unemployment had practically disappeared.

War-related industrial output in the United States was astonishing. By 1944, it was twice that of all the Axis powers combined. Instead of automobiles, tanks and fighter planes rolled off the assembly lines. American factories produced over 300,000 planes, 100,000 tanks, and ships with a total capacity of 53 million tons. So efficient were production methods that Henry Kaiser's giant shipyard in California could turn out a new ship in just 14 days. The war concentrated production in the largest corporations, as smaller businesses lost out on government contracts to larger businesses with more capacity. The 100 largest corporations accounted for up to 70 percent of wartime manufacturing.

**Research and Development** Government worked closely not only with industries, but also universities and research labs to create and improve technologies that could be used to defeat the enemy. The Office of Research and Development was established to contract scientists and universities to help in the development of electronics such as radar and sonar, medicines such as penicillin, and military goods such as jet engines and rockets. It also ran the top-secret **Manhattan Project**, which produced the first atomic weapons. Ironically, many of the European scientists who fled Fascist persecution would contribute to fascism's defeat through their work in United States.

**Workers and Unions** Labor unions and large corporations agreed that while the war lasted, there would be no strikes. Workers became disgruntled, however, as their wages were frozen while corporations made large profits. John L. Lewis, therefore, called a few strikes by coal miner unions. The Smith-Connally Anti-Strike Act of 1943, passed over Roosevelt's veto, empowered the government to take over war-related businesses whose operations were threatened by a strike. In 1944, Roosevelt had occasion to use this law when he ordered the army to operate the nation's railroads for a brief period.

**Financing the War** The government paid for its huge increase in spending (\$100 billion spent on the war in 1945 alone) by (1) increasing the income tax and (2) selling war bonds. For the first time, most Americans were required to pay an income tax, and in 1944, the practice was begun of automatically deducting a withholding tax from paychecks. Borrowing money by selling \$135 billion in war bonds supplemented the tax increase. In addition, the shortage of consumer goods made it easier for Americans to save.

**Wartime Propaganda** Few people opposed the war, so the government's propaganda campaign of posters, songs, and news bulletins was primarily to maintain public morale, to encourage people to conserve resources, and to increase war production. The **Office of War Information** controlled news about troop movements and battles. Movies, radio, and popular music all supported and reflected a cheerful, patriotic view of the war. For example, Norman Rockwell's popular illustrations of the "Four Freedoms" captured the liberties and values at stake in the war. The unity of Americans behind the war's democratic ideals helped that generation remember it as "**the Good War.**"





The Tuskegee Airmen created a distinguished record during World War II.  
**Source:** Wikipedia.

## The War's Impact on Society

Every group in the U.S. population adjusted to the unique circumstances of wartime. The increase in factory jobs caused millions to leave rural areas for industrial jobs in the Midwest and on the Pacific Coast, especially California. Entirely new communities arose around the construction of new factories and military bases. Many of the new defense installations were located in the South because of that region's warm climate and low labor costs. The wartime expansion set the stage for a postwar migration to the Sunbelt.

**African Americans** Attracted by jobs in the North and West, over 1.5 million African Americans left the South. In addition, a million young men left home to serve in the armed forces. During World War II, African Americans for the first time served as aviators in combat.

However, whether as soldiers or civilians, African Americans faced continued discrimination and segregation at home and in the armed forces. Dozens died in race riots in New York and Detroit during the summer of 1943 resulting from White resentment of Black families moving into their cities. **Civil rights** leaders encouraged African Americans to adopt the “**Double V**” slogan—victory over fascism abroad and the victory of equality at home.

Membership in the NAACP increased during the war, which continued to challenge unjust laws in court and advocate for civil rights legislation. Another civil rights organization, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), was formed in 1942 to work more militantly for African American interests. After Black leaders threatened a protest march on Washington, the Roosevelt administration issued an **executive order to prohibit discrimination** in government and in businesses that received federal contracts. One judicial victory was won in the Supreme Court case of *Smith v. Allwright* (1944). The Court ruled that it was unconstitutional to deny membership in political parties to African Americans as a way of excluding them from voting in primaries.

**Mexican Americans** Over 300,000 Mexican Americans served in the military and many others worked in defense industries. A 1942 agreement with Mexico allowed Mexican farmworkers, known as *braceros*, to enter the United States in the harvest season without going through formal immigration procedures. **Braceros** entered as temporary residents. They were not welcomed to stay permanently. The sudden influx of Mexican immigrants into Los Angeles stirred White resentment and led to the so-called zoot suit riots in the summer of 1943, in which Whites and Mexican Americans battled on the streets.

**American Indians** American Indians contributed to the war effort as both soldiers and workers. Approximately 25,000 served in the military, and thousands more worked in defense industries. Having discovered the opportunities off their reservations, more than half never returned.

**Japanese Americans** More than any ethnic group, Japanese Americans suffered special discrimination because of the war. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, many people suspected that Japanese Americans were spies or saboteurs and that Japan would soon invade the West Coast. In 1942, these irrational fears, as well as racism, prompted the U.S. government to order more than 100,000 Japanese Americans on the West Coast to leave their homes and move to internment camps. The order did not apply to Japanese Americans living in Hawaii and other parts of the United States. In the case of *Korematsu v. U.S.* (1944), the Supreme Court upheld the government's internment policy as justified in wartime. Despite this discriminatory treatment, almost 20,000 Japanese Americans served in the military. In 1988, the federal government agreed the ruling was unjust and awarded financial compensation to those still alive who had been interned.

**Women** The war also changed the lives of women. Over 200,000 women served in uniform in the army, navy, and marines, but in noncombat roles. As in World War I, an acute labor shortage caused women to take jobs vacated by men in uniform. Almost 5 million women entered the workforce, many of them working in industrial jobs in the shipyards and defense plants. The number of married women in the workforce increased to 24 percent. A song about "**Rosie the Riveter**" was used to encourage women to take defense jobs. However, they received pay well below that of male factory workers. Women also became more independent as heads of the households and chief income earners while men served overseas.

**Wartime Solidarity** The New Deal helped immigrant groups feel more included, and serving together as "bands of brothers" in combat or working together for a common cause in defense plants helped to reduce prejudices based on nationality, ethnicity, and religion. The **wartime migrations** also helped to soften regional differences and open the eyes of many Americans to the injustice of racial discrimination.

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

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1. Explain two ways that U.S. participation in World War II transformed American society.

### KEY TERMS BY THEME

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#### Mobilization (SOC, WXT)

War Production Board  
Office of Price Administration  
federal spending  
accumulated debt  
business and industry  
research and development  
Manhattan Project  
Office of War Information  
“the Good War”

#### Home Front (SOC, MIG)

wartime migrations  
civil rights  
“Double V”  
executive order to prohibit discrimination  
*Smith v. Allwright*  
braceros  
internment camps  
*Korematsu v. U.S.*  
“Rosie the Riveter”  
wartime solidarity

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

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Questions 1–2 refer to the excerpt below.

“Rationing is a vital part of your country’s war effort. Any attempt to violate the rules is an effort to deny someone his share and will create hardship and help the enemy. This book is our Government’s assurance of your right to buy your fair share of certain goods made scarce by war. Price ceilings have also been established for your protection. Dealers must post these prices conspicuously. Don’t pay more. Give your whole support to rationing and thereby conserve our vital goods. Be guided by the rule: “If you don’t need it, DON’T BUY IT!”

IMPORTANT: When you used your ration, salvage the TIN CANS and WASTE FATS. They are needed to make munitions for our fighting men. Cooperate with your local Salvage Committee.”

*War Ration Books, Office of Price Administration, 1943*

1. Which of the following was the primary purpose of the message the above document was trying to communicate?
  - (A) To control inflation caused by shortages of consumer goods
  - (B) To boost the wartime economy by encouraging consumption
  - (C) To discourage industries from making consumer products
  - (D) To prevent workers and unions from demanding higher wages

2. Which of the following describes the most important historical situation in which the government issued the statement above?
- (A) Governments wanted to control civilian behavior during wartime to reassure people that they were still in control.
  - (B) Industrial production was essential to successful modern warfare, and it required an effort by the entire nation.
  - (C) The increase in the size of the military meant that fewer people were available to work in recycling industries.
  - (D) Governments had to stop civilian hoarding during wartime so that people would not focus their anger on each other.

## SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

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Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

1. “Whereas the successful prosecution of the war requires every possible protection against espionage and against sabotage to national-defense. . . . I hereby authorize and direct the Secretary of War . . . to prescribe military areas . . . from which any and all persons may be excluded, and with respect to which, the right of any person to enter, remain in, or leave shall be subject to whatever restrictions the Secretary of War or the appropriate Military Commander may impose in his discretion.”

Executive Order 9066, February 19, 1942

Using the excerpt, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- (a) Briefly explain ONE specific effect that this order had on Japanese Americans.
  - (b) Briefly explain ONE specific Constitutional issue that was raised by this order.
  - (c) Briefly explain ONE additional effect that the wartime experience had on the civil rights movement in the United States.
2. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
- (a) Briefly explain ONE specific effect that federal mobilization policies had on the American economy during World War II.
  - (b) Briefly explain ONE specific effect that World War II had on opportunities for women.
  - (c) Briefly explain ONE specific example of how technological and scientific advances contributed to U.S. military victories.

# World War II: Military

*We knew the world would not be the same. . . . I remembered the line from the Hindu scripture, "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds." I suppose we all thought that, one way or another.*

J. Robert Oppenheimer, scientist upon seeing the first atomic weapons explosion, from a 1965 interview

**Learning Objective:** Explain the causes and effects of the victory of the United States and its allies over the Axis powers.

The fighting of World War II was waged on two fronts, or “theaters of operation.” In the Pacific, Japanese forces reached the height of their power in 1942, occupying islands throughout the western Pacific Ocean. In Europe, much of the fighting in the first year of war was between the Germans and the Soviets, as the latter fought desperately to prevent the conquest of Russia.

## Fighting Germany

The high tide of the German advance ended in 1942, partly as a result of U.S. entry into the war but mainly because of a Soviet victory at Stalingrad in the winter of that year.

**Defense at Sea, Attacks by Air** Coordinating their military strategy, the British and Americans concentrated on two objectives in 1942: (1) overcoming the menace of German submarines in the Atlantic and (2) beginning bombing raids on German cities. The protracted naval war to control the shipping lanes was known as the **Battle of the Atlantic**. German submarines sank over 500 Allied ships in 1942. Gradually, however, the Allies developed ways of containing the submarine menace through the use of radar, sonar, and the bombing of German naval bases. The U.S. bombers carried out daylight “**strategic bombing**” raids on military targets in Europe, while the Germans and Britain attacked population centers. The lines between military and civilian targets became blurred as the war carried on, especially in Japan, when the United States started to fire bomb sections of large cities.

**From North Africa to Italy** The Allies had the daunting task of driving German occupying forces out of their advance positions in North Africa and the Mediterranean. They began their North Africa campaign, Operation Torch, in November 1942. Led by U.S. General **Dwight Eisenhower** and British

General Bernard Montgomery, Allied forces succeeded in taking North Africa from the Germans by May 1943.

The next U.S.–British target was the Mediterranean island of Sicily, which they occupied in the summer of 1943, preparatory to an invasion of Italy. Mussolini fell from power during the summer, but Hitler's forces rescued him and gave him nominal control of northern Italy. In fact, German troops controlled much of Italy at the time that the Allies invaded the peninsula in September 1943. The Germans put up a determined resistance to the Allied offensive, holding much of northern Italy until their final surrender in May 1945.

**From D-Day to Victory in Europe** The Allied drive to liberate France began on June 6, 1944, with the largest invasion by sea in history. On **D-Day**, as the invasion date was called, British, Canadian, and U.S. forces under the command of General Eisenhower secured several beachheads on the Normandy coast. After this bloody but successful attack, the Allied offensive moved rapidly to roll back German occupying forces. By the end of August, Paris was liberated. By September, Allied troops had crossed the German border for a final push toward Berlin. The Germans launched a desperate counterattack in Belgium in December 1944 in the Battle of the Bulge. After this setback, however, Americans reorganized and resumed their advance.

**German Surrender and Discovery of the Holocaust** Since 1942, Allied bombing raids over Germany had reduced that nation's industrial capacity and ability to continue fighting. Recognizing that the end was near, as the Russian army closed in on Berlin, Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945. The unconditional surrender of the Nazi armies took place a week later, on May 7.

As U.S. troops advanced through Germany, they came upon German concentration camps and witnessed the horrifying extent of the Nazis' program of genocide against the Jews and others. Americans and the world were shocked to learn that 6 million Jewish civilians and several million non-Jews had been systematically murdered by Nazi Germany.

## Fighting Japan

In Europe, British, Soviet, and U.S. forces were jointly responsible for defeating Germany, but in the Pacific, it was largely the U.S. armed forces that challenged the Japanese. After the Pearl Harbor attack, Japan seized control of much of East Asia and Southeast Asia. By early 1942, Japanese troops occupied Korea, eastern China, the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), British Burma and Malaya, French Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos), and most of the Pacific Islands west of Midway Island.

**Turning Point, 1942** The war in the Pacific was dominated by naval forces battling over a vast area. Intercepting and decoding Japanese messages enabled U.S. forces to destroy four Japanese carriers and 300 planes in the decisive **Battle of Midway** on June 4–7. This battle ended Japanese expansion.

**Island Hopping** After the victory at Midway, the United States began a long campaign to get within striking distance of Japan's home islands by seizing strategic locations in the Pacific. Using a strategy called **island hopping**, commanders bypassed strongly held Japanese posts and isolated them with naval and air power. Allied forces moved steadily toward Japan.

**Major Battles** Early in 1942, the Japanese had conquered the Philippines. When General **Douglas MacArthur**, the commander of army units in the Southern Pacific, was driven from the islands, he famously vowed, "I shall return." The conflict that prepared the way for U.S. reoccupation of the Philippines was the largest naval battle in history. At the Battle of Leyte Gulf in October 1944, the Japanese navy was virtually destroyed. For the first time in the war, the Japanese used **kamikaze** pilots to make suicide attacks on U.S. ships. Kamikazes also inflicted major damage in the colossal Battle of Okinawa (April to June 1945). Before finally succeeding in taking this island near Japan, U.S. forces suffered 50,000 casualties and killed 100,000 Japanese.

**Atomic Bombs** After Okinawa, a huge invasion force stood ready to attack Japan. Extremely heavy casualties were feared. By this time, however, the United States had developed a frightfully destructive new weapon. The top-secret Manhattan Project under General Leslie Groves employed over 100,000 people and spent \$2 billion to develop a weapon whose power came from the splitting of the atom. **J. Robert Oppenheimer**, director of the Los Alamos Laboratory, New Mexico, successfully tested the first **atomic bomb** on July 16, 1945.

The new president, Harry Truman, and his wartime allies called on Japan to surrender unconditionally or face "utter destruction." When Japan gave an unsatisfactory reply, Truman consulted with his advisers and decided to use the new weapon on two Japanese cities. On August 6, an A-bomb was dropped on **Hiroshima**, and on August 9, a second bomb was dropped on **Nagasaki**. About 250,000 Japanese died, either immediately or after a prolonged period of suffering, as a result of the two nuclear bombs.

**War and Morality** Nuclear weapons, by design, destroyed a much larger area than conventional weapons. When used on population centers, the new technology would cause tens or hundreds of thousands of deaths and injuries from the blast and radiation. The moral issue of killing civilians was raised in World War I by the German use of submarines against passenger ships. In World War II, the Germans and British bombed each other's cities based on the rationale that it would force the other side to sue for peace. Instead, research after the war concluded it did not have the desired effect. In fact, industrial output often went up because the bombing of urban centers released workers from their commercial jobs to work in well-hidden war plants.

Some would argue that in modern industrialized societies, civilians were part of the war effort and therefore legitimate targets. The United States in World War II first used "strategic bombing" of only military targets; however, it began to cross the line with the fire-bombing of Japanese cities, which caused

thousands of civilian deaths. Today, people recognize that large-scale nuclear warfare could end most human life, if not most life of all kinds, on Earth.

**Japan Surrenders** Within a week after the second atomic bomb fell, Japan agreed to surrender if the Allies would allow the emperor to remain as a titular (powerless) head of state. General MacArthur received Japan’s formal surrender on September 2, 1945, in Tokyo’s harbor aboard the battleship USS *Missouri*. The diplomacy that led to the end of the war set the stage for the efforts to construct a more lasting peace (see Topic 7.14).

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

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1. Explain two significant causes for the victory of the United States and its allies over the Axis powers.

### KEY TERMS BY THEME

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#### Wartime Strategies (WOR)

Battle of the Atlantic

“strategic bombing”

Dwight Eisenhower

D-Day

Holocaust

Battle of Midway

island hopping

Douglas MacArthur

kamikaze

J. Robert Oppenheimer

atomic bomb

Hiroshima

Nagasaki

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

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Questions 1–3 refer to the following excerpt.

“I know that Japan is a terribly cruel and uncivilized nation in warfare but I can’t bring myself to believe that, because they are beasts, we should ourselves act in the same manner. For myself, I certainly regret the necessity of wiping out whole populations because of the ‘pigheadedness’ of the leaders of a nation and, for your information, I am not going to do it unless it is absolutely necessary . . . My object is to save as many American lives as possible but I also have a humane feeling for the women and children in Japan.”

President Truman, letter to Senator Richard Russell of  
Georgia, August 9, 1945



1. Which of the following best reflects Truman's reason as stated in this letter for using the atomic bombs against Japan in August of 1945?
  - (A) He sought revenge for Pearl Harbor and Japanese wartime atrocities.
  - (B) He hoped to end the war before Britain and France became heavily involved.
  - (C) He thought conventional fire-bombing of cities was unacceptable.
  - (D) He wanted to avoid more U.S. military casualties.
2. One objection to the use of nuclear weapons that Truman seemed to be responding to in this letter was that the action would
  - (A) lengthen the war because it would reinforce the refusal of Japan to surrender
  - (B) cause the indiscriminate killing of tens of thousands of noncombatants
  - (C) set off an arms race among countries as each tried to develop its own nuclear weapons
  - (D) damage national security because it would justify later use of similar weapons against the United States
3. What was the historical situation before Truman made his decision on using atomic weapons?
  - (A) U.S. forces had suffered 50,000 casualties in fighting on the Japanese island and *kamikaze* pilots were attacking U.S. ships.
  - (B) The United States had just invaded the region of China controlled by Japan and was planning to send more troops there.
  - (C) Japan had already publicly announced that it would stop fighting and that it was preparing to formally surrender.
  - (D) The war in Europe was still going on, and the defeat of the Nazis was still uncertain.

### SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION

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1. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
  - (a) Briefly explain ONE specific military strategy or tactic that contributed to the U.S. victory in World War II.
  - (b) Briefly explain ONE example to support the argument that Allied cooperation helped win World War II.
  - (c) Briefly explain ONE example to support the view that World War II was fought to preserve democracy and human rights against criminal regimes.

# World War II and Postwar Diplomacy

*Peace is never long preserved by weight of metal or by an armament race. Peace can be made tranquil and secure only by understanding and agreement fortified by sanctions. We must embrace international cooperation or international disintegration.*

Bernard Baruch, U.S. representative to United Nations Atomic Energy Commission, June 14, 1946

**Learning Objective:** Explain the consequences of U.S. involvement in World War II.

In order to defeat the Axis powers, the United States joined in alliance with unlikely partners such as the communist Soviet Union and former allies such as Great Britain and France that were trying to hold on to their colonial empires. Allied victory in World War II and the death of President Roosevelt exposed the contradictions in the Grand Alliance, and both caused and foreshadowed the conflicts of postwar diplomacy.

## American Leadership

In 1944, President Roosevelt won the Democratic nomination for the fourth time. The Democrats made an important change, however, in their choice of a vice presidential running mate. Party leaders felt that Roosevelt's third-term vice president, Henry Wallace, was considered too radical and unmanageable. With Roosevelt's agreement, they replaced Wallace with **Harry S. Truman**, a Missouri senator with a national reputation for having conducted a much-publicized investigation of war spending. The Democrats won 53 percent of the popular vote and an overwhelming 432–99 victory in the Electoral College.

Although Roosevelt publicly denied medical problems, those near him recognized his poor health. As fate had it, FDR would live for less than three months after his inauguration. Harry Truman, who would serve the rest of the term, rarely met with Roosevelt. For example, Truman was told of the secret development of the atomic bomb only after Roosevelt's death. In retrospect, critics questioned the impact of Roosevelt's poor health and the changes in the administration on American diplomacy, especially with the Soviet Union.

## Wartime Conferences

During the war, the **Big Three**—U.S. President Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Churchill, and Soviet Premier Stalin—arranged to confer secretly to coordinate military strategy and to lay the foundation for peace terms and postwar policies.

**Casablanca** The first conference, in January 1943, involved only Roosevelt and Churchill. They met in the North African city of Casablanca. They agreed on a grand strategy to win the war, including to invade Sicily and Italy and to demand “**unconditional surrender**” from the Axis powers.

**Tehran** The Big Three met for the first time in the Iranian city of Tehran in November 1943. They agreed that the British and Americans would begin their drive to liberate France in the spring of 1944 and that the Soviets would invade Germany and eventually join the war against Japan.

**Yalta** In February 1945, the Big Three conferred again at Yalta, a resort town on the Black Sea coast of the Soviet Union. Their agreement at Yalta would prove the most historic of the three meetings. They agreed on several policies to guide them after victory in Europe:

- The Allies would divide Germany into occupation zones. Germany would lose about 1/4 of its territories to Poland and the Soviet Union as their boundaries were moved westward.
- The liberated countries of Eastern Europe would hold **free elections**, even though Soviet troops controlled this territory.
- The Soviets would enter the war against Japan, which they did on August 8, 1945.
- The Soviets would control the southern half of Sakhalin Island and the Kuril Islands in the Pacific and have special concessions in Manchuria.
- Countries would hold a conference in San Francisco to form a new world peace organization (the future United Nations).

The Yalta Conference was the most important conference of the war because it largely determined the future map of Europe. After the war, President Roosevelt was criticized for “giving away” Eastern Europe to the Soviets. However, neither he nor the other Allies were in a position to stop the Soviet army from taking possession of these nations. At the time, before the successful test of the atomic bomb, Roosevelt also wanted Soviet help to defeat Japan.

**Death of President Roosevelt** When the president returned from Yalta and informed Congress of his agreement with Churchill and Stalin, people could see that his health had deteriorated. On April 12, 1945, while resting in a vacation home in Georgia, an exhausted Roosevelt died suddenly. News of his death shocked the nation almost as much as Pearl Harbor. Harry S. Truman entered the presidency unexpectedly to assume enormous responsibilities as commander in chief of a war effort that had not yet been won.



Seated, from left to right, are Winston Churchill of Great Britain, Franklin Roosevelt of the United States, and Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union.

**Source:** National Archives and Records Administration. Wikipedia.

**Potsdam** In late July, after Germany's surrender, only Stalin remained as one of the Big Three. Truman was the new U.S. president, and Clement Attlee had just been elected the new British prime minister to replace Winston Churchill. The three leaders met in Potsdam, Germany (July 17–August 2, 1945) and agreed (1) to demand that Japan surrender unconditionally, and (2) Germany and Berlin would be divided into four zones of occupation. However, cracks in the Grand Alliance became more evident after the conference. Stalin wanted a harsher treatment of Germany and interpreted the use of the atomic bomb against Japan as a threat to the Soviet Union. Moreover, Truman wanted to get “tough” with the Soviets, especially for the takeover of Eastern Europe by Communist governments that proved to be puppets of the Soviet Union.

## The War's Legacy

The most destructive war in the history of the world had profound effects on all nations, including the United States.

**Human and Economic Costs** The deadliest war ever conducted resulted in the deaths of 70 million to 80 million military personnel and civilians worldwide. About one-third of those were Soviet citizens. Fifteen million Americans served in uniform and approximately 400,000 Americans lost their lives and 800,000 others were wounded. Excluding the Civil War, more Americans died in World War II than in all other U.S. wars combined.

The war left the United States with a huge national debt. But while Europe and Japan lay in ruins, the United States had suffered no damage to its cities, factories, roads, universities, and farms. As a result, the United States emerged

after the war far wealthier than any other country. Further, as the political leader of the victorious Allied coalition, it had shaped the postwar settlements and had influence around the globe. Few, if any, questioned that the United States was the most powerful nation on Earth in 1945.

**The United Nations** Unlike its rejection of the League of Nations following World War I, Congress readily accepted membership in the peacekeeping organization that was formed at the end of World War II. Meeting in 1944 at Dumbarton Oaks near Washington, D.C., Allied representatives from the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and China proposed an international organization to be called the **United Nations**. Then in April 1945, delegates from 50 nations assembled in San Francisco, where they took only eight weeks to draft a charter for the United Nations. The Senate quickly voted to accept U.S. involvement in the UN. On October 24, 1945, the UN came into existence when the majority of member-nations ratified its charter.

**Expectations** In a final speech, which he never delivered, Franklin Roosevelt wrote: “The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be the doubts of today.” Americans had concerns about what world order might emerge after World War II, but they also shared hopes that life would be more prosperous. Without a doubt, the United States in 1945 was the most prosperous and the most powerful nation in the world. It had played a major role in defeating the Fascist dictators. Now people looked forward with some optimism to both a more peaceful and more democratic world.

However, the specters of the Soviet Union dominating Eastern Europe and gaining the A-bomb would soon dim expectations for cooperation. In 1946, the United States presented a plan to the United Nations for the control of **atomic weapons** and disarmament, but the Soviet Union vetoed the plan and developed its own atomic weapons. The breakdown of cooperation with the Soviet Union ushered in a period (1945–1980) dominated by a Cold War between the democracies and capitalist economies of the “West” and the Communist political and economic ideologies of the “East.”

## REFLECT ON THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE

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1. Explain two consequences of U.S. involvement in World War II.

### KEY TERMS BY THEME

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#### Wartime Diplomacy (WOR)

Harry S. Truman

Big Three

Casablanca

“unconditional surrender”

Tehran

Yalta

free elections

Potsdam

United Nations

atomic weapons

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

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Questions 1–2 refer to the following excerpt.

“Mr. President (of the Senate), we still have two major wars to win. I said ‘We.’ That does not mean America alone. It means the continued and total battle fraternity of the United Nations. It must mean one for all and all for one. . . . President Roosevelt correctly said in his annual message that ‘the nearer we come to vanquishing our enemies the more we become inevitably conscious of differences among the victors’ . . . Since Pearl Harbor, World War II has put the gory science of mass murder into new and sinister perspective. Our oceans have ceased to be moats, which automatically protect our ramparts. . . . Let me put it this way for myself: I am prepared, by effective international cooperation, to do our full part in charting happier and safer tomorrows.”

Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, Republican  
from Michigan, January 10, 1945

1. Which of the following actions would Vandenberg most likely have supported based on what he says in this passage?
  - (A) The decision to replace Henry Wallace with Harry Truman
  - (B) The membership of the Soviet Union in the United Nations
  - (C) An “America First” view of the U.S. role in the world
  - (D) A partisan fight over foreign policy after the end of World War II
2. Which of the following most clearly supported Roosevelt’s belief that “the nearer we come to vanquishing our enemies the more we become inevitably conscious of differences among the victors” ?
  - (A) The willingness of Britain and France to give up their colonies
  - (B) The joint occupation by the Allies of Japan after the war
  - (C) The decision to form the United Nations
  - (D) The goal of the Soviet Union to control Eastern Europe for defense

## SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION

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1. Answer (a), (b), and (c).
  - (a) Briefly explain ONE historical development that encouraged the involvement of the United States in the UN after World War II.
  - (b) Briefly explain ONE historical effect of the dropping of the atomic bomb on the international community after World War II.
  - (c) Briefly explain ONE development that contributed to the emergence of the United States as the most powerful nation after World War II.

## Comparison in Period 7

**Learning Objective:** Compare the relative significance of major events of the first half of the 20th century in shaping American identity.

The reasoning process of *comparison* asks students to describe similarities and differences between specific historical developments. In studying Period 7, you can use comparison to make judgments about the relative significance of events that shaped the *American identity*. For example, a comparison of historical events, such as World War I and World War II, can also help one grasp the unique complexity of each. For example, after World War I, Congress and most voters rejected joining the League of Nations and committing to collective security. In contrast, after World War II, joining the United Nations had bipartisan support. The two wars provide other cases of *multiple variables*:

- **Political Conditions:** President Wilson was less willing to compromise than President Roosevelt was nearly three decades later.
- **Military Situation:** The entry into World War I was controversial, as people continued to question the need for U.S. involvement. The attack on Pearl Harbor unified the nation behind fighting World War II.
- **Diplomatic Relations:** The main allies of the United States in World War I were democracies. In World War II, the United States worked with non-democracies, such as the Soviet Union.
- **National Values:** Immediately after World War I, people believed the United States could go its own way in world affairs. By 1945, people had experienced the failure of isolationism to stop the aggression by Japan, Italy, and Germany, and the success of collective security in doing so.

The analysis of such variables will help you to develop a more complex and persuasive argument.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT COMPARISON

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1. Compare the significance of the 1920s with period from 1933 to 1945 in shaping beliefs about assimilation of migrants and minorities as part of the American national identity.
2. Compare the relative impact of the reforms of the Progressive era and the New Deal in shaping views on the economy and capitalism as part of the American national identity.



## THINK AS A HISTORIAN: MAKING CONNECTIONS

Which set of numbers is easier to remember in order: 2, 8, 10, 6, 4; or 2, 4, 6, 8, 10? They are the same numbers, but the first set lacks an obvious connection between one number and the next, while the second set has one. Recognizing and understanding the significance of connections between people, places, objects, and events in history helps you to better understand the importance of what you are studying. Here are the two ways of making connections that will help you on the AP® exam.

- **Identify patterns:** This means you notice when historical developments or processes have aspects in common.
- **Make connections:** This means you are able to identify and explain how one historical development or process relates to another.

Items related to contextualization may appear anywhere on the AP® exam. You can use various reasoning processes to help you see connections:

- **Causation:** This includes distinguishing between minor and major causes, and between short-term and long-term effects of a historical development.
- **Comparison:** This includes recognizing both similarities and differences among historical developments, either from the same era or different eras.
- **Continuity and change:** This includes evaluating how significant each continuity and each change is.

*For each series of events below, identify the pattern they shared.*

1. Purchase of Alaska, annexation of Hawaii, Spanish-American War
2. Commercial radio becomes popular, talking pictures debut, jazz music becomes widespread
3. Trail of Tears, Dawes Act, overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani
4. Jingoism, Cuban revolt of 1895, sinking of the *Maine*
5. Increasing power of big business, rise of an urban middle class, agitation for women's suffrage, opposition to Jim Crow laws

*For each series of events below, explain the relationship that existed among them.*

6. Harriet Beecher Stowe publishes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Frank Norris publishes *The Octopus*, Upton Sinclair publishes *The Jungle*
7. Secret ballots, direct primaries, direct election of U.S. senators
8. U.S. trade with Britain increases, submarine warfare, *Lusitania*, Zimmerman telegram
9. Segregation, destruction of cotton crops by boll weevil, economic opportunities in the northern United States
10. Langston Hughes publishes poetry, Bessie Smith sings the blues, Paul Robeson acts in plays



# UNIT 7 — Period 7 Review: 1890–1945



## WRITE AS A HISTORIAN: WRITE THE SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS

The supporting paragraphs in your long essay will demonstrate your skill in using evidence. They will also demonstrate your ability to follow a reasoning process and develop a complex interpretation of the prompt.

**Use of Evidence** Suppose your thesis is that Progressive Era reforms were more focused on politics while New Deal reforms focused on economics. To earn any points, you need to provide two examples of evidence relevant to your thesis—that is, directly connected to your topic. For example, you might argue that the most important accomplishments of the Progressives were the amendments requiring the direct election of senators and allowing women to vote. In contrast, you might argue that most important accomplishments of the New Deal included a minimum wage, Social Security, and protection for union organizing.

To earn the maximum number of points, you need to show how your evidence *supports* your argument. The Progressives were often middle-class individuals for whom the economy was already working well. In contrast, many supporters of the New Deal were working-class individuals who wanted more government intervention in the economy. Using such terms as *because* and *for this reason* will help you link your evidence to your argument.

**Historical Reasoning and Complexity** Your supporting paragraphs also need to show that you used reasoning processes (causation, comparison, or continuity and change) to frame your argument. You can show this framing in your choice of words. Using terms such as *in contrast* and *on the other hand* will help you show the differences in two movements.

To earn the most points, however, your supporting paragraphs must demonstrate a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt. You could demonstrate this in various ways:

- Explain both similarities and differences or address multiple causes and effects. You might note how changes in technology shaped both sets of reforms.
- Note connections across geographic areas and time periods. You might add comparisons with reforms during Reconstruction.
- Use evidence from other sources to corroborate (verify), qualify (set limitations), or modify (revise) an argument. To qualify your argument, you might point to Progressive reforms that affected the economy (creating the Federal Reserve) and New Deal reforms that affected the political system (increasing federal government power).

**Application:** Review the sample scored essays on the College Board website. Explain why each received the score it did for the use of evidence, historical reasoning, and complexity.

For current free-response question samples, visit: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-united-states-history/exam>

## LONG ESSAY QUESTIONS

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**Directions:** The suggested writing time for each question is 40 minutes. In your response, you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
  - Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
  - Support an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence.
  - Use historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, causation, continuity or change) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt.
  - Use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt.
1. Evaluate the extent to which one of the wars fought by the United States between 1898 and 1945 had an effect on national identity.
  2. Evaluate the extent to which a reform movement between 1900 and 1941 had an effect on the U.S. economic system.
  3. Evaluate how the Progressive movement and World War I affected women compared to how the New Deal did.
  4. Evaluate World War I's effect on American business and labor compared to World War II's effect.
  5. Evaluate the extent to which technological innovations contributed to changes in American values during the period from 1890 to 1945.
  6. Evaluate the extent to which federal wartime policies contributed to changes in American civil liberties during the period from 1890 to 1945.
  7. Evaluate the extent to which immigration patterns in the United States changed in the period from 1900 to 1945.
  8. Evaluate the extent to which internal migration patterns changed American culture in the period from 1900 to 1945.

## DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

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**Directions:** Question 1 is based on the accompanying documents. The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise. You are advised to spend 15 minutes planning and 45 minutes writing your answer. In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using at least six documents.
- Use at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt.
- For at least three documents, explain how or why the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.
- Use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt.

1. Evaluate the relative importance of long-standing American values in the decision for the United States' entry into World War I.

### Document 1

**Source:** Oswald Garrison Villard, writer and journalist, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, July 1916

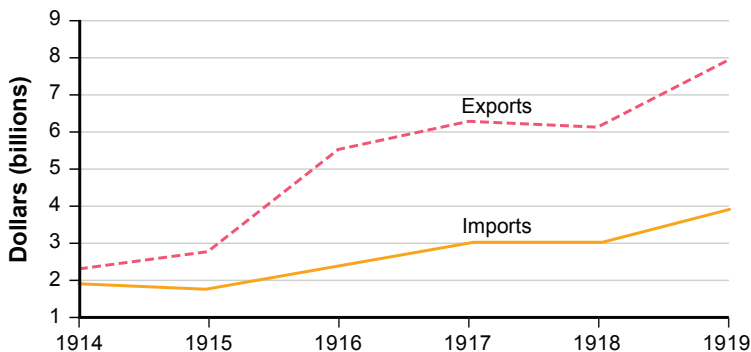
“Now, the real significance of this [campaign for preparedness] is that we have all at once, in the midst of a terrifying cataclysm, abjured our faith in many things American. We no longer believe, as for 140 years, in the moral power of an America unarmed and unafraid; we believe suddenly that the influence of the United States is to be measured only by the numbers of our soldiery and our dreadnoughts—our whole history to the contrary notwithstanding.

Next, the preparedness policy signifies an entire change in our attitude toward the military as to whom we inherited from our forefathers' suspicions and distrust. A cardinal principle of our polity has always been the subordination of the military to the civil authority as a necessary safeguard for the republic.”

## Document 2

**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Part 1, 1975.*

### VALUE OF UNITED STATES IMPORTS AND EXPORTS, 1914 TO 1919



**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Part 1, 1975*

## Document 3

**Source:** President Woodrow Wilson, War Message to Congress, April 2, 1917

We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretense about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included: for the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience. The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.

## Document 4

**Source:** Senator George W. Norris, Speech in the U.S. Senate, April 4, 1917

We are taking a step today that is fraught with untold danger. We are going into war upon the command of gold. We are going to run the risk of sacrificing millions of our countrymen's lives in order that other countrymen may coin their lifeblood into money. . . . We are about to do the bidding of wealth's terrible mandate. By our act we will make millions of our countrymen suffer, and the consequences of it may well be that millions of our brethren must shed their lifeblood, millions of broken-hearted women must weep, millions of children must suffer with cold, and millions of babes must die from hunger, and all because we want to preserve the commercial right of American citizens to deliver munitions of war to belligerent nations.

## Document 5

**Source:** Library of Congress



## Document 6

**Source:** Norman Thomas, socialist and pacifist, *The New Republic*, May 26, 1917

Tolerance arises from the existence of varying types of doers, all willing to respect one another's special competence. It is not too extreme to assert that in wartime (as in peacetime) some of the most heroic deeds are performed by those who do not (and, if called upon, would not) take up arms in defense of the cause. There are other forms of bravery than the purely military one. Let us be reasonable.

In bringing the gift of freedom to the distant unemancipated, shall we betray so precious a cause by brute denial of freedom to those of our own blood and tradition, to our own freedom lovers within the gate? What a sorry, tragical miscarriage of wisdom!

## Document 7

**Source:** Theodore Roosevelt, Pledge of Loyalty, September 11, 1917

We ask that good Americans . . . uphold the hands of the government at every point efficiently and resolutely against our foreign and domestic foes, and that they constantly spur the government to speedier and more effective action. Furthermore, we ask that, where government action cannot be taken, they arouse an effective and indignant public opinion against the enemies of our country, whether these enemies masquerade as pacifists, or proclaim themselves the enemies of our allies, or act through organizations such as the I.W.W. and the Socialist Party machine, or appear nakedly as the champions of Germany. Above all, we ask that they teach our people to spurn any peace save the peace of overwhelming victory in the war to which we have set our hands.