

Chapter 4 Study Guide

Section 1 The Drive for Reform

Industrialization, urbanization, and immigration brought many benefits to America, but they also produced challenging social problems. A movement called Progressivism arose in the 1890s to tackle these problems. Journalists whose stories dramatized the need for reform were called muckrakers. One leading muckraker was Lincoln Steffens, a magazine editor who published stories about political corruption. Another was Jacob Riis, a photographer whose pictures revealed life in urban slums. Novelist Frank Norris showed how the Southern Pacific Railroad kept a stranglehold on California farmers in *The Octopus*. Upton Sinclair's novel *The Jungle* revealed the unsafe and unsanitary conditions of Chicago meatpacking plants. The work of the muckrakers increased popular support for Progressivism and helped the Progressives bring about reforms. Laws were passed to end child labor and break up monopolies and trusts. After a fire at a garment factory killed nearly 150 workers, Progressives were able to get laws passed to protect worker safety.

Many reformers thought that Christianity should be the basis of social reform. These followers of the Social Gospel believed that society would improve if people followed the Bible's teachings about charity and justice. One form of charity was the settlement house, which offered services for the poor such as child care and classes in English. Hull House in Chicago was a famous settlement house founded by Jane Addams. Her work inspired others to help solve the problems of the urban poor by becoming social workers.

In order to reform politics and remove corrupt governments, Progressives pushed for a number of new laws. Dynamic leaders such as Governor Robert La Follette of Wisconsin created tools to limit the power of political bosses and business interests. Reformers created the direct primary so citizens, not political bosses, could select nominees for upcoming elections. The initiative gave people the power to put a proposed new law directly on the ballot. The referendum allowed citizens to approve or reject laws passed by a legislature. The recall gave voters the power to remove elected officials from office before their terms ended. These reforms brought about by Progressives continue to affect society today.

Section 2 Women Make Progress

In the early 1900s, a growing number of women sought to do more than fulfill their roles as wives and mothers. Many went to college to prepare for careers in teaching and nursing. Women had already won a shorter workday, but reformers saw the need for more changes. Florence Kelley believed that unfair prices for household goods hurt women and their families, so she helped found the National Consumers League (NCL). The NCL labeled products made in safe workplaces. The NCL also asked the government to improve food and workplace safety and assist the unemployed.

Women also sought changes in the home. With the temperance movement, led by the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), women tried to reduce or end the consumption of alcohol. Members of the WCTU blamed alcohol for some men's abuse and neglect of their families. Margaret Sanger sought a different change. She thought that family life and women's health would improve if

mothers had fewer children. Sanger opened the nation's first birth-control clinic. Ida B. Wells established the National Association of Colored Women, which helped African American families by providing childcare and education.

One of Progressivism's boldest goals was suffrage—the right to vote—for women. This fight was started in the 1860s but was reenergized by Carrie Chapman Catt in the 1890s. Catt toured the country encouraging women to join the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). This group lobbied Congress for the right to vote and used the referendum process to try to get women the vote in individual states. By 1918, this strategy had helped women get the vote in several states. Alice Paul was more vocal in her efforts. In 1917, she formed the National Woman's Party (NWP), which staged protest marches and hunger strikes and even picketed the White House to demand the right to vote. When the United States entered World War I in 1917, the NAWSA supported the war effort. Its actions and those of the NWP convinced a growing number of legislators to support a woman suffrage amendment. This reform became official in 1920 as the Nineteenth Amendment. Women finally had the right to vote for President.

Section 3 The Struggle Against Discrimination

The Progressive Era was not so progressive for nonwhite and immigrant Americans. Most Progressives were white Anglo-Saxon Protestant reformers who were indifferent or hostile to minorities.

Settlement houses and other civic groups played a big role in the Americanization efforts of many Progressives. Americanization occurred when Progressives encouraged everyone to follow white, middle-class ways of life.

Many Progressives shared the same prejudices against non-whites as other Americans. They agreed with so-called scientific theories that said that dark-skinned peoples had less intelligence than whites. They also supported segregation, or separation of the races, and laws to limit minority voting.

African American reformers responded in different ways to formal segregation and discrimination. For example, Booker T. Washington told blacks that the best way to win their rights was to be patient and to earn the respect of white Americans. W.E.B. Du Bois, on the other hand, said that blacks should demand immediately all the rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

W.E.B. Du Bois was a member of the Niagara Movement, a group that called for rapid progress and more education for blacks. After a race riot broke out in Illinois, its members joined with white reformers to form the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP planned to use the court system to fight for the civil rights of African Americans, including the right to vote. The efforts of the NAACP mostly helped middle-class blacks, but the Urban League focused on poorer urban workers. It helped families buy clothes and books and helped factory workers and maids find jobs.

African Americans were not alone in seeking their rights. Individuals and organizations of diverse ethnic groups spoke out against injustice and created self-help agencies. Jews in New York City formed the Anti-Defamation League to defend themselves against verbal attacks and false statements. Mexican Americans in several states formed mutualistas, groups that gave loans and provided legal assistance to the poor.

Section 4 Roosevelt's Square Deal

Theodore Roosevelt was a war hero, seasoned politician, and a dedicated reformer when he became President in 1901. He quickly pushed Congress to approve the Square Deal, a program of reform aimed at stopping the wealthy and powerful from dominating small business owners and the poor. Roosevelt used the power of the federal government to take on big business, breaking up trusts he considered abusive. In 1906, Roosevelt convinced Congress to pass the Hepburn Act, which limited what railroads could charge for shipping. This helped farmers in the West who had been at the mercy of the railroads.

After reading Upton Sinclair's novel *The Jungle*, Roosevelt pushed Congress to pass the Meat Inspection Act. This law gave the government power to inspect meat and meat-processing plants to ensure the meat was safe to eat. The Pure Food and Drug Act banned interstate shipment of impure food and the mislabeling of food and drugs.

Roosevelt loved nature, and he respected naturalist John Muir, whose efforts had led to the creation of Yosemite National Park. Following Muir's advice, Roosevelt put millions of acres of forests under federal control. However, he did not agree with Muir that it should all remain untouched. Like the head of the Division of Forestry, Gifford Pinchot, Roosevelt believed in the "rational use" of forests. The forests would be protected as future sources of lumber. To help settle fights over sources of water in the West, Roosevelt pushed for passage of the National Reclamation Act. That law gave the government power to build and manage dams and to control where and how water was used.

After two terms in office, Roosevelt wanted William Howard Taft to follow him because Taft shared his belief in regulating businesses. However, Taft did not follow the course Roosevelt had set, and Roosevelt became disappointed and, later, angry. He began to speak out against Taft, promoting what he called New Nationalism, a program to restore the government's trustbusting power. As another election neared, the Taft-Roosevelt battle split the Republican Party. A group of Progressives created the Progressive Party and nominated Roosevelt as President.

Section 5 Wilson's New Freedom

During the 1912 election, Roosevelt and Taft split the Republican Party vote, allowing Democrat Woodrow Wilson to win the election. Wilson was an intellectual man from Virginia who had taught college as a professor before becoming governor of New Jersey. Like Roosevelt, Wilson was a reformer who thought government should play an active role in the economy. He shaped his ideas into a three-part program he called the New Freedom.

First, Wilson tried to prevent manufacturers from charging unfairly high prices. He cut tariffs on imported goods, which made foreign goods more competitive in the United States and forced U.S. producers to charge fair prices. He also pushed for creation of an income tax, which the Sixteenth Amendment gave Congress the power to do. This tax more than made up for the money the government lost by lowering tariffs.

Second, Wilson pushed Congress to pass the Federal Reserve Act. This law gave the government authority to supervise banks by placing national banks under the control of a Federal Reserve Board.

Regional banks were then set up to hold reserve funds from commercial banks. The Federal Reserve also set the interest rate that banks pay to borrow money from other banks. This system ensured that no one person or bank had too much control over the economy.

Third, Wilson made sure that trusts did not behave unfairly. He persuaded Congress to create the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to monitor business practices and watch out for false advertising and dishonest labeling. Congress also passed the Clayton Antitrust Act, which strengthened earlier antitrust laws by spelling out which business activities were illegal. The act helped workers by protecting labor unions from being attacked as trusts.

Progressivism had a major impact on the nation. Political reforms expanded the power of voters. Economic reforms enabled the government to regulate corporations and banks in the interest of the public. Consumer protections gave the public confidence that the products they bought were not harmful. The government also began to manage natural resources all over the nation.