

BECOMING A WORLD POWER, 1898–1917

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

Senator Albert Beveridge, April 27, 1898

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

Since the 1790s, U.S. foreign policy had centered on expanding westward, protecting U.S. interests abroad, and limiting foreign influences in the Americas. The period after the Civil War saw the development of a booming industrial economy, which created the basis for a major shift in U.S. relations with the rest of the world. Instead of a nation that—at least since the War of 1812—had been relatively isolated from European politics, the United States became a world power controlling territories in the Caribbean and extending across the Pacific to the Philippines. How and why did the United States acquire an overseas empire and intervene in the affairs of Cuba, Mexico, and other Latin American nations? The origins of these developments appear in the years just after the Civil War.

Seward, Alaska, and the French in Mexico

A leading Republican of the 1850s and 1860s, 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.

Though a powerful advocate for expansion, Seward did not get all he wanted. For example, he failed to convince Congress to annex Hawaii and to purchase the Danish West Indies.

The French in Mexico

Napoleon III (nephew of the famous emperor Napoleon Bonaparte) had taken advantage of U.S. involvement in the Civil War by sending French troops to occupy Mexico. As soon as the Civil War ended in 1865, Seward invoked the Monroe Doctrine and threatened U.S. military action unless the French withdrew. Napoleon III backed down, and the French troops left Mexico.

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 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."

The "New Imperialism"

As the United States industrialized in the late 19th century, it also intensified its foreign involvement, partly because it wanted both sources of raw materials for manufacturing and worldwide markets for its growing quantity of industrial and agricultural products. In addition, many conservatives hoped that overseas territories and adventures might offer a safety valve for unhappiness at home after the Panic of 1893. They were concerned about the growing violence of labor-management disputes and the unrest of farmers. For the most part, advocates of an expansionist policy hoped to achieve their ends by economic and diplomatic means, not by military action.

International Darwinism

Darwin's concept of the survival of the fittest was applied not only to competition in business but also to competition among nations and races for military advantage, colonies, and spheres of influence. Therefore, to demonstrate strength in the international arena, expansionists wanted to acquire territories overseas. They saw this expansion as an extension of the idea of manifest destiny into the Caribbean, Central America, and the Pacific Ocean.

Imperialism Americans were not alone in pursuing imperialism, which meant either acquiring territory or gaining control over the political or economic

life of other countries. Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Japan, and other nations struggled to influence or possess weaker countries in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Ocean. Some in the United States believed that the nation needed to compete with the imperialistic nations for new territory or it would be reduced to a second-class power. In the United States, advocates of American expansion included missionaries, politicians, naval strategists, and journalists.

Missionaries 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 and natural supremacy of whites. Mission activities of their churches encouraged many Americans to support active U.S. government involvement in foreign affairs.

Politicians Many in the Republican party were closely allied with business leaders. Republican politicians therefore generally endorsed the use of foreign affairs to search for new markets. Congressional leaders such as Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts and the Republican governor of New York, Theodore Roosevelt, were eager to build U.S. power through global expansion.

Naval Power U.S. Navy Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan wrote an important book, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* (1890), in which 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, such as Samoa, that were desired as coaling and supply stations so that the new fleet could project its sea power around the world. By 1900, the United States had the third largest navy in the world.

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

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.

Blaine and the Pan-American Conference (1889) 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 for international cooperation on trade and other issues. Blaine had hoped to bring about reductions in 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 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. Most important, 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.

The Spanish-American War

A principal target of American imperialism was the nearby Caribbean area. 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 justification for U.S. intervention in the Caribbean's largest island.

Causes of 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.

Cuban Revolt Cuban nationalists, after fighting but failing to overthrow Spanish colonial rule between 1868 and 1878, renewed the struggle in 1895. Through sabotage and laying waste to Cuban plantations, they hoped to either force Spain's withdrawal or pull in the United States as an ally. In response, Spain sent autocratic General Valeriano Weyler and over 100,000 troops to crush the revolt. Weyler forced civilians into armed camps, where tens of thousands died of starvation and disease, and gained him the title of "The Butcher" in the American 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 were two New York newspapers, Joseph Pulitzer's *World* and William Randolph Hearst's *Journal*, which 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 *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, even though experts later concluded that the explosion was probably an accident.

McKinley's War Message Following the sinking of the *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 for the United States to intervene in the Cuban revolution on behalf of the 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 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, thousands of 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 who was 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 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 troublesome than the Philippines was the U.S. effort in Cuba. An ill-prepared, largely volunteer force landed in Cuba by the end of June. Here the most lethal enemy proved to be not Spanish bullets but tropical diseases. More than 5,000 American soldiers died of malaria, typhoid, and dysentery, while fewer than 500 died in battle.

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 heroic 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 for U.S. terms of peace.

Annexation of Hawaii

Since the mid-1800s, American missionaries and entrepreneurs had settled in the Pacific islands of Hawaii. Expansionists coveted the islands and, in 1893, American settlers aided in the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarch, Queen Liliuokalani. However, President Cleveland opposed imperialism and blocked Republican efforts to annex Hawaii. Then the outbreak of war in

the Philippines gave Congress and President McKinley the pretext to complete annexation in July 1898. The Hawaiian islands became a territory of the United States in 1900 and the fiftieth state in the Union in August 1959.

Controversy Over the Treaty of Peace

Far more controversial than the war itself were the terms of the treaty of peace 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. acquisition of the Philippines in return for payment to Spain of \$20 million. Since the avowed purpose of the U.S. war effort was to liberate Cuba, Americans accepted this provision of the treaty. However, many were not prepared for taking over a large Pacific island nation, the Philippines, 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 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, for the first time, the United States would be taking possession of a heavily populated area 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,” and also would entangle the United States in the political conflicts of Asia.

On February 6, 1899, the 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 and cost thousands of lives on both sides before the insurrection finally ended in 1902.

Other Results of the War

Imperialism remained a major issue in the United States even after ratification of the Treaty of Paris. An 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 of 1901. 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 renominated President McKinley, along with war hero and New York Governor Theodore Roosevelt for vice president. The Democrats, as they had in 1896, nominated William Jennings Bryan. He again argued for free silver and vigorously attacked the growth of American imperialism. However, most Americans accepted the recently enacted gold standard and saw the new territory, including the Philippines, acquired during the war as an accomplished fact. With growing national economic prosperity, the electorate gave McKinley a larger margin of victory than in 1896.

Recognition of U.S. Power One consequence of the Spanish-American War was its effect on the way both 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 take an active role 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 sum in indemnities, 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 (person who opposed 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 U.S. as a world power. Imperialists applauded his every move, but critics disliked breaking the tradition of noninvolvement 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) an earlier treaty of 1850 in which any canal in Central America was to be under joint British-U.S. control. This agreement, called the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, was signed in 1901. With the British agreement to let 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 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, United States returned the Canal Zone to the Republic of Panama to end the growing bitterness over the original treaty (See Chapter 29).

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 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.

East 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 concerned the laws of California, which 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) An important executive agreement was concluded between the United States and Japan in 1908. Secretary of State Elihu Root and Japanese Ambassador Takahira exchanged notes pledging 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 and direct the Algeiras 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, interventionist, and finally as an internationalist, Theodore Roosevelt embodied the vigor of a youthful nation arriving on world stage.

William Howard Taft and Dollar Diplomacy

Roosevelt's successor, William Howard Taft (1909–1913), did not carry a 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*.

Dollar Diplomacy in East Asia and Latin America

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 the northern province of Manchuria, however, the United States was excluded from an agreement between Russia and Japan to build railroads there. In direct 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.

The Lodge Corollary

Henry Cabot Lodge, a Republican senator from Massachusetts, was responsible for another action that alienated both Latin America and Japan. A group of Japanese investors wanted to buy a large part of Mexico's Baja Peninsula, extending south of California. Fearing that Japan's government might be secretly scheming to acquire the land, Lodge introduced and the Senate in 1912 passed a resolution known as the Lodge Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. The resolution stated that non-European powers (such as Japan) would be excluded from owning territory in the Western Hemisphere. President Taft opposed the corollary, which also offended Japan and angered Latin American countries.

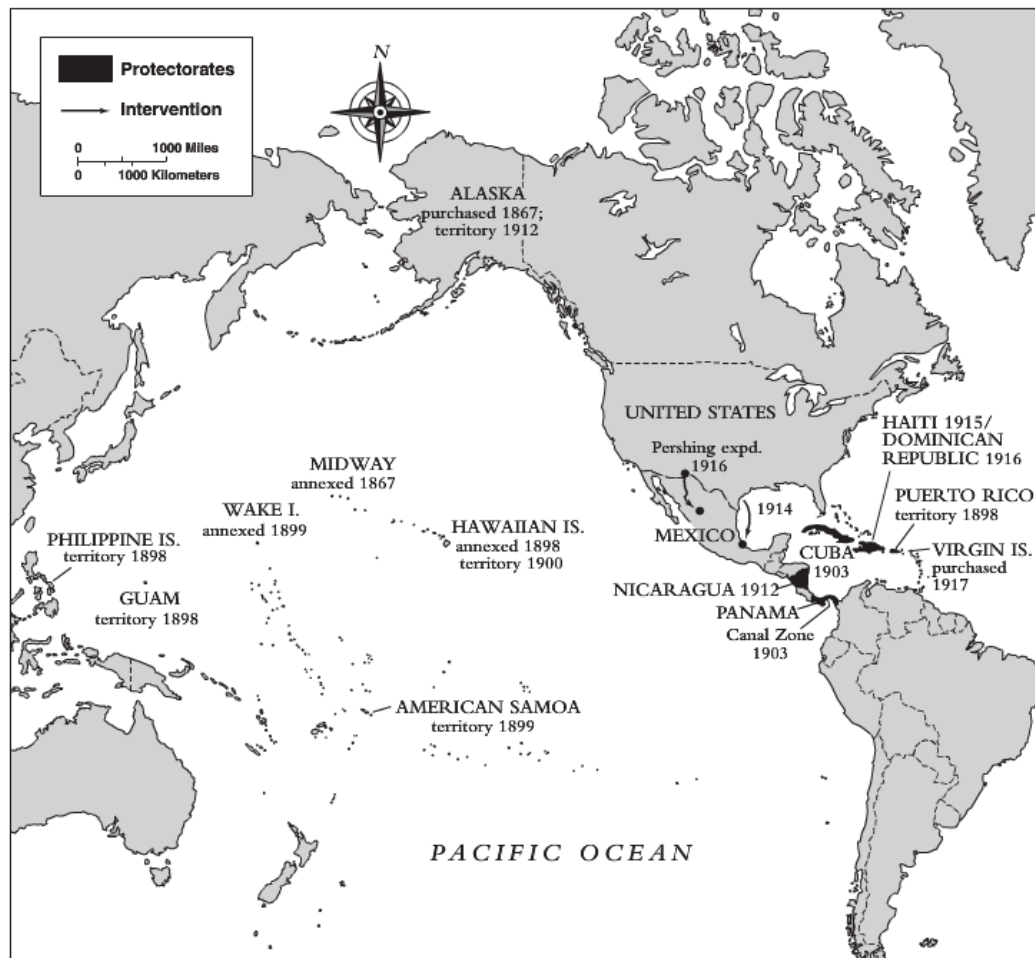
Woodrow Wilson and Foreign Affairs

In his campaign for president in 1912, the Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson called for a *New Freedom* in government and promised 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 hoped to demonstrate that the United States respected other nations' rights and would support 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.

U.S. TERRITORIES AND PROTECTORATES, 1917



The Philippines Wilson won passage of the Jones Act of 1916, which (1) granted full territorial status to that country, (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.

Puerto Rico An act of Congress in 1917 granted U.S. citizenship to all the inhabitants 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.

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



Military Intervention under Wilson

Wilson's commitment to democracy and anticolonialism had a blind spot with respect to the Mexico and countries of Central America and the Caribbean. He went far beyond both Roosevelt and Taft in his use of U.S. marines to straighten out 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 by 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 American presence in Mexico. In January 1917, the growing possibility of U.S. entry into World War I caused Wilson to withdraw Pershing's troops.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: DID ECONOMICS DRIVE IMPERIALISM?

For most of the 20th century, historians writing on U.S. emergence as a world power stressed economic motives as the principal reason for the imperialism. Whether explaining the Spanish-American War or later actions, historians such as William Appelman Williams and Walter La Feber focused on U.S. desires for overseas markets, raw materials, and investments.

Some historians have challenged this economic explanation of U.S. imperialism. In the Spanish-American War, historians note that business interests initially opposed U.S. intervention in Cuba because they feared that it would disrupt commerce. Only later did bankers and manufacturers support the war as a stabilizing influence. The change in view may have occurred only after war had started.

Other critics of the economic interpretation of imperialism stress the importance of noneconomic motives. Influenced by shocking stories in the yellow press, Americans public opinion seemed to express genuine humanitarian impulses—and also nationalistic outrage over the sinking of the *Maine*. Other historians, studying the motives of nationalist leaders like Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, have concluded that their chief interest was in establishing U.S. power on the world stage. In securing U.S. control of the Philippines, Roosevelt's role was crucial, and he was motivated by strategic considerations (establishing a naval base in the Pacific), not by economics. In response, those stressing economic motives argue that, even if Roosevelt had not ordered Dewey to Manila Bay, the Philippines would soon have become a target of U.S. ambitions.

Other historians believe that a new generation of foreign-policy makers had come to power around 1900. These talented leaders—chiefly Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson—were critical of the mediocre leadership in Washington in the post-Civil War years and were eager to take bold new directions. Historians taking this view portray Theodore Roosevelt as a realist who saw diplomacy as a question of balance-of-power politics, as opposed to the idealist, Woodrow Wilson, who approached foreign policy as a matter of morals and legality.

Historian Richard Hofstadter interpreted the Spanish-American War from the perspective of social psychology. He argued that the popular support for war resulted from a psychic crisis in the nation. In Hofstadter's view, the American people were expressing aggression built up by economic depressions, the closing of the frontier, the rise of big business, and fears of labor radicalism.

KEY NAMES, EVENTS, AND TERMS

Overseas Involvement (WOR)

William Seward
Monroe Doctrine
French in Mexico
Alaska purchase (1867)
Pan-American Conference (1889)
James Blaine
Venezuela boundary dispute
Cleveland and Olney
Hawaii
Pearl Harbor
Queen Liliuokalani
Cleveland blocks annexation

Causes of U.S. Imperialism (WOR, ID)

international Darwinism
business and imperialist competitors
spreading religion and science
Josiah Strong
expansionist politicians
steel and steam navy
Alfred Thayer Mahan
nationalist media

Spanish-American War, (WOR, POL)

Cuban revolt
Valeriano Weyler
"jingoism"
"yellow journalism"
De Lôme Letter
sinking of the *Maine*
Teller Amendment
"a splendid little war"
invade the Philippines

George Dewey
Rough Riders
Theodore Roosevelt
Treaty of Paris: Puerto Rico
Guam and Philippines annexation dispute
Emilio Aguinaldo
Anti-Imperialist League
Insular cases
Platt Amendment (1901)

China Policy (WOR)

spheres of influence
John Hay
Open Door policy
Boxer Rebellion
U.S. joined international force
Second Hay Note

TR Policies (WOR)

"big-stick policy"
TR supports Panama revolt
Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty (1903)
building the Panama Canal
George Goethals
William Gorgas
Roosevelt Corollary
Santo Domingo
Russo-Japanese War
Treaty of Portsmouth (1905)

Noble Peace Prize (1906)
segregation in San Francisco schools
gentlemen's agreement
Great White Fleet
Algeciras Conference (1906)
Hague Conference 1907
Root-Takahira Agreement (1908)

Dollar Diplomacy (WOR, WXT)

William Howard Taft
role of American money
railroads in China
Manchurian problem
intervention in Nicaragua
Henry Cabot Lodge
Lodge Corollary

Moral Diplomacy (WOR)

Woodrow Wilson
anti-imperialism
William Jennings Bryan
Jones Act (1916)
Puerto Rico citizenship
Conciliation treaties
military intervention
Mexican civil war
General Huerta
Tampico incident
ABC powers
Pancho Villa
expeditionary force
John J. Pershing

THE PROGRESSIVE ERA, 1901–1917

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. We have not kept up as well as other nations have. We have not adjusted our practices to the facts of the case. . . .

Woodrow Wilson, campaign speech, 1912

Large-scale industrialization, immigration, and urban expansion changed the United States dramatically during the last quarter of the 19th century. (See Chapters 16, 18, and 19.) By the turn of the century, a reform movement had developed that included a wide range of groups and individuals with a common desire to improve life in the industrial age. Their ideas and work became known as *progressivism*, because they wanted to build on the existing society, making moderate political changes and social improvements through government action. Most Progressives were not revolutionaries but shared the goals of limiting the power of big business, improving democracy for the people, and strengthening social justice. Achieving these goals often included a more active role for the federal government. This chapter will examine the origins, efforts, and accomplishments of the Progressive era. While Progressives did not cure all of America's problems, they improved the quality of life, provided a larger role for the people in their democracy, and established a precedent for a more active role for the federal government.

Origins of Progressivism

Although the Progressive movement had its origins in the state reforms of the early 1890s, it acquired national momentum only with the dawn of a new century and the unexpected swearing into office of a young president, Theodore Roosevelt, in 1901. The Progressive era lasted through the Republican presidencies of 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—but not before major regulatory laws had been enacted by Congress and various state legislatures.

Attitudes and Motives

As they entered a new century, most Americans were well aware of rapid changes in their country. The relatively homogeneous, rural society of independent farmers of the past was transforming into an industrialized nation of mixed ethnicity centered in the growing cities. For decades, middle-class Americans had been alarmed by the rising 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 the 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.

Who Were the Progressives? The groups participating in the Progressive movement were extremely diverse. Protestant church leaders championed one set of reforms, African Americans proposed other reforms, union leaders sought public support for their goals, and feminists lobbied their state legislatures for votes for women. Loosely linking these reform efforts under a single label, Progressive, was a belief that society badly needed changes and that government was the proper agency for correcting social and economic ills.

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 (the heart of the middle class in an earlier era), thousands of white-collar office workers and middle managers employed in banks, manufacturing firms, and other businesses formed a key segment of the economy.

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 included caring for the less fortunate and insisting on honesty in public life. The Social Gospel popularized by Walter Rauschenbusch (see Chapter 18) 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 a vigorous style of political leadership that had been lacking from 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. Without doubt, 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 the human condition.

Pragmatism A revolution in thinking occurred at the same time as the Industrial Revolution. Charles Darwin, in his *Origin of Species*, presented the concept of evolution, which had an impact well beyond simply justifying the accumulation of wealth (see Chapter 16). The way people thought and reasoned was challenged, and the prevailing philosophy of romantic transcendentalism in America gave way to a balanced *pragmatism*. In the early 20th century, William James and John Dewey were two leading American advocates of this new philosophy. They defined “truth” in a way that many Progressives found appealing. James and Dewey argued that the “good” and the “true” could not be known in the abstract as fixed and changeless ideals. Rather, they said, people should take a pragmatic, or practical, approach to morals, ideals, and knowledge. They 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 notions that stood in the way of reform. For example, they rejected laissez-faire theory as impractical. The old standard of rugged individualism no longer seemed viable in a modern society dominated by impersonal corporations.

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 output of factory workers, Taylor discovered ways of organizing people in the most efficient manner—the scientific management system. 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 anti-democratic 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. Newspaper and magazine publishers found that their middle-class readers loved to read about underhanded schemes in politics. Therefore, many publications featured in-depth, investigative stories. Writers specializing in such stories were referred to as “muckrakers” by President Theodore Roosevelt.

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.

Many of the 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* (on the tyrannical power of railroad companies) and *The Pit* (grain speculation) were more effective than many journalistic accounts in stirring up public demands for government regulations.

Decline of Muckraking The popularity of muckraking books and magazine articles began to decline after 1910 for several reasons. First, writers found it more and more difficult to top the sensationalism of the last story. Second, publishers were expanding and faced economic pressures from banks and advertisers to tone down their treatment of business. Third, 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

The cornerstone of Progressive ideology was faith in democracy. Progressives believed that, given a chance, the majority of voters would elect honest officials instead of the corrupt ones backed by boss-dominated political machines.

Voter Participation

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 dominated 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 antimachine vote. Some southern states even used white-only primaries to exclude African Americans from voting.

Direct Election of U.S. Senators Traditionally, 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, adoption 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.

Between 1898, when South Dakota adopted the initiative and referendum, and 1918 (the end of World War I), a total of 20 states—most of them west of the Mississippi—offered voters the initiative and the referendum, while 11 states offered the recall.

Municipal Reform

City bosses and their corrupt alliance with local businesses (trolley lines and utility companies, for example) were the first target 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 1901–1909, 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, in which an expert manager was hired by an elected city council 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 Reform

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 business such as insurance.

Temperance and Prohibition Whether or not to shut down saloons and prohibit the drinking of alcohol was one issue over which the champions of reform were sharply divided. 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. By 1915, they 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 (see Chapter 18) 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. 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 promoted the passage of state laws to protect women from long working hours. While in *Lochner v. New York* (1905) the Supreme Court ruled against a state law limiting workers to a ten-hour workday, later in *Muller v. Oregon* (1908) the high court ruled that 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 motivated states to pass laws to improve safety and working conditions in factories. One unforeseen 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 an activist, 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. The crisis involved a strike of anthracite coal miners through much of 1902. If the strike continued, many Americans feared that—without coal—they would freeze to death when winter came. Roosevelt took the unusual step of trying to mediate the labor dispute by calling a union leader and coal mine owners to the White House. The mine 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 special commission, which granted a 10 percent wage increase and a nine-hour workday to the miners. 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:

1. The *Pure Food and Drug Act* forbade the manufacture, sale, and transportation of adulterated or mislabeled foods and drugs.

2. 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 the 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 a national reserve 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.

More Trust-Busting and Conservation Taft continued Roosevelt's Progressive policies. As a trustbuster, Taft ordered the prosecution of almost twice the number of antitrust cases as his predecessor. 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. As a conservationist, 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).

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 oversee telephone, telegraph, and cable companies. The Sixteenth Amendment, ratified by the states in 1913, authorized the U.S. government to collect an income tax. (This reform was originally proposed by the Populists in their 1892 platform.) Progressives heartily approved the new tax because, at first, it applied only to the very wealthy.

Split in the Republican Party Progressives in the Republican party were unimpressed with Taft's achievements. In fact, they became so disenchanted with his leadership that they accused him of betraying their cause and joining the conservative wing of the party. These were their reasons:

1. *Payne-Aldrich Tariff* During his 1908 campaign, Taft had promised to lower the tariff. Instead, conservative Republicans in Congress passed the Payne-Aldrich Tariff in 1909, which raised the tariff on most imports. Taft angered Progressives in his party not only by signing the tariff bill but by making a public statement in its defense.

2. *Pinchot-Ballinger Controversy* The Progressives respected the chief of the Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot, as a dedicated conservationist. On the other hand, they distrusted Taft's secretary of the interior, Richard Ballinger, especially after he opened public lands in Alaska for private development. In 1910, when Pinchot criticized Ballinger, Taft stood by his cabinet member and fired Pinchot for insubordination. Conservatives applauded; Progressives protested.

3. *House Speaker Joe Cannon* Taft angered Progressive Republicans when he failed to support their effort to reduce the dictatorial powers of Congress' leading conservative, Speaker of the House Joseph Cannon.

4. *Midterm Elections* Fighting back against his Progressive critics, Taft openly supported conservative candidates for Congress in the midterm elections of 1910. It was a serious political mistake. Progressive Republicans from the Midwest easily defeated the candidates endorsed by Taft. After this election, the Republican party was split wide open between two opposing groups: a conservative faction loyal to Taft and a Progressive faction. The latter group of Republicans fervently hoped that their ex-president and hero, Theodore Roosevelt, would agree to become their candidate again in 1912.

Rise of the Socialist Party

A third party developed in the first decade of the 1900s that was dedicated to the welfare of the working class. Originally called the Socialist Labor party in 1897, it changed its name in 1901 to the Socialist Party of America. The Socialist platform called for more radical reforms than the Progressives favored: public ownership of the railroads, utilities, and even of major industries such as oil and steel.

Eugene V. Debs One of the Socialist party's founders, Eugene Debs, was the party's candidate for president in five elections from 1900 to 1920. A former railway union leader, Debs adopted socialism while jailed for the Pullman strike. He was an outspoken critic of business and a champion of labor.

Influence On such issues as workers' compensation and minimum wage laws, Progressives and some Socialists joined forces. For the most part, however, Progressives wanted to distance themselves from the ideas of Socialists, since the majority of voters favored only mild reforms, not radical causes. Eventually, however, some Socialist ideas were accepted: public ownership of utilities, the eight-hour workday, and pensions for employees.

The Election of 1912

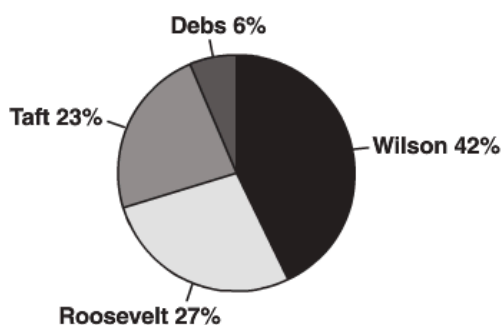
Reform efforts dominated a campaign that involved four notable presidential candidates.

Candidates President Taft was renominated by the Republicans after his supporters excluded Theodore Roosevelt's delegates from the party's convention. Progressive Republicans then formed a new party and nominated Theodore Roosevelt. (Roosevelt's claim that he was as strong as a bull moose gave the new Progressive party its nickname: the Bull Moose party.) After lengthy balloting, Democrats united behind Woodrow Wilson, a newcomer who had first been elected to office in 1910 as governor of New Jersey. The Socialist party, at the peak of its strength, again nominated Eugene V. Debs.

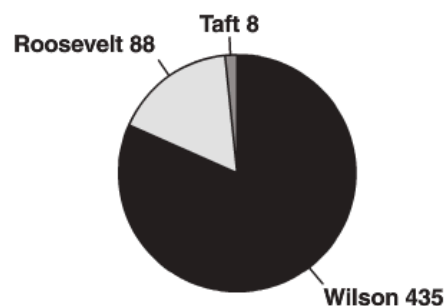
Campaign With Taft enjoying little popularity and Debs considered too radical, the election came down to a battle between Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. Roosevelt called for a New Nationalism, with more government regulation of business and unions, women's suffrage, and more social welfare programs. Wilson pledged a New Freedom, which would limit both big business and big government, bring about reform by ending corruption, and revive competition by supporting small business.

Results 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 the Progressive presidential candidates ensured that reform efforts would continue under Wilson, while the failure of the Progressive party to elect local candidates suggested that the new party would not last. But the idea contained in Roosevelt's New Nationalism—of strong federal government regulations helping the people—did have a lasting influence for much of the century (see, in Chapter 24, the New Deal, and, in Chapter 28, the Great Society).

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, 1912



Popular Vote



Electoral Vote

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), and 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's next major initiative concerned 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. The president again went directly to Congress in 1913 to propose a plan for building both stability and flexibility into the U.S. financial system. Rejecting the Republican proposal for a private national bank, he proposed a national banking system with 12 district banks supervised by a Federal Reserve Board. After months of debate, Congress finally passed the Federal Reserve Act in 1914. Ever since, Americans have purchased goods and services using the Federal Reserve Notes (dollar bills) issued by the federally regulated banking system.

Business Regulation Two major pieces of legislation in 1914 completed Wilson's New Freedom program:

1. Clayton Antitrust Act This act strengthened the provisions in the Sherman Antitrust Act for breaking up monopolies. Most important for organized labor, the new law contained a clause exempting unions from being prosecuted as trusts.

2. Federal Trade Commission The new regulatory agency was empowered to investigate and take action against any “unfair trade practice” in every industry except banking and transportation.

Other Reforms Wilson was at first opposed to any legislation that seemed to favor special interests, such as farmers' groups and labor unions. He was finally persuaded, however, to extend his reform program to include the following Progressive measures:

1. Federal Farm Loan Act In 1916, 12 regional federal farm loan banks were established to provide farm loans at low interest rates.

2. Child Labor Act This measure, 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, the Supreme Court found this act to be unconstitutional in the 1918 case of *Hammer v. Dagenhart*.

African Americans in the Progressive Era

In championing greater democracy for the American people, most leaders of the Progressive movement thought only in terms of the white race. African Americans were, for the most part, ignored by Progressive presidents and governors. President Wilson, with a strong southern heritage and many of the racist attitudes of the times, acquiesced to the demands of southern Democrats and permitted 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 blacks were lynched by racist mobs. Few Progressives did anything about segregation and lynching. Most shared in the general prejudice of their times. In addition, many considered other reforms (such as lower tariffs) to be more important than antilynching laws because such reforms benefited everyone, not just one group.

Two Approaches: Washington and Du Bois

Though lacking widespread white support, African-Americans took action to alleviate poverty and discrimination. Economic deprivation and exploitation was one problem; denial of civil rights was another. Which problem was primary was a difficult question that 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 The most influential African American at the turn of the century was the head of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, Booker T. Washington. In his Atlanta Exposition speech in 1895, Washington argued that blacks' 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 goal of political and social equality. (See Chapter 17.)

Du Bois' Stress on Civil Rights Unlike Washington, who had been born into slavery on a southern plantation, W. E. B. Du Bois was a northerner with a college education, who 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.

Washington's pragmatic approach to economic advancement and Du Bois' militant demands for equal rights framed a debate in the African American community that continued throughout much of the 20th century.

The Great "Migration"

At the close of the 19th century, about nine out of ten African Americans lived in the South. In the next century, this ratio steadily shifted toward the North. This internal migration began in earnest between 1910 and 1930 when about a million people traveled north to seek jobs in the cities. Motivating their decision to leave the South were: (1) deteriorating race relations, (2) destruction of their cotton crops by the boll weevil, and (3) job opportunities in northern factories that opened up when white workers were drafted in World War I. The Great Depression in the 1930s slowed migration, but World War II renewed it. 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.

Civil Rights Organizations

Racial discrimination during the Progressive era prompted black leaders to found three powerful civil rights organizations in a span of just six years.

1. 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 blacks. They and others who later joined the group became known as the *Niagara Movement*.
2. 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.
3. Another organization, the National Urban League, was formed in 1911 to help people migrating from the South to northern cities. The league's motto, "Not Alms But Opportunity," reflected its emphasis on self-reliance and economic advancement.

Women, Suffrage, 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. They 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

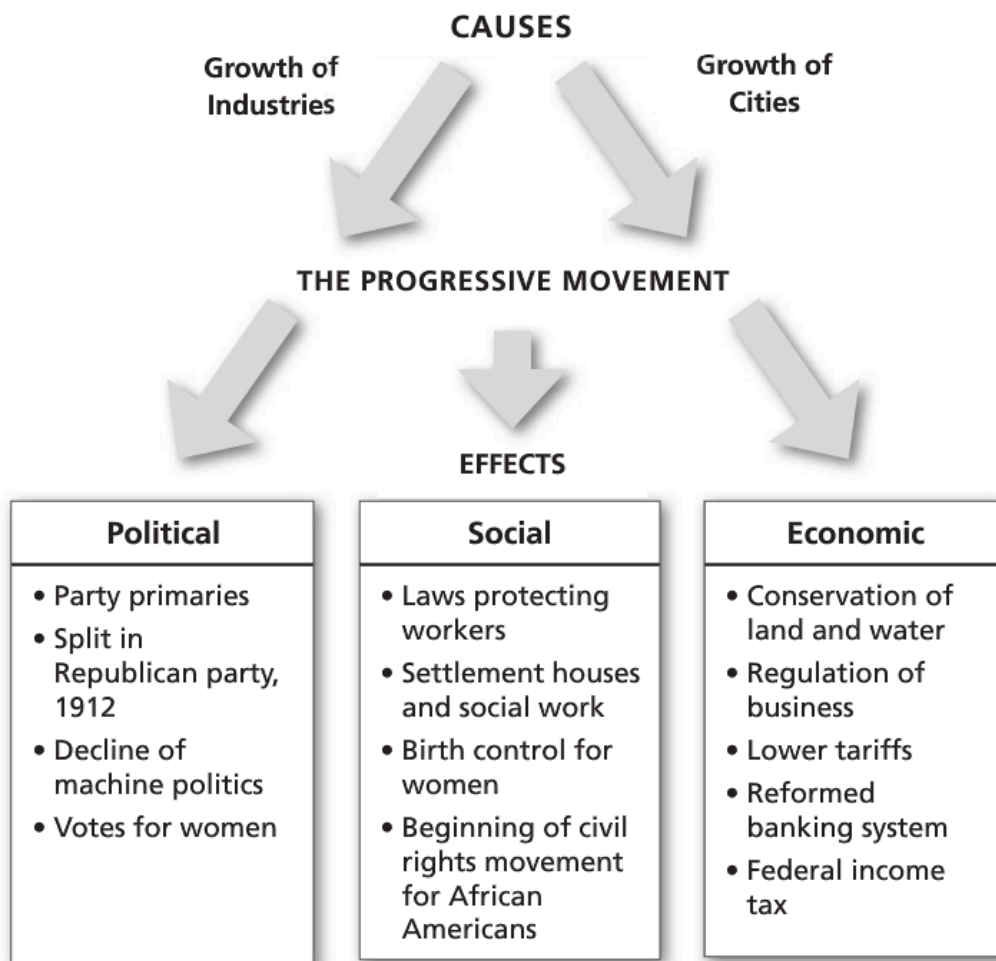
Carrie Chapman Catt, an energetic reformer from Iowa, became the new president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in 1900. Catt argued for the vote as a broadening of democracy which would empower women, thus enabling them to more actively care for their families in an industrial 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 militant 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 Nineteenth 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 as well. 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.



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: REFORM OR REACTION?

Historians have generally agreed that the Progressive movement was a response to industrialization and urbanization. They do not agree, however, on whether the Progressives were truly seeking to move society in new directions or whether they were reacting *against* new trends and attempting to maintain society as it once was.

Progressives saw themselves as genuine reformers, and for many years, historians accepted this view. Historians said that Progressives were simply acting in the tradition of earlier reformers: the Jeffersonians, Jacksonians, and Populists. William Allen White argued that the Progressives adopted the complete Populist package of reforms except for free silver. Historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., thought that U.S.

history moved in a liberal-conservative cycle and that progressivism was a predictable phase in that cycle following the conservatism of late-19th century politics.

Another, complementary view of the Progressives, depicts them not as democratic champions of “the people” but as modernizers who wanted to apply rational, scientific methods to the operations of social and political institutions. Samuel P. Hay’s study of municipal reform, for example, shows that Progressive leaders were an educated, upper-class elite working to make government more efficient under the direction of skilled experts. Some historians fault the Progressive movement’s emphasis on scientific expertise, boards, and commissions for creating institutions that seem to take away power from the voters and elected officials. For example, the chair of the Federal Reserve Board is often considered the second most powerful person in government after the president, but once appointed, this individual is largely independent of the president and Congress.

Those historians who view Progressives as conservatives in disguise—or even as reactionaries—stress how disturbed these citizens were by labor strife, by the agrarian discontent of the Populists, and by signs of revolutionary ferment among the urban masses. Gabriel Kolko argues that the business elite, far from being opposed to government regulation, in fact wanted regulation as a means of stabilizing industry. Kolko points out that the regulation of the meatpacking industry, although inspired by muckraking literature, benefitted the large meatpackers, who lobbied behind the scenes for government controls.

Historians have debated the relationship between Progressives and the working class. Did the middle-class Progressives act out of sympathy for the workers or out of fear of a socialist revolution? George Mowry in the early 1950s characterized the Progressive movement as a reaction of middle-class professionals and small-business owners to pressures both from above (large corporations) and from below (labor unions). In this view, the middle class was attempting to maintain its traditional leadership of society by directing reform. The neglect of unions and African Americans by Progressives provides further evidence that the reformers were conservative at heart.

On the other hand, some historians argue that middle-class motives for reform might have been an expression of that group’s strong sense of social conscience. The Protestant churches had cultivated a sense of responsibility and justice. The muckrakers’ articles stirred their readers’ conscience and aroused genuine feelings of guilt with respect to the poor and outrage with respect to dishonest politics.

KEY TERMS BY THEME

Progressive Movement (CUL)

urban middle class
male and female
white, old stock
Protestants
professional associations
Pragmatism
William James
John Dewey
Frederick W. Taylor
scientific management

Muckrakers (CUL)

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

Voting Rights (POL)

Australian ballot
direct primary
Robert La Follett
Seventeenth Amendment
direct election of senators
initiative, referendum, and recall

City and State Government (POL)

municipal reform
Samuel M. Jones
Tom L. Johnson
commission plan
city manager plan
Charles Evans
Hughes Hiram Johnson
"Wisconsin Idea"
regulatory commissions

Social and Labor Reform (POL)

state Prohibition laws
state regulation of education and safety
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 (POL, ENV)

Square Deal
anthracite coal miners' strike (1902)

trust-busting
bad vs. good trusts
Elkins Act (1903)
Hepburn Act (1906)
Upton Sinclair
The Jungle; Pure Food and Drug Act (1906)
Meat Inspection Act (1906)
conservation of public lands

Newlands Reclamation Act (1902)

White House Conference
Gifford Pinchot

Election of 1912, POL

Socialist Party of America
Eugene V. Debs
Bull Moose party
New Nationalism
New Freedom

William Howard Taft Presidency (POL)

Mann-Elkins Act (1910)
Sixteenth Amendment, federal income tax
Payne-Aldrich Tariff (1909)
firing of Pinchot

Woodrow Wilson Presidency (POL)

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

African Americans (ID, PEO)

racial segregation laws
increased lynching
Booker T. Washington
W. E. B. Du Bois
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Urban League

Women's Movement (ID, POL)

Carrie Chapman Catt
National American Woman Suffrage Association
Alice Paul
National Woman's party
Nineteenth Amendment
League of Women Voters
Margaret Sanger

WORLD WAR I AND ITS AFTERMATH, 1914–1920

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

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

The sequence of events in 1914 leading from peace in Europe to the outbreak of a general war occurred with stunning rapidity:

- SARAJEVO, JUNE 28: A Serbian nationalist assassinates Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand—the heir apparent to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian empire—and his wife.
- VIENNA, JULY 23: The Austrian government issues an ultimatum threatening war against Serbia and invades that country four days later.
- ST. PETERSBURG, JULY 31: Russia, as an ally of Serbia, orders its army to mobilize against Austria.
- BERLIN, AUGUST 1: Germany, as Austria's ally, declares war against Russia.
- BERLIN, AUGUST 3: Germany declares war against France, an ally of Russia, and immediately begins an invasion of neutral Belgium because it offers the fastest route to Paris.
- LONDON, AUGUST 4: Great Britain, as an ally of France, declares war against Germany.

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, as explained above, which pulled all the major European powers into war before calm minds could prevent it. It was a tragedy that haunted generations of future leaders and that motivated President Woodrow Wilson to search for a lasting peace.

President Wilson's first response to the outbreak of the European war was a declaration of U.S. neutrality, in the tradition of Washington and Jefferson, and he called upon the American people to support his policy by not taking sides. However, in trying to steer a neutral course, Wilson soon found that it was difficult—if not impossible—to protect U.S. trading rights and maintain a policy that favored neither the Allied Powers (Great Britain, France, and Russia) nor the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empires of Turkey). 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.

Neutrality

In World War I (as in the War of 1812), the trouble for the United States arose as the belligerent powers tried to stop supplies from reaching the enemy. Having the stronger navy, Great Britain was the first to declare a naval blockade against Germany by mining the North Sea and seizing ships—including U.S. ships—attempting to run the blockade. President Wilson protested British seizure of American ships as a violation of 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 that of the Allied powers, Great Britain and France. In early 1914, before the war began, the United States had been in a business 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.

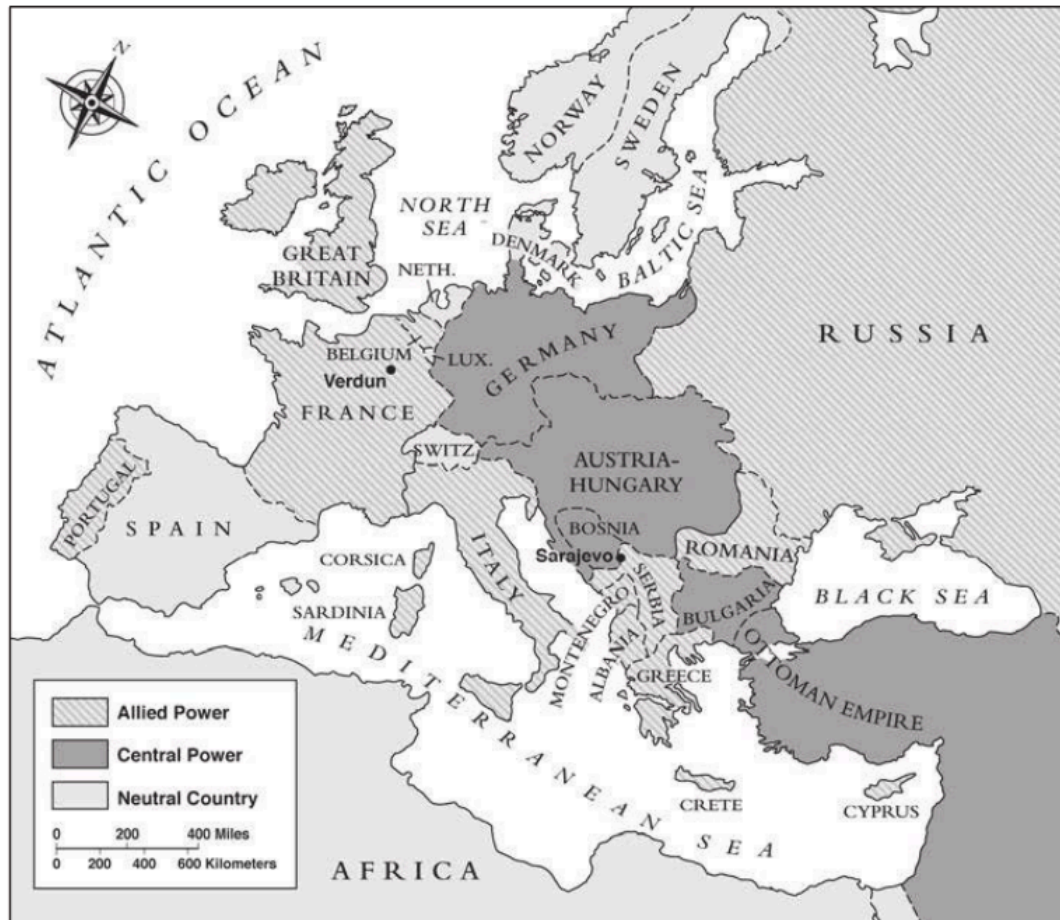
Loans In addition, when the Allies could not finance the purchase of everything they needed, the U.S. government permitted J. P. Morgan and other bankers to extend as much as \$3 billion in secured credit to Britain and France. These loans promoted U.S. prosperity as they sustained the Allies' war effort.

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 immigrants made up over 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).

OPPOSING SIDES IN WORLD WAR I



Overall, though, the majority of native-born Americans wanted the Allies to win. 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, as a person of Scotch-English descent, had long admired the British political system.

British War Propaganda Not only did Britain command the seas but 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 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. Woman 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. 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 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: "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.

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 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 Great Depression New Deal programs. 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. overseas shipment of food 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 promoted 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 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 by 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 both personal income and corporate taxes and placed an excise tax on luxury goods.

Public Opinion and Civil Liberties

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, pamphlets, and volunteer speakers—all urging Americans to watch out for German spies and to "do your bit" for the war.

War hysteria and patriotic enthusiasm provided an excuse for nativist groups to take out 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 the performing of Beethoven's music to the cooking of 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.

Espionage and Sedition Acts A number of socialists and pacifists bravely risked criticizing the government's war policy. The Espionage Act (1917) provided for imprisonment of up to 20 years for persons who either tried to incite rebellion in the armed forces or obstruct the operation of the draft. The Sedition Act (1918) went much further by prohibiting anyone from making "disloyal" or "abusive" remarks about the U.S. government. About 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.

Case of *Schenck v. United States* 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. In 1919, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes concluded that the right to free speech could be limited when it represented a "clear and present danger" to the public safety.

Armed Forces

As soon as war was declared, thousands of young men voluntarily enlisted for military service. Still, the military felt 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.

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.

Migration of Mexicans and African Americans Job opportunities in wartime America, together with the upheavals of the 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. African Americans also took advantage of job opportunities opened up by the war and migrated north.

| African American Population, 1900 to 1960 | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Region | 1900 | 1930 | 1960 |
| Northeast | 385,000 | 1,147,000 | 3,028,000 |
| Midwest | 496,000 | 1,262,000 | 3,446,000 |
| South | 7,923,000 | 9,362,000 | 11,312,000 |
| 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.

Fighting the War

By the time the first U.S. troops were shipped overseas in late 1917, millions of European soldiers on both sides had already died in trench warfare made more murderous 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 was 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.

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, Germany had 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 following broad principles for securing the 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.

EUROPE AFTER WORLD WAR I (1919)



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 a 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. 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. Applying 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. Signers of the treaty would join 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.

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, arguing 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 patriotic loyalty. This political 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 they 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 Believing that his policy could prevail if he could personally rally public support, Wilson boarded a train and went on an arduous speaking tour to the West to make speeches for the League of Nations. On September 25, 1919, he collapsed after delivering a speech in Colorado. He returned to Washington and a few days later 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. It never ratified the Versailles Treaty nor joined the League of Nations.

Postwar Problems

Americans had trouble adjusting from the patriotic fervor of wartime to the economic and social stresses of postwar uncertainties.

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 war production 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, business 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-radical 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, over 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. Their antiunion attitude 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. In the postwar period, 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 Boston, in September, police went on strike to protest the firing of a few police 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, the strike was broken in January 1920.

Race Riots

The migration of African Americans to northern cities during the war increased racial tensions. 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. The worst riot was in Chicago, where 40 people were killed and 500 were injured. Conditions were no better in the South, as racial prejudice and fears of returning African American soldiers led to an increase in racial violence and lynchings by whites.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: WAS WILSON A GOOD PRESIDENT?

Analysis of U.S. involvement in World War I focuses on two questions: (1) Why did the United States go to war, and (2) how did the peace treaty fail? Central to answering both questions is an understanding of the leadership and personality of Woodrow Wilson. Historical interpretations of Wilson from the 1920s to our own times are widely divergent.

Within ten years of the end of World War I, historians such as Harry Elmer Barnes offered highly critical studies of Wilson's policies and motives. They argued that Wilson had strong pro-British sympathies, that his policies favored Britain throughout the period of neutrality, and that the interests of U.S. bankers and arms manufacturers in making war profits influenced Wilson's decision for war. Historians, like most Americans, looked back upon World War I as a tragic mistake. This view remained common through the 1930s.

In the 1940s, after U.S. entry into World War II, historians adopted a "realist" perspective on Wilson. They saw the decision for war as a necessary and unavoidable response to German submarine attacks. They also looked positively on Wilson's commitment to the League of Nations as a pioneering step toward the formation of the United Nations in 1945. The diplomat and historian George F. Kennan argued that Wilson was a pragmatist in foreign policy who recognized the dire consequences to U.S. security if Germany were permitted to overthrow the balance of power in Europe.

More recent historians have looked on Wilson favorably. Arthur S. Link portrayed him as a gifted leader who responded appropriately to both British and German violations of U.S. neutral rights and who was forced by events outside his control into a war he did not want. Link also believes that the primary motivation for Wilson's war message of 1917 was his desire for the United States to play a leading role in the peacemaking process. Arno J. Mayer and Gordon Levin believed that Wilson skillfully combined his democratic ideals with consideration for U.S. economic and strategic interests. They pointed out how the president's efforts to ensure free trade and self-determination and to end colonialism and militarism served the purpose of advancing liberal capitalism. According to Levin, Wilson's motivations went beyond economics. His championing of the League of Nations transcended narrow U.S. self-interest and reflected a vision of a new world order based on collective security.

KEY NAMES, EVENTS, AND TERMS

Causes of WWI (WOR)

Allied power
Central Powers
neutrality
submarine warfare
Lusitania
Sussex pledge
propaganda
ethnic support

Debate over War (WOR)

preparedness
election of 1916
Robert LaFollette
Jeannette Rankin
Edward House
Zimmermann telegram
Russian Revolution
declaration of war

Mobilization (POL)

war industry boards
Food Administration
Railroad Administration
National War Labor Board
taxes and bonds
Selective Service Act
service of African Americans

Civil Liberties (POL)

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

Social Impact of the War (PEO, WXT)

wartime jobs for women
attitudes toward suffrage
migration of blacks and Hispanics

Fighting in Europe, (WOR)

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

Peace Treaty (WOR)

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

Debate over Treaty (POL)

election of 1918
Henry Cabot Lodge
Irreconcilables
Reservationists
Wilson’s stroke
rejection of treaty

Aftermath of War (WXT, POL, PEO)

recession, loss of jobs
falling farm prices
Red Scare
anti-radical hysteria
Palmer raids
xenophobia
strikes of 1919
Boston police strike
race riots