Chapter 9 – The Progressive Presidents
(1900-1920)

8.1 Roosevelt Becomes President

Sept, 1901 – William McKinley shot in Buffalo NY, by Leon Czolgosz (CHAWL-gawsh)

I. Roosevelt’s Path to the Presidency
   • Vice Pres. Theodore Roosevelt takes presidency 1901 September
   • From wealthy family
   • Sympathetic to problems of less fortunate
   • Harvard University
   • New York state legislature
   • Moderate reformer
   • Stubborn streak
   • Death of first wife, Alice Lee, 1884
   • Left politics moved to Dakotas
   • Ranch for several years
   • Rugged outdoorsman
   • Returned politics
   • Governor of New York
   • McKinley’s vice presidential candidate in 1900
   • Remarried to Edith Carow
   • Believed president should be an active leader
   • Pushed for legislation
   • Aggressively used executive powers
   • Responsive to public opinion

II. Labor and Business
   • Believed – balance interests of business, labor and consumers
   • Prevent one from taking advantage
   • Pennsylvania coal miners’ strike –1902
   • UMW –pay 8 hour and acceptance of union
   • 150,000 miners went on strike
   • lasted several months
   • vital concern to whole nation – heating for winter
   • went to arbitration
   • threatened to take over mines
   • The Square Deal = treat every citizen fairly
   • Roosevelt’s actions helped unions to bargain
   • All three business, labor and consumers promised a square deal
III. Roosevelt Takes on the Trusts
   • Regulation of trusts high priority for Roosevelt
   • “good” trusts and “bad” trusts
   • good trust = efficient and provided goods and services at reasonable prices
   • bad trust = restricted trade unfairly and high prices
   • goal = shut down bad trusts allow the good ones to stay
   • Northern Securities Company
   • Monopoly on major lines in NW
   • 1902 ordered justice dept to prosecute under Sherman Antitrust Act
   • J.P. Morgan visited and offered to make right
   • 1904 Supreme Court upholds Sherman Antitrust Act
   • dissolved Northern Securities sent a warning to large corporations
   • Roosevelt supported legislation regulation railroads and shipping rates
   • Reputation as a trustbuster

IV. 1904 Election
   • Roosevelt had public support
   • Antitrust angered business leaders
   • Some feared expansion of fed govt
   • Democrats chose NY judge Alton Parker
   • Parker accused Roosevelt of being a radical
   • Roosevelt expert at dealing with press
   • Charmed public
   • Parker neither well known or gifted speaker
   • Huge victory in November 1904

V. Roosevelt and the Muckrakers
   • AMA called for food standards and proper labeling
   • Congress resisted reforms
   • 1906 the Jungle Upton Sinclair
   • exposed practices of meatpacking industry
   • Roosevelt launched a federal investigation
   • June 1906 = Pure Food and Drug Act prohibited manufacture, sale or transportation of mislabeled or contaminated food and drugs sold in interstate commerce
   • Meat Inspection Act – required inspection of meat plants

VI. Conservation
   • Conservation = movement to protect nature and its resources
   • Roosevelt read many books on birds and wildlife
   • American Museum of Natural History founded by his father
   • Hunter and bird watcher
   • Two different points of view
   • Preservationists v, conservationists
• Preservationist=nature should be preserved because of its beauty
• Conservationists=wanted to manage the use of natural resources more efficiently
• both fought together to establish national and state parks
• Foundation of wildlife refuges
• Mining, logging and railroad companies opposed the efforts made during the Progressive Era
• 150 million acres of public land moved under the control of the Forest Service
• equal in size to great Britain and France combined
• Doubled number of national parks
• National Park Service created in 1916

8.2 The Taft Administration

I. William Howard Taft
   • Supported by Roosevelt
   • Secretary of war under Roosevelt
A. The reluctant President
   • Born in Ohio in 1857
   • Moderately wealthy
   • Legal career
   • Second in class at Yale
   • Variety of appointed offices
   • 8 yrs as U.S. Circuit Court judge
   • ambition to be supreme court chief justice
   • disliked political campaigns
   • encouraged by Roosevelt to run
   • easily defeated Democrat William Jennings Bryan 1908

B. Taft and Roosevelt
   • unenthusiastic speaker
   • didn’t like interviews
   • supported regulation of big business
   • promised to continue Roosevelt’s reforms
   • strongly believed law, not beliefs, must guide a leader
   • Taft was more cautious than Roosevelt
   • Believed Roosevelt claimed too much Presidential power
   • Opposed to progressive reforms such as recall

II. Taft Angers Progressives
A. Reforms Under Taft
   • Replaced much of Roosevelt’s cabinet with corporate lawyers
   • Started 90 antitrust lawsuits – double Roosevelt
   • US Steel, International Harvester and Standard Oil
• Progressives wanted laws to eliminate trusts entirely
• Business upset at prosecution
• Roosevelt claimed Taft was failing to distinguish between good and bad trust

B. The Tariff
• Republicans favored existing high tariff rates
• Made imports more expensive
• Protected American industries from competition
• Progressives and democrats believed it made cost of living too high
• Hurt American business to sell goods overseas
• **Payne-Aldrich Tariff** 1909 – reduced many tariffs but raised others

III. A Conservation Controversy
• Often felt misunderstood by public
• Chief of Forestry Gifford Pinchot
• Pinchot accused Secretary of the Interior Richard Ballinger of siding with big business and hurting conservation efforts
• Taft fired Pinchot
• Outraged conservationists including Roosevelt
• Congress launched and investigation of Ballinger
• Made Taft’s administration look bad
• Taft unable to win back progressive support

IV. Roosevelt and the Progressive Party
• Election of 1912
• Lost public support
• Republicans lost control of the House in 1910

A. the New Nationalism
• Roosevelt remained politically active
• New Nationalism - Called for strong executive, more active business regulation and passage of additional social welfare measures
• Angered Taft
• Began working to undermine Roosevelt
• Many progressives agreed with Roosevelt
• 1912 - 9 governors sent him a letter asking him to run for a third term
• Roosevelt decided to run

B. The Bull Moose Party
• Roosevelt began traveling around the country to challenge Taft for the republican nomination
• In states with direct primaries, Roosevelt was the clear winner
• Twice as many votes
• Roosevelt lost the nomination to Taft in a party convention controlled by Taft’s supporters
• Roosevelt and followers formed the Progressive Party
• Nicknamed Bull Moose Party
• Built its platform around Roosevelt’s New Nationalism.
• Promised more political power to the people

V. The Election of 1912

A. The Republicans Split
• Progressive party had to organize quickly
• Had to get on ballot
• Compete with democratic and republican political machines
• Roosevelt shot in Milwaukee, Wisconsin before a speech
• Gave the speech

B. Woodrow Wilson
• Democrats ran pro reform candidate Woodrow Wilson
• Born in Virginia
• Earned PhD in history from Johns Hopkins University
• Professor in 1890
• President of Princeton University
• Democratic nomination for governor of NJ in 1910
• Reforms while governor received national attention
• The New Freedom – government action against monopolies to ensure free competition.
• Challenged big business, encouraged small businesses and supported reducing the tariff rate
• Won approval as he toured the nation
• Independence from traditional machine politics
• did not receive a majority of the popular vote, but won a majority of electoral votes

8.3 Woodrow Wilson’s Reforms

I. Wilson in Office
• Wilson established himself as the clear leader of his administration
• Capable manager
• Good public speaker
• Seemed cold and proud
• Strong moral beliefs
• Practical about political issues
• Private about his ideas
• Wrote many official papers on his own
• Established regular press meetings
• Rarely answered questions directly
• Refused to be directly quoted
• First Democrat to be elected president in 20 years
• Democratic Party controlled both houses of Congress
• Appointed many democrats to government positions
• Brought many southern politicians into his administration
• First president since Thomas Jefferson to promote legislation in person before congress

II. Economic Reforms
• During his campaign two key economic issues: tariff reduction and banking reform

A. A New Tariff
• Believed lower tariff rates would help consumers
• Underwood Tariff Act of 1913 – resulted in lowest tariff rates in many years
• Also introduced a version of income tax
• US Supreme Court ruled income taxes unconstitutional
• Sixteenth Amendment February 1913 allowed federal government to pass direct taxes, such as income taxes

B. Reforming the Banking Industry
• Were no national regulations governing banks
• Lack of agreement on the issue among democrats
• Strong opposition from republican leaders
• Federal Reserve Act December 1913
• Created a banking system called the Federal Reserve
• Made up of 12 regional Federal Reserve banks as well as privately owned banks
• Overseen by independent decision making body that controls banking policy
• Federal Reserve has also become responsible for regulation bank deposits and interest rates

III. Regulating Big Business
• Wilson wanted a more powerful version of the Sherman Antitrust Act
• Clayton Antitrust Act October 1914
• Strengthened federal laws against monopolies
• Stated that labor unions had the right to bargain collectively and go on strike
• Prevented the new law from being used against organized labor as the Sherman antitrust act had been
• Samuel Gompers praised the Clayton Antitrust Act
• State and federal courts continued to favor business interests
• FTC – Federal Trade Commission - 1914
• FTC – five person commission
• Broad powers to examine company records and investigate business practices
• FTC able to issue restraining orders to stop unfair trade practices
• Today enforces business regulations and establishes standards for advertising and product labeling

IV. Changes in Policy
• Wilson believed many social issues were best addressed by state governments