Chapter 29: “Progressivism and the Republican Roosevelt”  
~ 1901 – 1912 ~

1. Desire to remedy problems through government initiative  
2. Reliance on “experts”  
3. -- Robert La Follette’s “Wisconsin Idea”  
4. Wanted reform not revolution  
5. Stressed the importance of efficiency in reform  
   --Frederick W. Taylor

6. Want to bring order out of chaos  
   – Creation of NCAA in 1910  
   – Federal Budget (1921)

7. Desire to make politics more democratic  

8. Desire to make businessmen more responsible for their actions

9. Desire to make society more fair and more just  
10. Desire to distribute income more equitably  
11. Desire to broaden opportunities for individual advancement  
12. Women were active in progressivism  
   --Suffragettes like Susan B. Anthony

13. Infiltrated both political parties  
14. Middle-class reform movement  
15. Limited demand for Black civil rights  
16. Operated on all three levels of government
Political Platform (national level)
17. Graduated Income Tax (16th Amendment 1913)
18. The Direct Primary
19. Initiative, Referendum and Recall
20. The Secret Ballot
21. Campaign funding reform
22. Direct Election of Senators (17th Amendment 1913)
23. Vote for Women
24. Extension of Pendleton

Political Platform (local level)
25. Innovative changes in city government
-- city managers and commission model
26. Strong mayors and governors
   - Robert LaFollette and WI. used the Wisconsin System to decrease influence of Big Bidness.
   - Hiram Johnson and CA. Hiram Johnson went after the RR's in Ca.
   - Charles Evans Hughes and NY: regulated the NY Gas and Insurance Co's.
   - And of course-----Teddy and NYC

Progressive Roots
• The purpose of the Progressive Movement was to use the government as an agency of human welfare.
• America had 76 million people in the 1900s, mostly in good condition.

Progressive Roots
• The Progressives had their roots in the Greenback Labor Party of the 1870s and 1880s and the Populist Party of the 1890s.
• In 1894, Henry Demarest Lloyd exposed the corruption of the monopoly of the Standard Oil Company with his book Wealth Against Commonwealth, while Thorstein Veblen criticized the new rich (those who made money from the trusts) in The Theory of the Leisure Class (1899).

The Theory of the Leisure Class
• Thesis:
  - Society has not changed since early tribes:
    • 2 classes: Leisure class and Labor Class
    • Early Tribes: Leisure class hunted and battled, labor class cooked, farmed, etc.
    • 1900: Leisure class (white-collar workers), labor class did backbreaking menial labor
  - Leisure classes uses direct and indirect coercion to keep their position
    • Middle Ages: Only noblemen allowed to hunt and fight
      • Early religious leaders were Leisure class (ability to provoke the anger of God to keep people subjected to menial labor)
    • 1900: Duty of Nationalism, American Dream, etc. keeps laborers indirectly subjected to higher class
      • Lack of union support in Government, Control of Congress by trusts keep labor down.
Progressive Roots

• Socialists (Eugene Debs) and feminists gained strength.
  – People like Jane Addams and Lillian Wald, women entered the Progressive fight.

Raking Muck with the Muckrakers

• Beginning about 1902, a group of aggressive ten- and fifteen-cent popular magazines, such as Cosmopolitan, Collier’s, and Everybody's, began flinging the dirt about the trusts.
  • In 1902, Lincoln Steffens launched a series of articles in McClure's entitled “The Shame of the Cities,” in which he unmasked the corrupt alliance between big business and the government.
  • Ida M. Tarbell launched a devastating expose against Standard Oil.

Raking Muck with the Muckrakers

• David G. Phillips charged that 75 of the 90 U.S. Senators did not represent the people but actually the railroads and trusts.
  • Ray Stannard Baker's “Following the Color Line” was about the illiteracy of Blacks.
  • John Spargo's The Bitter Cry of the Children exposed child labor.

Political Progressivism

• Progressives were mostly middle-class citizens who felt squeezed by both the big trusts above and the restless immigrant hordes working for cheap labor that came from below.
  • The Progressives favored the “initiative” so that voters could directly propose legislation, the “referendum” so that the people could vote on laws that affected them, and the “recall” to take bad officials off from their positions.

Progressivism in the Cities and States

• Progressive cities either used expert-staffed commissions to manage urban affairs or the city-manager system, which was designed to take politics out of municipal administration.
  • Urban reformers tackled “slumlords,” juvenile delinquency, and wide-open prostitution.
  • In Wisconsin, Governor Robert M. La Follette wrestled control from the trusts and returned power to the people, becoming a Progressive leader in the process.
  • Other states also took to regulate railroads and trusts, such as Oregon and California, which was led by Governor Hiram W. Johnson.
  • Charles Evans Hughes, governor of New York, gained fame by investigating the malpractices of gas and insurance companies.
Battling Social Ills

- Progressives also made major improvements in the fight against child labor, especially after a 1911 fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in NYC burned up 146 workers, mostly young women.
- The landmark case of Muller vs. Oregon (1908) found attorney Louis D. Brandeis persuading the Supreme Court to accept the constitutionality of laws that protected women workers.
  - His argument?: Girls are weaker and needed special laws protecting them!

Battling Social Ills

- Alcohol also came under the attack of Progressives, as prohibitionist organizations like the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, founded by Frances E. Willard, (WCTU) and the Anti-Saloon League were formed.
- Finally, in 1919, the 18th Amendment prohibited the sale and drinking of alcohol.

TR's Square Deal for Labor

- The Progressivism spirit touched President Roosevelt, and his "Square Deal" embraced the three Cs:
  - control of the corporations,
  - consumer protection, and the
  - conservation of the United States' natural resources.

TR's Square Deal for Labor

- In 1902, a strike broke out in the anthracite coal mines of Pennsylvania, and some 140,000 workers demanded a 20% pay increase and the reduction of the workday to nine hours.
- Finally, after the owners refused to negotiate and the lack of coal was getting to the freezing schools, hospitals, and factories during that winter, TR threatened to seize the mines and operate them with federal troops.
- As a result, the workers got a 10% pay increase and a 9-hour workday, but their union was not officially recognized as a bargaining agent.

TR's Square Deal for Labor

- In 1903, the Department of Commerce and Labor was formed, a part of which was the Bureau of Corporations, which was allowed to probe businesses engaged in interstate commerce; it was highly useful in "trust-busting."
TR Corrals the Corporations

• The 1887-formed Interstate Commerce Commission had proven to be inadequate, so in 1903, Congress passed the Elkins Act, which heavily fined RR's that gave rebates and the shippers that accepted them.
• The Hepburn Act restricted the free passes from railroad to loyal customers and set a maximum rate for shipping.
• TR decided that there were "good trusts" and "bad trusts," and set out to control the "bad trusts," such as the Northern Securities Company, which was organized by J.P. Morgan and James J. Hill.
• In 1904, the Supreme Court upheld TR's antitrust suit and ordered Northern Securities to dissolve, a decision that angered Wall Street but helped TR's image.

Caring of the Consumer

• In 1906, significant improvements in the meat industry were passed, such as the Meat Inspection Act, which decreed that the preparation of meat shipped over state lines would be subject to federal inspection from corral to can.
• Upton Sinclair's The Jungle enlightened the American public to the horrors of the meatpacking industry, thus helping to force changes.
• The Pure Food and Drug Act tried to prevent the adulteration and mislabeling of foods and pharmaceuticals.
• Another reason for new acts was to make sure European markets could trust American beef and other meat.

Earth Control

• The Forest Reserve Act of 1891 authorized the president to set aside land to be protected as national parks.
• Under this statute, some 46 million acres of forest were rescued.
• Roosevelt, a sportsman in addition to all the other things he was, realized the values of conservation, and persuaded other conservationists like Gifford Pinchot, head of the federal Division of Forestry, he helped initiate massive conservation projects.
• The Newlands Act of 1902 initiated irrigation projects for the western states while the giant Roosevelt Dam, built on the Arizona River, was dedicated in 1911.

Federal Lands in the U.S.
The “Roosevelt Panic” of 1907

- In 1904, TR announced that he would not seek the presidency in 1908, since he would have, in effect, served two terms by then.
- In 1907, a short but sharp panic on Wall Street placed TR at the center of its blame, with conservatives criticizing him, but he lashed back, and besides all, the panic died down.
- In 1908, congress passed the Aldrich-Vreeland Act, which authorized national banks to issue emergency currency backed by various kinds of collateral.
- This would lead to the momentous Federal Reserve Act of 1913.

The Rough Rider Thunders Out

- TR left the presidency to go on a lion hunt, survived, and returned, still with much energy.
- He had established many precedents and had helped ensure that the new trusts would fit capitalism and have healthy adult lives helping the American people.
- TR protected against socialism, was a great conservationist, expanded the powers of the presidency, shaped the progressive movement, launched the Square Deal, a precursor to the New Deal that would come later, and opened American eyes to the fact that America shared the world with other nations, so it couldn’t be isolationist.

Taft: A Round Peg in a Square Hole

- William Taft was a mild progressive, quite jovial, quite fat, and passive, but he was also sensitive to criticism and not as liberal as Roosevelt.

The Dollar Goes Abroad as Diplomat

- Taft urged Americans to invest abroad, in a policy called Dollar Diplomacy, which called to Wall Street bankers to sluice their surplus dollars into foreign areas of strategic concern to the U.S., especially in the Far East and in the regions critical to the security of the Panama Canal, or otherwise, rival powers like Germany might weaken U.S. trade.
- Taft also pumped U.S. dollars into Honduras and Haiti, whose economies were stagnant, while in Cuba, the same Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua, American forces were brought in to restore order after unrest.

Taft the Trustbuster

- In his four years of office, Taft brought 90 suits against trusts.
- In 1911, the Supreme Court ordered the dissolution of the Standard Oil Company (34 indep. Companies).
- Rockefeller owned stock in most of the new Companies and became richest man in the world because of the break-up.
- After Taft tried to break apart U.S. Steel, he increasingly became TR’s antagonist.

Taft Splits the Republican Party

- While Taft did establish the Bureau of Mines to control mineral resources, his participation in the Ballinger-Pinchot quarrel of 1910, in which Secretary of the Interior Richard Ballinger opened public lands in Wyoming, Montana, and Alaska to corporate development and was criticized by Pinchot, who was then fired by Taft.
- In the spring of 1910, the Republican Party was split between the Progressives and the Old Guard that Taft supported, and Democrats emerged with a landslide in the House.
- Socialist Victor L. Berger was elected from Milwaukee (served one term – proposed elimination of the veto, Senate, and nationalization of industry).
The Taft-Roosevelt Rupture

• In 1911, the National Progressive Republican League was formed, with La Follette as its leader, but in February 1912, TR began dropping hints that he wouldn’t mind being nominated by the Republicans, his reason being that he had meant no third consecutive term, not third term overall.
• Rejected by the Taft supporters of the Republicans, TR became a candidate on the Progressive ticket, shoving La Follette aside.
• In the Election of 1912, it would be Theodore Roosevelt versus William H. Taft versus the Democratic candidate, whoever that was to be.

Let’s Review

• Progressives:
  – Government is problem solver
  – Lloyd and Veblen
  – Muckrackers
  – Feminists (suffrage and 19th amendment)
  – Prohibition (18th amendment)
  – Local Governments
    • City managers (politics out of the city)

• Theodore Roosevelt:
  – Square Deal
    • Control Corporations
    • Protect Consumers
    • Conservation
  – Major laws:
    • Aldrich-Vreeland Act 1908
    • Banking
    • Newlands Act – Conservation
    • Meat Inspection Act
    • Pure Food and Drug Act
    • Elkins and Hepburn Acts – RR regulation

Review!

• Taft:
  – Fat Man!
  – Picked by T.R. to replace him
    • “my policies”
  – Trustbuster:
    • Standard Oil – 1911
    • U.S. Steel (angered T.R.)
  – Dollar Diplomacy

• Election of 1912:
  – T.R. comes back to run again
  – Taft (conservative Republicans) vs. Roosevelt (Progressive Party) vs. Wilson (Democrats) vs. Debs (Socialist)
  – T.R. and Taft split the Republican vote
  – Wilson (Democrat) wins
  – Debs receives 900,000 votes