

## Chapter 22, The Battle for National Reform

### Theodore Roosevelt and the Modern Presidency

- I. The Accidental President
  - A. When William McKinley died of assassination, vice president, Roosevelt, a young (42 year old) cowboy became president
  - B. “Wild man” reputation; rancher in Dakota badlands, captured outlaws, NYC police commissioner, San Juan Hill hero, fiery politician; champion of moderate change
- II. Government, Capital, and Labor
  - A. Roosevelt’s Vision—government mediated public good, president was core, allied with regulation, not destruction of trusts
  - B. Roosevelt wanted to allow government to investigate corporations; Department of Commerce and Labor (part of Bureau of Corporations) was at the heart of these investigations
  - C. Northern Securities Company—Sherman Antitrust Act (1902) was made to break up railroad monopoly in the northwest; JP Morgan was not very happy; Roosevelt was not notorious for breaking up trusts, but did it occasionally when they got out of control
  - D. Roosevelt intervened on strikes for both employers and employees depending on the case; usually he did not allow all demands but regulated and mediated disputes
- III. “The Square Deal”
  - A. Roosevelt was able to neutralize opposition from all Republicans during his first term and after winning a landslide victory, he could focus on his main goal: Reform
  - B. Boasted about his coal strike “Square Deal” to give everyone a fair deal
  - C. Hepburn Act—a conservative reform bill for railroad regulation
  - D. Pure Food and Drug Act—After Upton Sinclair’s book *The Jungle* came out, workplace reforms and food industry reforms sprouted from Roosevelt
- IV. Roosevelt and Conservation
  - A. Roosevelt had a romantic feeling toward wilderness
  - B. Added to national forest system
  - C. Took active interest toward conservation
  - D. Public land was actually for carefully monitored development back then, not ecological reasons like today
  - E. Aesthetic reasons were considered throughout
  - F. Federal Aid to the West—GOP supported public reclamation and irrigation projects; Newlands Act was for dams, reservoirs, etc.
- V. Roosevelt and Preservation
  - A. Shared concerns of naturalists, wanted aesthetic value of wilderness
  - B. National Park system (forests were for lumber, parks were for pleasure) was developed; Yellowstone was the first
- VI. The Hetch Hetchy Controversy
  - A. Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park was beautiful to naturalists, a good place for a dam to industrialists
  - B. Gifford Pinchot, chief forester, decided to build a dam to help San Francisco after a terrible earthquake
  - C. John Muir advocated aesthetic value, dam consumed his life
  - D. Pinchot wanted practical used of nature
  - E. It was a setback for naturalists but many new pro-preservation followers were mobilized
- VII. The Panic of 1907
  - A. After American production overflowed without a market, economy crashed to recession
  - B. Tennessee Coal and Iron Company—conservatives blamed Roosevelt for recession; Roosevelt allowed business leaders to work for recovery on their own, JP Morgan used US Steel to buy the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company from a NY bank; Roosevelt would not break it up, panic soon subsided
  - C. Roosevelt was loved by most but after the Panic of 1907, he did not run in 1908; “retired” (briefly)

## The Troubled Succession

*William Howard Taft assumed the White House in 1909 on a “wave of good feeling;” he was accepted by GOP and progressives. He left, however, with a broken GOP and a Democratic administration. He was unable to please both groups and thus failed.*

- I. Taft and Progressives
  - A. Payne-Aldrich Tariff—lowered protective tariffs to please progressives; feeble plan, angered progressives because of passivity
  - B. Ballinger-Pinchot Dispute—basically ruined Taft, an administration ruled in favor of an anti-progressive and angered progressives permanently
- II. The Return of Roosevelt
  - A. Roosevelt had been hunting in Africa during this but when he came back in 1910, he realized he was the only one left to reunite Republicans
  - B. “New Nationalism”—acted very liberal in a speaking tour, supported graduated income and inheritance taxes, workers’ compensation for accidents, regulation of labor, etc.
- III. Spreading Insurgency
  - A. Progressive incumbents were reelected continuously
  - B. Progressive Republicans and Democrats controlled the government but Roosevelt refused to run for president again; he just wanted to pressure Taft to return to progressivism
  - C. After Taft sued US Steel for the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company issue, Roosevelt started to change his mind
  - D. Robert La Follette gave up candidacy, Roosevelt decided to run
- IV. Roosevelt versus Taft
  - A. Roosevelt won primaries, La Follette won very little, Taft was the party leaders’ choice
  - B. Convention ended up nominating Taft, Roosevelt dramatically said “We stand at Armageddon”
  - C. The Progressive Party—Roosevelt’s supporters called themselves the Progressive Party, he nominated himself as the candidate, battle was hopeless however against Democratic candidate

## Woodrow Wilson and the New Freedom

- I. Woodrow Wilson
  - A. From NJ!!
  - B. Wilson’s “New Freedom”—passed progressive legislation as governor of NJ, was also the president of Princeton
  - C. He accepted conglomeration and supported regulation of business
  - D. However, he was more on the side of Brandeis and was against bigness
  - E. Republicans split votes, anticlimactically, Wilson won in an electoral college landslide
- II. The Scholar as President
  - A. Wilson was bold and forceful
  - B. Colonel Edward M. House was his Texas friend and advisor
  - C. Lowering the Tariff—Democratic and Progressive goal; cuts were so large that they made real competition and threatened American trusts
  - D. Sixteenth Amendment approved graduated income tax
  - E. Federal Reserve Act—major reform in American banking: funds were spread out, federal reserve notes (dollar bills) were issued and backed by US, money could be shifted quickly to troubled areas; national Federal Reserve Board regulated it
  - F. Federal Trade Commission Act—monitored businesses, allowed them to determine if their actions were acceptable; increased regulatory measures
  - G. Clayton Antitrust Bill—Wilson lost interest in this vigorous pursuit of monopoly
- III. Retreat and Advance
  - A. Did not support women’s suffrage or many civil rights
  - B. Needed to do a lot of reform to win reelection
  - C. Appointed Brandeis to Supreme Court as a major reform (Jewish and Progressive, two firsts)
  - D. Child Labor Laws—Keating-Owen Act (1916) was the first federal law to regulate child labor
  - E. After Keating-Owen Act was struck down by the court as unconstitutional, Wilson proposed a huge tax on child-made products

## The “Big Stick”: American and the World, 1901-1917

*Foreign affairs were not interesting to the public and even the senate before WWI so the president exercised of power as the leader of a major country.*

- I. Roosevelt and “Civilization”
  - A. Roosevelt believed in using American power in the world actively
  - B. “Speak softly and carry a big stick”
  - C. Civilized/uncivilized distinction: white Anglo-Saxons and Teutonics were civilized as well as those country with economies (Japan)
  - D. Civilized: industrial goods, uncivilized: raw goods
  - E. Civilized could interfere with uncivilized to preserve stability of both
  - F. Sea power helped this, Roosevelt’s navy was almost as big as Great Britain’s by 1906
- II. Protecting the “Open Door” in Asia
  - A. 1904—Japan attacks Russian fort
  - B. Roosevelt wanted to mediate conflict so neither nation became powerful in Manchuria (part of China that Japan and Russia wanted)
  - C. In NH, Roosevelt administered Nobel Peace Prize-winning treaties that ended the Russo-Japanese War including provisions such as less expansion from Japan but recognition of newly required territories
  - D. Great White Fleet—Japan became dominant power in Pacific so Roosevelt sent 16 battleships painted white to remind Japan of US power (Big Stick)
- III. The Iron-Fisted Neighbor
  - A. Latin America was an interest of Roosevelt and many Americans
  - B. 1902—Venezuela was in financial trouble so they went back on debts to Europe; Germany bombarded Venezuelan ports so Roosevelt used Navy as a threat
  - C. Roosevelt added “Roosevelt Corollary” to Monroe Doctrine saying that the US could intervene in neighbors if they were having trouble because it was their fault that Germany came in the first place
  - D. 1903—Dominican Republic has new regime that picked up \$22 million in debt to Europe from the old one: for three decades Roosevelt set up a customs system to help pay for debts
  - E. Platt Amendment—named after PA senator Thomas Platt, an amendment to Cuban constitution so the US would recognize them as a country: US had the right to keep out intruders in Cuba
- IV. The Panama Canal
  - A. Roosevelt turned sights from Nicaragua with its sea level possibilities to the Isthmus of Panama in Colombia where attempts had already occurred
  - B. John Hay, Roosevelt’s secretary of state met with Tomas Herrén of Colombia in Washington who agreed under pressure to the US having rights to a 6-mile wide canal zone for \$10 million plus rent
  - C. Colombian senate called for \$20 million
  - D. Philippe Bunau-Varilla was the chief engineer in the earlier failed French canal project, he organized and financed a revolution in Panama, U.S.S. *Nashville* went to “maintain order,” Panama became its own nation and agreed to terms
  - E. Ingenious use of foreign policy
- V. Taft and “Dollar Diplomacy”
  - A. Philander C. Knox, secretary of state, invested US money in other underdeveloped regions
  - B. Taft was not interested in stability
  - C. 1909 Intervention in Nicaragua—US sided with insurgents, invested money in new government and protected them from revolutions
- VI. Diplomacy and Morality
  - A. Wilson would face the most trying foreign tasks of any previous (or subsequent?) president
  - B. Dominican Republic—US set up military state there after they refused to become a virtual American protectorate
  - C. Haiti—US stayed there after Wilson sent troops to quell a revolution
  - D. Bought Danish West Indies from Denmark to keep it from Germany and called it the Virgin Islands

- E. Wilson signed a treaty with Nicaragua to assure that they wouldn't make treaties for canals with other countries
- F. His foreign policy in the above cases was generally like that of Roosevelt and Taft
- G. Moral Diplomacy became evident in dealings with Mexico
  1. American businessmen had been becoming powerful in Mexico during the Porfirio Díaz regime but when Francisco Madero took over as leader, Taft hired general Victoriano Huerta to start an insurrection
  2. However, Woodrow Wilson went back on this saying "he would never recognize Huerta's 'government of butchers.'"
  3. Wilson used a minor incident when Mexico mistakenly arrested US sailors and refused to salute US flag for penance as a reason for seizing Veracruz, a Mexican port
  4. US had a bloody fight and was on the brink of war, Wilson wanted out
  5. Huerta was forced to flee after Carranza seized Mexico City
  6. US recognized Carranza but not a former lieutenant (turned bandit) named Pancho Villa
  7. He killed multiple Americans, including some in NM
  8. General JOHN J. PERSHING led American troops to get Villa with the permission of Mexico, after a few skirmishes and never finding him, the US pulled away
- H. Sights were turning to Europe and brewing conflict there

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