

1902
United Mine Workers strike over low wages

1905
United States Forest Service established

1908
Muller v. Oregon

1911
Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire

1913
Sixteenth and Seventeenth amendments ratified

1913
Department of Labor formed

1900

1910

1920

2 Progressive Legislation

SECTION PREVIEW

Objectives

- 1 Describe urban reforms that took place during the Progressive Era.
- 2 Summarize the reforms made in state government that gave voters more power.
- 3 List the reforms that took place at the federal level.
- 4 **Key Terms** Define: direct primary; initiative; referendum; recall; holding company.

Main Idea

Because of public demand, local, state, and federal legislatures enacted a number of progressive reforms in the early 1900s.

Reading Strategy

Organizing Information As you read this section, create a chart listing the major progressive reforms made at the local, state, and federal levels.

Public demand for change led to a tremendous amount of legislation in the early 1900s. Reform took place at all levels of government—city, state, and federal.

Urban Reforms

Many of the earliest progressive reforms were made at the city level. Cities were home to most of the settlement workers, club members, and professionals who were pushing many of the reforms. Thus, they were on hand to maintain the pressure for change.

Attacking the Bosses Political machines and bosses sustained heavy criticism during the Progressive Era. For the most part, they were able to survive such attacks. New York City provides a good example. In 1896 Columbia University president Seth Low ran for mayor, supported by municipal reformers. To help his campaign against Tammany Hall's ward bosses, settlement houses sent children out to post handbills in their neighborhoods. Low lost the election, but he tried again in 1901 and won. But the Tammany Hall machine returned to power in the next elec-

tion. Over the following decades, New York voters switched back and forth between reformers and old political bosses.

In some cities, voter support for reforms prompted machine politicians to work with reformers. Together they registered voters, improved city services, established public health programs, and enforced tenement codes. Such alliances brought about astonishing improvements in urban life in some places.

Cities Take Over Utilities Reformers made efforts to regulate or dislodge the monopolies that provided city utilities such as water, gas, and electricity. Reform mayors Hazen S. Pingree of Detroit (1889–1897), Samuel M. “Golden Rule” Jones of Toledo (1897–1904), and Tom Johnson of Cleveland (1901–1909) pioneered city control or ownership of utilities. City control provided residents with more affordable services. By 1915, nearly two out of three cities had some form of city-owned utilities.

Providing Welfare Services Some reform mayors led movements for city-supported welfare services. Hazen Pingree provided public baths, parks, and a work-relief program.



Women workers crowd the floor of this Progressive Era factory. **Economics** Why did Florence Kelley consider labor issues to be women's issues?

"Golden Rule" Jones opened playgrounds, free kindergartens, and lodging houses for the homeless. "Nobody has a right to rule anybody else," he once said. In his view, all people would be good if social conditions were good.

State Reforms

Some governors and state legislators also were active in promoting progressive reforms. Governors Robert "Battling Bob" La Follette in Wisconsin and Hiram Johnson in California, among others, introduced reforms to give voters a more direct voice in government. They also worked for reforms in the workplace.

More Power to Voters Progressive reformers believed they could put an end to corruption in government by limiting the power of party bosses and politicians. One way to do this was to give voters more direct say in lawmaking and in choosing candidates. Five important gains were made by voters during the Progressive Era:

(1) **Direct Primaries.** Throughout the country, party leaders had long hand-picked who would run for office. By 1904 Governor La Follette had instituted a **direct primary** in Wisconsin. A direct primary is an election in which voters cast ballots to select nominees for upcoming elections. By 1916 all but three states had direct primaries.

(2) **The Seventeenth Amendment.** In 1904 Oregon began allowing voters, rather than the

state legislature, to choose their United States senator. By 1913 more than enough states were electing their senators in this way to ratify the Seventeenth Amendment to the Constitution. This amendment allows for the popular election of senators.

(3) **Initiative.** Many states also passed laws allowing citizens to use an **initiative** process. Through this process, citizens can propose new laws by obtaining a certain percentage of voters' signatures on a petition. Once the required number of signatures is gathered, the proposed law is then placed on the ballot in the next election.

(4) **Referendum.** The **referendum** process also gave voters a more direct role in legislation. Using this process, citizens may demand via petition that a law passed by the legislature be "referred" to voters for their approval or rejection.

(5) **Recall.** The **recall** procedure gave voters the ability to remove public officials from office before the next election.

Reforms of the Workplace Workplace tragedies also led to demands for reform. Late in the afternoon on Saturday, March 25, 1911, a match or cigarette ignited a fire on the eighth floor of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in New York City. Because many of the exit doors were locked to prevent employee theft, 146 people died in the blaze.

The horror of the Triangle fire roused the public to action. The day after the tragedy, the Women's Trade Union League and the Red Cross formed a committee to improve fire safety standards. The committee called on the city to appoint fire inspectors, to make fire drills compulsory, and to unlock and fire-proof exits.

Motivated in part by this disaster, state reformers also worked toward ending unsafe working conditions. Some states established labor departments to provide information and dispute-resolution services to employers and employees. Other states developed workers' accident insurance programs and compensation systems. By 1920 all but five states had taken steps to make it easier for workers to collect payment for workplace accidents.

Government efforts to control working conditions met legal opposition at every turn. In the case of *Lochner v. New York* (1905), for example, the Supreme Court struck down a law setting maximum hours for bakers. The law was declared void on the ground that it was

Main Idea CONNECTIONS

Why did Progressive reformers want to give voters more power?

“an illegal interference with the rights of individuals . . . to make contracts.”

After this setback, reformers tried to convince the courts that government had to control conditions to protect women. This approach worked. In the 1908 case of *Muller v. Oregon*, the United States Supreme Court upheld an Oregon law that limited hours for women laundry workers to ten hours a day.

Labor reformers were successful on some other fronts as well. By 1907 the National Child Labor Committee had convinced some thirty states to abolish child labor. Child labor was often defined as employment of children under age 14. Minimum wage legislation for women and children also made headway, with Florence Kelley leading a national campaign. After Massachusetts adopted a minimum wage in 1912, eight other states followed.

Federal Reforms

A number of important progressive reforms were also made at the federal level. Beginning with Theodore Roosevelt, the White House became a powerful voice for change.

Theodore Roosevelt’s “Square Deal” As President, Theodore Roosevelt was determined to use his powers vigorously. He got his chance in May 1902, when the United Mine Workers called a strike to protest their low wages. As winter approached and mine owners continued to refuse to talk to the union, TR decided to intervene. Lacking coal, the nation would be without a key source of heating fuel.

Roosevelt insisted that both sides submit to arbitration, in which an impartial third party decides on a legally binding solution. To encourage mine owners to accept this step, TR threatened to use the army to seize and operate the mines. In 1903 arbitrators granted the miners a 10 percent raise and reduced their hours from 10 to 9. They did not grant official recognition of their union, however. When Roosevelt called this a “square deal” for both sides, the phrase became a slogan of his presidency.

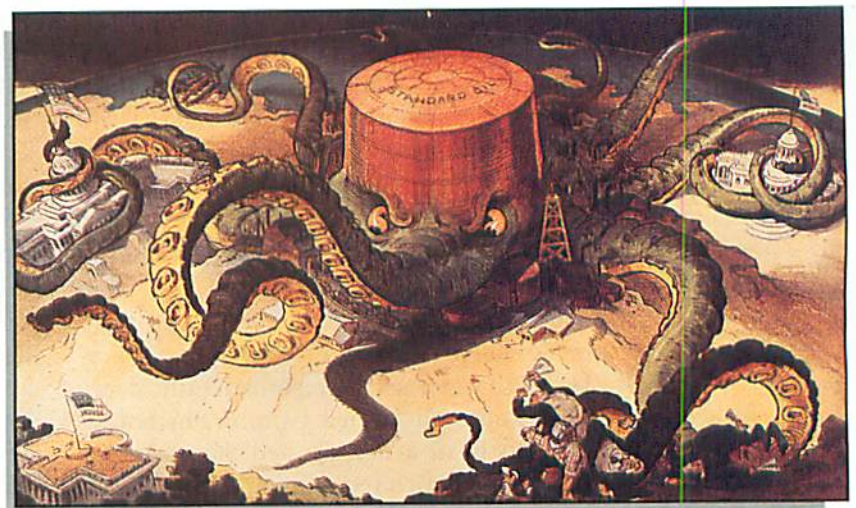
After his reelection in 1904, Roosevelt urged Congress to pass laws to regulate the food and drug industries and the railroads. In 1906 the Hepburn Act authorized the Interstate Commerce Commission to limit rates if

shippers complained of unfair treatment. Also in 1906 the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act required accurate labeling of ingredients, strict sanitary conditions, and a rating system for meats.

Antitrust Activism Although the Sherman Antitrust Act in 1890 was in place as a check on big business, it had never been vigorously enforced. Reversing this trend, Roosevelt’s Attorney General used the act to sue the Northern Securities Company. Northern Securities was a holding company that controlled railroads in the Northwest. **Holding companies** are corporations that hold the stocks and bonds of numerous companies. By doing so, holding companies gain control of smaller companies and thus create a monopoly. In 1904 the government won its case against Northern Securities in the Supreme Court.

By the time Roosevelt had completed his second term in 1909, the government had filed 42 antitrust actions. The beef trust, Standard Oil, and the American Tobacco Company were either broken up or forced to reorganize. TR was not antibusiness. He did not wish to destroy trusts that he deemed “good,” or not harmful to the public. But he believed that they should be supervised and controlled.

Protecting the Environment Roosevelt also urged Congress to extend the earlier steps that



Standard Oil has a stranglehold on government and industry in this 1904 cartoon. **Economics**
What was TR’s attitude toward monopolies?

Progressive Era Legislation

<i>Date</i>	<i>Legislation</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
1890	Sherman Antitrust Act	Outlawed monopolies and practices that result in restraint of trade, such as price fixing.
1902	National Reclamation Act	Created to plan and develop irrigation projects.
1905	United States Forest Service	Created to manage the nation's water and timber resources.
1906	Hepburn Act	Required railroads to obtain permission from the Interstate Commerce Commission before raising rates.
1906	Pure Food and Drug Act	Outlawed interstate transportation of impure or diluted foods and the deliberate mislabeling of foods and drugs.
1906	Meat Inspection Act	Required federal inspection of meat processing to ensure sanitary conditions.
1913	Department of Labor	Cabinet department created to protect and promote the welfare and employment of working people. Began with four existing bureaus, including the Children's Bureau.
1913	16th Amendment	Gave Congress the power to levy an income tax.
1913	17th Amendment	Provided for the direct election of senators.
1916	National Park Service	Created to take over the administration of the nation's parks.
1919	18th Amendment	Prohibited the manufacture and sale of liquor. (Repealed in 1933.)
1920	Women's Bureau	Created within the Department of Labor to promote the status of working women.

Interpreting Tables Progressive reform touched many aspects of life, including business, natural resources, labor, and consumer protection. **Government** Which reforms required constitutional amendments?

had been taken to protect the nation's natural environment and resources. For example, at the urging of explorers and nature writers such as John Wesley Powell and John Muir, Congress had established Yellowstone in Wyoming as the nation's first national park in 1872. In 1890 Yosemite in California was also established as a national park. Presidents Harrison and Cleveland preserved some 35 million acres of forest land.

Now, in the early 1900s, the federal government called in experts to develop a policy for land and water use based on scientific data. In 1905 Roosevelt named Gifford Pinchot, a forester, to head a new United States Forest Service. At Pinchot's recommendation, TR set aside more than 200 million acres of land for national forests, mineral reserves, and water projects. The National Reclamation Act, passed in 1902, set aside money from the sale of public lands to fund the construction of irrigation systems in arid states.

A New Labor Department In response to pressure from women's clubs and labor organizations, in 1912 the government established a Children's Bureau. The following year, the Department of Labor was added as a new Cabinet department. A Women's Bureau was formed in 1920. These two bureaus, both part of the Department of Labor, supported legislation that would benefit women and children. Julia Lathrop and Mary Anderson, the heads of these bureaus, became the first female bureau heads at the federal level.

New Constitutional Amendments Like the Seventeenth Amendment ratified in the same year, progressive reformers fought for the ratification of the Sixteenth Amendment in 1913. The Sixteenth Amendment authorized Congress to collect income taxes. Prior to this amendment, the government relied on income from tariffs. Progressives argued that tariffs pushed up the prices of goods purchased by

National Forests, Parks, and Monuments, c. 1908



TR was convinced that "vigorous action must be taken" to save the nation's natural environment. **Location** What do you notice about the location of the nation's parks, monuments, and forests?

the working poor. In contrast, the Sixteenth Amendment allowed the government to derive more of its income from the wealthy.

The Eighteenth Amendment was also pushed forward by progressive reformers and was ratified in 1919. The amendment

made it illegal for Americans to make, sell, or import liquor. Although not all Progressives favored prohibition, many thought it would protect society from the poverty and violence associated with drinking. As you will read, this amendment proved to be controversial.

SECTION 2 REVIEW

Comprehension

- Key Terms** Define: (a) direct primary; (b) initiative; (c) referendum; (d) recall; (e) holding company.
- Summarizing the Main Idea** Briefly describe the progressive reforms that were made at the city, state, and federal levels.
- Organizing Information** Create a diagram showing the changes that gave voters a more direct role in democracy.

Critical Thinking

- Analyzing Time Lines** Which events on the time line are related to labor reforms?
- Testing Conclusions** Provide evidence to support the conclusion that progressivism was not a single, unified movement.

Writing Activity

- Writing a Persuasive Essay** Write a letter to city officials in New York asking for specific workplace reforms.

1908
Taft elected
President

1910
Ballinger-
Pinchot Affair

1912
Wilson
elected
President

1913
Federal Reserve
system established

1914
Clayton
Antitrust Act

1916
Wilson reelected
President

1905

1910

1915

1920

3 Progressive Presidents

SECTION PREVIEW

Objectives

- 1 Describe the major controversies that took place during Taft's presidency.
- 2 Summarize the results of the election of 1912 and the role of the Bull Moose party.
- 3 List Wilson's policies as President.
- 4 **Key Terms** Define: conservationist; New Nationalism; New Freedom; Clayton Antitrust Act; Federal Reserve system.

Main Idea

Presidents Taft and Wilson continued to promote progressive reforms. Some Progressives were dissatisfied with Taft's policies and formed their own party. Roosevelt ran as the Progressive party's presidential candidate in 1912.

Reading Strategy

Organizing Information As you read this section, create a time line of reforms made during the Taft and Wilson presidencies.



William H. Taft

Progressivism had always been a series of informal alliances among like-minded reform groups. In 1912, however, a number of progressive reformers created their own political party. Though this party did not win the presidential election that

year, its ideas continued to hold the attention of American voters and politicians.

Taft's Presidency

The day after his election in 1904, Theodore Roosevelt announced he would not seek another presidential term. As the campaign of 1908 neared, Roosevelt handpicked his Secretary of War, William Howard Taft, to be the next Republican presidential nominee. On the Democratic side, William Jennings Bryan tried for a third and last time to win the office. Taft won easily.

President Taft had pledged to carry on TR's progressive program. He fulfilled that promise. Taft pursued some 90 antitrust cases

and supported numerous other reforms. As President, however, Taft had neither Roosevelt's energy nor strength of personality. He gave in to the Republican "old guard," which resisted many progressive programs. One such issue in which Taft compromised on his support for progressivism was tariff reduction. Progressives favored lowering tariffs because higher tariffs hurt consumers and favored business. Taft's failure to reduce tariffs angered Progressives in his own party. As a result, a faction of Progressives who disliked Taft's policies developed within the Republican party.

The Ballinger-Pinchot Affair A party crisis in 1910 only worsened matters for Taft. Taft compromised on yet another important progressive cause when he ignored the protests of **conservationists**. (Conservationists are people concerned with the care and protection of natural resources.) Taft's Secretary of the Interior, Richard A. Ballinger, allowed a private group of business people to obtain several million acres of Alaskan public lands. The lands con-