



Wilson

Progressivism

Chapter 5 Section 4

Woodrow Wilson Administration

- What was the purpose of the Underwood Tariff, which Wilson signed into law in 1913?
- Describe the purpose of the Federal Reserve system and the role of the Board of Governors?
- Describe the purpose of the Federal Trade Commission and what did Wilson want the FTC to do instead of breaking up big business.
- Identify the purpose of the three reforms Wilson introduces regarding Federal Aid and Social Welfare.

Essential Question

- Did Progressivism fulfill its goals or did it fail to produce reform and legislation that could of improved the lives of Americans? Provide an explanation with evidence.

Woodrow Wilson as Presidential Nominee

- Democratic Presidential Candidate
- Governor of NJ and professor of Political Science at Princeton
- Committed to Reform – Platform called “New Freedom”
 - Wilson was an admirer of Thomas Jefferson. The agrarian utopia of small, educated farmers envisioned by Jefferson struck a chord with Wilson. Of course, the advent of industry could not be denied, but a nation of small farmers and small businesspeople seemed totally possible. The New Freedom sought to achieve this vision by attacking what Wilson called the TRIPLE WALL OF PRIVILEGE — the tariff, the banks, and the trusts.

Election of 1912

- Taft resigned to defeat, hardly campaigned
- TR campaigned tons, until a would-be assassin shot him, and sidelined him last few weeks before election
- In Nov, TR and Taft split republican vote, Wilson held onto most Democrats and won easily.
- “New Freedom” versus “New Nationalism”

	Electoral Vote	Popular Vote (%)
Woodrow Wilson (Democratic)	435	6,293,454 (41.9)
Theodore Roosevelt (Progressive/Bull Moose)	88	4,119,538 (27.4)
William H. Taft (Republican)	8	3,484,980 (23.2)
Eugene V. Debs (Socialist)	—	900,672 (6.0)
Other Parties (Prohibition; Socialist Labor)	—	235,025

Woodrow Wilson as a Progressive

- Concentrated powers of Exec branch in his own hands, more than TR or Taft
 - Firm control over his cabinet
 - Delegated real authority only to those loyal to him
- Progressive Acts
 - Underwood Tariff Act: Income Tax – graduated income tax, 1% tax on individuals or corporations earning over \$4,000 a year, up to 6% for those over \$500,000 (16th Amendment to the constitution)
 - Federal Reserve Act – reform American banking system, passed December 1913, board of governors controlled rates, currency, and monitored inflation.
 - Federal Trade Commission Act – created a regulatory agency that would help business determine in advance whether their actions would be acceptable to the gov.
 - Clayton Antitrust Act – anti-monopoly act which Wilson eventually lost interest in after awhile

Woodrow Wilson as a Progressive

- By 1914, Wilson believed **New Freedom** was complete
- Refused to support movement for national woman suffrage
- Dismissed any new progressive reform legislation

- Congressional elections of 1914 smashed democrats, and Presidents lackluster attempt at reforms

- By 1915 – Wilson began to support a 2nd flurry of Social reforms
 - **Keating-Owen Act** – prohibited shipment across state lines of goods produced by underage children (court invalidated this act in 1918)
 - **Adamson Act**: established an eight hour workday, compensation for overtime.
 - **The Federal Farm Loan Act**: Provided farmers with long-term loans at low interest rates.

The Limits of Progressivism

- Progressives failed to address African American rights. (Jim Crow Laws, Segregation)
- Progressives also did not address anti-Semitism.
- Jewish Americans faced discrimination in housing, employment, and education.
- Other minority groups were left out. In spite of the shortcomings progressives improved and expanded democracy and it improved the quality of life for millions of Americans.