

Ch 15 Section 3 Politics in the Gilded Age

The Emergence of Political Machines

The Political Machine

- **Political machine**—organized group that controls city political party
- Give services to voters, businesses for political, financial support
- After Civil War, machines gain control of major cities
- Machine organization: precinct captains, ward bosses, city boss

The Role of the Political Boss

- Whether or not city boss serves as mayor, he:
 - controls access to city jobs, business licenses
 - influences courts, municipal agencies
 - arranges building projects, community services
- Bosses paid by businesses, get voters' loyalty, extend influence

Immigrants and the Machine

- Many captains, bosses 1st- or 2nd-generation Americans
- Machines help immigrants with naturalization, jobs, housing

Municipal Graft and Scandal

Election Fraud and Graft

- Machines use electoral fraud to win elections
- **Graft**—illegal use of political influence for personal gain
- Machines take kickbacks, bribes to allow legal, illegal activities

The Tweed Ring Scandal

- 1868 William M. Tweed, or **Boss Tweed**, heads Tammany Hall in NYC
- Leads Tweed Ring, defrauds city of millions of dollars
- Cartoonist Thomas Nast helps arouse public outrage
 - Tweed Ring broken in 1871

Civil Service Replaces Patronage

Patronage Spurs Reform

- **Patronage**—government jobs to those who help candidate get elected
- **Civil service** (government administration) are all patronage jobs
- Some appointees not qualified; some use position for personal gain
- Reformers press for merit system of hiring for civil service

Reform Under Hayes, Garfield, and Arthur

- Republican **Rutherford B. Hayes** elected president 1876
 - names independents to cabinet
 - creates commission to investigate corruption
 - fires 2 officials; angers Stalwarts
- 1880, Republican independent **James A. Garfield** wins election
- Stalwart **Chester A. Arthur** is vice-president
- Garfield gives patronage jobs to reformers; is shot and killed
- As president, Arthur urges Congress to pass civil service law
- **Pendleton Civil Service Act**—appointments based on exam score

Business Buys Influence

Harrison, Cleveland, and High Tariffs

- Business wants high tariffs; Democrats want low tariffs
- 1884, Democrat **Grover Cleveland** wins; cannot lower tariffs

- 1888, **Benjamin Harrison** becomes president, supports higher tariffs
 - wins passage of McKinley Tariff Act
- 1892, Cleveland reelected, supports bill that lowers McKinley Tariff
 - rejects bill that also creates income tax
 - Wilson-Gorman Tariff becomes law 1894
- 1897, William McKinley becomes president, raises tariffs again