

Ch 20 Politics of the Roaring Twenties

Section 1 Americans Struggle with Postwar Issues

Postwar Trends

The Effects of Peace on the Public

- War leaves Americans exhausted; debate over League divides them
- Economy adjusting: cost of living doubles; farm, factory orders down
 - soldiers take jobs from women, minorities
 - farmers, factory workers suffer
- **Nativism**—prejudice against foreign-born people—sweeps nation
- **Isolationism**—pulling away from world affairs—becomes popular

Fear of Communism

The Red Scare

- **Communism**—economic, political system, single-party government
 - ruled by dictator
 - no private property (to equally distribute wealth and power)
- 1919 Vladimir I. Lenin, Bolsheviks, set up Communist state in Russia
- U.S. Communist Party forms; some Industrial Workers of the World join
- Bombs mailed to government, businesses; people fear Red conspiracy
- Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer takes action, believed he needed to protect people from political radicals

The Palmer Raids

- Palmer, J. Edgar Hoover hunt down Communists, socialists, anarchists
- **Anarchists** oppose any form of government
- Raids trample civil rights, fail to find evidence of conspiracy

Sacco and Vanzetti

- Red Scare feeds fear of foreigners, ruins reputations, wrecks lives
- 1920, **Sacco and Vanzetti**, Italian immigrants, anarchists, arrested
 - charged with robbery, murder
 - trial does not prove guilt
- Jury finds them guilty; widespread protests in U.S., abroad
 - Sacco, Vanzetti executed 1927

Limiting Immigration

Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

- Nativists: fewer unskilled jobs available, fewer immigrants needed
- Think immigrant anarchists and socialists are Communist

The Klan Rises Again

- Bigots use anti-communism to harass groups unlike themselves
- KKK opposes blacks, Catholics, Jews, immigrants, unions, saloons
 - 1924, 4.5 million members
- Klan controls many states' politics; violence leads to less power

The Quota System

- 1919–1921, number of immigrants grows almost 600%
- **Quota system** sets maximum number can enter U.S. from each country
 - sharply reduces European immigration
- 1924, European arrivals cut to 2% of number of residents in 1890
- Discriminates against southern, eastern Europeans

- Prohibits Japanese immigration; causes ill will between U.S., Japan
- Does not apply to Western Hemisphere; many Canadians, Mexicans enter
- Many Nativists believed the Emergency Quota Acts of 1921 did not restrict immigration enough.

A Time of Labor Unrest

Postwar Labor Issues

- Government doesn't allow strikes in wartime; 1919 over 3,000 strikes
- Employers against raises, unions; label strikers as Communists

The Boston Police Strike

- Boston police strike over raises, right to unionize
- Calvin Coolidge ends strike, replaces strikers with new policemen

The Steel Mill Strike

- 1919, steel workers strike; companies use force, later negotiate
- Talks deadlock; Wilson appeals; strike ends
 - 1923 report on conditions leads to 8-hour day

The Coal Miners' Strike

- 1919, **John L. Lewis** becomes head of United Mine Workers of America
- Leads strike; defies court order to work; accepts arbitration
- Miners receive 27% wage increase; Lewis becomes national hero

Labor Movement Loses Appeal

- In 1920s, union membership drops from over 5 million to 3.5 million
- Less than 1% of African Americans, just over 3% whites in unions