
30

Wilsonian Progressivism at Home and Abroad, 1912–1916

PART I: Reviewing the Chapter

A. Checklist of Learning Objectives

After mastering this chapter, you should be able to

1. discuss the key issues of the pivotal 1912 election and the basic principles of Wilsonian progressivism.
2. describe how Wilson successfully reformed the “triple wall of privilege.”
3. state the basic features of Wilson’s foreign policy and explain how they drew him into intervention in Latin America.
4. describe America’s response to World War I and explain the increasingly sharp conflict over America’s policies toward Germany.
5. explain how domestic and foreign controversies played into Wilson’s narrow victory over Hughes in 1916.

B. Glossary

To build your social science vocabulary, familiarize yourself with the following terms.

1. **entrepreneurship** The process whereby an individual initiates a business at some risk in order to expand it and thereby earn a profit. “Wilson’s New Freedom, by contrast, favored small enterprise, entrepreneurship, and the free functioning of . . . markets.” (p. 688)
2. **self-determination** In politics, the right of a people to shape its own national identity and form of government, without outside coercion or influence. “. . . [the Confederacy] . . . partly inspired his ideal of self-determination for people of other countries.” (p. 690)
3. **piety** Devotion to religious duty and practices. “. . . Wilson was reared in an atmosphere of fervent piety.” (p. 690)
4. **graduated income tax** A tax on income in which the taxation rates grow progressively higher for those with higher income. “Congress enacted a graduated income tax. . . .” (p. 691)
5. **levy** A forcible tax or other imposition. “. . . [the] income tax [began] with a modest levy on income over \$3,000. . . .” (p. 691)
6. **inelasticity** The inability to expand or contract rapidly. “[The] most serious shortcoming [of the country’s financial structure] was the inelasticity of the currency.” (p. 691)
7. **commercial paper** Any business document having monetary or exchangeable value. “The . . . paper money [was] backed by commercial paper. . . .” (p. 692)
8. **promissory note** A written pledge to pay a certain person a specified sum of money at a certain time. “The . . . paper money [was] backed by commercial paper, such as promissory notes of business people.” (p. 692)

9. **Magna Carta** The "Great Charter" of England, which feudal nobles of England forced King John I to sign in 1215. As the first written guarantee of certain traditional rights, such as trial by a jury of peers, against arbitrary royal power, it served as a model for later assertions of Anglo-Saxon liberties. "Union leader Samuel Gompers hailed the [Clayton] act as the Magna Carta of labor. . . ." (p. 692)
10. **agricultural extension** The system of providing services and advice to farmers through dispersed local agents. "Other laws benefited rural American by providing for . . . the establishment of agricultural extension work in the state colleges." (p. 693)
11. **enclave** A small territory surrounded by foreign or hostile territory. "Though often segregated in Spanish-speaking enclaves, they helped to create a unique borderland culture. . . ." (p. 695)
12. **gringo** Contemptuous Latin American term for North Americans. "Challenging Carranza's authority while also punishing the gringos. . . ." (p. 696)
13. **censor** An official who examines publications, mail, literature, and so forth in order to remove or prohibit the distribution of material deemed dangerous or offensive. "Their censors sheared away war stories harmful to the Allies . . ." (p. 697)
14. **torpedo** To launch from a submarine or airplane a self-propelled underwater explosive designed to detonate on impact. ". . . the British passenger liner *Lusitania* was torpedoed and sank. . . ." (p. 699)
15. **draft** In politics, to choose an individual to run for office without that person's prior solicitation of the nomination. (A *military* draft, or conscription, legally compels individuals into the armed services.) "Instead, they drafted Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes, a cold intellectual who had achieved a solid record as governor of New York." (p. 701)

PART II: Checking Your Progress

A. True-False

Where the statement is true, mark T. Where it is false, mark F, and correct it in the space immediately below.

- ___ 1. Wilson won the election of 1912 largely because the Republican party split in two.
- ___ 2. In the 1912 campaign, Wilson's "New Freedom" favored a socially activist government and preserving large regulated trusts, while Roosevelt's "New Nationalist" favored small enterprise and breaking up a big business by antitrust action.
- ___ 3. Wilson believed that the president should provide national leadership by appealing directly to the people.
- ___ 4. Wilson successfully used his popular appeal to push through progressive reforms of the tariff, monetary systems, and trusts.
- ___ 5. Wilson's progressive outlook showed itself clearly in his attempt to improve the conditions and treatment of blacks.
- ___ 6. Wilson attempted to reverse the big-stick and dollar-diplomacy foreign policies of Roosevelt and Taft, especially in Latin America.
- ___ 7. Wilson consistently refused to send American troops to intervene in the Caribbean.
- ___ 8. In his policy toward the revolutionary Mexican government of Huerta, Wilson attempted to walk a middle line between recognition and intervention.

- ___ 9. The mediation of three Latin American nations saved Wilson from a full-scale war with Mexico.
- ___ 10. General Pershing's expedition into Mexico was an attempt to bring the pro-American faction of Mexican revolutionaries to power.
- ___ 11. In the early days of World War I, more Americans sympathized with Germany than with Britain.
- ___ 12. The American economy benefited greatly from supplying goods to the Allies.
- ___ 13. After the *Lusitania's* sinking, the Midwest and West favored war with Germany, while the East generally favored attempts at negotiation.
- ___ 14. After the sinking of the *Sussex*, Wilson successfully pressured Germany into stopping submarine attacks against neutral shipping.
- ___ 15. In the 1916 campaign, Wilson ran on the slogan "He Kept Us Out of War," while his opponent Hughes tried to straddle the issue of a possible war with Germany.

B. Multiple Choice

Select the best answer and write the proper letter in the space provided.

- ___ 1. The basic contrast between the two progressive candidates, Roosevelt and Wilson, was that
 - a. Roosevelt wanted genuine political and social reforms, while Wilson wanted only to end obvious corruption.
 - b. Roosevelt wanted to promote free enterprise and competition, while Wilson wanted the federal government to regulate the economy and promote social welfare.
 - c. Roosevelt wanted the federal government to regulate the economy and promote social welfare, while Wilson wanted to restore economic competition and social equality.
 - d. Roosevelt wanted to focus on issues of jobs and economic growth, while Wilson wanted social legislation to protect women, children, and city-dwellers.
- ___ 2. Wilson won the election of 1912 primarily because
 - a. his policies were more popular with the public.
 - b. Taft and Roosevelt split the former Republican vote.
 - c. the Socialists took nearly a million votes from Roosevelt.
 - d. he was able to win over many of the Roosevelt supporters to his cause.
- ___ 3. Wilson's primary weakness as a politician was
 - a. his lack of skill in public speaking.
 - b. his inability to grasp the complexity of governmental issues.
 - c. his tendency to be inflexible and refuse to compromise.
 - d. his lack of overarching political ideals.

- ___ 4. The “triple wall of privilege” that Wilson set out to reform consisted of
 - a. farmers, shippers, and the military.
 - b. the tariffs, the banks, and the trusts.
 - c. the universities, private dining clubs, and political bosses.
 - d. congressional leaders, lobbyists, and lawyers.

- ___ 5. During the Wilson administration, Congress exercised the authority granted by the newly enacted Sixteenth Amendment to pass
 - a. prohibition of liquor.
 - b. women’s suffrage.
 - c. voting rights for blacks.
 - d. a federal income tax.

- ___ 6. The new regulatory agency created by the Wilson administration in 1914 that attacked monopolies, false advertising, and consumer fraud was
 - a. the Federal Trade Commission.
 - b. the Interstate Commerce Commission.
 - c. the Federal Reserve System.
 - d. the Consumer Products Safety Commission.

- ___ 7. While it attacked business monopolies, the Clayton Anti-Trust Act exempted from anti-trust prosecution
 - a. industries essential to national defense.
 - b. agricultural and labor organizations.
 - c. the oil and steel industries.
 - d. professional organizations of doctors and lawyers.

- ___ 8. Wilson effectively reformed the banking and financial system by
 - a. establishing a third Bank of the United States to issue and regulate the currency.
 - b. taking the United States off the gold standard.
 - c. establishing a publicly controlled Federal Reserve Board with regional banks under bankers’ control.
 - d. transferring authority to regulate banking and currency to the states and the private sector.

- ___ 9. Wilson’s progressive measures substantially aided all of the following groups *except*
 - a. workers.
 - b. blacks.
 - c. farmers.
 - d. children.

- ___ 10. Wilson’s initial attitude toward the Mexican revolutionary government was
 - a. a refusal to recognize the legitimacy of General Huerta’s regime.
 - b. a willingness to intervene with troops on behalf of threatened American business interests.
 - c. strong support and provision of economic assistance to the Huerta regime.
 - d. an attempt to mobilize other Latin American governments to help oust Huerta.

- _____ 11. The threatened war between the United States and Mexico in 1914 was avoided by the mediation of the ABC powers, which consisted of
- Australia, Britain, and Canada.
 - Antigua, Brazil, and Cuba.
 - Argentina, Brazil, and Chile.
 - the Association of British Commonwealth nations.
- _____ 12. General Pershing's expedition into Mexico was sent in direct response to
- the refusal of Huerta to abandon power.
 - the threat of German intervention in Mexico.
 - the arrest of American sailors in the Mexican port of Tampico.
 - the killing of American citizens in New Mexico by "Pancho" Villa.
- _____ 13. The sympathy of a majority of Americans for the Allies and against Germany was especially conditioned by
- British bribes and payoffs to American journalists.
 - the Germans' involvement in overseas imperialism.
 - the German invasion of neutral Belgium.
 - the British refusal to use poison gas in warfare.
- _____ 14. After the *Lusitania*, *Arabic*, and *Sussex* sinkings, Wilson successfully pressured the German government to
- end the use of the submarine against British warships.
 - end its attempt to blockade the British Isles.
 - publish warnings to all Americans considering traveling on unarmed ships.
 - cease from sinking neutral merchant and passenger ships without warning.
- _____ 15. Wilson's most effective slogan in the campaign of 1916 was
- "The full dinner pail."
 - "Free and unlimited coinage of silver in the ratio of sixteen to one."
 - "A war to make the world safe for democracy."
 - "He kept us out of war."

C. Identification

Supply the correct identification for each numbered description.

- _____ 1. Four-footed symbol of Roosevelt's Progressive third party in 1912
- _____ 2. A fourth political party, led by a former labor union leader, that garnered nearly a million votes in 1912
- _____ 3. Wilson's political philosophy of restoring democracy through trust-busting and economic competition
- _____ 4. A twelve-member agency appointed by the president to oversee the banking system under a new federal law of 1913
- _____ 5. New presidentially appointed regulatory commission designed to prevent monopoly and guard against unethical trade practices
- _____ 6. Wilsonian law that tried to curb business monopoly while permitting labor and agricultural organizations

- _____ 7. Wilsonian reform law that established an eight-hour day for railroad workers
- _____ 8. Troubled Caribbean island nation where a president's murder led Wilson to send in the marines and assume American control of the police and finances
- _____ 9. Term for the three Latin American nations whose mediation prevented war between the United States and Mexico in 1914
- _____ 10. World War I alliance headed by Germany and Austria-Hungary
- _____ 11. The coalition of powers—led by Britain, France, and Russia—that opposed Germany and its partners in World War I
- _____ 12. New underwater weapon that threatened neutral shipping and seemed to violate all traditional norms of international law
- _____ 13. Large British passenger liner whose sinking in 1915 prompted some Americans to call for war against Germany
- _____ 14. Germany's carefully conditional agreement in 1916 not to sink passenger and merchant vessels without warning
- _____ 15. Key electoral state where a tiny majority for Wilson tipped the balance against Hughes in 1916

D. Matching People, Places, and Events

Match the person, place, or event in the left column with the proper description in the right column by inserting the correct letter on the blank line.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Thomas Woodrow Wilson | A. Small European nation in which an Austro-Hungarian heir was killed, leading to the outbreak of World War I |
| _____ 2. Theodore Roosevelt | B. Mexican revolutionary whose assaults on American citizens and territory provoked a U.S. expedition into Mexico |
| _____ 3. Samuel Gompers | C. Ports where clashes between Mexicans and American military forces nearly led to war in 1914 |
| _____ 4. Louis D. Brandeis | D. Caribbean territory purchased by the United States from Denmark in 1917 |
| _____ 5. Virgin Islands | E. Narrowly unsuccessful presidential candidate who tried to straddle both sides of the fence regarding American policy toward Germany |
| _____ 6. General Huerta | F. Small European nation whose neutrality was violated by Germany in the early days of World War I |
| _____ 7. Venustiano Carranza | G. Commander of the American military expedition into Mexico in 1916–1917 |
| _____ 8. Tampico and Vera Cruz | H. Southern-born intellectual who pursued strong moral goals in politics and the presidency |
| _____ 9. "Pancho" Villa | I. Leading progressive reformer and the first Jew named to the U.S. Supreme Court |
| _____ 10. John J. Pershing | J. Caribbean nation where Wilson sent American marines in 1915 |
| _____ 11. Belgium | K. Energetic progressive and vigorous nationalist who refused to wage another third-party campaign in 1916 |
| _____ 12. Serbia | L. Labor leader who hailed the Clayton Anti-Trust Act as the "Magna Carta of labor" |
| _____ 13. Kaiser Wilhelm II | M. Second revolutionary Mexican president, who took aid from the United States but strongly resisted American military intervention in his country |
| _____ 14. Haiti | |

- ___ 15. Charles Evans Hughes
- N. Autocratic ruler who symbolized ruthlessness and arrogance to many pro-Allied Americans
- O. Mexican revolutionary whose bloody regime Wilson refused to recognize and nearly ended up fighting

E. Putting Things in Order

Put the following events in correct order by numbering them from 1 to 5.

- ___ Wilson extracts a dangerously conditional German agreement to halt submarine warfare.
- ___ Wilson's superb leadership pushes major reforms of the tariff and monetary system through Congress.
- ___ The bull moose and the elephant are both electorally defeated by a donkey bearing the banner of "New Freedom."
- ___ The heavy loss of American lives to German submarines nearly leads the United States into war with Germany.
- ___ Despite efforts to avoid involvement in the Mexican revolution, Wilson's occupation of a Mexican port raises the threat of war.

F. Matching Cause and Effect

Match the historical cause in the left column with the proper effect in the right column by writing the correct letter on the blank line.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ___ 1. The split between Taft and Roosevelt | A. Caused most Americans to sympathize with the Allies rather than the Central Powers |
| ___ 2. Wilson's presidential appeals to the public over the heads of Congress | B. Helped push through sweeping reforms of the tariff and the banking system in 1913 |
| ___ 3. The Federal Reserve Act | C. Enabled the Democrats to win a narrow presidential victory in the election of 1916 |
| ___ 4. Conservative justices of the Supreme Court | D. Allowed Wilson to win a minority victory in the election of 1912 |
| ___ 5. Political turmoil in Haiti and Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) | E. Declared unconstitutional progressive Wilsonian measures dealing with labor unions and child labor |
| ___ 6. The Mexican revolution | F. Caused President Wilson and other outraged Americans to demand an end to unrestricted submarine warfare |
| ___ 7. "Pancho" Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico | G. Created constant political instability south of the border and undermined Wilson's hopes for better U.S. relations with Latin America |
| ___ 8. America's close cultural and economic ties with Britain | H. Was the immediate provocation for General Pershing's punitive expedition into Mexico |
| ___ 9. Germany's sinking of the <i>Lusitania</i> , <i>Arabic</i> , and <i>Sussex</i> | I. Finally established an effective national banking system and a flexible money supply |
| ___ 10. Wilson's apparent success in keeping America at peace through diplomacy | J. Caused Wilson to send in U.S. marines to restore order and supervise finances |

G. Developing Historical Skills

Understanding Documents in Context

Historical documents cannot usually be understood in isolation. Awareness of the circumstances and conditions under which they were written is essential to comprehending their importance. The text reproduces on p. 701 the advertisement with notice from the German government that appeared in the New York *Herald* on May 1, 1915, six days before the *Lusitania* was sunk. Read the ad carefully, and reread text pp. 698–703 to understand and evaluate the context in which the warning appeared. Then answer the following questions.

1. What was the *policy* of the German government regarding submarine use at the time the ad was taken out?
2. Why might the German government be particularly concerned about warning American passengers thinking of traveling on a British liner? How would the notice be useful even if some Americans did travel on the ship?
3. What fact about the *Lusitania's* cargo did the German government know that it did not put into the warning?
4. Why were many Americans outraged about the *Lusitania* sinking despite the warning?

PART III: Applying What You Have Learned

1. What were the essential qualities of Wilson's presidential leadership, and how did he display them in 1913–1914?
2. What were the results of Wilson's great reform assault on the "triple wall of privilege"—the tariff, the banks, and the trusts?
3. How was Wilson's foreign policy an attempt to expand idealistic progressive principles from the domestic to the international arena? Why did Wilson's progressive democratic idealism lead to the kind of U.S. interventions he professed to dislike?
4. What were the causes and consequences of U.S. entanglement with Mexico in the wake of the Mexican Revolution? Could the U.S. have avoided involvement in Mexican affairs?
5. Why was it so difficult for Wilson to maintain America's neutrality from 1914–1916?
6. How did Wilson's foreign policy differ from that of the other great progressive president, Theodore Roosevelt? (See Chapter 29.) Which president was more effective in foreign policy and why?