**ROARING 20S**

**Unit 14: Roaring 20s: A Clash of Values**

**I. Nativism Resurges**

**A.** In the 1920s, racism and nativism increased. Immigrants and demobilized military men and women competed for the same jobs during a time of high unemployment and an increased cost of living.

**B.** Ethnic prejudice was the basis of the **Sacco and Vanzetti case,** in which the two immigrant men were accused of murder and theft. They were thought to be **anarchists,** or opposed to all forms of government. Sacco and Vanzetti were sentenced to death, and in 1927 they were executed still proclaiming their innocence.

**C.** Nativists used the idea of **eugenics,** the false science of the improvement of hereditary traits, to give support to their arguments against immigration. Nativists emphasized that human inequalities were inherited and said that inferior people should not be allowed to breed. This added to the anti-immigrant feeling of the time and further promoted the idea of strict immigrant control.

**D.** The **Ku Klux Klan** (KKK) led the movement to restrict immigration. This new Klan not only targeted the freed African Americans but also Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and other groups believed to have “un-American” values.

**E.** Because of a publicity campaign, by 1924 the Ku Klux Klan had over 4 million members and stretched beyond the South into Northern cities.

**F.** Scandals and poor leadership led to the decline of the Klan in the late 1920s. Politicians supported by the Klan were voted out of office.

**II. Controlling Immigration**

**A.** In 1921 President Harding signed the **Emergency Quota Act,** limiting immigration to 3 percent of the total number of people in any ethnic group already living in the United States. This discriminated heavily against southern and eastern Europeans.

**B.** The National Origins Act of 1924 made immigrant restriction a permanent policy. The act lowered the quotas to 2 percent of each national group living in the U.S. in 1890. This further restricted immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. The act exempted immigrants from the Western Hemisphere from the quotas.

**C.** The immigration acts of 1921 and 1924 reduced the labor pool in the United States. Employers needed laborers for agriculture, mining, and railroad work. Mexican immigrants began pouring into the United States between 1914 and the end of the 1920s. The immigrants fled their country in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

**III. The New Morality**

**A.** A “new morality” challenged traditional ideas and glorified youth and personal freedom. New ideas about marriage, work, and pleasure affected the way people lived. Women broke away from families as they entered the workforce, earned their own livings, or attended college. The automobile gave American youth the opportunity to pursue interests away from parents.

**B.** Women’s fashion drastically changed in the 1920s. The **flapper,** a young, dramatic, stylish, and unconventional woman, exemplified the change in women’s behavior. She smoked cigarettes, drank illegal liquor, and wore revealing clothes. Professionally, women made advances in the fields of science, medicine, law, and literature.

**IV. The Fundamentalist Movement**

**A.** Some Americans feared the new morality and worried about America’s social decline. Many of these people came from small rural towns and joined a religious movement called **Fundamentalism.**

**B.** The Fundamentalists rejected Darwin’s theory of **evolution,** which suggested that humans developed from lower forms of life over millions of years. Instead, Fundamentalists believed in **creationism**—that God created the world as described in the Bible.

**C.** In 1925 Tennessee passed the Butler Act, which made it illegal to teach anything that denied creationism and taught evolution instead.

**D.** The debate between evolutionists and creationists came to a head with the Scopes Trial. Answering the request of the ACLU, John T. Scopes, a biology teacher, volunteered to test the Butler Act by teaching evolution in his class. After being arrested and put on trial, Scopes was found guilty, but the case was later overturned. After the trial, many fundamentalists withdrew from political activism.

**V. Prohibition**

**A.** Many people felt the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, which prohibited alcohol, would reduce unemployment, domestic violence, and poverty.

**B.** The **Volstead Act** made the enforcement of Prohibition the responsibility of the U.S. Treasury Department. Until the 1900s, **police powers**—a government’s power to control people and property in the public’s interest, had been the job of the state governments.

**C.** Americans ignored the laws of Prohibition. They went to secret bars called **speakeasies,** where alcohol could be purchased. Crime became big business, and gangsters corrupted many local politicians and governments.

**D.** In 1933 the ratification of the Twenty-first Amendment ended Prohibition. It was a victory for modernism and a defeat for supporters of traditional values.

**Unit 14: Roaring 20s: Art, Literature, and Pop Culture**

**I. Art and Literature**

**A.** During the 1920s, American artists, writers, and intellectuals began challenging traditional ideas as they searched for meaning in the modern world.

**B.** The artistic and unconventional, or **Bohemian,** lifestyle of Manhattan’s Greenwich Village and Chicago’s South Side attracted artists and writers. These areas were considered centers of creativity, enlightenment, and freedom from conformity to old ideas.

**C.** The European art movement influenced American modernist artists. The range in which the artists chose to express the modern experience was very diverse.

**D.** Writing styles and subject matter varied. Chicago poet **Carl Sandburg** used common speech to glorify the Midwest and the expansive nature of American life. Playwright **Eugene O’Neill’s** work focused on the search for meaning in modern society.

**II. Popular Culture**

**A.** The economic prosperity of the 1920s afforded many Americans leisure time for enjoying sports, music, theater, and entertainment.

**B.** Radio, motion pictures, and newspapers gave rise to a new interest in sports. Sports figures, such as **Babe Ruth** and heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey, were famous for their sports abilities but became celebrities as well.

**C.** Motion pictures became increasingly popular. The first “talking” picture, *The Jazz Singer,* was made in 1927. The golden age of Hollywood began.

**D.** The **mass media**—radio, movies, newspapers, and magazines—helped break down the focus on local interests. Mass media helped unify the nation and spread new ideas and attitudes.

**Unit 14: Roaring 20s: Harlem Renaissance**

**I. The Harlem Renaissance**

**A.** The **Great Migration** occurred when hundreds of thousands of African Americans from the rural South headed to industrial cities in the North with the hope of a better life.

**B.** In large northern cities, particularly New York City’s neighborhood of Harlem, African Americans created environments that stimulated artistic development, racial pride, a sense of community, and political organization, which led to a massive creative outpouring of African American arts. This became known as the **Harlem Renaissance.**

**C.** Writer **Claude McKay** became the first important writer of the Harlem Renaissance. His work expressed defiance and contempt of racism, which were very strong writing characteristics of this time. **Langston Hughes** became the leading voice of the African American experience in the United States.

**D. Louis Armstrong** introduced **jazz,** a style of music influenced by Dixieland music and ragtime. He became the first great cornet and trumpet soloist in jazz music. **E.** A famous Harlem nightspot, the **Cotton Club,** was where some famous African American musicians, such as **Duke Ellington,** got their start.

**F. Bessie Smith** sang about unrequited love, poverty, and oppression, which were classic themes in **blues** style music. This soulful style of music evolved from African American spirituals.

**II. African American Politics**

**A.** After World War I, many African Americans wanted a new role in life and in politics.

**B.** The Great Migration led to African Americans becoming powerful voting blocs, which influenced election outcomes in the North. **Oscar DePriest** was elected as the first African American representative in Congress from a Northern state after African Americans voted as a block.

**C.** The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) battled against segregation and discrimination. The NAACP’s efforts led to the passage of anti-lynching legislation in the House of Representatives, but the Senate defeated the bill.

**D.** Jamaican black leader **Marcus Garvey’s** idea of “Negro Nationalism” glorified black culture and traditions. He founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), which promoted black pride and unity. Garvey encouraged education as the way for African Americans to gain economic and political power; but he also voiced the need for separation and independence from whites.

**E.** Garvey’s plan to create a settlement in Liberia in Africa for African Americans caused middle class African Americans to distance themselves from Garvey. His ideas, however, led to a sense of pride and hope in African Americans that resurfaced during the civil rights movement in the 1960s.

**Unit 14: Roaring 20s: Presidential Politics**

**I. The Harding Administration**

**A.** In 1920, when Warren G. Harding ran for president, most Americans wanted to return to simpler times. His campaign slogan to return to **normalcy,** or a “normal” life after the war, made him very popular and he won the presidency.

**B.** Harding made a few distinguished appointments to the cabinet, but most appointments were given to friends. His old poker-playing friends became known as the **Ohio Gang.** Some members used their government positions to sell jobs, pardons, and immunity from prosecution. Before most of the scandals became public knowledge, Harding fell ill and died in 1923.

**C.** Harding’s secretary of the interior, **Albert B**. **Fall,** secretly allowed private interests to lease lands containing U.S. Navy oil reserves at Teapot Dome, Wyoming. He received bribes totaling over $300,000. The **Teapot Dome scandal** ended with Fall being the first cabinet officer in history to be sent to prison.

**D.** Another Harding administration scandal involved Attorney General Harry Daugherty. He refused to turn over files and bank records for a German-owned American company. Bribe money ended up in a bank account controlled by Daugherty. He refused to testify under oath, claiming **immunity,** or freedom from prosecution, on the grounds that he had confidential dealings with the president. The new president, Calvin Coolidge, demanded Daugherty’s resignation.

**II. The Coolidge Administration**

**A.** Vice President Calvin Coolidge became president after Harding’s death. Coolidge distanced himself from the Harding administration. His focus was on prosperity through business leadership with little government intervention. He easily won the Republican Party’s nomination for president in 1924.

**B.** The Democratic Party’s candidate was John W. Davis. Those not wanting to choose between the Republican and Democratic Parties formed a new Progressive Party with **Robert M**. **La Follette** as their candidate.

**C.** Coolidge won the 1924 election with more than half the popular vote. Coolidge promised to give the United States the normalcy that Harding had not.

**Unit 14: Roaring 20s: A Growing Economy**

**I. The Rise of New Industries**

**A.** During the 1920s, Americans enjoyed a new standard of living. Wages increased and work hours decreased. **Mass production,** or large-scale product manufacturing usually done by machinery, increased the supply of goods and decreased costs. Greater productivity led to the emergence of new industries.

**B.** The **assembly line,** used by carmaker Henry Ford, greatly increased manufacturing efficiency by dividing up operations into simple tasks that unskilled workers could perform. Ford’s assembly-line product, the **Model T,** sold for $850 the first year but dropped to $490 after being mass-produced several years later. By 1924 the Model T was selling for just $295.

**C.** Ford increased workers’ wages and reduced the workday to gain workers’ loyalty and to undercut union organizers.

**D.** Henry Ford changed American life with his affordable automobiles. Small businesses such as garages and gas stations opened. The petroleum industry expanded tremendously. The isolation of rural life ended. People could live farther away from work—creating the auto commuter.

**E.** More disposable income made innovations affordable. From electric razors to frozen foods and household cleaning supplies to labor-saving appliances, Americans used their new income to make life easier.

**F.** By 1919 the Post Office had expanded airmail service across the continent with the help of the railroad. In 1927 **Charles Lindbergh** took a transatlantic solo flight, which gained support in the United States for the commercial flight. By the end of 1928, 48 airlines were serving 355 American cities.

**G.** In 1926 the **National Broadcasting Company** (NBC) established a permanent network of radio stations to distribute daily programming. In 1928 the **Columbia Broadcasting** **System** (CBS) set up coast-to-coast stations to compete with NBC.

**II. The Consumer Society**

**A.** Higher wages and shorter workdays led to an economic boom as Americans traded thrift for their new role as consumers. American attitudes about debt shifted, as they became confident that they could pay back what they owed at a later time.

**B.** Advertising was used to convince Americans that they needed new products. Ads linked products with qualities that were popular to the modern era, such as convenience, leisure, success, fashion, and style.

**C.** By the early 1920s, many businesses hired professional managers and engineers. The large number of managers expanded the size of the middle class.

**D.** In the 1920s, unions lost influence and membership. Employers promoted an **open shop,** a workplace where employees were not required to join a union. **Welfare capitalism,** where employees were able to purchase stock, participate in profit sharing, andreceive benefits, made unions seem unnecessary.

**III. The Farm Crisis Returns**

**A.** American farmers did not share in the prosperity of the 1920s. Instead, prices dropped dramatically while the cost to improve farmers’ technology increased.

**B.** During wartime, the government had encouraged farmers to produce more for food supplies needed in Europe. Farmers borrowed money at inflated prices to buy new land and new machinery to raise more crops. Farmers prospered during the war. After the war, Europeans had little money to buy American farm products. After Congress raised tariffs, farmers could no longer sell products overseas, and prices fell.

**C.** President Coolidge twice vetoed a bill to aid the farmers, fearing it would only make the situation worse. American farmers remained in a recession throughout the 1920s.

**Unit 14: Roaring 20s: The Policies of Prosperity**

**I. Promoting Prosperity**

**A.** Andrew Mellon, named secretary of treasury by President Harding, reduced government spending and cut the federal budget. The federal debt was reduced by $7 billion between 1921 and 1929.

**B.** Secretary Mellon applied the idea of **supply**-**side economics** to reduce taxes. This idea suggested that lower taxes would allow businesses and consumers to spend and invest their extra money, resulting in economic growth. In the end, the government would collect more taxes at a lower rate.

**C.** Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover attempted to balance government regulation with **cooperative individualism.** Manufacturers and distributors were asked to form their own trade associations and share information with the federal government’s Bureau of Standards. Hoover felt this would reduce waste and costs and lead to economic stability.

**II. Trade and Arms Control**

**A.** By the 1920s, the United States was the dominant economic power in the world. Allies owed the U.S. billions of dollars in war debts. Also, the U.S. national income was far greater than that of Britain, Germany, France, and Japan combined.

**B.** Many Americans favored **isolationism** rather than involvement in international politics and issues. Americans wanted to be left alone to pursue prosperity. The United States, however, was too powerful and interconnected in international affairs to remain isolated.

**C.** Other countries felt the United States should help with the war’s financial debt. The United States government disagreed, arguing that the Allies had gained new territory and received reparations, or huge cash payments that Germany paid as punishment for starting the war.

**D.** Reparations crippled the German economy. As a result, **Charles G**. **Dawes,** an American diplomat and banker, negotiated an agreement—the Dawes Plan—with France, Britain, and Germany by which American banks would make loans to Germany so they could meet their reparation payments. France and Britain agreed to accept less reparations and pay more on their war debts.

**E.** The Washington Conference held in 1921 invited countries to discuss the ongoing postwar naval arms race. Secretary of State **Charles Evans Hughes** proposed a 10-year **moratorium,** or pause, on the construction of major new warships. The conference did nothing to limit land forces. Japan was angry that the conference required Japan to keep a smaller navy than the United States and Great Britain.

**F.** The **Kellogg-Briand Pact** was a treaty that outlawed war. By signing the treaty, countries agreed to stop war and settle all disputes in a peaceful way. On August 27, 1928, the United States and 14 other nations signed it, and eventually 62 nations ratified it. The treaty had no binding force, but was hailed as a victory.