

SECTION 2

Roosevelt in Office

Guide to Reading

Main Idea

With Theodore Roosevelt's succession to the presidency in September 1901, progressivism entered national politics.

Key Terms and Names

Square Deal, Northern Securities, United Mine Workers, arbitration, Hepburn Act, Upton Sinclair

Reading Strategy

Taking Notes As you read about the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt, use the major headings of the section to create an outline similar to the one below.

Roosevelt in Office
I. Roosevelt Revives the Presidency
A.
B.
C.
D.
II.

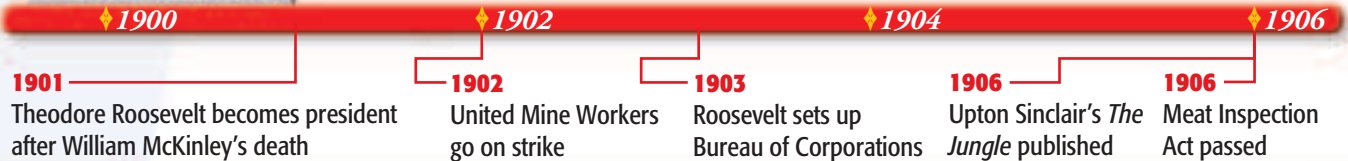
Reading Objectives

- **Describe** various efforts to regulate concentrated corporate power.
- **Discuss** Theodore Roosevelt's interest in environmental conservation.

Section Theme

Individual Action Progressive goals were carried to the national level when Theodore Roosevelt became president.

Preview of Events



★ An American Story ★



Theodore Roosevelt

William McKinley's assassination brought Teddy Roosevelt to the presidency. Despite the tragic circumstances, he took to the office with great joy. A man who loved the outdoors and physical activity, Roosevelt impressed many people as a new kind of president. One visitor wrote that after spending time with Roosevelt, "you go home and wring the personality out of your clothes."

The famous muckraker, Lincoln Steffens, already knew Roosevelt as a fellow reformer. Steffens went to Washington to see his friend, and this is what he saw:

“His offices were crowded with people, mostly reformers, all day long. . . . He strode triumphant around among us, talking and shaking hands, dictating and signing letters, and laughing. Washington, the whole country, was in mourning, and no doubt the President felt he should hold himself down; he didn't; he tried to but his joy showed in every word and movement. . . . With his feet, his fists, his face and his free words, he laughed at his luck. . . . And he laughed with glee at the power and place that had come to him.”

—quoted in *Theodore Roosevelt, A Life*

Roosevelt Revives the Presidency

Theodore Roosevelt, better known as “Teddy,” took office at age 42—the youngest person ever to serve as president. Roosevelt was intensely competitive, strong-willed, and extremely energetic. In international affairs, Roosevelt was a Social Darwinist. He believed the United States was in competition with the other nations of the world and that only the fittest would survive. Domestically, however, Roosevelt was a committed



progressive, who firmly believed that government should actively balance the needs of competing groups in American society.


"I shall see to it," Roosevelt declared in 1904, "that every man has a square deal, no less and no more." During his second term, his reform programs became known as the **Square Deal**. To Roosevelt, it was not inconsistent to believe in Social Darwinism and Progressivism at the same time. He believed the United States needed to adopt progressive reforms in order to maintain an efficient society that could compete successfully against other nations.

Roosevelt Takes on the Trusts Although he admired competition, Roosevelt was also concerned with efficiency. He believed that trusts and other large business organizations were very efficient and part of the reason for America's prosperity. Yet Roosevelt remained concerned that in the pursuit of

their private interests, some trusts were hurting the public interest. He wanted to find a way to supervise big business without destroying its economic efficiency. When the *New York Sun* declared that Roosevelt was "bringing wealth to its knees," the president disagreed. "We draw the line against misconduct," he declared, "not against wealth."

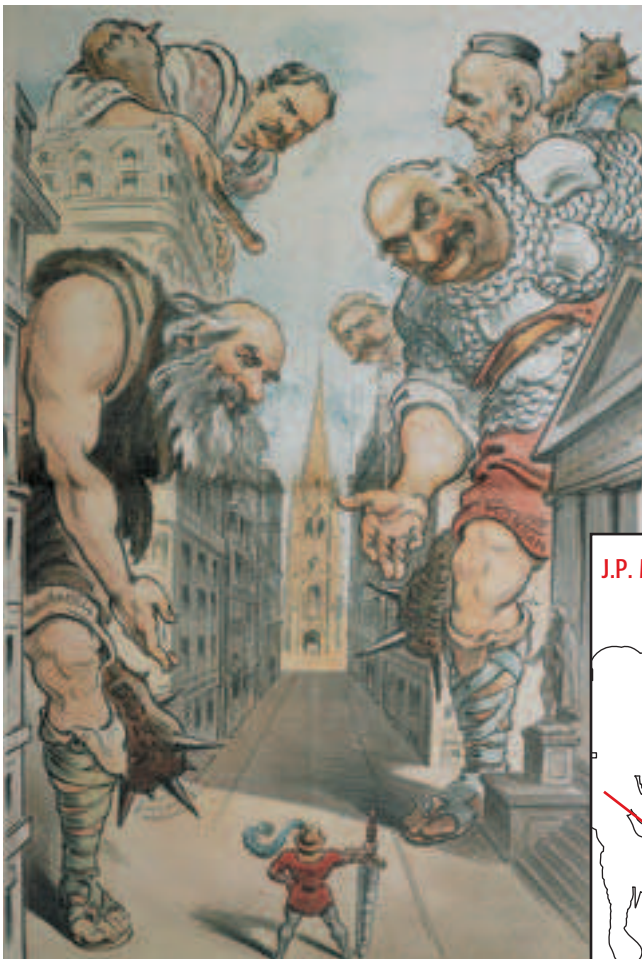
During Roosevelt's first year in office, a fight for control of the Burlington Railroad erupted on the New York Stock Exchange. On one side was E.H. Harriman of the Union Pacific Railroad. On the other side were James J. Hill and J.P. Morgan of the Great Northern and Northern Pacific Railroads. The stock battle almost triggered a financial panic that could have plunged the nation into a recession. The three men ultimately compromised by creating a giant new holding company called **Northern Securities**.

The formation of the Northern Securities Company alarmed many Americans, including Roosevelt. The stock battle that led to its creation seemed a classic example of private interests acting in a way that threatened the nation as a whole. Roosevelt decided that the company was in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act. In early 1902, he ordered his attorney general to file a lawsuit against Northern Securities.

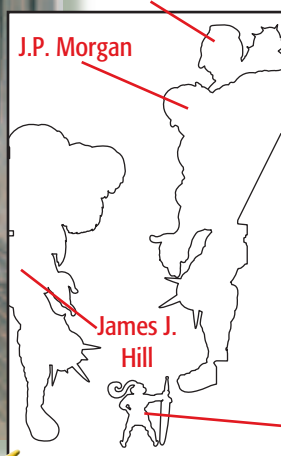
Roosevelt's action pleased many progressives but baffled J.P. Morgan. He immediately traveled to the White House with two supportive senators in tow to present his case. "If we have done anything wrong," he told the president, "send your man to my man and they can fix it up." Unmoved, Roosevelt proceeded with the case. In 1904 in *Northern Securities v. the United States*, the Supreme Court ruled that Northern Securities had indeed violated the Sherman Antitrust Act. Roosevelt declared it a great victory. "The most powerful men in the country," he proclaimed, "were held to accountability before the law." Newspapers hailed Roosevelt as a "trustbuster," and his popularity with the American public soared.  (See page 1082 for more information on *Northern Securities v. the United States*.)

Analyzing Political Cartoons

Corporate Giants This 1904 cartoon portrays Roosevelt as "Jack the Giant-Killer," but he actually restrained very few trusts. [Why do you think the scene is set on Wall Street?](#)



John D. Rockefeller



J.P. Morgan

James J. Hill

T. Roosevelt

The Coal Strike of 1902 As president, Roosevelt regarded himself as the nation's head manager. He believed it was his job to keep society operating efficiently by preventing conflict between the nation's different groups and their interests. In the fall of 1902, he put these beliefs into practice.

The previous spring, the **United Mine Workers (UMW)** union had called a strike of the miners who dug anthracite, or hard coal. Nearly 150,000 workers



walked out of eastern Pennsylvania’s anthracite mines demanding a pay increase, a reduction in work hours, and recognition for their union.

As the months passed and the strike continued, coal prices began to rise. To Roosevelt it was another example of groups pursuing their private interests at the expense of the nation. If the strike dragged on too long, the country would face a coal shortage that could shut down factories and leave many people’s homes cold with winter fast approaching.

Roosevelt urged the union and the owners to accept **arbitration**—a settlement imposed by an outside party. The union agreed. The mine owners, determined to destroy the UMW, did not. One owner, George Baer, declared, “The rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for not by the labor agitators, but by the Christian men to whom God in His infinite wisdom has given the control of the property interests of the country.”

The mine owners’ stubbornness infuriated Roosevelt, as it did much of the public. Roosevelt threatened to order the army to run the mines. Fearful of this, the mine owners finally accepted arbitration. By intervening in the dispute, Roosevelt had taken the first step toward establishing the federal government as an honest broker between powerful groups in society.

The Bureau of Corporations Despite his lawsuit against Northern Securities and his role in the coal strike, Roosevelt was not opposed to big business. He believed most trusts benefited the economy and that breaking them up would do more harm than good. Instead, Roosevelt proposed the creation of a new federal agency to investigate corporations and publicize the results. He believed the most effective way to keep big business from abusing its power was through knowledge and publicity of the facts.

In 1903 Roosevelt convinced Congress to create the Department of Commerce and Labor. Within this department would be a division called the **Bureau of Corporations**, with the authority to investigate corporations and issue reports on their activities.

The following year, the Bureau of Corporations began investigating U.S. Steel, a gigantic holding company that had been created in 1901. Worried about a possible antitrust lawsuit, the company’s leaders met privately with Roosevelt and offered a deal. They would open their account books and records to the Bureau of Corporations. In exchange, if the Bureau found anything wrong, the company would be advised privately and allowed to correct the problem without having to go to court.



Picturing History

Miner’s Lot In the early 1900s, miners worked under dangerous conditions for little pay. **How did Roosevelt respond when they went on strike?**

Roosevelt accepted this “gentlemen’s agreement,” as he called it. Shortly afterward he made similar deals with other companies. These arrangements gave Roosevelt the ability to regulate big business without having to sacrifice economic efficiency by breaking up the trusts.

Congress Follows In addition to creating the Department of Commerce and Labor, Congress passed the Expedition Act, which gave federal antitrust suits precedence on the dockets of circuit courts. Then, in 1906, Roosevelt pushed the **Hepburn Act** through Congress. This act was intended to strengthen the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC). An early effort to regulate the railroad industry, the ICC had been ineffective because it lacked sufficient authority.

The Hepburn Act tried to strengthen the ICC by giving it the power to set railroad rates. The agency originally was intended to regulate rates to ensure that companies did not compete unfairly. At first, railroad companies were suspicious of the ICC and tied up its decisions by challenging them in court. Eventually, the railroads realized that they could work with the ICC to set rates and regulations that limited competition and prevented new competitors from entering the industry. Over time the ICC



became a supporter of the railroads' interests, and by 1920 it had begun setting rates at levels intended to ensure the industry's profits.

✓ Reading Check **Comparing** What was the purpose of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and how successful was it?

Social Welfare Action

When Roosevelt took office, he was not greatly concerned about consumer issues, but by 1905 consumer protection had become a national issue. That year, a journalist named Samuel Hopkins Adams published a series of articles in *Collier's* magazine describing the patent medicine business.

Many companies were patenting and marketing potions they claimed would cure a variety of ills. Many patent medicines were little more than alcohol, colored water, and sugar. Others contained caffeine, opium, cocaine, and other dangerous compounds. Consumers had no way to know what they were taking, nor did they receive any assurance that the medicines worked as claimed.

Many Americans were equally concerned about the food they ate. Dr. W.H. Wiley, chief chemist at the United States Department of Agriculture, had issued reports documenting the dangerous preservatives being used in what he called "embalmed meat." Then, in 1906, **Upton Sinclair** published *The Jungle*. Based on Sinclair's close observations of the

slaughterhouses of Chicago, the powerful book featured appalling descriptions of conditions in the meatpacking industry:

“There would come all the way back from Europe old sausage that had been rejected, and that was moldy and white—it would be dosed with borax and glycerine, and dumped into the hoppers, and made over again for home consumption. . . . There would be meat stored in great piles in rooms; and the water from leaky roofs would drip over it, and thousands of rats would race about upon it.”

—from *The Jungle*

Sinclair's book was a best-seller. It made consumers ill—and angry. Roosevelt and Congress responded with the **Meat Inspection Act**. It required federal inspection of meat sold through interstate commerce and required the Agriculture Department to set standards of cleanliness in meatpacking plants. The **Pure Food and Drug Act**, passed on the same day in 1906, prohibited the manufacture, sale, or shipment of impure or falsely labeled food and drugs.

✓ Reading Check **Summarizing** What two pieces of legislation were enacted due to the facts revealed in Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*?

Conservation

Roosevelt put his stamp on the presidency most clearly in the area of environmental conservation. Realizing that the nation's bountiful natural resources were being used up at an alarming rate, Roosevelt urged Americans to conserve these resources.

An enthusiastic outdoorsman, Roosevelt valued the country's minerals, animals, and rugged terrain. He cautioned against unregulated exploitation of public lands and believed in conservation to manage the nation's resources. As president, Roosevelt eagerly assumed the role of manager. He argued that the government must distinguish "between the man who skins the land and the man who develops the country. I am going to work with, and only with, the man who develops the country."

GEOGRAPHY

Land Development in the West Roosevelt quickly applied his philosophy in the dry Western states, where farmers and city dwellers competed for scarce water. In 1902 Roosevelt supported passage of the **Newlands Reclamation Act**, authorizing the use of

Fact	Fiction	Folklore
<p>The Teddy Bear The soft and cuddly teddy bear was named after the gruff and rugged Theodore ("Teddy") Roosevelt. The idea for the toy stemmed from a hunting trip Roosevelt took to Mississippi in 1902. On the trip, the president refused to kill a defenseless bear cub. Cartoonist Clifford Berryman drew a whimsical reenactment of the scene for the <i>Washington Post</i>, which in turn inspired Morris Michtom, a toy shop owner in Brooklyn, to create the "teddy bear." The toy became a runaway success in the United States and abroad.</p>		





federal funds from public land sales to pay for irrigation and land development projects. Thus it was the federal government that began the large-scale transformation of the West's landscape and economy.

Gifford Pinchot Roosevelt also backed efforts to save the nation's forests through careful management of the timber resources of the West. He appointed his close friend Gifford Pinchot to head the United States Forest Service. "The natural resources," Pinchot said, "must be developed and preserved for the benefit of the many and not merely for the profit of a few."

As progressives, Roosevelt and Pinchot both believed that trained experts in forestry and resource management should apply the same scientific standards to the landscape that others were applying to the management of cities and industry. They rejected the laissez-faire argument that the best way to preserve public land was to sell it to lumber companies, who would then carefully conserve it because it was the source of their profits. With the president's support, Pinchot's department drew up regulations controlling lumbering on federal lands.

Roosevelt took other steps as well to conserve the nation's resources. He added over 100 million acres to the protected national forests, quadrupling their area, and established 5 new national parks and 51 federal wildlife reservations.

Roosevelt's Legacy President Roosevelt changed the role of the federal government and the nature of the presidency. Increasingly, Americans began to look to the federal government to solve the nation's economic and social problems. Under Roosevelt, the



Picturing History

Crowd Pleaser Teddy Roosevelt's energetic speaking style captivated audiences across the nation. **What impact did he have on the office of the presidency?**

executive branch of government had dramatically increased its power. The ICC could set rates, the Agriculture Department could inspect food, the Bureau of Corporations could monitor business, and the attorney general could rapidly bring antitrust lawsuits under the Expedition Act.

Reading Check **Examining** How did Roosevelt's policies help the conservation of natural resources?

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

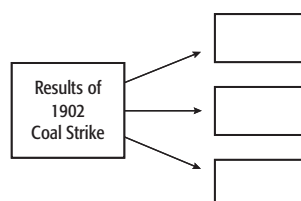
- Define:** Square Deal, arbitration.
- Identify:** Northern Securities, United Mine Workers, Hepburn Act, Upton Sinclair.
- Explain** what was provided for in the Hepburn Act.

Reviewing Themes

- Individual Action** How did Upton Sinclair contribute to involving the federal government in protecting consumers?

Critical Thinking

- Drawing Conclusions** What impact did Roosevelt's use of the Sherman Antitrust Act have on business?
- Organizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list the results of the Coal Strike of 1902.



Analyzing Visuals

- Analyzing Political Cartoons** Look at the cartoon on page 556. Why are the giants depicted as they are? What do they represent? Roosevelt is called Jack the Giant-Killer. What fairy tale is being referred to?

Writing About History

- Descriptive Writing** Imagine you are living in the early 1900s and have just read Sinclair's *The Jungle*. Write a letter to a friend explaining what the novel is about and how it characterizes the Progressive era.

CATHEDRAL RANGE

Clouds Rest
9,926 ft. (3,025 m)



El Capitan
7,569 ft. (2,307 m)

Eagle Peak

Yosemite Point

Upper Yosemite Falls
1,430 ft. (436 m)

Yosemite Falls total drop
2,425 ft. (739 m)

Royal Arches

Cathedral Spires

Yosemite Valley
4,000 ft. (1,219 m)

Cathedral Rocks

Bridalveil Fall
620 ft. (189 m)

Merced River



OUR GROWING HERITAGE

This map of the United States shows 9 of the national parks that existed by the end of President Theodore Roosevelt's administration. Roosevelt established 5 national parks, 4 of which still exist today. He also established 51 wildlife preserves and 150 national forests.



The Story of Yosemite



The breathtaking beauty of the Yosemite Valley has always astounded visitors to California's High Sierra. In 1851 volunteer soldiers came upon the valley. One officer felt a "peculiar exalted sensation" as he marveled at his surroundings.

The officer's reaction was a natural one. Carved by glaciers and rivers, the seven-mile-long valley into which he and his men rode lies at an elevation of 4,000 feet (1219 m). Above them rose the near-vertical cliffs and great granite monoliths of El Capitan, Half Dome, and Cathedral Rocks. Down onto the valley floor poured the waters of Bridalveil Fall. A dozen other waterfalls spilled over sheer cliffs elsewhere in the valley, some of them— like Yosemite Falls at 2,425 feet (739 m)—among the highest on Earth. Within five years, horseback parties were coming to gaze at Bridalveil Fall and the face of El Capitan. The tourists had found Yosemite.

To guarantee that the public could continue to enjoy the beauty, in 1864 President Abraham Lincoln granted the valley to California as a wilderness preserve. In so doing, Lincoln laid the foundation for the national park system. (The first official national park, Yellowstone, was not created until eight years later.) By the late 1880s Yosemite was attracting about 5,000 visitors a year. John Muir and other conservationists were anxious to preserve the area. Muir had spent years tramping through the woods and up and down the



President Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir stand atop Glacier Point.

mountains and glaciers of the park. His compelling descriptions swayed many influential people. In 1890 Congress expanded the protected area and made Yosemite an official national park.

In many ways Yosemite established a pattern for our national park system. It started programs to teach visitors about native plants and wildlife and was the first park to build a museum to help visitors understand and enjoy the region.

In 1903 President Theodore Roosevelt visited the park with Muir. The natural beauty of the valley captivated the environmentalist president and stimulated his desire to protect vast areas of the country. "We are not building this country of ours for a day," declared Roosevelt. "It is to last through the ages." During his presidency Roosevelt enlarged Yosemite, established the U.S. Forest Service, and put millions of acres of land under federal protection. In 1916 the National Park Service was established, and today it manages more than 380 areas, including 57 national parks.

Sightseers admire Yosemite Falls as they ride along Glacier Point Trail in 1901. Today some 3.5 million tourists visit the park each year.



LEARNING FROM GEOGRAPHY

1. How was the Yosemite Valley formed?
2. How did the establishment of the national park system help to conserve natural resources?