

Americans Struggle with Postwar Issues

Slide 1:

1. WWI had left American public exhausted. The debate over the League of Nations had Americans divided and the economy was in a state of adjustment
2. Americans responded to the stressful situation by becoming more fearful of outsiders.
3. Nativism, or prejudice against foreign-born people swept the nation
4. So did the belief of isolationism, a policy of pulling away from involvement in world affairs

Slide 2:

1. One perceived threat to American life was the spread of communism
2. Communism is an economic and political system based on a single party government ruled by a dictatorship.
3. Communists wanted to end private property, substituting government ownership of factories, railroads and other businesses.

Slide 3:

1. Vladimir Lenin and his followers known as the bolsheviks (the majority) established a new

communist state.

2. Their symbolic flag is red and they cried out for a worldwide revolution that would abolish capitalism everywhere.
3. A communist party rose in the U.S., attracting radicals and some members of the industrial workers of the world

Slide 4:

1. U.S. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer and J. Edgar Hoover and other agents hunted down suspected communists, socialists and anarchists
2. Anarchists are people who oppose any form of government
3. Palmer and Hoover trampled people's civil rights, invading private homes and offices and jailing suspects without allowing them legal counsel.
4. Hundreds of foreign born radicals were deported without trials.
5. Raids failed to turn up enough evidence
6. Many thought Palmer was looking for a campaign issue, so he could run for president
7. Public decided that Palmer didn't know what he was talking about

Slide 5:

1. Although the red scare didn't last long it fed people's suspicion of foreigners and immigrants.
2. This nativist attitude led to ruined reputations and lives
3. Two most famous are Nicola Sacco, a shoemaker and Bartolomeo Vanzetti a fish peddler

Slide 6:

1. Sacco and Vanzetti were arrested and charged with the robbery and murder of a factory paymaster and his guard in South Braintree, Massachusetts.
2. Witnesses said the criminals appeared to be italians.
3. Sacco and Vanzetti pleaded innocent and had alibis, the evidence against them circumstantial, and the judge made prejudicial remarks

Slide 7:

1. Sacco and Vanzetti were found guilty sentenced to death.
2. Protests rang out in the U.S., Europe, and Latin America
3. Many thought they were mistreated due to their radical beliefs, others thought it was because they were immigrants.
4. Governor fuller of Massachusetts let the executions go further and they died in the electric chair.

Slide 8:

1. “Keep America for Americans” became the new prevailing attitude. Anti-immigrant attitudes had been growing since the 1880s.
2. As a result of the red scare and anti-immigrant feelings different groups of used anti-communism as an excuse to harass others unlike themselves
3. One such group was the KKK

Slide 9:

1. Klu Klux Klan was devoted to 100% americanism. by 1924 KKK membership reached 4.5 million “white male persons, native born gentile citizens”
2. Klan believed in “keeping black in their place” destroying saloons, opposing unions, and driving roman catholic jews and foreign born people out of the country.
3. KKK members were paid to recruit new members into their world of secret rituals and racial violence.
4. Its criminal activity led to decreases in power

Slide 10:

1. Between 1919 and 1921 immigration and grown close to 600% 141,000 to 800,000 people
2. Congress enacted the emergency quota act of 1921

that set up a quota system

3. This system established the maximum number of people who could enter the United States from each foreign country.

Slide 11:

1. Goal was to cut down immigration for each European nation and it worked.
2. Law was amended in 1924 to limit immigration from each European nation to 2% of the number of nationals living in the United States in 1890.
3. Also reduced the total number of person to be admitted in one year to 150,000
4. It also prohibited Japanese immigration.

Slide 12:

1. Another conflict after the war was between labor and management.
2. During the war, the government wouldn't allow workers to strike because nothing could interfere with the war effort.
3. 1919 there were more than 3,000 strikes where 4 million workers walked off the job.
4. Employers did not want to give raises or have their workers join labor unions.
5. Three strikes grabbed the public's attention

Slide 13:

1. Boston Police strike as one. they had not been given a raise since the start of WW1 and were denied the right to unionize.
2. When representatives asked for a raise and were fired, the remaining force went on strike.
3. Massachusetts governor Calvin Coolidge had to call in the national guard.
4. When the strike ended the members were not given their jobs back. new policemen were hired instead.

Slide 14:

1. Steel mill strike. Workers wanted the right to negotiate for shorter working hours, a better wage, union recognition and collective bargaining rights.
2. 1919 steel corporation refused to meet with union reps.
3. 300,000 workers walked off their jobs
4. Steel companies hired strikebreakers: employees who agreed to work during the strike.

Slide 15

1. They also used force
2. Striking workers were beaten by police, federal troops and state militias.

3. Corporations said the strikers were communists
4. By 1923 the strike had ended, workers won an 8 hour work day but no union rights

Slide 16:

1. Coal miners strike was more successful.
2. Were organized by John L. Lewis and got president wilson to appoint an arbitrator to put an end to the dispute
3. Coal miner got a 27% boost in pay, but not a shorter work day or labor rights.

Slide 17:

1. Despite these limited gains the 1920s hurt the labor movement badly
2. Union membership declined from 5 to 3.5 million.
dropped for several reasons
 - Much of the work force consisted of immigrants willing to work in poor conditions
 - Since immigrants spoke a multitude of languages, unions had difficulty organizing them
 - Farmers who had migrated to cities to find factory jobs were used to relying on themselves
 - Most unions excluded african americans

