

# United States History

## UNIT 9 Materials



**The Gilded Age**  
*America Industrializes*



# UNITED STATES HISTORY

## TERMS LIST

# UNIT 9

## *The Gilded Age*

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# Unit 9

## The Gilded Age

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<b>PART ONE</b> <i>The Conquest of the American West</i>	<b>AMSCO, 280-281</b> [Modernizing Northern Society], <b>319-322, 339-346, 353</b> <a href="#">Document 9.1</a> (Turner) <a href="#">Document 9.2</a> ( <i>A Century of Dishonor</i> ) <a href="#">Folsom, <i>The Myth of the Robber Barons</i>, Chapter 2 (James J. Hill)</a>	<i>The Americans, ##-##</i>
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<b>PART FOUR</b> <i>Gilded Age Politics</i> <b>ON YOUR OWN</b>	<b>AMSCO, 380-386</b> <b>Hofstadter, Chapter 7</b> [The Spoilsmen] <a href="#">Document 9.7</a> (Acres of Diamonds) <a href="#">Graphic Organizer 8.2</a> (3 <sup>rd</sup> Two Party System)	
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<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST</b> DBQ	<b>MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST</b>

# From Frederick Jackson Turner

## "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893)

Source: <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/afp/turner.htm>

Document

9.1

In a recent bulletin of the Superintendent of the Census for 1890 appear these significant words: "Up to and including 1880 the country had a frontier of settlement, but at present the unsettled area has been so broken into by isolated bodies of settlement that there can hardly be said to be a frontier line. In the discussion of its extent, its westward movement, etc., it cannot, therefore, any longer have a place in the census reports." This brief official statement marks the closing of a great historic movement. Up to our own day American history has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West. The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development.

Behind institutions, behind constitutional forms and modifications, lie the vital forces that call these organs into life and shape them to meet changing conditions. The peculiarity of American institutions is, the fact that they have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changes of an expanding people--to the changes involved in crossing a continent, in winning a wilderness, and in developing at each area of this progress out of the primitive economic and political conditions of the frontier into the complexity of city life. Said Calhoun in 1817, "We are great, and rapidly--I was about to say fearfully--growing!" So saying, he touched the distinguishing feature of American life. All peoples show development; the germ theory of politics has been sufficiently emphasized. In the case of most nations, however, the development has occurred in a limited area; and if the nation has expanded, it has met other growing peoples whom it has conquered. But in the case of the United States we have a different phenomenon. Limiting our attention to the Atlantic coast, we have the familiar phenomenon of the evolution of institutions in a limited area, such as the rise of representative government; into complex organs; the progress from primitive industrial society, without division of labor, up to manufacturing civilization. But we have in addition to this a recurrence of the process of evolution in each western area reached in the process of expansion. Thus American development has exhibited not merely advance along a single line, but a return to primitive conditions on a continually advancing frontier line, and a new development for that area. American social development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character. The true point of view in the history of this nation is not the Atlantic coast, it is the Great West. Even the slavery struggle, which is made so exclusive an object of attention by writers like Professor von Holst, occupies its important place in American history because of its relation to westward expansion.

In this advance, the frontier is the outer edge of the wave-- the meeting point between savagery and civilization. Much has been written about the frontier from the point of view of border warfare and the chase, but as a field for the serious study of the economist and the historian it has been neglected.

The American frontier is sharply distinguished from the European frontier--a fortified boundary line running through dense populations. The most significant thing about the American frontier is, that it lies at the hither edge of **free land**. In the census reports it is treated as the margin of that settlement which has a density of two or more to the square mile. The term is an elastic one, and for our purposes does not need sharp definition. We shall consider the whole frontier belt including the Indian country and the outer margin of the "settled area" of the census reports... In the settlement of America we have to observe how European life entered the continent, and how America modified and developed that life and reacted on Europe. Our early history is the study of European germs developing in an

American environment. Too exclusive attention has been paid by institutional students to the Germanic origins, too little to the American factors. The frontier is the line of most rapid and effective Americanization. The wilderness masters the colonist. It finds him a European in dress, industries, tools, modes of travel, and thought. It takes him from the railroad car and puts him in the birch canoe. It strips off the garments of civilization and arrays him in the hunting shirt and the moccasin. It puts him in the log cabin of the Cherokee and Iroquois and runs an Indian palisade around him. Before long he has gone to planting Indian corn and plowing with a sharp stick, he shouts the war cry and takes the scalp in orthodox Indian fashion. In short, at the frontier the environment is at first too strong for the man. He must accept the conditions which it furnishes, or perish, and so he fits himself into the Indian clearings and follows the Indian trails. Little by little he transforms the wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe... The fact is, that here is a new product that is American. At first, the frontier was the Atlantic coast. It was the frontier of Europe in a very real sense. Moving westward, the frontier became more and more American....

### **The Waning of English Influence**

The frontier promoted the formation of a composite nationality for the American people. The coast was preponderantly English, but the later tides of continental immigration flowed across to the free lands. This was the case from the early colonial days. The Scotch-Irish and the Palatine Germans, or "Pennsylvania Dutch," furnished the dominant element in the stock of the colonial frontier... In the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics. The process has gone on from the early days to our own... In the middle of the present century the German element in Wisconsin was already so considerable that leading publicists looked to the creation of a German state out of the commonwealth by concentrating their colonization. Such examples teach us to beware of misinterpreting the fact that there is a common English speech in America into a belief that the stock is also English.

In another way the advance of the frontier decreased our dependence on England. The coast, particularly of the South, lacked diversified industries, and was dependent on England for the bulk of its supplies... Before long the frontier created a demand for merchants. As it retreated from the coast it became less and less possible for England to bring her supplies directly to the consumer's wharfs, and carry away staple crops...

The legislation which most developed the powers of the national government, and played the largest part in its activity, was conditioned on the frontier. Writers have discussed; the subjects of tariff, land, and internal improvement, as subsidiary to the slavery question. But when American history comes to be rightly viewed it will be seen that the slavery question is an incident. In the period from the end of the first half of the present century to the close of the Civil War slavery rose to primary, but far from exclusive, importance. But this does not justify Dr. von Holst (to take an example) in treating our constitutional history in its formative period down to 1828 in a single volume, giving six volumes chiefly to the history of slavery from 1828 to 1861, under the title "Constitutional History of the United States." The growth of nationalism and the evolution of American political institutions were dependent on the advance of the frontier. Even so recent a writer as Rhodes, in his "History of the United States since the Compromise of 1850," has treated the legislation called out by the western advance as incidental to the slavery struggle.

This is a wrong perspective. The pioneer needed the goods of the coast, and so the grand series of internal improvement and railroad legislation began, with potent nationalizing effects. Over internal improvements occurred great debates, in which grave constitutional questions were discussed. Sectional groupings appear in the votes, profoundly significant for the historian. **Loose construction increased as the nation marched westward.** But the West

was not content with bringing the farm to the factory. Under the lead of Clay--"Harry of the West"--protective tariffs were passed, with the cry of bringing the factory to the farm....

### **The Influence of Cheap Land**

The public domain has been a force of profound importance in the nationalization and development of the government. The effects of the struggle of the landed and the landless States, and of the Ordinance of 1787, need no discussion. Administratively the frontier called out some of the highest and most vitalizing activities of the general government. The purchase of Louisiana was perhaps the constitutional turning point in the history of the Republic, inasmuch as it afforded both a new area for national legislation and the occasion of the downfall of the policy of strict construction. But the purchase of Louisiana was called out by frontier needs and demands. As frontier States accrued to the Union the national power grew. In a speech on the dedication of the Calhoun monument Mr. Lamar explained: "In 1789 the States were the creators of the Federal Government; in 1861 the Federal Government was the creator of a large majority of the States."

When we consider the public domain from the point of view of the sale and disposal of the public lands we are again brought face to face with the frontier. The policy of the United States in dealing with its lands is in sharp contrast with the European system of scientific administration. Efforts to make this domain a source of revenue, and to withhold it from emigrants in order that settlement might be compact, were in vain. The jealousy and the fears of the East were powerless in the face of the demands of the frontiersmen. John Quincy Adams was obliged to confess: "My own system of administration, which was to make the national domain the inexhaustible fund for progressive and unceasing internal improvement, has failed." The reason is obvious; a system of administration was not what the West demanded; it wanted land. Adams states the situation as follows: "The slaveholders of the South have bought the cooperation of the western country by the bribe of the western lands, abandoning to the new Western States their own proportion of the public property and aiding them in the design of grasping all the lands into their own hands. Thomas H. Benton was the author of this system, which he brought forward as a substitute for the American system of Mr. Clay, and to supplant him as the leading statesman of the West. Mr. Clay, by his tariff compromise with Mr. Calhoun, abandoned his own American system. At the same time he brought forward a plan for distributing among all the States of the Union the proceeds of the sales of the public lands. His bill for that purpose passed both Houses of Congress, but was vetoed by President Jackson, who, in his annual message of December, 1832, formally recommended that all public lands should be gratuitously given away to individual adventurers and to the States in which the lands are situated.

"No subject," said Henry Clay, "which has presented itself to the present, or perhaps any preceding, Congress, is of greater magnitude than that of the public lands." When we consider the far-reaching effects of the government's land policy upon political, economic, and social aspects of American life, we are disposed to agree with him. But this legislation was framed under frontier influences, and under the lead of Western statesmen like Benton and Jackson. Said Senator Scott of Indiana in 1841: "I consider the preemption law merely declaratory of the custom or common law of the settlers."

It is safe to say that the legislation with regard to land, tariff, and internal improvements - the American system of the nationalizing Whig party - was conditioned on frontier ideas and needs. But it was not merely in legislative action that the frontier worked against the sectionalism of the coast. The economic and social characteristics of the frontier worked against sectionalism. The men of the frontier had closer resemblances to the Middle region than to either of the other sections.... The Middle region mediated between East and West as well as between North and South. Thus it became the typically American region....

## The Nationalizing Tendency of the West

It was this nationalizing tendency of the West that transformed the democracy of Jefferson into the national republicanism of Monroe and the democracy of Andrew Jackson. The West... had a solidarity of its own with national tendencies... North and South met and mingled into a nation. Interstate migration went steadily on--a process of crossfertilization of ideas and institutions. The fierce struggle of the sections over slavery on the western frontier does not diminish the truth of this statement; it proves the truth of it. Slavery was a sectional trait that would not down, but in the West it could not remain sectional. It was the greatest of frontiersmen who declared: "I believe this Government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. It will become all of one thing or all of the other." Nothing works for nationalism like intercourse within the nation. Mobility of population is death to localism...

But the most important effect of the frontier has been in the promotion of democracy here and in Europe. As has been indicated, the frontier is productive of individualism. Complex society is precipitated by the wilderness into a kind of primitive organization based on the family. The tendency is anti-social. It produces antipathy to control, and particularly to any direct control. The tax-gatherer is viewed as a representative of oppression. Prof. Osgood, in an able article, has pointed out that the frontier conditions prevalent in the colonies are important factors in the explanation of the American Revolution, where individual liberty was sometimes confused with absence of all effective government. The same conditions aid in explaining the difficulty of instituting a strong government in the period of the confederacy.

**The frontier individualism has from the beginning promoted democracy.** The frontier States that came into the Union in the first quarter of a century of its existence came in with democratic suffrage provisions, and had reactive effects of the highest importance upon the older States whose peoples were being attracted there. An extension of the franchise became essential... The rise of democracy as an effective force in the nation came in with western preponderance under Jackson and William Henry Harrison, and it meant the triumph of the frontier....

So long as free land exists, the opportunity for a competency exists, and economic power secures political power. But the democracy born of free land, strong in selfishness and individualism, intolerant of administrative experience and education, and pressing individual liberty beyond its proper bounds, has its dangers as well as its benefits. Individualism in America has allowed a laxity in regard to governmental affairs which has rendered possible the spoils system and all the manifest evils that follow from the lack of a highly developed civic spirit....

From the conditions of frontier life came intellectual traits of profound importance... The result is that to the frontier the American intellect owes its striking characteristics. That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless, nervous energy; that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom - these are traits of the frontier... Since the days when the fleet of Columbus sailed into the waters of the New World, America has been another name for opportunity, and the people of the United States have taken their tone from the incessant expansion which has not only been open but has even been forced upon them. He would be a rash prophet who should assert that the expansive character of American life has now entirely ceased. Movement has been its dominant fact, and, unless this training has no effect upon a people, the American energy will continually demand a wider field for its exercise. But never again will such gifts of free land offer themselves... Now, four centuries from the discovery of America, at the end of a hundred years of life under the Constitution, the frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American history.

# From Helen Hunt Jackson

## *A Century of Dishonor* (1888)

Source: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3401804757.html>

Document

9.2

The winter of 1877 and summer of 1878 were terrible seasons for the Cheyennes. Their fall hunt had proved unsuccessful. Indians from other reservations had hunted the ground over before them, and driven the buffalo off; and the Cheyennes made their way home again in straggling parties, destitute and hungry. Their agent reports that the result of this hunt has clearly proved that "in the future the Indian must rely on tilling the ground as the principal means of support; and if this conviction can be firmly established, the greatest obstacle to advancement in agriculture will be overcome. With the buffalo gone, and their pony herds being constantly decimated by the inroads of horse-thieves, they must soon adopt, in all its varieties, the way of the white man."

The ration allowed to these Indians is reported as being "reduced and insufficient," and the small sums they have been able to earn by selling buffalo-hides are said to have been "of material assistance" to them in "supplementing" this ration. But in this year [1888] there have been sold only \$657 worth of skins by the Cheyennes and Arapahoes together. In 1876 they sold \$17,600 worth. Here is a failing off enough to cause very great suffering in a little community of five thousand people. But this was only the beginning of their troubles. The summer proved one of unusual heat. Extreme heat, chills and fever, and "a reduced and insufficient ration," all combined, resulted in an amount of sickness heart-rending to read of. "It is no exaggerated estimate," says the agent, "to place the number of sick people on the reservation at two thousand. Many deaths occurred which might have been obviated had there been a proper supply of anti-malarial remedies at hand. Hundreds applying for treatment have been refused medicine."

The Northern Cheyennes grew more and more restless and unhappy. "In council and elsewhere they profess an intense desire to be sent North, where they say they will settle down as the others have done," says the report; adding, with an obtuseness which is inexplicable, that "no difference has been made in the treatment of the Indians," but that the "compliance" of these Northern Cheyennes has been "of an entirely different nature from that of the other Indians," and that it may be "necessary in the future to compel what so far we have been unable to effect by kindness and appeal to their better natures."

If it is "an appeal to men's better natures" to remove them by force from a healthful Northern climate, which they love and thrive in, to a malarial Southern one, where they are struck down by chills and fever—refuse them medicine which can combat chills and fever, and finally starve them—there indeed, might be said to have been most forcible appeals made to the "better natures" of these Northern Cheyennes. What might have been predicted followed.

Early in the autumn, after this terrible summer, a band of some three hundred of these Northern Cheyennes took the desperate step of running off and attempting to make their way back to Dakota. They were pursued, fought desperately, but were finally overpowered, and surrendered. They surrendered, however, only on the condition that they should be taken to Dakota. They were unanimous in declaring that they would rather die than go back to the



Indian Territory. This was nothing more, in fact, than saying that they would rather die by bullets than of chills and fever and starvation.

These Indians were taken to Fort Robinson, Nebraska. Here they were confined as prisoners of war, and held subject to the orders of the Department of the Interior. The department was informed of the Indians' determination never to be taken back alive to Indian Territory. The army officers in charge reiterated these statements, and implored the department to permit them to remain at the North; but it was of no avail. Orders came—explicit, repeated, finally stern—insisting on the return of these Indians to their agency. The commanding officer at Fort Robinson has been censured severely for the course he pursued in his effort to carry out those orders. It is difficult to see what else he could have done, except to have resigned his post. He could not take three hundred Indians by sheer brute force and carry them hundreds of miles, especially when they were so desperate that they had broken up the iron stoves in their quarters, and wrought and twisted them into weapons with which to resist. He thought perhaps he could starve them into submission. He stopped the issue of food; he also stopped the issue of fuel to them. It was midwinter; the mercury froze in that month at Fort Robinson. At the end of two days he asked the Indians to let their women and children come out that he might feed them. Not a woman would come out.

On the night of the fourth day—or, according to some accounts, the sixth—these starving, freezing Indians broke prison, overpowered the guards, and fled, carrying their women and children with them. They held the pursuing troops at bay for several days; finally made a last stand in a deep ravine, and were shot down—men, women, and children together. Out of the whole band there were left alive some fifty women and children and seven men, who, having been confined in another part of the fort, had not had the good fortune to share in this outbreak and meet their death in the ravine...

## Document 9.3

### From Ida Tarbell, *The History of the Standard Oil Company*

Published in excerpts in McClure's Magazine, 1902-1904

PBS: [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/rockefellers/sfeature/sf\\_7.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/rockefellers/sfeature/sf_7.html)

#### ***Rockefeller's rise:***

The strides the firm of Rockefeller & Andrews ... were attributed... mainly to [his] extraordinary capacity for bargaining and borrowing. Then its chief competitors began to suspect something. Rockefeller might get his oil cheaper now and then, they said, but he could not do it often. He might make close contracts for which they had neither the patience nor the stomach. He might have an unusual mechanical and practical genius in his partner. But these things could not explain all. They believed they bought, on the whole, almost as cheaply as he, and they knew they made as good oil and with as great, or nearly as great, economy. He could sell at no better price than they. Where was his advantage? There was but one place where it could be, and that was in transportation.

#### **The South Improvement Company scheme:**

For several days an uneasy rumor had been running up and down the Oil Regions. Freights were going up. Now an advance in a man's freight bill may ruin his business; more, it may mean the ruin of a region.

...

On the morning of February 26, 1872, the oil men read in their morning papers that the rise which had been threatening had come; moreover, that all members of the South Improvement Company were exempt from the advance. At the news all Oildom rushed into the streets. Nobody waited to find out his neighbor's opinion. On every lip there was but one word, and that was "conspiracy."...

For weeks the whole body of oil men abandoned regular business and surged from town to town intent on destroying the "Monster," the "Forty Thieves," the "great Anaconda," as they called the mysterious South Improvement Company. Curiously enough, it was chiefly against the combination which had secured the discrimination from the railroads--not the railroads which had granted it--that their fury was directed. They expected nothing but robbery from the railroads, they said. They were used to that; but they would not endure it from men in their own business.

#### ***The aftermath of South Improvement Company scheme:***

No number of resolutions could wipe out the memory of the forty days of terrible excitement and loss which the region had suffered. No triumph could stifle the suspicion and bitterness which had been sown broadcast through the region. Every particle of independent manhood in these men whose very life was independent action had been outraged. Their sense of fair play, the saving force of the region in the days before law and order had been established, had been violated. These were things which could not be forgotten. There henceforth could be no trust in those who had devised a scheme which, the producers believed, was intended to rob them of their business.

#### ***The oil boom:***

The oil men as a class had been brought up to enormous profits, and held an entirely false standard of values. As the "Derrick" told them once in a sensible editorial, "their business was born in a balloon going up, and spent all its early years in the sky." They had seen nothing but the extreme of fortune. One hundred per cent per annum on an investment was in their judgment only a fair profit. If their oil property had not paid for itself entirely in six months, and begun to yield a good percentage, they were inclined to think it a failure. They were notoriously extravagant in the management of their business. Rarely did an oil man write a letter if he could help it. He used the telegraph instead. Whole sets of drilling tools were sometimes sent by express. It was no uncommon thing to see near a derrick broken tools which could easily have been mended, but which the owner had replaced by new ones. It was

anything to save bother with him. Frequently wells were abandoned which might have been pumped on a small but sure profit. The simple fact was that the profits which men in trades all over the country were glad enough to get, the oil producers despised. The one great thing which the Oil Regions did not understand in 1872 was economy.

### ***The hushing of the Oil Regions:***

The great human tragedies of the Oil Regions lie in the individual compromises which followed the public settlement of 1880. For then it was that man after man, from hopelessness, from disgust, from ambition, from love of money, gave up the fight for principle which he had waged for seven years. "The Union has surrendered," they said, "why fight on?" This man took a position with the Standard and became henceforth active in its business; that man took a salary and dropped out of sight; this one went his independent way, but with closed lips; that one shook the dust of the Oil Regions from his feet and went out to seek 'God's Country,' asking only that he should never again hear the word 'oil.' The newspapers bowed to the victor. A sudden hush came over the region, the hush of defeat, of cowardice, of hopelessness.

### ***Rockefeller's genius:***

With Mr. Rockefeller's genius for detail there went a sense of the big and vital factors in the oil business and a daring in laying hold of them which was very like military genius. He saw strategic points like a Napoleon and he swooped on them with the suddenness of a Napoleon. Mr. Rockefeller's capture of the Cleveland refineries in 1872 was as dazzling an achievement as it was a hateful one. The campaign ... viewed simply as a piece of brigandage, was admirable. The man saw what was necessary to his purpose and he never hesitated before it. His courage was steady--and his faith in his ideas unwavering. He simply knew what was the thing to do, and he went ahead with the serenity of the man who knows.

### ***Rockefeller and public opinion:***

Little by little as the public began to realize the compactness and harmony of the Standard organization, the ability of its members, the solidity of the qualities governing its operations, they began to forget its history...they began to accept the Standard's explanation that the critics were indeed "people with a private grievance," "moss-backs left behind in the march of progress." It looked more and more to the outsider as if henceforth Mr. Rockefeller was going to have things his own way, for who was there to interfere with him, to dispute his position? No one, save that back in Northwestern Pennsylvania, in scrubby little oil towns, around greasy derricks, in dingy shanties, by rusty deserted oil stills, men still talked of the iniquity of the railroad rebate, the injustice of restraint of trade, the dangers of monopoly; still rehearsed with tiresome persistency the evidence by which it had been proved that the Standard Oil Company was a revival of the South Improvement Company.

### ***Rockefeller's character:***

Now, it takes time to secure and to keep that which the public has decided it is not for the general good that you have. It takes time and caution to perfect anything which must be concealed. It takes time to crush men who are pursuing legitimate trade. But one of Mr. Rockefeller's most impressive characteristics is patience. There never was a more patient man, or one who could dare more while he waited. The folly of hurrying, the folly of discouragement, for one who would succeed, went hand in hand. Everything must be ready before he acted, but while you wait you must prepare, must think, work. "You must put in, if you would take out." His instinct for the money opportunity in things was amazing, his perception of the value of seizing this or that particular invention, plant, market, was unerring. He was like a general who, besieging a city surrounded by fortified hills, views from a balloon the whole great field, and see how, this point taken, that must fall; this hill reached, that fort is commanded. And nothing was too small: the corner grocery in Browntown, the humble refining still on Oil Creek, the shortest private pipe line. Nothing, for little things grow.

# Document 9.4

## "I, Monopolist"

### A Posthumous Interview with John D. Rockefeller (1999)

Wired Magazine: <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/7.04/rockefeller.html>

THE WIRED LIVING ARCHIVE

DIE FIRST

ASK QUESTIONS LATER

STRAIGHT FROM THE PAST IN THE EXACT WORDS OF THE SUBJECT

### I, Monopolist

John D. Rockefeller, America's original supercapitalist, on Bill Gates and the Microsoft trial.

By Gary Wolf

*The triumphs of heavy industry are triumphs of hegemony, as 19th-century America's invention of the industrial trust amply demonstrated. The richest of its inventors - the man who created an unparalleled method to centralize control and eliminate competition - was the founder of Standard Oil Company and Trust, John D. Rockefeller.*

*When Rockefeller first set foot on the oil fields of western Pennsylvania, in the early 1860s, he found an anarchy of independent drillers and refiners who were constantly indebted, desperately underselling each other, and vulnerable to wasteful cycles of boom and bust. By the time he began to retire in the mid-1890s, Standard Oil Trust had become arguably the most successful business concern in history. Oil traveled from Standard Oil refineries over Standard Oil pipelines to Standard Oil wholesalers to Standard Oil retailers, and finally to consumers, in red Standard Oil cans.*

*Despite decades of battles with the government - resulting, finally, in the breakup of Standard Oil Trust in 1911 - Rockefeller never wavered in his belief that centralized control of industry by a handful of strong-minded capitalists was a good thing.*

*In discussions with Wired, Ron Chernow, author of the recent best-seller Titan: The Life of John D. Rockefeller, pointed out that "few of the founding fathers of our industrial system believed in free markets.*

*"Rockefeller was the archetypal figure of that era," Chernow noted. "He created the first great trust, he created the principle of monopoly, and he was its theoretician."*

*This being the case, we wondered what Rockefeller might have made of the Justice Department's antitrust suit against Microsoft. We were curious, too, just what he would say about his role in establishing a philanthropic template for later generations. At 43 - the age of Bill Gates today - Rockefeller launched an unprecedented second career of charitable giving. Indeed, Bill and Melinda Gates's most recent philanthropic gesture - a \$3.345 billion contribution to two family foundations - may be seen as part of a socioeconomic continuum initiated by Rockefeller.*

*Most important, we wanted to know about Rockefeller's legacy. What was his vision of success, failure, and true leadership?*

*So we asked him.*

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*Wired: Thank you for doing this interview. Ron Chernow told us you don't have a high opinion of journalists.*

*Rockefeller: They make a great ado and throw dust in the air.*

*OK. Let us throw our handful: It's been said that your Standard Oil Company figured out every fundamental mechanism by which a monopoly could restrain trade, and that all the government needed to do to create its antitrust legislation was compile a list of your business tactics.*

*A restraint of trade was the last thing that could be fairly charged against the Standard Oil Company. The Standard Oil Company was doing just the opposite. It was expanding trade every day. Many others had restrained trade by putting out oil which prejudiced the people against kerosene oil, as it*

was termed, as an illuminant, because of poor quality and consequent great danger. The Standard Oil Company went vigorously about the expansion of trade by giving the people an oil that they would call for a second time and that they would use without fear of the explosions.

*We're intrigued by some similarities between your business practices and those of Microsoft. Until a couple years ago, Microsoft received a license fee from manufacturers for every computer shipped, whether it ran Windows or a competitor's OS. (Microsoft ended this practice as part of the 1995 consent decree that closed the government's first antitrust case against the company.) When you were a fairly large refiner in Cleveland, you negotiated with the railroads secret rates that allowed you to ship your oil cheaper than your competitors and, subsequently, to acquire them. Then, as the railroads became more and more dependent on your growing power, Standard Oil got a secret rebate from the railroad on every barrel of oil shipped, whether it was your oil or your competitors'. This put you in a position to monopolize the trade.*

I do recall that we aided the railroads in greatly reducing the time taken by shipments and the return of cars, so that they were enabled to make the round trip in about half the time; and my recollection is that when they had come to know how satisfactory it was to do business with us, they were willing to construct an additional thousand cars for this traffic. We shipped solid trainloads. The small men, who could not furnish these facilities, were jealous, and that jealousy was part of the hue and cry against us.

*It is reported that one after another you told competing oil refiners that they could either join you or be destroyed, because you were going to own the entire oil business. For instance, Ida Tarbell, your great journalistic nemesis, quotes you as saying to the other refiners, "You are to turn over your refinery to my appraisers, and I will give you Standard Oil Company stock or cash, as you prefer, for the value we put upon it. I advise you to take the stock. It will be for your good." Many smaller software companies have shared a similar feeling when Microsoft casts an eye on their business - they can either join or die. Tarbell goes on to write that "certain refiners objected, but Mr. Rockefeller was firm. It was useless to resist, he told the hesitating; they would certainly be crushed if they did not accept his offer."*

That is absolutely false, and no man was told that by me or by any of our representatives. That statement is an absolute lie. Talks like this, emanating from individuals, were made when in after years they saw that they had made a great mistake in not coming into the Standard Oil Company. There was no compulsion, no pressure, no crushing. The Standard Oil Company was an angel of mercy, reaching down from the sky and saying: "Get into the ark. Put in your old junk. We'll take all the risks." The ark which Noah built was rather more favorable to those who went in. There are some people whom the Lord Almighty cannot save. They don't want to be saved. They want to go and serve the devil and keep on in their wicked ways.

*What, then, did you say to your competitors that induced them to sell?*

What we did was to take in the largest concerns first. I said, in substance, I thought we could manage the business better for mutual protection by uniting our interests. A few of the refiners decided to remain out, and these were among the smallest and least able to compete with us. With these our relations continued, entirely pleasantly, until at length, one by one, of their own volition, they were pleased to embrace the opportunity to join their interests with ours, the result of which in every case was most satisfactory to them.

*You were right in at least one respect - even a small amount of stock in Standard Oil in those early days would, within a decade, have turned the small refiners into very wealthy men. And yet many did not take payment in stock, but preferred cash.*

Remember always that people viewing the history from today are in a very different position from those who viewed it as an untried, unproven adventure, without a precedent, undertaken by young men. I would emphasize the word "young."

*The government investigated you many times, over many years, and ultimately broke up your company. Was this merely a failure of public relations?*

I determined it was useless to waste energy in denials and disputes with jealous or disappointed people. I persuaded our partners to keep silent, too. The more we progressed, yet kept on gaining success and keeping silent, the more we were abused. We all said nothing and went on sawing wood. These envious people, who had had the same opportunities we had but failed to profit by them, were most abusive.

*What is your view of the demonization of Microsoft by the government and parts of the media and public?*

The crowd is always ready to help tear down a successful man - the most successful singer, or speaker, or lawmaker, the most successful in any endeavor. Who were we that we should succeed where so many others failed? Of course, there was something wrong, some dark, evil mystery, or we never should have succeeded.

*Does pricing products at below cost - or free - smack of restraint of trade?*

The Standard Oil Company did what any other company would do when competitors sought to take away its business: It sold lower. There was nothing peculiar about this at all.

*And you operated in great secrecy, often misleading others in the industry about your real intentions.*

What successful merchant or manufacturer do we find who is keeping a kindergarten establishment for the purpose of educating others less favored with business ability than himself, so that they in turn may take away his business and the bread out of his children's mouths?

*Microsoft uses its monopoly in the market for PC operating systems to make profits in the applications market. How important were such collateral enterprises to your business?*

We had vision, saw the vast possibilities of the oil industry, stood at the center of it, and brought our knowledge and imagination and business experience to bear in a dozen - 20, 30 directions. There was no branch of the business in which we did not make money.

Take barrels. The coopers were Irish; there were many agitators among them; we never could be sure how long we could get the barrels we needed. We built our own barrel factory, our own cooper shop. We bought forests. We lent money to men who had no capital and wanted to cut wood for us. We built kilns to dry the wood, built warehouses to store the wood, and as we needed staves hauled out the dry, well-seasoned staves, instead of wasting so much transportation on green wood. We eliminated waste everywhere.

Refiners had to pay high prices for barrels because hoop iron was high. We bought it wholesale, at far less than the individual barrel-maker would have to pay. Paint. Glue. Sulfuric acid, for refining the oil - we made our own. How could a refiner, buying his in the open market, compete with us?

We made a tremendous savings on coal. Pipelines. What did we care for the railroads, their rates or their rebates, when we could carry our crude oil to be refined or the refined oil to market in our own pipes?

Then the tank ships. We began to use them to carry our products to foreign lands. Think of the saving in that! No barreling, no leakage, no handling by stevedores, no labor to unload the oil. There were brokers, freight brokers and oil brokers, all sorts of men who had to do with shipping oil. We

eliminated them from our business. More expenses lopped off. The best of these men we took in with us. They prospered. Many of them bought stock, did well.

The matter of exchange - foreign exchange. We did our own exchange, and made a lot of money on that. Distribution added a lot to the retail price of oil. We found that the wholesale grocers made their profit in selling oil to the retailers, and that the retailers sometimes added as much as 5 cents a gallon to their price in order to make their profit. We bought land, put up our storage tanks, cut out the cost of barreling and freight, made tank wagons, and delivered the oil at the doors of the consumers, eliminating all these intermediate profits on the way. We made a fine crop of enemies by it, too, but we made oil far lower in price than it had ever been before.

Some of the other things we made: chewing gum, candles, and other forms of paraffin. There was Vaseline, a valuable by-product. That made a big business by itself.

*What do you think will be the ultimate verdict of history on the concept of growing a new industry by these methods?*

It will be said: "Here was a force that reorganized business, and everything else followed it - all business, even the government itself, which legislated against it."

Did it ever occur to you to leave some profits for somebody else?

These people wanted competition. And when they got it, they didn't like it.

*Former Microsoft VP Michael Maples once said that all the company wanted was its fair share of the market and that, as far as he was concerned, Microsoft's fair share was 100 percent.*

I recall one incident of the efforts to annoy us: being called to Washington before some committee. After putting me through all sorts of inquisitions, we were just on the eve of adjourning when I was called back. The question was like this:

"Mr. Rockefeller, does your company or your connections, or do they not, control all the business in a certain section in Michigan?"

To which I answered innocently, "Not yet!" and the uproar broke up the meeting.

*His great success has led Mr. Gates to testify before Congress, as it led you to testify in various government investigations of your business practices. When you testified, you cooperated minimally. For example, during some questions about the South Improvement Company - an early attempt to enforce cooperation among oil refiners - you claimed not to have any knowledge of it, because your questioner accidentally called it the Southern Improvement Company. This kind of thing gave you a reputation for dishonesty. Surely you knew what the real name was.*

I never undertake to instruct the man who asks me questions. I remember that incident as if it were this morning. My attorneys were following the examination. I conferred with them. They agreed that there was nothing to add or explain. I did not stop to correct my questioner. Of course, I knew what I was answering.

*The strategy of Microsoft has been "Windows everywhere," just as the strategy of your Standard Oil was to have a single, centrally managed system of refining and shipping. How could this not destroy competition?*

Progress applies in every realm; we find people saying we must not be held by the narrow prejudices in the religious world, where today we find five churches in one village; where one would be ample, led by one consecrated, intelligent leader, devoting his energies for the coming of God's kingdom in the world. The Christ spirit is evidently coming in the battlefield, the wheat field, the workshop - everywhere! And we all rejoice in it and we forget the many unpleasant things which came in the transition. And all the more do we rejoice to overlook all complaint, all grumbling, all

injustice, that came against a group of men who fought for the new idea instead of the destructive old competition.

*Your domination of the industry was benevolent?*

The ideas of these people who believed in cooperation were the right ideas, and they were the best servants of the people. They conserved their resources instead of dividing and squandering, and the business grew and developed, and the money was wisely invested in the progressive steps of the business, and they worked out on a very large scale what was started on a small scale; and the advantages of such concerted action were more and more apparent.

*It is not uncommon for people to look at individuals of enormous wealth, such as you and Mr. Gates, and think, Why not stop after the first hundred million? How much does one man need? Is this any way to spend a whole life? To gather so much money and, in doing so, to make so many enemies?*

I feel that I could not have rendered the world in any other direction as great a service as I have rendered in this. Happy, happy these years were, with all the struggles through which we passed! Happy for us not only who led in the movement; happy for all who trusted us and cast in their lot with us! Not so happy for those too conceited, too crooked, too suspicious, to see any good which they themselves did not originate.

*You were the richest man of your age and also one of the century's great philanthropists. You founded the University of Chicago, which despite your conservative views became one of the most progressive universities in the country before the First World War. Your gifts revolutionized medical research and education. You were the main support for one of the most respected black colleges after the Civil War, Spelman Seminary. What advice would you give Mr. Gates and other very wealthy people in the late 20th century?*

In these matters each man must bear his own responsibility. Mere talking about what a man is going to do tomorrow does not meet the obligation. How much it is to be regretted that so many men are doing this continually while wasting this period of their lives, to waken too late to their lost opportunity! The opportunities come to every man for doing good with his means and using his gifts to make things better in the world. My counsel to every young man would be to begin to give as soon as he begins to get. In this way I have had great happiness.

*What is the secret to becoming rich?*

Some men get money as misers; some men accumulate it with a real desire to do good with it. I was attentive. I loved my work. I saved money. It was easy for me.

*Will the oil supply hold out for another century?*

The intelligent investor can never dismiss a good degree of anxiety indeed. We record with gratitude the experiences up to date, and the old and sanguine oilmen will hope on and hope ever. But I advise them, myself included, not to spend the money until they have it in hand.

*What would you say to the Microsoft executives today, who are facing such a storm of criticism? Is there any wisdom you can offer from your experience of building the Standard Oil Company?*

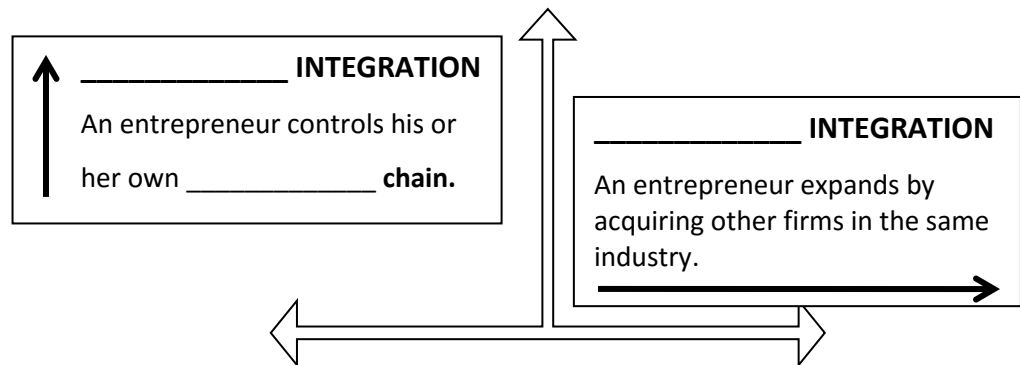
The little people, the unsuccessful, jealous people, were unhappy because they did not understand. Come, let us go to breakfast.



# Graphic Organizer 9.1

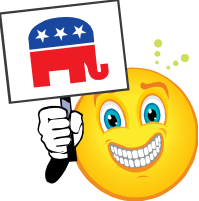
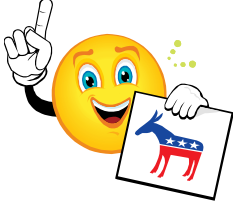
## The Rise of American Industry

Industrialist	Information	Philanthropy



## Graphic Organizer 9.2

### The Third Two-Party System

	<b>REPUBLICANS</b>		<b>DEMOCRATS</b>	
		<b>Regional Stronghold</b>		
		<b>Coalition</b>		
		<b>Tariffs</b>		
		<b>Moral Reform</b>		
		<b>Civil Service</b>		
		<b>Internal Improvements</b>		

# Document 9.5

## Platform of the Worcester Labor Reform Convention

September 4, 1871

Source: <http://www.deleonism.org/text/hd000008.htm>

We affirm, as a fundamental principle, that labor, the creator of wealth, is entitled to all it creates.

Affirming this, we avow ourselves willing to accept the final results of the operation of a principle so radical, -- such as the overthrow of the whole profit-making system, the extinction of all monopolies, the abolition of privileged classes, universal education and fraternity, perfect freedom of exchange, and, best and grandest of all, the final obliteration of that foul stigma upon our so-called Christian civilization, -- the poverty of the masses. Holding principles as radical as these, and having before our minds an ideal condition so noble, we are still aware that our goal cannot be reached at a single leap. We take into account the ignorance, selfishness, prejudice, corruption, and demoralization of the leaders of the people, and to a large extent, of the people themselves; but still, we insist that some steps be taken in this direction: therefore, --

Resolved, -- That we declare war with the wages system, which demoralizes alike the hirer and the hired, cheats both, and enslaves the working-man; war with the present system of finance, which robs labor, and gorges capital, makes the rich richer, and the poor poorer, and turns a republic into an aristocracy of capital; war with these lavish grants of the public lands to speculating companies, and whenever in power, we pledge ourselves to use every just and legal means to resume all such grants heretofore made; war with the system of enriching capitalists by the creation and increase of public interest-bearing debts. We demand that every facility, and all encouragement, shall be given by law to co-operation in all branches of industry and trade, and that the same aid be given to co-operative efforts that has heretofore been given to railroads and other enterprises. We demand a ten-hour day for factory-work, as a first step, and that eight hours be the working-day of all persons thus employed hereafter. We demand that, whenever women are employed at public expense to do the same kind and amount of work as men perform, they shall receive the same wages. We demand that all public debts be paid at once in accordance with the terms of the contract, and that no more debts be created. Viewing the contract importation of coolies as only another form of the slave-trade, we demand that all contracts made relative thereto be void in this country; and that no public ship, and no steamship which receives public subsidy, shall aid in such importation.

In presenting this platform, he enforced its far-reaching principle in a speech from which the following passages are taken: --

I regard the movement with which this convention is connected as the grandest and most comprehensive movement of the age. And I choose my epithets deliberately; for I can hardly name the idea in which humanity is interested, which I do not consider locked up in the success of this movement of the people to take possession of their own.

All over the world, in every civilized land, every man can see, no matter how thoughtless, that the great movement of the masses, in some shape or other, has begun. Humanity goes by logical steps, and centuries ago the masses claimed emancipation from actual chains. It was citizenship, nothing else. When that was gained, they claimed the ballot; and when our fathers won that, then the road was opened, the field was clear for this last movement, toward which the age cannot be said to grope, as we used to phrase it, but toward which the age lifts itself all over the world.

If there is any one feature which we can distinguish in all Christendom, under different names, -- trades-unions, co-operation, Crispins, and Internationals, -- under all flags, there is one great movement. It is for the people peaceably to take possession of their own. No more riots in the streets; no more disorder

and revolution; no more arming of different bands; no cannon loaded to the lips. To-day the people have chosen a wiser method, -- they have got the ballot in their light hands, and they say, "We come to take possession of the governments of the earth." In the interests of peace, I welcome this movement, -- the peaceable marshalling of all voters toward remodelling the industrial and political civilization of the day. I have not a word to utter, -- far be it from me! -- against the grandest declaration of popular indignation which Paris wrote on the pages of history in fire and blood. I honor Paris as the vanguard of the Internationals of the world. When kings wake at night, startled and aghast, they do not dream of Germany and its orderly array of forces. Aristocracy wakes up aghast at the memory of France; and when I want to find the vanguard of the people, I look to the uneasy dreams of an aristocracy, and find what they dread most. And today the conspiracy of emperors is to put down - what? Not the Czar, not the Emperor William, not the armies of United Germany; but, when the emperors come together in the centre of Europe, what plot do they lay To annihilate the Internationals, and France is the soul of the Internationals. I, for one, honor Paris; but in the name of Heaven, and with the ballot in our right hands, we shall not need to write our record in fire and blood; we write it in the orderly majorities at the ballot-box.

If any man asks me, therefore, what value I place first upon this movement, I should say it was the movement of humanity to protect itself; and secondly, it is the insurance of peace; and thirdly, it is a guaranty against the destruction of capital. We all know that there is no war between labor and capital; that they are partners, not enemies, and their true interests on any just basis are identical. And this movement of ballot-bearing millions is to avoid the unnecessary waste of capital.

Well, gentlemen, I say so much to justify myself in styling this the grandest and most comprehensive movement of the age.

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You do not kill a hundred millions of corporate capital, you do not destroy the virus of incorporate wealth by any one election. The capitalists of Massachusetts are neither fools nor cowards; and you will have to whip them three times, and bury them under a monument weightier than Bunker Hill, before they will believe they are whipped. Now, gentlemen, the inference from that statement is this: The first duty resting on this convention, which rises above all candidates and all platforms, is, that it should keep the Labor party religiously together.

## Document 9.6

### From Samuel Gompers, “Eight Hours and Nothing Less”

Delivered May 1, 1890, in Louisville, KY

Source: [http://alvaradohistory.com/yahoo\\_site\\_admin/assets/docs/samgompers.362182351.pdf](http://alvaradohistory.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/samgompers.362182351.pdf)

My friends, we have met here today to celebrate the idea that has prompted thousands of working-people of Louisville and New Albany to parade the streets of y[our city]; that prompts the toilers of Chicago to turn out by their fifty or hundred thousand of men; that prompts the vast army of wage-workers in New York to demonstrate their enthusiasm and appreciation of the importance of this idea; that prompts the toilers of England, Ireland, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and Austria to defy the manifestos of the autocrats of the world and say that on May the first, 1890, the wage-workers of the world will lay down their tools in sympathy with the wage-workers of America, to establish a principle of limitations of hours of labor to eight hours for sleep [applause], eight hours for work, and eight hours for what we will. [Applause.] . . .

. . . They tell us that the eight-hour movement cannot be enforced, for the reason that it must check industrial and commercial progress. I say that the history of this country, in its industrial and commercial relations, shows the reverse. I say that is the plane on which this question ought to be discussed—that is the social question. As long as they make this question an economic one, I am willing to discuss it with them. I would retrace every step I have taken to advance this movement did it mean industrial and commercial stagnation. But it does not mean that. It means greater prosperity; it means a greater degree of progress for the whole people; it means more advancement and intelligence, and a nobler race of people. . . .

They say they can't afford it. Is that true? Let us see for one moment. If a reduction in the hours of labor causes industrial and commercial ruination, it would naturally follow increased hours of labor would increase the prosperity, commercial and industrial. If that were true, England and America ought to beat the tail end, and China at the head of civilization. [Applause.]

Is it not a fact that we find laborers in England and the United States, where the hours are eight, nine and ten hours a day—do we not find that the employers and laborers are more successful? Don't we find them selling articles cheaper? We do not need to trust the modern moralist to tell us those things. In all industries where the hours of labor are long, there you will find the least development of the power of invention. Where the hours of labor are long, men are cheap, and where men are cheap there is no necessity for invention.

How can you expect a man to work ten or twelve or fourteen hours at his calling and then devote any time to the invention of a machine or discovery of a new principle or force? If he be so fortunate as to be able to read a paper he will fall asleep before he has read through the second or third line. [Laughter.]

Why, when you reduce the hours of labor, say an hour a day, just think what it means. Suppose men who work ten hours a day had the time lessened to nine, or men who work nine hours a day have it reduced to eight hours; what does it mean? It means millions of golden hours and opportunities for thought. Some men might say you will go to sleep. Well, some men might sleep sixteen hours a day; the ordinary man might try that, but he would soon find he could not do it long. He would have to do something. He would probably go to the theater one night, to a concert another night, but he could not do that every night. He would probably become interested in some study and the hours that have been taken from manual labor are devoted to mental labor, and the mental labor of one hour will produce for him more wealth than the physical labor of a dozen hours. [Applause.]

I maintain that this is a true proposition—that men under the short-hour system not only have opportunity to improve themselves, but to make a greater degree of prosperity for their employers. . . . It is the greatest impediment to progress to hire men cheaply. Wherever men are cheap, there you find the least degree of progress. It has only been under the great influence of our great republic, where our people have exhibited their great senses, that we can move forward, upward and onward, and are watched with interest in our movements of progress and reform. . . .

The man who works the long hours has no necessities except the barest to keep body and soul together, so he can work. He goes to sleep and dreams of work; he rises in the morning to go to work; he takes his frugal lunch to work; he comes home again to throw himself down on a miserable apology for a bed so that he can get that little rest that he may be able to go to work again. He is nothing but a veritable machine. He lives to work instead of working to live.

[Loud applause.]

My friends, the only thing the working people need besides the necessities of life, is time. Time. Time with which our lives begin; time with which our lives close; time to cultivate the better nature within us; time to brighten our homes. Time, which brings us from the lowest condition up to the highest civilization; time, so that we can raise men to a higher plane.

My friends, you will find that it has been ascertained that there is more than a million of our brothers and sisters—able-bodied men and women—on the streets, and on the highways and byways of our country willing to work but who cannot find it. You know that it is the theory of our government that we can work or cease to work at will. It is only a theory. You know that it is only a theory and not a fact. It is true that we can cease to work when we want to, but I deny that we can work when we will, so long as there are a million idle men and women tramping the streets of our cities, searching for work. The theory that we can work or cease to work when we will is a delusion and a snare. It is a lie.

What we want to consider is, first, to make our employment more secure, and, secondly, to make wages more permanent, and, thirdly, to give these poor people a chance to work. The laborer has been regarded as a mere producing machine . . . but back of labor is the soul of man and honesty of purpose and aspiration. Now you cannot, as the political economists and college professors, say that labor is a commodity to be bought and sold. I say we are American citizens with the heritage of all the great men who have stood before us; men who have sacrificed all in the cause except honor. Our enemies would like to see this movement thrust into hades, they would like to see it in a warmer climate [laughter], but I say to you that this labor movement has come to stay. [Loud applause.] Like Banquo's ghost, it will not down. [Applause.] I say the labor movement is a fixed fact. It has grown out of the necessities of the people, and, although some may desire to see it fail, still the labor movement will be found to have a strong lodgment in the hearts of the people, and we will go on until success has been achieved.

We want eight hours and nothing less. We have been accused of being selfish, and it has been said that we will want more; that last year we got an advance of ten cents and now we want more. We do want more. You will find that a man generally wants more. Go and ask a tramp what he wants, and if he doesn't want a drink he will want a good, square meal. You ask a workingman, who is getting two dollars a day, and he will say that he wants ten cents more.

Ask a man who gets five dollars a day and he will want fifty cents more. The man who receives five thousand dollars a year wants six thousand dollars a year, and the man who owns eight or nine hundred thousand dollars will want a hundred thousand dollars more to make it a million, while the man who has his millions will want everything he can lay his hands on and then raise his voice against the poor devil who wants ten cents more a day. We live in the latter part of the Nineteenth century. In the age of electricity and steam that has produced wealth a hundred fold, we insist that it has been brought about by the intelligence and energy of the workingmen, and while we find that it is now easier to produce it is harder to live. We do want more, and when it becomes more, we shall still want more. [Applause.] And we shall never cease to demand more until we have received the results of our labor.

## Document 9.7

### From Russell Conwell, “Acres of Diamonds” Speech (1890)

American Rhetoric: <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/rconwellacresofdiamonds.htm>

Now then, I say again that the opportunity to get rich, to attain unto great wealth, is here in Philadelphia now, within the reach of almost every man and woman who hears me speak to-night, and I mean just what I say. I have not come to this platform even under these circumstances to recite something to you. I have come to tell you what in God’s sight I believe to be the truth, and if the years of life have been of any value to me in the attainment of common sense, I know I am right; that the men and women sitting here, who found it difficult perhaps to buy a ticket to this lecture or gathering to-night, have within their reach “acres of diamonds,” opportunities to get largely wealthy... and unless some of you get richer for what I am saying to night my time is wasted.

I say that you ought to get rich, and it is our duty to get rich. How many of my pious brethren say to me, “Do you, a Christian minister, spend your time going up and down the country advising young people to get rich, to get money?” “Yes, of course I do.” They say, “Isn’t that awful! Why don’t you preach the gospel instead of preaching about man’s making money?” “Because to make money honestly is to preach the gospel.” That is the reason. The men who get rich may be the most honest men you find in the community. “Oh,” but says some young man here tonight, “I have been told all my life that if a person has money he is very dishonest and dishonorable and mean and contemptible.”

My friend, that is the reason why you have none, because you have that idea of people. The foundation of your faith is altogether false. Let me say here clearly, and say it briefly, though subject to discussion which I have not time for here, ninety-eight out of one hundred of the rich men of America are honest. That is why they are rich... It is because they are honest men.

Says another young man, “I hear sometimes of men that get millions of dollars dishonestly.” Yes, of course you do, and so do I. But they are so rare a thing in fact that the newspapers talk about them all the time as a matter of news until you get the idea that all the other rich men got rich dishonestly...

For a man to have money, even in large sum, is not an inconsistent thing. We preach against covetousness, and you know we do, in the pulpit, and oftentimes preach against it so long and use the terms about “filthy lucre: so extremely that Christians get the idea that when we stand in the pulpit we believe it is wicked for any man to have money—until the collection-basket goes around, and then we almost swear at the people because they don’t give more money. Oh, the inconsistency of such doctrines as that!

Money is power, and you ought to be reasonably ambitious to have it. You ought because you can do more good with it than you could without it. Money printed your Bible, money builds your churches, money sends your missionaries, and money pays your preachers, and you would not have many of them, either, if you did not pay them. I am always willing that my church should raise my salary, because the church that pays the largest salary always raises it the easiest...

I say, then, you ought to have money. If you can honestly attain unto riches in Philadelphia, it is our Christian and godly duty to do so. It is an awful mistake of these pious people to think you must be awfully poor in order to be pious.

# The Populist Party Platform

July 4, 1892

Source: <http://www.pinzler.com/ushistory/popparplatsupp.html>

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*The Populist Movement emerged from the farmers' alliances of the 1870s and 1880s. In the 1890s the Populist Party appeared to represent a viable third party independent of the Democrats and Republicans. A response to the growth of industrialism, the Populists opposed the "concentrated capital" of banks and big businesses and decried the many of the effects that industrialism was having on American society. As you read, look carefully at the Populists' analysis of the ills of American society and their proposed solutions. In what sense do the Populists represent a reaction against many of the changes the United States underwent during the Gilded Age?*

## PREAMBLE

The conditions which surround us best justify our co-operation; we meet in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political and material ruin. Corruption dominates the ballot-box.... The people are demoralized;... public opinion silenced.... homes covered with mortgages, labor impoverished, and the land concentrating in the hands of capitalists. The urban workman are denied the right to organize for self-protection, imported pauperized labor beats down their wages... and [we] are rapidly degenerating into European conditions. The fruits of the toils of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes for a few, unprecedented in the history of mankind.... From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed the two great classes: tramps and millionaires.

The national power to create money is appropriated to enrich bond-holders....

Silver, which has been accepted as coin since the dawn of history, has been demonitized to add to the purchasing power of gold.... the supply of currency is purposely [limited] to fatten [creditors].... A vast conspiracy against mankind has been organized... if not met and overthrown at once it forebodes terrible social convulsions, the destruction of civilization....

Controlling influences dominating both... parties have permitted the existing dreadful conditions to develop without serious effort to prevent or restrain them. Neither do they now promise any substantial reform.... They propose to sacrifice our homes, lives, and children on the altar of mammon; to destroy the multitude in order to secure corruption funds from the millionaires....

We seek to restore the government of the Republic to the hands of the "plain people."

Our country finds itself confronted by conditions for which there is no precedence in the history of the world; our annual agricultural productions amount to billions of dollars in value, which must, within a few weeks or months, be exchanged for billions of dollars worth of commodities consumed in their production; the existing currency supply is wholly inadequate to make this exchange; the results are falling prices, the formation of combines and rings, the impoverishment of the producing class. We pledge ourselves that if given power we will labor to correct these evils....

We believe that the power of government in other words, of the people, should be expanded... to the end that oppression, injustice, and poverty shall eventually cease in the land.

[We] will never cease to move forward until every wrong is righted and equal rights and equal privileges securely established for all the men and women of this country....

## Active Reading



## **PLATFORM**

First That the union of the labor forces of the United States... shall be permanent and perpetual....

Second Wealth belongs to him who creates it, and every dollar taken from industry without an equivalent is robbery.... The interests of rural and civil labor are the same; their enemies identical....

Third We believe the time has come when the railroad corporations will either own the people or the people must own the railroads.... The government [should] enter upon the work of owning and managing all the railroads....

**FINANCE** We demand a national currency, safe, sound, and flexible issued by the general government....

1. We demand free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1.
2. We demand that the amount of circulating medium be speedily increased....
3. We demand a graduated income tax.
4. We believe that the money of the country should be kept as much as possible in the hands of the people, and hence we believe that all State and national revenues shall be limited to the necessary expenses of the government, economically and honestly administered....

**TRANSPORTATION** - Transportation being a means of exchange and a public necessity, the government should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people. The telegraph and telephone... should be owned and operated by the government in the interest of the people.

**LAND** The land, including all the natural sources of wealth, is the heritage of the people, and should not be monopolized for speculative purposes, and alien ownership of land should be prohibited. All land now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs, and all lands now owned by aliens should be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only.

## **EXPRESSION OF SENTIMENTS**

1. Resolved, That we demand a free ballot, and a fair count in all elections... without Federal intervention, through the adoption by the states of the... secret ballot system.
2. Resolved, That the revenue derived from a graduated income tax should be applied to the reduction of the burden of taxation now levied upon the domestic industries of this country...
4. Resolved, That we condemn the fallacy of protecting American labor under the present system which opens our ports to [immigrants including] the pauper and the criminal classes of the world and crowds out our [American] wage-earners... and [we] demand the further restriction of undesirable immigration.
5. Resolved, That we cordially sympathize with the efforts of organized workingmen to shorten the hours of labor....
6. Resolved, That we regard the maintenance of a large standing army of mercenaries, known as the Pinkerton system as a menace to our liberties and we demand its abolition....
7. Resolved, That we commend to the favorable consideration of the people... the initiative and referendum.
8. Resolved, That we favor a constitutional provision limiting the office of President and Vice President to one term, and providing for the election of Senators of the United States by a direct vote of the people.
9. Resolved, That we oppose any subsidy or national aid to any private corporation for any purpose.

# From William Jennings Bryan, “Cross of Gold” Speech (1896)

History Matters: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5354/>

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*The most famous speech in American political history was delivered by William Jennings Bryan on July 9, 1896, at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. The issue was whether to endorse the free coinage of silver at a ratio of silver to gold of 16 to 1. (This inflationary measure would have increased the amount of money in circulation and aided cash-poor and debt-burdened farmers.) After speeches on the subject by several U.S. Senators, Bryan rose to speak. The thirty-six-year-old former Congressman from Nebraska aspired to be the Democratic nominee for president, and he had been skillfully, but quietly, building support for himself among the delegates. His dramatic speaking style and rhetoric roused the crowd to a frenzy. The response, wrote one reporter, “came like one great burst of artillery.” Men and women screamed and waved their hats and canes... The next day the convention nominated Bryan for President on the fifth ballot.*

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I would be presumptuous, indeed, to present myself against the distinguished gentlemen to whom you have listened if this were but a measuring of ability; but this is not a contest among persons. The humblest citizen in all the land when clad in the armor of a righteous cause is stronger than all the whole hosts of error that they can bring. I come to speak to you in defense of a cause as holy as the cause of liberty—the cause of humanity. When this debate is concluded, a motion will be made to lay upon the table the resolution offered in commendation of the administration and also the resolution in condemnation of the administration. I shall object to bringing this question down to a level of persons. The individual is but an atom; he is born, he acts, he dies; but principles are eternal; and this has been a contest of principle.

Never before in the history of this country has there been witnessed such a contest as that through which we have passed. Never before in the history of American politics has a great issue been fought out as this issue has been by the voters themselves....

We stand here representing people who are the equals before the law of the largest cities in the state of Massachusetts. When you come before us and tell us that we shall disturb your business interests, we reply that you have disturbed our business interests by your action. We say to you that you have made too limited in its application the definition of a businessman. The man who is employed for wages is as much a businessman as his employer. The attorney in a country town is as much a businessman as the corporation counsel in a great metropolis. The merchant at the crossroads store is as much a businessman as the merchant of New York. The farmer who goes forth in the morning and toils all day, begins in the spring and toils all summer, and by the application of brain and muscle to the natural resources of this country creates wealth, is as much a businessman as the man who goes upon the Board of Trade and bets upon the price of grain. The miners who go 1,000 feet into the earth or climb 2,000 feet upon the cliffs and bring forth from their hiding places the precious metals to be poured in the channels of trade are as much businessmen as the few financial magnates who in a backroom corner the money of the world.

We come to speak for this broader class of businessmen... those pioneers away out there, rearing their children near to nature’s heart, where they can mingle their voices with the voices of the birds—out there where they have erected schoolhouses for the education of their children and churches where they praise their Creator, and the cemeteries where sleep the ashes of their dead—are as deserving of the consideration of this party as any people in this country.

It is for these that we speak. We do not come as aggressors. Our war is not a war of conquest. We are fighting in the defense of our homes, our families, and posterity. We have petitioned, and our petitions have been scorned. We have entreated, and our entreaties have been disregarded. We have begged, and they have mocked when our calamity came.

***We beg no longer; we entreat no more; we petition no more. We defy them!***

The gentleman from Wisconsin has said he fears a [Robespierre](#). My friend, in this land of the free you need fear no tyrant who will spring up from among the people. What we need is an Andrew Jackson to stand as Jackson stood, against the encroachments of aggregated wealth.

They tell us that this platform was made to catch votes. We reply to them that changing conditions make new issues; that the principles upon which rest Democracy are as everlasting as the hills; but that they must be applied to new conditions as they arise. Conditions have arisen and we are attempting to meet those conditions. They tell us that the income tax ought not to be brought in here; that is not a new idea. They criticize us for our criticism of the [Supreme Court](#) of the United States. My friends, we have made no criticism. We have simply called attention to what you know. If you want criticisms, read the [dissenting opinions](#) of the Court. That will give you criticisms.

They say we passed an [unconstitutional law](#). I deny it. The income tax was not unconstitutional when it was passed. It was not unconstitutional when it went before the Supreme Court for the first time. It did not become unconstitutional until one judge changed his mind; and we cannot be expected to know when a judge will change his mind.

The income tax is a just law. It simply intends to put the burdens of government justly upon the backs of the people. I am in favor of an income tax. When I find a man who is not willing to pay his share of the burden of the government which protects him, I find a man who is unworthy to enjoy the blessings of a government like ours....

Mr. Jefferson, who was once regarded as good Democratic authority, seems to have a different opinion from the gentleman who has addressed us on the part of the minority. Those who are opposed to this proposition tell us that the issue of paper money is a function of the bank and that the government ought to go out of the banking business. I stand with Jefferson rather than with them, and tell them, as he did, that the issue of money is a function of the government and that the banks should go out of the governing business.

They complain about the [plank](#) which declares against the life tenure in office. They have tried to strain it to mean that which it does not mean. What we oppose in that plank is the life tenure that is being built up in Washington which establishes an [office-holding class](#) and excludes from participation in the benefits the humbler members of our society. . . .

Now, my friends, let me come to the great paramount issue. If they ask us here why it is we say more on the money question than we say upon the tariff question, I reply that [if protection has slain its thousands the gold standard has slain its tens of thousands](#). If they ask us why we did not embody all these things in our platform which we believe, we reply to them that when we have restored the money of the Constitution, all other necessary reforms will be possible, and that until that is done there is no reform that can be accomplished..

The sympathies of the Democratic Party, as described by the platform, are on the side of the struggling masses, who have ever been the foundation of the Democratic Party.

There are two ideas of government. There are those who believe that if you just legislate to make the well-to-do prosperous, that their prosperity will leak through on those below. The Democratic idea has been that if you legislate to make the masses prosperous their prosperity will find its way up and through every class that rests upon it.

You come to us and tell us that the great cities are in favor of the gold standard. I tell you that the great cities rest upon these broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic. But destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country....

If they dare to come out in the open field and defend the gold standard as a good thing, we shall fight them to the uttermost, having behind us the producing masses of the nation and the world. Having behind us the commercial interests and the laboring interests and all the toiling masses, we shall answer their demands for a gold standard by saying to them, ***you shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns! You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold!***

See Also:

["I Am a Democrat and not a Revolutionist": Senator David Bennett Hill Defends the Gold Standard](#)  
["Pitchfork Ben" Tillman Addresses the 1896 Democratic Convention](#)