

HIST 2112

Silver and Gold: The Populist Revolt Against Revolution

- Most of America is still heavily rural
- Populism
 - o The rural response to Industrialism
- Populists
 - o Farmers who are anxious about Industrialism to themselves and to the country
 - o Very closely related to the labor unions
 - Ideology very similar
- Agrarianism
 - o Farmer is a hero
 - Hardworking
 - Honest
 - Independent
 - o Ideal Americans
 - o Ideal to run a democracy
 - Vote for the best interest of the country
 - No other influences
 - o Industrialism had a tendency to destroy democracy
 - Depend on their employer for a job, wages, food, etc.
 - They vote when they are told to vote
 - o Republic loved the farmer
 - o Industrialists hated them
 - Felt they were living in the past
 - Holding everything back
- Populists are not revolutionary
 - o They do idealize their own past
 - o Not anti-progress, capitalist, etc.
 - o Want an industrialism that is more humane
- Overproduction
 - o Too much agricultural product
 - o The government gave away too much land
 - Everyone became a farmer
 - o Prices drop
 - o Hard times for all the farmers
- Farmers didn't trust the East
 - o Banks screwed them out of money
 - o Hated the railroads because they were monopolies and could charge you as they pleased
- Wealth is a product of labor
- "Wealth belongs to him who makes it."

- Create farmers alliances
 - o The alliance movement
 - o Starts in Western New York in the 1860's and 70's
 - o The Patrons of Husbandry
 - The Grange (casual name)
 - First farmers alliances
 - o Replaced with the National Farmer's Alliance
 - Equivalent of the Knights of Labor
 - Organized like a movement
 - Headquarters
 - Officials
 - Hierarchy
 - Sent speakers around the country to rally supporters
 - Organize politically
 - Form a third party
 - They want national ownership of the railroads
 - Want direct election of senators
 - o Weren't originally allowed to vote for senators
 - Want graduated income tax
 - o Want the rich to be taxed heavily
 - o Don't believe their money was earned honestly
 - Want all protection of industries gone
 - o Seen as unfair assistance
 - Free coinage of silver
 - o Control the supply of the crops to control prices
 - o Get a very low loan with very low interest from the credit union to get you through until you sell your crops
 - o Gold standard - money is backed up by gold
 - There is only as much money as there is gold
 - o Want to back up money with silver as well
 - o Can produce more money
 - Cause inflation through silver
 - Populists and Democrats unify
 - William Jennings Bryan
 - Ran for both Populist and Democratic vote at the same time
 - Lost