

# Theodore roosevelt's square deal essay sample

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## The Square Deal

President Theodore Roosevelt relentlessly improved the living, environmental, and business standards of the United States through his progressive program known as The Square Deal. Roosevelt's Square Deal focused mainly on three domestic improvements, referred to as the "Three C's:" conservation, consumer protection, and controlling corporations. Shortly after taking over the presidency position, upon the assassination of William McKinley, Roosevelt began implementing reforms from his Square Deal, which led to significant change in American business and lifestyle. An Autobiography, by Theodore Roosevelt, not only conveys the progressive reforms and actions taken by the President, but does so while expressing the opinions and tones of his desire to improve the middle and working classes.

The implementation of both the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act significantly improved living and working conditions in the United States. As part of Roosevelt's Square Deal, both of these laws assisted greatly in providing sanitary working conditions for employees, reducing the sale of contaminated food (which led to a reduction in illness and disease), and restricting the sale of medicines that were potentially dangerous or ineffective. Roosevelt also wholeheartedly supported, and enforced, the fair treatment of workers, most of whom were exploited by their employers through low wages, overworking, and other unfair treatments. In his autobiography, Roosevelt expresses pure relentlessness in achieving improved working conditions and fair treatment of employees: "Everything possible should be done to secure the wage-workers fair treatment. There should be an increased wage for the worker of increased

productiveness...special care should be taken by the Government if necessary to see that the wage-worker gets his share of the benefit, and that it is not all absorbed by the employer, or capitalist.”<sup>1</sup> These reforms contributed to improved lifestyles by reducing contamination and disease, as well as improving working conditions and wages.

A conservationist at heart, Roosevelt was the first president to actively preserve and improve nature and land throughout the United States. He was responsible for establishing protected lands, designating about 200 million acres as national forests, mineral reserves, and potential waterpower sites. Roosevelt created the National Conservation Commission in 1908 which conserved natural resources and enabled them to be used more efficiently. He firmly believed in preserving the natural resources and lands in the United States, as he states “ Like other men who had thought about the national future at all, I had been growing more and more concerned over the destruction of the forests.”<sup>2</sup> These initiatives would benefit the country and reduce wasted resources.

Roosevelt was the first President to enforce the Sherman Antitrust Act in order to prevent corporations from forming monopolies, specifically through Trusts. This was another measure taken to help protect the middle and working classes, and most importantly protect small businesses: “ The true way of dealing with monopoly is to prevent it by administrative action before it grows so powerful that even when courts condemn it they shrink from destroying it.”<sup>3</sup> Roosevelt was given the nickname “ trust buster” following the lawsuit against the Northern Securities Company, a railroad trust which had violated the Sherman Antitrust Act. The lawsuit, which favored <https://assignbuster.com/theodore-roosevelts-square-deal-essay-sample/>

Roosevelt's reform, opened the door for enforcement of the Act and led to the dismantling and prevention of numerous Trusts: " The success of the Northern Securities case definitely established the power of the Government to deal with all great corporations."<sup>2</sup> Roosevelt's persistence in protecting society and it's businesses from trusts enabled, and protected, the growth of the middle class and small businesses.

President Theodore Roosevelt's progressive reforms of the early 1900's helped in repairing the detriments in American society. The middle class would be given the opportunities and fair treatment that they deserved. Improved workplaces and increased wages were catalysts to improved lifestyles for most of the working class. The environment would become acknowledged as an important feature and one that should be protected for the safety and survival of future generations. Regulating business and putting an end to overpowering trusts through the enforcement of the Sherman Antitrust Act would protect the middle class and small business owners from exploitation and domination. Roosevelt's Square Deal benefited and impacted much of American society: "" Employers and employees have overwhelming interests in common, both as partners in industry and as citizens of the Republic, and that where these interests are apart they can be adjusted by so altering our laws and their interpretation as to secure to all members of the community social and industrial justice." <sup>3</sup> Through his progressive ideas and reforms, Theodore Roosevelt and his Square Deal brought fair treatment and justice to a society that desperately needed change.

#### Bibliography

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