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Introduction

During this time, the American economy grew at an extraordinary rate that generated high levels of wealth. Railways and telephone lines were developed creating new opportunities for entrepreneurs and cheaper goods for consumers. America viewed itself as a peaceful nation but later turned to be a nation divided between the haves and have-nots. It became a society where the poor struggled and worked extremely hard to survive in the society while the industrial and financial upper-class people lived in palatial homes. There are Americans, who celebrated the new wealth while others complained about this wealth, but the overall profound change was taking place in the country.

During this time, it was very interesting to participate in American politics since they were dynamic. Voter participation was very high, and elections were decided by a thin margin. Nevertheless, corruption influenced American politics (Twain & Warner, 2007). Ulysses government was not properly administered since the level of corruption was very high; though, the succeeding administrations were less corrupt. However, expanding wealth in America left a mark on the public and politicians agreed that this economic elite needs to expand immensely without interference from the government. It is quite unfair since industrial workers struggled to survive in the society while economic and industrial leaders capitalized on the expanding wealth (Twain & Warner, 2007). The wages in industries were low; hence, workers had to work for long hours to make the end meets, and this is very dangerous and unhealthy. It became worse when labor was divided into skilled and unskilled workers. This situation left many people with few

marketable skills and little hope of being employed. The consequence for all these events was the growing labor movements as workers joined together to face their industrial giants that were oppressing the individuals.

Farmers in America also suffered during this period since they had to capitalize on new technologies and markets on the growing economy of America (Roark & Johnson, 2012). The challenges they faced include purchasing of the machines that were innovated in order to compete well and produce quality products. It was quite unfortunate that they faced increased competition and falling prices of their products. In the last decade of the century, their share of national wealth reduced and their place in America was at risk. During this period, many American's were living an uncomfortable life much earlier than 1900. Some politicians raised their voices complaining of economic exploitation and political corruption during this period. Before 1900, some labor organizers and reformers experimented political approaches to increase their power.

Conclusion

It is quite justified to name the years between 1868 and 1901 as the gilded age. However, a glittering factor covered various economic and social problems. Labeling this period as gilded does not give a clear picture of what was going on. It was during this period that Americans had to struggle and come to terms with the wealth, political needs and labor divisions in the changing nation. This period was the beginning and an indication of the industrial revolution that made the world embrace technology in the daily lives. Individuals could now produce farm products in large scale since machines worked efficiently and quicker compared to human labor. Even

with the nation golden cover-up, Americans were already at work dealing with social and economic challenges they suffered.

References

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