Dbq 19th century farmers

In the late nineteenth century shortly after the Civil War and Reconstruction, farmers in the Midwestern United States found themselves in quite a predicament. During the second industrial revolution of the United States that contained mass introduction of: railroads, oil, steel, and electricity, the risk-taking entrepreneurs of this era took an adventure into the world of cutthroat capitalism. In just a little time, a handful of monopolies arose in all these industries which hurt both the consumer of the product and the producer of the material (Doc. F).

Because of the corrupt politicians in Washington DC, the absence of regulation on the monopolies put into place by bribes and greed or moderation from them, and the devious ways of the US Mint to support the wealthy elite, the overwhelming anger from the hard-working farmers of the United States had a just cause and was a strong voice that needed to be heard across the land. Thanks the economic crisis of 1893 hit the United States, the working people went in to a stage of shock due to the rise in population but little increase in the dollars in circulation (Doc C. . The normal and poverty class wanted an inflation to take place so the dollar was readily accessible to all citizens. Although this would devalue the dollar, this would assist the farmers because they constantly had to take out loans from big banks controlled by monopolies like J. P. Morgan and John Thompson. The allowance of the farmers more dollars means that they would not have to take out as many loans for new technology, equipment, and seeds to grow their crops.

Because there was no inflation, the farmer was chained to the banker and the banker to the government just like 30 years ago and the quote that " the slave was chained to the gin and the planter to the slave". This was vividly pictured thanks to the design presented in (Doc. D). When the farmers took out all the loans they needed to the first time around, the prices of their wheat plummeted to 1/10 of the prices they were, making them have no return.

This built up a debt with the bank, creating a hole that they only could dig deeper because they needed more money to buy more seeds again for next year's crop. This vicious cycle tortured the farmer but rewarded the men with money who could look down at the farmers as peons, the ones allowing them to have food on the table. A union named the Farmers' Alliance united to use a economic trick called bundling which is gathering all the product together to sell in a mass bundle for a higher price.

This union fell apart because of the disunity over the African-American movement happening simultaneously. Since the government decided not to pass any laws regulating the banks on fair interest rates on the loans or fixing the problem by putting more money into cycle, they added fuel on the fire of the feeling of industrial favoritism and disconnection with the people of the United States by denying silver funding and printing more greenbacks.

Congress was very deceptive during the late nineteenth century with their tactics of taking buyouts from the successful entrepreneurs and bankers to create and interpret laws for their liking. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act is a prime example of this. The plague of greed and money quickly spread to the occupants of the bench of the Supreme Court during this case. Their interpretation of this act made government powerless because it was not the government’s job to intervene with the economy and also taking its hands off of many monopolies such as railroads, steel, and banks.

These were not forms of trade but instead utilities of the people and other businesses to allow the creation of more businesses. If anything, more power was given to the monopolies of this era because the government declared itself unable to regulate them and actually would protect the railroads and banks for they were a vital tool in the transition of mail and the acquiring of gold by the United States government from the big bankers.

Thankfully these corrupt justices of the Supreme Court were compensated for their work. Not mainly from their government paycheck but from the whispers of top CEOs and entrepreneurs of the main monopolies. Also, the government was very keen to stab the farmers in the back by not allowing silver as another main rare metal into the Federal Reserve for the backing of their money. The people demanded a “ 16 to 1” for the federal funding. This meant that 16 ounces of silver could be the same worth as 1 ounce of gold.

James B Weaver was a strong supporter of this and wanted to eradicate the weapons of the big trusts that were violent threats of fraud, bribery, and pillage (Doc. F). J. Laurence Laughlin was very adamant about this by denouncing the cries of the farmers by saying that all people were feeling the pressure of the crisis but the introduction of silver into the US funding would not be a magic cure (Doc. E). Also in President McKinley’s acceptance speech, he also deems these cries empty and saying that time will heal all wounds (Doc. B).

It would take more than just time to heal this gaping gouge into the body of the United States thanks to the knife of unilateral laws of congress and the interpretation of the Supreme Court. Finally is the allowance of these monopolies to rise in the first place. Since there were no regulatory agencies back in the second industrial revolution, big businessmen with the idea of trimming fat in their companies could conquer any competitor by using hardball tactics of purposely driving prices low to make competitors go out of business.

Once these successful monopolies had flourished and spread across the country, their prices for the goods they sold skyrocketed. The farmer had only one place to buy the goods they needed, the monopolies. The farmers going to the monopolies to buy their goods and new technologies like the steel plow from John Deere strengthened the monopolies in the United States and made them more prosperous. To keep the trusts going strong, they frequently made backroom deals with congress to benefit the few and punish the many.

The wrath of politics hit everyone, everywhere, and with a strong punch. The government started this atrocity by implementing the high tariff to prevent foreign goods reaching the United States and having a fair opportunity to sell in the states. The farmer, falling mercifully to the ideas of DC put in place from the whimsically corrupt trust owners and big bankers, could do nothing but riot and demand for change. The situation of the farmers of the late 1800’s was not a pretty sight.

It was a sight that should have never been implemented. It should have been corrected with standard inflation and acceptance of more rare metals as backing of the dollar. Farmers all over the United States cried foul over the predicament laid in front of them but the justices and congressmen in Washington D. C. could not hear them over the sound of raining gold. The protection of the farmers would needed the loudest voice to awaken the sleepy politicians of our nation.