

Why americans began moving west



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1. Why Americans began moving west after the civil war? What the US government did to encourage these settlers and what happened to the Indians as a result of this?

Americans began to move to the West immediately after the American civil war, a practice that was supported by the government of the day though most of the native Indians in these areas were not for that idea. The term 'West' referred to the area in western America just between the 1850 or the period between the American civil war and 1900. It was also used to refer to the geographical region, people and the cultural practices of the people living in the western region of the United States before the 20th century. The term was later given a broader meaning to refer to the area beyond the Appalachian Mountains and west part of river Mississippi. Initially some of these regions were occupied by native Indians who were hunters and herders (Hamilton 116).

However, immediately after the American civil war, majority of the American began moving to the west. Some of the people moved to the west to witness good news from their relatives who had gone there earlier on about better Prairie lands, low land prices and large discounts for cash. However it should be noted that there are those who had nothing good about the West and to them the area was just a home for Indian herders and dangerous snakes. Generally the main reason why Americans moved to the West was economic prosperity. There are those who moved to Western America to look for farming lands and mineral deposits to ship to Europe and Far East. However, there is a small group called Mormons who went to the West to look for a

region where they could practice their religious beliefs without fear and free from persecution (Yanak & Pam 156).

The American government played a very important role in encouraging the Americans to settle in these lands. They did so through treaties with foreign nations and the native Indians, political agreements, military conquest, establishment of law and order in the region and introduction of modern technologies to empower those moving to the West. The US government later expanded its powers as a nation and this enabled US to evolve from an agrarian society to an industrialized nation hence promoting more settlements in the West and exploitation of the land to produce food crops and raw materials for the established industries. It should be noted that native Indians in the West did not welcome settlement of other people in their land and this resulted to a fight between the natives and the American government. The fight ended after completion of the transcontinental railroad when the rebelling Indians were put into reservations by the American army and their land cleared for settling the migrants. (Hamilton 199).

2. Discuss reasons for rapid industrialization in the United States in the second half of the 19th century. What were the major reasons for this growth and how the policy of laissez-faire encouraged the rise of big business? What was the role of business magnates known as robber barons and the influence of social Darwinism?

It is during the late 19th century that United States of America underwent rapid industrialization to the world's industrial leading country. This rapid

growth was facilitated by availability of adequate farming lands, ample means of transport provided by presence of railroad, availability of cheap labor, navigability of rivers and climate diversity among other factors. It should be noted that after migration of Americans to the West and defeat of the rebellious native Indians, US went through a reconstructive moment whereby Indians were assimilated by the large group where they acted as a source of cheap labor in farms and industries. Expansion of the US borders to the west increased its land for farming and rearing of livestock. This also increased its mining grounds leading to economic growth and industrialization (Yanak & Pam 34-36).

The US government promoted democracy in terms of business and this also contributed to rapid industrialization in the country. The US government did not dictate on what business to start, where to start and how to run these businesses. This encouraged people to come up with their own ideas about the business to start. Policies of laissez-faire also encouraged business people from outside US to come and establish industries since the government had developed favorable economic and political environment for businesses throughout the country.

Robbers and barons played a big role in the industrialization of the US. In economics, even stolen money is important as long as it is circulating in the economy. Therefore, regardless of the means used by these magnates to acquire their wealth, they generally played a great role in facilitating industrialization. This group provided capital necessary for industrialization. They also came up with ideas for developing more industries as they tried to acquire more income and remain famous. Robbers and barons ventured in all

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industries and this specialization enabled US be the world's most industrialized country in the 19th century (Barney 72).

Adoption of social Darwinism theory by Charles Darwin also encouraged people to work even harder leading to development of more industries. According to this theory, it was justifiable for weaker members of the society to be eliminated by the stronger ones for survival reasons (Applebaum 56). In other words policies of Darwinism promoted capitalistic economy where individuals in the US used all means to maximize their income leading to industrialization.