



# **IV. Politics of the 1920s**

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## A. Harding Struggles for Peace

1. Through the Dawes Plan, England and France were able to repay war loans to the U.S. Essentially, the U.S. arranged to be repaid with its own money. The solution caused resentment all around.
2. President Harding's cabinet included his close friends, the Ohio gang, who caused corruption in the administration.
3. Secretary of Interior Albert Fall leased government oil reserves in Teapot Dome, WY to private oil companies. Fall received more than \$400,000 from the deals and was found guilty of bribery.

# B. Fear of Communism

1. Some Americans believed that labor unrest after war would lead to the spread of Communism. Panic set in causing the “Red Scare.”
2. People who opposed the government were hunted down in Palmer raids. Their civil rights were violated as they were jailed or deported without trials. The raids failed to turn up evidence of a revolutionary conspiracy.
3. Italian immigrants and anarchists, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, were arrested and charged with robbery and murder. They provided alibis and proclaimed their innocence, but were found guilty and sentenced to death.

# C. Limiting Immigration

1. The Ku Klux Klan rises again and was devoted to “100% Americanism.”
2. Congress limited immigration into the U.S. with the Emergency Quota Act, targeting Roman Catholics, Jews, and the Japanese.

# D. Labor Unrest

1. Propaganda was used to link strikers to communism. Among some that caught the public's attention were the Boston Police Strike, the Steel Mill Strike, and the Coal Miners' strike.
2. Membership in unions dropped in the 1920s because immigrants were willing to work in poor conditions and most unions excluded African Americans.

# V. Changing Ways of Life

## A. American Industries Flourish

1. The automobile changed American landscape. Paved roads were constructed, such as Route 66. Henry Ford perfected assembly line production allowing for mass production of automobiles.
2. With advances in technology, the passenger airplane was now a method of transportation.
3. Technological advances made it possible for electricity to be distributed over long distances.
4. Advertisements no longer informed the public about products and prices, they also appealed to a person's desire. Americans could now buy goods on credit and pay through an installment plan.

## B. New Urban Scene

1. The 18th Amendment prohibited alcohol. Many law-abiding citizens defied the regulations.
2. Hidden saloon and nightclubs, known as speakeasies, allowed drinkers to obtain liquor illegally. People also bought alcohol from bootleggers, who smuggled it into the country.
3. Prohibition led to the rise of organized crime. Al Capone earned over \$60 million a year selling alcohol on the black market. He controlled the Chicago liquor business by killing off his competition. Prohibition ended in 1933 with the Twenty-first Amendment.

# C. Science and Religion

1. Fundamentalist religious groups and secular thinkers clashed over the truths of science. Fundamentalist rejected the theory of evolution and believed in the literal interpretation of the Bible.
2. John T. Scopes, a biology teacher, was accused of violating Tennessee's law that made it illegal to teach evolution in public schools. The Scopes Trial was deliberately staged in order to attract publicity. The ACLU promised to defend any teacher who challenged the law.



# D. The Twenties Woman

1. The Flapper embraced new fashions and urban attitudes. It was a movement confined to urban cities in the North.
2. Women were entering the workplace with 10 million women earning wages.

# VI. Education and Popular Culture

## A. Education

1. Enrollment in high schools quadrupled. The increase was sparked by prosperous times and higher educational standards for industry jobs.

## B. Mass Media

1. Literacy increased, giving rise to newspaper and magazine circulation. However, radio was the most powerful method of communication to emerge.

# C. American Heroes and Dreams

1. Babe Ruth symbolized the American Dream. He grew up in poverty and became the most successful sportsman of his generation.
2. Charles A. Lindbergh made the first solo flight across the Atlantic. His success was celebrated as he inspired many.
3. “Talkies” doubled movie attendance with millions of Americans going to the movies every week. Artwork changed as it now reflected the reality and dreams of America.
4. American writers, such as Sinclair Lewis, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Ernest Hemingway criticized American conformity and materialism. Some left the U.S. and settled in Europe.

# D. The Harlem Renaissance

1. The Great Migration caused urban race riots. The NAACP supported African Americans in protest against racial violence.

Marcus Garvey believed that African Americans should build a separate society and founded the UNIA. It left a legacy of black pride, economic independence, and respect for Africa.

2. The Harlem Renaissance was a literary and artistic movement that celebrated African-American culture. The poet, Langston Hughes, described the difficult lives of working-class African Americans in his work.

3. The Jazz Age originated in New Orleans and made its way north with the Great Migration.

4. Louis Armstrong is considered the most important and influential musician in the history of jazz.