

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION 12

NAME _____ DATE _____

Evaluate the extent to which the Progressive movement shaped American society from 1900 to 1920.

DOCUMENT 1

The machine controls the whole process of voting, and practices fraud at every stage. The assessor's list is the voting list, and the assessor is the machine's man. . . . The assessor pads the list with the names of dead dogs, children, and non-existent persons. One newspaper printed the picture of a dog, another that of a little four-year-old negro boy, down on such a list. A ring orator in a speech resenting sneers at his ward as "low down" reminded his hearers that that was the ward of Independence Hall, and naming over signers of the Declaration of Independence, he closed his highest flight of eloquence with the statement that "these men, the fathers of American liberty, voted down here once. And," he added, with a catching grin, "they vote here yet." Rudolph Blankenburg, a persistent fighter for the right and the use of the right to vote (and, by the way, an immigrant), sent out just before one election a registered letter to each voter on the rolls of a certain selected division. Sixty-three per cent were returned marked "not at," "removed," "deceased," etc. From one four-story house where forty-four voters were addressed, eighteen letters came back undelivered; from another of forty-eight voters, came back forty-one letters; from another sixty-one out of sixty-two; from another, forty-four out of forty-seven. Six houses in one division were assessed at one hundred and seventy-two voters, more than the votes cast in the previous election in any one of two hundred entire divisions.

—Lincoln Steffens, *The Shame of the Cities* (1904)

DOCUMENT 2

Clifford Berryman, *Cartoon of Theodore Roosevelt* (1909)



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DOCUMENT 3

We denounce the ever-growing oppression of our 10,000,000 colored fellow citizens as the greatest menace that threatens the country. Often plundered of their just share of the public funds, robbed of nearly all part in the government, segregated by common carriers, some murdered with impunity, and all treated with open contempt by officials, they are held in some States in practical slavery to the white community. The systematic persecution of law-abiding citizens and their disfranchisement on account of their race alone is a crime that will ultimately drag down to an infamous end any nation that allows it to be practiced, and it bears most heavily on those poor white farmers and laborers whose economic position is most similar to that of the persecuted race.

... We agree fully with the prevailing opinion that the transformation of the unskilled colored laborers in industry and agriculture into skilled workers is of vital importance to that race and to the nation, but we demand for the Negroes, as for all others, a free and complete education, whether by city, State or nation, a grammar school and industrial training for all and technical, professional, and academic education for the most gifted.

. . . As first and immediate steps toward remedying these national wrongs, so full of peril for the whites as well as the blacks of all sections, we demand of Congress and the Executive:

- (1) That the Constitution be strictly enforced and the civil rights guaranteed under the Fourteenth Amendment be secured impartially to all.
- (2) That there be equal educational opportunities for all and in all the States, and that public school expenditure be the same for the Negro and white child.
- (3) That in accordance with the Fifteenth Amendment the right of the Negro to the ballot on the same terms as other citizens be recognized in every part of the country.

—*Platform Adopted by the National Negro Committee* (1909)

DOCUMENT 4

The Settlement . . . is an experimental effort to aid the solution of the social and industrial problems which are engendered by the modern conditions of life in a great city. It insists that these problems are not confined to any one portion of a city. It is an attempt to relieve, at the same time, the overaccumulation at one end of society and the destitution at the other, but it assumes that this overaccumulation and destitution is most sorely felt in the things that pertain to social and educational advantages . . . It must be grounded in a philosophy whose foundation is on the solidarity of the human race, a philosophy which will not waver when the race happens to be represented by a drunken woman or an idiot boy. Its residents must be emptied of all conceit of opinion and all self-assertion, and ready to arouse and interpret the public opinion of their neighborhood. They must be content to live quietly side by side with their neighbors, until they grow into a sense of relationship and mutual interests. . . . In short, residents are pledged to devote themselves to the duties of good citizenship and to the arousing of the social energies which too largely lie dormant in every neighborhood given over to industrialism. They are bound to regard the entire life of their city as organic, to make an effort to unify it, and to protest against its over-differentiation.

—Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (1910)

DOCUMENT 5

We opened our plea for women by showing our audience that the mother and wife could not long protect herself and her children unless she had a vote. That the milk the city mother gave her baby; the school her children were educated in; the purity of the water they drank; the prices she paid for meat and clothes; the very wages her husband received; the sanitary and moral condition of the streets her children passed through were all matters of politics. When once we had clearly established the fact that women wanted to vote to protect their homes we had won a large part of our audience.

—Helen M. Todd, “Getting Out the Vote” (1911)

DOCUMENT 6

Commission government in Birmingham has been an unqualified business success. With the appointment of our commissioners there dawned a new day in our civic progress. We are realizing the fruition of long cherished hopes. The same sort of fidelity, honesty, energy, loyalty and intelligence is being displayed by these public employees that we have been accustomed to expect from private employees. A dollar of city money in Birmingham can buy as much in labor, service, and material as a dollar of individual money. When the commissioners entered upon their duties, Birmingham's floating debt under aldermanic government had been piling up with alarming rapidity. A favored bank had selfishly dominated the city's finances, and the other banking institutions of the city had felt that it was useless for them to consider, or endeavor to aid in, the city's financial problems. Practically all of the Birmingham bankers were enthusiastic believers in commission government, and have rallied in loyal support of the new administration.

—Walker Percy, "Birmingham under the Commission Plan" (1911)

DOCUMENT 7

The fact that industrial monopolies arrest development is more serious even than the direct burden imposed through extortionate prices. But the most harm-bearing incident of the trusts is their promotion of financial concentration. Industrial trusts feed the money trust. Practically every trust created has destroyed the financial independence of some communities and of many properties; for it has centered the financing of a large part of whole lines of business in New York, and this usually with one of a few banking houses. This is well illustrated by the Steel Trust, which is a trust of trusts; that is, the Steel Trust combines in one huge holding company the trusts previously formed in the different branches of the steel business. Thus the Tube Trust combined 17 tube mills, located in 16 different cities, scattered over 5 states and owned by 13 different companies. The wire trust combined 19 mills; the sheet steel trust 26; the bridge and structural trust 27; and the tin plate trust 36; all scattered similarly over many states. Finally these and other companies were formed into the United States Steel Corporation, combining 228 companies in all, located in 127 cities and towns, scattered over 18 states. Before the combinations were effected, nearly every one of these companies was owned largely by those who managed it, and had been financed, to a large extent, in the place, or in the state, in which it was located.

—Louis Brandeis, *Other People's Money and How the Bankers Use It* (1913)