**Chapter 22**

The New Era

*Reviewing Objectives*

**A thorough study of Chapter Twenty-Two should enable the student to understand:**

1. The reasons for the industrial boom in the 1920s after the initial period of economic readjustment following World War I.
2. The nature and extent of labor’s problems.
3. The plight of the American farmer.
4. The changes in the American way of life and American values in the 1920s in the areas of consumerism, communications, religion, and the role of women.
5. The reflection of these changed values in American literature and art.
6. The effects of prohibition on American politics and society.
7. The reasons for xenophobia and racial unrest in the 1920s.
8. The debacle of the Harding administration.
9. The pro-business tendencies of the Republican administration in the 1920s.

**Chapter 22**

**Pertinent Questions**

**The New Economy**

1. Outline the causes of the economic boom of the 1920s. What impact did the spectacular growth of the automobile industry have on related business activities?
2. What was the New Era trend in business organization? What sort of firms were less likely to consolidate?
3. What were the elements of “welfare capitalism”? To what extend did the average worker benefit from welfare capitalism and from rising production and profits?
4. To what extent was the lag in union membership due to the unions themselves? What were the other causal factors? How did the unions serve African-Americans and other ethnic minorities?
5. What was the largest immigrant group during the 1920s? Where did they concentrate? What was their economic status?
6. What caused the big drop in farm prices and income in the 1920s? Explain how parity was designed to solve the problem. What happened to parity?

**The New Culture**

1. Describe the new urban mass consumer culture. How did advertising help shape it?
2. How did newspaper chains, mass circulation magazines, movies and radio serve as unifying and nationalizing forces in America? What was unique about radio?
3. What new attitudes toward work, motherhood, sex, and leisure developed in the 1920s, especially among middle-class women? Was the new woman mostly a figure a myth?
4. What effect did women’s suffrage have on the politics of the 1920s?
5. What changes in high-school and college attendance occurred during the 1920s? How did these changes contribute to the recognition of the distinct stage of adolescence? What else helped change attitudes toward youth?
6. How did the adoration of Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, and especially, Charles Lindbergh illustrate the ambivalence with which many Americans regarded the decline of the “self-made man”?
7. What social forces combined to alienate the members of the so-called Lost Generation? What did these people attack? Who were the main attackers?
8. What was the Harlem Renaissance? What was its effect?

**A Conflict of Cultures**

1. What more basic conflict in society did the controversy over the “noble experiment” of prohibition come to symbolize? What were the results of prohibition?
2. Explain the changes in immigration laws brought about the National Origins Act and subsequent legislation. What ethnic groups were favored?
3. How did the resurrected Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s differ from the Reconstruction-era Klan? How influential was the new Klan?
4. Compare and contrast the views of the modernists and the fundamentalists. How did Darwinism and the Scopes trial symbolize the conflict between the two? How has the conflict persisted?
5. How were the cultural tensions of the 1920s reflected in the Democratic Party?

**Republican Government**

1. What features of President Warren G. Harding’s personal background led to his political repudiation? What was the biggest of the various Harding-era scandals?
2. Contrast the personal lives of Harding and Calvin Coolidge. Did their politics and policies differ as much as their personalities?
3. Why did Herbert Hoover push so strongly for the creation of trade associations?

**Patterns of Popular Culture: Dance Halls**

1. What led to the dance craze of the 1920s and 30s? To what extent did the dance halls threaten traditional values?