

SSUSH16: Investigate how political, economic, and cultural developments after WWI led to a shared national identity.



"COME UNTO ME, YE OPPREST!"

From *Memphis Commercial Appeal*,
1919



AMERICA UNDER COMMUNISM!

alamy stock photo

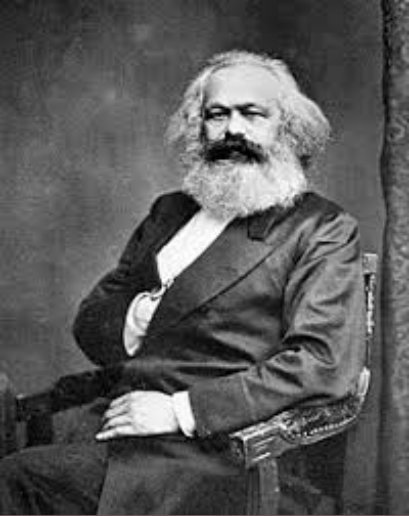
EC7R24
www.alamy.com

Element A: Explain how fears of rising communism and socialism in the United States led to the Red Scare and immigrant restriction.

SSUSH16 Overview

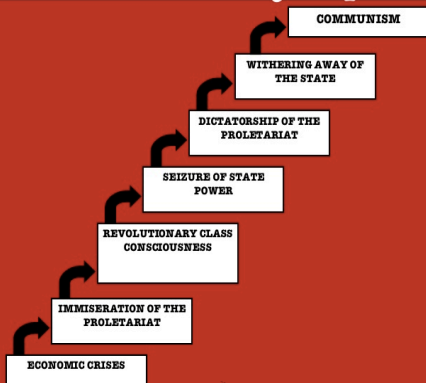
- ❑ Following World War I, the United States began to form an even stronger national identity.
- ❑ The effects of communism's rise led to strong efforts to defend the United States from its spread.
- ❑ The regional divide that characterized much of the nineteenth century gave way to a more national approach to politics, economics, and culture.
- ❑ Additionally, the dramatic influence of mass media led to nationwide advertising campaigns that targeted consumers in all parts of the United States- not just in one area.
 - Out of these conditions in the 1920s came a more solidified national identity, in which the United States defended democracy and capitalism and mass consumerism influenced culture across the nation.
 - Even though there was much prosperity and unity in the United States after World War I, there were also significant identity and equality struggles still challenging women and Blacks.
 - These groups emerged from the 1920s with greater political and cultural significance.

Communism's Origins



- ❑ The German philosopher Karl Marx developed a new theory in the mid-nineteenth century that combined history and economics.
 - Marx held that history was composed of a series of revolutions in which those who were oppressed overthrew their oppressors and established new political and economic forms.
 - Marx also said that those in power, who ultimately became oppressors themselves, gradually corrupted these new systems.
 - He held that the final revolution would be between the capitalists and the workers.
 - According to Marx, the workers would eventually tire of being oppressed through low wages and poor working conditions and violently overthrow the capitalist economic system.
 - This workers' revolution, he believed, would usher in a new time period.
 - Out of the revolution would come the creation of a dictatorship in which workers would share the means of production and distribution.
 - Marx's theory became known as a more extreme form of socialism, which is known as communism.

The Revolutionary Sequence

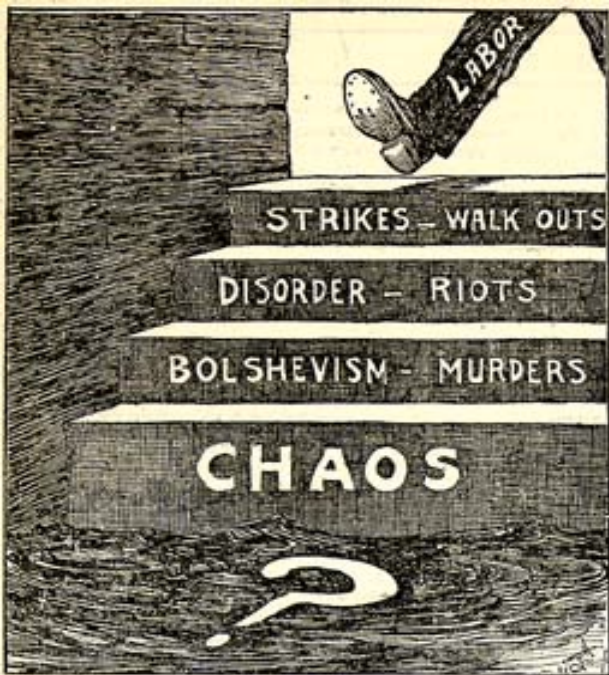


Socialism's Rise in US/ Communism's Rise in Russia



- ❑ The idea of a worker controlled economic system appealed to industrial workers worldwide.
- ❑ In 1901, the Socialist Party of America was created.
 - Elements of socialist theory also infiltrated American labor unions, especially the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W).
 - With the exception of the elections of 1912 and 1920, the Socialist Party in the United States was a weak third party.
- ❑ In 1917, communist revolutionaries known as Bolsheviks overthrew the czar in Russia.
- ❑ The new Bolshevik authority established the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and was led by Vladimir Lenin.
 - Lenin called for a worldwide revolution to destroy capitalism.
 - America thus became a pivotal target for communist infiltration.

The Red Scare



1919

STEP BY STEP

-- Greene in the New York Evening Telegram



- ❑ Unable to engage in direct action during World War I, labor unions began to strike for higher wages after the war.
 - These strikes, thought by many to be led by communists, became increasingly more violent.
 - The fear of the spread of communism in the United States was heightened by Karl Marx's prediction of a worker revolution.
 - Were the labor union strikes part of Lenin's mission in the United States?
 - Many saw capitalism and democracy as being in danger from communist threats.
- ❑ The wave of fear and action to protect the United States from such ideological crisis became known as the Red Scare.
 - For the most part, Americans were unified to protect the nation's identity as a democratic and capitalist country from communism.

The Red Scare



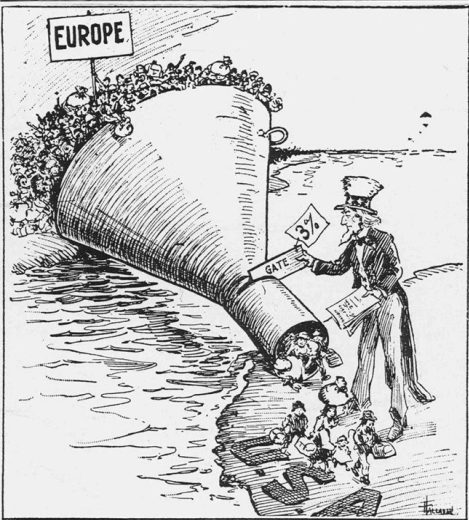
"COME UNTO ME, YE OPPREST!"

From *Memphis Commercial Appeal*,
1919



- ❑ The perceived danger was further exacerbated by a series of bombings sponsored by a group of Italian anarchists.
 - The attacks were carried out against public buildings and officials.
- ❑ Terrorists twice attacked United States Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer.
- ❑ These incidents, coupled with the violent labor strikes, led the United States Justice Department and the FBI to stage a series of raids against suspected anarchists and communists.
 - Hundreds were arrested across the nation.
- ❑ However, civil libertarians claimed the Palmer Raids lacked legal standing and targeted people's beliefs rather than their actions.
- ❑ Most of those arrested were later released but 556 people were deported as a result of the Palmer Raids.
- ❑ The Red Scare ended when a purported May Day plot to overthrow the government never took place and Palmer's actions were censured for violating civil liberties.

The Red Scare



- ❑ The Red Scare was also a factor that led to new restrictions on immigration.
 - Other factors included two ideas that grew particularly strong during the post-World War I era of the 1920s.
 - One of the ideas was that people born in the United States were superior to immigrants.
 - The other was that America should keep its traditional culture intact.
- ❑ Anti-immigrant, anti-Jewish, and anti-Catholic sentiments contributed to the popularity of a revived Ku Klux Klan, not just in the South but also throughout the nation.
- ❑ By 1924, this conservative reaction against immigrants resulted in the passage of the National Origins Acts.
 - The main provision of the laws was to establish the Quota System, which set limits on the number of immigrants who could enter the United States from each country.
- ❑ The Red Scare was perceived by many to be a threat to the foundations of the United States.
 - Although sometimes overstepping individual civil liberties, there were strong efforts after World War I to protect and enhance the national identity of the United States.