**US History**

**Measurement Topic 4:** The 1920’s

**Level 3**

**Learning Target #3: Explain how** **the USA changed as a result of mass production, growth of cities, technological advancements/inventions and how these changes effected American society, women and ethnic groups.**

The 1920’s in America was a time of change. One of the first changes to take place was right for women to vote, lead to an increase in women’s confidence, women working outside the home and a change in how women looked and behaved, most evident in the **flapper**. The flapper being a women who wore shorter dresses, cut their hair, smoked, dank and was seen a rebellious, immoral woman. Change also happened to the civil liberties/rights of some individuals, manly immigrants and minorities (African Americans). Workers went on strike creating the fear of a communist takeover, the **Red Scare**, a time of anti-communist feelings, resulting in the civil liberties of many individuals to be violated especially during the Palmer Raids. With the mistrust of immigrants came an increase in **nativism** (the feelings that you should support your own kind) resulting in new immigration laws. New groups were formed to fight for the protection of civil liberties (rights); **ACLU** was created to protect everyone’s rights, the **NAACP** was created to end racial discrimination and help provide political rights for African Americans. Also the **UNIA** was created to help promote black pride and unity amongst African Americans.

After world war 1 people attempted to return to a sense of normality. As a result of the work by the unions and the many strikes, workers’ wages had increased, and work hours and days had decreased. For example Henry Ford gave his workers $5 a day pay (similar to $75 today), health benefits and paid vacation. This resulted in workers have much more money to spend and time off to spend their money.

The single most important invention of the 1920’s was the invention of electricity. Electricity became available almost everywhere, creating a very reliable energy source for homes and factories. Electricity also led to more invention and technological advances. One such technological advancement took place in the auto industry. Henry Ford created a new way to produce automobiles with his **ASSEMBLY LINE**. The assembly line would allow one worker to complete one part of the car then move it to another worker who would complete another party. This process would continue until the car was fully assembled. This process also became known as **mass production**, which is the production of mass quantities of the same product being produced. This led to the automobiles being affordable for the average person, people began to travel around the United States, and it also led to the growth of cities as a result of people being able to live in different parts of the cities, yet driving to their jobs.

Mass production also made other products more affordable for people to purchase, such as vacuums, washing machines, refrigerators, and stoves. Adverting made people want things that they did not necessarily need such as radios, cleaning products and personal hygiene products (mouth wash, toilet paper, deodorant) . When people did not have enough money, they would use a new form of credit called, “**installment plans**” or payment plans to purpose items such as cars, washer machines and radios. This allowed more people to have products, and improved their lives.

With an increase in time and money people began looking for entertainment. One of the first forms of entertainment came with the radio. Radios provided people with news, music, soap operas and sports. Families would sit down around the radio and listen to news or soap operas or sporting games over the radio. Also in the 1920’s silent movies became one of the biggest industries. People would pay 3cents to watch a 15 minute silent move. One of the most famous actors was Charley Chaplain.

The 1920’s became known as the roaring twenties due to all the changes that took place, women voting, violations of civil liberties, the creation of organization to fight for civil liberties, electricity, the assembly line, mass production, affordable automobiles, new inventions, credit and new forms of entertainment. The only group who did not see good change were famers, who went into debt after WW1. All these things affected America for years to come.

Questions:

1. How were strikes able to help the average worker?
2. What was the single most important invention and how did it effect the USA?
3. How did the assembly line and mass production change the USA?
4. What inventions were created as a result of mass production?
5. What is an installment plan?
6. What forms of entertainment did people have in the 1920’s?
7. Which groups of people did not benefit from all the change in the 1920’s?

Summary: Write a summary, about all the changes that took place in the USA, and how those changes were positive changes for the USA.

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