

**Knowledge Map: USA 1910 - 1929 (Intolerance America in the 1920s)**

**Summary:** This section of the subject deals with the intolerance that certain key groups experienced. There are two main critical areas that are both very sensitive: immigration and racial tension. The topic requires us to look closely at how immigrants were treated in America in the 1920s and why they faced such hostility. Equally, we also need to look closely how Black Americans were treated and, again, why they faced such institutionalised racism. These two groups provide a good contrast to the apparent "Roaring 20s" that the economic boom appeared to suggest.

**Intolerance of Immigrants**

**Summary**

The USA is a country that has been built on immigration but during the 1920s this attitude seemed to change. Rather than embracing immigrants, many people turned against them and blamed them for many of the problems in American society.

**Key Knowledge**

1	Open Door Policy	During the 19th Century, the government followed an Open-Door Policy to immigration. They actively encouraged mass immigration in order to populate the country.
2	Mass Immigration	Between 1871 and 1910, over 21 million people fled Europe and emigrated to the US. This mass immigration had an effect on the American people already in the US, especially as 10 million arrived between 1900 and 1910.
3	Changes Attitudes	The growth of mass immigration changed attitudes to immigration in America. Where immigrants moved to cities, ghettos developed based around people's original country of origin. Many people feared that these 'new' immigrants would take jobs and work for low wages.
4	WASPs	For many in America in the 1920s, the ideal citizen was a WASP - white, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant. Immigrants from Asia were not white, while many Europeans were Catholics, Greek Orthodox or Jewish.
5	Government Restrictions	As a consequence of changing attitudes to immigrants, the Republicans introduced various measures to restrict immigration which got increasingly stricter throughout the 1920s. Many Republican politicians campaigned successfully using anti-immigrant rhetoric.
6	Americanisation	Along with government restrictions on immigration, the government introduced measures to Americanise immigrants with such events as 'Americanisation Day' which required immigrants to re-affirm their loyalty to the USA.

**The Red Scare: the Fear of Communism**

**Summary**

The changing attitude towards immigrants was greatly fuelled by a fear of communism. Communism is an extreme political view that had established itself in Russia and was potentially taken route in Eastern Europe and many Americans feared its influence arriving in America.

**Key Knowledge**

6	Xenophobia	Xenophobia is a dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries. This attitude was displayed towards 'new' immigrants and manifested itself in a number of ways.
7	Communism	Communism is a political theory created by Karl Marx in the 19th Century where all property is owned by the state and all work for the state and for the good of the state. This theory became reality in 1917 in Russia following the Bolshevik revolution of 1917.
8	The Red Scare	The Red Scare was an almost hysterical reaction by Americans to the events surrounding the Russian Revolution of 1917. The communist government removed the Russian royal family by revolution and many Americans felt that immigrants brought with them extreme political views such as anarchism and radicalism.
9	Increase in Strikes	From 1919, there were an increasing number of strikes that took place across America that fuelled peoples' fears of communism. The most famous of these was in Seattle in 1919 by a group called the IWW - Industrial Workers of the World - a name that had a suggestion of communism.
10	Anarchist Activities	In 1919 there was a series of bombings by extreme anarchist groups who were anti-government. The bombings were an attempt to prevent the government from functioning properly.
11	Palmer Raids	The Attorney-General of the US, Mitchell Palmer, believed that communists were plotting a revolution and had even infiltrated government. In May 1920, he sanctioned a series of raids against suspected communists. They were illegal, and 6000 suspected communists were arrested and several hundred Russian immigrants were sent back to Russia.
12	Sacco and Vanzetti	The trial of Sacco and Vanzetti in May 1920 is an example of the prejudice and injustice many immigrants in America faced. They were charged with, and found guilty, of murder despite the evidence suggesting otherwise.

**Intolerance of Race**

**Summary**

Slavery had been made illegal in the United States in 1863 during the Civil War. Yet, in some Southern States in the US, tension between the different communities remained with white people trying to enforce their views and power on black Americans. This intolerance stems from these institutionalised racist attitudes.

**Key Knowledge**

13	The Southern States and Slavery	The Southern States of the US were once slave states. They had used slaves to farm crops such as tobacco and cotton. In 1863, slavery was made illegal and many black Americans settled in these states. Despite this, many of the old attitudes towards black Americans remained and life was intolerable.
14	Jim Crow Laws	The most obvious attempt by white Americans to reassert their dominance were the Jim Crow Laws. These laws segregated white and black Americans in schools, hospitals, parks, swimming pools, libraries and many other areas of society. They were based on the principle 'equal but segregated' but this was never the case.
15	Ku Klux Klan (KKK)	Following the end of slavery in the 1860s, a group called the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) was formed. Its aim was to terrorise black people. This group saw a sharp rise in its membership from 1915.
16	Black Reaction: Migration	Many black people reacted to the intolerance they faced by choosing to move away from the Southern States by migrating north. In the years following 1910, many moved to find a better life in a more tolerant north. This was called the 'Great Migration'.
17	Black Reaction: the NAACP and UNIA	Another way black Americans fought the intolerance was to form organisations that campaigned for equality. The two main groups were the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and the UNIA (Universal Negro Improvement Association).

**Intolerance of Religion**

**Summary**

Along with racial intolerance existing in the southern States of the US, there was widespread religious intolerance. The Southern States were very religious and did not tolerate views that questioned their Christian beliefs. In the 1920s, these were beginning to be challenged.

**Key Knowledge**

18	The Bible Belt	The Southern States that had once been slave states also form an area of America known as the Bible Belt. These states were very religious and viewed themselves as righteousness and God-fearing Christians. These states include Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky and Tennessee.
19	The Monkey Trial	In the 1920s, these Bible Belt states saw many challenges to their fundamentalist Christian beliefs but none more obvious than when John Scopes challenged the law in Tennessee that did not allow the teaching of evolution. This would become known as the Monkey Trial.

**Keywords**

Immigration	The action of coming to live permanently in a foreign country.
Ghettos	Communities in America in the 1920s that formed around immigrants' countries of origin.
WASPs	"White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant" Americans who feared immigration would undermine American life.
Xenophobia	The dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries.
Communism	A political theory where property is owned by the state and all members of the state work for the good of the state.
Bolshevism	Another word for communism. Named after the Russian Revolutionary party of 1917, the Bolsheviks.
Anarchism	A belief in the abolition [removal] of government and the organisation of society on a voluntary basis.
Segregation	The enforced separation of different racial groups in a country.
Fundamentalism	A form of a religion that upholds belief in the strict, literal interpretation of the Bible.