

## Postwar Controversy

- The 20's were not fun for everyone
  - Americans faced 3 important concerns
    - **Communism / Radicalism**
    - **Organized Labor**
    - **Racism**
  - **Communism / Radicalism**
    - Since **Russian Rev. (1917)** there was fear of communism in US
      - **Communism - an economic & social system**
        - Only 1 political party allowed
        - Needs of country more important than individual
        - No private property
      - 1919- **Communists attempt takeover of Ger. & Hungary**
      - 3<sup>rd</sup> **Communist International (Comintern) Moscow (1919)**
        - Russian dominated org. seeking world-wide communist revolution
        - **American organized labor seen as anti-American - linked to political radicalism & communism**
          - 1919 - mail bombs sent to govt. & biz leaders
            - Several major strikes that year
            - Violence on May Day (May 1<sup>st</sup>) - Intl. Workers Day
          - In response, **U.S. Attorney Gen. A. Mitchell Palmer** orders raids of anarchists, socialists, & communists
            - **"Palmer Raids"** violated numerous civil rights
            - Foreigners & recent immigrants were targeted
          - The period was known as the **"Red Scare"**
        - **Sacco & Vanzetti case** - an example of persecution of radicals
          - Nicola Sacco & Bartolomeo Vanzetti - Italian immigrants
            - Anarchists & draft dodgers
            - 1920 - arrested for robbery & killing in Mass.
              - No direct evidence they did it - their radicalism made it easy to convict them
              - Despite intl. protest, they were electrocuted in 1927
              - Still no hard evidence of guilt or innocence
  - **Organized Labor**
    - **Boston Police Strike - 1919 - over wages**

- Mass. gov. **Calvin Coolidge** put down strike w/ natl. guard
  - All strikers fired & replaced
  - **Coolidge - "There is no right to strike against the public safety by anyone, anywhere, anytime."**
  - Public was outraged by the strike - opposed the police
- **Steel Workers Strike - 1919 - over hours & swing shifts**
  - Different jobs in steel industry were unionized but industry itself was not
  - The strike was unorganized
    - Strike put down in Jan. 1920
      - **18 workers killed fighting w/ US Steel security, state & fed troops**
- **Coal Miners Strike - 1919- over wages**
  - Coal industry was organized by **United Mine Workers**
    - Prez of UMW in 1919 - **John L. Lewis**
    - Attorney Gen. Palmer ordered workers to end strike
      - Lewis publicly pronounced strike over - privately urged workers to continue their strike
      - Coal a vital industry - **miners eventually win 27% raise**
      - Lewis becomes a natl. figure - some admired & some hated
  - **Strikers in general were seen as anti-American radicals**
- **Racism & the Ku Klux Klan**
  - **KKK born during Reconstruction - almost died out - back in 20's**
    - Had 4.5 million members in 1924
    - **Besides Af. Ams., hated Jews, Catholics, & other foreigners**
      - Resented advances made by Af. Ams - wanted to keep them in "their place"
      - Members believed that moral values of US were being corrupted by urban intellectuals
      - Believed foreigners were going to overthrow US govt.
        - **As in the past, Klan used violence & intimidation**
          - Lynchings were commonplace
          - Southern police & politicians often looked other way