

About the book

You have been given a section of reading from a book entitled Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy. This is different from the primary sources we typically use in class. It is a secondary source in that it is an historian's interpretation of events. In this case the source is about the prominent South Carolinian politician Ben Tillman. Please see the reference page for details about the book and its author.

About the reading

The section of the book you have is about the limits of reform in South Carolina. It speaks directly to the subjects of progressivism and the story of African Americans in the Progressive Movement we addressed in class. We saw that the Progressives fell short of ensuring that African Americans had full protection of the law under the constitution and failed to fight for the protection of the civil liberties. Please notice that sections of the text are numbered and those numbers correspond to this sheet. Use this to organize your reflections.

What to do...

As you read look for certain things:

- What things did Tillman do that appear progressive?
- What personal beliefs prevented him from doing many things that were commonly considered progressive?
- He refused to do certain things. What did he refuse to do and why?
- Look for examples of contradictions in his thinking and actions.
- What was attitude toward segregation and voting rights for African Americans in South Carolina

1. He could claim to be the senate rep. of industrial workers & agric producers. He also argued that the fed. gov't must not be given powers that would enable it to intrude in states "domestic affairs". He argued for states rights

2. It was saying some ppl might have described Tillman as a progressive, but he really wasn't.

3. Tillman's own progressivism in regulatory matters was shaped by his belief that federal power would have to forswear racial equality & escape the clutches of the f. power before it could be trusted. He was very suspicious of factory owners. He wanted S.C. legislatures to limit the amount of hours that adults & kids could work.

4. If the fed. gov't receives power to limit hours of industrial workers, it could also limit the working hrs of agricultural workers & this could cripple S.C.'s agriculture.

5. During 1903 debate, referred to a court injunction against Debs railway union a decade earlier as evidence that federal officials helped subordinate the rights of the ppl to the rights of industrial & financial bosses.

6. Tillman opposed the federal remedies proposed by populists & democrats. He believed nationalizing RRs would create a political army to be used by the party. He suggested that the Nebraskans support for gov't ownership of the RR might cost him the 1908 Dem. nomination.

7. Tillman argued that only his version of white supremacist democracy was truly prog. Definition of a prog. a real dem. according to the ideas of Thomas Jefferson & not a hypocrite or a liar, or a socialist or Bull Moose.

8. He denied to issue of bonds, which he believed would unjustly enrich wealthy bondholders. He also believed our existing navy was adequate to show the flag & to defend the nation's limited overseas interest.

