per year died on average), terrible wages, terrible job security, and could fix none of this through
strikes, as there were so many unemployed that any job could easily be filled. Moreover, people
were so poor that every single member of the family usually had to work.

During this time period, the rich got richer and the poor got poorer: by 1890, the top 1% made as
much money as the bottom 50% and owned as much property as the bottom 99%. When
southern plantation owners began to be taxed for the first time, they implemented a sales tax
rather than a graduated income tax.

Describe Westward Expansion in the Gilded Age.

Many people wanted to move west to escape the economic inequality in the East. As a result,
people moved in groups rather than as single pioneers.

The role of the government in the west was to get the Indians off of land that people wanted
(through treaties and warfare), to oversee Western governments, to oversee the selling of land,
and to give land to railroads, pioneers, mining companies, and speculators.

People obtained land mostly from speculators or else under the Homestead Act of 1862. In the
thirty years after the civil war, more land was newly cultivated than had been in the 250 years
before the war. One area that dramatically grew was the Middle Border, the section of America
including Kansas and Nebraska; in 1860, it contained approximately 30,000 people, while in
1900, it contained 5 million. The cattle kingdom also increased, with the cowboys of the west
even forming their own unions so to speak, explaining the 1883 strike.

Bonanza farms were large farms with thousands of acres and tons of laborers (including the
citrus farms of California). They made work more efficient, as they could be irrigated all at once
and often with the help of the government (as per the philosophy of John Rowell). However,
most land was cultivated by individual farmers, although the days of subsistence farming were
gone: now everybody was linked to the national market through railroads, meaning almost all
farming was commercial.

Despite the large amount of farming in the west, by 1890 a higher percentage of Westerners
lived in cities than that any other population. This was mostly because of the lumber and mining
industries in areas such as California, as well as gold rushes in the Dakotas, Idaho, and Alaska.

Indians: With the introduction of horses to the Plains Indian Tribes, warfare had begun in 1850.
In 1869, Ulysses S. Grant created a peace policy, but it quickly fell apart. US soldiers began
killing the buffalo that the Indians survived on, almost leading to the extinction of buffalo.

In 1876, Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, and others beat and killed Colonel Custer and 250 of his men
at the Battle of Little Bighorn while defending the Black Hills. However, in 1877, O.O. Howard
beat the Nez Percé, led by Chief Joseph, as they fled, almost reaching Canada: this was the
beginning of the end for the plains Indians. The 1880s were the end for the Comanche tribe as
well. In short, as 8 new states were added with the end of the Civil War, Indians were pushed off
of their ancestral land and forced into reservations.
was not simply old-fashioned, as the party embraced railroads, etc. and did call for governmental regulation of the economy to some extent.

**Populist Platform 1892**: Written by Ignatius Donnelly, the platform aimed to decrease corruption in politics as well as helping farmers out. The platform itself: (1) Direct Election of Senators. (2) Government control of currency. (3) Government funding of farmers. (4) Income tax. (5) Legalization and government support of unions. (6) public ownership of railroads and other public utilities to lower costs.

Populist coalition: many, e.g. Tom Watson, called for an alliance across races. However, many southerners were still racist and refused to join a coalition with blacks; as a result, many whites stayed with the democrats, many blacks stayed with the republicans. Southern whites also used intimidation to keep Alliances in check. However, a Colored Farmers’ Alliance was formed (though its 1 strike, in 1891, was brutally ended). In 1894, a coalition won government positions in North Carolina, resulting in a “2nd Reconstruction” with black politicians, etc.

Populist candidate James Weaver got 1 million votes, 22 electoral votes in 1892 (8.5 percent). 15 governors, 3 congressmen were elected.

**Homestead Strike** – Amalgamated association. Frick fired workers, who set up a blockade. Frick called in scabs (strikebreakers), then Pinkertons (private police), then the militia; after months, the workers finally stood down, but not before an anarchist killed Frick, resulting in a loss of sympathy for the labor movement.

**Pullman Strike** – American Railway Union refused to deal with Pullman Cars after he lowered wages. Attorney General of Cleveland Richard Olney ordered them back to work; they refused. Eugene V. Debs arrested (decision upheld unanimously in Re. Debs). 34 killed in clashes.

Other politicians didn’t side with the labor movement: e.g. the army was sent in to deal with Coxey’s army in 1894 while they marched to Washington, D.C. about unemployment. However, populist governors were different: a Colorado governor sent troops in to protect miners during a strike.

As the economic situation got worse under Cleveland in the 90s, millions broke away from the democrats and joined the populists. However, this was mostly in rural areas; city-dwellers didn’t support the increase in price of farm goods or the sub-treasury plan, so they mostly went over to the Republicans.

**Election of 1896**: Democrats nominated William Jennings Bryan. He was an advocate of free silver – because the more money there was, the more inflation there would be, the more farm prices would go up, and the more easily farmers could pay off their debts. He was also influenced by the social gospel, and so was an advocate of progressive laws. Populists didn’t really trust him, but they saw that supporting him was the only way to get some of their policies implemented, so they officially endorsed him.

Republicans were not pleased with the idea of deliberate inflation; they nominated William McKinley, who advocated a gold standard, saying that it was the only “honest”