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Reasons for Agrarian Discontent, and the Validity of Farmers' Complaints

Before the age of big business and industry, agriculture dominated the economy. Ninety-seven percent of all people in the eighteenth century were farmers. As industry started controlling the economy, ~~farmers started~~ farmers had reasons for their discontent, and there was validity to their complaints.

Farmers used to be in control of the economy, but they started to be replaced by industry, causing discontent. Supply and demand was a reason why industry was ahead of agriculture. Farmers started planting more crops than was needed, and the prices for crops dropped as a result. Price per pound for ~~wheat, cotton and~~ corn went from about a dollar and six cents a pound to twenty-nine cents a pound. Wheat and cotton also went down. ~~Illustrating~~ Many people claimed it was the farmers' own fault for too much supply. (Document E). Another problem for farmers was inflation. Farmers needed inflation to raise the price of farm products and ease the price of debts. The problem was not enough money was around. The value of the dollar ~~was~~ increased from 1865 to 1895, meaning money was scarce for farmers. An answer to inflation was the Silver Coinage clause. If silver was coined, then there would be much more money, which helps farmers. The people in charge of money, like bankers hurt farmers by keeping the value high in gold, and not coining silver. (Document A) The bankers caused another problem for the farmers. ~~Since the value of~~ They charged extremely high interest rates for real estate and mortgages. The farmers couldn't afford these rates, and eventually they'd be poor. The bankers kept farmers in control that way. (Document D). Railroads and trusts

worked together sometimes. ~~The~~ ^{company} railroad ~~trust~~ was charged extra by the trusts, because the trusts wanted to get the best bargain. So, to make a profit, railroads charged farmers more to make up for what they lost to trusts. Trusts also set prices ~~however they wished~~, and that hurt farmers. (Document F).

Validity was in the farmers' complaints. The companies in the east told them to plant many crops, so they did, and there was too much supply. Farmers ~~contend~~ claimed that it was the set prices that hurt them. (Document E) Inflation was the bankers' fault and the governments'. They could have raised the amount of money, but it would've hurt them. The bankers sometimes charged forty percent ~~off~~ on interest rates. Republicans thought Silver Coinage would hurt farmers. (Document G)

Trusts and railroads were out to make a profit. Railroads bribed politicians to help them. Freight rates were two times higher in the West. Rockefeller even claimed railroads ^{were} made more profitable by trusts. Farmers became ruined from the increase of rates. (Document H).

As industry became big, farmers had reasons for their discontent, and there was validity in their complaints. Times changed and farmers had to adjust, but other people made it tough on them.

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but well done.