WHO? WHAT? WHY?

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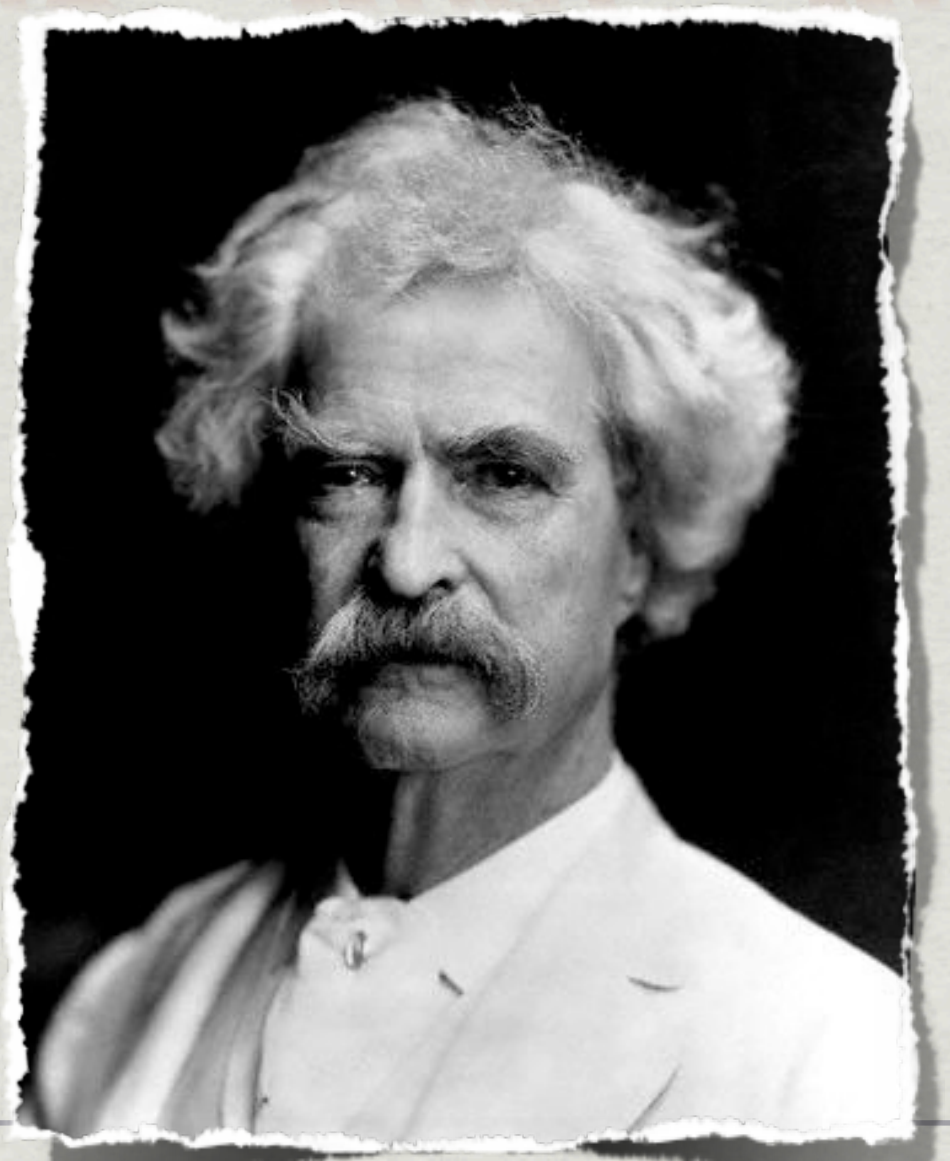
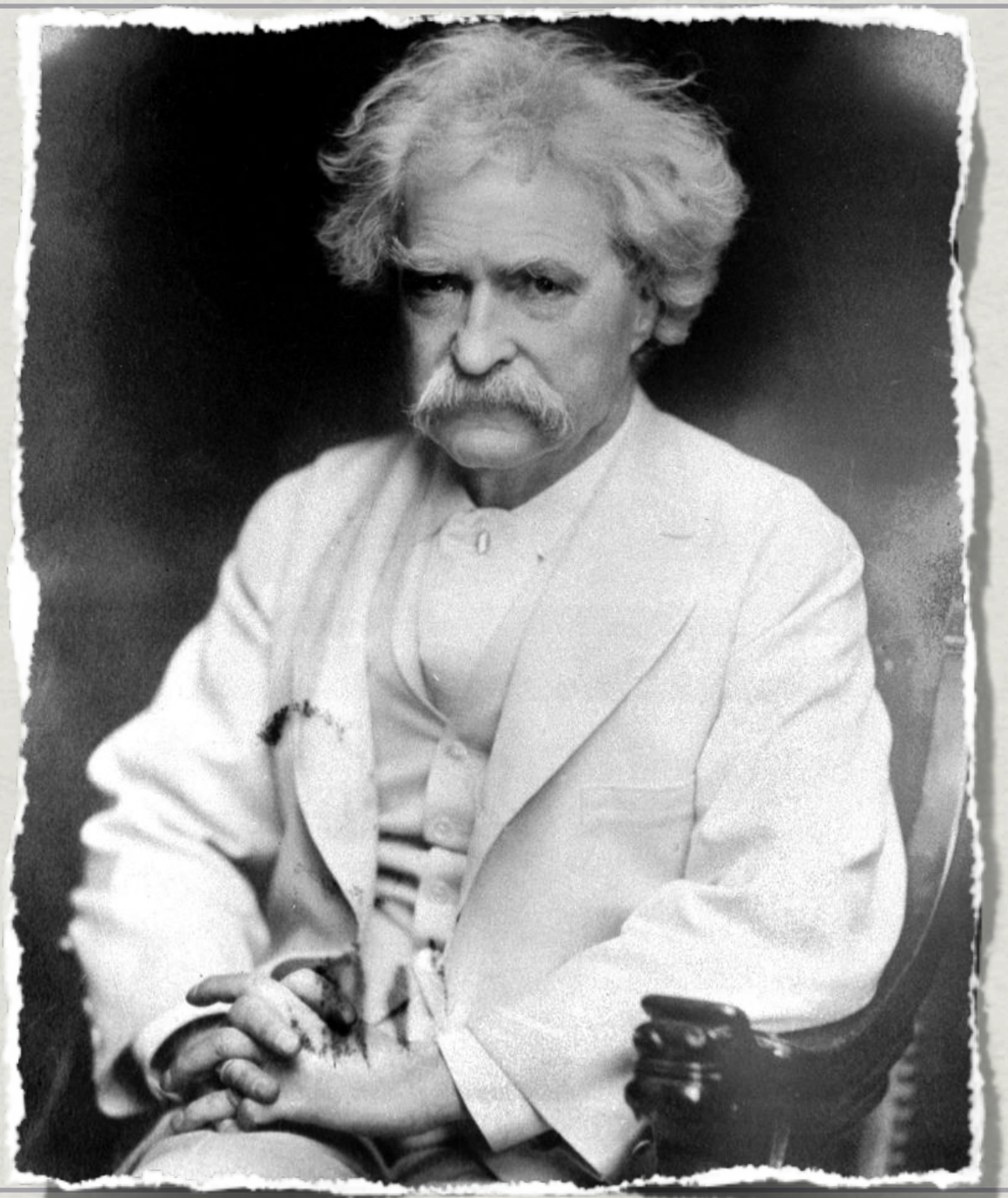




UNITED STATES
HISTORY
with Mr. Willis

UNIT 2 - DAY 110

POLITICS OF THE GILDED AGE

AS CITIES & POPULATIONS BOOMED, NEW POLITICAL STRUCTURES FOUGHT FOR POWER

LOCAL GOVS GREW INEFFICIENT

↓

POLITICIANS SOUGHT TO MANIPULATE VOTERS & GAIN POWER

↓

SECRET INTERNAL CORRUPTION GOT POLITICIANS RICH

↓

WHICH LEADS TO...

THE POLITICAL MACHINE

"THAT'S WHAT'S THE MATTER."

Boss Tweed. "As long as I count the Votes, what are you going to do about it? say?"

An organized group of political officials who controlled activities of a political party within a city

With migration & urbanization, political parties sought to take advantage of chaos to control office

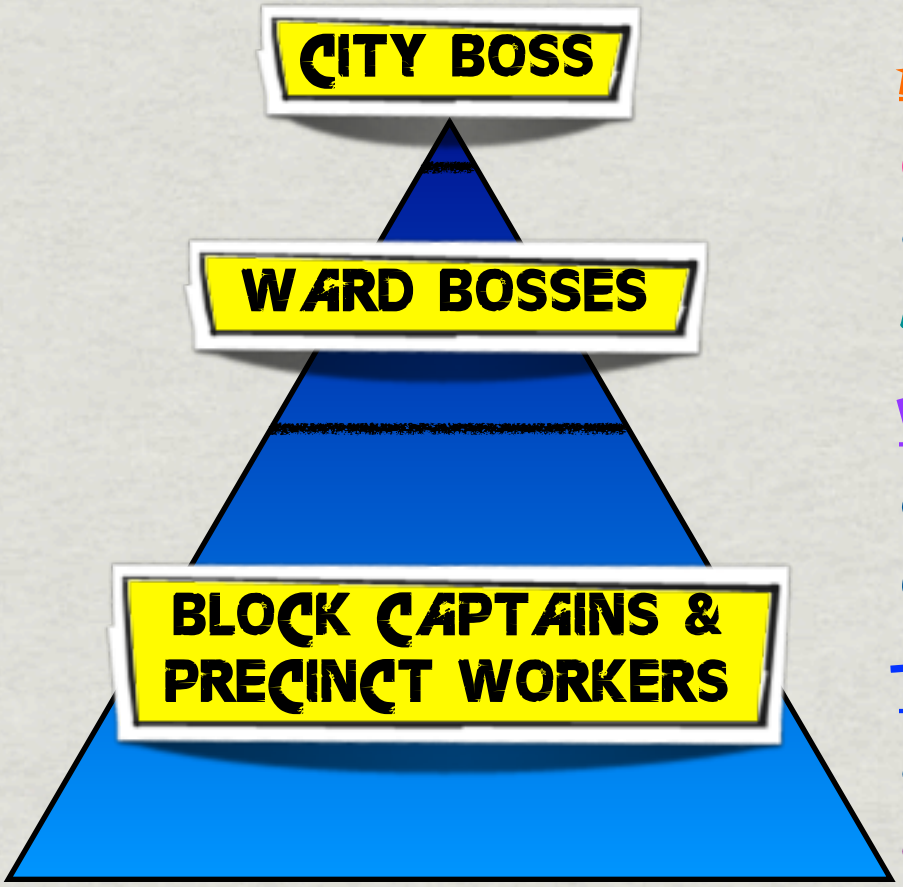
How?

...**MANIPULATE VOTERS!**

Officials gave favors and perks to voters & businesses in return for support at the ballots

"You get my back, I'll get yours!"

THE POLITICAL MACHINE STRUCTURE



Structure: LIKE A PYRAMID!

Block Captains & Precinct Workers

ROUNDED UP VOTES IN NEIGHBORHOODS & CITY BLOCKS

ESCORTED VOTERS TO THE BALLOT BOX

Ward Bosses

GAVE LOCAL FAVORS, ENSURED PRECINCT VOTES WERE SECURED

The City Boss

CONTROLLED MOST LOCAL SERVICES AND CHOSE CANDIDATES TO ELECT

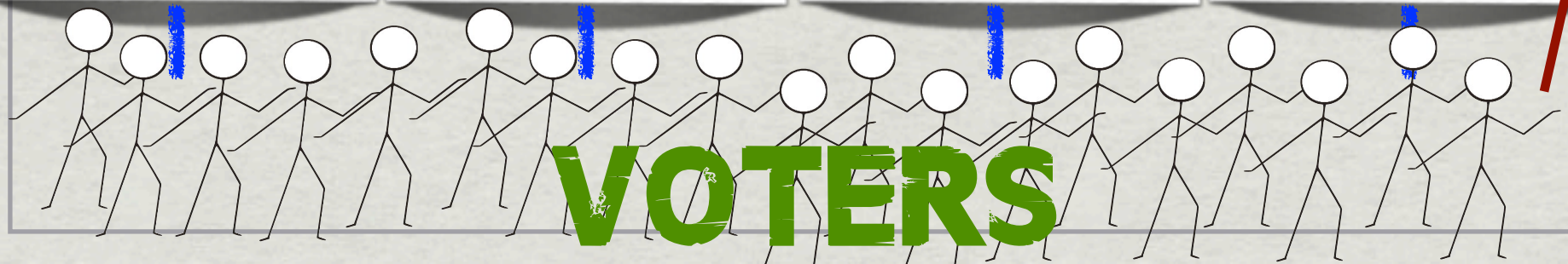
THE POLITICAL MACHINE STRUCTURE

CITY BOSS → Selects a candidate for public office

JOBS, HOUSING, CITIZENSHIP, COURTS, PERKS
CONTROLLED BY THE CITY BOSS

WARD BOSSES | WARD BOSSES | WARD BOSSES

BLOCK CAPTAINS & PRECINCT WORKERS | BLOCK CAPTAINS & PRECINCT WORKERS | BLOCK CAPTAINS & PRECINCT WORKERS | BLOCK CAPTAINS & PRECINCT WORKERS



INFLUENCE OF THE MACHINES

Political Machines **PREYED** on newly-arrived **IMMIGRANTS** and struggling **BUSINESSES** the most!

HOW IT WORKED

TOOK ADVANTAGE OF "CULTURE SHOCK", PROMISED HOUSING, JOBS, & QUICK NATURALIZATION FOR WORRIED NEW IMMIGRANTS

HIRE 2ND GEN. IMMIGRANTS TO SPEAK TO NEWBIES IN NATIVE LANGUAGE

BUSINESSES COULD GET QUICK LICENSES AND BYPASS PAPERWORK, SEE COMPETITORS "DISAPPEAR" IN RETURN FOR CASH/VOTES

Why is that important?

1. Elected officials were unqualified "lackeys"
2. Electorate were indebted to corrupt officials

AS MACHINES GAINED CONTROL OF MORE CITIES, CORRUPTION BEGAN TO SPREAD...

MACHINES BECAME MORE BOLD WITH THEIR EXPLOITS, RESORTING TO OPEN CRIME AND CORRUPTION

↓

DESIRE TO KEEP POWER LED TO INEFFICIENT GOV., EXPLOITATION OF CITIZENRY

↓

AND SO WE HAD...

GRAFT AND FRAUD

CAN THE LAW REACH HIM?—THE DWARF AND THE GIANT THIEF

Graft: the illegal use of political power for personal gain

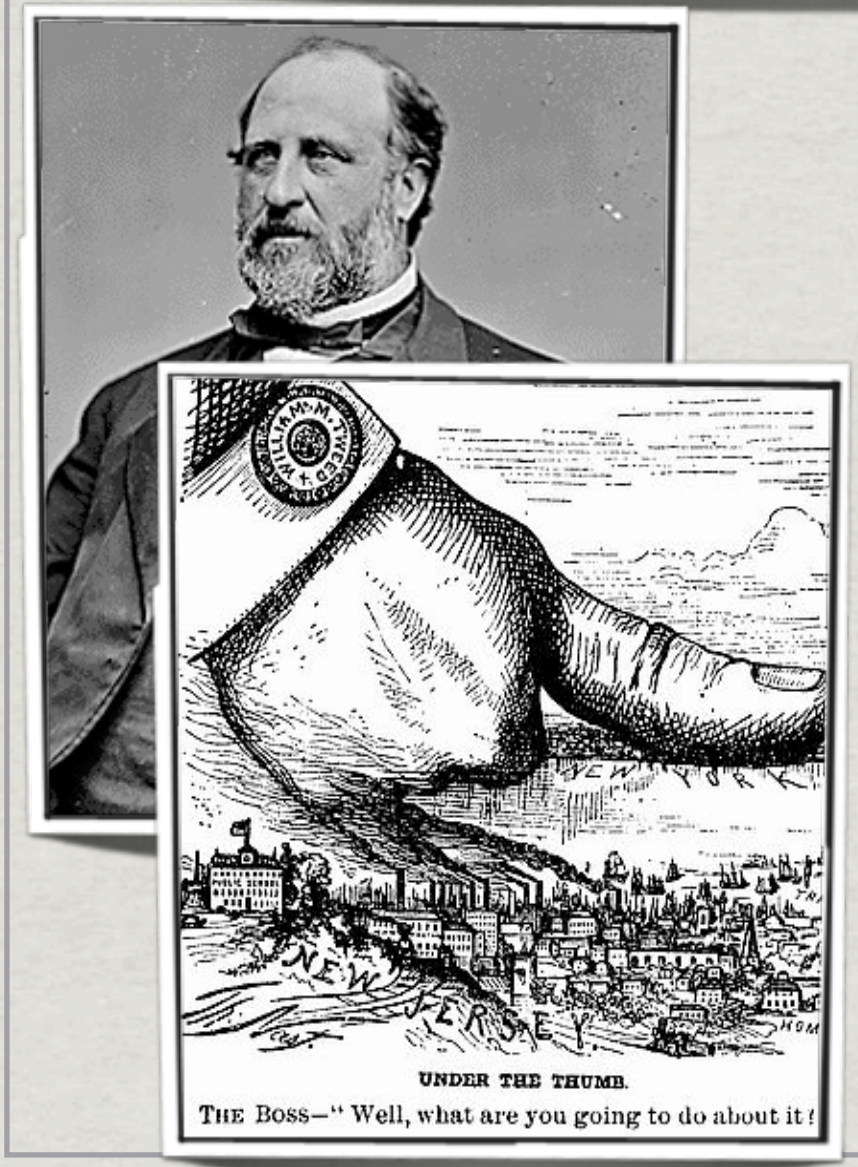
Machines would get "kickbacks" for employment

- Have workers over-bill the city for jobs done and then skim off the top
- They controlled police, took payments which allowed illegal business

They would commit voter fraud when enough votes couldn't be bought

- Fake names, dead people

BOSS TWEED & TAMMANY HALL



The most famous political machine was Tammany Hall in New York

Run by "Boss" Tweed, it was a democratic machine that ran NY

Helped by negative cartoons by Thomas Nast, outrage over Tammany's graft led to it downfall

Tweed was arrested and convicted of fraud

estimates claimed Tweed defrauded NY out of 10s of millions of $$ in kickbacks

THE TAMMANY TIGER LOOSE.—"What are you going to do about it?"

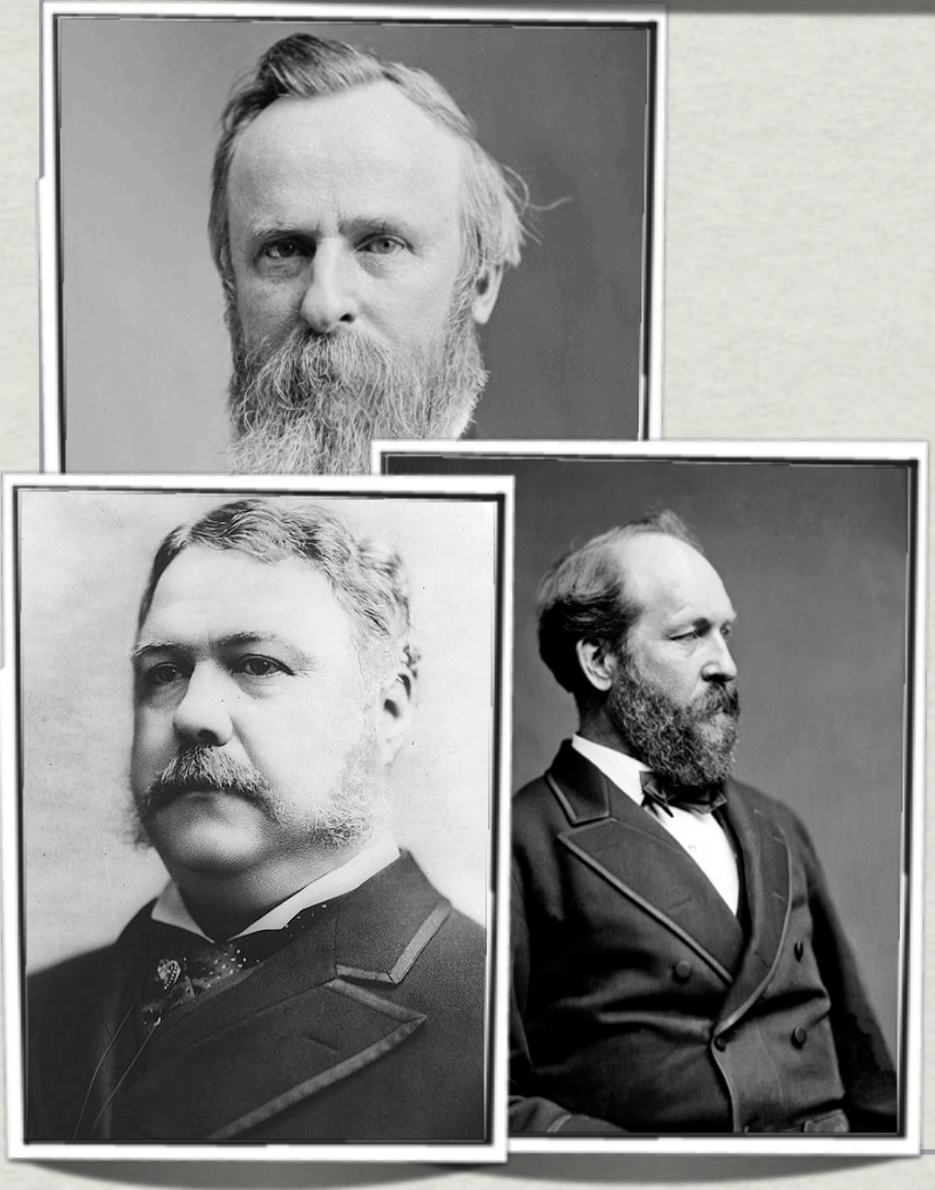
As graft was uncovered, public outrage led to reform...

Nationwide, politicians were pressured to change ways and prevent future fraud

Reforms uncovered the corruption hidden under the golden "gild" of the age

Which leads to...

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM



MOVEMENT'S LEGACY

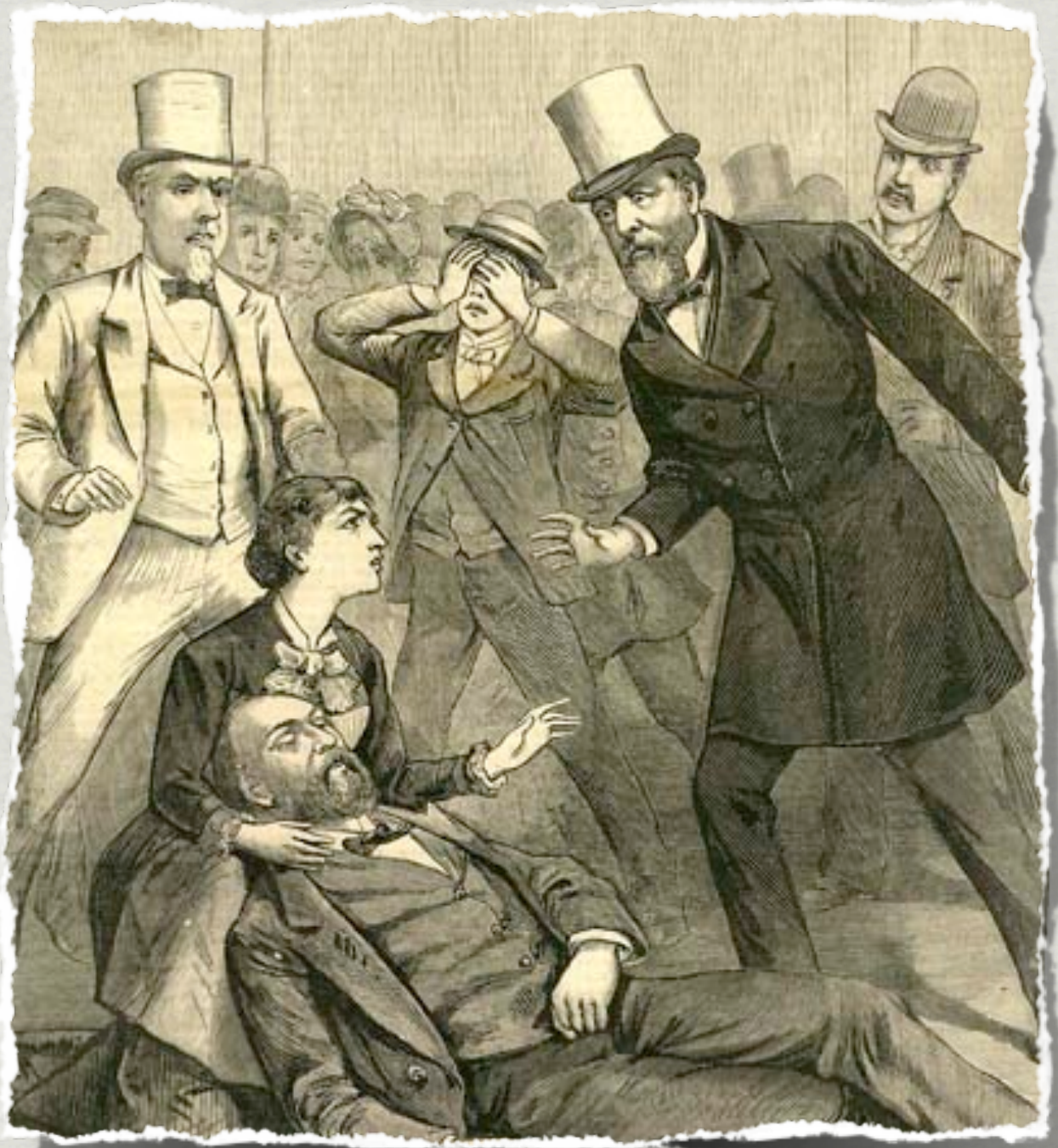
REPEALING PATRONAGE IN AMERICAN POLITICS

Presidents Hayes & Garfield repealed patronage & gave civil service jobs based on merit

supporters of patronage, Stalwarts, killed Garfield so his Stalwart VP, Chester A. Arthur, could be Pres.

Arthur turned reformer, passed the Pendleton Civil Service Act

made it mandatory to give gov appointments based on merit



WASHINGTON, D. C.—THE ATTACK ON THE PRESIDENT'S LIFE—SCENE IN THE LADIES' ROOM OF THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD DEPOT—THE ARREST OF THE ASSASSIN.—From Sketches by our Special Artist's [illegible] and C. Upham.

Why is that important?

It leads to a new era of accountability and confidence in government!

Closure

Write three things you learned today about:

1) The structure of the Political Machine

2) The methods used by Political Machines to manipulate the system

3) Civil service reform