Central American History Study Guide Test #2

Lesson 1 Brief introduction to American Independence

- In response to unfair taxation and legislations delegates from each American colony met in NEW YORK in 1765 to fight against British oppression. They decided that each colony had the right to their own taxes; therefore, protecting their economy.

- Despite many just fighting for more rights. Radicals such as Samuel Adams encouraged acts of vandalism including the Boston Tea Party in 1773. He wanted the 13 colonies to obtain complete independence.

  The war

- The British army “red coats” set out to confiscate weapons in surrounding villages of Boston.

- In Lexington they entered a battle with the “minutemen”. The colonies joined under George Washington to fight against the British.

  Independence

- The USA declared independence on July 4th 1776

- The declaration was drafted by Thomas Jefferson.

- Despite the declaration the war continued and the French forces joined American forces in 1778.

- Peace came in the Treaty of Paris of 1783 in which the British recognized American independence.

Lesson #2 A New “Boss” in the New World

- The USA and the British battled for Central and South American trade

- They wanted to supply manufactured goods and pressured the Spanish Empire to allow trade.

  No re-conquest or New colonization

- Latin American territories gained independence in 1821

- The British wanted to give a joint declaration with Americans against Spanish re-conquest or conquest of new territories. However, Americans gave their own declaration known as the Monroe Doctrine.

  Monroe Doctrine 1823 *****

- State of the Union address to congress that rejected European expansion in the Western Hemisphere.

- The declaration blocked the Spanish from reconquering or obtaining new territories in the New World.

- Stopped British influence or conquest of new areas.

  Manifest Destiny

- Expressed the belief that the United States was ordained to expand to the Pacific Ocean and into Mexican and Native American territory.

- Louis O’Sullivan: “Our destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federated self-government entrusted to us.”

Lesson #3 Back to Central America: Conservative take over

- Conservatives enacted the following changes: elites monopolized importation again; the church got their privileges back; the government expenses were reduced; they stopped mass education and direct taxation.
Government System

- They believed that Central America was NOT ready for democracy.
- Conservatives BELIEVED that CA needed need a firm grip and created DICTATORSHIP governments.

The Caudillo “leader” (dictators)

- The leadership of a “charismatic”, forceful strongman which later formed into military dictatorships
- Governed through a system of informal of obedience based on paternalistic relationship between subordinates and the leader.
- Caudillos SUPPORTED the church and elite interests
- They enacted PROTECTIONIST policies towards indigo, cochineal, and cattle ranching
- Dictators attracted foreign investors because they ONLY needed to deal with an all-powerful PRESIDENT.

Lesson # 4 Passage through the Sea

- By 1848 the USA annexed California
- The fastest way of travelling from New York to California was through Central America (before the transcontinental railroad in 1869)
- In 1849 Nicaragua granted exclusive transit rights to the USA
- The contract was granted to Cornelius Venderbilt
- The proposed route: through the Rio San Juan from Greytown to Castillo, Forth San Carlos, Lake Nicaragua, Rivas and ended in Britos on the Pacific side.

- Clayton-Bulwer Treaty 1850:

- Bounded both parties NOT to maintain an exclusive control over the proposed canal
- Parties agreed to extend the agreement to any other form of transportation in Central and South America
- Stipulate that neither the USA or Britain could exert control over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Misquito Coast or any other Central American Region.

Nicaraguan importance fade

- Colombia feared British annexation and in 1850 to 1855 allowed Americans the exclusive rights over a railway
- The Nicaraguan route faded because Americans completed the transcontinental railroad across the USA
- Neo-colonialism: the economic and political policies by which a great power indirectly maintains or extends its influence over other areas or people.
Lesson # 5 The National War in Nicaragua

William Walker: The American imperialist (filibuster)******

-A filibuster: Someone who engages in an unauthorized military expedition into a foreign country or territory to foment or support a revolution.

-Nicaraguan Liberals invited him in 1855 to aid in the ongoing civil war in Nicaragua

-Liberals wanted to remove conservatives and impose a republican government

-HE AGREED TO JOIN in Exchange for land and power and he hoped to take control of Vanderbilt’s Atlantic and Pacific Ship Transit Company

His Achievements

-He became the general of the liberal army

-He took control of Granada (the conservative stronghold)

-He formed a coalition government with the conservative leader Patricio Rivas but became sole president in 1856

The National War

-The USA wanted to incorporate Nicaragua as a slave state and the USA sent 2,500 mercenaries to join Walker’s army.

Conservatives United for Nicaragua

- Conservatives in Nicaragua united with the four other countries to fight Walker

-Rafael Carrera got funds, ammunitions and troops for the National Army of Liberation which was lead by Costa Rican President Juan Mora.

The War

- The war lasted a year

- The British blocked some American supplies to reach Walker

- Mora offered Walker’s mercenaries amnesty and free passage home

- Walker surrendered with only 200 soldiers 1857

Lesson # 6 The Coffee Republics

Liberal Take Over in the 1870s

-Liberals continued having dictators in CA

-Removed the church from government positions.

-Liberal market policies inviting foreign investment

Coffee Investment

- Costa Rica began (1830) cultivating Coffee in the highland valley and Pacific slopes.

- It distributed uncultivated land to landless people and eliminated the church tithe (10% tax of the church)

- England invested and controlled the Coffee Industry in Costa Rica and shipped to Europe and USA
Coffee boom in Central America

- Liberal dictators encouraged cash crop production: free TRADE
- Created a single crop dependence and Central America from world market price fluctuations
- Largest crop export up to the 20th century

Land Reforms

- Removed lands from the church to transform into coffee fincas; sold public lands; forced natives to rent and sell communal lands (ejidos forced to extinction in 1882); all nations granted land to foreigners in exchange for modernization projects.

Labor Reforms

- Forced peasants to accept salary advances
- Governments allowed growers not to pay in cash or pay them in goods from stores
- Allowed no payment
- In harvesting seasons, even peasants with land were forced into “volunteering to work”

Lesson #7 Banana Republics

- Minor Keith worked in a railroad construction. While building the railroad he planted bananas on the sides. In 1880 he joined with others to form the Boston Fruit Company and in 1899 the United Fruit Company was created.

UFC

- It expanded to Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua
- Controlled most trading ports and railways
- Monopolized the trade to the USA

How did the UFC dominate?

- Illegal activities to buy out politicians.
- Bought large amounts of lands in Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and El Salvador.
- In Honduras it owned 400,000 acres (40% through grants)
- They controlled the Railroad systems: governments granted land from 250 to 500 acres for each mile of railroad construction.
- The company had intermediaries to rent lands from native land owners.

STUDY THE READING COMPREHENSION PROVIDED ON THE UFC!