Aim: What actions could workers have taken to improve their conditions during the late 19th century?

Friday 12/13: Exam: The Gilded Age & Immigration

Problems Faced by Workers

- Long hours
- Child labor
- Low wages
- No job security
- Unsafe working conditions
- Poor/unhealthy working conditions

What government can do?

• Pass laws- child labor, minimum wage, safety

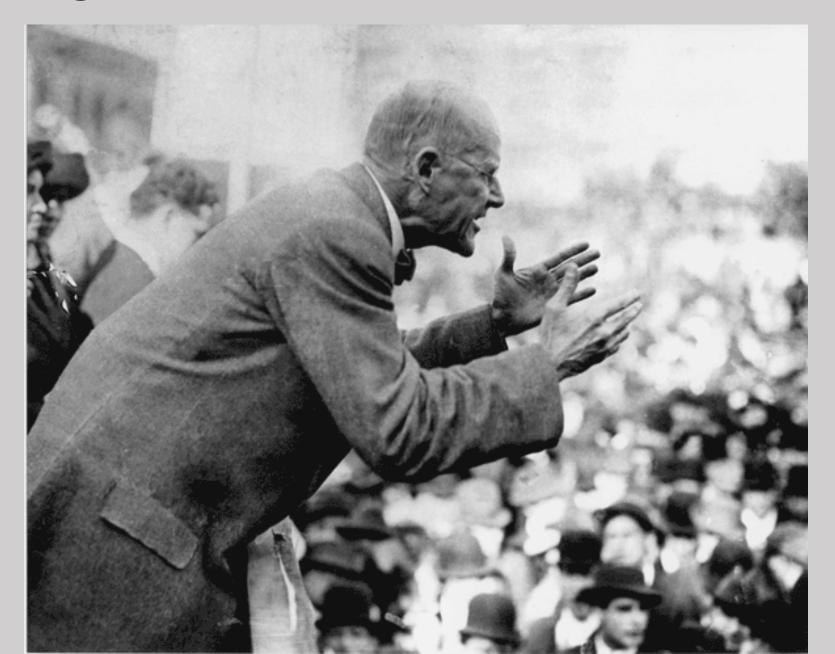
Why as individuals would workers not have much power?

What workers can do

- <u>Organize unions</u> Organization of workers that seeks to improve conditions, wages, etc. through the <u>collective bargaining</u> process
- <u>Collective bargaining</u> negotiating with employers as a group rather than as individuals
- <u>Create political parties</u> have people run for office
- <u>lobbying</u> trying to influence legislators who are favorable to your interests (talk to them, give them campaign contributions)

• <u>Raise awareness</u>

Organized Labor



Types of Unions

- <u>Trade (Crafts union)</u> skilled workers all performing the same job (eg. electricians, plumbers, carpenters)
- <u>Industrial Union</u> workers in same industry performing different jobs. Usually semi-skilled and unskilled workers. (eg. United Auto Workers)

Weapons of Unions

- <u>Strike</u> refusal to work
- <u>Picketing</u> parade outside workplace
- **<u>Boycott</u>** refusal to patronize strikebound company
- **<u>Publicity</u>** appeal for public support (newspaper, radio, television)





Bread and Butter Issues

• issues which are important to most people, because they affect them personally.

Obstacles Facing Unions

- 1. Tactics and power of Owners and Management (eg. Homestead)
 - Lockout work stoppage or denial of employment
 - Replacement workers
 - Pinkertons -a private security force
 - Blacklisting denying people employment (union, political, Whistle blowing history)
 - Yellow-dog contract worker agrees not to remain in or join a union.
- 2. Public opinion was often against workers (eg. Haymarket Incident)
 - Believed unions were influenced by "radical" ideas like socialism, anarchy, and communism
- 3. Government often sided with management (RR Strike of 1877; Pullman Strike)
- 4. Changing nature of workplace Mechanization decreased need for skilled workers. Unskilled workers easier to replace

Homestead Strike (1892) – Carnegie Steel

- Wages of steelworkers cut
- Action of Labor Union?
 - Calls for a strike
- Action of Industry?
 - Police force called the "Pinkertons" brought in to break up the strike
- **Action of Government?**
 - Troops & local militia sent in to calm the situation

Effect?

- Carnegie successfully broke up the attempt to organize a union
- No labor unions in steel industry until the 1920's.
- Wages dropped & hours extended





Town of Pullman



Pullman Strike (RR Strike)1893 Chicago

• Wages of employees cut without a decrease in living costs in the company town

Action of Labor Union?

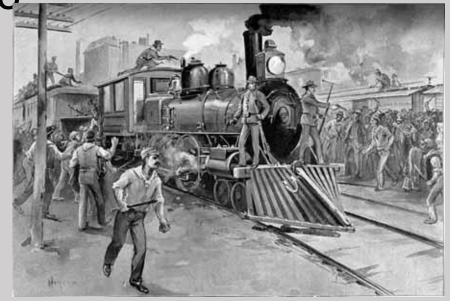
- Eugene V. Debs & the American Railway Union (ARU)
- Nationwide strike, halting railroad traffic

Actions of Industry?

Argued that the labor union was destroying free trade

Actions of Government?

- President Grover Cleveland sent in federal troops; Eugene V. Debs is arrested Effect?
- Use of court system and military to limit power of labor unions

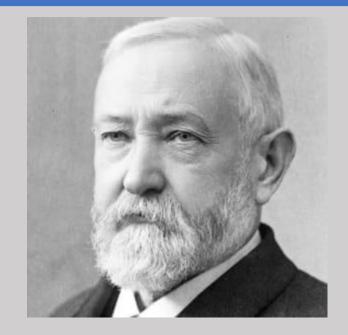




Sherman Anti-Trust Act

- <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?</u>
 <u>v= DSN0uUNLOw</u>
- Designed to combat the monopolies that were eliminating competition in American business.
- 1st time the federal government stepped in to limit business.
- Often used against labor unions

Benjamin Harrison 23 President 1889-1893





Government – often sided with management

• Eg. – Pullman Strike

- President sent in troops to move trains
- Court Case In Re Debs upheld injunction (court order) requiring workers to return to the job. Said government had responsibility to insure interstate commerce occur.

