The Rise of Unions
Strength in Numbers

-The business owners in the late 1800s and early 1900s had strength in the amount of revenue and money they obtained.

-The common workers’ strength was present in their numbers.

-Unions were organizations that demand better working conditions, higher pay, increased safety measures, and other requests collectively.
The Complaints of Workers

- Many workers were frustrated with the long work hours of factory life. Many worked 12-16 hours a day 7 days a week.

- There were no sick days, vacations days, workers compensation for injuries, or any other humane policies like these.

- The factories were incredibly dangerous, filthy, and contained numerous health hazards.
The Tactics of Unions

- Unions attempted to bargain collectively. This means that individuals did not protest alone, but did so as a group.

- They would elect leaders who would negotiate with the business owners for higher pay, safer conditions, etc.

- Also, if demands were not met, workers would refuse to work and protest near the facility in a tactic called a strike.
Factories in the late 1800s and early 1900s were radically unsafe and possessed many health hazards.
Labor Unites

-William Sylvis formed the National Labor Union in the late 1860s for iron workers. The NLU initially had racist policies for membership; they only allowed whites to join their group.

-The NLU eventually gained over 600,000 members and lobbied for Congress to enforce an 8 hour work day.

-Other unions formed as well, such as Uriah Stephens’ group, the Noble Order of the Knights of Labor. The Knights of Labor allowed all races to join their group.
Going on strike was a tactic many Unions used to achieve their goals.
Unions Form Across the USA

-The American Federation of Labor, a collection of unions from various occupations, led by Samuel Gompers, aggressively used strikes more than other unions.

-The Industrial Workers of the World consisted of miners, lumber workers, and dock workers. They were led by William Haywood.

-Eugene V. Debs tried to unite skilled and unskilled workers into unions. He led the American Railway Union that united unskilled workers with trained engineers.
Capitalism vs. Socialism

-The USA economy was based on **Capitalism**. In this system, individuals who own private businesses sell goods or services for a profit.

-Some argued capitalism was good and created incentive for business to innovate and evolve over time. Others argued capitalism made business owners rich, while most people were trapped in poverty.

-Some wanted **Socialism**, a system in which the government controls most of the production of goods and attempts to improve the quality of life for common workers. Capitalists argued this would remove the incentive to improve goods and services over time.
Some people thought the government should only be responsible for Police/Security and other basic necessities. Others claimed the government should be responsible for things that the capitalistic market had traditionally provided, like clothing and food. Socialism sought to increase the role of the government into these areas.
Unions and Violence

-In the Haymarket Affair, protesters were outraged that a striker was killed by officers at the McCormick Harvester Plan in Chicago.

-A police line formed against the workers and someone lobbed an explosive into the police line.

-Several officers and workers died in the conflict. This created suspicion and fear toward unions in the USA.
Workers and Police Officers clash in the Haymarket Affair
Unions and Minorities

- Many Unions were segregated. Yet, African Americans unionized and formed the Colored National Labor Union and other unions.

- Often, women were also excluded from Unions. Yet, women such as Pauline Newman and others attempted to unionize women who were laborers.

- Newman helped to create the Ladies Garment Workers Union.
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