



Growth of the American Labor Movement

1865-1900



GUIDING QUESTION

How successful was organized labor in improving the position of workers by 1900?

CONDITIONS FOR WORKERS

- ✧ Expanding Middle Class
- ✧ Wage earners and real wages
- ✧ women in labor force
- ✧ standard of living
- ✧ Working conditions
- ✧ Attempts to Improve Conditions for Workers:
 - ✧ child labor laws
 - ✧ Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)
 - ✧ Labor contract law (1885)

Shifts in US Labor Force



* No figure available

SOURCE: Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970

19TH Century Unions

- ★ Knights of Labor
- ★ Terrance Powderly
- ★ American Federation of Labor (AFL)
 - ★ Samuel Gompers
- ★ Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)
 - “wobblies”



Women Delegates, Knights of Labor Convention



Samuel Gompers



Rise of Labor Unions

Early Labor Unions

- Became strong after the Civil War
- Provided assistance to members in bad times
- Later expressed workers' demands to employers

The Knights of Labor

- A national union
- Recruited skilled and unskilled workers, women, and African Americans
- Emphasized education and social reform

The American Federation of Labor (AFL)

- Led by Samuel Gompers
- Was a **craft union** of skilled workers
- A bread and butter union
- Used **collective bargaining** as a strategy

Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)

- Known as "The Wobblies"
- Organized unskilled workers
- Had radical socialist leaders
- Many violent strikes.

Business Tactics

- ✱ strikebreakers ("scabs")
- ✱ lockout
- ✱ blacklists
- ✱ yellow-dog contracts
- ✱ private guards & state militia
- ✱ court injunctions

Immigrants replace
striking workers,
July 8, 1882



SIGNIFICANT LABOR ACTIONS

- ★ “Molly Maguires”
- ★ Great Railroad Strike (1877)
- ★ Haymarket Square Bombing (1886)
- ★ Homestead Strike (1892)
- ★ Pullman Strike (1894)



Great Railroad Strike of 1877



Great Railroad Strike of 1877, Baltimore





Haymarket Bombing

Attention Workingmen!

.....GREAT.....

MASS-MEETING

TO-NIGHT, at 7.30 o'clock,

.....AT THE.....
HAYMARKET, Randolph St., Bet. Desplaines and Halsted.

Good Speakers will be present to denounce the latest
atrocious act of the police, the shooting of our
fellow-workmen yesterday afternoon.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Achtung Arbeiter!

G r o ß e

Massen-Versammlung

**Heute Abend, halb 8 Uhr, auf dem
Heumarkt, Randolph-Straße, zwischen
Desplaines- u. Halsted-Str.**

! Gute Redner werden den neuesten Schurkenstreich der Polizei,
indem sie gestern Nachmittag unsere Brüder erschoss, geißeln.

Das Executiv-Comite.

Haymarket Square *Harper's Weekly*, May 15, 1886



Haymarket Square (5/4/1886)

Graphic Weekly (Chicago) May 15, 1886



CHRYSTO-LEH BELL, BATHING OF THE MORN.

Haymarket Riot May 4, 1886



The eight policemen who died in the ensuing riot



Card showing Haymarket defendants

Haymarket



"The Chicago Anarchists Pay the Penalty of their Crime" *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, November 19, 1887

Carnegie Mill, Homestead PA



Homestead Strike

Locked-out
steelworkers seize
control of the
Homestead Plant

July 1, 1892

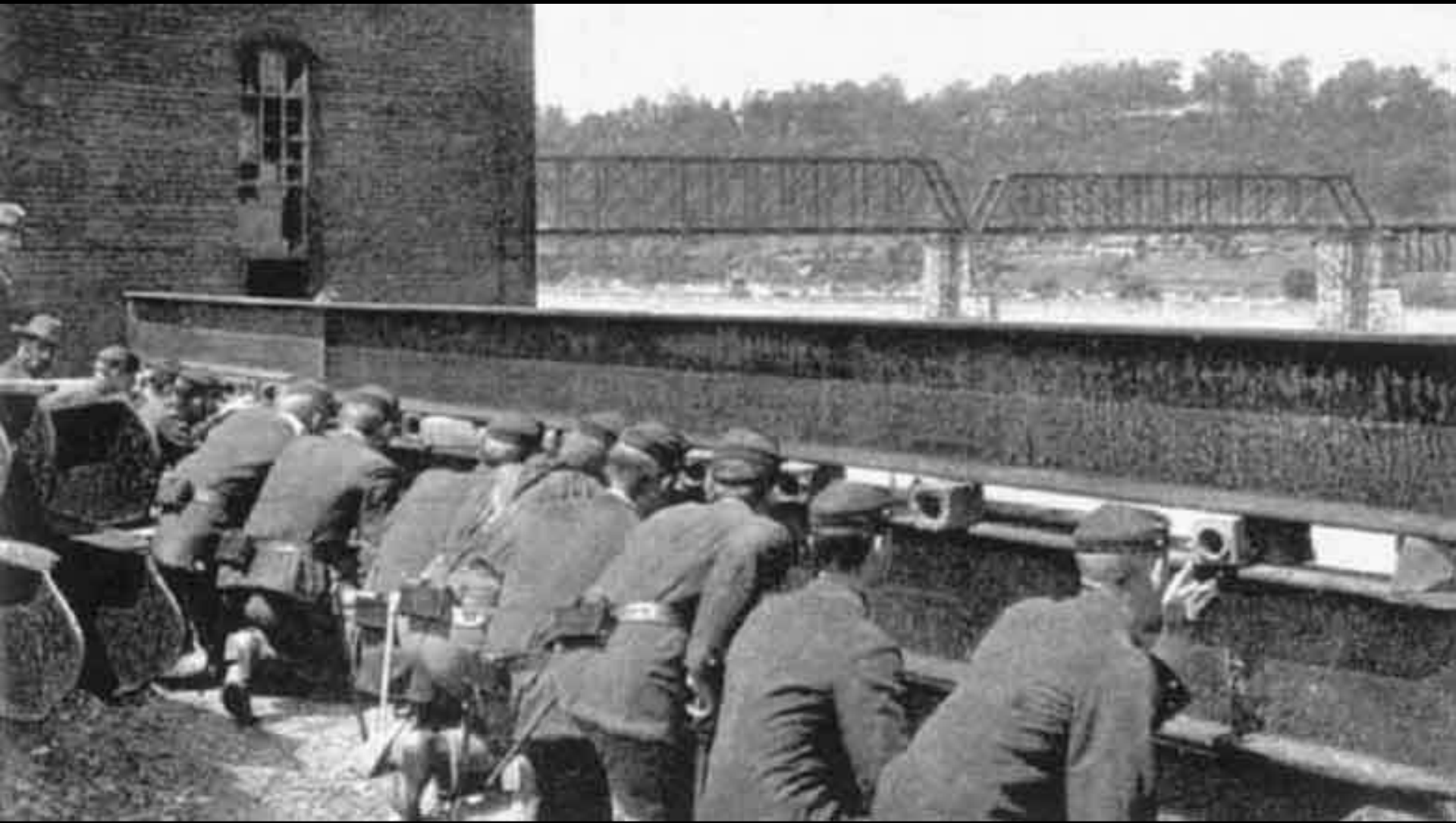


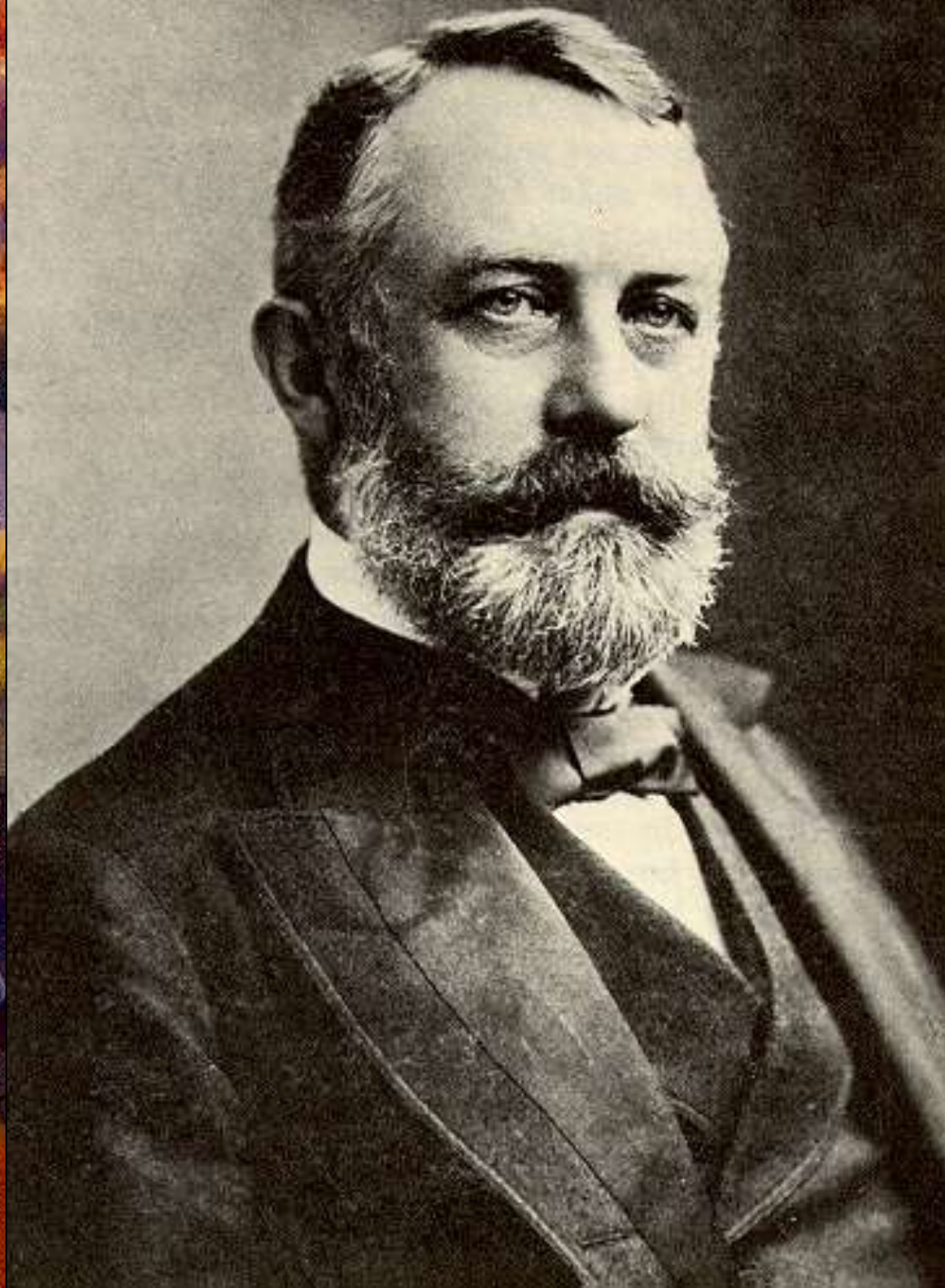
Homestead Strike

300 Pinkerton Detectives attempt to land at the Plant, July 6, 1892



Pennsylvania Militia at Carnegie's Homestead Steel Mill, 1892





Henry Clay
Frick

Pullman Strike



Reasons for Early Labor Failures

- ✱ Court rulings
- ✱ Power of Industry
- ✱ Weakness of Unions – lacked unity, financial resources
- ✱ Availability of cheap labor
- ✱ Government support of Industry
- ✱ Violence and Association in public's mind with subversion of order

Labor Union Membership, 1897-1920

