Labor Changes

• Employees more expendable
• Real wages rose but working conditions, hours were deplorable (10 hours/day, 6 days/week)
• Company towns—tyrannical
• Unemployment/depression in late 1800s allowed for even lower wages, worse conditions
  – 75% of workers who went on strike in 1894 were fired
  – Conditions for immigrant workers even worse
Women & Canadians

- **Women** – wages far lower than men; blamed for lowering the wage level in general; not always accepted into organized labor

- **Canada** – Low wages (much lower for women); conditions of industry were poor but not as terrible as in America (worst factories: cotton mills and cigar factories)
Unions

- **National Labor Union** (1866) – William H. Sylvis
  - Gained 8-hour workday for federal workers
- **Knights of Labor** (1869)
  - Uriah Stephens; Terrence V. Powderly (Grand Master Workman)
  - Open to ALL workers
  - Worked for an 8-hour workday for all
  - Equal pay for men & women; no child labor
  - Lobbied for **Chinese Exclusion Act**
  - Favored arbitration to strikes, but successful strike against railroads → increased membership
  - Declined in power in late 1880s—**BLUM**: catered to too many groups of workers (Skilled and Unskilled)
American Federation of Labor (AFL)

- Founded in 1881 by Samuel Gompers
- Federation of separate craft unions
- Worked for an 8-hour workday and 6-day workweek, legislation to promote worker safety and compensation, higher wages
- Favored collective bargaining over strikes
Haymarket Riot

- Chicago, 1886
- Workers were protesting attack on strikers when bomb exploded, killing 7 policeman & 4 civilians
- Organized labor members were arrested and 7 were guilty → 4 hanged
Canada Labor Timeline

• 1872 – Trade Union Act passed by Macdonald – Legalized registered trade unions; wanted to appease the 9-Hour Campaigns

• 1886 – Canadian Trades and Labour Congress – First national trade union based in QUE/ONT

• 1881 – Knights of Labor reach Canada

• 1890 – AFL reaches Canada – John Flett appointed Canadian leader by Gompers
Challenges

• Public looked down on closed shops
• Immigrants were unfamiliar with labor
• Women were largely excluded, but founded own union in 1903: National Women’s Trade Union League
• Blacks excluded from most unions
• Blacklists – List of people employers thought were undesirable (perhaps just because they were union members) → stopped those people from getting a job in that industry nationwide
Managers vs. Unions

- **Yellow-Dog Contracts** – New employee signed these stating they would not join a Union
- Hired spies, **strikebreakers**
- Federal troops called in to end strikes
  - **Homestead Steel Strike** (1892) – 300 Pinkerton detectives employed to keep peace → strikers resisted → seven detectives and nine strikers died → strike was a big failure
  - **Pullman Strike** organized by Eugene Debs (1894);
    - Debs jailed for breaking an injunction which called for the strike to end. Supreme Court decided strikes violate the Sherman Antitrust Act as “a conspiracy in restraint of trade”; federal troops sent by Cleveland → 12 killed