AP United States History

Labor and Immigration

- Sherman Anti-Trust Act - 1890

  • Passed to break up trusts on allegations of monopoly that hurt wages and prices

  • This act wasn't very useful, however

    - In fact, US v Knight said it could only regulate unions and works as opposed to actual businesses

  • As a result, it was used to fight unions instead rather than monopolies

- Worsening Labor Conditions

  • Industrial workforce expanded through migration across national borders and internal migration

  • Lower wages, increases in child labor, more diverse workforce, longer hours

- 1877 Great Railroad Strike

  • B & M railroad announces 10% pay cut, and workers go on strike in West Virginia

    - Across the county, workers follow suit, totaling up to 100K workers on strike

    - 100 died from these stokes

  • The government responded with he military

- Knights of Labor - 1869

  • Opened membership to whites, immigrants, women, African Americans, whether skilled or unskilled

    - Had one million members, considered the first labor union

- American Federation of Labor: Created by Samuel Gompers

  • Confronted big business, associated of craft unions to represent material interests in wages, hours, and conditions

  • Primarily skilled laborers, led many strikes, collective bargaining

- Results of Labor Battles

  • Pretty much exclusively won by management: lockouts, blacklists, yellow dog contracts, state militia, injunctions

  • Thanks largely to the support of government because of immigrants who would accept lower wages (scabs)