

1919 Pittsburgh - Role Sheet

Name: *Albert D. Jones Jr.*

Allegiance: *Anti-Strike Faction*

Role Context

You're a 40-year-old Black American born in Pittsburgh and a molder at one of Pittsburgh's largest steel mills. You consider yourself luckier than other Black steel mill workers because you are a molder - a skilled position that makes double the rate of an unskilled steel mill worker. Your rate is still significantly less than a molder that is white, which frustrates you greatly because you are much more skilled than your fellow employees.

Motivations

You want to see an increase in pay, equal to that of your white counterparts, however, you know this is likely to never happen. Only 5.8% of molders are African American, and because you are in such a minority at work you are treated terribly. You want to be paid the same as your white counterparts, however, organized unions have no interest in setting equal wages and benefits for Black workers. Black Americans make up less than 1% of all organized unions in the United States, and strike organizers such as William Foster have repeatedly stated that they are not striking for equal rights. If you join the strike, you would have to forfeit your wages. It is already hard enough to live in Pittsburgh as a black man on your own, so why make it even harder to fight for a cause that does not care about you?

If a strike does end up passing, you know that you will be a strikebreaker. A strikebreaker is an employee who continues working in the mills regardless of the strike. From previous strikes, you know that strikebreakers are paid more than their current rate as a reward from their employer. Strikebreakers, however, are treated with great hostility and because you are Black, racial violence will likely occur. In your arguments, you should state that you and tens of

thousands of other Black steelworkers will continue working in the mills despite the strike, which could lead to the strike's failure. Gary is a powerful man, and you know he could recruit these potential Black workers from the South where there is little opportunity. As a teen, you remember hearing about the Homestead Strike in which strikebreakers significantly hurt the strike effort. Elbert Gary has already recruited thousands of Black workers from the South to work for him. Imagine how many more he could bring if a strike were to happen.

Play Guidelines

Round #1

- Walk around the temple and try to talk to as many indeterminates as possible arguing your case.
- You should argue that a strike like this will fail because of strike breaking. You should reference the Homestead Strike and its massive failure.
- Look for other Black steelworkers and express how the unions have demonstrated racism and do not care about Black workers' rights.

Round #2

- Challenge the pro-strike faction to explain why the strike should continue given past precedence.

Round #3

- This is your final chance to stop the strike! Check-in with those who you have previously talked to and see if their stance has changed.

Victory Objectives

Complete Victory

Your Victory in the game is directly related to the success of the strike. A complete Victory will see you win Round #2, and then maintain your majority in Round #3.

Partial Victory

Partial victory may also be obtained if you lose the vote in Round #2 but manage to achieve the 50% majority vote in Round #3, thus seeing no Strike occur at all in Pittsburgh.

Important Sources

- Source 3.4 - "The Chicago Race Riots."
- Source 3.11 - "Steel Workers on the Question of Striking."
- Source 3.12 - "A Steel Worker Writes to Fellow Workers."