

1919 Pittsburgh - Role Sheet

Name: *Robert O'Donnell*

Allegiance: *Indeterminate*

Role Context

You're a white, 21-year-old Carnegie Steel Company mill worker, and you're also a member of a labor union. You have been a resident of Pennsylvania your entire life, and never saw the battlefield of the Great War since you were a year too young for the draft. Despite your young age, you're a hard worker and are sympathetic to both sides of the debate.

Motivations

Since you are the only man in your immediate family after your father died in the Great War, you work as the primary financial source of your family. Your Uncle was also killed in the Homestead Strike of 1892, so your feelings on labor strikes and the repercussions against striking workers are complicated. You worry that if you take part in the strike or even show signs of supporting the efforts, the mill owners will take notice, putting your job and your family's financial security at stake.

However, you do agree that there are many aspects of your job that need to be reformed. The long hours, low wages, and poor working conditions are unbearable, unethical, and dangerous, and your pay is hardly enough for you and your family to get by. You worry that if reforms are not made, the financial stability of your family that rests upon solely you may not be able to hold much longer. Many disqualifying injuries, sometimes fatal, often occur in the steel mills, and you wonder if "job security" is even a viable reason for being anti-strike considering you could lose your job - and maybe your life - at any moment. Whether the millworkers decide to strike or not, you're concerned for your and your family's safety and security during the affair. You also hope to educate the other workers that may not be familiar

with the Homestead Strike and other labor strikes that have had a greater impact on the workers themselves than on the labor industry and its fallibilities.

Play Guidelines

Round #1

- Introduce yourself to the other members of the meeting. Involve yourself in discussions among other workers and provide your perspective. At the end of the round, vote either in support or against the resolution.

Round #2

- Prepare a productive question to present to the assembled group.
- Carefully listen to all sides of the discussion, consider how they address your specific concerns, and, at the end of the round, vote accordingly.

Round #3

- Continue to discuss the labor strike. At the end of the round, vote either in favor or against the strike. Consider all the options that may be presented to you.

Victory Objectives

Complete Victory

You will achieve complete victory if your vote in Round #3 follows the majority-winning vote.

Complete Defeat

You will achieve complete defeat if your vote in Round #3 does not follow the majority-winning vote.

Important Sources

- Source 3.5 - “BLOOD IS SHED.: Fierce Battles at Homestead. Pinkertons Met and Repulsed. Twenty Men Are Killed in the Fight.”
- Source 3.6 - “The Daily Schedule of a Steel Worker in Homestead, Pennsylvania, 1919.”
- Source 3.11 - “Steel Workers on the Question of Striking.”