

Educator: Lam Nguyen

Title: The Church Sides with Labor

Subject: US History, Grade 10, Online Class

Educator's State: Minnesota

Lesson Plan:

Introduction, Overview, and Unit Rationale:

This lesson is a supplementary assignment for an on-line class. The teacher's school online classes are in the beginning processes of implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which aims at providing flexibility in ways information is presented, in the ways students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills and in the ways students are engaged. The teacher would like to provide additional supplemental activities in which students can choose from after a lesson is completed. This is just one way where students can have some flexibility in deciding what they want to learn. It is the goal of the teacher to create as many choices in which students can pick and learn about.

During the Gilded Age of the late 1800's in America, powerful robber barons dominated society and kept wages low. Working conditions were poor as well and workers suffered in dangerous mines and factories. Slowly, the labor movement grew out of the need to protect the common interest of workers. For those who worked in industries, organized labor unions fought for better wages, reasonable hours and safer working conditions. However, they met great resistance from industries, the government, and local police.

On Day One, students will be provided readings of some of the most famous early labor union strikes and conflicts. They include the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, Haymarket Affair, **Homestead Strike**, Pullman Strike, Ludlow Massacre, Flint Sit-Down Strike, and the Memorial Day Massacre of 1937. For each major event in the labor movement, students will use the readings to add the dates, causes, and results in a table that has been provided to them.

On Day Two, students will be organized into seven groups and each group will be assigned one of the union strikes or conflicts. For this step, students will be working together in a breakout room. Each group will work together to figure out the following:

1. The name of the strike or event
2. The name of the union leading the strike and the company involved
3. The date and location where it happened
4. What was the reason for the strike? What did the workers wish to receive?
5. What happened? Was there violence? Did the government intervene?
6. What was the result? Was the strike successful?

On Day Three and Four, each group will present their findings to the class. As students listen to each group, they will complete a Venn Diagram (provided by the teacher in Digital Form). Students will fill in the left side of the Venn Diagram with facts from their group's strike and label it at the top. As other groups share their information, students will fill in similarities and differences in the other parts of the Venn Diagram. After the presentations, the class will discuss their findings, using these questions as a jumping off point:

1. What did most of the strikes have in common? Why do you think that is?
2. What was the government's role in most strikes? Which side did they favor? Why?
3. How did strikes change over time?
4. Which industries saw the most strikes? Why do you think that is?
5. Why do you think industries were so reluctant to give in to their worker's demands?

On Day Five, students are given the opportunity to choose a supplementary assignment to learn from. Here is a couple of lessons students can choose from:

1. Child Labor During the Industrial Revolution - Reading
2. Child Labor in America - Interactive Notebook
3. Early Labor Strikes - Picket Sign
4. The Jungle by Upton Sinclair - Reading
5. **The Church Sides with Labor - Reading**

Unit Goals:

1. Students will understand the need for the development of the labor movement.
2. Students will gain knowledge of the harsh working conditions of the working class and the children of the gilded age.
3. Students will be able to identify the common interests workers fought for.
4. Students will understand how labor unions met great resistance from industries, the government, and local police.
5. Students will gain a strong understanding of the importance and connection of the church and the immigrant communities.

Connections to State Standards:

Minnesota State Standard 19.

Historical Perspectives: Identify diverse points of view and describe how one's frame of reference influences historical perspective.

9.4.19.12 US6Era 6: Migration, Imperialism, and Inequality

Identify patterns, intersections, and causes of stratification, including racial, class, gender, citizenship status and/or religion that lead to social inequalities and their impact on both individuals and groups in the United States and across the world.

Minnesota State Standard 19. Historical Perspectives: Identify diverse points of view and describe how one's frame of reference influences historical perspective.

9.4.19.15 US9Era 9: Contested Freedoms

Examine conflicting perspectives about the impact of federal policies and legislation on American society, including taxation, criminal justice, incarceration, free trade and/or immigration.

Lesson Description:

See lesson at the bottom.

Technology Needs:

Laptop or Chromebook

Material Needs:

None

Other Sources to Consider:

1. Alexander, June Granatir, *The Immigrant Church and Community: Pittsburgh's Slovak Catholics and Lutherans, 1880-1915*, University of Pittsburgh Press, XVII.
2. David P. Demarest, ed., *The River Ran Red: Homestead 1892*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992, 121-22.

The Church Sides with Labor from the *New York World*

Background: Immigrants from the old world (Poles, Slavs, Italians, and others) came in droves to the mines, steel mills and factories of western Pennsylvania looking for a better life. Sometimes recruited to come, many arrived without their wives and children, but labored to save money to bring them over. These immigrants were fiercely loyal to their homeland's faith. As years went by with the influx of more immigrants and their families, immigrants created communities and voluntarily and successfully founded national churches.

Direction: Read the following news story about the Homestead Strike from the *New York World* and answer the following questions below.

The following news item from the Homestead Steel strike was published on July 11, 1892.

BOSTON, July 10. From the pulpit of the Church of the Carpenter this morning the Rev. W.D.P. Bliss, in speaking of the recent troubles at Homestead, Pa., said:

"Homestead has spoken to the country. It has thrilled the ranks of labor with new life, new courage, new manliness.

"Workmen have met and defeated the desperado hirelings of capital, and for their victory we need to thank God. Democratic papers might be accused of using the incident for political purposes, but Republican papers have almost unanimously declared the employment of the Pinkertons as needless and unjust. One Republican paper of this city has even said that we want a little less of music hall and library charity and a little more humanity from Andrew Carnegie.

"The prime issue at Homestead was whether Mr. Carnegie, skulking in ease in Scotland, shall win all the benefit of improved machinery and workmen get no better wages; and secondly, whether workingmen shall or shall not have the right to organize as capital is organized."

The Rev. Charles G. Ames, at the New South Church, held the attention of a large congregation for nearly three-quarter of an hour's talk on the Homestead troubles. He began with this:

"Close following the celebration of our national independence with its grand boast of liberty, equality and fraternity, there comes from Western Pennsylvania a tumult of angry workers, with the short crack of rifles and the groans of dying men's bloody, horrible business. Yet it is only one incident to the mad struggle between capital and labor. The flash of those guns reveals a situation as wide as the continent."

Dr. Louis Albert Banks of the First M.E. Church, Temple street, pulled Carnegie over the coals with a vengeance. What the public wants of Carnegie, he said, is justice and not the kind of

charity he has been dealing out of late. The sorest point in the whole trouble he thought was the refusal of the mill owners to meet them squarely and show a disposition to do what is right.

"A few years ago," said Mr. Banks, "Mr. Carnegie wrote a book entitled 'Triumphant Democracy,' which attracted wide attention. But this refusal on the part of himself and associates to recognize his employees as equals in the situation and worthy of being met in generous, brotherly conference, is a cruel stroke at the very root of democracy. It is a practical assertion of the divine right of the plutocracy. The whole affair would indicate that the Old World castle in which Mr. Carnegie is spending his summer has saturated himself and associates with Old World ideas as well.

PITTSBURG, PA. July 10. A number of the Pittsburg preachers referred to the Homestead troubles during the course of their sermons.

The Rev. David McAllister of the Eighth Street Reformed Presbyterian Church said: "The Christian teaching bears on all problems springing from the relations between labor and capital. The problem at Homestead has lost its original cast. It has become a question of law and good government. Their natural sympathies with the workman have led many people and a few newspapers to express themselves in such a way as to make the problem infinitely hard. No matter what motives may have existed, their position has been to incite riot.

"Modern Communism will not solve this Homestead problem. Modern Communism is a perversion of the gospel. It lets a man share in property no matter if he has not helped to earn it. In the Gospel of Christ the personal claim is recognized. There can be no settlement at Homestead as long as the law and Constitution are trampled under foot as they are at present. One breach of the law has led to another.

"When I read of the abuse of those Pinkerton men my blood boiled, and I felt ready to take up a musket and help restore order at Homestead. I hope every man in my congregation felt so. Believing in reforms as I do, it is necessary to say that, first of all, the law must be maintained at any cost. The treatment of those Pinkerton men after they had surrendered was shameful. The actions of the strikers would have disgraced savages. The treatment before their surrender, when the white flag was shot away three times, was an infinite disgrace.

"If we had the right kind of man at the head of the Government that riot would have been quelled in twenty-four hours. The situation is growing in seriousness hourly. Those men are now flushed with a so-called victory.

"I recognize the grievances of the workingmen and the justice of many of their claims, but property rights are sacred.

"The leading feature of it all is that the law has been scoffed. It is a burning shame that we should be taxed to uphold a military force and then be refused its help. A government that does not govern should step down and out for one that has the grit to meet an emergency like this, which is not local but national.

CHICAGO, ILL., July 10. The Rev. Alfred Henry, a prominent west side pastor, preached a sermon on the Homestead trouble to-day. He defended and upheld the locked-out millmen, and claimed that all men situated as they were would have done as they did.

The company's statement struck him as a fine bit of burlesque writing. It showed that while the output of the mills was largely increased, and consequently the prosperity of the company increased, this was used as an argument to cut wages instead of allowing the men to share in the prosperity. He denounced the company and its methods.

Source: David P. Demarest, ed., *The River Ran Red: Homestead 1892* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), 121-22

The Church Sides with Labor from the *New York World*

1. According to Rev. W.D.P. Bliss of the Church of the Carpenter, Boston, MA, what were the union workers fighting for?

2. Rev. W.D.P. Bliss says that "Workmen have met and defeated the desperado hirelings of capital..." Who are the "desperado hirelings" and "capital"? And explain their relationship?

3. How does Rev. Charles G. Ames of the New South Church describe the events at the Homestead Strike?

4. According to Dr. Louis Albert Banks of the First M.E. Church, how should Andrew Carnegie treat his workers? As of late, what kind of charity has Carnegie been providing?

5. Although Rev. David McAllister of the Eighth Street Reformed Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, PA “recognize the grievances of the workingmen and the justice of many of their claims,” what action(s) by the union men does he not forgive? How might these actions hurt the union cause going forward?

6. How does Rev. Alfred Henry, a prominent west side pastor from Chicago, Il, views the actions taken by the Union men? What reason does he provide to support his view?

7. Summarize the church's view of the events at the Homestead Strike? Provide their views and the reasoning.

8. After summarizing the church’s view of the events at the Homestead Strike, explain the cultural and social connection between the church and the workingmen and how it connects to the church’s position on the strike.