World History Notes

3/6/2024

* Throughout the 1800s, the United States was a major destination for immigrants. Some traveled across the Pacific Ocean from China and Japan. Most, however, came from Europe.
* Within those newly urbanized centers, living conditions were often appalling. Unlike today, government regulation, or legal restriction, of industry was practically nonexistent.
* Workers often lived in slums—heavily populated parts of a city marked by filth and squalor.
* In the slums, workers lived in tenements, or filthy, overcrowded apartment buildings of four to six stories. These were often unclean and extremely dangerous places to live.
* Living in such close quarters without proper sanitation encouraged the spread of communicable diseases such as cholera, smallpox, and typhoid fever.
* Urban death rates soared because few government programs existed that dealt with public-health issues in the first half of the 1800s.
* [Child Labor During the Industrial Revolution](https://youtu.be/nN-mmQuyU_8)
* **The Labor Movement**
* Workers during the 1800s continued to be treated like replaceable machinery. They began to resent the long hours, the dangerous working conditions, and the extremely low wages.
* Individual workers had little power to change their circumstances—they could not bargain with employers, nor could they seek help from the government, which did little to regulate working conditions.
* They realized that they needed to develop a new way of protecting themselves.
* To do this, workers formed labor unions, or groups of workers who organized to protect the interests of its members.
* Historically, most labor unions have focused on three primary goals: higher wages, shorter hours, and improved working conditions.
* By the late 1800s, strong unions in Europe and the United States had begun to make economic gains for workers, often through strikes or the threat of strikes.
* A strike is an agreement among workers to stop working until the employer meets their demands.
* Generally, unions employed the strike strategy as a last resort, often when owners refused to sit down to discuss issues.