

Pittsburgh, thirteen killed in Reading, \$5 million in car shops and other property set afire in one city, the workers in St. Louis so aroused that for two weeks they took over the city itself. Yet all the strikes of this period were beaten. In the midst of a mushrooming capitalism came depressions; and in the midst of depressions the labor movement suffered a severe setback.

But the setbacks of one decade were followed by insistent new efforts—and new setbacks—in the next. After the depressions of the 1870's the wheels of industry began to grind forward once more in the 1880's. The number of factories grew from 253,852 to 355,405, their capital from 2.8 to \$6.5 billions. In a more prosperous period many strikes were won. Strikes against Jay Gould's railroad system were victorious, and in their wake labor added hundreds of thousands of members. But another strike, against the McCormick Harvester factory in Chicago, ended in the Haymarket Riot and the eventual hanging of four anarchist leaders. Now the offensive against labor mounted again. Thousands of unionists were blacklisted, many driven off company property at gun point. Committees that went in to discuss grievances with employers were as often as not told to leave the premises. Spies were introduced by the hundreds, and Pinkerton agents were used in large numbers both for espionage and to break strikes.

The mere assertion that this was a decade of great industrial growth does not accurately picture the turmoil and unevenness of this development, the heartache and tribulations of the millions of immigrants and native workers who sought security in the factories and railroads being built by the "robber barons." To such men industrial tyranny was real, and the theories of socialism and radicalism not unattractive. Did anyone really believe that the

Vanderbilts and the Goulds could be "put in their place," made to yield wage increases of five cents and ten cents an hour without near-warfare? The facts seemed to belie it. Did anyone really think that the recurring depressions almost each decade could be stopped so long as the titans of industry were politically so powerful? A large segment of America, in addition to the labor movement, had no such confidence. This was the era when Populism was sinking roots amongst the farmers, when the West manifested deep hostility to the corporations of the East. Something more radical than "higher wages and shorter hours"—important in themselves—seemed on the social and political agenda. Producers' cooperatives lost their appeal as the years slipped by, but more mature forms of socialism gained stature with the laboring man, particularly in depression times.

In 1893 the United States experienced another depression, and in 1894, there came—again as a defensive measure against wage cuts—one of the most bitter strikes in American history, labeled in the press the "Debs Rebellion." Eugene V. Debs, a tall, kindly, humane railroad worker, later to become the leader and presidential standard bearer of the Socialist party, in 1893-1894 organized 150,000 men into the American Railway Union. Before the group could stabilize, however, it was confronted with its first—and last—major test.

The trouble started at Pullman in Illinois, where the maker of sleeping cars, George Pullman, ruled an empire strongly reminiscent of feudal days. His workers lived in Pullman tenements, paid him exorbitant rents, bought at his high-priced stores, sent their children to his school, attended his church, took relaxation in his theater or park, and lived a life completely circumscribed by the likes and dislikes of the "boss." Needless to say, Pullman was