

# North american labor movement in the 1880s report (assessment)

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To enhance capitalist exploitation and national oppression, the workers of North America responded with a fierce class struggle. The 80s of the 19th century were a turning point in the history of the labor movement on this continent: workers first came forward as a class that realized its special interests. During these years, employees were united mainly around the so-called Knights of Labor who proclaimed their goal to liberate workers from the tyranny of corporations and destroy the slavery of wage labor.

The key figures in the conflict were capitalized tycoons and the owners of large enterprises on one side and the working class along with the Knights of Labor on the other. On behalf of working people, railwaymen acted as opponents of trade unions formation. On behalf of the bosses, local authorities led by the Mayor of Toronto, Mr. Howland, protested against the activities of the opposition.

The role of the public in this whole story is quite significant because the Knights managed to cause such mass excitement and resonance in society due to the interest of ordinary people. In connection with the fact that the authorities tried to block the actions of activists, the situation became even worse. Such measures led to an open confrontation between the local government and the members of the opposition, and the conflict into a large-scale one from a local one.

Perhaps, the main reason for the conflict between the unionists was the working conditions that were imposed on employees of different enterprises. The case concerned wages, the length of the working day, etc. As an argument, the supporters of the Knights gave the opinion that corporations

conducted the policy of tyranny. All this led to the fact that confrontations and strikes became a very frequent phenomenon among the masses.

The Knights abandoned the idea of the struggle when it became clear that their forces were too small to fight the state apparatus. In the local district assembly, fifty-five people asked to cancel the strike. Undoubtedly, ordinary people chose in favor of the power of the Knights. Nevertheless, the strikers complained about the low pay for their activity, and over time, the enthusiasm subsided, and subsequently completely came to naught.

Moreover, the rumors were heard that strikers were just puppets in the hands of real liberators. Therefore, one of the central problems related to the strike was quite typical; and it was the lack of money.

Initially, the actions of those who struggled for freedom were justified by the time and poor living conditions. However, in their behavior, there was not much excitement, and they even condemned some of their followers for too hard work. It is not excluded that the consequences of the activity of strike leaders were highly controversial and, perhaps, even condemned by the direct leadership.

Undoubtedly, the most important thing, without which it would be quite possible to manage was these strikes since such a form of resistance inherent in the people was almost always effective enough, as practice shows. Also, if the followers of the Knights did not enter into an open confrontation with the authorities, it is possible that some of the freedoms

would have been given to workers at the stage of negotiations. Therefore, some measures could have been taken to prevent cruel events.

Thus, the unification of workers into one opposing community was not very long. Certain measures could have been achieved through efficient teamwork. The decline in interest in strikes was quite a natural event.