

Example of pullman strike essay

[Business](#), [Company](#)



The Pullman strike also known as Chicago strike was a major event that affected two third of United States and redefined the relations of the employers and employees in the era post civil war. The Pullman strike took place in the year 1894 in Chicago and proved to be a defining moment in the history of US labor movement and also affected the political and social structure of the America. This paper discusses the Pullman strike and several related aspects of the issue.

American society, economic and industrial policies were changed substantially in the era of post civil war. In new changed environment, the relation of the employees and employers was also facing several challenges and changes. Employer's mission was to make maximum money while the employees were concerned about their salary, comfort and security. At several occasions, such clashes of interests lead towards spar between employers and employees and Pullman strike is an example of such changing relations. Pullman Palace Car Company was founded in Chicago in the year 1867 by George Mortimer Pullman. A well developed township was also made by the Pullman for the employees of the company where homes, churches, markets, hotels, library, schools, bank and post office, everything was available. The rent that was charged for all these facilities was 20 to 25 percent higher than neighboring areas and it was deducted from the salary of the workers. Workers were not allowed to live outside the campus of this township and it was a condition to live inside the township for those who were willing to get a job in the Pullman car Company. Everything was almost fine before the great depression of 1893 which affected the economy badly. This crisis affected the Pullman palace car company and company suffered

major loss and in lieu of the loss, Pullman fired a large number of workers. Salary of employees was reduced by 25 % but he denied reducing the rent of the premises. His capricious policies proved to be the main reasons of this strike and the aggrieved workers of his company joined the newly formed American Railway Union (ARU). This is how the strike was begun and all the efforts to stop the strike were frustrated due to Pullman's adamant behavior .

Finally on May 11, 1894 almost three thousand employees of the Pullman car Company refused to work and company closed its doors for the employees. After more than one month of strike, President Cleveland on June, 28 ordered the army to keep an eye on the strikers which angered the striking workers and the peaceful agitation was turned into an uncontrollable violent conflict. Agitators started removing rail tracks and destroying the cars. Troops entered and controlled the agitators by using force against them and the strike came to an end.

The strike was finished but its effects were visible on the society and economy for a long time. Railroad companies lost more than \$80 million in business and additional \$ 6 million due to the damage of railway property. According to an estimate, the total loss in terms of money was \$ 5, 360, 000 and the most important loss that occurred due to the strike was the death of 34 people. The strike adversely affected the agitating workers, their families and some workers could not get a job after this episode.

Work Cited

Lindsey, Almont. The Pullman strike: the story of a unique experiment and of a great labor upheaval. London: The university of Chicago press, 1942.