Background Guide

Joint Crisis Committee

Trust Issues: Captains of Industry

JACKRABBIT MUN VII

L.B. Poly - May 24th, 2025

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CO-HEAD CHAIR LETTERS

Hello Delegates!

My name is Will Weaver and I am so excited to be one of your co-chairs for the JCC: Captains of Industry crisis committee. I am a junior at Long Beach Poly High School, and this is my second year in Model UN. I have loved my experience in Model UN so far, enjoying the knowledge I have gained from my research, and the skills I have obtained through attending conferences, especially crisis committees (which are obviously the best). I am excited to chair for you all, as I love being on the other side of the gavel as well!
Outside of MUN, I spend a lot of my time involved in music. I am in the marching band here at Poly, playing the baritone, but I also play the saxophone in Poly's jazz A band, and have enjoyed playing bassoon and piano for other ensembles in the past. I love to research biology, spending time in the field with my dad collecting samples or recording tapes to study bird behavior. I also like to run, hike, and go skiing in the wintertime.
In my opinion, the Gilded Age is one of the most interesting parts of American history, and I have had a lot of fun delving super deep into the economics, politics, and wacky characters of this time period. I am hopeful that each of you delegates comes well prepared and ready to make this the absolute best crisis room that it can be. I look forward to chairing your committee, and I am so excited to meet you all. As always, feel free to send an email to me or my fellow dais if you have any questions. Thank you delegates, and I wish you the best of luck!

Sincerely,
Will Weaver
JCC: Captains of Industry | Co-Head Chair
willweaver2026@gmail.com

CO-HEAD CHAIR LETTERS

Hello delegates!

My name is Abigail Hall and I will be one of your co-chairs for the Captains of Industry Crisis Committee. I'm currently a sophomore, and since eighth grade I've always fostered a love for Model United Nations and the amazing experiences it offers. For me, Model UN offers an opportunity to gain insight into the complex forces that shape the world we live in. I believe learning about the issues present in different nations can help you develop knowledge of and empathy for people across the globe, and I hope Jackrabbit MUN helps you find some of this insight and joy as well.

At Poly, I play on the girls varsity golf team, and also participate in Speech and Debate. Outside school, I'm a huge fan of hand drawn art, character design, and reading (especially sci-fi). If you have any questions, feel free to contact me via email. I look forward to meeting all of you, and hope I can help you to have a fun and enlightening experience at JackrabbitMUN!

Sincerely,

Abigail Hall
JCC: Captains of Industry | Co-Head Chair
abbyh1257@gmail.com

CRISIS LEAD LETTER

Hello delegates!

My name is Jackson Trunnelle and I'm going to be your Crisis Lead for the JCC: Captains of Industry room in Jackrabbit MUN VII. I am currently a senior and Co-President for our Model UN program at Long Beach Poly. MUN is a very exciting place where I have been able to explore global policy, consider new ideas, and make great connections with wonderful people who I have had the pleasure of delegating with. Outside of MUN, I play club volleyball and varsity for my high school team, as well as playing pickleball and card games in my free time. At school, I am also involved in VITA Tax Club, Poly Global Fund, and Poly Pickleball Club. I love cookies too (especially Christmas ones) and believe I can make the best cookie butter sandwich you'll ever try.

I am very excited to hear all of the wonderful ideas and creative solutions that will be brought forth, and how through patience, cooperation, and civility, we can strive to make the world a better place. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at my email below!

Sincerely,
Jackson Trunnelle
JCC: Captains of Industry | Crisis Lead
jctrunnelle@gmail.com

VICE CHAIR LETTER

Hello Delegates!

Hello, my name is Giankell Torres, I will be your vice chair for JCC: Captains of Industry. Currently, I am a junior at Long Beach Poly High School attending MUN for the very first time, hoping to continue in my senior year. Not only is MUN wearing fancy suits and shoes to the conferences, but it gives an accurate representation on how the United Nations system works. Since then I'm glad that I'll be chairing a crisis which is my favorite in all of MUN.

Outside of school, I play football on a team and with friends during the weekends. Before the age of 11 I used to be in the Atletico Madrid Academy about to fly to Spain, until I tore my ACL only days prior the flight. Even with this huge step back I still look forward to each day, even if it's not football. In my free time I like to read.

Sincerely,
Giankell Torres
JCC: Captains of Industry | Vice chair
yoyotorrezz@gmail.com

POSITION PAPER GUIDELINES

- Position Papers are due at 11:59 PM on **Sunday, May 18th**.
- Delegates **must** submit position papers to be eligible for **research AND committee awards.**
- Position Papers will be submitted through a google form:
    - **https://forms.gle/jkcnWafGFAL6hJay9**

- At the top of each paper, include your character/country name, first and last name, school name, and appropriate committee.

  J.P. Morgan
  First Last
  School Name
  JCC: Captains of Industry

- Papers should be submitted as a PDF file
    - Please name the file [Committee_Character]
        - Ex. **JCC Captains_JP Morgan**
- Papers should be minimum 1-2 pages in length with an additional Works Cited page in MLA format
- Papers should be single-spaced in Times New Roman 12 pt. font and include no pictures or graphics
- Please include the following sections for each committee topic:
    - Background
    - Position of your Character
    - Possible Solutions

If you have any questions or concerns, please email one of your chairs.

COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

The date is February 8, 1895. The United States is in trouble–the effects of the Panic of 1893 on the economy have not subsided. Due to a multitude of reasons, the treasury is slowly losing gold. Full depletion would spell the collapse of the dollar. In a shocking act of benevolence (or sly manipulation), one of the richest men in America, J. P. Morgan, facilitated an agreement with U.S. President Grover Cleveland to sell 3.5 million ounces of gold to the government in exchange for a 30-year bond issue.

While this isn't a permanent solution, Morgan's action temporarily averted a full-blown economic crisis. For the farmers and urban laborers, however, this intervention represents another stark reminder of their powerlessness in a country where the wealthy can manipulate the economy at will. The government's loyalty to those with wealth and status intensified calls for radical reform among those most disadvantaged. Farmers and laborers, who form the backbone of the American economy, feel betrayed by a system that prioritizes the interests of a few elites over the survival of millions of filthy farmers.

You and your fellow delegates will operate as a collective of the famed Captains of Industry–whether that makes you a business tycoon, investment banker, politician, or inventor, you've amassed a large amount of wealth and power to your name. Through your directives, you must work to fulfill your personal goals and prevent this conflict with America's peasants from getting so out of hand that your own industries suffer. Your influence has spearheaded the molding of America into one of the most powerful nations in the world, and yet the disillusioned working class continues to pound on your doors and call for change. You must fight back against their demands by cooperating and maintain your respective economic empires by any means necessary…

TOPIC SYNOPSIS

Businessmen have always been the backbone of American society. As Hamilton said, “the prosperity of commerce,” your prosperity, “is the most useful and productive source of national wealth.” But now, you are under attack. The workers, stirred by malcontents like the “Wobblies” and the “American Federation of Labor,” are growing uneasy. You gave them jobs, livelihoods, a good day's work for a (at least, in your estimation) fair wage. You furthered economic development, contributed to national security and helped shape America, guiding it into a golden, gilded age.

For your hard work, you have seen growth across the board. Whether you are in steel, oil or coal, your revenues are up and your expenses are down. The government has, after generous donations and some judicious prodding, caught on to the miracle of laissez-faire economic policy, allowing you to stoke the fires of American progress and ingenuity. Lady Liberty is pleased—but there is no satisfying some of those greedy, uncivilized laborers. They are forming unions and daring to strike, to walk off those perfectly good jobs that you all gave them.

In order to counter these foolish rebellions and ensure the continuation of this golden gilded age, you have brought in new workers (who are then unfairly and unjustly demeaned as “scabs” by the ignorant masses), you have tried to appease, to discuss, to talk it out. But they still continue.

It is time for the gloves to come off.

Because this is one half of a Joint Crisis Committee, you'll be positioned against the "Gilded Age Farmers" (or Maladroit Malcontents) room. These… folk… will be doing everything they can to accomplish their destructive agenda and grind American progress (and the growth of your personal fortunes) to a screeching halt. You'll need to come together to ensure that these farmers remain divided, conflicted, and inept, lest your entire operation be left to the mercy of the backward mob. Your America is a stable America, a free America, an America for innovators and you will need to use your superior business acumen to protect your country and company, built from nothing from the blood, sweat and tears of yourself and men like you. Will you be up for the task, or will you let the unwashed masses tarnish your legacy and send America into ruin?

BACKGROUND

POST-CIVIL WAR AMERICA

After the Civil War ended with the Union victory in 1865, the United States became a nation primarily focused on expansion. President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act in 1862 during the Civil War, which was a major step towards westward growth. Lincoln was also in favor of high protective tariffs, following the framework set out by the former statesman Henry Clay. Tariffs fostered production within the United States by putting taxes on foreign goods, which catalyzed the rise of American-driven industry. The Lincoln administration opted to take a *laissez-faire* strategy in regulating the budding American industries; the government was entirely hands off when it came to business, in the hopes that this would better enable opportunity, progress, and innovation. This lack of regulation allowed industrialists broad latitude to expand their own commercial empires. American tariffs also led to counter-tariffs from other countries. International trade began to decline, which again favored American industrialists because they owned the domestic production industries and could keep up with rising prices.

Because the government was focused on expanding American territory as quickly as possible, few laws regulating immigration were initially passed. Open borders led to a spike in immigration in the 1880s, and around 10 million immigrants entered the country compared to only tens of thousands just decades earlier. European immigrants were offered permanent citizenship after five years of residency. For Chinese immigrants, the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 offered free immigration (but not citizenship) to all coming to the United States. This treaty was also meant to ensure a steady flow of low-cost immigrant labor without allowing Chinese people to stay in the

U.S. permanently. This growing immigrant workforce was incredibly profitable for American businesses and firms and supported the Gilded Age's industrial boom. Most notably, the construction of the transcontinental railroad—one of the greatest feats of American engineering–would not have been possible without labor from Chinese immigrants. However, growing concern for the safety of American jobs increased anti-Chinese sentiments in America. Due to this, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was passed, which abrogated the right of Chinese people to freely immigrate into the U.S. As a result, the number of Chinese workers across a variety of industries greatly decreased. Both skilled and unskilled Chinese-Americans faced violent discrimination, along with difficulties finding work. Though this legislation was intended to support white American laborers, very few people actually migrated from out of state to fill these jobs. The lack of an immigrant workforce led to the decrease of productivity and wages for all workers, because immigrant labor accounted for a large percent of industrial progress.

RISE OF THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

While the first industrial revolution was marked by the mass production of goods for consumers, the second industrial revolution had a larger focus on producing capital goods. Crucial to understanding the Gilded Age economy is understanding the difference between the two types of commodities produced—consumer goods as opposed to capital goods. Consumer goods are produced for personal consumption and include commodities such as textiles, food, and kitchenware. Capital goods are bought by businesses in order to make consumer goods. The companies who led the production of capital goods became incredibly wealthy, with the wealthiest individuals being those who controlled the market of the three major capital goods: steel, oil, and railroads.

Steel Industry

One of the largest industries of the Gilded Age was steel. In the years after the Civil War, the American steel industry grew at a rapid pace, particularly because the steel magnate Andrew Carnegie was relentless in his efforts to drive down U.S. steel prices.

Before the late 1800s, steel, which is difficult to produce, was rarely used, with wrought iron being far more prevalent in industry and manufacturing. British inventor Henry Bessemer rapidly expanded steel production through his discovery of a new way to process and refine steel in large quantities. His process—aptly named the Bessemer Process—made mass production of steel more efficient and profitable. Thanks to Bessemer, Carnegie's steel became cheaper and was able to be used to create new bridges and skyscrapers. As Carnegie prized efficiency above all else, his steel workers often were resentful. Perceived unfair wages and poor treatment led to discontentment from laborers, who sought representation through labor unions and better compensation, and sparked conflict within the system. Despite this, cheaper steel increased America's prestige as a world power, improved the quality of life for many, and accelerated America's industrial growth. The country's advancement in this industry was clear: in 1860, the United States produced only 13 thousand tons of steel; in 1880, they produced 1.46 million tons; and in 1890, 4.2 million tons were produced in a single year. By the late 1800s, America had surpassed Britain in steel production. Overall, the Gilded Age's expansion of the American steel industry helped propel a modernized U.S. into the 20th century.

Oil Industry

Oil was another of the American Gilded Age's three great industries. The extraction of petroleum enabled some of the late 19th and early 20th century's most notable technological advancements, such as the automobile. In 1855, George Henry Bissell, in his search for an alternative to whale oil for lamps, helped found the Pennsylvania Rock Oil Company. The company hired Edwin Drake, who made the world's first drilled oil well which sparked America's modern oil industry. Later discoveries of large underground oil reservoirs in Pennsylvania and Ohio led to an oil boom in those states.

Overshadowing the rest of America's oil companies; however, was the titan of the oil industry: Standard Oil. John D. Rockefeller and his business partners created the Standard Oil Company of Ohio in 1870. The company focused on oil refining, as refining had fewer variable costs compared to oil exploration and drilling. Soon, Standard Oil was reaping massive profits, largely as a result of two factors: efficiency and market control. Part of the company's success lay in Rockefeller's emphasis on cost saving, waste reduction, research, and development. For example, when Standard Oil discovered a method of processing impure oil that had previously been thought useless, the company gained access to an entirely new product source. Standard Oil is most known for its masterful horizontal integration, as its owners' desire for market control propelled it to the top of the growing Gilded Age firms. By the late 1880s, Standard Oil had gained control of 90% of America's oil market, and made Rockefeller the world's first billionaire.

Railroad Industries

The first American railroad charter was granted in 1815 to John Stevens, widely considered the father of American rail for demonstrating their feasibility from a small track near his estate in New Jersey. The first commercial line to be built was the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) line, which began operating in 1831. Soon, railroads popped up across the East Coast, and although the industry slowed during the Great Panic of 1837, it advanced rapidly in the 1870s after the Civil War. Before 1871, 45,000 miles of track had been laid across the country, but by 1895, the nation gained another 150,000 miles of track. A major part of this progress was the building of the Transcontinental Railroads, which was completed in 1869 by the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroad companies. This was made possible by significant government support. Congress passed the Pacific Railway Act in 1862, which authorized the building of the transcontinental railroad. Also, four of the five transcontinental railroads were built with federal land grants and received millions of acres from Congress. Smaller railroad companies had to buy land themselves, and were not always able to purchase it because conflict often arose between them and landowners.

"The Big Four" railroad industrialists—Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington, Mark Hopkins Jr., and Charles Crocker–funded another railway company, the Central Pacific Railroad (C.P.R.R.). This allowed for the development of areas near the Sierra Nevada and the Rocky Mountains and the American West as a whole; at this time, farming towns in the East were slowly turning into industrial cities, but the West was able to near-immediately raise cities as their Eastern counterparts developed because railroads could speedily bring over large amounts of materials and manpower. This era also saw significant technological innovation within the railroad industry in the form of larger and more powerful locomotives, new types of freight cars, air brakes, the

adoption of the standard gauge (which allowed for the interchange of cars between railroads), increased use of steel rails, and the creation of the four standard time zones, which allowed for accurate long-distance scheduling. Another significant development during the railroad boom of the late 1800s was the invention of the sleeper car by George Pullman and Ben Field in 1865, which allowed for comfortable travel across the nation. Sturdy, permanent bridges were also constructed over large rivers, further connecting America.

METHODS OF INDUSTRY TYCOONS

The most successful corporations of the Gilded Age expanded their businesses and maximized profits through two main integration techniques: vertical integration and horizontal integration.

Vertical integration, which was pioneered by Andrew Carnegie, was achieved through control of every step of production when producing a single commodity. For example, Carnegie, instead of buying from a third party, sourced raw materials from fields and mines that he owned. With total control of the supply chain, he was able to cut costs tremendously. Carnegie also bought out the means of transportation for his steel (including railroads and ships) and expanded during depressions so that he could see great profits when the economy improved again. This, in tandem with Carnegie's strategy of integrated production—he exported a finished product made of steel, as opposed to competitors who only exported raw steel—Carnegie was able to increase profits by eliminating middlemen completely. Vertical integration was similarly employed by Swift and Company, who capitalized on the long rail journey and the demand for meat on the East Coast. Stationed in Chicago, Gustavus Swift saw an opportunity to profit when he purchased vast amounts of territory on the Great Plains

and cattle, hired cowboys to raise them, and bought out the railways that would transport them to Chicago. Like Carnegie, he had ownership of every step in the meat process, from the holding facilities to the slaughterhouse to the canning companies. His invention of the refrigerated railcar made this process even more profitable, as he was able to transport meat across the country safely and efficiently. Both examples of vertical integration illustrate how controlling each step of the operation was a strategic and profitable investment.

Horizontal integration maximized profits by eliminating competition within the market of the same commodity, which was done frequently through the extensive, often aggressive, purchasing of stock shares and the creation of trusts. Extremely wealthy individuals would be able to buy so many shares of other companies that they owned a majority of them. Once a 51% margin of stock ownership was reached, the majority owner had full rights to the company. They controlled how it was run, who it employed, and all of its profits. In this way, wealthy business tycoons would “buy out” their competitors by purchasing so much stock that they could claim full ownership over the rival company. This greatly reduced competition and allowed the tycoons to drastically raise the prices of necessary commodities after they eliminated all alternatives.

In industries with many wealthy magnates competing for a total monopoly, horizontal integration could sometimes lead to conflict. During the 1860s, Vanderbilt began to seek control over the Erie Railway Company, which was extremely profitable because it connected the New York Harbor to Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Chicago. Though Vanderbilt held a monopoly over all water traffic in and out of New York City, the Erie railroad was controlled by three other wealthy men: Jay Gould, James Fisk, and Daniel Drew. Vanderbilt, who sought control over the entire area, began buying stock in the Erie Railroad to stealthily obtain 51% and swindle the three men out of ownership. It took them until 1867 to realize this was happening, but when they did, Gould, Fisk, and Drew printed out additional shares of stock to water down the market. This also prevented Vanderbilt from obtaining a significant portion of shares and cost him over $7 million. Eventually Gould, Fisk, and Drew agreed to buy the stock back at the inflated price, Vanderbilt walked away with a profit, and the shares were worth significantly more money than they were before. By putting these heavily inflated shares back on the market, Gould, Fisk, and Drew also profited heavily. This affair was dubbed the “Erie War” and served as an example for how easily the stock market could be manipulated by those with sufficient capital and clout, ensuring both “competing sides” became even wealthier.

In horizontal integration, large tycoons often puppeteered smaller companies by buying them out but still allowing them to keep their name. This gave them the appearance of being separate companies, yet the acquisitor was in total control of the companies absorbed. Thus, the holding company could pool profits from the companies that had been completely bought out. John D. Rockefeller was especially known for employing this strategy. Three months after beginning consolidation in 1872, Standard Oil had acquired 22 of its 26 local competitors. In 1882, the company expanded to a nationwide board, establishing a board of trustees that dealt with all shares from Standard Oil’s stockholders and each company that it had absorbed. The board of trustees oversaw all profits of the component companies, elected directors and officers, and determined the dividends. By the late 1880s, Standard Oil owned 90% of America’s oil market.

Standard Oil’s market control meant that the company could directly negotiate shipping prices with railroad companies. Rockefeller did this through ordering

rebates—partial refunds given to buyers––on all barrels of Standard Oil moved through railroads. Rockefeller also demanded higher prices for his competitors, and drawbacks on every barrel of oil delivered by one of Rockefeller's competitors, essentially placing a tax and collecting information on all companies who did not participate under his holding company. These strategies ensured that Rockefeller would make profit off of any oil being transported through the railroads, no matter what. The railroad companies had no choice but to oblige to Rockefeller's demands, as their profits relied heavily on transporting Standard Oil across the nation, and because even they needed the oil to grease their own gears. Rockefeller was also incredibly successful with predatory pricing. He could charge less for oil due to the money he made back from discounts from the railroad company, and he had the information necessary to underprice his competitors. Predatory business practices were also deployed in order to force competition out of business. If he came across a threatening competitor, he would appraise it and then offer Standard Oil stock to its owners in proportion to the value of their company. This compensated them for the buyout, and he was able to absorb any talented employees into his own company.

Despite rampant anticompetitive behavior, action was not taken to regulate trusts until 1890 with the Sherman Antitrust Act. Nonetheless, the legislation has not yet proven effective, and companies like Standard Oil are only continuing to expand their profit horizons.

BARONS IN POLITICS

With their immense wealth and influence, the nation's wealthiest had considerable power over politics at national, state, and local levels. In their quest to preserve and increase their profits, the barons often used their economic power to

influence policy for their own benefit. For instance, the aforementioned Erie War also involved political corruption within Tammany Hall, a political machine in New York. Political machines were party organizations that worked to accrue voters and maintain administrative control of an area. In order to make the selling of newly issued shares lawful, Gould, Fisk, and Drew appointed William “Boss” Tweed, the Grand Sachem of Tammany Hall, a director of the Erie Railroad in exchange for favorable business legislation in New York. Additionally, during the 1872 Credit Mobilier Scandal, Congressman Oakes Ames was revealed to have given bribes in the form of Credit Mobilier stocks to other members of Congress to persuade them to drop an investigation against the company, which Ames was affiliated with. The machinations of the Gilded Age’s wealthiest often involved corrupt members of the government, such as during the 1871-75 Whiskey Ring Scandal, in which several whiskey distillers were found to have been bribing IRS officials in order to defraud the government of taxes. Further misbehavior was evident in the “spoils system,” a term for the period’s common practice of the party victors of an election appointing their supporters to government positions. The influence of the barons on lawmakers was well-known during the Gilded Age, with many journalists such as Thomas Nast satirizing the prevalence of corruption.

Despite having far-reaching influence in government, there was still significant opposition to some of the industrialists' more harmful practices. A large part of the Gilded Age’s industrial boom stemmed from behavior that some deemed anti-competitive and a threat to economic stability. Massive monopolies, such as Rockefeller’s Standard Oil and Carnegie Steel Company, which practiced vertical and horizontal integration respectively, were accused of this. The scope of these corporations’ power made the public, and thus the politicians, wary. This led to the passage of laws like the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890, which imposed criminal fines and charges on individuals and corporations who partook in trusts. This was meant to restrict monopolies that intended to dominate the market in the name of protecting free and unfettered trade. Generally, these antitrust laws were intended to ensure that businesses engaged in healthy competition in order to give consumers options while maintaining the quality of goods and services. As a result, trusts, cartels, monopolies, conspiracies, contracts, and interlocked directorates (one person serving on the boards of competing companies), and other agreements that could enable market domination were restricted. Despite the Sherman Antitrust Act being very popular amongst a public tired of monopolies, its lack of specific definitions of prohibited behavior hampered its effectiveness, leading to the continued proliferation of highly successful monopolistic entities throughout the Gilded Age.

CONFLICT WITH LABORERS

Although many of the nation's wealthy industrialists prided themselves on guiding America towards progress and prosperity, many people outside government, particularly laborers, are disturbed by their expanding power. Throughout the Gilded Age, there have been several significant altercations and resistance movements against America's Captains of Industry.

Of the three main industries of the Gilded Age, the steel industry was notorious for its hostility towards labor rights, a position that sparked significant protests, some of them violent. Unions were formed in response to workers' complaints and demands for higher pay and a safer work environment. In 1892, Andrew Carnegie, head of one of America's most profitable steel businesses, Carnegie Steel, broke off a contract with the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, a powerful union that

represented the workers of the Homestead steel mill near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The mill was one of the company's largest, and Carnegie, not wanting to let his grip on his asset loosen, directed Henry Clay Frick, his operations manager, to break up the union ahead of their agreed-upon deadline. Frick complied, shutting down the factory, hiring private security, and cutting wages, and eventually firing the plant's entire workforce to replace them with non-unionized ones. Workers responded with an organized protest known as the Homestead Strike, in which they fired guns and cannons at the factory's guards. This violence caused by the workers dimmed their public support.

The railroading industry also saw conflict between industrialists and small businesses. In the early days of American railroads, progress was rapid to link the nation via train. As usual, this progress came at a cost to laborers. Pay was low, and for those who worked in rail-laying camps, conditions were particularly brutal—workers were subject to harsh weather, rocky terrain, illnesses, and potential conflicts with Native Americans. During the construction of the transcontinental railroads, those who suffered the most were usually Irish and Chinese immigrants, who were often discriminated against by other workers. The poor treatment of railroad laborers in general however inevitably led to conflict between them and the "Captains of Industry" who profited off their labor.

The Pullman Strike of 1894 was one of the most significant railroad protests of the Gilded Age, disrupting rail traffic across the Midwest for a month. The strike was sparked by a decision by the Pullman Palace Car Company, who manufactured railroad sleeper cars, to cut the already low wages of its workers in response to the economic depression caused by the Panic of 1893. This was done without corresponding reductions in charges at the company town of Pullman, causing many workers to face starvation. After being rebuked when requesting to negotiate, workers went on strike, and, with the aid of the American Rail Union headed by Eugene V. Debs, they boycotted and halted the usage of Pullman's cars across the Midwest. The strike and boycott was finally ended when a federal injunction was issued by the Cleveland administration after a postal service car was destroyed in a riot, and federal troops were sent in to contain the violence that broke out. At the end of the ordeal, the power of the ARU was hampered, and the public was no longer sympathetic to the labor cause, as people were horrified by the ensuing violence and farmers were concerned about their crops being blocked from the market—a victory for the industrialists.

Finally, one of the greatest opponents of the expanding wealth and influence of the Captains of Industry were farmers. Their interactions with industrialists created many opportunities for conflict to occur. Throughout the American Midwest and West, farmers faced immense hardship. This was in part a result of drought, and also because of the high fees farmers had to pay to store and transport their goods to market. Freight rate discrimination–the practice of large rail companies financially favoring their largest shippers, such as Standard Oil—was a common practice. It usually came in the form of "short-haul/long-haul" pricing, where railroads charged a higher rate per mile over shorter distances. This policy was not an issue for their wealthy clients, but was a serious strain on small farmers, who often could not pay the price. These challenges were exacerbated by the government's economic policy of the gold standard, which essentially meant that the value of the U.S. dollar was tied to a certain physical amount of gold. In practice, this led to economic hardship for many in the working class, because while the amount of money in the economy was fixed (as was the amount of gold in the economy), goods continued to be produced, leading to excessive supply and deflation of prices. These financial strains usually did not concern industrialists, who were strongly in favor of the gold standard. This was just one of the policy disagreements that culminated in the formation of organized labor resistance movements such as the Farmers' Alliance.

The Farmers Alliance was started in 1875, and was an organized agrarian movement that worked alongside other farmer and labor organizations to improve the economic conditions of farmers. The movement, being so widespread, had roots in three main regions. In the North, it had grown out of the Granger Movement, a coalition of farmers that fought grain transport monopolies. In the South, farmers formed the National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union (also called the Southern Alliance), and southern farmers of color, who were excluded from the Southern Alliance, formed the Colored Farmers' National Alliance and Cooperative Union. Among these organizations' goals were an end to sharecropping (the practice of farmers being indebted to the owners of the land they tended), an increase in the supply of money through the adoption of the silver standard, a graduated income tax, the abolition of national banks, government regulation or ownership of railways and telegraph companies, and the ability to use crops as collateral for loans. Although their political advocacy did win them some local elections, the Farmers' Alliance was largely unsuccessful in achieving national change, leading to the founding of the Populist Party, which hoped to achieve what the Alliance could not.

POLITICAL PARTIES

During the Gilded Age, there were three major political parties: the long-standing Democratic and Republican parties and the new Populist party, which had arisen in support of laborers. The Republican party was strongly allied with the interests of business and infrastructure, benefitting banks and business owners, and

promoting tariffs to protect American industry. In contrast, the Democrats were more in favor of personal liberty over reform, opposed tariffs, and were especially adept at the operation of political machines, most notably, New York's Tammany Hall. In response to the rampant social abuses, economic turmoil, and corruption of the Gilded Age, the Populist Party emerged in the 1890s. By then, it was well known on the national stage and had widespread support; in 1892, James B. Weaver ran as a presidential candidate, garnering 1 million votes. Headed by figures such as Thomas E. Watson, Terence V. Powderly, and Eugene Debs, the Populist Party was a leading contender in advocating for the common man. The Populists shared much of their policy positions with their predecessor, the Farmers' Alliance, as they were in favor of a silver standard that would increase the money supply and help farmers fight debilitating deflation, improved public education, greater government regulation of companies, the publicization of railroads, and more.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Aside from the expansion of the major three industries, the Gilded Age also saw several other major changes in American business. The Captains of Industry hold significant sway over the country's economy, and could shift it according to their whims. For example, railroad tycoon James J. Hill enabled the economic development of the American Northwest by offering cheap land to settlers near railroad tracks. On the other hand, Jay Gould, William Tweed, Peter Sweeney, and James Fisk's attempt to corner the loose gold market resulted in the price of the U.S. paper dollar dropping, and caused an economic panic known as Black Friday.

After the passage of the National Banking Act of 1863-64, the U.S. economy rapidly expanded but also suffered repeated crises. For example, the Panic of 1873 arose from overinvestment in railroad projects, which outpaced the demand for railroads and caused a lower return on investments. This led to European investors divesting American railroad bonds, which hurt companies and indirectly led to the collapse of the major bank Jay Cooke and Co.

In 1893, a combination of the draining of gold from the treasury as a result of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, reduced international trade, and economic slowdown led to increased loan defaults and weakened bank balanced sheets. This induced the Panic of 1893, in which U.S. gold reserves fell from $190 million in 1890 to $100 million by 1893. Economic strains for the working class were exacerbated, but many of the nation's top industrialists and landowners remained unaffected. To jumpstart the economy, J.P. Morgan and his large network of America's bankers organized a large number of investments with lines of credit as collateral. In essence, Morgan offered the U.S. government a $65 million loan to help bail the country out of the depression. The influx of money he prompted helped to ease some of the damage the Panic caused.

While many are optimistic about the improvement of the U.S. economy, others are worried that this increase of money will grow the political power of industrialists so they can further exploit the rights and liberties of the lower classes. Many of the recovery benefits are slowly going to the working class, and an unprecedented transfer of wealth from industrialists to the laborers is highly feared. As a result, many labor organizations, such as the AFL and the National Farmers Alliance have been vigorously fighting in Washington for the ability to collectively bargain for better working conditions, shorter working hours, paid time off (primarily for maternal care), paid doctors visits, and medical insurance.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

This committee will begin on the **8th of February, 1895**. As delegates, you will receive various crisis updates throughout committee, where our dais or crisis staff will deliver new information pertinent to the events of committee. Time jumps may occur. **Since this committee begins on the 8th of February, 1895 we understand that critical events within several character's lives may not yet have occurred, and some information has not yet been revealed to the public. Nonetheless, please abide by your character's original historical timeline. Also, this committee is set in an alternate timeline, and any character actions may diverge from the historical timeline.** We recommend making a basic timeline for your character that you can refer to during debate.

When it comes to directives, we allow group (also known as joint private), personal, and committee directives, as well as communiques and press releases.

At JackrabbitMUN we use a digital directive system, so you will submit your directives via a Google Form and get responses from Crisis Staff in a digital crisis notebook (a Google Doc). This decreases response time, allowing delegates to submit far more directives—at previous JackrabbitMUN editions we've averaged a response time of less than ten minutes. Committee directives should be written on a Google Doc and shared with the Chair, who will send them to the Crisis Staff. In addition, on the day of the conference, you will be given a folder with a portfolio power. These portfolio powers are secret–only you will know what your portfolio power is–and include two major things: plots and powers. Plots are secret objectives a delegate is trying to accomplish or secret information that only one delegate or a group of delegates would

be privy to. For instance, an example of a plot is how in our past “Red Scare” room, multiple delegates were Communists and plotted with each other to overthrow the United States. Powers are special actions that delegates can take. These can range from the ability to “OBJECT!” to another delegate’s speech, to a secret task force of spies and analysts that a delegate can command to gather intelligence on their adversaries, to the ability to call a general strike and cripple key infrastructure.

We at Jackrabbit MUN are aware of harmful events that occurred during the time of the Gilded Age. We do not condone any of these events, but we encourage engaging and nuanced debate and decision-making to further the goals of your character. **However, actions such as genocide, hate speech, racism, xenophobia, and sexism are forbidden under any circumstance, even if they are accurate to beliefs of the time period.** We are approaching the Gilded Age with 21st-century values, and failure to recognize this will result in penalties ranging from verbal reprimands to bans from JackrabbitMUN.

Please be advised that at JackrabbitMUN we have a policy of not killing your fellow delegates. Therefore, please do not submit directives attempting to assassinate one another. We also will not entertain directives that involve genocide or nuclear weapons. Thank you so much for signing up and we look forward to meeting you on the 24th!

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

John D. Rockefeller

John D. Rockefeller is an American industrialist and philanthropist who founded the Standard Oil Company. His impact on the world of business and at large is unmatched. Born in Richford, New York, to a family of modest stature, Rockefeller quickly began his path toward becoming one of the wealthiest and most influential figures in modern history. He developed a monopoly that, by 1879, dominated a full 90% of America's oil production through ruthless business practices and strategic buyouts. In the later stages of the 19th century, the importance of oil as a resource saw Rockefeller's wealth skyrocket. As of now in 1895, Rockefeller's personal fortune is estimated at $900 million, almost 3% of the US GDP, and he is currently one of the most influential men in America. As the eminent magnate of America's largest industries, Rockefeller knows the value of ruthless business tactics and prioritizing efficiency above all else; profits are to be sought at all costs. Who else is fit to lead America's industry, other than one who possesses these instincts?

Andrew Carnegie

The quintessential example of a self-made man, Andrew Carnegie is one of the most important of America's success stories. Born in Dunfermline, Scotland, in 1835, Andrew Carnegie grew up accustomed to the hard times that his family faced, and was no stranger to poverty. From a bobbin boy working for $1.20 a week at a local cotton mill to the manager of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Carnegie's financial skills and eye for investments in innovation brought him far. Carnegie began the construction of his first steel mill, the Edgar Thomson Steel Works, in 1874 and took off with a multitude of businesses from there. He became a tycoon in steel and amassed a fortune by the time he was in his early thirties. Carnegie is also famous for publishing a pamphlet called *The Gospel of Wealth*, in which he describes his philosophy that anyone can become rich through working hard, educating themselves, and making good decisions. In his pamphlet, Carnegie outlines what he thinks to be the responsibilities of the wealthy, which include choosing to give wealth back to the poor. Carnegie is widely recognized for his philanthropy—desiring to to give away all of his money before he dies. He takes on many famous public service projects, including the building of thousands of libraries around the world, so that the poor may educate themselves, pick themselves up by their bootstraps, and maybe, someday, be just as successful as he is!

Jay Gould

Born in 1836, Jay Gould is a railroad executive, financier, and speculator, and is regarded as a Captain of Industry who will, without fail, do what needs to be done in order to increase his wealth. First working as a surveyor in New York State, he began speculating in railroad securities in 1859. During and after the Civil War, Gould continued investing in railroad stocks, amassing a fortune of $25 million, and then acquiring Union Pacific Railroad. Along with railroads, Gould owns the Western Union Telegraph Company after weakening it with… *inducements* and competition with his smaller telegraph companies along with Manhattan Elevated Railroad. He owned the New York *World* newspaper from 1879 to 1883. Through outcompeting his rivals and engaging in aggressive financial manipulations, Gould will use any means possible to preserve his financial empire.

J.P. Morgan

John Pierpont Morgan is *the* giant of American finance and industry. At 58 years old, Morgan reached his current position through ambition and financial prowess. He is now one of the most powerful and influential businessmen of the Gilded Age. Morgan's financial empire is centered around his banking firm, recently renamed J.P. Morgan and Company. His influence reaches far beyond banking: Morgan has reorganized and consolidated many railroad companies, and such action has increased his control over the industry. He is also deeply involved in the steel industry and plans to expand his investments in the near future… Additionally, Morgan has greatly invested in Thomas Edison's ventures in order to promote electric lighting and power. More importantly, though, his vast resources make him a powerful force in the American economy: he has helped the United States government avoid bankruptcy numerous times, as recently as this year when he sold gold to the government upon a certain agreement regarding the matter of bankruptcy. With this insurmountable wealth and influence, Morgan seeks to do nothing less than be the steady hand guiding America into a prosperous future with the help of his influence and cunning. Lately, he's been seen meeting with a well-dressed, shadowy figure in a rather odd-looking beret.

Jay Cooke

One of the most prestigious and well known bankers in the country, Jay Cooke began receiving training for a commercial career at a young age. Born in 1821 to a lawyer and former member of Congress, Cooke moved from Ohio to Philadelphia when he was just eighteen to work for E.W. Clark & Company—one of the country's largest private banking firms. He showed quite the business acumen, moving up and out of

the ranks by 1858, when he retired from the firm and began his own projects, including the private banking house Jay Cooke & Company (which collapsed in 1873). Cooke contributed a significant amount to the financing of the Union army during the Civil War, making massive successes where the Treasury Department had failed, especially from the selling of bonds. As of 1895, Cooke still wields incredible financial influence through his position as a true Captain of Industry.

William Kissam Vanderbilt

After becoming America's largest employer in the 1850s, the Vanderbilt family became among the wealthiest in America. This was all thanks to Cornelius Vanderbilt's ruthless pioneering in the shipping industry, from ferries to a rapidly growing railroad company. Even after his death in 1877, the Vanderbilt name itself did not die. As the second-oldest grandson, William Kissam Vanderbilt received much of the family fortune and the Vanderbilt estate. William Kissam Vanderbilt is in charge of managing the New York Central railway system, although he currently is not as interested in business. His interests include art, yacht racing, and philanthropy, having previously devoted himself to the building of the Metropolitan Opera. Most of his career is focused on the breeding and racing of horses and he is one of the founders of the Jockey Club.

Leland Stanford

After moving to California for business during the Gold Rush, Leland Stanford rose to prominence in the railroad and mining industry. He studied law in New York, attending prestigious schools for most of his educational career. He is a risk-based, triumphant mercantilist and so earned a position as the Central Pacific Railroad's

president through a major pursuit in 1856. Notably, he was elected the first Republican governor of California, serving in 1862 and 1863. He also served in the U.S. Senate from 1885 to 1893. He supported and authored bills that encouraged democratic worker cooperatives. He also famously founded Stanford University. He values educational institutions that promote innovation, and is someone who deeply believes in California's future as a major national power. His efforts are a testament to his passion for progress and commercialization, shown through his public services crafted for the people and his workings on not just the Central Pacific Railroad, but for western transportation as a whole. Two years ago, he was rumored to have passed on, but he's quietly returned to public life over the last few weeks, although he hasn't been taking meetings...

William McKinley

William McKinley is an up-and-coming politician, and plans on running in the 1896 presidential election as a Republican. Currently, he is serving as the Governor of Ohio. McKinley is well-liked and sympathetic to both the upper and working-class causes. At heart, he's an opportunist, and although he is not afraid to back farmers through investments by America's top 1%, McKinley does not seem to want to make serious efforts to fix farmer or labor struggles that the Populists are faced with. He is also not a supporter of the free silver movement, one of the flagship campaign points of his Democratic adversary, William Jennings Bryan. McKinley's influence is only expanding, and for those who want to rise with him, it is best to not make an enemy of him if you want to hold onto your powerful positions. He's also been seen meeting with an odd man in a suit and a, frankly, outlandish beret...

Thomas Edison

A brilliant inventor and prominent figure in the world of science, Thomas Edison has built his fortune on innovation and strategy. Lauded for improving the lightbulb and supporting direct current electricity decades ago, Edison thrived by securing patents, winning legal battles, and restricting competitors like Nikola Tesla. Of his many accomplishments, he is best known for his invention of the light bulb, the phonograph, and the world's first central electric power system. Although some view him as ruthless or cheating, Edison's work solidified his reputation as one of America's greatest inventors. As of now, Edison is still looking to shake up American industry with ingenuity and scientific innovation.

Alexander Graham Bell

Alexander Graham Bell is a prominent businessman, scientist, and inventor, most well known for his ingenious invention of the telephone and refinement of the phonograph. Bell was born in 1847, in Edinburgh, Scotland, in a household where he was acutely aware of the mechanisms of sound–his mother was born deaf and his father was a teacher of the deaf. This experience later influenced Bell to become a teacher of the deaf himself when he moved to Boston, where he eventually helped to found a school for the deaf. Bell also worked to further advance the telegraph machine. No stranger to competition, he and his rival Elisha Gray both fiercely pursued more advanced harmonic telegraphs. Bell was ultimately successful first. This work resulted in his invention of the telephone in 1876 and the creation of the Bell Telephone Company in 1877, which has generated considerable revenue. Throughout his life, Bell has possessed a strong passion for scientific advancement through his multiple inventions. He is committed to using his success and ingenuity to benefit all of society–and connecting with America’s most powerful certainly provides an opportunity for that.

Henry Clay Frick

Henry Clay Frick is a hardline American industrialist and financier, most notable for founding the H.C. Frick & Company where he manufactured coke, a coal-based fuel with a high carbon content. At 21, he began his first business partnership with two cousins and continued to produce coke with them. He was supported through loans from his lifelong friend Andrew Mellon. Frick also served as chairman of Carnegie Steel for a short period of time, and was the founder of the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, an exclusive retreat for America’s richest. Now, in the aftermath of the 1892 Homestead Strike, Frick is more anti-union than ever, threatening to have those striking, ungrateful, malicious malcontent workers at his steel mills evicted from their homes. He is the target of many union organizers, and has even survived an assassination attempt. Frick lives a lavish life, and is quite proud of it. Although this makes him the quintessential luxury man, it does come with a price—he’s recently been lampooned by the masses for his perceived excess. Even so, Frick believes he has worked for his position, for his station in life, and now should get to enjoy the fruits of his honest labor.

Minor Cooper Keith

Minor Cooper Keith was born in 1848 in Brooklyn, New York. At sixteen years old, Keith had planned on moving to Texas to manage a cattle ranch that his father had purchased for him. However just two years later, in 1871, Keith and his two brothers were invited by his uncle Henry Meiggs to work on a contract to build a railroad in

Costa Rica, meant to stretch from San Jose to the coastal port of Limon. Building in the thick, humid jungles was far more difficult than anticipated, with Keith being forced to take over the company after the death of his uncle and he only finished the project in 1890. Keith had initially planted bananas in order to provide cheap nourishment for his masses of laborers, but exporting the yellow fruit into the United States using his completed railroads is currently proving to be his most prominent financial success. As of now, Keith's fortunes in fruit have not yet lifted him to the forefront of America's industry, but he believes in the potential of this venture. Keith is certainly yet to establish a monopoly on the fruit market, but his influence in the industry is only growing, and he'll stop at nothing to get a seat at the table of the country's most powerful.

James J. Hill

Dubbed the "Empire Builder" and the transportation pioneer of the American Northwest, Hill is known for his visionary business leadership, skills, and innovation. After being rejected from the army during the Civil War, he founded the First Minnesota Volunteers and became experienced with management and logistics. Hill established railroads along the Mississippi and Red Rivers and was also involved in the coal fuel industry, which, through his effective leadership, made him quite wealthy by the early 1870s. Seeing the potential in unsettled land, Hill desires not only to make money, but to aid in developing and progressing communities, such as by assisting settlers and immigrants in settling on land near his railroads. Through this work, Hill is widely regarded as one of the great drivers of Western development and progress.

Edward L. Doheny

Edward Doheny is an oil tycoon from California. Born to modest parents in Wisconsin, he was a painter, miner, and prospector out in the "Wild West" before moving to California to chase the oil business. Striking oil first in 1892 with the Los Angeles Oil Company, he set off a petroleum boom that turned the city into a major oil extraction locus. Having amassed a substantial share of wealth in a quick amount of time, Doheny is now rivaling Standard Oil's market share in California with his Pan American Petroleum and Transport enterprise. Throughout the state, Doheny has reached an influence that, on occasion, puts him at the same table as John D. Rockefeller and other American oil giants—no small achievement, if you ask him. With this newfound success, Doheny is setting his sights on exclusively controlling the whole of California's oil market, including a small town in Southern California called "Long Beach." As someone unfamiliar with having massive wealth at his disposal, Doheny now possesses a considerable ego, and is not afraid to get his hands dirty to rise to the top of his industry.

Richard "Boss" Croker

Born in 1843, Croker is the embodiment of industrial dominance and strength. He dropped out of school in his early teens to work in machinery and engineering. Croker gained prominence in Tammany Hall, New York's top Democratic political machine, after an associate took note of his cutthroatness during a boxing match against Dick Lynch. With New York's most influential political machine at his disposal, he embarked on political goals and began to seek government positions. Croker ascended to "Boss" after "Honest John" Kelly, his predecessor, passed away, and he spared no time getting to work. Croker has substantial control and influence over

NYC's businesses, markets, and police force, particularly those of…questionable legality. Croker recently fled to Europe because of a threatening investigation involving his organization's place in providing…strategically placed economic inducements… to the police. Unfortunately, Tammany Hall's loss of strong leadership has caused their hold on New York's voters to slip. For now, Croker is working with a vengeance, scouting opportunities to revive Tammany Hall's political dominance of New York City and beyond.

Andrew Mellon

Born in 1855, Mellon is an industrious, determined, and successful businessman who is shaping the landscape of American banking. Andrew Mellon was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he attended the Western University but never graduated. He dabbled in the lumber and coal business before he began working at his father's bank, T. Mellon & Sons. Mellon was a model employee, later becoming president of the company. His leadership rescued the bank from the repercussions of the Panic of 1873. As T. Mellon & Sons expands, Mellon's current goal is furthering the outreach and influence of the bank to cultivate his growing wealth. He has eyes on acquiring general industrial powerhouses like oil, petroleum, and silicon. In 1881, he gained ownership of the Pittsburgh National Bank of Commerce and ventured into the oil industry after being promoted to Director of the Pittsburgh Petroleum Exchange. Having been left his father's fortune, these ventures are part of Mellon's goal to maintain and solidify his family's legacy. Most important to this is the maintenance of positive business relationships with his father's associates, such as Henry Clay Frick. Mellon is a highly professional, conservative, and pensive individual, prioritizing business and the continual acquisition of wealth.

Levi Morton

The current Governor of New York, Republican Levi P. Morton is well known for his skills in conflict resolution. He often used these while vice president in the Senate, even if it meant going against his own party. Born in 1824, Morton possessed strong business skills, earning a small fortune at twenty-one through his savings while managing a local general store. In 1842, Morton joined the James M. Beebe Dry Goods Company in New York. When the firm nearly went bankrupt after the Civil War, Morton successfully revived it, paying off all its debt. Although he often loses his campaigns for public office, Morton had a brief tenure in the House of Representatives on the Foreign Affairs committee. He has also cultivated connections with many influential political figures, including Roscoe Conkling and Thomas Platt of the Republican Party's political machinery. Although Morton is steadfastly pro-business, he still possesses a strong commitment to be an effective public servant for the American people, and is not afraid to stand in opposition to conventional Republicans for his values.

Edward Henry Harriman

Born in 1848, Edward Henry Harriman (E.H. Harriman) is a prominent financier and railroad magnate. Harriman is currently estimated to control some 60,000 miles of tracks. Having long valued hard work, Harriman started work at Wall Street as a clerk at the age of fourteen, and quickly rose through the ranks. His first work in railroads was in executive positions on the Illinois Central, but as of now he's set his sights on acquiring one of the biggest players in the railroad industry: Union Pacific Railroad. Being a highly driven businessman, Harriman is known for being detail-oriented. This often leads to conflicts however, as his business practices are accused of being monopolistic. He's also been taking quite an interest in exploration lately. He was seen meeting privately with a strange, wild, figure over the last few months—not the sort that a Captain of Industry would ordinarily communicate with. Who knows what he is planning...

George Westinghouse

A genius inventor who has received 362 patents and established 61 companies, Westinghouse has faced fierce competition from wealthy and influential people his entire career. Best known for inventing the railway air brake and his innovations in electricity, Westinghouse was born in 1846 in New York, showing a keen talent for machinery at a young age. He received his first patent at age nineteen for a rotary steam engine, three years after losing interest in college and dropping out. Westinghouse took an interest in natural gas, using his utility charter for the Philadelphia Company to develop natural gas wells and promote its uses in homes. Often considered cleaner and cheaper than other fossil fuels, natural gas is rising in its popularity among residential homes, which makes it unpopular to those who profit off of oil and coal. Westinghouse is currently striving to take over America with natural gas and diminish the influence, use, and power that oil and its businessmen have within the United States. He's also developed alternating current (AC) electrical power distribution, which he believes has incredible potential, due to its voltage being much higher than Thomas Edison's patented direct current (DC) lightbulbs. This vicious competition began the War of the Currents with Edison and his company, which ended in victory for Westinghouse in 1892. However, his main interest currently lies in electrical power still, constantly innovating through his company Westinghouse Electric.

Nikola Tesla

Nikola Tesla is a visionary who has dedicated his life to pushing the boundaries of science and technology. Born in Croatia in 1856, Tesla moved to the United States to work for Thomas Edison, but soon struck out on his own after their disagreements over electrical systems. Tesla is obsessed with harnessing electricity for the benefit of mankind. He believes that the rotating magnetic field–the basis for most alternating current machinery–and wireless energy transmission will have the potential to do this. However, his lack of knowledge on business and patents has left him struggling for funding and often overshadowed by more ruthless business owners. An insightful thinker, Tesla is well aware of his disadvantages and lack of great influence, prompting him to discover a powerful ally who can aid him in using his inventions to reshape industry and society. He has retreated from the public eye over the last two years, but has returned recently, and seems full of nervous excitement. Nobody quite knows why…

Collis P. Huntington

Growing up on a Harwinton farm, Collis P. Huntington's life was once filled with hardship, as his family suffered immense poverty. In the hopes of improving his circumstances, he created a store with Solomon, his older brother, in Oneonta, New York, in 1844. The S & C.P. Huntington business prospered, providing them a respectable standard of living—but he wasn't content. In the mid 1800s, Huntington established another store in Sacramento, California selling mining equipment, making a small profit. Around this time, he entered into an agreement with Mark Hopkins, Leland Stanford, and Charles Crocker which resulted in the creation of the expansive Central Pacific Railroad (CPRR) and Pacific Mail Steamship Company in 1860, which was responsible for building the western half of the transcontinental railroads, and a significant portion of America's western railways. As a result, he has gained a massive amount of wealth and many lucrative business "partnerships" with many of his richest "competitors." As of 1895, many have characterized Huntington's accomplishments as "shady", accusing him of being a "robber baron" with practices such as bribing politicians and withholding dividend payments from minority stockholders. Huntington sees dispelling these clearly unfounded rumors as a top priority—only through winning back the trust of the public can he maintain his status and influence.

Philip Danforth Armour

Philip Danforth Armour was born on a farm in New York. After the 1848 California gold rush, he moved to Milwaukee with his newfound fortune to start a wholesale grocery and produce business with his brother, Herman Armour. Finding success selling salt and pickled pork to Western immigrants, Armour entered a collaboration with Frederick Miles in 1859 in the grocery and commission business. In 1863, Armour left Miles and joined John Plankinton, establishing a pork-packing and grain-dealing firm known as Plankinton & Armour. With land he bought west of the Chicago Stockyards in 1872, he was able to build a large pork plant to start a new meatpacking company. Similarly to Miles, Armour left Plankton. Their experience and ambition, paired with the convenience of new inventions such as the utilization of waste products and the growth and development of refrigeration enabled the company to grow into one of the world's largest meatpacking firms, becoming one of the country's leading grain traders and speculators.

Hetty Green

Known as the "Witch of Wall Street," Hetty Green is a famous financier and businesswoman. Currently known as "the richest woman in America," she is excellent at predicting the outcomes of the stock market. In a field dominated by men, Green stands out amongst her competitors, and offers reasonable interest rates to businesses, investors, and local governments during poor economic times. Unlike many of her wealthy counterparts, she refuses to take part in the lavish lifestyles much of the top 1% indulge in. In part as a result of her Quaker origins, Green is very frugal and refuses to spend money on herself, and can never be bribed. Instead, she chooses to focus on donating and investing her fortunes; for Green, making money is its own reward, even if she seemingly has no ambition to accumulate to the heights of Morgan and Rockefeller. Although Green has been judged for her opportunistic nature, this can be seen as one of her greatest strengths to her investment strategy, and is key to her thriving in such a volatile environment.

Russell Sage

Russell Sage is a highly successful Wall Street financier and former politician. Beginning his career as an errand boy at a grocery store in Troy, New York, he learned how to trade stocks at twenty-one, earning him the profits to buy his brother's store. Sage was also a politician, part of the Whig party, and served two terms in Congress. After the invention of the stock market, he took advantage of the ability to choose the quantity and time when to buy stocks. Both he and railroad magnate Jay Gould manipulated securities and took control of New York City's elevated lines in 1881. The only time he was forced to cut his losses was on the stock market Panic of 1884, where he lost over $7 million dollars. Nevertheless, Sage sees class divides as a part of life and tends to have little sympathy towards rural farmers or urban laborers advocating for better working conditions. Furthermore, in the aftermath of J.P. Morgan's bailout, he has been one of the first people desperate to get his hands on lost money that he loosely spent during times before the Panic. Sage seems very concerned with keeping and maintaining his own power, as well as that of his companions, and he has no time to be in touch with the mundane squeals and complaints of peasant folk.

William Randolph Hearst

Hearst is a pioneer of a sensationalist style of journalism, known for his often hyperbolic and exaggerated style of "yellow journalism". Recently, in 1887, Hearst took control of the *San Francisco Examiner*, and quickly elevated it with highly sensationalist stories and reformist investigative reporting which made the paper profitable within two years. Although he has held some sympathies for America's workers, Hearst is more concerned with the expansion of his media empire and the growth of his wealth as rumors fly and papers sell. Most importantly, perhaps, Hearst's influence in media and experience in media competition has given him significant skill with the manipulation of public sentiment.

Gustavus Swift

Born in 1839, Swift is the affluent founder of the meatpacking firm Swift and Company, most notable for his creation of the railway refrigerator car that enabled the bulk shipment of meat by rail. He entered the meat industry at age fourteen as a butcher's helper and ended up working for a firm in Chicago, the center of the meatpacking market. He felt that meatpacking could be made more profitable than meat selling if a method existed to ship fresh meat from Chicago to markets on the East Coast (rather than shipping live cattle which would be slaughtered locally). Thus, Swift engineered the refrigerator car, which enabled the long-distance shipment of meat by cooling it with ice and circulated air. These innovations proved as lucrative as Swift had expected, and in 1878, he started his own meatpacking firm: Swift and Company, with his brother, which eventually had distribution centers across the globe and a capital of $25,000,000. Part of this success lay in Swift's talent for vertical integration, as his company utilized and profited off of every part of its animals, producing not only meat, but also margarine, glue, soap, and fertilizer.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How much power and status are you willing to give up to appease America's working class?
2. What is the most effective way to block the spread of populist ideals that most threaten your positions of power?
3. If possible, how can you compromise with unions and farmer's associations to ensure profits stay high without frequent strikes and unpredictable losses of labor?
4. How do you keep status exclusive and prevent the downwards transfer of our wealth to too many Americans?
5. How can we collaborate effectively as Captains of Industry with the use of our empires to ensure that none of us lose our status or influence as it comes under threat?
6. How can you effectively promote policies that favors our aspirations?

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