

## Workers Organize

### Laissez-faire Climate

**laissez-faire climate** of the late 1800s, the government had little concern for workers

Many **industrial workers** were scraping by on less than \$500 per year.

The rich were very, very rich.

**1890** an estimated 10 percent of the population held 75 percent of the nation's wealth

government grew uneasy about the power of corporations

1890 Congress passed the **Sherman Antitrust Act** (*a law that made it illegal to create monopolies or trusts that restrained free trade*), which made it illegal to form trusts that interfered with free trade

act was ineffective since the government prosecuted only a few companies