

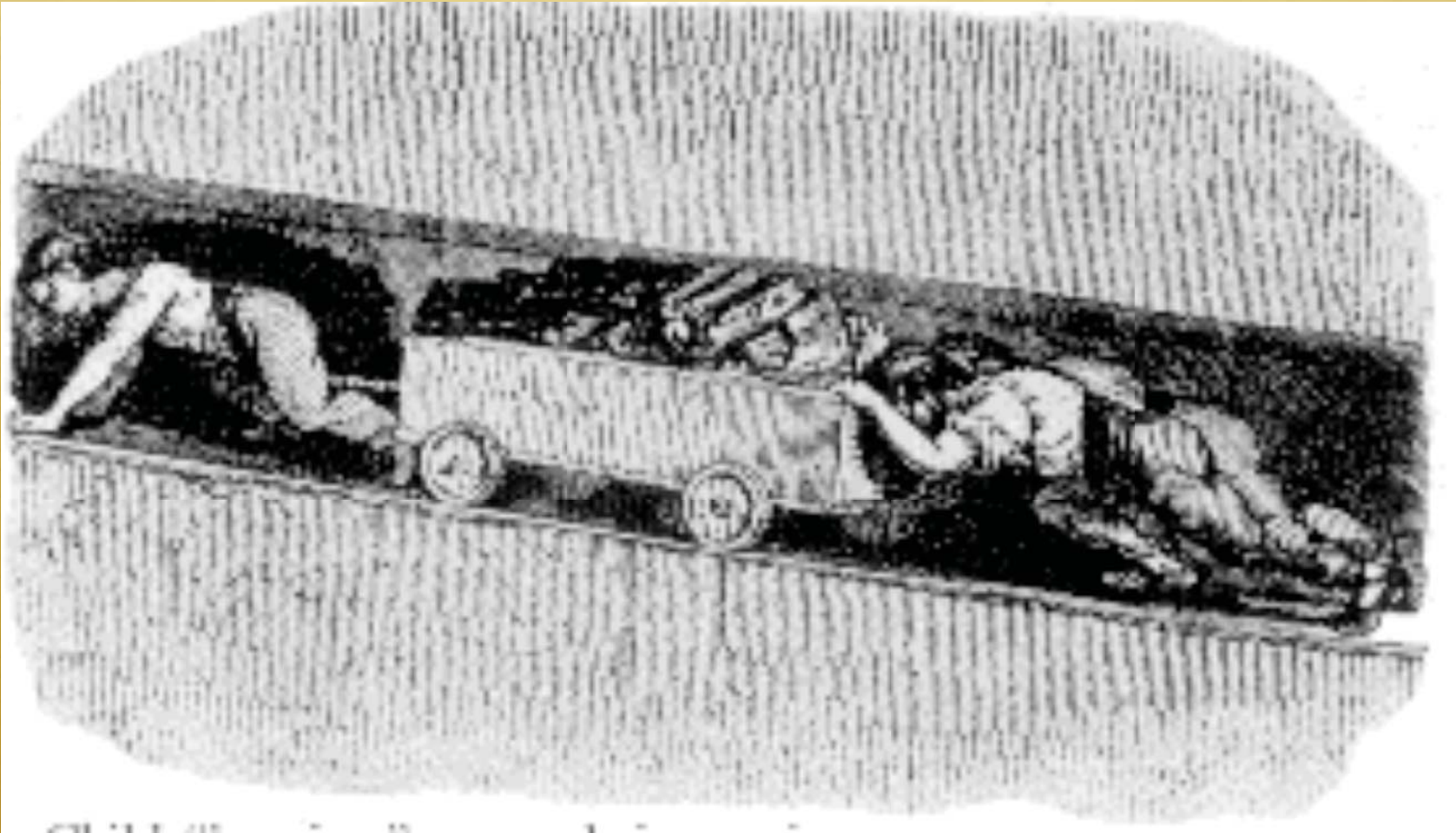
How were workers PAID?

- ✦ **POORLY** – Wages were so low that families could not survive without sending their young children to work too. There was no law requiring employers to pay a **MINIMUM WAGE**
- ✦ **INCONSISTENTLY** – Many times, employers would fail to pay their workers on time. There was no law requiring **TIMELY PAYMENT** for work
- ✦ **SOMETIMES NOT AT ALL** – There was no law requiring pay with money, and some people were forced to work for food. If an employer did not pay workers, there was little workers could do about it.

How Was Workers' **HEALTH** and **SAFETY** Protected?



No laws regulated health and safety



NYC Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire 1911



- ✦ Garment “sweatshop” / 16 hours 6 days a week / \$6 -\$10
- ✦ No sprinkler or fire extinguishers despite 2 earlier fires
- ✦ No usable fire escape
- ✦ Exits locked to keep workers working and not stealing
- ✦ 147 people died (most immigrant women and girls)
- ✦ Factory owners not guilty

Weren't People Outraged?



WORLD WAR I

America became involved in this global war centered in Europe that lasted from 1914 to 1918, which diverted attention away from domestic problems – including LABOR ISSUES.



GREAT DEPRESSION



- ✦ In October 1929 the stock market crashed, and eventually 80% of American wealth was lost
- ✦ Many Americans lost their life savings and homes
- ✦ By 1932, one out of every four Americans was unemployed and families were barely surviving

Children at “Soup Kitchen”



1935

SOCIAL SECURITY ACT:

- ✦ Retirement pensions (“social security”)
- ✦ Welfare benefits for unemployed and needy families
- ✦ Funded by payroll tax

MORE SECURITY FOR THE AMERICAN FAMILY



**THE WIDOW OF A QUALIFIED
WORKER WILL RECEIVE MONTHLY
BENEFITS AT AGE 65. IN CERTAIN
CASES, AN AGED DEPENDENT
PARENT MAY GET BENEFITS. ...**

FOR INFORMATION WRITE OR CALL AT THE NEAREST FIELD OFFICE OF THE

SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD

National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (“NLRA”)

Guarantees rights of employees to:

- ✦ Organize UNIONS (groups of workers “unionized” to achieve common goals relating to their employment)
- ✦ Engage in COLLECTIVE BARGAINING for better employment terms (examples: **PAY**, **SAFETY** as well as terms of employment – such as how fired)
- ✦ Take COLLECTIVE ACTION including to STRIKE (an organized refusal to work to put pressure on an employer)



Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (or “FLSA”)

- ✦ Maximum 44-hour seven-day workweek
- ✦ Time and a half for overtime in many jobs
- ✦ Prohibited employment of children (under 16) in most jobs
- ✦ Established a national minimum wage (now \$7 – California \$8)

TODAY



- ✦ Are the U.S. Labor Laws perfect?
- ✦ Do employers always pay employees fairly?
- ✦ Do employers always ensure employees' safety?
- ✦ Do children never have to work instead of going to school?

BETTER ... BUT NOT PERFECT

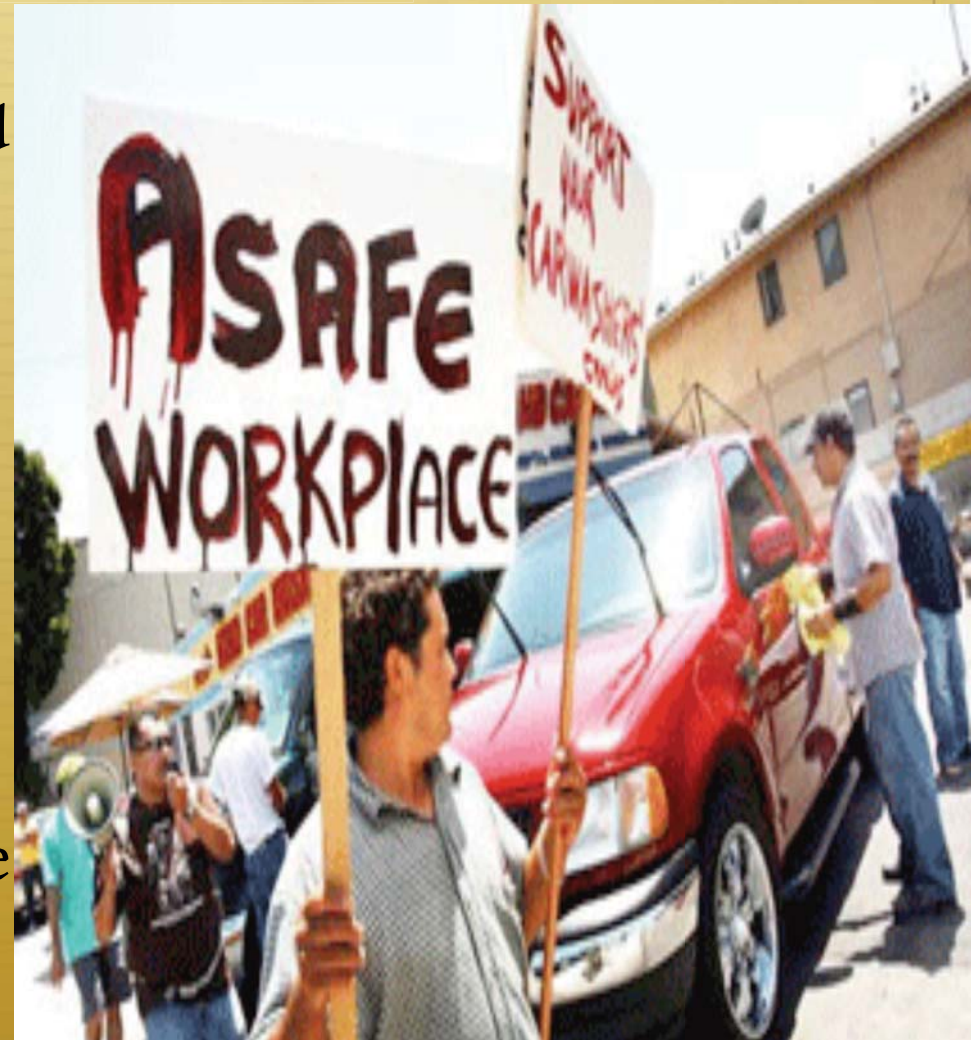
Every year, workers file thousands of complaints with the Department of Labor because (for example):

- ✦ NOT GIVEN ADEQUATE WORK BREAKS
- ✦ NOT PAID TIME AND A HALF FOR OVERTIME
- ✦ UNSAFE CONDITIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

WHERE IS THIS HAPPENING???

L.A.'s "WASHEROs"

- ✦ Car washes are profitable but some WasherOs are paid less than \$50 for a 10-12 hour day, or tips only
- ✦ During busy summer hours WasherOs work without breaks or water → heat exhaustion & dehydration
- ✦ WasherOs suffer health problems from chemicals, falls and slips, and repetitive heavy lifting and washing



CHILD LABOR HERE?



VIDEO

TOMORROW ...



- ✦ How would you change the Labor Laws in our country?
- ✦ How can you help to change the laws now?