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Montana and the Pullman strike of 1894: A Western response to industrial warfare

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MONTANA AND THE PULLMAN STRIKE OF 1894

A WESTERN RESPONSE TO INDUSTRIAL WARFARE

By

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The primary goal of this study is a delineation and explanation of popular reactions in Montana to the Pullman Strike of 1894. The account views such reactions as a case study of western reactions to a national labor dispute erupting within a social milieu of former pioneers, industrial workers, and agrarians, living in a large, sparsely populated and only recently admitted state. Secondary concerns include federal and state policies and actions regarding the strike, as well as those of national and local unions.

Since there is little evidence available in the form of diaries or personal papers on Montanans' reactions to the strike, the author has relied on accounts by local, independent, community newspapers, as well as those by papers which had been purchased by major mining interests, along the affected railroads. Public documents, military communiques, and the private correspondence of various civilian and military officials, comprised the second major source of evidence for the actions and attitudes of local, state, and federal, participants and observers.

Utilizing these sources, the study reveals that the state's residents were relatively unified in their support of the strikers. Local economic issues and psychological uncertainties over national directions resulted in a widespread, popular consensus, which, in a positive sense, evoked sympathy for the strikers. More negatively, it represented a communal defense against the onslaught of the forces of centralization, industrialization, and urbanization, which were transforming the societal landscape of the United States in the closing years of the nineteenth century.
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This account of an episode in Montana's past could not have been written without the encouragement and aid of a number of people. The Department of History of the University of Montana graciously purchased a collection of military dispatches, which shed a great deal of light on the Pullman Strike in Montana and the western states in general. William Evans, H. Duane Hampton, and George B. Heliker, who comprised my examining committee, suggested a number of criticisms relating to oversights in interpretation and evidence.

A special debt is owed H. Duane Hampton, who first suggested some of the possibilities inherent in this topic, and patiently endured my meandering consideration of at least two other thesis topics over a six month period. Once I had settled on this subject, he offered searching, incisive criticisms relating to methodology and conclusions and suggested various approaches which enabled me to resolve several recurring dilemmas. I am also indebted to Cheryl Marty White, who aided in the final preparation of the manuscript and bore the worst brunts of this endeavor.

To her and to everyone connected with this project goes my sincere gratitude and appreciation. Of course, any remaining oversights or errors are solely my own responsibility.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE PULLMAN STRIKE AND

THE CRISIS OF THE 1890s

The decade of the 1890s was one of intense and bewildering social turmoil. Permeated by what Richard Hofstadter called a "psychic crisis,"¹ the country was transformed from an agricultural to an industrial society, and Americans became alarmed by the dimly-perceived and often misunderstood results which accompanied that transition. To some, an industrial and financial "plutocracy" seemed destined to subvert the traditional institutions and values of the rural community. To others, primarily of the middle and upper classes, the spectre of class warfare reared its head and threatened to disrupt their new-found prosperity and destroy civilization itself. The closure of the frontier, announced by Frederick Jackson Turner in his famous 1893 essay, signified the end of the frontier "safety valve" for urban discontent, and, for those who were aware of his pronouncement, it served to heighten their fears and apprehensions for the future.

An unprecedented number of labor disturbances erupted in the early 1890s because of the refusal or inability of the country to adequately deal with the social readjustments accompanying the meteoric

industrialization of the post-Civil War period. The depression of 1893 intensified discontent as it unleashed its full fury on an increasingly urbanized and industrialized America. The economy sank quickly into a severe depression as 642 banks failed, 22,500 miles of railroad mileage went into receivership, and the industrial market in general collapsed. As employment and wage reductions increased, both organized and unorganized labor suffered during the 1893-94 winter.2 Spring inaugurated the worst year of the depression in which an estimated 2.5 to 3 million workers (approximately 20 percent of the work force) were unemployed.

Responding to the economic crisis, workers retaliated through a series of national and regional protests. The wage reductions which accompanied the depression triggered a futile national strike by the United Mine Workers, representing 180,000 miners, in April and May 1894. Demanding federal work relief, the Commonwealers, or Coxeyites, formed seventeen "industrial armies" and marched on Washington. Labor protests became almost commonplace events as over fourteen hundred strikes occurred in 1894 alone.3

Such unrest clearly alarmed conservatives throughout the country. Extreme tension and a sense of crisis permeated the ranks of the more affluent, who feared the apparent assault on property rights as well as a violent class confrontation. Within this frightened group, Arnold Paul suggests, the judiciary assumed increasing importance and, by the mid-1890s, became the "principal bulwark of conservative defense."


3Ibid., pp. 12-15.
Striking an activist stance, the courts foresook their neutralist ideologies and consummated a conservative-oriented, constitutional revolution to defend property rights against what they perceived as the "mob."\(^4\)

The Pullman Strike, which paralyzed every transcontinental railroad except the Great Northern, became a focal point for such fears and triggered unprecedented judicial and presidential intervention in a labor-capital dispute. Led by the powerful General Managers' Association (G.M.A.), the railways had little difficulty persuading the federal judiciary to aid them against the insurgent American Railway Union (A.R.U.). The courts quickly issued a series of "omnibus injunctions" aimed at prohibiting strike activity. Based, among other things, on the argument that the strike constituted a "restraint of trade" and, thus, violated the Sherman Antitrust Act, the court orders represented a new departure in American jurisprudence.

Alarmed by exaggerated reports of violence on the affected roads and ignoring protests by Governor John Peter Altgeld, the Cleveland Administration dispatched troops to Chicago, the headquarters of strike activity, to enforce the injunctions and open the roads. Subsequently, Cleveland and Attorney-General Richard Olney ordered military intervention on railroads throughout the Trans-Mississippi West. Faced with the presence of the United States Army, the arrest of its national and local leaders, and the threat of a hostile federal judiciary, the A.R.U. membership was compelled to admit its defeat.

As the fortunes of the American Railway Union declined in Chicago, the union's president, Eugene Victor Debs, turned to the West, hoping to recoup his organization's losses in that distant arena. Ultimately, Debs' optimism proved unfounded, since there too, federal injunctions and armed force guaranteed a railroad victory.

One of the focal points of Debs' hopes was the newly admitted state of Montana. Crossed by two transcontinental railroads, the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern, Montana possessed a relatively large and active A.R.U. membership. Moreover, union activity in the state had provided valuable aid to Debs in his victory over the Great Northern the previous April.

Debs had more immediate grounds for hope. Montana's locals had fervently supported the national convention's decision to boycott Pullman cars. If anything, the A.R.U. membership was too eager for a confrontation. Angered by a series of wage cuts, locals along the Northern Pacific line rapidly added the restoration of wages to their list of grievances—in spite of Debs' desire to limit demands to issues directly relevant to the Pullman car boycott. Finally, railroad employees enjoyed a large measure of support from their communities, particularly in the western part of the state.

However, though largely unencumbered by an antagonistic press or hostile public opinion, the strikers in Montana were defeated by the same forces which precluded success in Chicago. Federal injunctions, with the accompanying threat of arrests, coupled with the presence of federal troops and the introduction of large numbers of imported, non-union workers quickly smashed the Pullman Strike in Montana. In the
wake of defeat, union members faced blacklisting or were forced to renounce the American Railway Union to regain their jobs at reduced wages.

The strikers in Montana, like their counterparts throughout the western United States, were unable to withstand the newly forged alliance of corporate and federal power. In despair, they returned to former positions or joined the growing ranks of the industrially unemployed.
CHAPTER II

THE STRIKE IN CHICAGO

Chicago was the center of the tumultuous Pullman Railroad Strike of 1894. The principal combatants, the powerful General Managers' Association (G.M.A.) and the potentially powerful American Railway Union (A.R.U.), maintained their headquarters in the city, which was located only minutes from the Pullman works, the genesis of the conflict. The boycott attained national proportions when those organizations intervened in the dispute at Chicago and, later, throughout the Trans-Mississippi West. When the Cleveland Administration, responding to requests by the G.M.A., introduced federal power into the conflict, that force was first used in Chicago in the form of injunctions and troops. Finally, soon after the G.M.A. achieved victory in Chicago, the railroads defeated the national strike as arrests and blacklisting of A.R.U. leaders followed in the wake of federal troop trains.

Formed in 1886 by the railroads centering or having terminals in Chicago, the General Managers' Association stated its goal in Article II of the organization's constitution. Broadly defined, the Association's purpose was "... the consideration of problems of management arising from the operation of railroads terminating or centering in Chicago."1

1"Constitution and By-Laws of the General Managers' Association of

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Prior to the Pullman Boycott, the Association was primarily concerned with issues such as switching, car service, the loading and unloading of cars, weights of livestock, and rates. The G.M.A. had only incidentally considered wages, although the United States Strike Commission, which was created to investigate the Pullman Strike, suggested that employees on Association roads were treated as subjects of that organization. However, in the 1893-94 winter the Association, whose actions greatly influenced other roads, began efforts to establish a single, uniform wage schedule throughout the nation.\(^2\)

Despite its own national operations, policies, and impact, the G.M.A. refused to recognize or negotiate with its nationally organized opponent, the American Railway Union. The Strike Commission sharply criticized this Association tactic, observing that such action "... seems arrogant and absurd when we consider its standing before the law, its assumptions, and its past and obviously contemplated future

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Organized in Chicago on June 20, 1893, the American Railway Union's organizational goal was the unification of all white railroad employees into one union, which would have sufficient power to negotiate with the increasingly centralized railroads. The A.R.U.'s social objectives included a desire to protect pay scales and hours of work and to lobby for legislation generally beneficial to workers.

The union was formed along democratic lines. Local memberships elected regional delegates, who chose the union's national leaders at the A.R.U.'s annual convention. The national leaders, contrary to contemporary popular opinion, had no authority to call a strike on any railroad unless the affected local unions agreed. Viewing the strike tactic as only a last resort, the A.R.U. constitution outlined a fairly elaborate grievance procedure designed to settle disputes without any active confrontation.

The A.R.U. experienced a rapid growth in membership in the first year of its existence. The most spectacular increase occurred as a result of the union's victory over James J. Hill's Great Northern Railroad. Responding to the Great Northern's drastic wage reductions (August 1893, January 1894, and March 1894) on April 13, 1894, the A.R.U. ordered a strike at the request of Great Northern employees.

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4Ibid., pp. xxiii-xxvii; Lindsey, Pullman Strike, pp. 110-13; Ray Ginger, The Bending Cross: A Biography of Eugene Victor Debs (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1949), pp. 92-95. Despite some internal opposition, a majority of the union's membership favored the racial bar, which satisfied racist prejudices as well as fears of job competition from non-white workers.
Although only a minority of the road's employees belonged to the union, an overwhelming number of workers, including members of the railroad brotherhoods, supported the strike and succeeded in paralyzing the road.

After one week, Hill agreed to submit the issue to a board of arbitration. The board, composed of fourteen St. Paul businessmen and headed by Charles Pilsbury, decided unanimously in favor of the A.R.U. and granted the strikers a wage increase which augmented the Great Northern's monthly payroll by $146,000. Victory swelled the American Railway Union's ranks so that by the time of its first annual convention (June 12, 1894), the union boasted of a membership exceeding 150,000 in over 465 locals.

The events which eventually precipitated the Pullman Strike occurred in Pullman, Illinois. Pullman, dubbed the "compulsory heaven" by Ray Ginger, was a "company town," which was built, owned, maintained, and controlled, by the Pullman Palace Car Company. Convinced that "... paternalism wisely administered would make labor more...

5Lindsey, Pullman Strike, pp. 113-14; Ginger, Bending Cross, pp. 102-14. As estimated in the U.S. Strike Commission Report, pp.xxiii-xxiv, the total number of railroad employees in the nation exceeded 850,000 man. The U.S. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 427, suggested a similar figure. However, on page 426, the Bureau also indicated that the definition of "employee" included any "... person in the service of a railroad, subject to its continuing authority to supervise and direct the manner of rendition of his service." (excluding lawyers); thus, the 850,000 figure is somewhat misleading, since it includes supervisory personnel, and, correspondingly, the percentage of railway laborers represented by the A.R.U. was larger than the 850,000 figure indicates.

amenable to the interests of the corporation . . . " George Pullman built what he and many others considered a model town in 1884.

Although the town was physically attractive and well-planned, a mood of oppressive regimentation prevailed. Determined to eliminate "all debasing influences," Pullman prohibited all saloons and brothels within the town's limits; also determined to prevent heresy among his employees, Pullman denied the use of public halls to anyone suspected of being a "radical" or an "agitator," while he enlisted a number of loyal employees to circulate among the population and report any disloyal statements. Finally, the Pullman Company owned all property within the town and refused to sell any to its employees, thus reducing them to a perpetual "tenant at will" status. After studying the town in 1884, Richard T. Ely commented:

In looking over all the facts of the case, the conclusion is unavoidable that the idea of Pullman is un-American. It is a nearer approach than anything the writer has seen to what appears to be the ideal of the Great German Chancellor. It is not the American ideal. It is benevolent well-wishing feudalism, which desires the happiness of the people, but in such a way as to please the authorities.

An underlying problem, inherent in the paternalistic community, gradually emerged during the months of September 1893 to May 1894, and

7 Lindsey, Pullman Strike, p. 35.


9 Quoted in Lindsey, Pullman Strike, p. 86.
resulted in the strike at Pullman. During this period, the Pullman Com-
pany reduced wages on an average of 25 percent. However, Pullman refused
to lower rents (or dividends to the Pullman Company's stockholders),
which ran approximately 20 to 25 percent higher than comparable rentals
in Chicago and surrounding areas.

Caught in an economic squeeze between high rents and decreasing
wages, the Pullman workers formed a grievance committee which petitioned
the company to restore wages to the June 1893, level. The company refused
and fired three committee members on May 10, 1894, on the grounds of
lack of work. That evening, despite pleas of caution from A.R.U. offi-
cials, the local union declared a strike and employed a force of 300 men
to guard the Pullman property—an action which the company alleged was
designed to prevent the use of "scab" labor. Responding to the union's
move, the Pullman Company idled the remaining 600 non-striking employees
and closed its works, which were not reopened until August 2, 1894.10

Then, on June 15, the Pullman chapter of the American Railway Union
addressed the national convention, which had begun its proceedings on
July 12. The workers explained: "We struck at Pullman because we were
without hope. We joined the American Railway Union because it gave us a
glimmer of hope . . ." Petitioning for aid in its struggle, the chapter
requested that national organization to

... help us make our country better and more wholesome. Pull
us out of our slough of despond. Teach arrogant grinders of
the faces of the poor that there is still a God in Israel, and

10 U.S. Strike Commission Report, pp. xxxii-xxxix. Almont Lindsey
disagreed, arguing that only three hundred workers remained (Pullman
Strike, p. 123). Regardless of the number, however, the Pullman Com-
pany closed its operations and idled the remaining employees who refused
to strike.
if need be a Jehovah—a God of battles. Do this, and on that last day you will stand, as we hope to stand, before the great white throne "like gentlemen unafraid...

The convention was moved to action by the Pullman workers' emotional appeal, wage cuts, national discrimination against the A.R.U., and a growing conviction that they were all at the mercy of the vested interest which had drawn together by virtue of business relations and a common policy toward labor. The convention appointed a committee to meet with the Pullman Company, which subsequently refused its offers. In spite of the cautious and apprehensive advice of President Eugene Debs and other A.R.U. leaders, the convention, after wiring its local chapters, unanimously resolved to institute a national boycott of Pullman cars unless that company adjusted the grievances with its employees by noon, June 26. No agreement was reached, and by June 28, 1894, 18,000 A.R.U. members were on strike.

The conflict escalated as the General Managers' Association entered the fray. The G.M.A. met in an emergency meeting on June 25—the day before the threatened boycott—and unanimously resolved to resist the boycott "in the interest of their existing contracts [with the Pullman Company] and for the benefit of the traveling public...


Lindsey, Pullman Strike, p. 132.

Ibid., pp. 128-34. Ultimately, over 125,000 men, including non-A.R.U. members, joined the boycott (Ginger, Bending Cross, pp. 122-23).

Another and, perhaps, the primary rationale has been suggested by Almont Lindsey, who argued that the G.M.A. perceived a chance to destroy the American Railway Union, whose victory over the Great Northern road alarmed the members of the Association.16

To lead the fight, the Association appointed John M. Egan, previously manager of the Chicago and Great Western Railroad. As the G.M.A. began firing any employee who refused to handle Pullman cars, the boycott was transformed into a national strike, paralyzing every transcontinental railroad except the Great Northern. On June 29, the Association resolved that none of its members would rehire any employee fired as a result of the boycott. Meanwhile, Egan established employment agencies in Toledo, Cleveland, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York, and Boston, to recruit non-union labor from the ample ranks of the unemployed.17

Nevertheless, on July 2, Egan admitted that the paralyzed railroads had been "fought to a standstill."18 Faced with defeat, the G.M.A. began agitating for federal injunctions and troops. Assessing the railroad's position, Almont Lindsey observed:

A vital part of the strategy of the association was to draw the United States government into the struggle and then to make it appear that the battle was no longer between the workers and the railroads but between the workers and the government.19

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16Lindsey, Pullman Strike, pp. 136-39; see also Paul, Conservative Crisis, p. 136.

17Lindsey, Pullman Strike, pp. 139-41; see also Proceedings of the General Managers' Association, June 29-July 1, 1894.

18Lindsey, Pullman Strike, p. 144.

19Ibid., p. 142.
The Association's request fell on sympathetic ears in Washington. Alarmed by the general economic weakness, the increase of labor violence, and frightened by exaggerated press reports of conditions in Chicago, the Cleveland Administration moved quickly. After two days of violence at Blue Island (Chicago)—neither supported nor encouraged by the American Railway Union—the Federal District Court at Chicago issued injunctions enjoining A.R.U. leaders from "compelling or inducing by threats, intimidation, persuasion, force or violence, railway employees to refuse or fail to perform their duties."20

Working closely with the G.M.A., Assistant United States District Attorney Edwin Walker attended the July 3 meeting of the Association. He explained the ramifications of the injunction and requested the railroads to supply his office with evidence of its violation. Walker also disclosed that federal troops would soon arrive to enforce the court order and that the military authorities "... would be glad to have suggestions concerning troop dispositions from the railways, as they would be better advised than anyone else of the necessities ..."21

By July 4, federal troops, commanded by General Nelson A. Miles, who was extremely hostile to organized labor,22 arrived in Chicago by order of President Cleveland. Rioting continued and reached its height.

20Ibid., pp. 163-64.


on July 6, when fire destroyed over $340,000 worth of railroad property. A highly prejudiced local and national press blamed the A.R.U.’s leadership for the violence. However, the United States Commission, after a thorough investigation, observed that union leaders realized that mob action would merely lead to repression and defeat; the Commission also declared:

There is no evidence before the commission that the officers of the American Railway Union at any time participated in or advised intimidation, violence, or destruction of property...2

Alarmed by the chaos in Chicago and on the transcontinental lines, President Cleveland issued a proclamation on July 8 against the strikers and increased the number of federal troops in the affected areas. Meanwhile, the executive branch received severe criticism from a number of mid-western and far western governors.

The most vehement protest came from Governor John Peter Altgeld of Illinois. In a series of angry telegrams on July 5-6, Altgeld argued that local and state authorities were able to maintain order in Illinois. Further, the governor argued that since the state government had not

23Lindsey, Pullman Strike, pp. 165-200.
24U.S. Strike Commission Report, p. xlv; An early historian argued that the violence resulted from the appearance of semi-criminal private detectives hired by the railroads (Robert Hunter, Violence and the Labor Movement [New York, New York: Macmillan Co., 1914], p. 299). Almont Lindsey, however, suggested a somewhat broader explanation, arguing that, although the arrival of "detectives" and the military were an irritant, greater factors were the accumulated resentments (caused by unemployment and wage reductions accompanying the depression) held by certain classes against the railroads, combined with the presence of an abnormally large number of "hoodlums, tramps, and semi-criminals," who had been drawn to and stranded in Chicago by the Columbian Exposition (Lindsey, Pullman Strike, p. 205).
25Lindsey, Pullman Strike, p. 211.
requested federal troops, their appearance signified that "... the principle of self-government either never did exist in this country or else it has been destroyed ..." Altgeld also warned,

Federal interference with industrial disturbances in the various states is ... a new departure, and opens up so large a field that it will require a very little stretch of authority to absorb to itself all the details of local government ... 26

In reply Cleveland maintained that he had not exceeded his authority and had acted properly to "... restore obedience to law and to protect life and property." 27

The restoration of "obedience to law" included the arrest of Eugene Debs and other high officials of the American Railway Union on charges of conspiracy on July 10, 1894. Meanwhile, in his zeal to obtain a conviction, the United States Attorney at Chicago, Thomas Milchrist, ordered an illegal raid on A.R.U. headquarters where deputy marshals and deputy post office inspectors ransacked every room and confiscated all union documents, including Debs' unopened personal mail. The next day (July 11) Judge Grosscup reprimanded Milchrist and ordered that the

26 Telegram, Governor John Peter Altgeld to President Grove Cleveland (July 6, 1894), Allan Nevins, ed., Letters of Grover Cleveland, 1850-1908 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Riverside Press, 1933), pp. 360-61.

27 Telegram, Cleveland to Altgeld (July 6, 1894), Ibid., pp. 361-64; Cleveland published a formal defense of his actions in his book, The Government in the Chicago Strike of 1894 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1913). The former president characterized the Pullman Strike as a "determined and ugly labor disturbance ...," which "... reached the entire Western and Southwestern sections of our country. Railroad transportation was especially involved in its attacks. The carriage of United States mails was interrupted, interstate commerce was obstructed, and railroad property was riotously destroyed ..." (pp. 2-3). As a result, Cleveland argued that "... conditions ... not only justified but actually obliged the Government to stern and unusual measures in the assertion of its prerogatives ..." (p. 12).
materials be returned.28

Confronted by a hostile national government openly allied with its adversary, its leaders in jail, the A.R.U. in Chicago was defeated by July 13.29 Nevertheless, President Debs still dreamed of victory. He looked to the West for support in a last ditch effort to defeat the railroads and preserve the new union. On July 15 Debs optimistically (and erroneously) forecast:

We will win our fight in the West because we are better organized there. There is brawn and energy in the West. Men there are loyal, fraternal, and true. When they believe they are right, they all go out and stay out until the fight is over . . . We will show the general managers that the attempt to crush organized labor will result in receivership for all their railroads.30


29Ibid., p. 232.

30Ibid., p. 235.
CHAPTER III

THE STRIKE IN MONTANA

Montana, like most of the country, gave little notice to the Pull­man workers’ plight until the struggle attained national and, for the American Railway Union, catastrophic proportions. Until the strike reached the state, Montanans were primarily concerned with the continu­ing 1893 depression, national unemployment, Coxeyite marches, the Helena-Anaconda capital fight, Populism, and the approaching fall elections.

Railway services, vital to the isolated and sparsely populated state, seemed relatively secure. The previous spring had witnessed the use of a peaceful, legal method—arbitration— to settle the Great Northern Strike. There existed, then, a recent example that reason, rather than the horrors of class warfare or confrontation, could prevail as the country and the new state underwent the transition from a predominately agricultural to an industrial society.

Responding to the national depression, the Great Northern had slashed wages to the point that its employees were the lowest paid work­ers on any transcontinental railroad. The infant American Railway Union, representing only a minority of unskilled Great Northern employees, demanded a restoration of wages in early April 1894.

However, James J. Hill, president of the Great Northern, refused to make any concessions, and a strike swiftly followed. Even the skilled
laborers of the railroad brotherhoods joined in a gigantic, peaceful effort which virtually paralyzed the Great Northern. After eighteen days, both Debs and Hill agreed to submit the dispute to arbitration. A board, composed of businessmen from St. Paul and Minneapolis and chaired by Charles Pilsbury, granted nearly all the A.R.U. demands, including a monthly wage increase of $146,000 for the road's employees.¹

In the crisis-laden atmosphere of the 1890s, this example of a peaceful, non-violent settlement of labor disputes offered a glimmer of hope to alarmed, fearful Montanans. Indeed, when the Pullman Boycott unleashed its full fury in the state, the overwhelming majority of newspapers, regardless of political affiliation or philosophical stance, urged arbitration as a means of settlement.²


²The favorable attitude of the state's principal newspapers toward the strikers was somewhat of an oddity, since the "Copper Kings" controlled the major publications in Montana. By 1888 W. A. Clark controlled the Butte Miner, and in 1891 Marcus Daly obtained control of the Anaconda Standard, which was the largest and most influential paper in the state (John W. Schiltz, "Montana's Captive Press," Montana Opinion, vol. 1, no. 1 [June 1956], pp. 3-4). The spectacle of such anti-union capitalists allying with labor against the Northern Pacific and Montana Union railroads was a highly unusual phenomenon of which the cause(s) is still unclear. Thomas A. Clinch suggested a partial explanation by observing that the Northern Pacific was attempting to claim a substantial portion of the state's mineral lands under its land grant charter (Thomas A. Clinch, "The Northern Pacific Railroad and Montana's Mineral Lands," Pacific Historical Review, vol. 34, no. 3, pp. 323-35, passim). Since the Northern Pacific threatened the large mining interests, then, it is quite understandable for those interests to ally with the strikers during the Pullman Boycott in a continuing attempt to discredit the railroads and the Cleveland Administration (the silver mine owners were opposed to the "Gold Democrats" and later participated in Populist efforts to elect William Jennings Bryan in 1896).
As previously noted, the Pullman conflict initially aroused relatively little interest in the state. Typical was a small notice in the Weekly Missoulian, reporting that "... one hundred brick-makers employed by the Pullman company struck today." The calm was deceptive, however. In the short space of forty-eight hours, traffic on the entire Northern Pacific Railroad was at a standstill.

The American Railway Union convention, meeting in Chicago, ordered a boycott against all Pullman cars at noon, June 26, 1894. Learning that the Northern Pacific had discharged several men for obeying that order in St. Paul, the appointed representatives of the Livingston, Montana, local warned J. D. Finn, Superintendent of the Montana Division of the Northern Pacific Railroad, that unless the discharged men were immediately reinstated, the entire division would strike at midnight, June 27. Although the A.R.U. would allow mail trains to continue operating, its membership would refuse to operate any other Northern Pacific locomotive.

Although the less skilled workers, such as fireman, formed the bulk of the A.R.U.'s membership, the union's threat was, nevertheless, clear to the Northern Pacific management. Though the company's engineers belonged to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers rather than to the A.R.U., they were pledged to work only with experienced firemen. Experienced non-union labor would have to be recruited and imported from distant terminals before the Northern Pacific could resume operations.

J. W. Kendrick, General Manager of the Northern Pacific, accepted

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the challenge and adamantly denied the legitimacy of the union's demands. In Livingston he announced:

The Northern Pacific owns an undivided one half interest in all the Pullman cars which run over its tracks at present. An interference with the running of these cars is, therefore, an interference with the property of this road. The dining cars and all other cars are the property of the receivers of this railroad. I am not informed that the American Railway Union has any grievance against the Northern Pacific railroad, therefore there seems to be no reason for an extension of the boycott to cars in which the road has an interest and joint ownership.5

Confronted with Kendrick's statement and his subordinate's (Superintendent Finn) refusal to detach the Pullman cars from two trains, including one routed for Yellowstone Park, Livingston's union men, followed by sympathetic dispatchers, struck at 12:30 A.M., July 27. R. F. Doherty, an official of the Livingston chapter, immediately notified Debs of the event and urged him to "... call out the entire system at once."6

Already begun on the Minnesota Division, the strike quickly spread throughout Montana. Superintendent Finn met with the Livingston strike committee at 1:30 P.M., June 27 in a last minute attempt to prevent the escalation of the conflict from a simple boycott of Pullman cars to a full-scale strike, which would mean a complete halt of activity on the Northern Pacific line. The union reiterated its position that the strike could end immediately if the St. Paul men were reinstated, although the Pullman boycott would remain in force. However, Finn dashed any hopes for compromise by casually replying, "Well, I guess you fellows


will remain idle a long time." Later that afternoon, Debs ordered all union employees to quit work immediately and to appoint local committees to supervise strike activities.7

Local responses were rapid and decisive. By 5:00 P.M. the Northern Pacific was completely paralyzed. Within Montana, the Butte, Anaconda, Helena, and Missoula locals immediately joined chapters on the Yellowstone and Montana Divisions of the Northern Pacific.8 During these initial stages, the A.R.U. gained support from other quarters. The Order of Railway Conductors in Livingston unanimously agreed to openly support the strike. Although the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, also in Livingston, initially denied that it was a party to the conflict, the Brotherhood's membership refused to work with inexperienced "scab" labor and, thus, reinforced the strikers' position by their neutrality. Also, relatively large numbers of previously unorganized railroad workers reportedly entered the A.R.U.'s membership rolls throughout the state.9

That same day (June 27), the Butte chapter of the American Railway Union quickly exceeded the national organization's desires and extended the conflict to the Montana Union Railroad, a branch line of the Union Pacific Railroad Company.10 Aware of recent bitter labor disputes and of

7Ibid., no. 298 (June 28, 1894), p. 1; Helena Independent, vol. 35, no. 129 (June 28, 1894), p. 8.

8The Northern Pacific System in Montana was divided into three areas: the Yellowstone Division (Glendive to Billings), the Montana Division (Billings to Helena), and the Rocky Mountain Division (Helena to Missoula).


10The Montana Union railroad ran north and south from Butte, Montana, to its intersection with the Union Pacific's main line at Ogden, Utah.
the increasingly national scope of the current battle, the Butte workers felt that the Pullman issue involved far more than the rights of Pullman workers themselves. Rather, they believed the conflict was "... a decisive battle between the corporations and the American Railway Union, and ... [were] prepared for a long and bitter fight."

Conforming to this view, J. H. Calderhead, President of the Butte Chapter of the American Railway Union, telegraphed the local chapter in Ogden, Utah, and urged them to boycott any northbound Pullman cars. The Butte strike committee simultaneously informed W. H. Burns, General Manager of the Montana Union company, that no more Pullman cars would be handled by A.R.U. members until a settlement was reached in Chicago.12

Sympathy for the Pullman workers and loyalty to the leadership of the American Railway Union, while powerful motivations in themselves, cannot fully explain the Montana chapters' support for the Chicago boycott. Another and, perhaps, the most important issue surfaced immediately. In December 1893, the Northern Pacific announced, as did railroads throughout the country, a 5 to 10 percent wage reduction. The railroad's disregard of employee organizations further inflamed labor's dissatisfaction—the Northern Pacific management had simply announced the new wage schedules without negotiating with older brotherhoods or the infant A.R.U. locals.13

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11Anaconda Standard, vol. 5, no. 298 (June 28, 1894), p. 1. The strike committee also informed the smaller, local lines—i.e., the Montana Central and the Butte, Anaconda, and Pacific (B.A.&P.)—of the union's position.

12Ibid.

In early January 1894, as the workers threatened to strike over such high-handed practices, the Northern Pacific receivers sought a federal injunction. On December 29, 1893, a federal writ was issued, enjoining all Northern Pacific employees from striking or otherwise interfering with the operation of the Northern Pacific Railroad after January 1, 1894—the date the new wage schedules went into effect.14

Although the strike was temporarily prevented, the issue smoldered until the summer of 1894, when it was almost immediately revived during the first week of the Pullman Strike. Throughout the state, locals unanimously demanded a restoration of the pre-January 1894 wage schedules as a condition of settlement. Encouraged by the A.R.U. success against the Great Northern, the Missoula, Montana chapter led the way on June 27 in vocalizing this demand.15 By June 30, the Livingston, Helena, Billings, and Glendive locals had followed suit.16

In the wage issue, as in the threatened extension of the strike to the Montana Union road, the strikers clearly exceeded the desired bounds and strategy of the national headquarters. On June 28, Debs futilely wired J. W. Naugle, Chairman of the Butte Strike Committee, that

\[
\text{... We request that this matter [restoration of wages] be postponed and our whole attention devoted to the Pullman boycott. When it is won, restoration of wages will be an easy}
\]


16Ibid., vol. 5, no. 299 (June 29, 1894), p. 1; the Billings Gazette, vol. 10, no. 9 (June 30, 1894), p. 1; the Helena Independent, vol. 35, no. 131 (June 30, 1894), p. 5; the Livingston Post, vol. 5, no. 12 (June 28, 1894), p. 3; and the Weekly Missoulian, vol. 35, no. 27 (July 4, 1894), p. 3.
However, Debs' caution proved an insufficient bar to the Montana stikers; their demand for a restoration of the 1893 schedules continued to be a burning and unifying issue.

Although not adamantly opposed to an extension of the boycott to the Montana Union, Debs, as well as a number of the railroad's employees, hoped that a direct conflict could be avoided by cooperation between the road and the American Railway Union. Since the parent Union Pacific owned a large number of Wagner sleepers, it was hoped that the road would substitute them for its Pullman cars and, thus, void a confrontation.  

Such hopes proved illusory. The Union Pacific attached Pullman cars to two northbound trains, despite the announced June 30 boycott on the Union Pacific and Montana Union lines. Pursuant to their resolutions, the Butte chapter declared a general strike at 6:00 P.M., June 30. President Debs quickly endorsed the action in a telegram to Calderhead:

All Union Pacific employees are requested to leave the service immediately. Several points on that system are now tied up. Several men have been discharged for refusing to handle Pullman cars, but they may be assured there will be no settlement on any basis until each man on every road is reinstated. This is a fight to the finish against combined capital and oppression and we are sure winners. Do no violence but every man quit and stand firm... Chicago is paralyzed. Strike extends to Columbus, Ohio...  

17 Anaconda Standard, vol. 5, no. 299 (June 29, 1894), p. 1; Lindsey, Pullman Strike, p. 219.  
19 Ibid., no. 301 (July 1, 1894), p. 1; the Butte Miner, vol. 31, no. 182 (July 1, 1894), p. 5.
While the American Railway Union's membership girded itself for the decisive battle, the opposing railroads, led by the powerful General Managers' Association of Chicago, also mobilized. The Union Pacific's interests, and, thus, the Montana Union's, were directly represented in that body.

Of greater significance to the Montana scene, however, was the Northern Pacific's position. The Northern Pacific, with its eastern terminal at St. Paul, Minnesota, was not formally a member of the G.M.A., since membership in that body was restricted to those roads centering or having terminals in Chicago. Nevertheless, Northern Pacific interests were considered and promoted by connecting roads such as the Chicago and Great Western Railway and the Chicago and Northern Pacific Railway.

A few days after the declaration of a national boycott, J. W. Kendrick, General Manager of the Northern Pacific, appealed directly to the G.M.A. Bypassing indirect channels, Kendrick requested the Association to extend sympathetic assistance to the Northern Pacific in battling the strikers on his road. Although the precise nature of that request is unclear, the minutes of the June 29 meeting of the G.M.A. indicate that its members vowed "... to do anything it [the Association] could for his [Kendrick's] company." Subsequent events, such as legal maneuvers, calls for federal troops, and the importation of non-union, eastern workers, indicate that the Northern Pacific received a great deal of advice and aid from the Association. Certainly, that road used methods strikingly similar to those of the General Managers' Association in defeating the American Railway Union.

\[20\text{Proceedings of the General Managers' Association of Chicago, 1893 and 1894, June 29, 1894.}\]
CHAPTER IV

INTERLUDE AND CHARACTERISTICS

After the strike was in force, there followed a brief lull in Montana while the various factions plotted strategy or simply awaited the events which would force the moment of decision. To a large extent, the activities and vocalized opinions of this brief period revealed Montanans' attitudes toward that conflict.¹

A large, geographically isolated, and sparsely populated state, Montana was heavily dependent on its transportation network. The principal industries were agriculture, lumber, and mining, which required a rail system to provide access to distant markets. Within Montana itself, a transportation system was also imperative for farmers to market their products in the state's scattered towns. Any substantial interference, with the state's railroad network would necessarily affect its economy.² Although the Great Northern continued operations (it was

¹As in the previous chapter, most of the source materials for this chapter are drawn from local newspapers since available papers, records, etc., are very limited or in many cases, nonexistent for this period. However, these newspapers can be seen as reflective of their readership's opinions to a large extent, since most of them were relatively small, independent publications which were dependent on local circulation and support.

²In his book, Urban Populism and Free Silver in Montana: A Narrative of Ideology in Political Action (Missoula, Montana: the University of Montana Press, 1970), p. 20, Thomas Clinch explained: "Transportation was a vital factor in Montana's economic development ... the
the only transcontinental road to do so), the closure of the Northern Pacific and the Montana Union, a branch of the Union Pacific, immediately damaged local economies.

In the eastern part of the state, Glendive, a railroad town near the Montana-North Dakota border, quickly ran dangerously low on food supplies. By the end of the first week of the strike, the town's stores were nearly barren of staple foodstuffs.³

Cattlemen near Miles City and Billings feared "disastrous" losses would result from the Northern Pacific tieup.⁴ Sheepmen in Billings were unable to store wool in the Northern Pacific's warehouses; since the Northern Pacific's storage facilities were overflowing, Agent Talbott refused to accept further shipments until a settlement was reached with the American Railway Union.⁵ The strike also forced retail business into a severe slump within a week.⁶

One side effect beneficial to Billings' residents resulted from the tieup, however. Several carloads of perishable foods--bananas, vegetables, and poultry--were stranded on Billings' sidetracks awaiting settlement of the strike. Rather than allow those items to rot, Agent

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³Daily Gazette (Billings, Montana), vol. 1, no. 6 (July 9, 1894), p. 3.
⁵Daily Gazette, no. 1 (July 2, 1894), p. 3.
⁶Ibid., no. 8 (July 11, 1894), p. 3.
Talbott served what the Billings Gazette labelled a "feast of famine," at which two thousand people received a full meal for a minimal price.\(^7\)

Farther west, the Big Timber Pioneer complained that the strike hurt sheepmen and fruit growers.\(^8\) Although there was little perishable freight in the Bozeman yards,\(^9\) the fertile Gallatin Valley suffered economic hardships. Though sympathetic to the A.R.U. cause, the Bozeman Chronicle warned that the area's ranchers, unable to sell their crops of oats or cattle, anticipated economic disaster, while local fruit growers faced a nearly total loss on their cash crops.\(^10\) Overtly hostile to the strikers, the Bozeman Avant-Courier thundered:

> it is costing the great northwest at least a million dollars a day in the loss of business, destruction and depreciation of property, enforced idleness of thousands of people and the shutting down and closing up of mills, mines, smelters and manufacturers . . .\(^{11}\)

The Avant-Courier's pronouncement was somewhat exaggerated, since the newspapers of the state's mining regions noted only minimal economic repercussions resulting from the strike. In Helena, which was also serviced by the Great Northern road, residents experienced few hardships.\(^{12}\) Southwest of Helena, the Butte/Anaconda area experienced a sharp rise in

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\(^7\)Billings Gazette, vol. 10, no. 11 (July 7, 1894), p. 5.

\(^8\)Big Timber Pioneer, vol. 4, no. 32 (July 12, 1894), p. 4.


\(^10\)Bozeman Chronicle, vol. 12, no. 22 (July 5, 1894), p. 4.

\(^11\)Avant-Courier (Bozeman, Montana), vol. 23, no. 34 (July 14, 1894), p. 2.

\(^12\)Helena Independent, vol. 35, no. 129 (June 28, 1894), p. 8.
food prices despite its indirect access to the Great Northern. In a single twenty-four hour period (July 2-July 3), egg prices doubled. Also, the price of hay, grain, and feed rose materially, while strawberries rose from $2.50 to $4.00 per case.  

Confronted by skyrocketing prices and by the fact that Butte stores had stockpiled only two to three days of provisions, a number of Butte residents became understandably apprehensive. However, the Great Northern continued supplying the town, and by July 8, local farmers had begun supplementing the food supply by driving in fresh supplies of cattle and sheep daily. Although shortages of salt and pork continued, the strike’s effects remained merely "noticeable but in no way distressing."  

Mining operations in the Butte/Anaconda area were only minimally affected. Firms such as Marcus Daly’s Anaconda Company and the Boston and Montana Mine had stockpiled a month’s supply of timber and fuel. Only the Parrot Smelter, heavily dependent on the Montana Union for its fuel supply, was forced to suspend operations. Other mines, including F. Augustus Heinze’s properties, were unaffected by the strike.  

Located near the Montana-Idaho border, Missoula was affected to a greater extent. Farmers in the surrounding Bitter Root and Missoula valleys suffered noticeably. Fruit growers had just finished their harvest, and tons of strawberries and other perishable foods rotted as the

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strike continued. Reportedly, farmers were losing one thousand dollars a day on the strawberry crop alone, while losing an additional one thousand dollars a day on other perishable agricultural products. The Northern Pacific tieup also injured the area's lumber industry, forcing the large saw mills in neighboring Bonner and Hamilton to suspend operations until rail service resumed. Although serious food shortages were averted, large retail establishments, such as the Missoula Mercantile Company, reported a substantial drop in sales, while some items—e.g., sugar—doubled within a twenty-four hour period.

Given the immediate impact on Montana's economy as well as the spectre of certain economic disaster if the strike lasted very long, one would expect an extreme anti-A.R.U. sentiment from most of the state's residents, accompanied by demands for a forcible settlement of the strike. Such views certainly emerged, particularly in the livestock raising areas near Miles City, Billings, and, to some extent, Bozeman. Surprisingly, however, a majority of these westerners, including small farmers—who probably suffered the most from the tieup—heartily supported the American Railway Union's cause or were at least sympathetic toward the strikers.

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18* Ibid., no. 298 (June 29, 1894), p. 1; Daily Tribune (Great Falls, Montana), vol. 16, no. 329 (July 1, 1894), p. 2; Helena Independent, no. 131 (June 28, 1894), p. 1; Weekly Missoulian, no. 27 (July 4, 1894), p. 4.

19* Helena Independent, no. 130 (June 29, 1894), p. 5.


21* Weekly Missoulian, no. 27 (July 4, 1894), p. 4; Daily Tribune, no. 320 (July 1, 1894), p. 2.
The citizens of Glendive, a small railroad center surrounded by agricultural interests, generally supported the strike. The seventy-five members of the small A.R.U. local "jubilantly" walked of their jobs during the early morning of June 28. A relatively large number of unskilled non-union men simultaneously quit in sympathy. Two days later (June 30), the town's conductors, engineers, firemen, and trainmen, vowed to support the union until the strike ended. Zealots also began a new paper, the American Railway Union Striker, on June 29. Within this heady atmosphere, the established Glendive Independent sagely advised the strikers to

... Act as a unit, have no divided councils and be prepared to fight to a finish. If you do this it will materially shorten the struggle, for the other side will know that united you are impregnable and will yield the sooner, the battle will be over and victory perch upon your banners. Stand by one another, not only here at Glendive, but from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the lakes to the gulf, and heed well the advice and council of those you have placed in authority.

Public sentiment was more divided in Billings. Certainly, the Northern Pacific workers supported the strike. Following the example of other chapters, three hundred men, including non-union employees, had walked off the job. Alarmed by the drift of public sentiment against the railroad, the editor of the Daily Gazette vocalized conservative apprehensions when he warned that the Populist ranks would grow immensely

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22Anaconda Standard, no. 298 (June 29, 1894), p. 1; Helena Independent, no. 130 (June 29, 1894), p. 5.


24Glendive Independent, vol. 9, no. 2 (June 30, 1894), p. 3.

25Ibid., p. 2.

Reverend J. W. Jennings, on the other hand, urged his Methodist congregation to support the American Railway Union strike. On July 1, the first Sunday of the strike, Reverend Jennings delivered a sermon entitled, "What are the Poor Man's Rights?" to an overflowing audience. Church attendance on that particular Sunday was so great that Jennings was compelled to open the windows so a large group on the lawn could hear his sermon. In his oration, the minister compared the strike to the Boston Tea Party and damned

... the present party in power [which] has apostatized from the faith of the Jacksonian fathers, for instead of being now the defenders of the rights of the people against aggression and oppressive corporations, trusts, etc., they are the pliant tools of the codfish monied aristocracy who seek to dominate this country and endanger the overthrow of our American institutions... These rights (inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness) no corporation or money power has any right to deprive the poorest laborer of, or in any way to abridge... No man or set of men have any right to monopolize the means of subsistence and dictate to the poor the very terms of life...  

Refusing to confine his activities to the pulpit, Jennings later addressed an open meeting of the A.R.U. where he expounded his views on the relationship of Christian Socialism to contemporary American society. The local chapter in turn passed a resolution thanking the reverend and J. D. Matheson, editor of the newly inaugurated Daily Times, for their "fairness and impartiality" during a time of national hysteria and

27Ibid., no. 11 (July 11, 1894), p. 2.

28Billings Gazette, no. 11 (July 7, 1894), p. 1; the complete text of Reverend Jennings' sermon was printed by the Daily Times (Billings, Montana), vol. 1, no. 7 (July 7, 1894), pp. 1 & 4.
widespread attacks on organized labor.\(^2^9\)

By its relatively impartial and fair reporting, the *Times* certainly helped the A.R.U. cause in eastern Montana. Refusing to imitate the extremely biased and exaggerated reporting in Chicago, Matheson calmly reported on local conditions. For example, in a July 5 editorial, he commented that

> So far as our own townsmen are concerned who are taking part in this strike, they are keeping within the bounds of law and preserving the best of order. They contend that they have serious grievances adjusted by peaceful methods, as becomes good and true American citizens. . . .\(^3^0\)

The *Daily Gazette* was more alarmed. Although Becker noted the calm situation in Billings, he feared that the violent example of Chicago would spread. To prevent a nightmare of national violence, he called for martial law and compulsory arbitration, since "[t]he very existence of government is at stake."\(^3^1\) West of Billings, local newspapers expressed sympathy for the poorly paid workers but, nevertheless, condemned the strike, since it hurt innocent livestock and agricultural interests. To correct the situation, the *Big Timber Pioneer* and the *Stillwater Bulletin* echoed Populist demands for government ownership of railroads.\(^3^2\)

Public sentiment in Livingston, the most militant point in the state, favored the American Railway Union cause. The *Anaconda Standard*,

\(^{2^9}\) *Daily Times*, no. 5 (July 5, 1894), p. 3.
\(^{3^1}\) *Daily Gazette*, no. 2 (July 3, 1894), p. 2.
\(^{3^2}\) *Big Timber Pioneer*, no. 32 (July 12, 1894), p. 4; *Stillwater Bulletin* (Columbus, Montana), vol. 2, no. 41 (July 7, 1894), p. 4.
which maintained a news bureau in Livingston, reported that

The strikers have the sympathy of nine-tenths of the people
[in Livingston]. The farmers especially are with the railroad
boys . . . and a number of the tillers of the soil in this
vicinity have generously offered to contribute quantities of
vegetables and other farm products to the American Railway
Union if any outside assistance should be desired.33

Organized labor also supported the strikers. As previously noted,
the local chapter of the Order of Railway Conductors unanimously voted
to support the boycott. The conductors' action was especially diffi­
cult, since they were ineligible for the fifty dollars per month stipend
from the national organization, which had not endorsed the strike.34
The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers modified its neutral stance of
June 27 and expressed its sympathy to the strikers, pending a decision
of the grand lodge.35 The local chapter of the Brotherhood of Railway
Trainmen faced a somewhat greater dilemma. W. A. Sheehan, Grand Secre­
tary and Treasurer of the B.R.T., forbade the chapter to strike. Refus­
ing to obey that order, the local opted to disband and support the
American Railway Union on the evening of July 2.36

The town's newspaper, the Livingston Post, expressed sympathy for
the A.R.U. on both a national and a local level. As early as June 28,
the Post's editor, Walter Anderson, commented:

The boycott is on in earnest, and no Pullman cars will be
allowed to pass over the various railroads of the country until
Pullman recognizes the truth of the maxim, "The laborer is

34Ibid.
35Helena Independent, no. 131 (June 30, 1894), p. 1.
36Ibid., no. 135 (July 3, 1894), p. 1; Anaconda Standard, no. 303
(July 3, 1894), p. 1.
worthy of his hire."

... It is not the province of the Post to sit in judgment on the action of the strikers. They are supposed to be more thoroughly posted in regard to their grievances than outsiders can possibly be. The railroad companies, if they act wisely, will go to the utmost limit of their ability in settling their grievances ...

Anderson also enthusiastically supported local efforts in the state:

The A.R.U. is going to make a clean sweep while they are about it, and the Post bids them God-Speed. The railroad boys have rights which the company must respect, and that they will win in the end hardly admits of a doubt.

Popular sympathy for the strikers was also evident in Bozeman, despite a strong current of opposition represented by the Avant-Courier. The town's mayor and other influential citizens publicly endorsed the strike at an open A.R.U. meeting on July 1. The Avant-Courier adamantly denied that those gentlemen represented the views of the town: "We believe our citizens generally are inclined to be non-committal."

The validity of the Courier's observations is questionable, however, since (1) the Anaconda Standard, with a local news bureau, felt that Bozeman generally endorsed the strike, and (2) the Courier's editor hysterically forecast that socialism and the destruction of organized capital would result from an A.R.U. victory. Further, the Courier ignored the loose, democratic structure of the American Railway Union and erroneously characterized its leader as "... Generalissimo Debs, whose authority over his subjects, the members of the American Railway

37Livingston Post, vol. 6, no. 12 (June 28, 1894), p. 2.
38Ibid., p. 3.
40Avant-Courier, no. 34 (July 14, 1894), p. 2.
Union, appears to be as absolute as that of the czar of Russia . . . "41

A second newspaper, the Bozeman Chronicle, espoused a more moderate and, probably, a more accurate position. While noting the damage to cattlemen and fruit growers, the Chronicle emphasized the strikers' restraint and their close identification "... with the interests of the city." Refusing to support the A.R.U.'s strike, however, the paper advised railroad employees to seek their relief through arbitration.42

In the state's principal mining region—including Butte, Anaconda, and Helena—the strike received substantial support from organized labor and the principal newspapers. On June 30, the Silverbow Trades and Labor Assembly extended moral and financial support to the A.R.U.43 The Butte Typographical Union, Number 126, fearing that an A.R.U. defeat would injure organized labor for years, resolved to "... tender to the American Railway Union the fullest measure of moral sympathy and pledges, if called upon, its financial support."44 Similarly, the Cigar Makers Union of Butte Pledged "[t]o extend to the American Railway Union our sympathy, and pledge ourselves to aid them in every honorable and lawful manner, both morally and financially."45 Finally, although the A.R.U. employees

41Ibid. Actually, the A.R.U. was rather loosely organized—a factor which hindered its effort in combating the well organized and highly centralized General Managers' Association—U.S. Strike Commission Report, pp. xxvi-xxvii.

42Bozeman Chronicle, vol. 12, no. 22 (July 5, 1894), p. 4.
43Butte Miner, vol. 31, no. 182 (July 1, 1894), p. 5.
44Anaconda Standard, no. 302 (July 2, 1894), p. 1.
of the Great Northern refused to join the strike, a large number sympathized with the strikers; one example of their concern occurred on July 10 when a number of employees refused to handle Montana Union freight, which had to be moved by wagon.  

In Anaconda, the Western Union operators struck on July 1 because the wires were being used for the transmission of railroad business.  Also, Reverend P. Lowry of Anaconda publicly endorsed the strike and warned his congregation that the success of organized labor's efforts to obtain a fair wage was imperative if the country hoped to avert class warfare and revolution.

The strikers enjoyed the sympathy, though not the overt support, of the area's newspapers. The Anaconda Standard, boasting the largest circulation in the state, provided complete national and regional coverage of the strike. Using handcars, the Standard's employees distributed the latest news throughout the state, thus keeping the various local chapters well informed.  By printing the full texts of resolutions, policy statements, etc., of A.R.U. positions (as well as those of the railroads), especially those counseling orderliness and restraint, the Standard helped allay exaggerated fears and popular hysteria throughout the state—in marked contrast to many national papers which fostered and

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46 Ibid., no. 311 (July 11, 1894), p. 6.


48 Anaconda Standard, no. 309 (July 9, 1894), p. 3.

49 On June 29, 1894, the Standard began its "handcar deliveries" to Billings, Livingston, Bozeman, Missoula, and smaller points on the Northern Pacific and Montana Union railroads—Ibid., no. 300 (June 30, 1894), p. 1.
encouraged those very attitudes.\textsuperscript{50} Though declining to publicly support the strike itself, the \textit{Standard} did defend the character of the strikers, declaring that they "... are showing constantly that they have the interests of the community at heart."\textsuperscript{51}

More sympathetic to the A.R.U. cause was the \textit{Butte Miner}, which demanded that Pullman consent to arbitration so that a rapid settlement could be reached.\textsuperscript{52} L. O. Leonard, a member of the American Railway Union, enthusiastically supported the strike in the first issue of the \textit{Railway Review} (formerly the \textit{Anaconda Review}).\textsuperscript{53}

A leading paper in the state, the \textit{Helena Independent}, rushed to endorse A.R.U. actions on June 26:

\begin{quote}
We hope that the American Railway Union will not let up in its boycott of the Pullman Car company until that corporation will agree to pay decent wages to its porters ...\textsuperscript{54}
\end{quote}

A week later, after the conflict had paralyzed most of the state's rail system, the editor calmly pointed out:

\begin{quote}
The railway employees of the country as a whole are a body of working men of whom any country might be proud. They are temperate, industrious, intelligent, patriotic citizens, and it
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{51}\textit{Anaconda Standard}, no. 301 (July 1, 1894), p. 1.

\textsuperscript{52}\textit{Butte Miner}, no. 179 (June 28, 1894), p. 4; \textit{Ibid.}, no. 182 (July 1, 1894), p. 4.


\textsuperscript{54}\textit{Helena Independent}, no. 127 (June 26, 1894), p. 4.
is highly creditable to them that among so many hundred thousand, with all the excitement and confusion attendant upon a big strike there are so few cases of breach of the law or destruction of property. Whatever differences of opinion the American public may hold as to the merits or demerits of the boycott, all will cheerfully bear tribute to the dignity and orderliness with which it is being conducted.55

In Missoula, near the western border of the state, sentiments were a bit more divided. The farmers of the surrounding areas, including the Grass Valley, Frenchtown, and the Bitter Root Valley, quickly met and passed sympathetic resolutions offering substantial donations of beef, potatoes, flour, and bacon, to the strikers.56 As a result, the Weekly Missoulian reported:

The Garden City strikers are very much encouraged at the expressions of sympathy and offers of substantial assistance that are being showered upon them from all sides and feel, in consequence, that they are in an excellent position to stay out and make a long, winning fight.57

Other support came from the local American Federation of Labor, which adopted a resolution extending moral sympathy of the A.R.U.58

However, labor support was not unanimous on the Rocky Mountain Division of the Northern Pacific. Although an estimated 40 percent of the Northern Pacific's employees had willingly walked off their jobs and, thereby, paralyzed the road, the remainder (including engineers, conductors, brakemen, dispatchers, operators, and clerks) did not support the

55 Ibid., no. 134 (July 3, 1894), p. 4.
56 Weekly Missoulian, no. 27 (July 4, 1894), p. 3; Helena Independent, no. 134 (July 2, 1894), p. 1.
57 Weekly Missoulian, no. 28 (July 11, 1894), p. 1.
58 Ibid.
Particularly resentful were the members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the Order of Railway Conductors, and the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, who passed resolutions expressing their neutrality and lack of grievances against the Northern Pacific.

The Missoulian remained fairly impartial in its reporting—a stance which was criticized by a number of readers—although traces of hostility occasionally appeared in its columns. The paper defended the conduct of "... striking employes [who] entertain no desire to injure any of the company's property ..." However, the Missoulian also nostalgically bemoaned the loss of the good old days when railroads were an unknown quantity and strikes and other labor disturbances considered out of order and decidedly foreign to the then prevailing custom in the northwest.

Generally, then, Montanans sympathized with the strikers, though sympathies were divided over the strike itself. Due, perhaps, to the prevalent disgust with railroads and to the corresponding increase of Populist sentiment, criticism of the strike was extremely muted. In fact, as previously noted, many groups, such as small farmers and a number of labor organizations who faced potential economic disaster, were among the most vocal supporters of the Pullman strike in the state.

The strikers themselves, smarting from wage reductions and encouraged by the Great Northern victory, were certainly quite militant—
perhaps too much so for the harried Eugene V. Debs who had tried, unsuccessfully, to limit the conflict to the cause of the Pullman workers and the preservation of the American Railway Union.

However, it would be altogether too easy to overstate the strikers' and the state's militancy or sentiments. For that militancy was of a very moderate and restrained variety. For example, in virtually every strike center in the state, the local chapter immediately organized its own patrols to protect railroad property. As a result, little or no property was damaged or destroyed prior to the arrival of federal troops.

Further, American Railway Union spokesmen and their vocal supporters defended the strike on the basis of American traditions. Indeed, they argued that unless organized labor's efforts proved successful, the traditional American social and political fabric would be torn by class warfare—an event which they decried as vociferously as the most frightened of alarmists.

Something of this general mood could be seen in the communities' Fourth of July celebrations—universally reported, in the best style of western "boosterism," as the best and most spectacular of the state's history. The Missoula Racing Association held a special two-day meet (July 4-5) "... as there is not much else to do these days but to attend races and watch the hand cars come in ..."^3

That same Independence Day, Attorney-General Richard Olney defended the introduction of federal troops into the conflict and pontificated: "We have been brought to the ragged edge of anarchy, and it is time to see whether the law is sufficiently strong to prevent this condition of

^3Ibid.
affairs . . ." Missoula, like other small communities throughout the state, simply enjoyed the holiday, while every "anarchist"

not engaged in the arduous duty of grinding out the American Railway union's daily paper, spent a pleasant day at the race track, the picnic grounds, or in chasing the delusive mountain trout . . .

In the Butte/Anaconda area, where even greater community support existed for the strike, the popular mood has hardly revolutionary. Rather, the local American Railway Union chapter sent a voluntary, unpaid crew to rescue a circus train stranded near Lima, Montana (the southernmost Montana community on the Montana Union road). In return, the grateful Great Syndicate Shows and Paris Hippodrome held an A. R. U. benefit performance on July 7 in Butte. The Butte, Anaconda, and Pacific Railroad, which serviced the local mines and smelters, provided transportation at reduced rates so the area's residents could attend. The American Railway Union affair was a great success with over twelve hundred spectators attending, including five hundred Butte, Anaconda, and Pacific commuters.67

64Quoted in Lindsey, Pullman Strike, p. 245, from the New York Times (July 5, 1894), p. 2.
65Weekly Missoulian, no. 28 (July 11, 1894), p. 5. The Helena Independent, no. 137 (July 6, 1894), p. 5, reported similar activities and celebrations in Helena, Glendive, and Bozeman.
66Butte Miner, no. 183 (July 2, 1894), p. 2.
67Anaconda Standard, no. 307 (July 7, 1894), p. 3; Ibid., no. 308 (July 8, 1894), p. 3.
CHAPTER V

MOBILIZATION ON THE NORTHERN PACIFIC

Officials of the Northern Pacific road reacted quickly to the paralyzing strike in Montana. In an attempt to arouse public opinion against the American Railway Union, J. D. Finn, Superintendent of the Montana Division, informed Sheriff Conrow of Livingston on July 1 that "... the strikers on the Northern Pacific railroad in certain localities are destroying the property of the company..." Finn then demanded that Conrow protect the Northern Pacific's property in Park County from this threat or assume liability for the anticipated damages.\(^1\) Finn's statements were probably designed for propaganda purposes, since there had been little or no property destruction in that area.

Unwilling or unable to defeat the strikers in a private arena, Northern Pacific officials, like the General Managers' Association of Chicago, turned to the federal courts for support. Finn and W. H. Brimson, Superintendent of the Rocky Mountain Division, met in Helena on July 2, where they consulted with the law firm of Cullen and Toole.\(^2\) The

\(^1\)Anaconda Standard, vol. 5, no. 302 (July 2, 1894), p. 1. Finn's charges of property destruction by the strikers were never proven—a fact which tends to support the American Railway Union's allegation that the Northern Pacific was engaging in a propaganda campaign to incite popular sympathies against the strikers.

following day they filed in the United States District Court for relief, which was immediately granted by Judge Hiram Knowles. In a decision strikingly similar to those being delivered throughout the West, Knowles discarded the mantle of judicial neutrality and held:

... that the said receivers be ... authorized to discharge all persons heretofore in their employ within the district of Montana, who shall for the period of twenty four hours after the publication of this order, refuse to perform the duties for which they are respectively employed, and the said receivers are further authorized and employed to take the places of the persons so discharged upon such terms and conditions as to the said receivers may seem meet and proper until the further order of the court ... and it is further ordered that all persons be forbidden and prohibited from intimidating or interfering in any manner with all persons who are now or who may hereafter be employed by said receivers.³

Knowles also ordered United States Marshalls to arrest anyone who attempted to interfere with railroad property or the running of trains as well as anyone who advised or aided in such actions. That same day, Knowles issued a similar injunctions and instructions to cover the Montana Union/Union Pacific road.⁴

The stricken railroads now possessed the legal tools to defeat the strike, although they lacked the physical capability to fully utilize those tools. Pursuing a strategy of confrontation, the railroads refused to listen to American Railway Union demands, while they intensified efforts for even more governmental aid to defeat the insurgent strikers. Both the judiciary and the military joined the cry for federal intervention in the West.

During the first days of July 1894, the United States District

³Ibid., no. 135 (July 4, 1894), p. 8.
⁴Ibid.
Court Judges of Montana and Idaho formally petitioned Attorney-General Olney for federal troops. Arnold Paul has offered an explanation for such judicial actions, which occurred throughout the country in the summer of 1894. During the early 1890s, a conservative-oriented Constitutional revolution replaced the traditional ideal of juristic neutrality with the more dynamic concept of the "new judicialism." The new approach, in which the Pullman Strike marked a significant precedent, produced an activist judiciary allied with the federal executive to defend the rights of property.

To the conservative mind of the 1890's, subject to growing fears of unruly majorities and class conflict, the decision of the American Railway Union to press ahead with a boycott, despite all considerations of contractual and property rights and public necessity, smacked of the most irresponsible radicalism, of anarchy and "communism."

To meet this threat, which assumed "... the aspects of class warfare, an alarmed legal conservatism, unfavorable to the strike to begin with, intervened in strength and broke the strike." To a significant extent, Judge Knowles was a staunch member of this alarmed, property-conscious judiciary. He had used the legal powers of the federal government to support the railroads in the December 1893 wage dispute. In the summer of 1894, his judicial activism, or

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5 Richard Olney to Secretary of War (July 6, 1894), U.S., Navy and Old Army Branch, Military Archives Division, Records of the Adjutant General's Office Pertaining to the Chicago Pullman Strike of 1894, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Record Group 94.

6 Paul, Conservative Crisis and the Rule of Law, pp. 1-3.

7 Ibid., p. 136.

8 Ibid., p. 132.

9 Judge Knowles was probably influenced by Judge James G. Jenkins'
partisanship, increased when he delivered the July 3 injunctions.

The railroads in Montana, like those throughout the Trans-Mississippi West, found a second and powerful ally in the United States Army. On July 3, 1894, Brigadier General Wesley Merritt reported that, despite the federal court orders,

The situation on the Northern Pacific road west of Fargo shows no signs of improvement. No trains running. Crews that the rail-road authorities engage for services refuse to work unless adequate protection is afforded them. The protection of United States court as now offered does not in the laborers' opinion secure them against danger.

I am not able to send out the paymaster for the bi-monthly payments nor can I ship supplies to the posts on the line of the Northern Pacific.10

Three days later, Merritt recommended to Secretary of War Daniel S. LaMont that he be allowed to use troops to "remove the obstruction" on the Northern Pacific road, since use of the operating Great Northern system would result "... in a derangement of the system of supplies and increased expense to the government ..."11

At a higher level, the railroads appealed to and found ready support from Major General J. M. Scholfield, Commanding General of the United States Army. In a series of communications on July 6, James

(United States District Court at Milwaukee, Wisconsin), December 22, 1893, ruling on a Northern Pacific petition. Knowles' decision was nearly identical to Jenkins' order, which authorized the Northern Pacific receivers to reduce wages and enjoined employees to "absolutely desist and refrain" from harming or interfering "in any manner, by force, threats, or otherwise" with whoever wanted to continue or begin work on the Northern Pacific road; Ibid., pp. 116-18.

10Telegram, Brigadier General Merritt to Adjutant General, United States Army (July 3, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.

11Telegram, Merritt to Secretary of War Daniel S. LaMont (July 6, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.
McNaught, counsel for the Northern Pacific receivers, informed Schofield and Secretary of War LaMont

... that if troops could be furnished to accompany mail trains from St. Paul to Fort Keogh and Missoula ... that road could be opened ... and the strike settled on the entire system within a week ... 12

McNaught further suggested that the government could dispense with the normal legal procedures for employing federal troops, since "... the conspiracy and lawlessness is so widespread and so far reaching and of such a character as to render ... requisitions of Federal Courts and State governors unnecessary ..." 13

The Cleveland Administration moved swiftly. On the evening of July 6—the same day that the Northern Pacific had petitioned for military intervention—Cleveland ordered Schofield to open the Northern Pacific on the principal ground that it was a post route and a military road. Schofield's orders to Merritt and Brigadier General Otis, Commander of the Department of the Columbia, contained the official rationale for armed intention:

In view of the fact, as substantiated by communications received from the Department of Justice, from your official reports and from other reliable sources, that, by reason of unlawful obstructions, communications or assemblages of persons, it has become impracticable, in the judgment of the President, to enforce, by the ordinary course of judicial proceeding, the laws of the United States in the states of North Dakota and Montana along the line of the Northern Pacific Railroad, so as

12 James McNaught to Major General John M. Schofield (July 6, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office. Schofield apparently agreed that the normal legal procedures necessary for the employment of federal troops were inappropriate or "unnecessary," since he urged the introduction of U.S. troops before the various states had a chance to prove their ability to preserve order.

13 Ibid.
to secure to the United States the right guaranteed by Section eleven of the Act Approved July 2, 1894, entitled "An Act granting lands to aid in the construction of a railroad and telegraph line from Lake Superior to Puget Sound on the Pacific Coast, by the Northern Route," to the use of said railroad as a "post route and a military road, subject to the use of the United States for postal, military, naval and all other government service," you are directed by the President to employ the military force under your command, so as to give such protection to said railroad as will prevent any unlawful and forcible obstruction to the regular and orderly operation of said road, "for postal, military, and naval and all other government services," within the limits of said States.

General Merritt, moving west from St. Paul, and General Otis, moving east from Seattle, then conducted a gigantic pincer operation, which encompassed the entire Northern Pacific route from Lake Superior to Puget Sound. The United States Department of Justice aided the military forces by supplying U.S. Marshalls to arrest and hold the anticipated prisoners for the actions of federal courts. Schofield also encouraged the departmental commanders to work very closely with Northern Pacific officials throughout the operation.

On July 7, Merritt dispatched the first troop train from St. Paul. The train, manned by two companies of regulars and carrying four work crews, entered Montana at Glendive two days later (July 9) and stayed in

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14 Telegram, Schofield to Merritt (July 6, 1894), U.S., Navy and Old Army Branch, Military Archives Division, Letters Sent by the Headquarters of the Army (Main Series), 1828-1903, vol. 32 (Micro-copy 857, Roll 13), National Archives, Washington, D.C., Record Group 108; Schofield to Brigadier General Otis (July 7, 1894), Ibid.

15 Telegram, Schofield to Merritt (July 7, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office; Telegram, Schofield to Otis (July 7, 1894), Letters Sent by the Headquarters of the Army.

16 Telegram, Schofield to McNaught (July 7, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.
Billings that night. Fifty troopers of the Tenth Cavalry from nearby Fort Custer had arrived to pacify the area on the previous day (July 8). Commenting on their presence, the Billings Weekly Times observed:

Evidently they had been warned of danger at Billings, and the peaceful inhabitants who were drawn there by curiosity were surprised to see the warlike preparations which had been made to resist the expected uprising of our citizens . . . . It reminded one of what we read of a trainload of Cossacks entering a Polish town, more than the progress of our own army through a loyal territory. 18

Local army commanders made similar warlike preparations throughout the state on July 7-8 to the surprise of an amazed citizenry. By the evening of July 8, federal troops from nearby posts had occupied every major rail center and bridge between Glendive and Helena although they bypassed the Butte/Anaconda area where violent resistance was anticipated. 19 Farther west, troops also occupied Missoula and the surrounding area.

17 Telegram, Merritt to Schofield (July 12, 1894), Ibid.
18 Weekly Times (Billings, Montana), vol. 4, no. 13 (July 12, 1894), p. 8.
19 The Army's apprehensions concerning the Butte/Anaconda area probably stemmed in large measure from that area's enthusiastic support for the Coxeyite activities of "General" William Hogan, who led a force of over five hundred men, which seized a Northern Pacific train in Butte on April 24, 1894. Thomas A. Clinch, "Coxey's Army in Montana," Montana: The Magazine of Western History, vol. 15, no. 4 (Autumn 1965), pp. 2-11, passim; see also Eggert, Richard Olney, pp. 119-25.

The details of local troop movements may be found in (1) U.S., Congress, Senate, Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the Year of 1894, S. Exec. Doc. 1, vol. 1, part 2, 53rd Cong., 3d sess., 1894, pp. 120-30, 153-57; and (2) the Records of United States Army Commands, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Record Group 93, Letters Sent File (Fort Missoula, Montana), 1894-94; and (3) Returns from United States Military Posts, 1800-1915, Micro-copy 617, National Archives, Washington, D.C.: Roll Number 277 (Fort Custer, Montana), Roll Number 573 (Fort Keogh, Montana), and Roll Number 798 (Fort Assiniboine, Montana).
During the occupation, an element of racism surfaced among the strike's embittered supporters. The Helena Independent reported that a large number of Missoulians felt that, although the use of troops was unnecessary, they "... would much prefer if any are used to guard property, that they be white troops." However, such attitudes were not universal. Indeed, the A.R.U. chapter in Livingston, widely regarded as the state's most militant group, had formerly denounced the Chicago convention's decision to bar Blacks from the American Railway Union.

As the troops appeared, Cleveland issued a Presidential Proclamation on July 9 explaining their presence. Arguing that it had become "... impracticable to enforce the laws of the United States in North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Wyoming, Colorado, and California, and the Territories of Utah and New Mexico," Cleveland introduced federal troops

... for the purpose of enforcing ... the laws of the United States, and protecting property belonging to the United States or under its protection, and of preventing obstructions of the United States Mails and of commerce ..., of securing to the United States the right guaranteed by law to the use of such roads for postal, military, naval, and other governmental service ...

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22 The full text of the July 9 proclamation may be found in a variety of sources including General John M. Schofield's autobiography, Forty-Six Years in the Army (New York, New York: The Century Co., 1897), pp. 511-12, and the July 10 issue of the Helena Independent. Most state papers carried at least a synopsis of the order, explaining the presence of federal troops in their communities.

Historians have debated the degree to which Cleveland was
Cleveland further argued that all persons participating in "... or in any way connected..." with the now unlawful "obstruction" of the affected railroads to return to their homes by 3:00 P.M., July 10.23

Many departmental commanders, such as General Merritt of the Department of the Dakota, were conservative by temperament and receptive to railroad cries for aid. More significant, from the standpoint of national policymaking, was General Schofield's position. As noted by Harvey Wish, Schofield, as commander of the Army, strongly favored responsible for this policy. In his 1923 biography of Richard Olney, Henry James argued that Cleveland, intensely interested in the Pullman affair, formed a close alliance with Attorney-General Olney and discarded the states' rights "shibboleth" of the Democratic Party in an attempt to deal with the problems of an industrial, urban republic—i.e., to ensure a railroad victory over the American Railway Union (Henry James, Richard Olney and His Public Service [Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1923], pp. 43-55). Horace Samuel Merrill's biography of Cleveland extended James' thesis and argued that Cleveland was the prime mover in the introduction of federal power to the dispute (Horace Samuel Merrill, Bourbon Leader: Grover Cleveland and the Democratic Party [Boston, Massachusetts: Little, Brown, & Co., 1957], pp. 193-4).

Allan Nevins sharply disagreed with James' assertion, suggesting that "... Cleveland wished to avoid any drastic Federal intervention. But his impetuous and hot-tempered Attorney-General, Olney, who had been closely identified with railroad interests, determined to smash the strike..." (Nevins, ed., Letters of Grover Cleveland, pp. 242-43, and Allan Nevins, Grover Cleveland, A Study in Courage [New York, New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1932], pp. 614-28). In a recent biography of Olney, Gerald Eggert agreed that Olney was the principal figure in the new federal policy. However, Eggert argued that, although Olney viewed the strike as illegal, he was extremely reluctant to use the Sherman Anti-Trust Act to break the strike. Eggert also noted that Olney later recanted and came to favor compulsory arbitration, rather than federal troops, as the proper means for settling major labor disputes (Eggert, Richard Olney, pp. 134-62, passim).

23Ibid.
military intervention to stave off a railroad defeat.\textsuperscript{24} Further, as revealed in a July 9 communication, General Schofield was the author of the July 9 Proclamation, which was specifically designed to justify intervention and a state of quasi-martial law in all affected states and territories.\textsuperscript{25}

In his autobiography, Schofield revealed that his primary concern had been a military one. He damned the Great Northern Strike, the Coxeyites, and the Pullman Strike, together, blaming them for

\textit{The lawless interruption of traffic on the Pacific roads [which] had continued from the latter part of April till early in July . . . in spite of all the efforts to enforce the laws . . . by the ordinary proceedings . . .} \textsuperscript{26}

Arguing that the transcontinental railroads had been subsidized and built "\textit{... mainly as a military bond between the Atlantic States and the Pacific States . . .}," Schofield felt that there was no question as to the legality of intervention in the name of national and military security.\textsuperscript{27}

Within three days (July 7-10), the federal executive branch, at the urgent requests of the railway interests, had decided to extend the use of federal power into the hinterland of the American Northwest. In Montana, there had been no violence and little or no destruction of


\textsuperscript{25}Schofield to Cleveland (July 9, 1894), Letters Sent by the Headquarters of the Army.

\textsuperscript{26}Schofield, Forty-Six Years, p. 507.

\textsuperscript{27}Ibid., p. 509.
railroad property, but Army units mobilized, determined to preserve what was perceived as the national security by opening the Northern Pacific road and checking the expected déluge of anarchistic violence.

Surprisingly, the state government made no outcry. Though there had been no rioting and, therefore, no official requests for federal troops, Governor Rickards refused to protest Cleveland's disregard of the traditional state prerogative of preserving order within its own borders. The Republican governor's silence contrasted sharply with the outcries by the governors of Illinois, Colorado, Missouri, Oregon, and Idaho, although those executives admittedly represented a minority sentiment among state governors. Most state executives, like Rickards, remained non-committal, confining themselves to proclamations which warned their citizens to preserve order and desist from any interference with railroad traffic.  

28Lindsey, Pullman Strike, pp. 261-63.
CHAPTER VI

OCCUPATION AND CONFRONTATION

Violence did erupt in the state after the introduction of federal troops. As the state government remained passive and federal troops, injunctions, and proclamations, flooded the state, bridges were burned and a major military-civilian confrontation occurred at Livingston, the strike's center.

On July 9, while making their daily paper delivery to Missoula, the Anaconda Standard's handcars discovered that the unoccupied Gold Creek bridge had been burned. An anonymous party or parties had also attempted to fire the depot at Victor, Montana, located on a small, unoccupied branch line servicing the Bitter Root Valley.1

The authorities never discovered the identity of the arsonists. Certainly, it was never established that they were members of the American Railway Union. Possessing very little evidence, the area's papers, unlike their national counterparts, declined to speculate on the person or persons responsible for the arson. Actually, such speculations would have been extremely hazardous, since there was a large number of Populist farmers, disgruntled Coxeyites, miners, and unemployed transients, within the state who were hostile to the Northern Pacific.

General Merritt characterized the strikers' attitudes fairly accurately, noting that there was "considerable feeling" in Montana, but that he did not expect any violence. However, he did allege, predictably perhaps, that the strikers were responsible for the burning of the Gold Creek bridge.²

Aside from that unproven suspicion, Merritt's general view was valid. The strikers reacted swiftly, vehemently, and non-violently. In Livingston, despite Knowles' injunction, the approaching troop train, and Cleveland's proclamation, Superintendent Finn was unable to enlist a single man to serve on the approaching St. Paul train.³ The strikers then unanimously denounced the use of troops and deputy marshalls as unnecessary, since they had never and would never "... destroy a dollar's worth of company property ..."⁴

Similarly, the Livingston Post denounced armed intervention as an attempt to erect a "military despotism." The Post charged—correctly, as later investigations would reveal—that the General Managers' Association and its imitator, the Northern Pacific, had obstructed the mails by attaching Pullman cars to mail trains, thereby providing a legal basis (albeit a flimsy one) for the "omnibus injunctions." Calling on Governor Rickards to protest Cleveland's actions, the Post charged that such intervention violated Article III, Section 31 of the new state's constitution, which stated that

²Telegram, Brigadier General Wesley Merritt to Major General John M. Schofield (July 9, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General’s Office.


No armed person or persons shall be brought into this state for the preservation of the peace or the suppression of domestic violence, except upon the application of the legislative assembly or of the governor when the legislative assembly cannot be convened.5

American Railway Union members and their supporters registered similar protests throughout the state. Representative of statewide strike opinion, the A.R.U. called a public mass meeting in the state capital on the evening of July 9. The speakers included A.R.U. leaders from Butte, Helena, and surrounding areas. Addressing a large audience, which included many non-union residents and "hundreds of ladies," Joseph Oker of Marysville warned: "Discontent could not be conquered by force. Strikes were but a manifestation of discontent and unhappiness." John H. Husely of Helena compared the strike to a crusade, "... a battle for supremacy between dollars and cents on one side and humanity on the other."6

The principal speaker was J. H. Calderhead, leader of the powerful Butte chapter of the American Railway Union. Explaining and defending the strike, Calderhead emphasized the moral issue involved rather than wage demands. Comparing the strike to the abolitionist movement of the Civil War, he declared: "When the condition of affairs at Pullman are such that the men who worked there can no longer stand it, it is our duty to take up the fight and carry it through." Arguing that the strike was inaugurated out of a moral necessity, Calderhead, nevertheless, reiterated that neither he nor the A.R.U. advocated violence of any sort. Turning to the immediate issue of federal intervention, he emotionally declared:

5Livingston Post, vol. 6, no. 14 (July 12, 1894), p. 2.
6Helena Independent, no. 141 (July 10, 1894), p. 5.
The strong arm of the government has been laid on us. A proclamation has been issued preparatory to the declaration of martial law. We believe this opportunity will be used by the plutocracy to create a standing army and erect a military despotism. 

The following day (July 10), a dramatic confrontation occurred in Livingston between the civilian populace and the military forces aboard the westbound St. Paul train. One of the principals was Captain B. G. Lockwood, who was in command of the troops accompanying the train.

Later, in sworn testimony defending his actions, Lockwood disclosed his apprehensions of impending violence prior to the train's arrival at Livingston. Though no serious incident had occurred during the first day of operations, Lockwood and his troops had faced insults and threats upon their arrival in Billings. The next day (July 10), after leaving Billings, Lockwood stated that he had "... frequently heard strikers along the road call out that at Livingston [our] arms would be taken away and the trains destroyed ...". Lockwood's second-in-command, Captain J. C. Ord, corroborated Lockwood's fears of impending conflict in Livingston.

General Superintendent Kimberly, who was aboard the train, and Divisional Superintendent Finn, who met the train outside of town, helped increase the commander's apprehensions. Kimberly and Finn warned Lockwood "... that there would certainly be trouble ..." in the town.

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7Ibid.


9Testimony of Captain J. C. Ord, Ibid., p. 188.
and that he must take the necessary precautions.\(^\text{10}\)

Expecting violence, Lockwood's command entered the town. At the depot they encountered a large crowd of six to seven hundred people, including about 150 strikers, a large number of women and children, and the principal elected officials of Livingston.\(^\text{11}\) Mistaking the crowd's temper and anticipating a riot, Lockwood ordered his four companies, which were armed with loaded carbines and bayonets, to form a cordon around the train and push the crowd back "with guns if necessary."\(^\text{12}\)

Lockwood then dismounted in a state of extreme agitation and alarm,\(^\text{13}\) as noted by a large number of witnesses in sworn testimony. He reportedly struck an old man in the stomach and rushed about frantically trying to move the crowd farther back.

Obeying orders, one of the soldiers struck I. F. Toland, a Northern Pacific foreman and a leading figure in the American Railway Union, in the stomach with the butt of his rifle. Toland later recounted: "I told him that I was in a public street, and I was in the neighborhood of twenty feet from the track when I called him a son of a bitch ..."\(^\text{14}\) Lockwood then rushed up and struck Toland in the head with the flat of his sabre and threatened to "... run him through ..." if he did not

\(^\text{10}\)Testimony of Lockwood, \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 182-83.

\(^\text{11}\)This figure is a rough estimate, since witnesses disagreed as to the actual number. I. F. Toland suggested the six to seven hundred figure, and it is quoted here because most of the witnesses' estimates fell within this general area.


\(^\text{13}\)\textit{Ibid.}.

\(^\text{14}\)Testimony of I. F. Toland, \textit{Ibid.}, p. 50.
move farther back. Pulling back his sword, Lockwood inadvertently struck a small boy (none of the individuals were seriously hurt, although Toland required a number of stitches). Later, defending his actions, Lockwood argued: "Seeing that if force was not used, bloodshed would probably follow, I struck the ringleader . . ."16

After Lockwood's assault, the crowd's temper became menacing and ugly.17 Spying some non-union, imported workers on the other side of the depot, the crowd surrounded them, hurling insults and threats. Fearing for their lives, the workers drew revolvers, whereupon the crowd charges. All but one of the men broke through to the protection of a detachment of soldiers, and the chief of police was able to protect the remaining man.18

Having expected a riotous confrontation, Lockwood had overreacted and nearly precipitated a riot. In one of his more sensible actions, Lockwood left the more sober minded Captain O'Neill in charge of a detachment and continued westward.

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15Ibid.

16Testimony of Lockwood, Ibid., p. 182.

17Frank S. Webster, a real estate and insurance agent in Livingston, rented a hall to the A.R.U. and attended its meetings. Commenting on the Lockwood incident, Webster testified: "... I know that the American Railway Union had gotten their men stationed along the track, it cost them $150 per day to guard the property here; they had men stationed at the depot and at the bridge and I was told when the train came in it would not meet with any violence at all, that they didn't intend to to anything, but after that gentleman was hit--he happened to be one of the leading men of the American Railway Union--that seemed to stir everything up . . ."--Testimony of Frank S. Webster, Ibid., p. 100.

18Helena Independent, no. 142 (July 11, 1894), p. 1.
To this point, discussion of the Lockwood incident has been largely confined to the military's view of the atmosphere in Livingston. It seems worthwhile, however, to consider the town's state of mind as perceived by its leaders and citizens.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the July 10 incident was the townspeople's view of the day's events. Most of the passengers and military personnel on the train viewed the crowd surrounding the depot as a "threatening mob." The majority of Livingston's residents, including their principal elected officials, disagreed and substantiated I. F. Toland's statement. They felt that the crowd was actually rather calm and certainly peaceful, while Lockwood was nearly hysterical.

Livingston's mayor, Frank Beley, stated that Lockwood's attack on an old man and Toland was entirely unprovoked. Further, when the mayor urged Lockwood to restrain himself, the agitated captain retorted that he was a "... son of a bitch ..." and that "I am running this town ..."19

Similarly, H. J. Miller, the Park County Attorney, testified: "None of us anticipated any trouble ..." Since the crowd was not violent, the local U.S. Marshall and his deputies, whose aid Lockwood refused, were sufficient to handle any disturbance--federal troops were not needed to preserve the civil order, which to that point was unbroken.20

A. R. Joy, ex-mayor and a local attorney, also corroborated the fact of the crowd's peaceful demeanor. Observing that there had been no


20Testimony of H. J. Miller, Ibid., pp. 2-11.
violence or property destruction in the preceding two weeks, Joy noted that only a small percentage of the assembled crowd were strikers anyway; the rest were local businessmen, women, children, and other curious spectators.21

The testimony of Beley, Miller, and Joy represented the views of the Livingston community, which expressed its outrage at a mass meeting on the night of July 10. Over a thousand angry citizens filed into Livingston's opera house to listen to speeches by Joy, Miller, and H. B. Kelley (president of the local American Railway Union chapter).22

At that meeting, nine leading citizens, including a district judge and the county attorney, drafted a telegram to Governor Rickards and Senator T. C. Power protesting Lockwood's actions. Newspapers throughout the state, joining in the general outcry, printed the telegram in toto:

To-day a mail train in charge of soldiers, commanded by Captain Lockwood, stopped here and many citizens through curiosity, were at the station, and all were quiet and unarmed. The captain, without cause, struck an unoffending citizen on the head with his sabre while standing on the public street, seriously wounding him, and the captain used vile and profane language in the presence of ladies, and publicly insulted our mayor. Our community feels greatly outraged.23

21 Testimony of A. R. Joy, ibid., pp. 16-17.

22 Helena Independent, no. 142 (July 11, 1894), p. 1. Although a majority of Livingston's residents were outraged by Lockwood's actions, a few supported him. Representing this dissenting view were George R. Milburn (Judge, 7th District Court of Montana), G. L. Lockwood (taxidermist), Dr. R. Alton, and W. F. Sheard (gunsmith)—"Lockwood Investigation," Records of the Adjutant General's Office, pp. 240-63, passim.

23 Helena Independent, no. 142 (July 11, 1894), p. 1; the telegram was also enclosed in other communications: (1) Telegram, Governor John Rickards to President Cleveland (July 11, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office, and (2) Telegram, Schofield to Brigadier General Merritt (July 11, 1894), Letters Sent by the Headquarters of the Army. The signatories were Frank Henry, H. J. Miller, John T. Smith, Allan R. Joy, George Wright, L. M. Leply, J. P. King, James S. Thompson and
Both Senator Power and Governor Rickards forwarded the telegram to President Cleveland and General Schofield the next day. Rickards informed the President that

Emanating from prominent and reliable gentlemen, the telegram is entitled to prompt and careful consideration. In the interests of our citizens, as well as for the general good of the public, I respectfully ask that the statements made in the foregoing telegram be thoroughly investigated in such manner as your judgment may direct.24

On July 11, Schofield ordered General Merritt to investigate the incident and impose the appropriate disciplinary measures.25

In the days following the Lockwood incident, federal troops completed the occupation of the Northern Pacific road. While completing the operation, troop trains faced no major obstructions by the civilian populace, although demonstrations and hostility surfaced in most areas. One such incident occurred in Missoula on July 11. There, a crowd of two hundred jeered the arriving eastbound train. An unidentified person hurled a brick at the conductor, whereupon Captain Loughborough, commander of the train, forced the crowd back with bayonets. However, there were no injuries on either side.26

The same day, Rickards issued a proclamation designed to halt or apprehend arsonists bent on stopping the troop trains. The governor offered a thousand dollar reward for information leading to the arrest of J. E. Swindlehurst.

24 Telegram, Rickards to Cleveland (July 11, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.

25 Telegram, Schofield to Merritt (July 11, 1894), Letters Sent by the Headquarters of the Army.

26 Anaconda Standard, no. 312 (July 12, 1894), p. 1.
and conviction of anyone who burned or destroyed any "... valuable structure belonging to any railroad company in this state, used, occupied, and necessary for the operation of such road ...".27

The July 11 proclamation did not stop property destruction. Anonymous persons burned at least a dozen minor crossings and trestles during the following week. On July 17, a passenger train was dynamited two miles west of Missoula. Fortunately, no one was seriously injured in the incident, which the American Railway Union emphatically condemned.28

However, none of these events, all of which were criticized by local A.R.U. chapters, seriously impaired the opening or operation of the Northern Pacific. The most serious incident was the July 9 burning of the Gold Creek bridge, but it was quickly repaired and caused only a slight delay to the westbound federal troops.

With the military forces patrolling the Northern Pacific line, General Manager Kendrick sensed victory and offered Northern Pacific employees their old positions if they applied before noon, July 15. However, Kendrick warned that his road would not rehire everyone:

Men who have fomented disturbances, who have participated in

27 The complete text of Rickard's July 11, 1894, proclamation was printed in the July 12, 1894, issue of the Helena Independent, p. 5.

28 Weekly Missoulian, vol. 25, no. 29 (July 18, 1894), p. 4; Helena Independent, no. 149 (July 18, 1894), p. 1. On August 11, 1894, six men (Fred Nickols, Robert Steele, Charles Flynn, John Delaney, M. G. Walker, and Cahill Wilson) were arrested in connection with the incident and were charged with (1) tearing up railroad track, (2) assault with intent to kill and murder, and (3) burglary. However, the court dismissed all charges against all of the suspects (State of Montana v. Frederick Nickols, et. al., General Index Direct, vol. 1, nos. 211, 212, 213, Missoula County Court House, Missoula, Montana.)
violence, or in destruction of railroad property, who have
counselled disobedience to the rules of this road, who have
interfered with and sought to prevent men from performing ser­
VICES, or in other words "agitators" will not be acceptable.29

In a July 15 telegram to General Schofield, James McNaught, counsel for
the Northern Pacific, disclosed that the Northern Pacific's definition
of "agitator" included anyone who refused to renounce his membership in
the American Railway Union.30 The road anticipated that switchmen and
firemen would constitute the largest segment of such undesirables, but
McNaught felt the Northern Pacific "... could easily supply their
places with non-union labor"31 imported from eastern and midwestern
urban centers.

Faced with federal and state injunctions, imported non-union labor,
and the presence of federal troops and marshalls, many strikers accepted
defeat and the Northern Pacific's offer. The more skilled workers, such
as engineers and conductors, began applying for their old positions all
along the line, and the Northern Pacific was able to announce the resump­
tion of normal passenger and freight operations on July 17.32

Predictably, Livingston was a major exception—not one employee,
whether an A.R.U. member or not, applied before Kendrick's deadline.33

29Telegram, General Manager J. W. Kendrick to Depot Manager (Helena,
Montana) W. W. Stuart (July 13, 1894), Helena Independent, no. 145 (July
14, 1894), p. 8.

30Telegram, James McNaught, counsel for the Northern Pacific Rail­
road, to Schofield (July 13, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's
Office.

31Helena Independent, no. 148 (July 17, 1894), p. 8.

32Ibid.

33Ibid., p. 1.
However, both the railroad and the military authorities anticipated only minor difficulties on the Northern Pacific line. On July 17, McNaught informed General Schofield that "... striking employes are daily and rapidly sending in their applications," and that the Northern Pacific would have little problem in replacing recalcitrant laborers with non-union men from St. Paul. 34 On July 17, General Otis reported the line clear from Portland to Missoula. 35 Similarly, General Merritt informed national headquarters that the Northern Pacific was quiet throughout the Dakota Department with only minor disturbances in Livingston. Merritt also announced his readiness to march on the Butte/Anaconda area where he expected violence. 36

By July 19, the Northern Pacific was indisputably victorious. On that date, even the militant Livingston chapter of the American Railway Union bowed to the inevitable and declared the strike over. 37 Throughout Montana, public opinion, which had generally been sympathetic toward the strikers, began to shift and demanded an immediate end to the conflict. Representative of this shift, Missoulians who had previously supported the strike demanded an immediate end to labor disturbances; to enforce their desires, the community appointed a large force of deputy marshalls with instructions to arrest the "... first man who even

34 Telegram, McNaught to Schofield (July 17, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.
35 Telegram, Brigadier General Otis to Schofield (July 17, 1894), Ibid.
36 Telegram, Assistant Adjutant General to Schofield (July 17, 1894), Letters Sent by the Headquarters of the Army.
yelled 'scab' or made any public demonstration." With the Northern Pacific strike over, federal troops began massing to disperse the remaining strikers on the Union Pacific's branch line, the Montana Union.

38 Ibid. It is difficult to explain this shift in public sentiment, since no firm evidence exists to account for the sudden change. Continuing economic hardships, engendered by the strike, and the apparent railroad victory certainly played a role. Also, increasing property violence, such as the Missoula incident, must have alarmed residents who had previously supported the strikers; Stanley Buder (Pullman, p. 194) suggests a similar pattern of shifting popular sympathies in Chicago, by noting that "... the boycott and disorders cost the strikers the support of many former sympathizers while diverting attention from the town and multiplying the number of people elsewhere in need of aid." Finally, some citizens had become reluctant to continue challenging the federal authority when that authority appeared in the form of Army regulars who had previously been venerated, especially during the state's recent frontier phase.
CHAPTER VII

OCCUPATION OF THE MONTANA UNION
AND THE STRIKE'S AFTERMATH

Federal intervention on the Montana Union railroad closely paralleled the methods employed in crushing the strike on the Northern Pacific. J. S. Shropshire, attorney for the Union Pacific, refused to negotiate with the strikers, and decided, instead, to appeal directly to the United States District Court in Butte, Montana, for relief. Judge Hiram Knowles immediately granted the Union Pacific receivers, as he had the Northern Pacific management, the power to discharge and replace striking employees.¹

Employing tactics similar to those of the Northern Pacific, S. H. H. Clarke of the Union Pacific, which was the parent line of the Montana Union, requested military assistance. On July 5, 1894, Clarke wired General Schofield that his system was paralyzed west of Cheyenne, Wyoming, and that the "receivers are helpless except military assistance be rendered . . ."²

General Schofield and Attorney-General Olney agreed to extend

military aid to beleaguered Union Pacific system. Olney suggested that the legal rationale for intervention was the same as that for the Northern Pacific road. Writing to Schofield on July 7, Olney declared:

The intent of the Union Pacific charter that the road of the Company thereby incorporated should be a post and military road of the Union, it seems to me to be as clear as in the case of the Northern Pacific charter.3

Since the executive branch and the military agreed, Schofield confidentially informed Clarke that the necessary orders for "... protection of the Union Pacific Railroad" would soon be issued.4 At midday, July 7, Schofield wired instructions, identical to those telegraphed to Generals Merritt and Otis, to Brigadier General Brooke, Commander of the Department of the Platte.5

Within a week the Army opened the Union Pacific's main lines. The Union Pacific road was able to resume regular service on July 11.6 On July 15, General Brooke informed Schofield that

Reports from all points on Union Pacific report quiet and traffic resumed, except to Butte, Montana. I have not sent troops to that point, but have placed them as far north as Dillion, Montana.7

After the main lines were opened, the departmental commanders prepared to "mop up" the Montana Union line. There, the principal strike center and, thus, the primary target of the Army was Butte. Because of

3 Telegram, Attorney-General Olney to Schofield (July 7, 1894), Ibid.

4 Telegram, Schofield to Clarke (July 7, 1894), Ibid.

5 Telegram, Schofield to Brigadier General Brooke (July 7, 1894), Letters Sent by the Headquarters of the Army.

6 Lindsey, Pullman Strike, p. 248.

7 Telegram, Brooke to Schofield (July 15, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.
the strong pro-labor sentiment in the Butte/Anaconda area. General Merritt expected "... to encounter greater violence than has been met up to this time," and he, therefore, wished to employ a large force to pacify the area. 8

General Merritt was prepared to risk a possible strike on the Great Northern by using that road to transport his troops. The zealous commander was unshaken, however, since he felt: "The union railroad element is controlling on that road and to enforce order must be reduced to obedience or displaced by new men." 9

On July 19, federal troops, directed by General Merritt from the east and by General Brooke from the south, began their march on Butte, Montana. The Helena Independent reported the arrival of six companies of regulars via the Great Northern, although the paper erroneously speculated that their destination was California. 10 Merritt's fears (or hopes) that the Great Northern American Railway Union membership would enter the conflict were not realized since the Great Falls chapter, in a stormy meeting on July 17, had decided to haul the troops. 11 In the south, Colonel Bates, commanding nearly six hundred troops, left Cheyenne, Wyoming, on July 19 for Butte, Montana. 12

Meanwhile, striker sentiment remained high in the Butte/Anaconda

8Telegram, Merritt to Schofield (July 16, 1894), Ibid.

9Ibid.

10Helena Independent, no. 150 (July 19, 1894), p. 8.

11Ibid., p. 1.

12Telegram, Brooke to Schofield (July 19, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.
region. On July 15, Anaconda held a "Grand Parade of Sympathy with the American Railway Union," in which organized labor turned out in full force to demonstrate its support for the strike.

J. H. Calderhead, observing the strike's collapse on the Northern Pacific, condemned Governor Rickards for his inaction. Foreseeing a complete military occupation of the Montana Union, Calderhead argued that Rickards could and should halt any federal intervention on that road, since it was completely within the state's borders and, thus, exempt from federal jurisdiction under Washington's interstate commerce powers. Rickards, however, refused to forsake his non-committal position.

On July 18, two companies from the south occupied forty miles of the Montana Union's tracks, extending as far north as Dillon, Montana—seventy miles from Butte. An unidentified party or parties dynamited one small bridge and burned three others in retaliation. Eschewing violence, the American Railway Union appointed a special committee to prevent such actions and promised that the troops would not face any violence when they reached Butte. Nevertheless, the Union Pacific supplemented Rickard's earlier offer by declaring that it would give a

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13 Part of the widespread sympathy in the area was due to the presence of an estimated nine hundred American Railway Union members in the Butte/Anaconda area (Railway Review [Anaconda, Montana], vol. 1, no. 1 [July 19, 1894], p. 2). However, a large number of the labor and farmer organizations in the area supported the new union's actions.

14 Anaconda Standard, vol. 5, no. 316 (July 16, 1894), p. 3.

15 Butte Miner, vol. 31, no. 208 (July 18, 1894), p. 5.

16 Helena Independent, no. 150 (July 19, 1894), p. 1.
one thousand dollar reward for information leading to the conviction of anyone accused of destroying Union Pacific property.\footnote{Anaconda Standard, no. 321 (July 21, 1894), p. 1. Governor Rickards had offered a one thousand dollar reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone who burned or destroyed any "... valuable structure belonging to any railroad company in this state, used, occupied, and necessary for the operation of such road ..." (Helena Independent, no. 143 July 12, 1894, p. 5).}

In Butte, the union men of the Northern Pacific voted to return to work on July 20, although they declared that the use of military force was unnecessary.\footnote{July 20, 1894, officially marked the end of the Northern Pacific strike. The Butte chapter's decision was in accord with that of the Missoula and Bozeman chapters, which also voted to end the strike on July 20 (Ibid.).} However, the Montana Union employees remained firm. At a mass meeting that night, President Calderhead angrily denounced the federal government's policy, declaring:

\begin{quote}
\begin{center}
... The greatest evil connected with railroad corporations is the overwhelming influence they have in politics and legislation. ... Troops are on the way to Butte to-night to intimidate our citizens. The yards at Butte to-night are as quiet as a cemetery. How long will this condition exist? The only remedy is the government ownership of railroads.\footnote{Ibid.}
\end{center}
\end{quote}

After Calderhead's address, the membership unanimously passed a resolution calling for government ownership of railroads, basing their demand on the Preamble to the United States Constitution and expressing their fear of an approaching police state.\footnote{Ibid.; Butte Miner, no. 211 (July 21, 1894), p. 5.}

The next morning (July 21, 1894), approximately 450 troops arrived from Fort Assiniboine. That afternoon, nearly six hundred regulars entered Butte from the south. The strikers kept their promise, and no
confrontation occurred as troops occupied the town. Only a small crowd of curious residents greeted the Army. The principal excitement of the day occurred when someone set off a string of firecrackers in the Montana Union depot and momentarily startled the jittery regulars. With the occupation of the last striker stronghold in Montana, the Pullman Strike was effectively at an end in the state. The Northern Pacific line had been operating for several days, and on July 22, General Brooke was able to report that after the "quiet and orderly" occupation of Butte, "... all the Union Pacific is now open for traffic."22

A few futile protests and demonstrations erupted at various points in the state, but organized resistance to the railroads had been effectively crushed. On the Northern Pacific road, two hundred miners in Cokedale, a small community near Livingston, pelted a non-union crew with rotten eggs, rocks, and chunks of coal. However, the next day (July 22), a detachment of twelve regulars quickly dispersed the hostile miners.23 On the Union Pacific road, the Silverbow Trades and Labor Assembly protested the arrival of troops in Butte and demanded that the Montana Congressional Delegation (Senator T. C. Power and Representative Charles S. Hartman) press for the immediate removal of the troops from civilian centers in the state.24

22Telegram, Brooke to Schofield (July 22, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.
24Telegram, Charles Lane (President of the Silverbow Trades and Labor Assembly) and Patrick Meany (Secretary) to T. C. Power and
However, the strike was over, and the Montana Union employees voted to return to work on July 23. In a bitter post mortem, President Calderhead attributed the defeat to governmental interference, declaring "... it would be revolution to hold out against Uncle Sam ... and we must back down as gracefully as patriotic citizens can under the circumstances ..." Calderhead specifically blamed the Cleveland Administration for what he considered an ill-advised, rash violation of the United States Constitution, and observed:

Not a link pin had been removed from the local yards; violence was not even threatened. The civil authorities, always first in matters of this kind, had not been called upon. One deputy sheriff could have arrested every member of the American Railway Union without the least trouble.

The victorious railroads quickly retaliated against the defeated American Railway Union. The General Managers' Association and its allies blacklisted thousands of former employees, while federal grand juries issued indictments charging American Railway Union leaders with conspiracy and contempt of court.

The Northern Pacific and the Union Pacific roads pursued similar policies. The Northern Pacific refused a large number of reemployment applications in Livingston, Helena, and Missoula, while its St. Paul

^Quoted in the Butte Miner, no. 213 (July 23, 1894), p. 5.

^Lindsey, Pullman Strike, pp. 279-81, 236-37.

[^25:Anaconda Standard, no. 324 (July 24, 1894), p. 4; Butte Miner, no. 114 (July 24, 1894), p. 5.]

[^26:Quoted in the Butte Miner, no. 213 (July 23, 1894), p. 5.]

[^27:Lindsey, Pullman Strike, pp. 279-81, 236-37.]

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headquarters officially blacklisted four hundred former employees. Superintendent Brimson, announcing the official Northern Pacific position, warned the "agitators," a term which included employees who refused to renounce their American Railway Union affiliation, and "dynamiters," as determined by company dossiers, would not be rehired, while the rehiring of "acceptable" employees would depend on the "needs of the railroad." Because of this policy, over eight hundred former employees did not receive their former positions. Similarly, the Union Pacific discharged two thousand employees, including many on the Montana Union road.

Union Pacific officials also filed complaints against American Railway Union leaders on the Montana Union line. J. S. Shropshire, Union Pacific attorney in Butte, petitioned the U.S. District Court to issue warrants for eleven American Railway Union leaders in Lima, Montana, the southernmost terminal of the Montana Union line. The complaint alleged that they

... were the leaders among others in committing the Acts herein complained of, and were guilty of contempt of court in that they did on or about June 30 by acts, orders, commands and threats interfere with trains and engines ... by removing the spikes, plates and braces of the rails of the track ... and by menaces and threats preventing the receivers from repairing the dame and by acts aforesaid and by threats and other acts of intimidation prevented and delayed the running of trains and prevented employes who were willing to continue working from doing so, ... thus depriving the receivers from the right

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and privilege of the use and enjoyment of property . . . 31

Judge Knowles duly issued the warrants, and federal troops arrested the eleven men on July 23 and 24, although the authorities had some difficulty apprehending a few individuals who had been fishing and camping for several days. 32 Speaking for the "Lima 11," Hugh Barton argued that the charges were "trumped up." Barton maintained that the accused men had specifically instructed strikers to keep away from railroad property, while a bridge foreman had inspected the tracks the day before troops arrived and found no property destruction along the Montana Union tracks. 33

In Butte more arrests followed. On July 25, U. S. Deputy Marshalls arrested Fred Walker, L. D. Garvin, George Boomer, J. L. McDonald, Patrick Meany, C. E. Allen, W. B. Dye, and C. B. Jolly, on contempt charges for the violation of Judge Knowles’ July 27 injunction. 34 On July 27, the president of the local American Railway Union chapter, J. H. Calderhead, who faced similar charges, voluntarily surrendered to federal authorities. 35

The trial of the Montana Union strikers began September 6, 1894,

31Quoted in the Anaconda Standard, no. 325 (July 25, 1894), p. 4.

32Ibid., no. 326 (July 24, 1894), p. 4. The eleven men were Michael Cavanaugh, P. H. Patterson, S. J. Parry, William Davis, B. W. Wilson, H. Barton, A. O. Willour, J. D. Masters, A. Christianson, S. O. Height, and B. W. Downy (Livingston Post, no. 20 [August 23, 1894], p. 2.

33Anaconda Standard, no. 326 (July 26, 1894), p. 4.

34Ibid.; Butte Miner, no. 316 (July 26, 1894), p. 5.

in Butte, Montana. Most of the men were released because of lack of evidence, a finding which was facilitated by Knowles' ruling that the men could not be found in contempt of court for calling anyone a "scab" or inducing others by peaceful methods to quit work.36

However, Judge Knowles found Calderhead, Walker, Garvin, Dye, Boomer, and Barton guilty of contempt of court and sentenced them to thirty days in the county jail and fined them one hundred dollars per man. The residents of Butte were surprised by the relative harshness of Knowles' verdict, since it was widely assumed they would only be fined and reprimanded.37

Released on October 24, 1894, the strikers, considered revolutionary anarchists or worse by the military authorities, issued a very non-revolutionary statement. Declaring "... obedience to the law is the duty of a citizen..." J. H. Calderhead, speaking for his fellow prisoners, thanked the jailors for their courtesy and expressed the hope that "... they may always find the pathway of life pleasant."38

Although a number of American Railway Union leaders, considered innocent of any wrongdoing by many of their peers, were subjected to fines and limited terms of imprisonment, Captain Lockwood, whose rash actions nearly precipitated a riot, was found innocent by the military authorities. Responding to local and state pressures, on July 11, 1894, Major General Schofield ordered General Merritt to investigate the

36Anaconda Standard, vol. 6, no. 4 (September 14, 1894), p. 5; Ibid., no. 11 (September 14, 1894), p. 5.
37Ibid., no. 22 (September 25, 1894), p. 5.
38Ibid., no. 52 (October 25, 1894), p. 8.
July 10 incident in Livingston. On July 13, 1894, Merritt appointed Captain C. F. Glenn as Acting Judge Advocate for the Lockwood investigation.  

In Montana, journalistic emotions ran high as most papers demanded that Lockwood be punished for striking I. F. Toland and the small child. The Bozeman Avant-Courier and other small eastern Montana papers, including the Yellowstone Journal, the Stock Grower's Journal, the Billings Gazette, and the Stillwater Bulletin, took the minority view and defended Lockwood's actions as justifiable in the face of hostile workers who allegedly leaned "... dangerously towards socialism and insurrectionary expedients." Relying on the train passengers' testimony and viewing Lockwood as a force for "law and order," the papers argued that only through such actions and the defense of those actions in the face of contrary popular sentiment could "... brains and loyalty and patriotism—in a word, Americanism—... triumph over fanaticism, lawlessness and brute force."  

Captain Glenn's report agreed with this alarmed minority sentiment. In the investigation, Glenn recorded testimony from ninety-eight witnesses, including train passengers, officers, enlisted men, and residents of Livingston. Generally, the soldiers and passengers, who had been warned of imminent riots at Livingston, characterized the crowd surrounding the depot as a "threatening mob" and, therefore, defended Lockwood's   

39 Communication by Assistant Adjutant General for Brigadier General Merritt (July 13, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.  

40 Avant-Courier (Bozeman, Montana), vol. 23, no. 36 (July 28, 1894), pp. 1-2.
conduct.

However, a majority of the town's residents, including disinterested citizens, testified that the crowd was composed of curiosity seekers with only a minority of strikers present. Further, the American Railway Union, although extremely militant, actively condemned all forms of violence to persons or property—an argument which was substantiated by the fact that neither persons nor property had been harmed prior to the arrival of military forces. So, Livingston's residents felt that Lockwood's actions were, at best, rash, unjustified, and ill-advised.

Nevertheless, Captain Glenn recommended that Lockwood not be court-martialed. His superior, General Merritt heartily concurred. On August 6, 1894, Merritt recommended to General Schofield that Lockwood "... did his duty well under the circumstances ..." and should be exonerated. Merritt acknowledged that the investigating officer was biased and that much of the testimony was highly prejudiced in favor of Lockwood—indeed, James McNaught and T. R. Selmes, counsel for the Northern Pacific Railroad, had and were continuing to supply a number of affidavits on their own initiative to Glenn.

However, Merritt felt that

... the very general approval by disinterested persons including ex-Senator McMillan (of Minnesota) ... coupled with the evidence of Messrs. Kimberly and Finn and the army officers present ... exonerated Captain Lockwood ... from the charges

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41 T. R. Selmes to Captain C. F. Glenn (August 31, 1894), Ibid.
made against him . . . 43

Merritt revealed his attitudes even more clearly in his annual report to the Secretary of War. In that document, Merritt condemned what he considered the "vicious" and "lawless" elements which participated in the Pullman Strike. The commander of the Dakota Department then observed that, taken together the Coxeyite movement and the Pullman Strike illustrated "... the necessity of tactics for maneuver of machine guns." 44

Major General Schofield, whose conservative temper has already been noted, concurred with Merritt on October 5, 1895, and made the appropriate recommendations to Secretary of War Daniel LaMont. 45 On October 19, the War Department notified Governor Rickards that it had found Captain Lockwood's actions "entirely justifiable." The decision, labelled a "whitewash" by the Livingston Post, 46 held that

... the circumstances which gave rise to the accusations against Captain Lockwood were no less than an insurrection against the Government of the United States and open defiance of the national authority ... 47

In an incredible passage, the War Department further argued that

43Telegram, Merritt to Schofield (August 6, 1894), Ibid.


45Letter, Schofield to Secretary of War Daniel LaMont (October 5, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.

46Livingston Post, no. 30 (November 1, 1894), p. 3.

47Telegram, John B. Doe (Acting Secretary of War) to Governor Rickards (October 19, 1894), Records of the Adjutant General's Office.
there were no innocent bystanders, since by their very presence, otherwise merely curious bystanders supported and aided the "mob" and could only blame themselves for subsequent injuries.

... It is shown that even idle bystanders, having no intention to take part in mob violence, did, nevertheless, by their presence with the lawless mob, give countenance and encouragement to the insurrection. If the citizens suffered some violence at the hands of the troops because the latter could not discriminate between the innocent and the guilty, it would seem that the citizens are themselves to blame for their misfortune... 48

The Pullman Strike had been smashed. The federal courts, the national executive, and the military, had forsaken their traditionally neutral roles in the name of what Arnold Paul has called the "New Judicialism." A new, or at least a vastly strengthened, alliance was formed between large railroad interests and the federal government. As Ray Ginger has suggested, the significant precedent established a new, active social policy. 49 Constitutional order was to be viewed as dependent on the maintenance of corporate power and stability as opposed to militant organized labor. The federal government was prepared to over-ride traditional state prerogatives and employ its full power through the courts and armed forces to protect that new order from the anticipated and widely feared threat of class conflict and confrontation.

Montana, like other middle and far western states, was an arena for the inauguration of this new policy. The optimism of the strike's early days gave way to amazement and bewilderment as federal courts enjoined

48 Ibid.

strike activity and federal troops began arriving to enforce the courts' decision. A few unidentified individuals retaliated by venting their anger in scattered acts of violence. However, confronted by blacklists and indictments, most strikers sank into a state of cynical despair. Summarizing the strike and its aftermath, one Montanan expressed the attitude of many residents:

As 'tis the fashion we would like
   To have our say about the strike;
Each one it seems has something planned
   To thwart these evils of our land.
Each strike that's made, to some extent,
   Has always had a precedent;
They cause much loss and some must bend,
   And but little's gained in the end.
Some say go to the ballot box,
   You'd as well get the chicken-pox.
For don't we all know? aye full well,
   Elections now are grumbling hells;
What would be our plan, do you ask?
   Here's our pen, we give up the task.
The corporations of all lands
   Have men and laws well in their hands;
What! you say "'tis very funny?"
   Not to me, they have the money.

Verdant Slim
Darby, Montana
August 22, 1895

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*Bitter Root Times* (Hamilton, Montana), vol. 6, no. 21 (August 24, 1894), p. 2. The name "Verdant Slim" is undoubtedly a pseudonym, but the available sources do not shed light on the real identity of the author.
Montana and other western states were somewhat of an anomaly in their reaction to the Pullman Strike. Nationally, the majority of the public supported Cleveland's actions. Although many individuals were sympathetic to the Pullman workers' struggle, that sentiment became overshadowed by unfounded fears of anarchy and violence, which were encouraged by irresponsible journalists who emphasized and exaggerated the more violent aspects of the strike. Business and professional organizations exhibited their opposition to the strike by supporting the federal government's innovative policy, while agricultural interests remained fairly neutral.\(^1\)

A majority in the United States Congress also supported the government's policy during the Pullman Strike. Both houses registered overwhelming support for Attorney-General Olney's tactics. One indication of Congressional sentiment lay in that body's negative reaction to a proposal by Senator James Kyle of South Dakota. Kyle proposed that the Justice Department be compelled to modify and limit its definition of what constituted a mail train. More significant perhaps, Kyle "... proposed that legal action should be allowed only when strikers

\(^1\)Lindsey, *Pullman Strike*, p. 321.
interfered with that part of a train which was essential to the transportation of mails . . . " The detachment of the Pullman cars, which were clearly not essential for the operation of trains or the transportation of mails, would not, therefore, constitute a federal offense or a basis for federal intervention.\(^2\)

The American Railway Union, including the local chapters in Montana,\(^3\) supported the Kyle proposal. However, Senator Cushman K. Davis (Republican from Minnesota) vocalized the attitudes and fears of most of the Senate and the nation when he opposed the measure. To a nation alarmed by "... financial panic, economic depression, and profound labor unrest . . .," and the example of the assassination of President Carnot of France, Davis' arguments for a return to "law and order" seemed plausible and necessary.\(^4\) The senator's "hard line" opposition to the Kyle resolution quickly transformed him into a national hero. Over ninety newspapers from thirty-three states begun viewing Davis as a presidential prospect in the 1896 election.\(^5\)

The national legislature's mood was expressed even more clearly in mid-July 1894, when both the Senate and the House passed resolutions which fully endorsed Cleveland's actions. In the Senate, there was little opposition to the resolution, which was passed on July 11, 1894,


\(^3\)Butte Miner, vol. 31, no. 184 (July 3, 1894), p. 5.


\(^5\)Ibid., p. 201.
by a combination of northern and southern senators.6

Five days later, the House passed a similar resolution. There too, Southern delegates, such as Representative Catchings of Mississippi,7 supported the Cleveland Administration's innovative policy which overrode traditional state prerogatives. Advocating the minority view, Representative Bland of Missouri opposed the resolution:

... I believe in local State Government, and the whole arm of the State authority should be used in suppressing violence before the Federal Government should interfere, except to protect its own property and its mails.

I am aware, Mr. Speaker, that throughout this country, even in States where there was no violence, and where if violence occurred at all, the State authorities were ready and able to deal with it without any instructions sent out by the Attorney-General. The whole country was flooded with deputy marshals; sheriffs were arrested, State authority was overthrown and the strong arm of the Federal Government took possession of matters properly belonging to the States . . . .8

Public sympathies in the western half of the country contrasted sharply with the attitudes of the federal government and the nation in general. Within this large region, Montanans' attitudes, like those of other states' citizens, were generally sympathetic to the strikers and, in many cases, to the strike itself. However, although an aura of militancy enveloped the state, only sporadic, scattered acts of property destruction occurred in Montana. Events in the state contrasted sharply with the large scale rioting and violence in the Midwest at Chicago,

7Ibid., part 8, p. 7544.
8Ibid.
Illinois, and at Hammond, Indiana; in the Rocky Mountain West at Trinidad, Colorado, and at Raton, New Mexico; and in the Far West at Sacramento, San Francisco, and Oakland, California.  

According to popular stereotypes, which portray the West as a "Cradle of Barbarism," one would expect Montanans' reaction to the Pullman Strike to be one of widespread lawlessness and violence. Popular sympathy for the Commonwealers' hijacking of a Northern Pacific train at Butte during the previous spring would tend to reinforce such expectations. As previously noted, violence did erupt during the Pullman Strike. However, there were relatively few such incidents, and they were restricted, aside from one attempt to dynamite a passenger train near Missoula, to scattered acts of property destruction rather than the large scale rioting in the Strike's center in Chicago.  

At first glance, it is difficult to account for Montana's militant, non-violent response to the strike, since the sequence of events in the state paralleled that of urban Chicago. In both places, railway workers, suffering from real or anticipated wage reductions, sympathized with the Pullman employees, whose plight symbolized their own predicament in a dramatic fashion.  

Once the strike had begun, it was immediately successful. The General Managers' Association, including the Union Pacific and the Northern Pacific were suddenly confronted by the probability of a reenactment of

9Lindsey, Pullman Strike, pp. 246-52.  
10Ray Allen Billington, America's Frontier Heritage (Hinsdale, Illinois: Dryden Press, 1966), pp. 69-95, passim. Billington argued that the West's "frontier-process" created neither "... a patent-office model of the East nor a land sunk in barbarism..."
the Great Northern's defeat and by a corresponding increase in the American Railway Union's power. Anxious to avoid both developments, the General Managers' Association, the member Union Pacific line, and the imitative Northern Pacific petitioned both the federal courts and the Cleveland Administration for aid to smash the strike and, hopefully, the American Railway Union. Both the courts and the federal executive branch quickly granted the railroads' request by flooding the country with injunctions and by employing most of the Army stationed in the western half of the United States.

The combination of corporate, judicial, Presidential, and military power quickly defeated the strike in Chicago and in Montana, which was one of the areas where Debs had optimistically hoped to make a last-ditch effort against the railroads. The railroads' victory was followed by punitive measures against union leaders. In Chicago, a federal grand jury indicted Debs (President of the American Railway Union), George W. Howard (Vice President), Sylvester Keliher (Secretary), and Lewis W. Rogers (Editor of the A.R.U.'s paper, the Railway Times), and charged them with conspiracy. Similarly, in Montana J. H. Calderhead, President of the Butte American Railway Union chapter, et al., were indicted.

Despite the similarities between the Chicago and Montana experiences during the strike, sharp differences did exist. A major distinction was the fact that Montanans reacted in a relatively non-violent fashion. A second difference, which largely accounted for that non-violence, was the widespread public support (including independent publications as well as the state's major newspapers, which were

11Lindsey, Pullman Strike, p. 278.
controlled by large mining interests) for the strikers in Montana.

One factor explaining that support was the strong current of anti-railroad sentiment which had evolved prior to the Pullman Strike. Thomas A. Clinch suggests that the anti-railroad sentiment in Montana originated primarily in a recurrent dispute over the Northern Pacific's land grant by which that road claimed over fourteen million acres in the state. The company began filing its claims in 1884, and by 1887 the road had selected over two million acres which included a sizeable amount of western Montana's mineral lands, which the Northern Pacific argued were agricultural in character.¹²

To enforce its claims, the Northern Pacific sought injunctions to eject miners from the company's alleged property, and a series of court battles ensued between mine owners and the railroad. However, the battle was not limited to those parties. Western Montanans, regardless of political affiliation, protested the Northern Pacific's attempt to control the state's mining operations. Indeed, Clinch argued:

The Northern Pacific became the bete noire of western Montanans of all walks of life and of all political faiths because it threatened the basis of their principal industry—mining.¹³

Populists in the state also protested the Northern Pacific move. Concentrated in western Montana, this organization was heavily dependent on trade unions in the mining region around Butte and Helena. Reflecting this concern, the Populists' state platform of 1892 demanded that


¹³Ibid., p. 283
the Northern Pacific forfeit "... its land grant for failure to meet the deadline for completion."14

Given this widespread popular hostility toward the Northern Pacific, it is hardly surprising to discover a corresponding support for the American Railway Union by the state's residents during the Pullman Strike of 1894. Other factors, such as anticipated greater retail sales from the increased spending power of railway workers and a genuine sympathy for the Pullman and railroad workers, certainly played a role in shaping public opinion. However, the principal economic factor in generating support for the strike remained a deep, uncompromising hostility to the Northern Pacific's attempt to control the state's mineral lands.15

A corollary to this economic factor was a social/psychological element suggested in national terms by Robert Weibe. In his book, The Search for Order, Weibe argued:

The great casualty of America's turmoil late in the century was the island community. Although a majority of Americans would still reside in relatively small, personal centers for several decades more, the society that had been premised upon the community's effective sovereignty, upon its capacity to manage affairs within its boundaries, no longer functioned ... In a manner that eludes precise explanation, countless citizens in towns and cities across the land sensed that something

14Ibid.

15Although anti-Northern Pacific attitudes pervaded the entire state, those sentiments were relatively muted in eastern Montana, where cattlemen and sheepmen, who constituted the economic base in that area, enjoyed favorable treatment, vis-à-vis rate schedules. Further, although during the 1893 depression "Western Montana, heartland of the mining industry, suffered to an extreme degree, Eastern Montana, primarily an agricultural region, suffered ... but not with the same intensity, since the demand for beef and grain did not lessen as sharply as that for silver." (Clinch, Urban Populism and Free Silver in Montana, pp. 13 and 103).
fundamental was happening to their lives, something they had not willed and did not want, and they responded by striking out at whatever enemies their view of the world allowed them to see. They fought, in other words, to preserve the society that had given their lives meaning. But it had already slipped beyond their grasp.¹⁶

Though subject to many of the same fears held by individuals throughout the country, Montanans in 1894 still lived in small, relatively isolated communities. This social environment could still provide individuals with a sense of identity and well-being within the community. However, residents were aware of the gigantic changes sweeping the nation and the world—events which seemed, to varying degrees, to undermine their own values and beliefs. A more immediate threat and, consequently, a more tangible enemy were the railroads, including the Northern Pacific, whose policies were determined in distant cities and over which the community had little or no leverage. Seen from this perspective, the widespread hostility toward the Northern Pacific can be viewed as the venting of repressed apprehensions and frustrations by a large number of the state's residents.

Similarly, popular support for (and opposition to) the Pullman Strike was a continuation of the defense of the community against powerful, impersonal forces, which from the community's standpoint, threatened to destroy that institution and its attendant value structure. This vague, shadowy, and yet powerful, sentiment surely combined with a more personal concern for individual members of the community—i.e., the strikers. The state's newspapers in every town on the Northern Pacific and the Union Pacific lines reflected this sentiment by emphasizing the

strikers' commitment to the town's interests and welfare.

Reinforcing community sentiment as well as anti-railroad and anti-Cleveland prejudices was the growing Populist movement within the state. Formed in January 1892, the Montana Populist Party attracted trade unionists, farmers, and liberal reformers. With this broad, popular base, Populists made "dramatic gains" in the 1894 state legislative elections.17 Fusing with the Democratic Party in 1896, the Populist movement reached its peak in the 1896 elections as voters in all but two of the state's counties overwhelmingly supported William Jennings Bryan for President; in state contests, Populists elected R. Burns Smith as governor, as well as an "overwhelmingly fusionist" House.18

The Pullman Strike occurred in the midst of this growing Populist sentiment, which contributed to community support for the strikers. Because of its rather unique orientation, Montana Populism directly reinforced community attitudes. That unique orientation was silver, which was "... the great unifying force from 1889 to at least 1896 ..."19 Since silver mining formed the primary base of Montana's economy, its defense attracted supporters from all classes, occupations, and political persuasions. Although farmers did subscribe to Populist principles, "... the typical Populist in Montana, in centers of party strength such as Butte, Anaconda, Helena, and Great Falls, was an urban


18 The national victor, William McKinley, captured only two counties (Dawson and Custer), located in eastern Montana, by very narrow margins (Ibid., p. 153).

19 Ibid., p. 20.
This cross section of the state's residents expressed itself, as previously noted, in the pervasive, unified hostility toward railroads, and especially toward the Northern Pacific which seemed to directly threaten the very basis of the new movement—silver. More immediately, this unifying, community force—i.e., silverite Populism—expressed itself in the state's sympathy for Coxeyism\(^2^1\) and its support of the Pullman strikers.

J. H. Calderhead is representative of this close identification of the community at large with the Pullman strikers. He was both the President of the Butte chapter of the American Railway Union and the Chairman of the Populist State Central Committee.\(^2^2\) As such, Calderhead embodies the state's communal outlook, which provided the underlying strength of Montana Populism and which manifested itself in the widespread popular support for the insurgent strikers in the summer of 1894.

This often intangible, yet widespread sense of identification with the community also explains the relative lack of violence in Montana during the strike. For, if one grants the strikers' commitment to and identification with their respective communities, it follows that those individuals also subscribed to the ethics of that social environment. Part of that ethical structure actively condemned violence and property

\(^{2^0}\)Ibid., p. 170.

\(^{2^1}\)Ibid., pp. 105-11; for more information regarding Montanans' reaction to Coxeyism, see Clinch, "Coxey's Army in Montana," Montana: The Magazine of Western History, pp. 2-11.

\(^{2^2}\)Clinch, Urban Populism and Free Silver in Montana, p. 114.
destruction by labor organizations. Operating within this ethical system and aware that widespread violence would cost the American Railway Union its support within the state, the union appointed guards for railroad property and counselled restraint among its members. That the strikers and the supporters obeyed so well was tribute to their convictions and an affirmation of their adherence to traditional, nineteenth century norms.

23 The state's newspapers illustrated this social more by their condemnation of the violence in Chicago, Sacramento, etc., as well as their previous denunciations of various incidents accompanying the Coxeyite movement. Further, during the Pullman Strike in Montana, the papers, including those which overtly supported the Strike, emphatically condemned property destruction such as the bridge burnings and the dynamiting of a passenger train outside Missoula, Montana.
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