

GENERAL STRIKE ALWAYS FAILS, HISTORY SHOWS

Workers Here and Abroad
Have Lost Through Such
Methods.

By RUTH FINNEY
Times Special Writer

WASHINGTON, July 18.—No general strike ever has been even partly successful in this country, or in any other.

Records of industrial warfare, studied here today in connection with the San Francisco strike, show this to be true. In every case organized labor has found itself up against unexpected responsibilities and problems it could not solve.

In every case an unorganized public, determined to carry on normal life without interference, has broken the strike partly through its own efforts, partly through use of public funds, militia, and troops.

The United States had its first experience with the general strike in Seattle in 1919. When it was over, labor men admitted they had gone into it without realizing that a general strike, if it succeeds, implies assumption on the part of labor unions of duties and responsibilities usually performed by government officials.

Extra Duties Pile Up

With the strike under way it was necessary for the strike committee to decide whether the city's streets should be lighted or left dark, how the public health should be preserved, what businesses were essential to public welfare. The Labor Union Record, published in Seattle, said:

"If the strike continues, labor may feel led to avoid public suffering by reopening more and more activities under its own management, and that is why we say we are starting on a road that leads no one knows where."

On the second day of the Seattle general strike, street cars started running again, under protection of police and troops. By the fourth day, hundreds of workers were trickling back to work, and on the fifth day the general strike was officially at an end, collapsed under the weight of its own inefficiency.

Revolt Plot Charged

Little or no disorder occurred, but business men and Mayor Ole Hanson of Seattle called the strike a revolutionary attempt to overturn the government.

In the same year a general strike in Winnipeg lasted six weeks. In that city police, firemen, letter carriers, and garbage collectors walked out with 35,000 craft union workers. This strike committee also found itself responsible for the city's welfare and found the responsibility a heavy one. Two riots occurred. Trials for sedition conspiracy followed.

Great Britain's general strike in 1926 lasted thirteen days.

Experience Abroad

The public walked to work when it could get there no other way and persistently carried on its normal pursuits. The government called for 500,000 volunteers to operate food and milk depots, to open communications services, and finally to restore transportation. Poor and rich responded, co-operated so successfully that organized labor was forced to concede defeat.

Perhaps the most significant attempt at a general strike took place in Sweden in 1909. The country was well organized; 200,000 workers walked out. Strike leaders had made elaborate preparations to keep essential services operating, but found it impossible to maintain discipline.

The government kept hands off to let labor make a thorough test of public sentiment. The strike went to pieces when public security brigades were organized, enlisting support from all classes.

3 Youths Hurt in Auto Crash

RICHMOND, Ind., July 18.—William Guyer, 17, was injured fatally and Ivel Mendenhall, 23, and Will-

No Transportation, So San Francisco Does Next Best Thing



Overflowing the sidewalks and swarming into the street, San Franciscans got to work as best they could. Here is a crowd of commuters walking up lower Market street, normally one of the busiest arteries in the city, now deserted by auto traffic. A city was suddenly dismounted from its accustomed wheels and set down on foot.



Throngs milled into every grocery and food store in San Francisco as the chains of general strike tightened about the city. The above scene was typical, showing anxious crowds thronging the counter, and a single harried clerk trying as best he could to fill the storm of orders from dwindling stocks of food.

bur Birt, 18, were hurt in an automobile collision near Richmond last night.

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JOHNSON KEEPS EYE ON STRIKE

General Is Closeted With Mediators During Night Conference.

By United Press

SAN FRANCISCO, July 18.—Disclaiming official connection with any phases of the San Francisco strike, General Hugh S. Johnson, NRA administrator, remained here today for closely guarded conferences with federal mediation representatives.

General Johnson's part formed one of the most puzzling aspects of the situation. Some whispered that he is President Roosevelt's personal representative. Mr. Johnson himself insists he is making only an "NRA sales tour of the Pacific coast."

Regardless, the general was busy last night conferring with Edward F. McGrady and O. L. Cushing, members of the board appointed by President Roosevelt to arbitrate the labor dispute.

Guards kept reporters far from the room in which the three men met. Archbishop Hanna, third member of the arbitration board, was not present.

Steamship company officials and other employers of maritime labor were in the lobby but they too maintained silence.

One day in early fall a delegation of railwaymen called on him. They told him railway officials would not listen. He told them he would see that they received a hearing, that he, personally, would press for just settlement of their grievances.

But things dragged on, as such things will. Each side was a little stubborn. Quite suddenly, on Oct. 5, employees of the Northern Railway of France quit their jobs. The strike was on.

One by one, the other railroads of the country were tied up.

Dockers, street railwaymen, truckers, builders, and other began to follow suit.

Brands acted. Firmly believing

he was cutting his own throat for

ever, politically speaking, he issued

a mobilization order calling the

strikers to the colors for twenty

days. The strikers thus became

soldiers, and disobedience meant

trial for insubordination or deser-

tion.

Loyal to the Tricolor, the men re-

sponded. They were ordered to man

the trains and set the wheels in

motion. It was all over in one day.

A single bold stroke had settled

the strike, but it promised to settle

Briand's political hash. Parliament

met, and pandemonium broke loose

as Briand mounted the rostrum.

"Apotste!" yelled Jean Jaurès,

famous labor leader. "You, yourself,

were among the first to uphold the

right to strike!"

"Renegade!" "Traitor!" "Turn-

coat!" others yelled, shrieking,

throwing books, inkwells and what

not about the chamber. The bedlam

went on until the deputies were

almost exhausted. Then,

seeing an opening, Briand shot into

it a stinging rebuke:

"Messieurs," he said, his famous

voice ringing like the great bells in

the steeples of Notre Dame. "Per-

mit me, gentlemen, to waive reply

to the personal insults heaped upon me.

The people of France have

first call—and they are waiting!"

Then he explained his position.

The right to strike was inviolable.

He would yield to no man in defend-

ing it. But when strikes paralyzed

a whole people—when a compara-

tion between themselves but in-

stead ignored the common good, a

helpless public and nation—then he

would have to interfere.

Public opinion practically was un-

animously on the side of the Briand

thesis. Even labor later forgave

him. He died, France's grand old

man, beloved of the vast majority.



National guardsmen gradually extended their lines from the waterfront to include the produce jobbers' district. Here is a portion of a barrier before which guardsmen are halting an auto as it attempts to enter the restricted district. The movement foreshadowed the bringing in of provisions under convoy to feed beleaguered San Francisco.

Briand Risked Career to Crush General Strike

Radical Premier Held Public Interest Came First in Defending Acts.

By WILLIAM PHILIP SIMMS
Scripps-Howard Foreign Editor

WASHINGTON, July 18.—Aristide

Briand, late prime minister of France, once threw away his whole political future, so he and every one else thought, to spare France a general strike.

Mr. Briand came from France's mining district. His associates were

the roughest, most radical laborites in the country. And he outdid them all in demanding full rights for the workers. By 1910, so rapidly had he been pushed to the top by the masses, he was premier.

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