

1936

NORTHWEST LABOR CALENDAR

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VOICE OF ACTION

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JANUARY

January 5, 1918: A vigilante mob wrecked the shop of the Piggott Printing Company. The firm had printed some material that did not measure up to the standards of the 100 per cent Americans.

January 16, 1919: A peaceful I.W.W. demonstration was broken up in Seattle by police. Dozens were arrested and 43 were later sentenced to prison terms by Judge F. H. Rudkin.

January 21, 1919: Thirty thousand Seattle shipyard workers, joined their Tacoma brothers, went on strike for a raise in wages to eight dollars a day, which was made necessary by the huge rise in living costs.

It was out of this walk-out that the great Seattle General Strike grew.



January 27, 1935: Delegates from trade unions and unemployed organizations all over the state met in Olympia in a Washington State Congress for Unemployment Insurance. Passage of the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill by the state legislature was demanded and permanent committees to work for the enactment of the bill on both a state and national scale were set up. The Congress was held despite strong pressure by reactionary groups to prevent its meeting in the state capitol.

January 29, 1915: Speaking to an overflow crowd of more than 3,000 people at the old Dreamland pavilion in Seattle, Eugene V. Debs, beloved Socialist leader, said: "My ideal is a thinker in overalls . . . He is one of the higher manhood, of the moral courage to face the world and fight for his rights. In doing this he may lose the respect of his neighbors, but he will retain his own respect and will go ahead fighting in the greatest struggle in the world."

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JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

dock workers of the entire Pacific Coast out on strike. The strike was bitterly fought and lasted until autumn.

February 3, 1887: A court action provoked one of the earliest fights for women's rights in the Northwest. The women's suffrage law was declared unconstitutional by the State Supreme Court, and according to a Tacoma historian, this decision was met with "a wave of indignation throughout the state scarcely equalled before or since."

February 6-10, 1919: The Great General Strike, lasting five days, took place. It grew out of a dispute between shipyard workers and shipyard owners. While the daily press yelled, "Revolution," and printed oceans of misleading propaganda and falsehoods, the Seattle Daily Union Record was the only medium of publicity for labor.

"NOW SEE WHAT YOU
CAN DO?"



Transcription of a cartoon in the Seattle Union Record of Feb. 6, 1919 (Published during the General Strike)

Troops were called in to preserve "law and order," but the strikers maintained their own forces for peace, making it impossible for the troops to provoke riots. The five days of the general strike are the most "law abiding" the city had ever seen. All the essential services for the normal existence of the population were continued, but with greater efficiency than ever before. Even such an anti-labor magazine as the Literary Digest was forced to concede these facts.

February 8, 1910: A United Labor Party, chiefly for participation in city politics, was formed when 40 unions sent delegates to a convention called by the Bricklayers' Union. It was described as a "class struggle" party. The Central Labor Council endorsed it.

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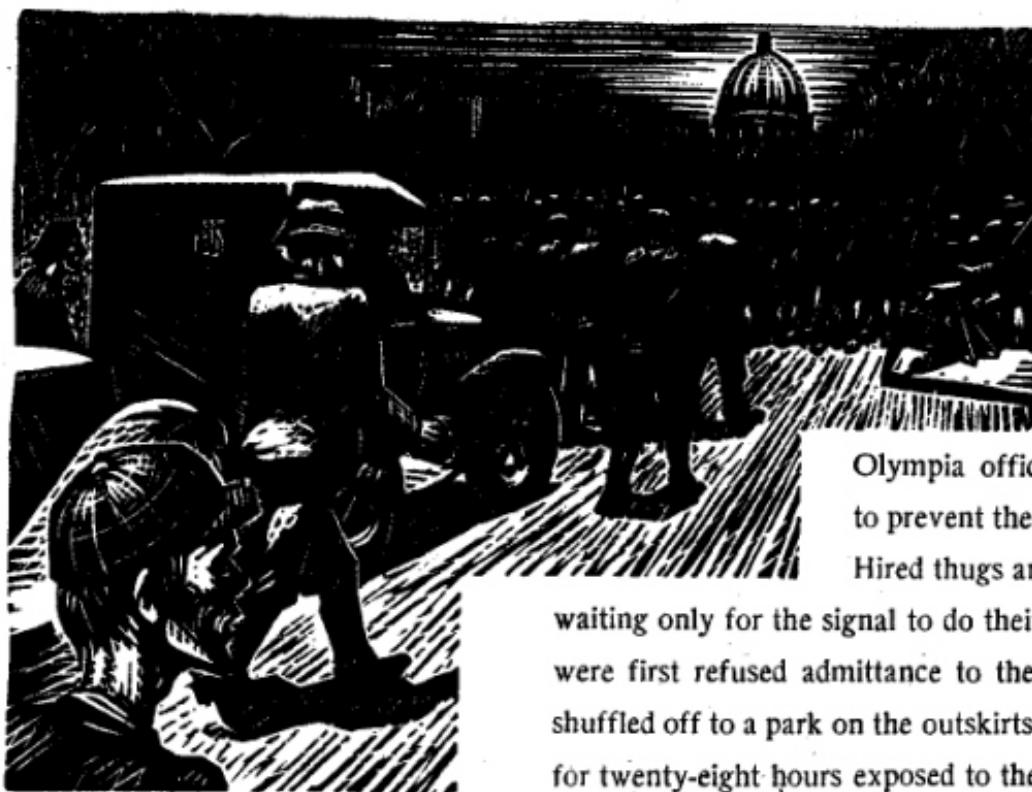
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MARCH

March 1, 1933: Some 3,000 unemployed coming from all over the state banded together to march on Olympia on the first state-wide hunger march.

Olympia officials were prepared at any cost to prevent the marchers from entering the city. Hired thugs and vigilantes were armed heavily

waiting only for the signal to do their bloody work. The unemployed were first refused admittance to their capital city, and then finally shuffled off to a park on the outskirts of the city where they remained for twenty-eight hours exposed to the cold and rain without food and

shelter. This maltreatment was followed by orders from Governor Martin and the Chief of Police to leave Olympia in thirty minutes. The marchers left to avoid bloodshed. They were forced to run through a gauntlet of vigilantes as they proceeded homeward.

March 25, 1933: On the 25th of March, 1933, the Voice of Action was founded. The paper was to be the organ of the State Committee of Action which represented, at that time, every unemployed organization in the state of Washington.

Since that time the Voice of Action has grown tremendously, not only in circulation, but also in influence. Today it is a real leader of progressive action and thought in the Northwest. Trade unionists, unemployed, liberals and all forward-looking people are now turning to the Voice of Action for their news.

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MARCH

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APRIL

April 15, 1919: A school teachers' strike took place in Victoria, B. C. The demand of the strikers was an increase in wages, which were very low. The strike lasted a week.

April 14, 1919: A longshore strike began in Seattle as a result of the Employers' Association's attempt to cut wage gains, abolish the union list system, and kill the union. This move of the employers was defeated by the strike which lasted for thirty-four days, ending May 17, 1919.

April 29, 1899: The Bunker Hill Mine and the Sullivan mill in Idaho, were mysteriously blown up. A few days later, after Governor Steunenberg had asked President McKinley for federal troops, martial law was declared in Coeur d'Alene in spite of the fact that peace prevailed in the city. Twelve hundred workers were arrested without warrants, imprisoned without charges, and placed behind barbed wire in a bull pen not fit for cattle. The entire west shook with indignation over the "justice" being displayed in Idaho. This event was, however, just the beginning of this fight between the miners and the mine owners. It was later climaxed by the famous kidnapping of Haywood and his associates.



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APRIL

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**Don't be misled April 1, or any other day
Read the Voice of Action . . .**

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MAY

May 3, 1905: The Seattle Central Labor Council was established.

May 5, 1917: Twenty-five thousand Seattle workers struck for ten minutes today as a demonstration of protest against Tom Mooney's imprisonment.

May 6, 1935: The great Northwest lumber strike, involving 40,000 workers, began today. The strike came as a result of very poor wages and because the employers refused union recognition. The strike, which lasted thirteen weeks, was one of the greatest labor struggles in the history of the Northwest. Despite the fact that the state police and the national guard were called out against them the lumber workers fought stubbornly and finished the strike with a mass union, wage increases and partial union recognition. The strike broke for a time at least the strength and influence of the company 4-L unions in the lumber industry.



TOM MOONEY



Tear gas victimized hundreds in Tacoma streets as employers attempted to break the lumber strike with an offensive of troops.

May 9, 1907: The trial of Big Bill Haywood, leader of the Western Miners, began in Boise, Idaho. Haywood was accused of murdering former Governor Steunenberg of Idaho. Haywood, it was established, was in Salt Lake City at the time of the murder. The American working class was so outraged at the trumped-up charge against Haywood that in all corners of the country demonstrations were held in protest. On the Boston Commons over 200,000 gathered to voice their condemnation of the Idaho event. In Chicago 50,000 union men and women marched in protest. In New York the parade was even larger.

After a trial of long duration, Haywood and his fellow defendants were acquitted. Clarence Darrow defended the accused in a most brilliant manner.

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MAY

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May 1, International Labor Day

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JUNE

June 8, 1917: One hundred and fifty miners were killed today in the Granite Mountain Mine at Butte, Montana. The disaster was the result of a lack of safety devices in the mine. Investigation showed it not to be an accident, but criminal negligence.

On June 11, three days after the catastrophe, one group of miners struck, and within three months all the miners in Butte were out. In addition to better safety conditions the miners demanded a wage increase from \$4.75 to \$6 per day and also the unconditional abolition of the infamous rustling card system of blacklisting. The I.W.W.'s were strong in the strike leadership.

June 10, 1916: The maritime workers of the entire Pacific Coast ended a completely successful strike of two weeks. Fourteen hundred men in Seattle alone participated in the walk-out. Higher wages and a nine-hour day in place of the old ten hour day were the demands gained by the strike.

June 14, 1918: The state Grange convention was expelled from the Walla Walla school where it was meeting today. Thirty minutes notice was all that was given. The Grangers were charged with being "unpatriotic" and members of the Non-Partisan League.



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JUNE

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JULY

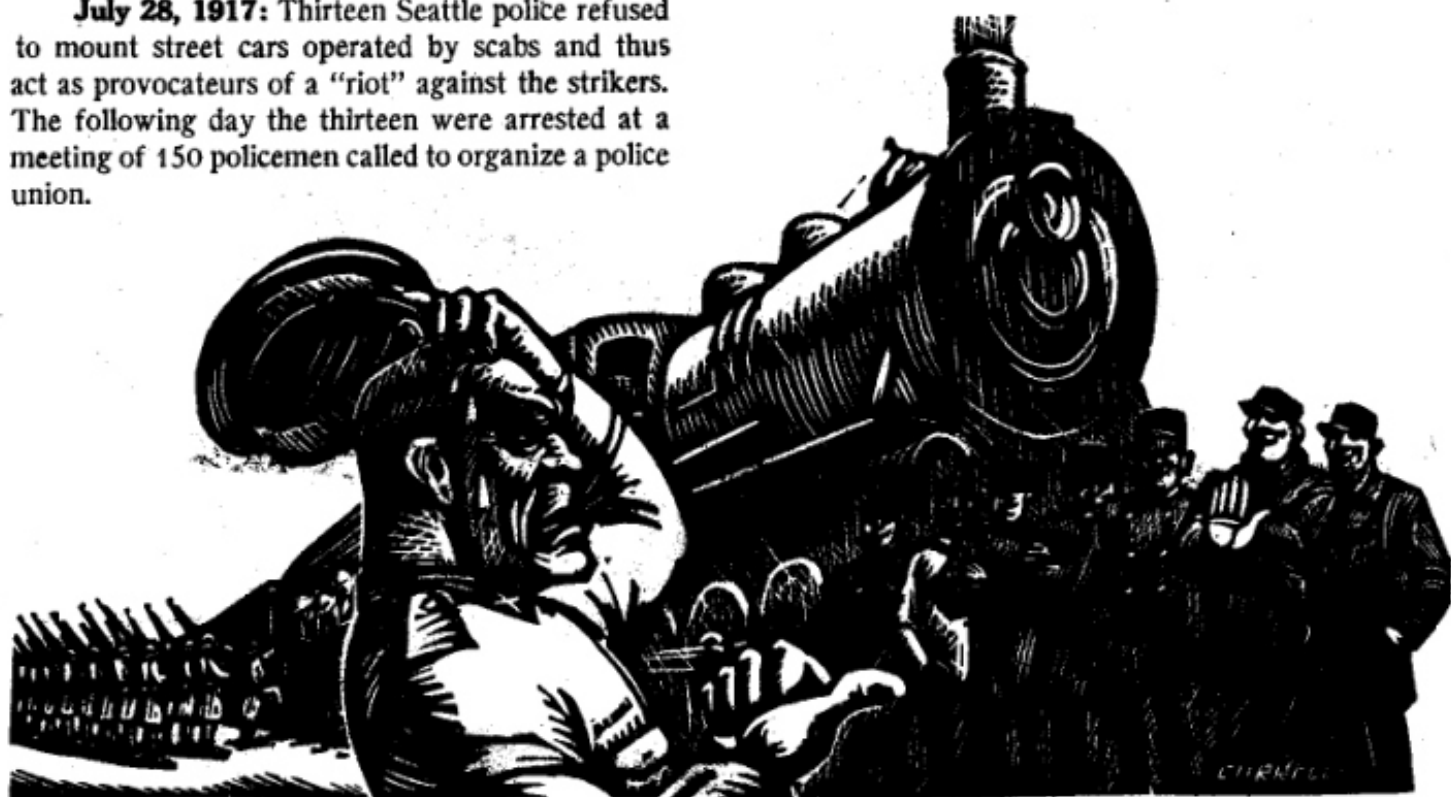
July 11, 1894: In the midst of the great railroad strike, led by Eugene Debs, American Railway Union local 89, meeting at Great Falls, Montana, ordered that "all employees of the Great Northern between Havre and Butte quit work the moment an attempt is made to move troops between any points on other lines for the purpose of operating roads, employees of which are now on strike, or protecting scabs. Should you be called upon to handle cars containing soldiers or implements of war, refuse to do so. Advise us and we will tie up the road."

Action of this type was taken by railroad workers all over the country. In Sacramento, national guardsmen fraternized with strikers, turned over an arsenal to them and supplied them with cartridges, according to the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. The New York Times files reveal that in Tacoma, troops were arrested for refusing to ride on trains operated by non-union crews.

July 14, 1916: Capt. Robert Dollar, speaking to a mass meeting of Seattle businessmen advised employers to use armed thugs and open a reign of violence against strikers. Two hundred thousand dollars was subscribed toward a goal of one million dollars for an open-shop war chest, at the meeting.

July 18, 1917: Following a red-baiting speech by Secretary of Navy Daniels in Seattle, sailors raided and demolished the I.W.W. headquarters.

July 28, 1917: Thirteen Seattle police refused to mount street cars operated by scabs and thus act as provocateurs of a "riot" against the strikers. The following day the thirteen were arrested at a meeting of 150 policemen called to organize a police union.



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JULY

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AUGUST

August 1, 1917: Frank Little, prominent I.W.W. leader, was lynched near Butte, Montana, where he was organizing the striking miners. (Note: On the 18th anniversary of his death, in 1935, Butte Miners, Local No. 1, recognized the militant anti-war activity of Frank Little, and initiated a campaign to raise funds for the purpose of erecting a monument over the almost-forgotten grave of the labor martyr.)



August 17, 1935: Thousands marched through Portland streets in protest against the non-union wage levels of the Works Progress Administration. The parade was endorsed by the Oregon State Federation of Labor and arranged by a committee consisting of representatives from the Portland Central Labor Council, the Oregon Truck Owners Association, Veterans' Union, Central Federation Against Unemployment and the National Economic Welfare Federation.



August 20, 1920: The Seattle Central Labor Council issued a circular letter urging that the handling of all war supplies destined for use against the Soviet Union should stop. Action was also urged against President Wilson's stand that he would "use all available means" to assist Poland in its war on the Soviets.

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AUGUST

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August 1, International Anti-War Day

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SEPTEMBER

Sept. 2, 1933: The Vanguard, a weekly Seattle paper, published an article showing that the Community Fund, which was having its drive at this time, was an organization whose funds were eaten by overhead. Thirty seven per cent of all the money taken in went to overhead, salaries for high officials, etc. The Vanguard indicated that the whole affair was nothing but a scheme to shove the burden of caring for the needy onto the backs of the lowly-paid.

Sept. 13, 1919: Thousands of I.W.W.'s poured into Seattle from all over the Northwest to meet President Wilson. Police terror was unable to prevent them from lining up on both sides of the street for five blocks along Wilson's line of march where they presented a sea of unsmiling faces and an ocean of hatbands labelled "Release Political Prisoners. As a result, the President called them into a special conference and gave audience to their grievances.

Sept. 21, 1917: The Seattle Teachers organized into a union, the first of its kind in the Northwest.



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SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER . .

October 15, 1917: Seattle newsboys organized into a union to resist the wage-cutting campaign of the three daily newspapers. A successful one-day strike against the Post-Intelligencer was waged.

October 7, 1919: Seattle longshoremen refused to work on the Steamer Delight when they discovered that the boat's owners were loading ammunition destined for Kolchak's White Guard armies, who were warring on Russian revolutionary forces. The Delight was tied up for a month before scabs finally loaded it. When the Delight finally arrived in Vladivostok the ammunition intended for the White Guards fell into hands of the revolutionaries, who had seized the city while the cargo was being delayed in Seattle.

October 12, 1926: Eugene V. Debs, Socialist and one of the best loved men in American history, died.

October 13, 1922: Six hundred and seventy five A. F. L. longshoremen and 275 I.W.W. seamen struck in Portland. Although the strike was conducted peacefully, the mayor shrieked, "Revolution," claiming that an army of 25,000 I.W.W.'s was under arms and marching on Portland. Police demolished the picket lines and arrested about 500 workers illegally without warrants; many of these workers were carrying their lunch pails, unaware of the strike's existence.

All known I.W.W.'s were arrested and their hall was demolished.

October 20, 1919: Centralia business men met at the Elks' Club to lay plans for the American Legion-Vigilante lynch raid on the I.W.W. hall Armistice Day. These plans set the stage for the never-to-be-forgotten Centralia tragedy.

October 31, 1933: A huge crowd packed Eagles' Auditorium to hear Tom Mann, one of the most famous British labor leaders of all time. The meeting was sponsored by a united front of university professors, church groups, Socialists, Communists and student organizations.



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OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

workers struck today, and were followed by thousands of telephone employees throughout Oregon and Washington.

November 5, 1916: The S. S. Verona docked at Everett today, loaded with I.W.W.'s determined to re-establish the right of free speech in Everett. As the Verona docked, 150 deputy sheriffs and vigilantes opened fire upon it from the pier, killing five and wounding 40 of the unarmed radicals. Two deputies were killed in their own cross fire. Upon their return to Seattle, 74 of the I.W.W.'s were arrested for trial for murder. The largest crowd ever to fill the Dreamland pavilion raised defense money and secured acquittal.

November 11, 1919: American Legionnaires, cooperating with Centralia business men, raided the Centralia I. W.W. hall during an Armistice Day parade. In self-defense, the I.W.W.'s opened fire on the raiders. Wesley Everest, himself a war

veteran was caught and brutally lynched. Even decent burial was denied the I.W.W. martyrs, and the most vital evidence was suppressed by the court in the subsequent trial. Third degree pressure was used on the jury and a conviction pushed through on perjured evidence. To date, all have either died or have been paroled, except Ray Becker, who still lies in Walla Walla prison, demanding an unconditional release.

November 19, 1919: Printers at the Seattle Post-Intelligencer struck to force the removal from that paper of a hysterical anti-labor advertisement. The advertisement, which ferociously attacked both the American Federation of Labor and the I.W.W., was removed after having appeared only in an early edition. The printers also forced the publishers to print a resolution which they had drawn up concerning the advertisement on the first page, refusing to return to work unless this was done.



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DECEMBER

December 15, 1918: At a Victoria mass meeting, British Columbia soldiers rebelled, and refused to embark for Siberia to fight against the U.S.S.R. Only ten per cent of two thousand were willing to sail. At the point of bayonets some seven hundred were marched to the ship. Many had to be handcuffed before they were pushed aboard. The news of the rebellion was quickly suppressed.



December 16, 1918: Seattle longshoremen voted to refuse to load munitions intended for use against the U.S.S.R.

December 19, 1918: All Tacoma electrical workers struck.

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DECEMBER

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