

beings, and so are the people of Everett do not go up there and jeer or shake the red flag or sure as fate something will happen again"[136]

Atop the front page of the May 5th Everett *Daily Herald* was a headline reading, "IWW Defendant Acquitted Today." The paper followed with a quarter page story entitled, "Tracy Set Free by Seattle Jury." The article contained a brief synopsis of the events leading up to the massacre and detailed the IWW's violation of Everett ordinances. While distancing itself, the newspaper's goal seems to be to make peace. The paper went on to report that, over the course of the trial, many Everett citizens had testified to the peaceful nature of the Wobblies. The article mentioned the estimated cost to the city and the fact that many witnesses identified Thomas as a shooter from the *Verona*. The story mentioned that 60 prisoners were to be released, and that that the strongest case the prosecution had was against Tracy. The tone of the article appears to portray an attempt by city to acknowledge both sides and begin to put some closure on the event. By the next day, the trial disappeared from the front page and the *Herald* like the *Seattle Daily Times* began to focus on the war.

After the not guilty verdict, the May 11, 1917 issue of the *Labor Journal* carried a one paragraph story hidden on page three. Detailing the choice the state was left with after the verdict, the headline simply stated, "Proceed with Trial or Release Prisoners" The *Labor Journal* had dedicated almost no coverage to the Thomas Tracy Trial, and the depiction of the verdict illustrates a determination by the paper to give no credit or coverage to the IWW. The paper's idea of controlling the story of the massacre seemed to be the idea that there wasn't one.

The *Northwest Worker* claimed the not guilty verdict was a great victory for the Socialist Party. The May 17, 1917 issue of the *Northwest Worker* carried the headline "Tracy Verdict." [137] The article claimed that from the start, Socialists were in the thick of the fight alongside the Wobblies. While claiming victory, the paper reminded its readers of the harassment and persecution they suffered from the mill owners and the commercial club. It also detailed how the Socialists would have held more meetings but did not want to detract from the IWW's program.

The *Industrial Worker's* May 12th headline proclaimed "Verdict Guilty Against Everett Bosses." [138] The *Industrial Worker* detailed much of the closing arguments by both sides. The IWW weekly proclaimed victory but also a determination to keep the fight going. According to the paper, the

verdict clarified divisions along class lines. The newspaper noted Prosecuting Attorney Black's closing statement when he described the citizens of Everett as professionals, family men, and people of good character while describing Wobblies as men with no home, no friends, and with no community.

[139] The *Industrial Worker* left the battle lines clearly drawn. In contrast to the commercial media, the local labor papers, and the city of Everett, the IWW was determined not to let the story die.

The victory in the courtrooms was not only evident in the silencing of the commercial press regarding the massacre; it became a rallying call and organizational tool. Spending over \$37,000 dollars on Tracy's defense proved the IWW's determination and loyalty to its cause. [141] The win gave the IWW legitimacy and attested to the legality of their organizing techniques. [142] The 74 men that were released from jail became job delegates and took the story on their campaign for the union. [143] George Vanderveer remarked that the more the IWW men "got kicked around the larger they grew." [144] The Seattle office, which had only had two on staff at the beginning of the Everett campaign, employed thirty within a couple months after the verdict. [145] And 1917 would witness the IWW's great campaign to organize the timber industry. [146]

We Never Forget

The story of the Everett Massacre has been pushed and pulled in many directions. The local and labor newspapers, each with their own political, social, and financial agendas, told the story in different ways. But the IWW's determination to produce press releases, posters, postcards and other literature ensured that their version of the massacre would not be silenced. The various public events, including the spectacle of the martyrs' funeral procession, serve as examples of the IWW's determination to use the story of the massacre to promote their cause. A graphic that appeared in the January 27, 1917 issue of the *Industrial Worker* made the point: "We Never Forget."

And the IWW effort to control the story would not end. Within a year, the *Everett Massacre*, by Walker C. Smith was published by the Industrial Workers of the World. It was the first detailed account of the events leading up to the Everett Massacre and the ensuing trial of Thomas Tracy and Smith's account has had a lasting impact. For one thing, it includes the closest thing to transcripts of the trial testimony. The official transcripts disappeared at some point after the trial. Vividly written, with a powerful argument that

shows the Wobblies as martyrs, the book is an example of the union's relentless use of the massacre as a rallying cry for workers.

During the red scare and the McCarthyism of the 1950's, two new books carried on the story: *The Rebel Girl*, an autobiography of IWW activist Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, and *Counsel for the Damned* a biography of George F. Vanderveer. Both contained an account of the massacre story. At the time, many US citizens were being targeted and blacklisted for political beliefs considered anti-American. Many IWW members had suffered a similar persecution during WWI. Both books describe Flynn's and Vanderveer's involvement in the IWW and the trial of Thomas Tracy as a victory for the IWW

In the 1960s and subsequent decades, the story would be renewed by activists and scholars sympathetic to the social movements of a new generation. In 1967, historian Robert Tyler published *Rebels in the Woods; the IWW in the Pacific Northwest*, including a key chapter on Everett. Norman Clark's *Mill Town: A Social History of Everett, Washington, from its Earliest Beginnings on the Shores of Puget Sound to the Tragic and Infamous Event Known as the Everett Massacre*, following in 1970. Numerous articles in magazines and academic journals added to the interest, and the incident was explored in the 1979 documentary film, *Wobblies*. Almost all of these accounts follow the basics of the IWW interpretation. More recently, websites, including the wonderful digital archives made available online by the [Everett Public Library](#) and the University of Washington's [Labor Archives](#), tell the massacre story[147] And social movements have found the story useful as we saw in the opening vignette about the Occupy Everett



marchers in 2011. The fact that the I.W.W's version of the events of November 5, 1916 lives on suggests that many times history is not told by the victor, it is sometimes told by those who refuse to be silenced.

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This article began as an honor's thesis for the University of Washington Department of History 2012

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Four men die in the Centralia Massacre on November 11, 1919.

By Alyssa Burrows
Posted 11/06/2003
HistoryLink.org Essay 5605

On November 11, 1919, a gunbattle erupts during an Armistice Day parade of American Legionnaires in Centralia, leaving four dead and resulting in the lynching of one member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). World War I veterans and other Centralia citizens march on the local headquarters of the IWW, whose members anticipate an attack. Shots are fired, killing veterans Arthur McElfresh, Ben Casagrande, and Warren Grimm and wounding veterans John Watt, Bernard Eubanks, and Eugene Pfister. That night a mob removes imprisoned IWW member Wesley Everest, who is also a veteran, from the town jail and lynches him from the bridge over the Chehalis River.

From Parade to War Zone

An American Legion Armistice anniversary parade down Tower Avenue, made up of Centralia and Chehalis veterans, Elks club members, Boy Scouts, nurses, Red Cross workers, the Salvation Army, Centralia citizens, and the Elks Club band, stopped for a moment in front of the IWW hall, located in the Roderick Hotel. World War I veteran and newly elected leader of the Centralia Legion Post, Lieutenant Warren Grimm, who was leading the Centralia veterans, ordered his men to stop. A group of the veterans rushed the IWW hall. Shots rang out and Grimm was hit.

The IWW of Centralia had been warned that their hall would be raided, as many other IWW halls had been since the autumn of 1917, and so had discussed what to do about it. Elmer Smith, their lawyer, advised them they were entitled to defend their property. They decided to do so and members volunteered to take places around the hall -- in the Arnold rooming house, the Avalon Hotel, and on Seminary Hill -- where they would be in firing range of the attackers, although they didn't expect the raid to happen during the parade.

Many shots rang out. Arthur McElfresh, a veteran who had sought cover peered around a corner and was shot in the head. Wesley Everest, an IWW member, shot ex-servicemen Ben Casagrande and John Watt as they were running toward him down an alley. Servicemen crouching in an alley saw Everest run past them and chased him. They eventually stopped him at the bank of the Skoocumchuck River, which Everest didn't cross due to its fast currents and his heavy gear.

The Lynch Mob Forms

Dale Hubbard, one of the servicemen, pointing a pistol he knew was jammed, ordered Everest to surrender, and began moving towards him. Everest shot him, Hubbard fell, and Everest unloaded his gun by shooting him twice more. Hubbard died in the hospital later that night, becoming the fourth death from the parade melee, but not the final death of the day.

The others caught Everest and led him by a belt around his neck to the City Jail on Maple Street. A growing crowd of Centralia citizens followed as they went, kicking and punching Everest, whom they were told was Britt Smith, acknowledged leader of the local IWW. When the crowd arrived at the jail, one of them produced a rope and strung it around his neck. It was thrown over a spike on a telephone pole, and Everest's feet left the ground before Dr. Livingstone, the parade marshal, talked the crowd down, and Everest was put in a jail cell.

Meanwhile, vigilantes were rounding up anyone suspected of being involved with the Wobblies, and destroying the IWW hall. Men hauled all the furnishings out into the street and set them on fire. The IWW membership list and records were given to the town prosecutor, who just happened to be watching from the other side of the street. News of Hubbard's death further inflamed the vigilantes.

Later that evening, about a hundred men gathered at the Elks Club, waiting to be sworn in as deputies in order to take part in rounding up IWW suspects. They made their way down to the jail and gathered outside. Someone pulled a main switch in the power distribution building adjacent to the jail and the lights went out. The crowd broke a panel out of the door and entered the jail, removing Everest. They threw him in a car and took him to the bridge over the Chehalis River near the edge of town. A rope was thrown over the cross beam, tied to Everest's neck, and he was thrown over the side. A witness, Bob Burrows, said perhaps 20 shots were fired at or close to the body, then the mob silently got back in their cars and left (McClelland, p. 81).

Other witnesses said he had been castrated, but the coroner's report the next day stated "no scars that could be located on the body outside where the rope cut neck. Hole that looked like bullet hole ... rope was still around the neck of the man" (McClelland p. 85).

The mob gathered again at the Elks Club, and Centralia judge George Dysart with his son, Lloyd, worked to talk reason into the men there, convincing them not to grab other IWW suspects now at the jail. At 11:25, the National Guard arrived by train and prevented further violence.



Seattle General Strike

Project

University of Washington

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The Seattle General Strike of February 1919 was the first 20th-century **solidarity strike** in the United States to be proclaimed a “general strike.” It led off a tumultuous era of post-World War I labor conflict that saw massive strikes shut down the nation's steel, coal, and other industries and threaten civil unrest in a dozen cities. **The Seattle General Strike Project** is a multimedia website exploring this important event. It is part of the Civil Rights and Labor History Consortium

(<https://depts.washington.edu/labhist/>) based at the University of Washington.

On the morning of February 6, 1919, Seattle, a city of 315,000 people, stopped working. 25,000 other union members had joined 35,000 shipyard workers already on strike. The city's AFL unions, 101 of them, had voted to walk out in a gesture of support and solidarity. And most of the remaining work force stayed home as stores closed and streetcars stopped running. The city was stunned and quiet. While the mayor and business leaders huddled at City Hall, eight blocks away the four-story Labor Temple, headquarters for the Central Labor Council and 60,000 union members, hummed with activity. An elected Strike Committee had taken responsibility for coordinating essential services. Thousands were fed each day at impromptu dining stations staffed by members of the culinary unions. The teamsters union saw to it that supplies reached the hospitals, that milk and food deliveries continued. An unarmed force of labor's “War Veteran Guards” patrolled the streets, urging calm, urging strikers to stay at home. On the second day, the Mayor threatened to declare martial law and two battalions of US Army troops took up position in the city, but the unions ignored the threat and calm prevailed. “Nothing moved but the tide,” remembered a striker years later.

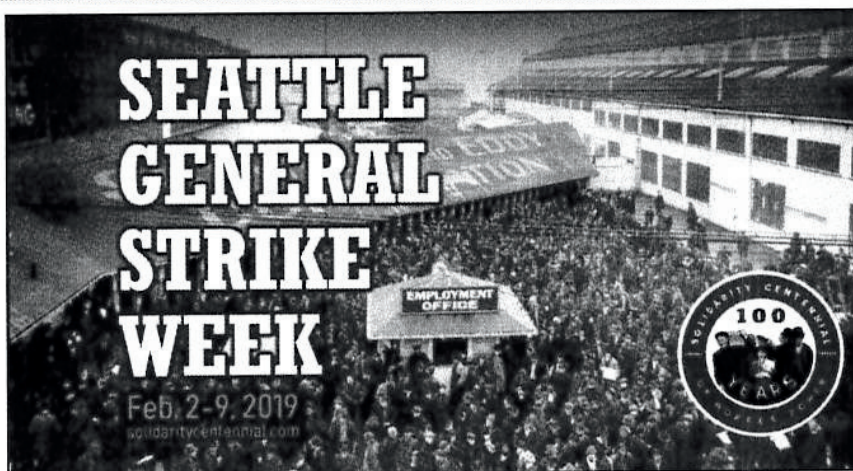
VIDEO INTRODUCTION

Seattle General Strike 1919



Excerpt from *Witness to the Revolution: The Story of Anna Louise Strong* (<http://www.stourwater.com/ALS/>) a film by Lucy Ostrander. Courtesy Stourwater (<http://www.stourwater.com/>)

Nothing moved but the tide

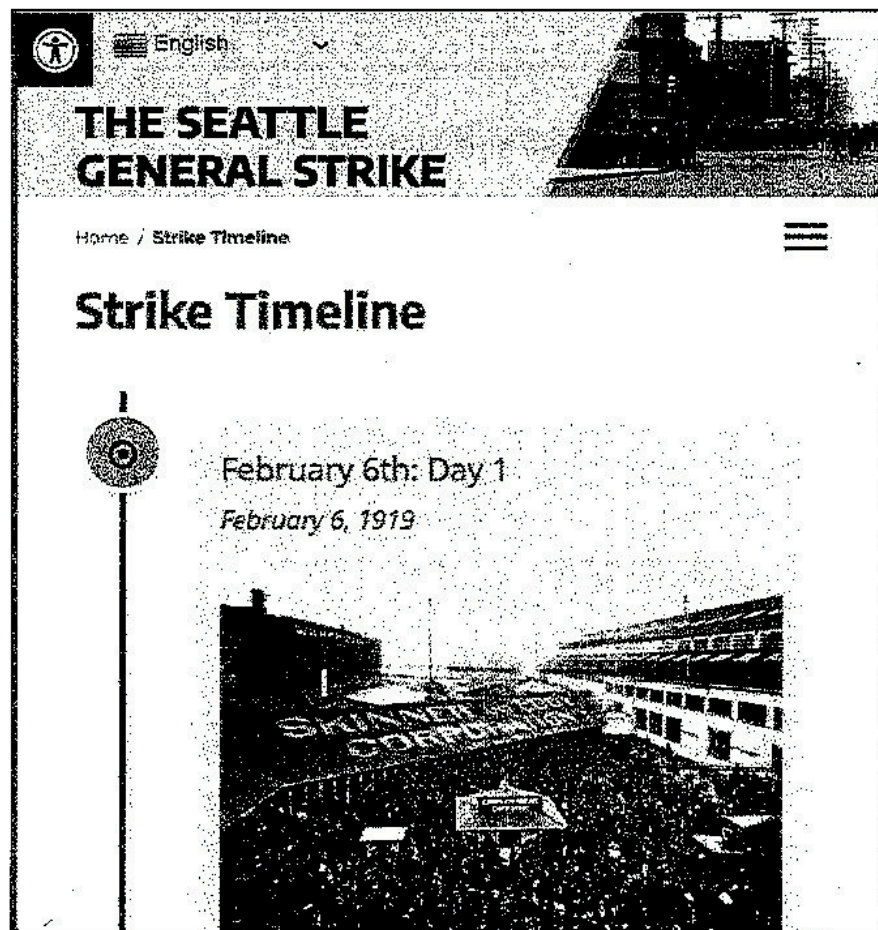


refused to negotiate. Some of the unions wavered on the strike's third day. Most others had gone back to work by the time the Central Labor Council officially declared an end on February 11. By then police and vigilantes were hard at

In that sense, the strike was a success. Big strikes in the past had usually led to big violence, but this one remained completely peaceful, and in doing so provided a model for later mobilizations. On the other hand, it was becoming clear that the sympathy strike was not working. Most of the local and national press denounced the strike, while conservatives called for stern measures to suppress what looked to them to be a revolutionary plot. More important, the federal officials charged with managing the shipyards,

work rounding up Reds. The IWW hall and Socialist Party headquarters were raided and leaders arrested. Federal agents also closed the *Union Record*, the labor-owned daily newspaper, and arrested several of its staff. Meanwhile across the country headlines screamed the news that Seattle had been saved, that the revolution had been broken, that, as Mayor Hanson phrased it, "Americanism" had triumphed over "Bolshevism." That was not story that most of the strikers would tell, nor the lesson that generations of labor activists would draw from it. The Seattle General Strike lasted only six days, but, in a variety of different ways, has continued to be of interest and importance ever since.

Understanding the Strike
(<https://specialcollections.ds.lib.uw.edu/SeattleGeneralStri>

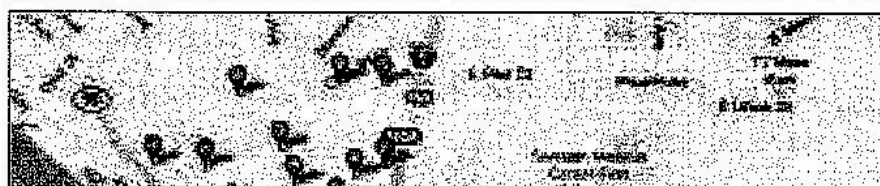


(<https://specialcollections.ds.lib.uw.edu/SeattleGeneralStrike/>)

This multimedia website explores the history and consequences of the Seattle General Strike of 1919. Below you will find original research articles, digitized newspaper articles and other important documents, photographs, and extensive bibliographic materials. Start by watching two short videos (video.shtml) , one produced by KCTS, the other an excerpt from *Witness to Revolution: The Story of Anna Louis Strong* (video.shtml) produced and directed by Lucy Ostrander. Then read Roberta Gold's article (gold.shtml) from the *Encyclopedia of Labor History Worldwide* and "An Account of What Happened in Seattle and Especially in the Seattle Labor Movement, During the General Strike, February 6 To 11, 1919" (<http://content.lib.washington.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/pioneerlife&CISOPTR=9191&REC=12>) written by Anna Louise Strong and members of the General Strike Committee. Daren Salter has created a dramatic slide show (1919SeattleGeneralStrikeProject-show.pdf) that tells the story of the strike with photos and headlines illustrating key events. The most detailed account is the new centennial edition of the *The Seattle General Strike* (book.shtml) by Robert L. Friedheim brought up to date with an introduction, photo essay, and afterword by James N. Gregory.

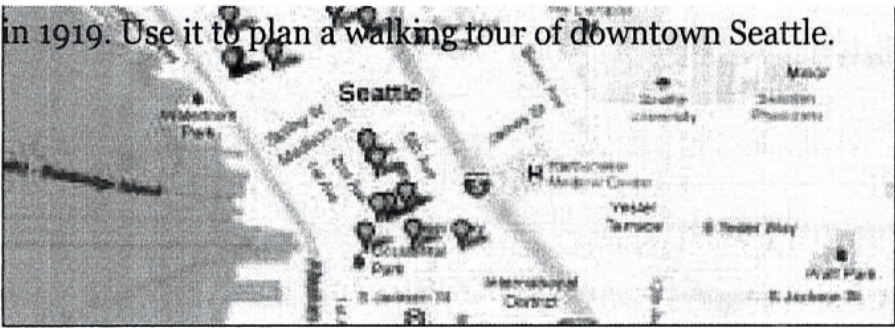
The Labor Archives of Washington recently published a spectacular online exhibit about the strike which features a detailed timeline and includes dozens of photos, pamphlets, minutes of strike committee meetings, IWW leaflets, and reports of agents hired to spy on labor activists. and documents. Visit the UW Libraries Special Collections, Labor Archives of Washington (<https://specialcollections.ds.lib.uw.edu/SeattleGeneralStrike/>) exhibit website.

Map
(<https://depts.washington.edu/labhist/strike/map.shtml>)

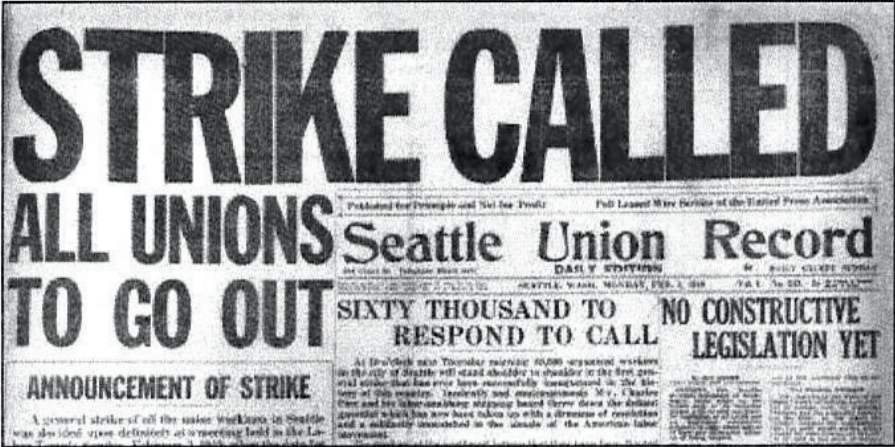


(<https://depts.washington.edu/labhist/strike/map.shtml>)

Here is our interactive map showing the locations of important events and union headquarters



News Coverage February 3-13, 1919 (news.shtml)



(news.shtml) The General Strike was headline news around the world. In Seattle, the newspaper coverage was much more intense. Here is a day-by-day record of coverage in the city's four daily newspapers: The *Seattle Union Record*, *Seattle Times*, *Seattle Star*, and *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* (news.shtml) . View the database of more than 180 articles and click the titles to read them online. We have also digitized complete copies of the *Seattle Union Record*

(unionrecord_Feb1919.shtml) for January and February.

Articles about the strike and its legacy (researchpapers.shtml)



(researchpapers.shtml) The articles that follow explore a variety of issues, including the role of the IWW in the strike; the the way that the labor movement responded to women workers and to the African American community; how the national media covered the strike. In addition, there are reports on key unions and organizations like the right-wing Minutemen; reports on earlier strikes; and biographical essays on Anna Louise Strong, Mayor Ole Hanson, and University of Washington President Henry Suzzallo. The reports are described on the Research articles (researchpapers.shtml) page. They are listed below.

We are pleased to also feature a unique and deeply researched report by historians Robert Cherny and Seth Bernstein about SEATTLE/SEIATEL' "The

American Commune" in the Soviet Union, 1922-1939 (seattle_commune.shtml) that was founded by veterans of the general strike and other Pacific Northwest radicals, many of Finnish origin, who left the United States in order to follow their politics to the new Soviet Union.

- The Politics of Gender in the Writings of Anna Louise Strong (jackson.shtml) by Rebecca Jackson
- The Industrial Workers of the World in the Seattle General Strike (anderson.shtml) by Colin Anderson
- Manufacturing a Menace: Labor Espionage in Seattle, 1919-1920 (https://depts.washington.edu/labhist/strike/labor_spies.shtml) by Shaun Cuffin
- African-Americans and the Seattle Labor Movement (wright.shtml) by Jon Wright
- Women and the Seattle Labor Movement (nguyen.shtml) by Lynne Nguyen
- Seattle's Waitresses Serve in Solidarity (waitresses.shtml) by Jessica Keele
- White Women in the 1919 Seattle Labor Movement: Facing Gender Subordination, Practicing White Supremacy (white_women.shtml) by Kathryn Karcher

How the National Press Reported the General Strike (shown.shtml) by Sheila Shown
Spying on Labor: The Seattle Minute Men (newsome.shtml) by Susan Newsome
Campus Kaiser: Henry Suzzallo, the University of Washington and WWI Labor Politics (farrell.shtml) by Patrick Farrell
International Shingle Weavers of America (emerson.shtml) by Phil Emerson
Mayor Ole Hanson: Fifteen Minutes of Fame (williams.shtml) by Trevor Williams
Shipyard Workers on the Eve of the General Strike (shipyards_webb.shtml) by Patterson Webb
Seattle Newspapers Report on Shipyard Workers in 1918 (shipyards_news.shtml) by Patterson Webb
Electrical Workers' Unions and the Seattle General Strike
(https://depts.washington.edu/labhist/strike/electrical_workers.shtml) by Nicholas Greenwood
The Songbird and the Martyr: Katie Phar, Joe Hill, and the Songs of the IWW
(https://depts.washington.edu/labhist/strike/songbird.shtml) by Senteara Orwig
Reds, Labor, and the Great War: Antiwar Activism in the Pacific Northwest
(https://depts.washington.edu/antiwar/WW1_reds.shtml) by Rutger Ceballos
Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen (mickelson.shtml) by Erik Mickelson
The International Union of Timberworkers 1911-1923 (canterbury.shtml) by Chris Canterbury
Laundry Workers Struggle for Recognition 1916-17 (reimer.shtml) by Kimberley Reimer
The Seattle Telegraphers Lockout of 1918 (radford.shtml) by David Radford
The Mooney Congress and the 1919 Seattle General Strike (quast.shtml) by Stan Quast
The IWW, the Newspapers, and the 1913 Seattle Potlatch Riot (larrabee.shtml) by James Larrabee
Where Women Worked During World War I (kim.shtml) by Tae H. Kim
Washington State's 1911 Workmen's Compensation Act: The Newspaper Coverage (deibert.shtml) by Ryan Deibert
Perceptions of Race in the Seattle Union Record (seabury.shtml) by Chad Seabury

Oral Histories and Strike Memories
(interviews.shtml)



(interviews.shtml)
In 1977, Professor Rob Rosenthal interviewed 35 men and women who participated in or remembered the 1919 General Strike. Rosenthal has generously agreed to share these oral histories (interviews.shtml) with the Seattle General Strike Project. These audio MP3 files and transcripts comprise a rare and valuable resource. The narrators speak not only about the events of 1919 but about later aspects of Pacific Northwest labor and political history. **Dave Beck** is the most famous of the men and women interviewed. Later to serve as President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Beck was 24 years old at the time of the General Strike, newly discharged from the Navy and was part of a group of Teamsters who opposed the strike.

Commemorating the Strike (music.shtml)

In February 2019, Seattle celebrated the centennial of the 1919 General Strike in a week-long sequence of events, including films, an archival exhibit, a dramatized reading of words and songs from the strike, and a full day of activities at the Labor Temple. Commemorations of this sort are an important part of the legacy of the Seattle General Strike. They show how the strike lives on, inspiring new generations to think about labor, social justice, and radical activism. One of the most important commemorative projects was the rock opera *Seattle 1919* (music.shtml) which tells the story of the general strike in lyrics and music. Composed by Rob Rosenthal, *Seattle 1919* was recorded by the Fuse. The band performed the full rock opera in Seattle on May 1, 1989, shortly after the 70th anniversary of the strike. Here is more about the rock opera (music-songs.shtml) and you can listen to one of the songs.



Seattle General Strike

Project

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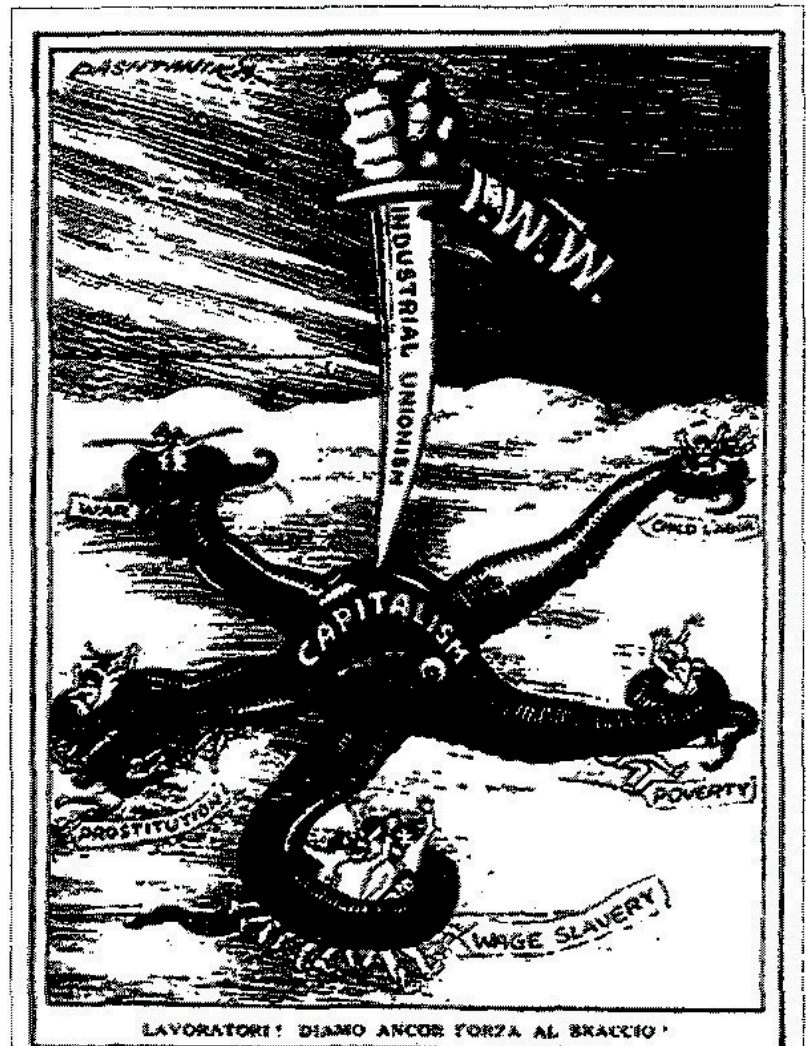
The Industrial Workers of the World in the Seattle General Strike

By Colin M. Anderson

The Seattle General Strike is an event very important in the history of the Pacific Northwest. On February 6, 1919 Seattle workers became the first workers in United States history to participate in an official general strike. Many people know little, if anything, about the strike, however. Perhaps the momentousness of the event is lost in the fact that the strike took place without violence, or perhaps it is because there was no apparent visible change in the city following the event. But the strike is a landmark for the U.S. labor movement, and is very important, if for no other reason, for what it stands for. Workers expressed their power through a massive action of solidarity, and demonstrated to the nation the potential power of organized labor. This was at a time when labor was generally divided over ideological lines that prevented them from achieving such mass action very often.

For many at the time, however, the strike represented something else: something more sinister and extreme. To many of the locals in Seattle the strike was the beginning of an attempted revolution by the Industrial Workers of the World and others with similar radical tendencies. These people saw the putting down of the strike as the triumph of patriotism in the face of radicalism gone too far. The insistence of these conservatives that the IWW was behind the strike, together with the state of the organization and its place in the labor movement at the time, has created a mystery as to just how much of a role the "Wobblies" played in the Seattle General Strike.

Looking into this seemingly simple question brings about many other questions that were hard to answer in 1919, and remain even harder to answer now, eighty years after the fact. How did an ordinary conflict between shipyard workers and owners turn into an event the magnitude of a general strike? How many of those in control of the strike were involved with the IWW, or sympathized with their cause? To what extent did the strike's leaders attitude correlate with those of Seattle's rank-and-file workers? In the end, it is hard to imagine how the Wobblies could have brought about the general strike as many accused them of doing at the time. Historians have suggested



Lavoratori, an Italian-Language IWW Newspaper, borrowed graphics from *Solidarity* and the *Industrial Pioneer*. The editor would usually add a caption in Italian. The above caption reads: "Workers! Give Me More Strength in my Arm!"

Loggers, miners, and seasonal agricultural workers formed the core of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) at the outset. They found success organizing in the Northwest logging camps by promoting industrial unions that would bring all the workers in the industry under one umbrella union. They believed in worker ownership of factories, a 40-hour work week, and sanitary conditions in the logging camps—and for believing in these 'rights' they were branded as dangerous radicals. Photo courtesy of the IWW (<http://www.iww.org/>).

that the strike was organized by the AFL unions in Seattle, and that the IWW did not play any significant role. This is the general position offered by those within the strikes internal leadership of AFL union officers. The truth as to the IWW's place in the general strike most likely lies somewhere between the paranoia-filled sentiments of conservatives, and the claims of these AFL leaders who spent years claiming the IWW possessed no influence or involvement. A deeper understanding of this must begin with some background on the labor movements history in Seattle, and the IWW's place in it.

In the late nineteenth century, the Pacific Northwest came of age. Gold was discovered in Alaska, the lumber industry flourished, the Northern Pacific Railroad was completed, Washington achieved statehood, and Seattle was put on the map. The waters of Puget Sound first made Seattle a key port for the transportation of timber in the 1880's and 1890's, and soon after a first stop for miners on their way to Alaska hoping to strike it rich. Seattle and the entire region developed a unique culture, a way of life all its own.

Part of this culture was a radicalism within the labor movement that surpassed that of the movement elsewhere. Many Northwest workers were migratory, especially those in the unstable, inconsistent lumber industry. Industry organizations were formed in part for the purpose of combating organized labor, keeping wages low and working conditions cheap. Into this arena stepped the Industrial Workers of The World, formed with the goal of developing class-consciousness among workers and organizing them into "One Big Union." The frontier economies of the West provided the IWW with many workers who would listen to the IWW's ideas with open ears and open minds in the early 20th century.

For about the first fifteen years of the century, the IWW developed and maintained a very strong presence not only in the Northwest, but also in other regions throughout the United States. Utilizing tactics such as free-speech fights and demonstrations, IWW members toured the Northwest preaching their ideals and attempting to establish themselves in various communities. During the years before World War I, the IWW also came to be feared and hated by some segments of society. The ideas they espoused were contrary to the American ideals of freedom and capitalism. In his book, *Rebels Of The Woods*, Robert L. Tyler described the opposition that the Wobblies came up against. "That Jeffersonian myth at the heart of this post-frontier society was actually threatened much more by the railroad boom and the beginning of large-scale capitalist exploitation of the region's resources than by the I.W.W. rhetoric. But the I.W.W. appeared, almost providentially it would seem, as scapegoats."

In towns like Everett and Spokane, the fight against the IWW got violent. In 1909 a free speech fight in Spokane resulted in many arrests and raids on the IWW hall, while in 1916 IWW members clashed with opponents in Everett. The violence in Everett left people on both sides dead and wounded. This episode was just one incident where the resistance to the presence of the Wobblies in a community turned violent.

By 1919 the IWW was considered by many to be a radical and dangerous organization that was working toward the goal of sparking a revolution. The Russian Revolution by the Bolsheviks in 1917 deepened the fears of conservative Americans and created a red scare throughout the country. By praising the events in Russia the IWW soon came to be associated with the revolution. A conservative Seattle man named Edgar Lloyd Hampton wrote an article in the *Saturday Evening Post* two months after the general strike in which he blamed the IWW and other radicals for what happened. Hampton claimed, "The I.W.W. themselves openly boast that the Russian Revolution was planned in the office of a Seattle lawyer, counsel for the organization..." This sentiment, which was quite common among people outside labor movement circles, perpetuated the idea that an event like a general strike was really an attempted revolution.

While people may have exaggerated the involvement of the IWW in the Seattle General Strike, the history of the Wobblies in the months and years leading up to the strike did provide their opponents with ammunition and evidence to support their claims. IWW members never shied away from confrontations with their opponents, and made their radical ideas well known. In August 1918 the IWW was reported to be plotting a general strike of miners

and lumber workers throughout the West. 32 Wobblies were arrested in Spokane in connection with the plot. Scores of Wobblies were arrested following the passing of anti-sedition laws by the government. The same month that the plot was broken up in Spokane, 70 IWW members were jailed in Seattle for "government investigation as suspected seditionists."

There were also reports of a mass meeting in Tacoma of the Tacoma Soldiers', Sailors', and Workmens' Council where the speakers, including I.W.W. representatives, urged "a peaceful overthrow of the present form of government in the United States and the taking over of government industries by the working class..."

An article in the Oregonian on January 13, 1919 reported on a meeting of "Bolsheviks" in Seattle at 4th and Virginia at which speakers were urging a general strike in large part to prevent the shipping of supplies to Siberia for use by armies who were resisting the Bolsheviks there. These articles all reflect the fact that there was an abundance of activity by the IWW and other radicals in the years prior to the strike. The activities that found their way onto the pages of the newspapers made much of the public resentful, distrustful, and afraid of the Wobblies and their intentions.

An interview of Frank L. Curtis some years after the strike shows how some assumed the IWW was directly behind the strike. He told of how his father, a conservative Seattleite, believed revolution was at hand, and admitted these beliefs were fostered by "I.W.W. trouble" in previous years rather than the facts of the case in early 1919. He described how the "great wonder after the strike was over how good respectable working people had followed the lead of the I.W.W... no one could understand how the I.W.W.'s had put it over."

While these sentiments were exaggerated beliefs that stemmed from conservative fears and misunderstandings, there is historical evidence that suggests that there were Wobblies and other radicals who were more involved than most secondary sources claim. Spy reports indicate that they participated in various ways, including attendance at meetings, distribution of literature, and various speeches addressing the strike issues. One report claimed that IWW members were meeting with strike leaders in Seattle and Tacoma.

Reports also indicated the circulation of IWW materials at Central Labor Council meetings and the pasting of IWW propaganda at the vote by soldiers and sailors to support the general strike on January 28th. One report even suggested that the President of the State Federation of Labor telegraphed AFL international officers claiming the strike movement was being organized by the IWW and AFL leaders who were IWW sympathizers. This report also claimed that he had requested help to control the situation and prevent the IWW from taking control of the labor movement from the AFL in Seattle. These reports suggest that the IWW was playing a role in the campaign for the general strike, and that the Wobblies possessed considerable influence in the Seattle labor scene.

Another spy report describes an IWW meeting that took place on January 1st 1919, when labor leaders in Seattle were considering a general strike. A speech by Walker Smith, a well-known Wobbly in Seattle, was reported on, and while he was quoted as praising the IWW and encouraging his listeners to support a general strike, there was no indication from his words that the IWW was leading the strike at all. Smith's words reflect the IWW's strong belief in the necessity of general strikes, and he pointed to the events in Russia, saying, "Look at Russia! When the Working Men, the Soldiers, and the Sailors organized as a mass, they put an end to human slavery and capitalism. The workers can do that everywhere if they want to."

Another reason that many were so inclined to accuse the IWW was the connection people had in their minds between the IWW and large-scale actions like general strikes. The general strike as a strategic action was an important weapon in the IWW's arsenal, even though they never really used it. The shutting down of all industries was an important step towards achieving the kind of economic system desired by the Wobblies. Their literature, however, did not endorse using force to achieve their goals. Rather, the IWW saw direct action resulting from class-consciousness as the necessary groundwork for a general strike. The general strike as an ideal represented the kind of solidarity among working people that the Wobblies wanted to see in the United States. This acceptance of the idea of

a general strike was in part what led to all of the fingers that were pointed at the IWW when the Seattle General Strike came about in 1919. One article, in listing the IWW's methods and principles, mentioned general strikes, saying the organization's methods included "the habitual use of the strike - particularly the general strike - not much to remedy the specific grievances or to establish improvement of labor conditions as to cripple and ruin employers and paralyze the industries of the country." Sentiments like this reveal the association that many people made between the idea of a general strike and the perceived revolutionary radicalism of the IWW.

While the use of a general strike was something talked about more by the Wobblies than other contemporary unions, it was not something out of the realm of possibility for the AFL craft unions. Large scale actions and sympathy strikes were prevalent in the history of the labor movement, and would continue to take place in future years. General strikes came later in other U.S. cities, including San Francisco. In the case of Seattle, the various unions came together in solidarity, crossing the lines of craft unionism which previously had made large strikes relatively rare. A Union Record article that appeared late in January before the strike had occurred told of how the Central Labor Council was debating over whether the general strike should be a sympathy strike or a mass strike.

This question was never really officially answered. In fact, the inability to declare any clear goals for the strike was another reason why people found it easy to speculate that the IWW was behind it. Furthermore, if a general strike was going to happen anywhere in the U.S., Seattle was arguably the city where it could take place most easily. The environment of Seattle, far distanced from other regions, together with the unique radicalism that characterized the entire labor movement in Seattle, made the city a likely testing ground for a general strike. The working class in Seattle was firmly grounded in its progressive, radical ideas. In his book on the Seattle General Strike, Robert Friedheim emphasizes the radical sentiments of Seattle unions, citing the national AFL's view that the local unions of Seattle were dangerously radical. Friedheim quotes The Rebel Worker as saying the labor movement in Seattle was "so distinctive that even the IWW characterized it as a movement 'affiliated - more in form than in spirit - with the American Federation of Labor.'"

In the opinions of the conservatives and middle class people of Seattle, the radicalism of Seattle's unions had become much more dangerous and fevered. In his article on the strike, Hampton pointed to the Union Record as a sign that the labor movement was getting more extreme. He wrote that the Union Record had turned "from a more or less radical weekly into a much more radical daily." He also claimed that the Union Record had urged workers to support a general strike even though most unions did not want to do so. Hampton, like many other citizens of Seattle, firmly believed that the general strike was an attempted revolution, engineered by the IWW and other "Bolsheviks" in the hopes that it would spread to other cities and states.

As the IWW fell deeper into a state of defense against the onslaught of opposition and persecution, individual Wobblies, as well as the organization as a whole, were forced to alter their ways. Before 1919 it had become common for most Wobblies in Seattle to be members of other unions, which was due to both the danger inherent with publicly spreading the IWW's ideas, as well as the difficulty that came in trying to get a job without joining the AFL-affiliated craft unions. As one worker put it, "... I belong to the I.W.W. for a principle and to the A.F. of L. for a job." This system of dual membership was referred to as "boring" and the existence of such a practice provides further mystery by raising the question of just how many workers and leaders within AFL unions believed in the principles and ideals put forth by the IWW. The answer, once again, lies somewhere between what a conservative would claim (that the IWW controlled the AFL unions during the strike) and what the actual leaders of the strike would say (that the Wobblies had no presence).

One labor leader who spoke about the strike frequently in the years following it was James A. Duncan, who was Secretary of the Seattle Central Labor Council at the time of the strike and a longtime respected leader in the Seattle labor scene. Duncan later testified in a court case that the General Strike in Seattle was not directly led by any radicals or IWW's. When asked to explain his opinion as to the cause of the strike, Duncan explained that those in Seattle's labor circles believed that labor's opponents were working with the government to destroy the movement,

and that this process was beginning with the shipyard workers, whose conflict quickly developed into the general strike. Duncan expressed also in his testimony that he doubted there were more than three percent of the Seattle Central Labor Council who were party socialists.

Although Duncan was very adamant about playing down the influence of radicals in the strike, he probably stretched the truth to some degree. The leaders within the Central Labor Council had reason to distance themselves from groups like the IWW. Openly allying themselves with these elements would certainly fuel the fires of conservatives who already were fearful of a possible revolution clouded by the general strike. It is interesting to compare Duncan's testimony in the later court case to a quote attributed to him in the Union Record just days before the strike, in which he exclaimed, "It is all right to talk about the revolution, but some of us are not revolutionaries." While this quote does indicate that Duncan was not himself a revolutionary, it also may lead one to believe that there were others involved who were, and that addressing the desires of the more radical element in Seattle labor was an issue for the leaders.

The desire to downplay involvement of the radicals and IWW's was also evident in a pamphlet issued by the General Strike Committee after the strike ended. In addition to detailing the events leading up to and taking place during the strike, the pamphlet also addressed the widespread ideas that it was anything more than a sympathy strike by the AFL. In it the committee claimed that the strike was carried out by unions of the AFL, acting on the decisions made by the voting rank-and-file. They also plainly denied that the IWW had any part, "contrary to sentiments made widely throughout the country." Addressing accusations that the leaders of the strike were revolutionaries, the committee wrote that, "Probably hardly any of the so-called 'leaders,' accused by the press of trying to start Bolshevism in America, believed that the revolution was at hand. Such belief as there was occurred in isolated cases in the rank and file..."

The strike committee claimed that the IWW's rumored leading role came from two things, primarily. First, the press's desire to discredit the strikers. Newspapers did nothing to stop the spread of panic in the days before, during, and after the strike. In fact, the press helped perpetuate people's fears. An example is an article in the Seattle Star in which the paper appealed to peoples' "Americanism" to stand up to the revolutionary hopes of the Bolsheviks who were attempting the strike. Secondly, the publication and distribution of "dodgers" during the strike. Many people saw the Wobblies handing out their literature and believed it was official strike propaganda. Indeed, the IWW was visible on the streets during the strike, but this was certainly nothing new, and the assumption that this now meant more than before was unfounded.

Most of the historical evidence connected with the labor community about the strike denies the IWW played a key role. An article with Henry M. White, who worked as a mediator during the strike, said in a letter written to the Union Record that in his negotiations he had not recognized any of the labor representatives he dealt with as being connected to the IWW. He also wrote, "I would certainly not brand the unions of Seattle as being influenced by the IWW with nothing more substantial than mere rumors to justify it."

In an interview with Robert Friedheim, Ed Weston, a member of the Boilmakers' Union in Seattle during 1919, said that the strike was not sponsored by the IWW, that Wobblies had no important positions if leadership in the strike, and that their influence was "probably nil." He also said that Seattle Mayor Ole Hanson falsely accused many labor reps of being "reds."

Indeed, Ole Hanson is one major contributor to the idea that the General Strike was a revolutionary attempt to overthrow the government. Following the end of the strike, Hanson toured the country telling his story of the strike, which was that he had thwarted a revolution by radicals. Already suffering from a major backlash and red scare, the IWW's reputation was further damaged by Hanson's claims.

An article appeared in one publication after the strike praising Hanson and supporting the idea that he had suppressed a revolution attempt. The article claimed that the secret service had provided the police with information

from IWW meetings that the IWW was behind the general strike. Knowing this, the article claimed, allowed Mayor Hanson and the police to stop the strike quickly and prevent a revolution. Hanson is quoted in the article as saying, "Bolshevism in Seattle is dead. No other city need fear them if the methods we employed are used." Hanson called also for the removal of the IWW from places of power in labor unions, greater control over immigration into the U.S. of "aliens" who brought radical ideals, and the passage of more laws outlawing the IWW and other radical organizations that were anti-government.

In the wake of the strike, IWW members saw the persecution against them intensified. Thirty-nine Wobblies were arrested in connection with the strike as the authorities tried to place blame for what had happened on the radical elements of Seattle's labor circles. The headquarters for the IWW was raided. The false blame put on the Wobblies was met by another unique display of solidarity among Seattle's labor movement, as the Central Labor Council came to the arrested IWW members' defense to defend "fundamental rights involved in these cases which are necessary to our own existence." In an era when the IWW and AFL were separated by their ideological differences and the opposing approaches of class unionism and industrial unionism, Seattle's labor movement once again showed their solidarity.

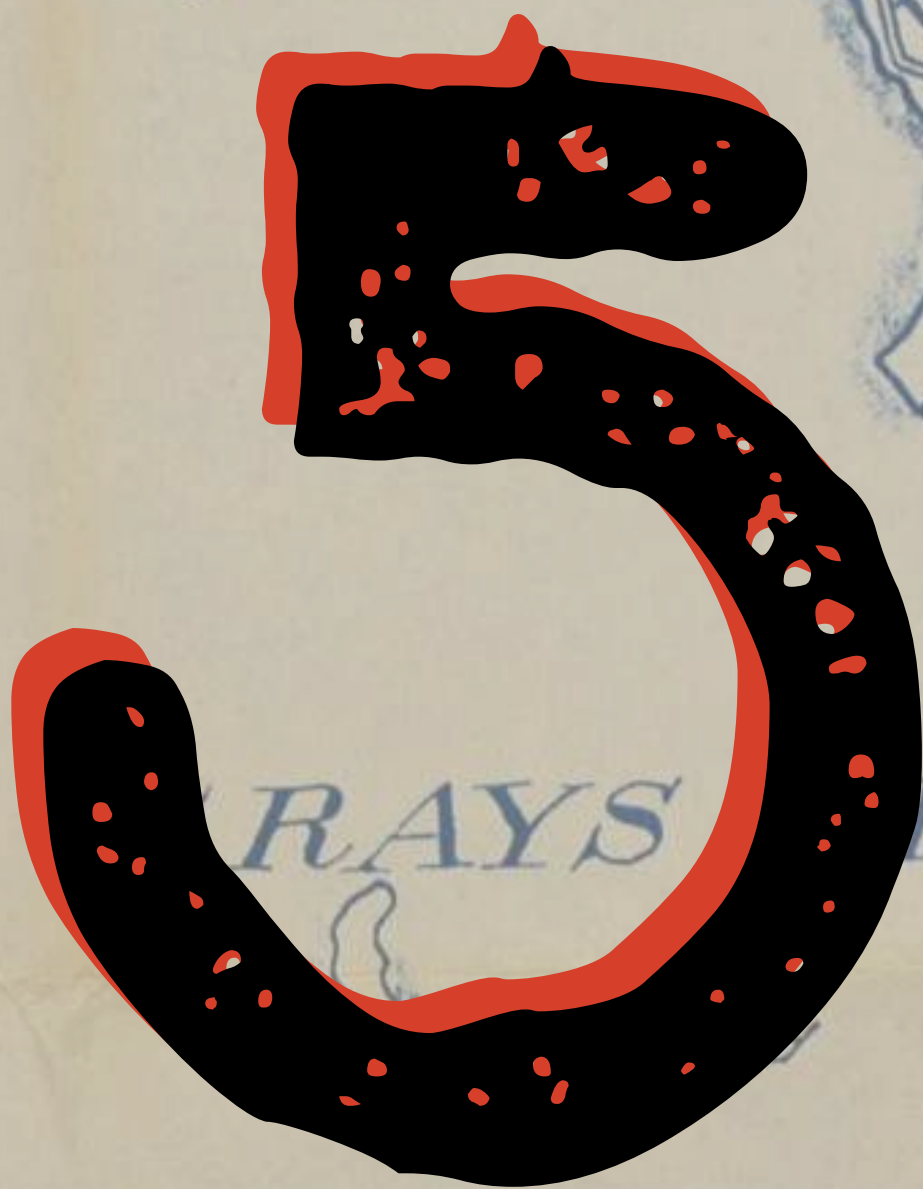
On a sadder note, the IWW faced one of the darkest chapters in its history later in 1919 when an Armistice Day parade in Centralia, Washington turned into a bloody conflict between members of the American Legion and the local Wobblies who were trying to maintain their presence in the community. There were deaths on both sides, including an especially harsh and brutal lynching of one Wobbly. The IWW had seen the peak of its influence, and was now spiraling downward in the face of so much opposition. IWW leaders had hoped that the strike would stand as a demonstration of the inherent power of worker solidarity and spark a wider acceptance of IWW ideals over those of the AFL. Instead, the labor movement headed into a different direction that stood in between the two segments ideologically.

While Hanson, conservative citizens, and many press outlets maintained and spread their belief that the Seattle General Strike had been an attempted revolution, the IWW as an organization did not claim any direct participation or leadership. New Solidarity, a national IWW newspaper out of Chicago, declared that the IWW as an organization or as individuals was not behind the strike. The paper did, however, support the strike and expressed admiration for those who participated in it. On February 22, the paper published an "Ode to Seattle," which praised Seattle for showing what labor could do by acting in solidarity.

New Solidarity explained the strike's origins in the shipyard strike and listed some of the lessons learned from the weaknesses and strengths they saw. The IWW had always supported the idea of a general strike because it was the best way to cause the complete paralysis of an industry. In Seattle, the AFL craft unions had finally crossed the lines and come together as a working class. Hopefully, to the IWW, the events in Seattle would be repeated later on a larger scale.

In analyzing the causes of the general strike the IWW pointed to the persecution of its members in Seattle, which led to a situation where many workers were members of both the IWW and another craft union for their job. Another factor recognized by the Wobblies was the social revolution that had taken place in Russia and influenced many in America.

The IWW is a compelling subject to study, both as an organization and in cases like the Seattle General Strike, as individuals. In assessing the organization's role in the strike, what is most important is specific individuals who may have been Wobblies or accepted their ideas. Seattle was unique for the radical nature of its labor unions, and the IWW was right in the middle of the scene. But in the General Strike, the IWW stayed largely in the background, watching and hoping it would lead to something more that they had dedicated their lives to fighting for. The strike also came just as the IWW was going into serious decline, largely from the persecution by the same people who accused them of being behind the strike.



5

MISC LABOR HISTORY

The anarchist origins of May Day

Prepared from a PDF file at
www.struggle.ws/wsm.html



Not many people know why May Day became International Workers Day and why we should still celebrate it. It all began over a century ago when the American Federation of Labour adopted an historic resolution which asserted that *"eight hours shall constitute a legal day's labour from and after May 1st, 1886"*.

In the months prior to this date workers in there thousands were drawn into the struggle for the shorter day. Skilled and unskilled, black and white, men and women, native and immigrant were all becoming involved.

Chicago

In Chicago alone 400,000 were out on strike. A newspaper of that city reported that *"no smoke curled up from the tall chimneys of the factories and mills, and things had assumed a Sabbath-like appearance"*. This was the main centre of the agitation, and here the anarchists were in the forefront of the labour movement. It was to no small extent due to their activities that Chicago became an outstanding trade union centre and made the biggest contribution to the eight-hour movement.

When on May 1st 1886, the eight hour strikes convulsed that city, one half of the workforce at the McCormick Harvester Co. came out. Two days later a mass meeting was held by 6,000 members of the 'lumber shovers' union who had also come out. The meeting was held only a block from the McCormick plant and was joined by some 500 of the strikers from there.

The workers listened to a speech by the anarchist August Spies, who has been asked to address the meeting by the Central Labour Union. While Spies was speaking, urging the workers to stand together and not give in to the bosses, the strikebreakers were beginning to leave the nearby McCormick plant.

The strikers, aided by the 'lumber shovers' marched down the street and forced the scabs back into the factory. Suddenly a force of 200 police arrived and, without any warning, attacked the crowd with clubs and revolvers. They killed at least one striker, seriously wounded five or six others and injured an indeterminate number.

Outraged by the brutal assaults he had witnessed, Spies went to the office of the Arbeiter-Zeitung (a daily anarchist newspaper for German immigrant workers) and composed a circular calling on the workers of Chicago to attend a protest meeting the following night.

The protest meeting took place in the Haymarket Square and was addressed by Spies and two other anarchists active in the trade union movement, Albert Parsons and Samuel Fielden.

of this and suggested that the large force of police reservists waiting at the station house be sent home.

It was close to ten in the evening when Fielden was closing the meeting. It was raining heavily and only about 200 people remained in the square. Suddenly a police column of 180 men, headed by Bonfield, moved in and ordered the people to disperse immediately. Fielden protested *"we are peaceable"*.

Bomb

At this moment a bomb was thrown into the ranks of the police. It killed one, fatally wounded six more and injured about seventy others. The police opened fire on the spectators. How many were wounded or killed by the police bullets was never exactly ascertained.

A reign of terror swept over Chicago. The press and the pulpit called for revenge, insisting the bomb was the work of socialists and anarchists. Meeting halls, union offices, printing works and private homes were raided. All known socialists and anarchists were rounded up. Even many individuals ignorant of the meaning of socialism and anarchism were arrested and tortured. *"Make the raids first and look up the law afterwards"* was the public statement of Julius Grinnell, the state's attorney.

Trial

Eventually eight men stood trial for being *"accessories to murder"*. They were Spies, Fielden, Parsons, and five other anarchists who were influential in the labour movement, Adolph Fischer, George Engel, Michael Schwab, Louis Lingg and Oscar Neebe.

The trial opened on June 21st 1886 in the criminal court of Cooke County. The candidates for the jury were not chosen in the usual manner of drawing names from a box. In this case a special bailiff, nominated by state's attorney Grinnell, was appointed by the court to select the candidates. The defence was not allowed to



The Chicago martyrs: Parsons, Engel, Spies and Fischer were hanged, Lingg (centre) killed himself in prison

The police attack

Throughout the speeches the crowd was orderly. Mayor Carter Harrison, who was present from the beginning of the meeting, concluded that *"nothing looked likely to happen to require police interference"*. He advised police captain John Bonfield

present evidence that the special bailiff had publicly claimed *"I am managing this case and I know what I am about. These fellows are going to be hanged as certain as death"*.

Rigged jury

The eventual composition of the jury was farcical; being made up of businessmen, their clerks and a relative of one of the dead policemen. No proof was offered by the state that any of the eight men before the court had thrown the bomb, had been connected with its throwing, or had even approved of such acts. In fact, only three of the eight had been in Haymarket Square that evening.

No evidence was offered that any of the speakers had incited violence, indeed in his evidence at the trial Mayor Harrison described the speeches as *"tame"*. No proof was offered that any violence had been contemplated. In fact, Parsons had brought his two small children to the meeting.

Sentenced

That the eight were on trial for their anarchist beliefs and trade union activities was made clear from the outset. The trial closed as it had opened, as was witnessed by the final words of Attorney Grinnell's summation speech to the jury. *"Law is on trial. Anarchy is on trial. These men have been selected, picked out by the Grand Jury, and indicted because they were leaders. There are no more guilty than the thousands who follow them. Gentlemen of the jury: convict these men, make examples of them, hang them and you save our institutions, our society."*

On August 19th seven of the defendants were sentenced to death, and Neebe to 15 years in prison. After a massive international campaign for their release, the state 'compromised' and commuted the sentences of Schwab and Fielden to life imprisonment. Lingg cheated the hangman by committing suicide in his cell the day before the executions. On November 11th 1887 Parsons, Engel, Spies and Fischer were hanged.

Pardoned

600,000 working people turned out for their funeral. The campaign to free Neebe, Schwab and Fielden continued.

On June 26th 1893 Governor Altgeld set them free. He made it clear he was not granting the pardon because he thought the men had suffered enough, but because they were innocent of the crime for which they had been tried. They and the hanged men had been the victims of *"hysteria, packed juries and a biased judge"*.

The authorities have believed at the time of the trial that such persecution would break the back of the eight-hour movement. Indeed, evidence later came to light



Contemporary woodcutting of the funeral of the four hanged men

that the bomb may have been thrown by a police agent working for Captain Bonfield, as part of a conspiracy involving certain steel bosses to discredit the labour movement.

When Spies addressed the court after he had been sentenced to die, he was confident that this conspiracy would not succeed. *"If you think that by hanging us you can stamp out the labour movement... the movement from which the downtrodden millions, the millions who toil in misery and want, expect salvation - if this is your opinion, then hang us! Here you will tread on a spark, but there and there, behind you - and in front of you, and everywhere, flames blaze up. It is a subterranean fire. You cannot put it out"*.

Revolutionary politics

Over a century after that first May Day demonstration in Chicago, where are we? We stroll through town with our union banners - about the only day of the year we can get them out of head office. Then we stand around listening to boring (and usually pretty meaningless) speeches by equally boring union bureaucrats. You have to keep reminding yourself that May Day was once a day when workers all over

the world displayed their strength, proclaimed their ideals and celebrated their successes.

It is important that "once upon a time" it was like that. We can do it again. We need independent working class politics. No collaboration with government and bosses. Real solidarity with fellow workers in struggle, not a blinkered sectional outlook. We still need a further reduction in working hours, without loss of pay, to make work for the unemployed.

We need revolutionary politics. That means politics that can lead us towards a genuine socialism where freedom knows no limit other than not interfering with the freedom of others. A socialism that is based on real democracy - not the present charade where we can choose some of our rulers, but may not choose to do without rulers. A real democracy where everyone effected by a decision will have the opportunity to have their say in making that decision. A democracy of efficiently co-ordinated workplace and community councils. A society where production is to satisfy needs, not to make profits for a privileged few. Anarchism.

more info:

www.struggle.ws/about/mayday.html



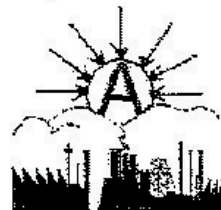
"The day will come when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you are throttling today"

The memorial to the Chicago martyrs opposite has the text above as the inscription on its base. The Chicago martyrs understood that although the state had put *"Anarchy .. on trial"* their deaths would not also be the death of the anarchist idea.

Today the anarchist movement is more geographically widespread than at any time in its history. May day has become a time not only for remembering the Chicago martyrs but also for going on the offensive against capitalism. Join in that struggle

www.struggle.ws/wsm.html

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Labor, Logging, Life and Death in Grays Harbor

Posted on October 28, 2022 · by Noah Wingard



Hoquiam Strikers, 1912

It would be a grave misunderstanding to say that the labor movement, including the IWW, is only confined to a handful of industries in the hearts of major cities. Indeed, with many industries such as agriculture or mining, union presence can extend even to the smallest of communities. In no other place was this seen historically than Grays Harbor, Washington, which during the early 20th century was one of the IWW's most active areas of organizing, strikes and labor victories.

Just shy of 50 miles from Centralia, WA, the Grays Harbor area had one of the most active timber industries around the turn of the 20th century. It had a large multiethnic population consisting predominantly of Finnish immigrants in the thousands, with other immigrant and ethnic minorities moving in later into the 1920s and 30s. The Finnish population made up the largest ethnic group of the IWW locals, even producing a multitude of articles for the Finnish-language IWW newspapers such as *Tie Vapauteen* and *Industrialisti*. The Grays Harbor area hosted a variety of trades such as loggers, lumber transportation, shingle factory workers and other jobs related to maintaining and supporting the logging industry. Workers regardless of their age, sex, or ethnicity worked long hours for a fraction of a wage compared to the loggers of today, with many living in makeshift lodgings near lumber camps or simple one-family homes outside of downtown.

The jobs themselves were dangerous, with every injury from amputations, to falling logs, to deaths being reported in all lumber related industries on an almost constant basis. Logging and shingle weaving were some of the most dangerous, and the 10 hour workdays on average led to exhaustion, further increasing the risk of accidents. These conditions were in stark contrast to the lumber mill owners themselves, who saw record production and profits during the first three decades of the century. They saw lumber exports reach billions of cubic feet when other lumber shipping harbors around the country only saw millions. It was in the midst of these conditions that saw a rising potential for labor organizing in the region, and the IWW saw greater influence in the local life and culture, as workers began organizing strikes and community solidarity actions in the towns surrounding the harbor.