

Use of Violence in Strikes Splits Ranks of Union Backers

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LANSING, Mich., June 16—Il-
lumination on some of the basic eco-
nomic and emotional factors in the
present labor strife, particularly
upon motives and rationalization
behind the use of force, is provided
in a re-examination of the "labor
holiday" that tied up business ac-
tivity in this city.

Various contributing factors have
been named by union leaders to ex-
plain the holiday, which tied up
Lansing's business activities on June
7. Underlying them all, however, is
the question of force. The issue does
not appear to be essentially a con-
test between labor and industry, as
United Automobile Workers of Amer-
ica leaders feel, but rather a con-
test between those on one side who
advocate the use of violence, if
necessary, to accomplish adjust-
ments, and those on the other side
who believe recourse to force instead
of law will solve nothing but will,
instead, merely intensify wrong con-
ditions.

No effort is made by the U. A. W.
to deny that laws were broken
during the holiday when some 12,000
factory men took over control of
downtown Lansing, forced stores to
close, blockaded streets and brought
all public transportation service to
a standstill. They do deny, however,
the demonstration was inspired by
a disrespect for American law and
insist the holiday was necessary to
draw attention to injustices toward
labor. The cause of labor looms fore-
most in their arguments, and the
end in view is stressed more than
the means employed.

Injunction Called Unfair

Their attitude toward court in-
junctions illustrates the local U. A.
W. A. leaders' standpoint. They are
acting on the assumption labor can
find no help for itself through the
courts. They regard the injunction
as an unfair weapon used against
them by manufacturers to deprive
them of their right to protest against
and compel the remedying of work-
ing conditions. They feel this right
remains theirs even where laws state
to the contrary, and they regard
such laws as "improper" and con-
trary to "national policy."

The feeling is prevalent here that
labor has cause for complaint. But
an increasing discrimination is be-
ing made by observers between labor,
as a "generality," and unionism, as
represented by the U. A. W. A. Many
who favor the cause of unionism are
concerned lest a continuation of tac-
tics employed in the holiday demon-
stration bring a public reaction pow-
erful enough to crush the U. A. W. A.
and C. I. O. and deal a severe setback
to the cause of labor.

But while prejudice here against
the U. A. W. A. has gained of late,
the fact remains the union has dem-
onstrated surprising strength. Lead-
ers claim 15,000 local members, prin-
cipally in the Olds Motor Works, Rep
Motor Car Company, Fisher Body
Corporation (Lansing branch), and
Motor Wheel Corporation plants. On
a basis of three persons to a family,
the union claims to represent at
least 45,000 persons, or almost half
of Lansing's entire population.

Four Reasons for Holiday

Four main reasons for the holi-
day are cited by Lester Washburn,
president of the local U. A. W. A.
They are:

1. Protest against the attitude
of public officials toward labor
and labor problems.
2. Protest against "discrimina-
tory" methods employed in mak-
ing arrests where workmen are
concerned.
3. Protest against "improper"
state labor laws.
4. Show of local U. A. W. A.
strength.

According to Mr. Washburn, the
"straw which broke the camel's
back" and precipitated the holiday
was the arrest and jailing of eight
U. A. W. A. sympathizers for pick-
eting and other activities at a
strike-bound plant here. His wife
was one of those arrested. Mr.
Washburn said he and other fac-
tory men resented the fact the
sheriff's officers made the arrests at
2 a. m., taking the eight persons
from their homes to the city jail to
await arraignment later in the day.

Sheriff Allan MacDonald, who
directed the arrests, said his depu-
ties acted as they did to prevent
trouble. The large number of pick-
ets and U. A. W. A. sympathizers,
some armed with clubs, made it
likely violence would result from
any attempt on his part to serve
warrants in the normal course of
events, the sheriff explained.

The labor trouble had developed
at the plant of the Capitol City
Wrecking Company. Six employees
were discharged soon after the U.
A. W. A. had organized some of
the workers. Company officials said
there was no work for the six. Union
leaders charged the firm had hired
other men to fill the jobs vacated.
succession. On MacDonald's

Strike Is Called

A strike was called May 21. U. A.
W. A. leaders charge company offi-
cials had refused to negotiate with
the union regarding reinstatement
of discharged workmen. An appeal
to the National Labor Relations
Board to intervene was rejected, ac-
cording to Mr. Washburn, because
the firm was not engaged in inter-
state commerce. Picketing was
started by union sympathizers, who
gained possession of the plant and
thereafter refused to allow even
company officials on the premises.

The company obtained an injunc-
tion forbidding U. A. W. A. pickets
from interfering either directly or
indirectly with workmen or officers
of the firm. The arrests followed
and the scene of the trouble suddenly
changed from the small plant to the
state Capitol. Throngs of workmen
visited the office of Gov. Frank
Murphy and thousands made the
capitol the union headquarters for
the day. Hundreds of U. A. W. A.
sympathizers milled about in corri-
dors of the City Hall where the eight
pickets were still in jail. No attempt
at a jail delivery was made, however.

Three of the pickets were ar-
raigned and released during the
forenoon. They were charged with
having violated the injunction. The
remaining five were kept in jail until
late afternoon, however, when they
were arraigned on charges of "mo-
lestering and disturbing" laborers at
work, in violation of a state law.
They all pleaded "not guilty," and
trial dates were set.

Michigan Picket Law

Michigan law permits picketing
only so long as pickets keep moving
and so long as they do not molest
or interfere with workers.

At present, a bill which would
establish a state labor relations com-
mission having power to act in labor
troubles is before the Senate, having
passed the House. It would delay
action of judges in issuing injunc-
tions in labor disputes. According to
Governor Murphy, who sponsored
the measure, Michigan is pioneering
in the labor relations legislation field
and his bill is the first of its kind
proposed to a state legislature.

The Michigan measure would pro-
vide machinery aimed to head off
strikes and mediate them if they
occur.

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