

Dahlstrom Plant Closed by Strike

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Massed Picketing Begun With 600 Employees Out

Massed pickets trudged steadily before the main entrances to the Dahlstrom Metallic Door Plant this morning as some 600 union members began their first full day of a strike after wage re-opening negotiations broke off at 3 P. M. Tuesday.

The employees, represented by Local 307, United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers, walked out of the plant en masse at 4 P. M. Tuesday after a final peace effort failed.

The union scheduled mass picketing for periods when employees ordinarily report for work. At other times during the day, smaller forces of pickets are expected to be on duty for three-hour periods.

Basic issue of the strike is a demand for a general wage increase. Amount of the wage increase sought by the union has not been disclosed.

Two other main issues are demands for a company-paid insurance plan and two additional paid holidays. The union gained four paid holidays under terms of a previous contract.

A last-minute meeting of company and union officials was called at 11 A. M. Tuesday and again at 2 P. M. at the request of the U. S. Conciliation Service, represented by Clarence Lamotte of Buffalo. The meeting broke up at 3 P. M. after efforts of the conciliator failed to bring about any agreement between the two parties.

The strike was called "100 per cent effective" in a statement made this morning by the general strike committee of Local 307.

It was declared in the statement that "not one production worker entered the plant this morning." In describing the situation at the plant, the general strike committee stated:

Maintenance Men Pass

"Drifts men, construction workers and many office workers refused to pass the picket lines. Watchmen, firemen, coal wheelers and a maintenance foreman were permitted to cross the picket line this morning in the interest of plant protection."

In a statement to the news services, the strike committee said "the company gave them (the union workers) no alternative when it refused to bargain further."

Hopes for an early end to the strike were discounted somewhat by talk in various local labor circles that the strike may be prolonged because of negotiation difficulties.

Many meetings have been held since that date, each meeting being called at the insistence of the union. The company has stubbornly refused to recognize the needs of their workers despite the fact that the employees' earnings are on the down grade, and the company profits are steadily increasing. In fact, at this time the profits are the highest in their history.

The union feels that the company bears the full responsibility for forcing their workers to take the drastic step which they have taken. The company gave them no alternative when it refused to bargain further.

"In view of the fact that the wages of the Dahlstrom workers, as well as the wages of other factory workers in Jamestown, are sub-standard, the union feels that its demands are fair and just. Dahlstrom Metallic Door has never once met the national pattern in regards to wages, paid holidays and other conditions. The company has never granted a wage increase or any other benefits since 1945, unless forced to do so by a strike vote.

"Even conciliation has failed. In the final session today (Tuesday) Commissioner Clarence Lamotte of the U. S. Conciliation Service tried again and failed to bring the parties together."