

Labor 100 Years Ago — June 3, 1916

A look back at the front page stories of the Oregon Labor Press June 3, 1916. A digital version of the front page can be seen at www.nwlaborpress.org/100yearsago

*OCEAN AND RIVER SHIPPING TIED UP

There's a little trouble along the waterfront of the Pacific Coast just now. It all came about because the men employed in handling the cargoes wanted a little more money.

It's a strange condition of affairs in the minds of some people that believe in "free and independent"

workmen and all the rest of the rot that goes with non-union labor, that a few thousand men can effectually tie up the shipping of the entire Pacific Coast, as has been done in this case.

The ship owners set a price for hauling freight and passengers, and if the public don't pay it, the ship own-

ers don't operate the ships and shipping is tied up.

But, of course, that is different. Somehow or other the man who owns the ship seems to have a God-given right to do as he pleases.

So when the men who work for the ship owners conclude they want a larger share of the money they earn,

the ship owner ties his vessel up and calls for the police to "protect his property," while he scurries around to fill the places of the strikers with men who are "free and independent" and therefore ready to assist the boss to starve some men into a frame of mind where they will in turn be ready to take the places of the strikebreakers.

According to reports there are about 15,000 men directly involved.

The difficulty in Portland is over the wages of the river steambot men who ask for a raise in wages of \$10 per month, which amounts to about 35 cents per day per man. In addition they want one day's rest in seven and some other minor adjustments of working conditions.

Charles Bennett, representative of the River Steamboat Men's Union, says: "We have the situation well in hand and expect to win. Our men are standing firm because they believe that our demands are just and that eventually the vessel owners will realize the fairness of the demands. We don't want any violence and are not advocating it. We think when the public understands the conditions under which we work they will be on our side."

According to newspaper reports the tie-up all along the Coast is complete. About 300 men are out in Astoria, 5,000 in San Francisco, about 6,000 on Puget Sound, 1,500 at San Pedro and a number of others at minor ports.

The strikers will have the solid support of the organized labor movement and we hope for a speedy settlement.

