

Milestones in Labor History

--November--

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1993 - APWU signs historic agreement with USPS on the Remote Bar Code System, resulting in an increase of thousands of bargaining unit positions.

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1855 - Birthdate of Eugene V. Debs, labor leader and socialist. He said, " If it had not been for the discontent of a few fellows who had not been satisfied with their conditions, you would still be living in caves. You would never have emerged from the jungle. Intelligent discontent is the mainspring of civilization. Progress is born of agitation. It is agitation or stagnation."

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1981 - Death of Emmett Andrews, second general president of APWU.

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1935 - Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) was formed to expand industrial unionism. It merged with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1955 to form the AFL-CIO.

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1887 - Four labor organizers hanged for alleged conspiracy in riot and bombing at Chicago's Haymarket Square.

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1889 - United National Association of Post Office Clerks organized in New York City.

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1903 - Women's Trade Union League formed to educate women about the advantages of union membership, to support women's demands for better working conditions, and to raise awareness about the exploitation of women workers.

1915 - Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) labor organizer Joe Hill was executed by a Salt Lake City, Utah firing squad. Hill was arrested and condemned to death for a murder, though supporters claim no clear evidence existed to convict him. The IWW and others rushed to defend Hill, believing he was unfairly prosecuted because of his labor background. Hill died a martyr and has been celebrated in song and legend ever since. On the eve of his death, he wrote, "Don't waste any time in mourning. Organize." His words remain a rallying cry to this day.

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1990 - APWU contract expires. For the first time in postal history USPS fails to reach agreement with any of the four postal unions.

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1909 - President Taft issues Executive Order to all Civil Service workers further restricting constitutional rights to petition Congress.

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1891 - Brotherhood of Electrical Workers founded.

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1832 - Birthdate of author, abolitionist, and nurse Louisa May Alcott. Known for her fictional work *Little Women*, Alcott also wrote *Work* an autobiographical novel exposing the exploitation of women workers and the evils of industrialization in 1873.