

THE BIG STRIKE

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The big strike by Mike Quin

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MIKE QUIN

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by Mike Quin

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

MORE THAN FIFTEEN YEARS have passed since the Great Maritime Strike of 1934. Thirteen years have come and gone since this book was written. More than two years have gone by since Mike Quin died. And this book by Mike Quin, telling the story of the Great Maritime Strike, is just now, after all these years, first seeing the light of publication.

Surely the story of 1934 has been worth telling. Just as surely, never has the story of a great labor struggle been told in such vivid and dramatic terms, for the author was both observer and participant, and yet this story is coupled with painstaking accuracy and historic authenticity. Most certain of all, Mike Quin was a gifted storyteller with a knack for getting people to stop and listen.

Strange it is that despite such a unique combination of favorable circumstances this work has waited until now for its transfiguration from manuscript into book. Yet not so strange, for the commercial publishing houses cared as little for Mike Quin as they did for the authentic story of 1934, written for the eye of those most concerned—the working men and women of America.

There is a kinship between Mike Quin and 1934. Leaflet writer, pamphleteer, newspaper columnist, radio newscaster, Mike Quin became the authoritative voice of those thousands of workers whose courage and deep sense of brotherhood made 1934 the epic struggle that it was, and until the day of his death he remained their voice, as well as the voice of the thousands of others who followed in their wake.

The Great Maritime Strike was the harbinger of the battles to come in steel, auto, rubber, and other basic industries of the country. It heralded the vast organizing drives that gave birth to CIO. It set an example of militant solidarity that proved unbeatable.

For the virtually new generation of workers that entered the maritime industry, and other industries as well, since 1934, this book offers not only an exciting story but also a profound insight into the stuff that went into the conception and birth of the present-day labor movement.

There are those in the upper councils of labor who would erase the memory of the turbulent years from 1934 to 1937. In their craving for

dubious respectability they wish to forget the unrespectable strikes and picket lines that gave substance to the unions they now dominate.

But the workers cannot afford to forget. The fundamentals of their struggle for survival are the same today as they were in 1934. Forms and tactics might change, but without the guts of militant solidarity they have the effective impact of a punch thrown by a shadow boxer.

The story of 1934 is not a mere incident in labor history. It is a graphic lesson for today. And it is very fortunate that this lesson is now made available in as enthralling and authoritative a chronicle as this.

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To

NICK BORDOISE

HOWARD SPERRY

DICK PARKER