

Eagle's eye

Strike Special

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It's over!

Rialto teachers ended a two-week strike, the first of its kind in San Bernardino County's history, on Sept. 23 with what they called a victory over contract disputes.

The district, however, still refuses to acknowledge the strike as a "win" for teachers. Superintendent Robert Williams called it a "no-win, no-lose contract for either side."

Major issues were just cause, transfer and reassignment, maintenance of standards and class size, all of which were awarded the teachers. The contract also included a 10 percent raise. Teachers had asked for 13.4 percent.

About 300 of Rialto's 450 teachers stayed off the job until the contract was approved Sunday, Sept. 23. A total of 79 like teachers stayed out, and 26 crossed the picket line.

THE HEAT IS ON! As temperatures soared over the 100° mark, Kathy Duke and 78 other like teachers picketed the school during a recent two-week strike to settle contract disputes with the school district. (Photo by Robert Cisneros)

STRIKE: Administration misrepresents issues in teacher walk-out

Lies lead to mass confusion, result in much loss of respect

by Darryl Delgado, Jenny Rogers, Jim Long and Rick Sanchez

During the two long weeks of the strike by Rialto teachers many Eisenhower students stayed out . . . either out of apathy or in support of the striking teachers.

Certainly many more students would have taken advantage of a chance to support their teachers if they had not been threatened by so many lies.

It was nearly impossible to get a straight factual answer to questions. Parents and students were equally confused by the conflicting answers they were receiving from both sides of the picket line. Who has to be trusted in a crisis situation was extremely difficult to decipher. Should we listen to our educators or our administrators? Both groups we had been brought up to respect and trust.

Now that the strike has ended and we have the time and insight to look back and review the entire ordeal, it is obvious that the teachers on the picket line were leveling with us. They told us their stand in plain words, and now that the strike is over, they have stood by their promises.

The administration fed us misconceptions, false statements and cover-ups handed down as FACT by the school administration, school board members and the superintendent.

It is no wonder many students were confused and felt they could not take an active stand on the issue while threats were being passed out left and right by administrators.

Lie #1—Attendance

Certainly the most pertinent question on everyone's mind was whether to come to school or not.

From the very first day rumors about attendance policy were flying. First, we were threatened that if we missed one week of class we would be dropped from our classes. Then there were rumors that if the strike lasted longer than two weeks, time would have to be made up during the summer vacation. This especially worried seniors who wondered if they would be able to graduate on time.

Teachers on the picket line said attendance records would start when they were back in the classroom, and that is what has happened.

Lie #2—Grades

We were told by subs and the administration that work assigned by subs would be counted toward our grades. Picketing teachers said the work would not be counted. It wasn't.

Lie #3—School was Running Smoothly
Another lie told to the public during the strike was concerning how smoothly everything was running in school. School officials went out of their way—they even mailed a newsletter home—to assure concerned parents that the schools were running normally, even with 75 percent of

the teachers out on strike.
However, students who were on campus and in classrooms witnessed quite the opposite situation.

Lie #4—Roll Taking

Figures in the newspaper, quoted by the administration, indicated about 50 percent of Ike's enrollment was attending classes regularly, but those students actually in the classes report that not one period of each day went by without a large group of students on campus ditching. A paranoid administration was handing out demerits right and left for being on campus without hall passes.

Principal Jan Button was quoted in the Sun as saying, "It isn't really true that students are signing into class and then leaving."

Lie #5—Qualified Subs

Perhaps the biggest problems were the classes themselves. Most of the subs who "taught" at Ike admitted that they knew little or nothing about the subject they were assigned to teach. Despite what the public was led to believe, students who were there report all that was done in most classes was roll call and talking with friends.

Lie #6—Vandalism

Several acts of vandalism were reported during the strike situation. Certain hotheaded individuals reportedly damaged cars and other private property of subs and members of the school board and school administration.

However, as was the case in most of the mud-slinging, reports of much of this vandalism was exaggerated or simply was not true, or the truth had been bent so badly it could not be set back in shape.

No matter how it is put, the destruction of private property or even the thought of such an act is wrong.

It turns a tense situation into an explosive one. Ripping through electrical systems, damaging paint jobs with eggs is only adding gasoline to the flame. And as everyone knows, gas ain't to be wasted.

Lie #7—no win

Perhaps the most painful lie of all was one voiced by Superintendent Robert Williams last week. After the teachers sacrificed their paychecks and spent two weeks picketing to get their new contract, Williams presented them with a slap in the face when he told the Sun-Telegram this was "a no-win, no-lose contract for either side." Teachers had said all along it wasn't the money they were striking for, it was the specific wording of their contract that protected their rights.

Students share some of their experiences during the strike in the story below.

The first day of school I walked into class and I saw my first period substitute sitting behind the desk holding a newspaper. I sat down and waited. He finally

called roll and said, "I want you to all know I'm only here to benefit myself. I'm here for the bucks."

Later I read in the newspapers that there were substitutes in most of the classes and they were doing a good job. So I went to

school thinking, "Well they pretty well have the situation under control." I got to class and I saw my first period teacher sitting behind his desk again, reading the newspaper. He took roll as usual and that morning read the comics to us.

Sheila Wortham



STUDENTS join their teachers. . . but not in class.



(Photo by Robert Cisneros)

News briefs

Recall election planned for two board members

Petitions from the recall (removal) of two school board members, Doreen Baylus and Betty McDermott, are being circulated by a new organization called Concerned Parents of Rialto, headed by Douglas Devasher.

The term of office for the other three board members ends in November. Alan Battaglia has filed for re-election. Richard Adams and Ernest Garcia are not seeking re-election.

The recall movement originated during the two-week long teacher strike.

Teachers recuperate

Five Eisenhower teachers carrying picket signs suffered

minor injuries when they were bumped by cars near the faculty parking lot during the strike.

Carl Scrambray, who suffered broken blood vessels in the back of the knee in one accident, said last week she intends to press charges. She has a California Teachers Association Lawyer. "I was three-fourths across the drive," she said, "and the driver saw me and simply accelerated. There is no doubt in my mind it was intentional."

Carl Siltzman suffered a bruised knee. "I don't think the traffic safety teacher who hit me knows that pedestrians have the right of way," he said. "And the EMR teacher who hit and carried

me about 60 feet on his hood must not know that either."

Nancy Vanaken also suffered a leg bruise when a car driven by an unidentified woman bumped her. "I was in the crosswalk," Vanaken said. "I did not walk in front of the car." She said she did not think she would press charges, however.

Marie Smallwood required medical treatment after she was struck by a car. She was treated for chest pains and released. Concerning charges, Smallwood said, "No comment . . . until something happens."

George Fleming was struck by a car exiting the lot on Lilac. He was thrown on to the hood of the car.

The funniest incident I witnessed during the strike also made me the angriest. It was between periods 2 and 3 on the second day of school. I was shocked to see Mr. Brady and either Mr. Kinser or Mr. Button chasing after kids with bullhorns and stampeding a crowd of kids like a herd of cows. The sight of grown men doing that was hilarious, but at the same time, it angered me and the rest of the students that we were being treated like animals or an unruly mob.

—Judd St. John

It was our first strike and most people did not know what to expect, including me. One seems to hear about some sort of strike happening around the U.S. every day, but this strike was different. It was at our school. I didn't know what was going to happen as I was riding my bike on Baseline, but I expected it to be bad. A big surprise was waiting for me. The teachers were walking around the school, holding signs above their heads and were actually smiling! As I went by the teachers, they smiled at me! No fights, no guns, no hidden Army surplus items, just teachers picketing for what they believe in.

—Ron Holyfield

The sub we had on the second day of school was from Iran. He didn't speak English very well so we all wrote our names on a sheet of paper so that he could take roll. When he got the paper back he couldn't read any of the names written in handwriting. He wrote on the board the name of the subject he was to teach, "Biology!" It was like the class was teaching him.

—Barbara Rambert

The funniest incident I can recall of the teachers strike happened while I was having lunch at Frisbie Park. We were sitting around talking when this motorcycle of about 150 cars came pulling into the parking lot. People started getting out of the cars and I recognized them as the striking teachers. We were going to leave but all the cars had blocked our exit so we were there for the entire teachers rally.

The most awe-inspiring thing I saw during the strike was the teachers rally at the district office. The teachers held hands and formed a human chain around the district office and were chanting slogans of their cause, showing the teachers unity during a time of unrest.

—Steve Janik



Follow the bouncing ball

Battle Hymn of the Strike
(Sing to the tune of Battle Hymn of the Republic)

Mine eyes have seen the coming of the scabs who crossed the lines. They were taking over classes where our teachers once served time. They were giving us assignments that won't help us get an A. And they still got \$75 a day.

By Janet Moore and Shellah Harris

(To be sung to the fab tune of "Hey, look me over . . ." You know, the Carls Jr. song!)
Hey, the strike is over!
The teachers are in school.
Now that the subs are gone,
Things are goin' cool.

The teachers got their way
So now things are okay.

We're all back where we belong,
So that is why we sing this song.
(Start over from the beginning.)

By Laura Dobbs and Melinda Brooks



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'Sleepy town' copes

It is a Thursday evening and the Angels are going for a pennant in a most emotional battle. Rialto has finally settled a most emotional battle. But this is not baseball. The stakes are higher and the salaries smaller. And the emotions are deeper.

For most of us, this was the first teachers' strike we have ever been through. There were many feelings so strong, words just will never describe it. Some were confused, very confused. The obligation was always the question. To support a teacher or go to school.

Had the strike gone much longer, our confusion, the confusion of a sleepy little town whose only industry is fast food, would have become so intense that recovery would have been impossible.

Rialto has learned so much, yet her wounds, and the wounds of its people will never fully heal. Teachers and students, senior citizens and businessmen, mothers and fathers, they will surely remember this year as the year the teachers dropped their chalk for pickets.

Relationships and Rialto have taken a beating. Some will never be good again. It doesn't matter who was right or wrong now. The only thing that matters now is that we remember... and pray that we may never be so torn again.

The Angels have a chance to win. Maybe it's possible for Rialto to make an emotional victory too.

Letters

Nothing learned when told 'let bygones be bygones'

Yahoo — Mountain Dew — The strike is over!

Both "sides" are claiming victory. The strikers claim they won the contract language, but the scabs can point out that it cost each striker about \$1000 to obtain that language. In truth, there is no victory by either side, only a settlement.

The Superintendent has requested that all participants "let bygones be bygones." By that I hope he doesn't mean simply forget about it, for lessons cannot be learned by putting past experiences out of mind.

I cannot help but wonder what would have happened had the Sunday REA strike-vote meeting gone differently. The vote was close, approximately 160 to 190.

On the surface this looks like a majority of 30 people, while in reality it is half that. If only 15 "yeas" had voted "no" the outcome would have been split. Many teachers I have talked to have stated that they entered the meeting either undecided or inclined to vote against the strike, but after listening to the speeches decided to reject the

contract. Speaker after speaker urged a strike. Not one teacher who crossed the picket line spoke out against the impending strike. How many of those 15 (approximately) decisive votes could have been swayed had there been many speakers questioning the sanity, morality or strategy of strike? By their silence, every teacher who crossed the line rejected the legacy of free speech, shirked his responsibility to the democratic whole, and thereby must share responsibility for the strike.

Jon Hanna
Department of Mathematics

All deserve respect

Dear teachers,
It may be quite awhile before Eisenhower completely recovers from the stress of the strike. In talking to many teachers who went out on strike and to those who crossed the picket line, it seems evident that what they were doing was the best thing for them. A person is entitled to his

own opinion. Let us hope that all teachers will respect the decisions made by teachers enough to accept this as something of the past. As one teacher said, to hold a grudge can

only hurt oneself.

Some teachers have already made an attempt to become a whole staff again. Let's hope this will continue so things can return to what they used to be. If they do

not, the students will be the ones to suffer, and as educators, you should know that the students are the ones who count.

Darryl Delgado
EE news-editor

