

**Historical Marker - S745C - Lansing Labor Holiday / Lansing Labor Holiday (Marker ID#:S745C)**



**Front - Title/Description**

***Lansing Labor Holiday***

As the labor movement spread across Michigan in the 1930s, workers in Lansing organized. After a successful strike at REO Motor Car Company ended in April 1937, the Amalgamated United Auto Workers Local 182 began recruiting new members from small auto shops, including Capital City Wrecking Company, which refused to negotiate a contract. Workers went on strike. The company got an injunction against picketing, but unionists ignored it. Around 2 a.m. on June 7, 1937, Sheriff Alan MacDonald ordered his deputies to arrest the picketers while he went to arrest labor leader Lester Washburn. He was not home, so MacDonald arrested his wife, Nevah. In response to the arrests, the union called for a Labor Holiday, or general strike, of the entire City of Lansing.

**Significant Date:**

Two World Wars and the Depression (1915-1945)

**Registry Year:** 2017    **Erected Date:** 2017

**Marker Location**

**Address:** West Michigan Avenue

**City:** Lansing

**State:** MI    **ZipCode:** 48933

**County:** Ingham

**Township:** Lansing

**Lat:** 42.73378200 / **Long:** -84.55366100

**Web URL:**

**Back - Title/Description**

***Lansing Labor Holiday***

On June 7, 1937, between 2,000 and 5,000 union members and supporters arrived in downtown Lansing. They nonviolently forced shops, theatres, factories and offices to close, resulting in a virtual shutdown of the entire city. Union members marched to City Hall and the Capitol asking for the release of the arrested picketers and Nevah Washburn. Mayor Max A. Templeton said there was nothing he could do, but Governor Frank Murphy met with officials involved in the arrests. Shortly thereafter the arrestees were released. The next day Capital City Wrecking Company agreed to contract negotiations with its workers. Labor historians later described the holiday as a rarity, one of the few successful non-violent general strikes of the early twentieth century labor movement.