

Key Individuals

The leaders of Local 574



(left to right) Grant Dunne, Bill Brown, Miles Dunne, and Vincent Dunne upon their release from the military stockade in 1934. Far right is Communist League of America lawyer Albert Goldman.

Harry DeBoer (1905 – 1992)



DeBoer was a lifelong labor activist, originally from Crookston, Minnesota. He was a leader in the 1934 Teamster strikes and is credited with developing the tactic of the ‘cruising pickets.’ He was a picket captain on “Bloody Friday,” when he sustained wounds and two of his comrades were killed. A leading member of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), DeBoer was imprisoned under the Smith Act for opposing U.S. involvement in WW II. His 1987 essay, “How to Win a Strike” is included here.

Farrell Dobbs (1907-1983)



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Dobbs was radicalized during the Depression and became a union leader as a coal worker in Minneapolis. After his involvement with the 1934 Teamster strike, he became an elected union officer, and, later, the trade union director for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). He was convicted under the Smith Act and served a term in prison in 1941. He later ran for president as a SWP candidate and wrote a popular book about the strike, *Teamster Rebellion* (Pathfinder Press: 1972).

V. R. (Ray) Dunne (1889-1970)



Dunne was a founder and leader of the American Communist Party, from which he was expelled in 1928 along with Carl Skoglund and others on the charge of "Trotskyism." Dunne and Skoglund were primarily responsible for the strategy and organization of the Minneapolis Teamster strikes of 1934. Dunne's brothers, Grant and Miles, were also leaders of Local 574.

Grace Holmes (1906-1992)

Holmes was a Socialist Workers Party (SWP) activist and politician from Saint Paul. She actively supported the 1934 Teamster strikes as a lecturer at the University of Minnesota. She joined the SWP in 1940, ran for the U.S. Senate as a SWP candidate and worked as a party organizer in Minnesota and New York. In 1941 she was imprisoned under the Smith Act and served 16 months. In 1948 she was the party's candidate for vice president of the United States. She then left the party and taught at St. Mary's Nursing School (Minneapolis) for many years. See also [Carlson Sisterhood in the Revolution : The Holmes Sisters & The Socialist Workers Party](#) by Elizabeth Raasch-Gilman. An inventory of Holmes' papers is available [here](#).

Meridel Le Sueur (1900-1996)



Le Sueur was a noted writer, journalist, actress, feminist, and radical and wrote about them) closely. Her numerous writings during the strike are invaluable accounts. Le Sueur was later blacklisted by the House Un-American Activities Committee for her membership in the Communist Party. A building in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood of Minneapolis is named after her. Her papers are available [here](#).

Floyd B. Olson (1891-1936)



Olson was the Farmer-Labor Governor of the state of Minnesota during the 1934 Teamster strike. Over the course of his life he was also a salesman, laborer, miner, lawyer and county attorney. A progressive advocate for everyday people, Olson's popularity helped to make Minnesota's Farmer-Labor coalition the most successful third party in America's history. [Here is the MN Historical Society's page](#) on Olson which includes personal papers, official governor's records and a full biography.

Carl Skoglund (1884-1960)



Skoglund emigrated to Minnesota in 1911 from Sweden, where he had been a paper mill worker and an active member of the Swedish Social Democratic Party. After being injured working in northern Minnesota, he went to work as a railroad car repairer and helped to organize Railway Carmen's Local 299. He was fired and blacklisted for his participation in the six-month 1922 nation-wide railroad shop-crafts strike. Later, he drove a coal delivery truck and became a key leader in the 1934 Minneapolis Teamster strikes. Skoglund and others, including VR Dunne who had been expelled from the Communist Party for "Trotskyism," helped to form the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in 1938. Skoglund was imprisoned under the WW II era anti-radical Smith Act (the Act was eventually deemed un-constitutional by the Supreme Court). During the 1950's, the US government repeatedly tried to deport Skoglund to Sweden. He died in 1960 at the SWP's educational center in New Jersey.

Charles Rumford Walker (1893-1974)

Walker was born in New Hampshire and served in World War I. He was a journalist, editor, researcher and writer interested in automation and industrial history. He also translated a number of Sophocles' dramas and wrote novels. His non-fiction 'rank and file' account of Minneapolis, American City, focuses on the 1934 teamster strikes.