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MAJOR WORK STOPPAGES, 1996

The number of major work stoppages rose in 1996, after dropping to a record low in 1995, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. The number of workers idled by stoppages also increased. Both of these work stoppage measures still were low by historical standards. The days of idleness resulting from major work stoppages declined over the year.

Thirty-seven major work stoppages began during 1996, idling 273,000 workers and resulting in about 4.9 million days of idleness (about 2 out of every 10,000 available work days). Comparable figures for 1995 were 31 stoppages, 192,000 workers idled, and 5.8 million days of idleness. (See table 1 and charts 1-3.) The series, which dates back to 1947, covers strikes and lockouts involving 1,000 workers or more and lasting at least one shift.

Of the 37 major work stoppages beginning in 1996, 31 were in the private sector, including 15 in manufacturing and three each in construction and health services. In the public sector, the six disputes involved local government employees in education, mainly teachers.

Industries with the most days of idleness during the year due to work stoppages were transportation equipment manufacturing (2.1 million days), real estate services (630,000 days), printing and publishing (630,000 days), food stores (391,000 days), and primary metals manufacturing (298,000 days).

The 1996 stoppage involving the most workers was between General Motors Corp. and 136,000 employees represented by the United Automobile Workers, some of whom were out 18 days. The only other large stoppage involved the Commercial Building Realty Advisory Board and the Service Employees International Union (30,000 workers out 31 days). (See table 2.)

About one-half of the year's work stoppage idleness--2.5 million days--stemmed from three disputes. The first two were the previously mentioned General Motors-Automobile Workers dispute and the Commercial Building Realty Advisory Board-Service Employees stoppage. The third involved about 2,500 workers represented by various unions at the Detroit Free Press and Detroit News. This work stoppage began in 1995 and continued into

1997, making it the longest stoppage in effect during 1996. The longest stoppage beginning in the year was at Trailmobile, where 1,100 workers represented by the United Paperworkers were out for 165 days. Another long stoppage beginning in the year was at Pemco Aeroplex, where some 1,100 workers represented by the Automobile Workers were idle for 163 days; this stoppage continued into 1997.

The term "major work stoppage" includes worker-initiated strikes, as well as lockouts of workers by their employers, involving 1,000 workers or more. The Bureau does not attempt to distinguish between strikes and lockouts in its statistics.

Table 1. Work stoppages involving 1,000 workers or more, 1947-96

Year	Stoppages 1/		Days idle 1/	
	Number	Workers involved (thousands)	Number (thousands)	Percent of estimated working time 2/
1947	270	1,629	25,720	(3)
1948	245	1,435	26,127	0.22
1949	262	2,537	43,420	.38
1950	424	1,698	30,390	.26
1951	415	1,462	15,070	.12
1952	470	2,746	48,820	.38
1953	437	1,623	18,130	.14
1954	265	1,075	16,630	.13
1955	363	2,055	21,180	.16
1956	287	1,370	26,840	.20
1957	279	887	10,340	.07
1958	332	1,587	17,900	.13
1959	245	1,381	60,850	.43
1960	222	896	13,260	.09
1961	195	1,031	10,140	.07
1962	211	793	11,760	.08
1963	181	512	10,020	.07
1964	246	1,183	16,220	.11

1965	268	999	15,140	.10
1966	321	1,300	16,000	.10
1967	381	2,192	31,320	.18
1968	392	1,855	35,367	.20
1969	412	1,576	29,397	.16
1970	381	2,468	52,761	.29
1971	298	2,516	35,538	.19
1972	250	975	16,764	.09
1973	317	1,400	16,260	.08
1974	424	1,796	31,809	.16
1975	235	965	17,563	.09
1976	231	1,519	23,962	.12
1977	298	1,212	21,258	.10
1978	219	1,006	23,774	.11
1979	235	1,021	20,409	.09
1980	187	795	20,844	.09
1981	145	729	16,908	.07
1982	96	656	9,061	.04
1983	81	909	17,461	.08
1984	62	376	8,499	.04
1985	54	324	7,079	.03
1986	69	533	11,861	.05
1987	46	174	4,481	.02
1988	40	118	4,381	.02
1989	51	452	16,996	.07
1990	44	185	5,926	.02
1991	40	392	4,584	.02
1992	35	364	3,989	.01
1993	35	182	3,981	.01
1994	45	322	5,020	.02
1995	31	192	5,771	.02
1996	37	273	4,887	.02

1/ The number of stoppages and workers relate to stoppages that began in the year. Days of idleness include all stoppages in effect. Workers are counted more than once if they are involved in more than one stoppage during the

2/ Total working time is for all employees, except those in private households, forestry, and fisheries.

3/ Not available.

year.

Table 2. Work stoppages involving 5,000 workers or more beginning in 1996

Employer, location, and union	Began	Ended	Workers involved ¹	Estimated days idle in 1996 ¹
Commercial Building Realty Advisory Board New York, NY Service Employees (SEIU)	1/4/96	2/4/96	30,000	630,000
San Diego public schools San Diego, CA San Diego Education Association (Ind.)	2/1/96	2/8/96	5,000	30,000
Ingalls Shipbuilding, Inc. Pascagoula, MS Metal Trades Council (MTC)	2/14/96	2/15/96	7,600	14,200
General Motors Corp. Dayton, OH Automobile Workers (UAW)	3/5/96	3/22/96	136,000 ²	1,260,000
Retail grocery chains--Safeway and King Sooper Denver, CO, area Food and Commercial Workers(UFCW)	5/14/96	6/26/96	12,000	372,000
Northern Illinois Mason Employers Association Chicago, IL Bricklayers (BAC)	6/1/96	6/12/96	6,500	52,000
McDonnell Douglas Aerospace St. Louis, MO Machinists (IAM)	6/5/96	9/16/96	6,700	482,400
League of Voluntary Hospitals New York, NY Service Employees (SEIU)	6/24/96	8/28/96	5,800	272,600
General Motors Corp. Janesville, WI Automobile Workers (UAW)	10/30/96	11/6/96	5,100	30,600

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- 1 Workers and days idle are rounded to the nearest 100.
 - 2 Includes workers idled because of material shortages.