**WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE**

**One Big Union - Background**

-March 1919, Calgary, Members of TLC (Trades and Labour Congress) vote to form OBU

-General Strikes- Shut down towns & cities

-Goals

· Better wages

· Legal recognition of Union

· Six hour work day/ 5 day weeks

· right to collective bargaining

· Repeal of earlier Govt. labour legislation

-At height of union (1920) 50,000 members

-post-world war one era saw unemployment, social unrest, and rising inflation

**1919 Winnipeg General Strike**

· invoked a fear of a Canadian “Bolshevik Revolution”

· Started small - grievances over working conditions

· Built up speed very quickly

-Winnipeg Unions voted to support general strike or mass walkout

-May 15 , 1919 Winnipeg shut down

· 94 out of 96 unions stopped performing jobs

· Police voted to walk but stayed on the job! ! !

· Fear of government sending in the Military

· no fire-fighters, post, telephone, telegraph streetcars, deliveries

· 30,000 on strike, more than half of which were non-union

-Citizens Committee of 1000 opposed to strike

· manufacturers, bankers, politicians

-Sympathy strikes occur in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Toronto, ........

-Police strikebreakers boost city police 27 to 272

· Machine gun mounted on trucks

· Assault tank - Military

-Arthur Meighen - Minister of Justice

· Changed laws - allowing the govt.’ to arrest, detain, and deport citizens on

suspicion of advocating revolution.

**Sat. June 21 Bloody Saturday**

-Police enter crowd ( War veterans, women , children, strikers) swing batons and

shoot guns

-Crowd flees into the waiting arms of the armed troops who crack more skulls

-1 dead, 30 injured, many arrested

**Resolution**

-Employees go back to work/June 25th strike over

-strike lasted 43 Days

-Union movement set back in the short term

-the resultant Royal Commission finds the workers’ grievances were valid

-J.S. Woodsworth, who had been arrested went on to form the CCF Cooperative

Commonwealth Federation which became the NDP