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'Give Light & the People Will Find Their Own Way.'

THURSDAY, AUGUST 19, 1954.

—Editorials—

The Nonstop Featherbed.

We never heard of a newspaper called fair by both sides when it attempted to cover or comment on a strike. The ump is always a bum, either to the runner or the infielder.

Nevertheless, we can't recall any strike which has been so misrepresented by the union as this pilots' strike against American Airlines.

The pilots' union said the issue was safety.

The Civil Aeronautics Board said it was not.

The pilots' union told us the planes used on the nonstop flights involved didn't have autopilots.

The CAB verified the company's statement that nine of the 12 planes used did have them, and the other three were in the process of getting them.

The pilots' union said the issue was whether the "standard" eight-hour day was to be abandoned on other flights too.

We found that the company had filed with the National Mediation Board a binder that it would observe the so-called "standard" eight-hours-in-the-air rule on all other flights, for the simple reason that it had no intention of violating or trying to change the rule.

So the hard fact remains that the union pulled 1000-odd pilots off their jobs because of a dispute over 50 men's jobs, which paid between \$14,000 and \$20,000 a year for an average of 88 hours work a month. That's right; a month. Sometimes they worked an extra long day. But they were on duty 10 days, off 20 days, for the average quoted above.

They struck in order to get extra pilots assigned to these five nonstop transcontinental flights, which average 35 minutes over the eight-hour "standard."

The shut-down company now has suspended without pay most of the rest of its personnel.

Perhaps that will clarify the issue to the rest of the help, so that they will understand it as well as the public, which has been inconvenienced by this shut down of a nationwide transportation service over a row about featherbedding.

Perhaps union leaders representing the laid-off personnel will take an interest in the dispute, since their dues-payers now also are affected.

Up to now, unions have pretty much followed the attitude of the late Phil Murray of the CIO, when he was asked to comment on a previous pilots' strike.

Mr. Murray said that he didn't know much about that sort of thing; it seemed like a strike between two sets of capitalists.