

NEWS



from AFSCME

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY, AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEMPHIS, Tenn., March 6 -- Jerry Wurf, international president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, and six other defendants, found in contempt of court by defying a no-strike injunction, were sentenced to \$50 fines and ten days in jail by the chancery court here.

They were freed on appeals bonds ranging from \$250 to \$1,000 following the sentencing.

The strike of 1,300 sanitary public works employees to demand recognition of the union began on February 12. It is still in progress and the city has been able to recruit less than 200 strikebreakers. Trash and garbage are piling up in the city at the rate of 2,900 tons a day.

Chancellor Robert Hoffmann, who found the union leaders in contempt of an injunction obtained by the city on February 24, said they could purge themselves of the citation by ending the "illegal strike." The injunction was based on an earlier one, issued in 1966, which the city obtained on the occasion of a one-day walkout by the sanitation workers.

The city made a special point that Wurf was in contempt of the court by virtue of his appearance before the Memphis City Council on Feb. 27, when he gave the union's position regarding the strike issues.

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The injunction had called upon the union to cease and desist from engaging in a strike against the city, causing or authorizing individual employees to strike in an endeavor to obtain a collective bargaining agreement with the city.

Appeals bonds were posted for International President Wurf, of Washington, D.C., in the amount of \$1,000; for International Field Staff Director P. J. Ciampa, of Baltimore, Md.; International Special Representative William Lucy, Washington, D.C.; International Organizer Jesse Epps, Jackson, Miss., and International Organizer Joseph Paisley, Nashville, Tenn., in the amount of \$500. Bonds of \$250 were posted for T. O. Jones, president and Nelson Jones, steward, of the striking union, Memphis City Employees Local 1733.

Fifteen officers and members of the local union who had been named in the original contempt citation were dismissed.

In addition to recognition of the union as bargaining agent for the city employees, Local 1733 had asked checkoff of union dues, a grievance procedure and a wage increase of 40 cents an hour. Spokesmen said the walkout climaxed a long history of unfair treatment of the workers.

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