

The Origins of 159:6

“In 1911, New York enacted the Sullivan Law, which was to become the model for restricting the ownership and carrying of handguns. The law outlawed handgun ownership without a police permit and was modeled after European firearms laws that were considered to be successful in dealing with **political dissidents, anarchists, and labor agitators.**¹”

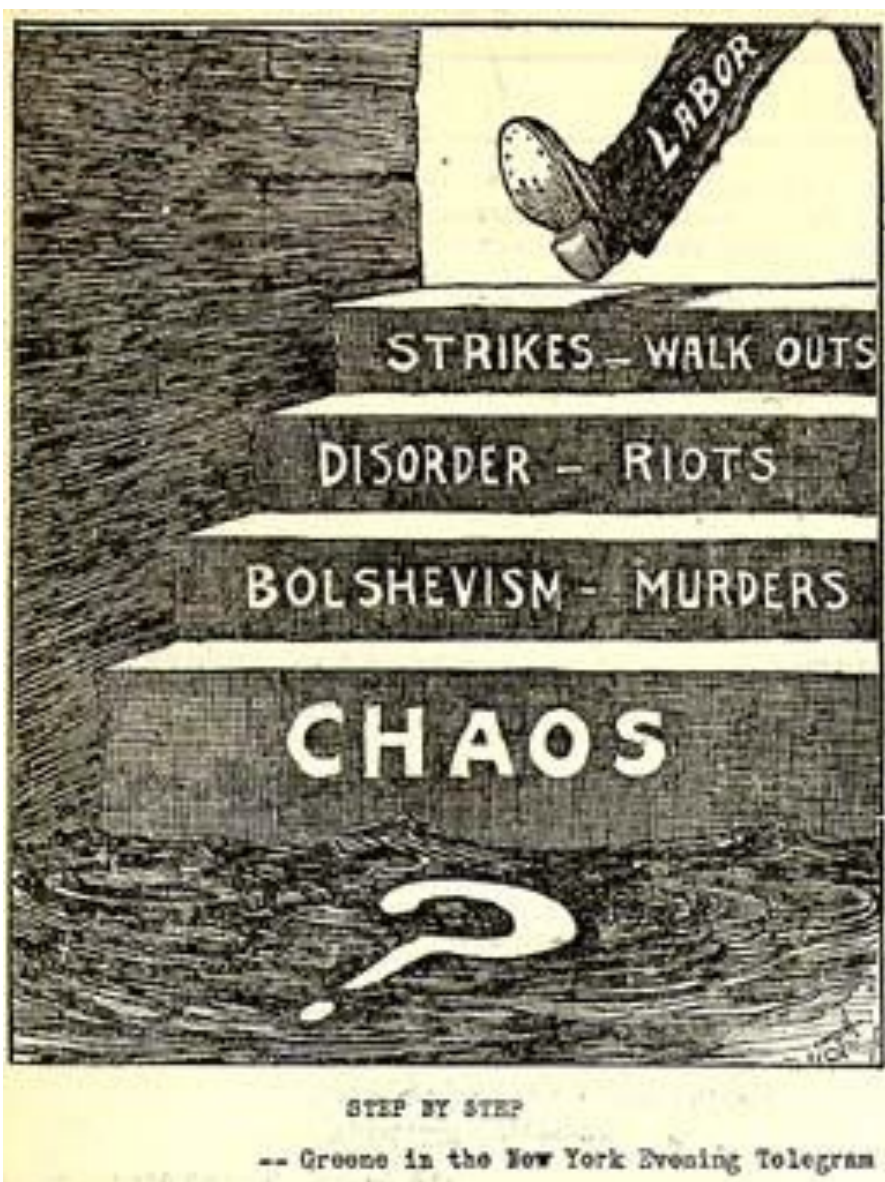


¹ J.R Snyder, Esquire; “Fighting Back: Crime, Self-Defense, and the Right to Carry a Handgun.

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“While Northern states may have favored the discretionary licensing laws as a means of ensuring that **Italians, Jews, labor agita-**

tors, or others with radical political beliefs did not obtain arms, Southern states favored such laws because the broad discretion permitted maneuvering room to deny permits to **African-Americans.**³”



³ D.B. Kates, "Toward a History of Handgun Prohibition in the United States (Great Barrington, MA: North River, 1979).

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“The Sullivan Law introduced two criteria that were to become widely adopted, with some variation, in most states throughout the 1920s and early 1930s. Handguns could not be acquired without a permit issued only to persons who had both *"good moral character"* and *"good cause"* to carry a handgun. That approach apparently was readily appealing to legislators in other states precisely because it seemed such a well-devised means of ensuring that the "wrong" sort of people did not obtain firearms, and could not carry them. The statute was not on its face discriminatory on grounds of race, religion, national origin, or political beliefs. Instead, broad, uncircumscribed discretion granted in self-validating yet empty li-



censing criteria ("good moral character," "good cause") enabled the police or other licensing authorities to target specific groups deemed the source of violent crime and political conflict: **Italians, Jews, or the foreign-born** (misperceived as naturally possessing criminal propensities or having little attachment to traditional Ameri-

can institutions and values), **African-Americans, labor agitators**, and those suspected of "anarcho-syndicalism" by virtue of their political beliefs, associational activities, or **country of origin.**²

²J.R Snyder, Esquire; "Fighting Back: Crime, Self-Defense, and the Right to Carry a Handgun.

Labor, Race & Guns in New Hampshire

“Lots of times they complained that we [Amoskeag] hired too many **Polish** people or too many **Greeks** or too many **French** people.... We had a chart made up weekly, monthly, then yearly. It showed the percentage of all nationalities. Then if there were any complaints that we were hiring too many French or Irish or Polish or

Greek workers, we'd compare them and find out what the variation was, and very seldom would it vary very much. The **French** [Canadian] people were probably 50 percent; the American people—like the **Irish-Americans, Scotch, English**—would run probably 20 to 25 percent; the **Greek** would run 10 percent; the **Polish** would run 10 percent; **Italians** we'd classify with "others". Joseph Debski, management clerk.⁴

[illegible]

Harvard University – Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School. / Amoskeag Manufacturing Company records, 1831–1936 (inclusive). Box CE-1, Vol. CN-1 and Vol. CN-2, folders 15–18, Mss:442 1831–1936 A525, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School.

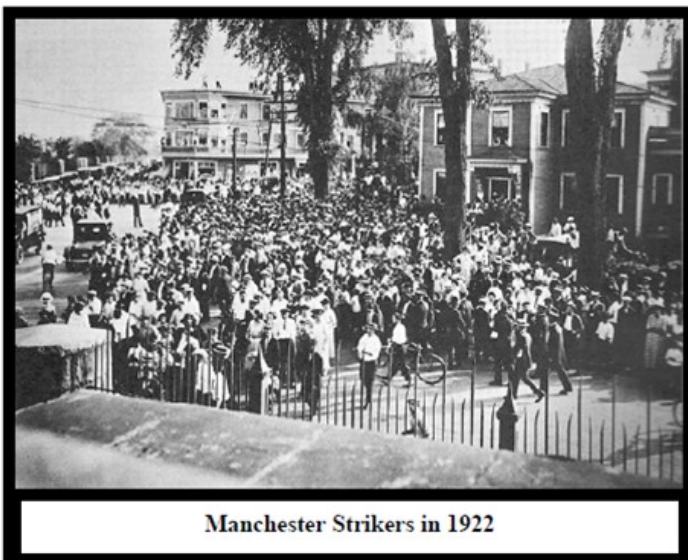
⁴ Randolph Langenbach, *American Heritage Society*, October/November 1978 | Volume 29, Issue 6.

Labor, Race & Guns in New Hampshire

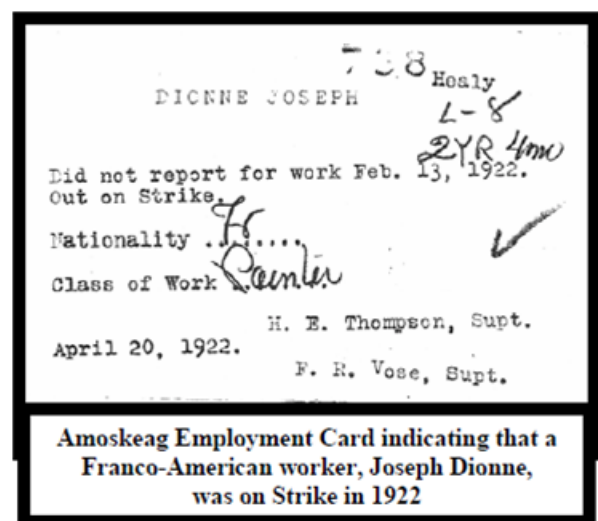
“Manchester, New Hampshire was a unique industrial town because it continued to be dominated by the Amoskeag... the survival of the city’s entire economic, social, and political structure became dependent on the Amoskeag’s success.⁵”

“Once the war ended [1918], production decreased and the Amoskeag faced a labor surplus.⁶”

“...Parker Straw, agent and grandson of Ezekiel A. Straw, posted a notice that as of February 13, 1922, all departments would receive a pay reduction of 20 percent, with running hours increased from 48 to 54 hours per week. The United Textile Workers of America persuaded millworkers to strike when the new arrangements were to take effect. They did, and the city's entire economy suffered... After 9 months, however, necessity forced employees to return to work with their demands unmet...⁷”



Manchester Strikers in 1922



⁵ Sweezy, Alan R., *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 52, No. 3. (May, 1938).

⁶ Hareven, Tamara K., *Family Time and Industrial Time*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America (1982).

⁷ Ibid.

Labor, Race & Guns in New Hampshire

“1923: HB 26, NH’s version of the Sullivan Act, passed by both Houses with repeated references to “*foreign-born, un-naturalized persons*” throughout the General Court Journals and gives local law enforcement complete discretion to determine who is “suitable” to be granted a pistol license.⁸”



⁸ Journal of the House, 1923.