

12-12-1989

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Recommended Citation

Neagle, John. "Grenada: Public Employees Strike." (1989). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/notisur/3823>

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Grenada: Public Employees Strike

by John Neagle

Category/Department: General

Published: Tuesday, December 12, 1989

On Dec. 9, Public Workers Union president Lauret Clarkson declared victory after agreeing to end a week-long strike. Clarkson said the government had pledged to seek loans to pay back wages. Participating in the strike were about 7,000 public employees nearly all teachers, and post office, port, customs, and other civil servants. The strike began Dec. 1 after Prime Minister Herbert Blaize said the government could not meet unpaid wage hikes from 1987 to 1989. On Dec. 8, during a meeting with union leaders, Blaize promised to convene Parliament on Thursday to seek its permission to request bank loans to pay workers \$9.3 million in back wages. Since 1987, the government has reportedly borrowed heavily from local banks to reduce a growing budget deficit. It was widely believed Blaize had avoided reconvening Parliament for fear he would face a no-confidence vote, forcing him to resign. (Basic data from AP, 12/09/89)

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