

Can Nurses Strike

By T. Stephens

This may sound strange to some, the goodies/old-timers and to others something ordinary, thus it gives rise to mixed feelings. The answer may be an emphatic 'yes' from some and from others a hesitant 'no'.

Strike means abstaining from work intentionally, these are the days of agitations. Almost every day, we hear about some agitation by some group/associations or the other. Personnel belonging to service associations like Medical, non and para-medical, pharmaceutical, now a days resort to strike to pressurize the authorities.

A couple of decades back, nurses felt that theirs being a noble profession, the concept of strike had no meaning to them. On the contrary the present day nurses, seeing their sister associations using this weapon freely, are more inclined to follow suit, little realising that their fellow men are the sufferers because, their services to the patients cannot be affectively replaced by other service personnel.

Whether one likes it or not, strike seems to have become a common weapon and an established procedure. Now let us recall the steps/stages of

agitational activities:

There should be a representation of grievances/demands written in clear/unambiguous/simple language.

Start lobbying with various groups of people: Political, local personalities of high standing/authority, the public and sister associations to seek their support to your cause.

Give wide publicity of your grievances, the hardships you are put to, your pathetic service conditions, in the local press, distribute hand bills at the cross roads, freely to enlighten them about your cause.

Wear black badges on duty to draw the attention of the patients, their relatives and friends, also the administration and other services personnel.

It is unfortunate that our administrative authorities take little notice of the wearing of the black badges, whereas the Britishers take it very seriously when the employees wear black badges.

Resort to peaceful demonstration like slogan shouting in front of the administrative office for an hour to draw the attention of the other service personnel, the public, the patients relatives and the administration. It serves as a reminder to your

representation of your demands to the management.

Adapt work to rule practice. The inconvenience caused to the public results in gaining public sympathy. At times it may not be.

Serve notice of strike on the management which amounts to the threat of strike.

Seek support of other sister associations/unions. You may have to coordinate with other unions/associations and support them in their distress.

Resort to one day token-strike/mass casual leave to press your demands. Your services are not easily replaceable, whereas others' are. Be careful not to prolong the strike longer, lest you lose public sympathy which may weaken your cause.

Bank employees strike but for one day only to press their demands.

Be careful not to misuse the weapon of strike. By careful use, you may achieve your end. By misuse, you not only fail to achieve your objective, but you may lose public sympathy as well.

Readers are most welcome to express their frank constructive views on this short note.

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