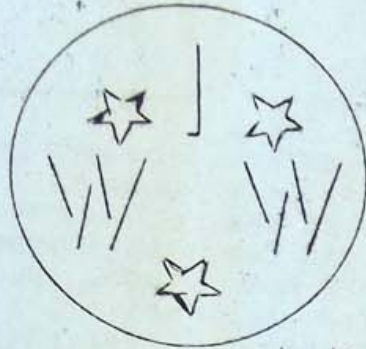
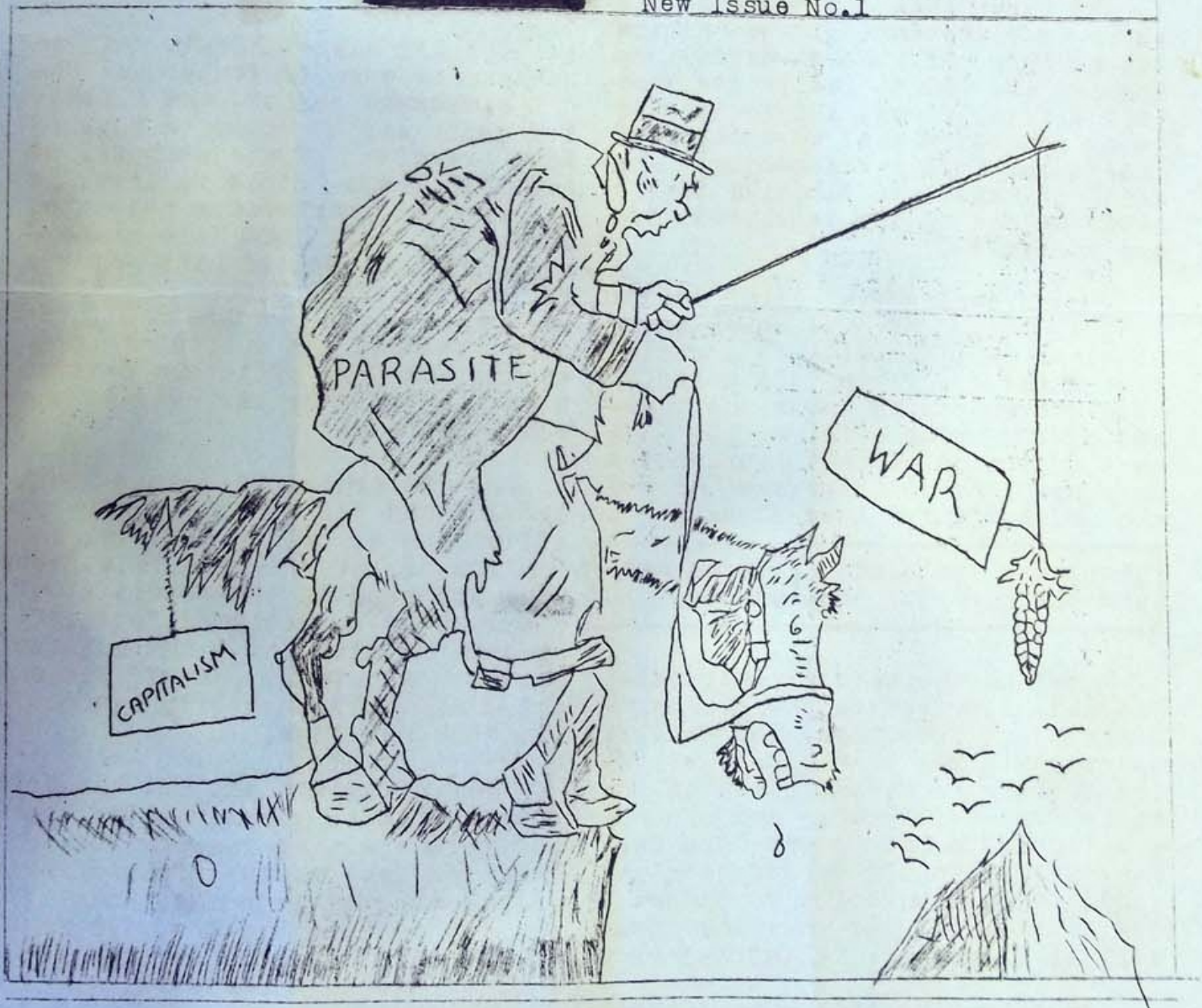


[1938-44?]



# SHOP BULLETIN

Issued by Metal and Machinery Workers Industrial Union of IWW  
New Issue No. 1



"Come On Cavalcade, The Next Boom Will Be a Big One!"



## WHO IS TO BLAME FOR LABOR UNION RACKETEERING?

Whenever Pegler or other of the daily head fixers run out of material they fill in their columns with heartrendering tales of racketeering in labor unions. Their moans can be heard even above the clink of the silver they get for writing such stuff. They are not concerned with racketeering in general but just in that racketeering in which they do not share the benefits or for which they get paid to condemn.

We know that in some unions there is racketeering. We advise the members of these unions to abolish it. Don't let it get root in the first place. And to do this it is necessary that we understand the causes of racketeering. How does it manage to flourish within labor unions to the detriment of the members?

Racketeering in labor unions is the result of (1) union constitutions wherein it is provided that a few are given the power of absolute authority over the conduct of the union affairs; (2) Members of the union unwilling, unable or just too uninterested to run the union affairs themselves.

There are two kinds of union men, and one kind just bellyaches.

Most unions were already established long before the present members got into them. The constitution was already set up. Constitutional power is already vested in the hands of the few. And by this previously vested power the few have the authority to refuse the right to the majority to change the constitution so that the power will be given back to the majority.

In case like this only a complete overhauling can effect a change. But before the union

Whether you work by the piece  
or by the day,  
By shortening the hours you  
lengthen the pay.

crowned head will give into this they will see the union wrecked and scuttled so that the money in the treasury can be retained by them. Hundreds of times the rank and file have revolted against their power glutted officials but in every case they have failed or have adopted the very constitutional provisions which have permitted official racketeering to develop again.

The AFL alone hasn't all the racketeers even if Pegler and the CIO spokesmen say so. John L. Lewis for years was occupied in putting down revolts of his members. He expelled them. Stole ballots. He cooked the referendum accounts. From 1919 until 1932 the membership of the United Mine Workers fell from over 400,000 to about 80,000. Though the AFL now points this out they are guilty of financing the UMWA officials several times in their drives against the rank and file.

Racketeering exists in both the AFL and CIO because their constitutions allow for official domination of the rank and file. Every time you read in the papers about a strike being declared "outlaw" by the officials of a union it is another case where the officials are using this authority against the rank and file.

But officials are not the sole cause of these practices. The rank and file are also responsible. Many of the present officials-ridden unions dropped into the hands of the few because the few were the only ones interested enough to conduct the union affairs.

Where the workers join a union already rotten with corruption and



the gag rule with the support of thugs shuts up all opposition the members are not altogether to blame. But where the rank and file have every opportunity to express their opinions, decide the policies of the union and to master the officials instead of the officials mastering them, the blame for racketeering practices of officials rest entirely on the shoulders of the members.

If all the people who carry union cards but let George do it were laid end to end it would be -- a good thing.

If members are too lazy to look after their own interests they should not blubber if others look after them for them in a way pleasing to those doing the work.

The IWW constitution provides for the widest exercise of rank and file control. Official domination is impossible without the consent or utter indifference of the majority. It is impossible for IWW officials to make deals with the employers in return for a payoff. No IWW official has the power to pull strikes and call them off whenever it appears to his own personal benefit to do so. This is the job of the rank and file.

And because the IWW officials haven't this power there isn't any chance of him starting rackets where the employer finds it to his benefit to offer bribes.

But democracy does not exist in a union just because the majority may rule it so pleases. Democracy isn't just an abstract principle. It is a way of getting things done, discussing the pros and cons of problems confronting us deciding the better method and putting these decisions into practice.

The practice of democracy is the responsibility of all and a



Gus Squawks is the "Problem Child" of a labor union. "Why don't the union do something for me," Gus squawks. Without provocation Gus will cry on your shoulder about his tough boss, how hard he works, how little he gets and how phony his committee man is. But Gus seldom attends union meetings and then only tanked up. Gus always wants the floor. Gets up. Squawks. Says nothing. Sits down. Then he wants the floor again. He squawks all month that the chairman is a dictator because he won't let Gus stop other attend to union business while Gus squawks. The union Gus isn't in is better than the one he is in Gus Squawks. Gus always just squawks.

rank and file member who leaves it all up to a few is anti-democratic. IWW members don't have to fight for democracy in their union. But they use it. It can't exist without use. If you don't use it, if you don't take your share of the responsibilities of running your union you don't believe in democracy. And if you don't practice democracy you are helping to bring about those conditions which foster racketeering.



## WHO WANTS POLITICS IN THE IWW?

"Contrary to popular opinion the IWW is not a political organization but devotes itself entirely to bargaining for higher wages and shorter hours." This is reported in the Cleveland News as the explanation given by one who left the IWW some months ago for a higher paid job with another organization.

If he means that we do not clutter up our union meetings with discussion of the relative merits of dog catchers at election time, we are not political. Refusing to be diverted from the business of higher wages and job conditions is characteristic of our union meetings. If he means that an official of the IWW cannot feather his own nest by using the organization to deliver in the bag votes for the politicians who promise to do something for him, he is right. We are not political.

Scratch a politician and  
you will find a bureaucrat.

Nothing is more pleasing to the boss than to know that the discussion of needed improvements in the shop can be postponed "until after the election." Whereas all in the union are one (if they are sincere union men) in wanting better conditions of labor, they are of many political views. There are Republicans and Democrats, Socialists and the various brands of Communists. So the unity achieved on the common desire for better working conditions is wrecked by political differences as a union allows itself to become a tail to some political kite. Union is justly suspicious of the intentions of he who openly proclaims his aim of making the political partisanship a member the concern of the union.

The IWW as an organization is non-political. We endorse no pol-

## WHERE TO LOOK FOR IT

"What do you want to fool around with the IWW for?" the boss asked one of his workers. "You won't get anything out of them."

"I reckon you're right, boss," was the reply. "We won't get anything out of the IWW-- we just sorta figure we are going to get it out of you."

Boss: "I don't know where to go for my vacation. I'm afraid the sea would disagree with me."

Unorganized Worker: "Oh, no, sir. It wouldn't dare."

### Voice Of The Unemployed

Twelve hours a day....!  
Don't you know any tricks.  
Two men could have jobs  
If you would only work six.

*continued from next column*  
iticians and ask that no politician do us dirt by endorsing us. But many IWW members are rabid boosters of the political party of their choice. So long as they hang their political bias on the peg outside when they come to a union meeting we do not interfere with their political expression.

A member of the IWW may vote of he may not. That is his business. We respect his right to a secret political ballot and ask him to keep it a secret so far as the union business is concerned. If a member wants to vote for the politician who gives him five bucks, a shot of dehorn or promises him a job he most likely will do so regardless what a union does. Neither the IWW, CIO, AFL nor the MESA can guarantee their members would do otherwise than this. John L. Lewis and his disciples tried that in the last election and look where they landed.

To take the time of union meeting to listen to small bore politicians means more important work is left undone.



## WHY BE TIED DOWN?

A local group of workers now on strike are showing some common sense in not agreeing to not ask for a general wage increase in the next six months. There is no telling just what will turn up in that time to warrant an increase in pay.

Louis Stark in the New York Times points out that some economists expect living costs to rise between 5 and 8 percent by the end of the year. While higher living costs should not be the only reason for higher wages still it is a factor that cannot be ignored unless the workers want to lower their living levels.

Even individual wage raises should be possible at all times to take effect immediately as changes in production methods are brought about in a plant. To have to wait for a set period of time before getting adjustments to compensate for the changed production would work unjustified hardships on individuals and on whole departments.

Employers never tie themselves down to not putting in labor saving devices or speed up things for a period of time and workers should adopt the same attitude. An employer could easily arrange production so as to weaken much of the demand for a wage increase at a given time.

At the expiration of the set period during which no wage increases were to be asked for a lay off of a few men would make it appear that business was bad. This would discourage many from wanting to make any demands at such a time. Once the workers were tied down for another set period production could be made up and the workers would be left holding the bag.

## I.W.W. BRASS WORKERS STRIKE

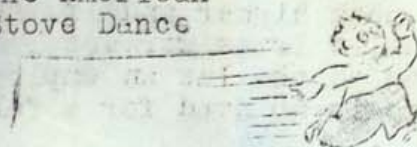
Two hundred and fifty IWW members in the Republic Brass are now on strike for an increase in wages. The management offered them a five percent raise but wanted at the same time to take away a tow and one half per cent bonus which has been in effect since last November.

The management refuses to talk any further increase other than what he has offered. Further conferences with the union committee are but a waste of time he feels. However, seeing that they had been working overtime every day and sometimes on Saturday the men feel that he will come across.

The picket line is solid but members from other IWW shops are always welcome.

---

Alex Boris behind the bar at  
the American  
Stove Dance



---

## WELL OFF

A talk between two females was heard just as George Dobrich was leaving an East St. Clair Tavern:

"You should make a play for George, dear. He's a bachelor and well off."

"That's the trouble with him. He knows when he is well off," was the reply.



## REPUBLIC BRASS STRIKE BULLETIN

Blywise is mighty disappointed that the boys who worked for him so long should stop his plant and his profits. He seems to have a short memory, or at least one which forgets many of the details. Some of the boys though can fill in some spots left by him.

Remember in those happy days of twenty years ago when one 10% cut after another was "given" and in a little brotherly chat Blywise told us that those who didn't want to work for the wages he set didn't need to come back to work? Then when the depression came so did more wage cuts? The first day of the strike Blywise told the committee that he still wanted the power to cut wages at any time he thought it necessary. What boss doesn't want this power?

### REMEMBER ?



Remember during the depression days when the boys kept the firm running by not demanding their full pay when it was due they were promised that their loyalty would not be forgotten and that some day the appreciation would take a more durable and substantial form than mere words of thanks from



their tearful employer? There is an old saying that "A promise made is a debt unpaid." And it sure applies to this promise.

There isn't a wide difference between the wages paid at the Republic Brass than those at other brass shops. But the production here is much higher and if the same wages is made as in other plants the Republic Brass workers labor a darn sight harder to make them. According to the law an employer is entitled to his pound of flesh but there is no need for a fellow to have to sweat blood in addition.

Only oatmeal is what Blywise gets out of the Republic Brass for all his efforts. There are at least a few of the boys ready to exchange pay checks with him and take a chance on having to live on oatmeal.

We made promises to stick together when we voted the strike. And the spirit on the picket line shows that workers' promises mean more than those of the boss.

The management kept reminding the committee that care should be taken to not kill the goose that lays the golden egg. Not having seen any of these yellow eggs the boys feel that someone is beating them to the henhouse. A twenty four picket line should be plenty of precaution against the management sneaking any during the strike at least.

If this proves to be a hard nut to crack the meat will be that much sweeter. Solidarity wins.