

Release Agitation.

Things in Sydney are now well under way in connection with the Defence and Release Committee.

All the available speakers are working over-time, and we cannot supply the requests from the different country districts to send along a speaker, but the campaign is well organised, and we are doing our best.

This week end there are six speakers in the country, and next week more will be out. Motions of protest are rolling in to our office and financial support is coming along.

If the workers will only stick to their promises, the boys inside will soon be breathing a different atmosphere.

—N.R.

The New Year started well in Broken Hill by releasing five of the imprisoned agitators. A mass meeting was held in the Central Reserve, where the culprits gave their experiences of jail life.

Before the meeting closed a motion was passed demanding the release of the 12 men in Sydney.

A combined Release Committee has been formed in Broken Hill, and good work is being done.

It is up to the rest of the working class of Australia to be prepared to take a stand with the boys in the Hill, and demand the release of the imprisoned men.

F. W. McLaughlin, one of the agitators imprisoned in Broken Hill over the conscription struggle, at a reception accorded him on his release that he did not regret his experience in gaol. "Experience teaches" was an old saying. Gaols were built by the working class for the Capitalist class, to be filled by the working class, of course. When one arrived at the prison, he was dumped inside the gates and handed over to the prison authorities. That cleared the police, stalwart men who did nothing towards the world's production. He

was presented with canvas trousers, shirt of a color peculiar to gaolbirds, vest and coat to suit, and a straw decker made in gaol. The whole turnout, in fact, was the product of a prison labor. It was a cheap way of learning a trade. In this garb one wondered if he was the same man. He was a new-rooster, in a new back yard, with nothing to crow about. The Governor put the prisoner through a rigid cross examination. One particular question was the address of the nearest relatives, which it was explained very necessary as "you might die on their hands." This was a wise precaution. You were so starved that you could pick up the wrinkles of your empty belly, and wipe the tears from your eyes with them. Routine, as explained in an article in "Barrier Daily Truth" a few days ago, was lightly touched on. The principal industry was knitting socks. The institution was just what might be expected of capitalism. It was nothing short of a nerve-wrecking machine. The inmates were made physical wrecks, and moral deterioration naturally followed. It was far better to have a man going round at night to see no harm came to them, than to be in the trenches waiting for a bayonet. He read an account of British attempts to silence free speech up till 1831. The freedom of press had been non-existent in those days. Did it exist now? We were no further advanced than were stumbling back. Reaction was everywhere triumphant, and brute force supreme. It must come. Organised Labor was on its trial. There was only one possible hope for Labor in Australia—it lay in solidarity and vigilance.—"B. D. Truth."

Things are going along well here. Good collection this week end for Defence Fund and secretary will forward same shortly.

The miners here voted in favour of taking up a collection next pay, and good results are expected.

The petition signing is going along well and donations are coming in. The prospects look bright.

BENT AXLE

**MELBOURNE**

At business meeting held Monday, Jan. 8th, credentials from delegates representing the following organisations were gone into:—Amalgamated Carpenters' Union, Branch No. 1; Painters' and Decorators' Union, Federal Clerks' Union, South Melbourne P.L.C., Socialist Party of Victoria, Militant Front-gardists of the Labor Party, Women's Political Association, No-Conscription Fellowship, Women's Social, Political and Industrial Council, Australasian Socialist Party, Women's Anti-Conscription Committee. Other communications re the appointing of delegates from other bodies at early date were also received.

The next business was the election of officers in accordance with a circular sent out to the various unions to that effect. Mrs. Bella Lavender, M.A., delegate from the Women's Anti-Conscription Committee, was elected as president; Fellow-Worker Barber, of the I.W.W., elected vice-president; Mr. E. W. Carrd (Federated Clerks), elected as minute secretary and treasurer; Ggo. H. Hill (I.W.W.), as secretary. An executive committee of three were elected; these were Mr. P. Hoynes (Mil. Propagandists), Jones (South Melbourne P.L.C.), and Stephens (Amal. Carpenters).

It was decided to hold open air propaganda meetings in as many places as we could find speakers for. For the present we are intending to confine our work in that direction to Sundays on the Yarra Bank, and Friday evenings. Might say that on Fridays we are holding three different centres, and have prospects of at least six such meetings every Friday evening within the next two weeks.

In addition to these, we are also arranging for meetings in the various town halls in working class suburbs, sending speakers to P.L.C. meetings, and also in front of various trade unions wherever we can contrive to do so. †

Every member in the League is a live one, a worker—no dead wood. Just beginning to get things into shape for activity, and believe me we shall have something doing in Melbourne in the way of release agitation in the course of the next few weeks.

Business meetings of the W.D. and R. League in future will be held in the Guild Hall, Swanston-street, on Tuesday evenings, 8 p.m. sharp.

GEO. H. HILL,
Secretary W.D. and R. League.

F. W. Jackson has been busy at the Mount, and last Friday night spoke to a large and attentive audience in the main street. He dealt with "Direct Action versus Legislation," and was well received.

F. W. Jackson has just finished a series of four lectures, and as a result much prejudice and misunderstanding has been lifted. The local rebels are getting together, and will make their presence felt here before long.

Over 300 "Direct Actions" were sold at the last meeting, and a collection of £1/5/.
The enthusiasm displayed here at all meet-

The I.W.W. local has been reorganised, and they are anxiously awaiting the arrival of an I.W.W. organiser.

Mount Morgan is once again on the map and going strong, this time we hope to stay.
—W.J.

For

"DIRECT ACTION."
Enclosed please find P.O. for 4/, for which please send "Direct Action" for one year to the following address:—

Name _____

.....

dress
FILL IT IN NOW!

THE NAME OF LONG BAY IS DESTINED TO BECOME FAMOUS IN THE ANNALS OF THE WORKING CLASS. NOT BECAUSE IT IS A PLEASURABLE SEA-SIDE RESORT; NOT BECAUSE MANY HAPPY HOURS HAVE BEEN SPENT SURFING IN THE SALT Y SPRAY, BUT BECAUSE IN A STOUT AND SOLID BUILDING, STANDING BACK. ON THE MAINLAND, TWELVE MEMBERS OF THE WORKING CLASS ARE NOW LANQUISHING BECAUSE THEY REMAINED LOYAL TO THEIR CLASS.

BEHIND IRON BARS AND IN A ROCK RIBBED FORTRESS, TWELVE
GOOD MEN AND TRUE ARE NOW DRAGGING OUT THEIR MISERABLE
LIVES.

THESE FIGHTERS FOR FREEDOM ARE NOW SUFFERING BECAUSE THEY DARED TO SPEAK FOR THEIR CLASS. THEY ARE LIVING IN MISERY AND PAIN BECAUSE THEY WERE LABOR AGITATORS. THEY NOW LIVE IN DURANCE VILE BECAUSE THEY HAD THE COURAGE TO OPPOSE THE INDUSTRIAL MAGNATES OF THIS COUNTRY.

FELLOW-WORKERS! REMEMBER LONG BAY. REMEMBER THE FIGHTING SPIRITS WHO ARE OUT THERE. REMEMBER THE CELLS IN WHICH THEY SLEEP. AND THE DULL YARDS IN WHICH THEY LIVE.

FELLOW-UNINISTS! REMEMBER THESE MEN WERE YOUR MATES. THEY WORKED WITH YOU ON VARIOUS JOBS. THEY FOUGHT WITH YOU IN MANY FIGHTS AGAINST THE BOSS.

WILL YOU SEE THEM DIE IN A FELON'S PRISON? WILL YOU LISTEN TO THEIR APPEAL IN VAIN?

THEY ARE WAITING FOR THEIR CLASS TO SPEAK; THEY ARE WAITING FOR THEIR MATES TO ACT.

MEMBERS OF THE WORKING CLASS! WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER?

Direct Action



WEEKLY
OFFICIAL ORGAN
of the
INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF
THE WORLD.

(Australian Administration)
Office: 403 Sussex Street, Sydney,
Australia.

Subscriptions: 4/ per year; New Zealand,
6/ per year; Foreign, 8/ per year.

HEADQUARTERS, I.W.W. (Australia):
403 SUSSEX STREET, SYDNEY.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS: 164 W.
Washington Street, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.

INDUSTRIAL EFFICIENCY.

The question of industrial efficiency is the most important question that confronts the working class to-day.

On the reply that is given, and this can only be revealed by the activities within the plants of industry, depends the future welfare of that class.

By submitting to the task that will be set, the workers will be signifying their willingness to be themselves, their children, and their children's children, chartered to slavery from the beginning of life to the end.

The question can not be evaded, it must be answered, not by one individual, nor by two, nor yet by a group. It needs the solid voice of the toilers of every country to say, "Damn you and your industrial efficiency scheme. Hard work never brought pleasure. Long hours never created leisure, and low wages never empty stomachs filled.

What is this industrial efficiency, and where can a manifestation of it be seen? I stand in one of the busy thoroughfares of a city and passing by me, I see an elegantly finished automobile. The car is one that it would be difficult to have surpassed in comfort and finish. Its interior is highly upholstered, whilst outside the varnish acts as a mirror for every object that is passed. The car runs smoothly, and with comfort to its occupants. Reclining in each of the seats is a representation of the height of fashion, all of them well dressed and apparently sumptuously fed individuals. As I look at the car my mind swiftly turns to the several industrial processes that has brought it to perfection. Not alone the car, but the occupants, too, are included in the workshop activities, accountable for their present form of existence.

The material of the construction counts for nothing. The wood-work is just timber that has grown in the forest. The iron and steel merely the extraction from the ore that was once buried in the earth, and the clothing, nothing but what once covered the backs of the beasts of the field. All of it common material. But out of it the marvellous production of an elegant motor car and four well-dressed fops.

Hidden in that common material is the essence of achievement: in every fibre is lodged the vitality of the toiler. Men and women have been at their several occupations, and I see in the vehicle as it passes the accumulated undistinguishable human energy of the workers.

Look upon whatever you will from the humble pair of shoes that you (the proletarian) or your children wear to the most fashionable production of head-dress for the elite of society; from the Jerry built shack to the artistically designed mansion; from the modest, nay, paltry breakfast table to the sumptuous dinner, the material counts for nothing. It is the directed energy of those who produce it that affords the presence of such things amongst us.

The timber in the motor car might instead have been converted into a table or chairs for one who assisted in the making of the car. The varnish would have looked just as well upon the residence of

one of the toilers. The iron and steel would have served a good purpose as palisades or bedsteads for the homes of the many who need them. The clothing would look just as well on you and yours as on those who wore it, and the occupants of the car would commit no greater crime than you do if they turned to and did their bit to earn their keep.

The purpose of the foregoing is not to make you believe that automobiles are not wanted, and should not be produced but what one should be conscious of is that the industrial efficiency scheme of the master class determines that the more simple and more necessitous of material things are superfluous.

Is there not sufficient proof in knowing that too little labour energy is embodied in the making of the things required by the mass of the people both in quality and in numbers?

Take the labour that is expended in the mines in the extraction of the earth's minerals. Instead of having this revealed to us in the requirements of those who toil in the mines, by way of wholesome food for their consumption, in good homes to shelter them, in the best of clothing for their comfort and in the other details that go to make life appreciable it is found that the mass of that energy or the results of it becomes crystallised in articles that when they leave the hands of the workers they never again return, but the fruits of their labour are enjoyed by others.

Industrial efficiency as enunciated by the employing class measures the amount of blood and vitality that are properties in the bodies of the working class and the birds of carrion on the field of battle its purpose is to extract every grain and drop for its own particular benefit.

A little child born in the working class environment is to the employers of labour nothing more than a vessel that holds the elixir of life for them. That vessel is moulded and developed, and early in its growth they begin to draw from it the energy that it contains, and the instances are many that long before maturity they have syphoned it dry with as little thought as one has in the sucking of an orange.

A society debauch, a woman dressed in the height of fashion, a king's banquet, a politician's hypocrisy, a labour leader's treachery, a millionaire's brutality, a parson's hellish ravings, a priest's damnation of souls, the vagaries of a society fop are accounted for by nothing other than misdirected utilisation of the labour energy of the workers and their children.

This industrial efficiency places the workers in the mental aspect of the elected set as so much material for its consumption. Just as the wool from the back of the sheep is converted into wearing apparel so is a substance extracted from the workers embodied in all the articles of use, and just as it is necessary to feed the sheep to acquire its coat so too are you fed to render service to those who have the privilege to appropriate your labour power.

You workers are calculated. You represent so many society functions, so many swell equipages, so many pleasure yachts, and so many joy rides.

You are the mine-owners' leisure time and his wife's fashionable corsets. His mansion, his garden, his poodle dog is you-transformed. You are force, energy that erects the palatial homes of the rich and furnishes them with the most artistic requirements.

You are the politicians' seat, and the parson's pulpit, the judge's salary, and the king's privileges. You have fed them all for a thousand years, and still they cry for more, and still more, and you, what else are you? A graveyard where you put beneath the sod each the remnants of the other pumped dry of all life sustaining qualities. A kerosene tin with the oil extracted from it.

Industrial Unionism points the way to the controlling of the labour power of the workers by the workers.

All production will then revert back to those who produce, and the strongest magnifying glass would fail to reveal the landlord's rent, the user's interest, or the business man's profit.

The brains of the master class are buried with their industrial efficiency scheme, and the toilers work on in comfort.

E. MOYLE.

Applications are called for
EDITOR OF "DIRECT ACTION."

All applicants must have been a member of the I.W.W. for at least six months, and must have application in at this office before March 15th, 1917.

All further particulars from
F. BROWN, Manager "D.A."

Our Boys in Gaol.

Whoever you are, whatever you are, aye, and wherever you are, if you belong to the working class, you should scorn the thought of being an idle spectator of the tragedy now being enacted in an alleged civilised Australia.

FIFTEEN YEARS! Think of it, and ask yourself "What for?"

Men arrested, regardless of whether evidence could be produced against them, charged with crimes in many instances only because they happened to be on the I.W.W. premises when the raid was made!

Are these men, who are largely responsible for the unmistakable hostility now displayed against the further enslavement of the Australian working class to be gagged for fifteen years? Remember, the fight is still on, their presence in our ranks is of primary importance, we want them, we must have men, who can look into the eyes of death if necessary without flinching. They did not fear to shoulder their share of the burden. Imprisonment for life failed to find the "yellow streak" in them! Are you then prepared to see men like these spend their lives in living graves?

Tell me, how will you feel when you look into the thin wasted faces and questioning eyes of the survivors of the ordeal fifteen years hence?

What will you tell the kiddies when

they ask you what you did to SAVE their fathers from a living death?

Does it mean that you are afraid to identify yourself with the demand for their release or that you are saving your cash for the war loan, or has that bogey "the sack" got you bluffed?

You, who still believe in treating the "base of power" reasonably and constitutionally and coaxing him to better your conditions; see what sweet reasonableness has done for the workers of miserable England and Europe, and then turn to Ireland and Australia, two countries that put up a fight, and then deny if you can that a proud, defiant working class is better than an evolutionary step at a time, meek and lowly, enslaved multitude.

The only crime from a working class standpoint that the thirty agitators now doing time are guilty of is that they have persistently, regardless of consequences, sounded the alarm. In season and out they have shouted from the housetops, Slow Down, Reduce the Output, Strike or Bleed, Organise.

These men can yet be snatched from the jaws of hell, IF the working class of Australia WILL it.

Don't forget that the WILL of an organised, determined working class can upset the calculations of the most despotically learned judge that ever sat in a court of law.

ERASMUS.

HOW THE BOSS FIGHTS.

If slander, abuse and lies would kill anything, the I.W.W. would be dead and buried long ago. If it were possible to dig the grave of an organisation per medium of prejudice, spite and malice, the I.W.W. would now be no more.

Ever since the advent of the I.W.W. in Australia, craft union officials, politicians, and the master-class in general, have never ceased to hurl maledictions at the head of that fighting organisation.

In the eyes of all the upholders of the capitalist system, the I.W.W. has always been an anathema. The scribes of the capitalist press have always been ready to defame, vilify, and curse the I.W.W.

But despite the ravings of the master-class, the dismal wailings of their venal press, and the snufflings of politicians, despite the storms of anger, spite, and hatred which has deluged the I.W.W. from time to time, it has defied them all and still stands out bold and defiant as the rock.

During the conscription campaign in Australia, the Prime Minister, Mr. W. M. Hughes and his followers, used every tactic possible in an attempt to prejudice the minds and instil hatred in the breasts of the people of Australia against the I.W.W.

There was no invective too strong, no venom too poisonous, no language too severe, to pour upon the heads of the I.W.W. agitators. They were charged with every crime in the calendar, and spoken of as men who are outside the pale of civilisation.

Surely the master class are hard put to it for arguments. Any school boy can abuse and slander; any small child can insult and lie, but it takes smart men to be truthful and honest, and that our enemies have never been.

It is well known that the master-class are unscrupulous in their tactics, and believe in "any tactic that wins" when fighting the working class.

The furious hate and spiteful anger which the master-class have given vent to of late only goes to prove their impotency in trying to stop the industrial propa-

ganda and silence the voice of the labor agitator.

Although the putrid penny prints of plutocracy gloated over the cruel sentences passed upon twelve members of the working class in Sydney and the conscriptionists rubbed their hands with glee, the propaganda of industrial unionism has not ceased one bit.

The persistent and consistent agitation for the One Big Union has got the bosses goat, and they are now yelling their hardest for our suppression.

All the channels of vituperation have been opened, and through them are rushing all the muck and filth, slime and slander, in the way of arguments which only yellow journals could be guilty of. Everything possible is being done in order to try and raise hatred and contempt towards the I.W.W.

After all the machinations of the master-class, they have not yet succeeded in bringing to light any proof that the I.W.W. is led by foreigners, or that there is anything criminal in its principles or teachings.

After all the oceans of ink which has been spilt by the scribes of capitalism in denunciation of the I.W.W., one looks in vain for any evidence to support their accusations. After all the wind and words got off by the mouthpieces of capitalism one still waits and listens for any proof of their arguments.

The I.W.W. has issued a challenge to all its enemies to come along and prove that it is a criminal organisation, but our only reply is a torrent of abuse.

The I.W.W. challenges any member of society to come along by day or night, through the press or by platform, any time and anywhere, and prove that the I.W.W. has ever advocated or practised criminality, but we wait in vain for an answer.

The condemnation of the master class should be our recommendation. The absence of arguments against us should be our incentive to fight on.

We have full confidence in our fight for freedom, and will battle on until the world is free.

-N.R.

UNION INTELLIGENCE.

At the present moment the electrical trade is slacker than it has been for a long time. A few months back the employers had to hunt up labor for their jobs, but the bubble has burst and now nearly two hundred members of the electrical trades are hunting for jobs.

One would naturally think that a union secretary would be able to explain the reason for this unemployment, and understanding the cause of the trouble devise some way out of the difficulty. For long, the militant members of the working class have been advocating the shortening of the work day, in order to make

room for more men, but every move in that direction has been opposed by the union officials.

The unions have plainly been degenerating into something approaching employment agencies.

One man, looking for a master recently, called on the secretary of this electrical trades union, and was informed that the chance of a boss was very slight. Upon inquiring what the secretary and the union intended to do about the matter he received the rather scientific answer, "We will have to hope for the best, my boy."

-MATADE

Spasms.

By Tom Barker.

Commissioner Fraser, of the New South Wales railways, reckons that the workers have slowed down 15 per cent in seven years on his railways. We wonder whether the wholesale sacking of I.W.W. men will have the effect of speeding things up. At the present rate of slowing down the boss will be in dungarees about 1955. It may happen before that if the workers hurry up slowing down. Anyway, the hard fact is that it takes 115 men to do the work in 1916; that 100 did in 1908. And that is a more effective way of dealing with the working class nightmare unemployment than soup-kitchens and unemployment parades.

The local council at Lismore, N.S.W., is upset about its pick and shovel artists slowing down on the job. The ganger has been instructed to fire anyone who doesn't keep his head down and his rear up. Arbitration courts, council gangers, local councillors who spend their afternoons on bowling greens, are very estimable institutions and individuals, and don't look any worse for their speeding up. "Work, boys, work," and be contented," is the national anthem of a lunatic asylum, and the Lismore Council.

The "National" Party, just cradled in Melbourne, is about the finest collection of bunce-steerers, has-beens, dead-beats, homeless dogs, once-wassers, would-to-goddess, political mediocrities, municipal muddlers, oldest inhabitants, mouth-fighters, blue-eyed boys, work-shys, and slow-downers Australia possesses. And yet Larkin and Glynn, Grant and Hamilton, Reeve and King, McPherson and Besant, Teen and Beatty, Fagan and Moore, industrial workers, are in gaol. Anyone knows that Australia's affairs would be infinitely safer in their hands than in the itching, avaricious, blood-stained hands of the National (?) Party. The Massey-Ward outfit in Godswon are in for a lovely time. The Pikekohe cocky and the Otago chaff merchant are emporising within a hundred miles of the front, and have left N.Z. affairs in the kindly hands of Handcuff Herdman and Jimmy Allen, the counter lunch colonel. This precious pair are slinging anti-conscriptioists into gaol at the rate of six a week. Anyway, Labor is developing a cantankerous temper over this business, and a general holiday around the coal-mines and waterfronts seems very probable. And the cow cookies who broke the last strike for the shipping companies, and then paid for it through increased freight rates, are so badly hit by conscription, that it is more than evident that there will be co-operation, instead of batons this time. And Massey and Ward, the Empire skitters, will be well advised to stay in Hold Hengland and not emulate Wm. the Frantic, alias Mud.

In the 1913 strike, scabs got control of the Auckland wharf, but the Napier water frontiers scabbed considerable. Now that Aucklanders have abolished night-work on the wharves by an enormous majority, And Napier is out on strike to get more help into the hatches. Good luck to them both, and may the Australian cargo slingers sling night-work overboard, too. Truly, Big Bingy, the boncheads are cultivating the microscopic piece of grey matter in their attics. And, lo and behold, it is infinitely better than the development of mighty muscles and leathery callouses upon the uncouth fingers of the toil-stunned.

Congratulations to the boys who have left the hospitable precincts of H.M. Gaol in Broken Hill. According to the "Barrier Daily Truth," they are in good form. Their first consideration was their brothers in Long Bay Gaol. May our movement never lack such fighters who are the salt of the earth, and the finger posts to better days. Would that Broken Hill was Australia, and Grant and the lads would be out with us. But obstacles are made to be overcome, and we are going to win out.

The I.W.W. is going to be of some account in Queensland shortly. The influence of the organisation is making itself felt all over the West and North. Brisbane is alive with wobbles, and they are contemplating getting a central hall where propaganda will be undertaken to instil the ideas of industrial self-reliance upon the minds of the local workers. A fine collection of orators will be procurable, and the spirit of industrialism will grow in fertile soil.

Well, boys, this is the year of our Lord, 1917. We want to make this year OUR year. The boss and his minions and menials and the rest of the undesirable citizens will object, of course, but that won't trouble us. May the bankruptcy courts work overtime, and set the workers an example. Get to your mates on the job.

Unite.

In the throes of a system replete with amazing inconsistencies and gross injustice the only haven of security for the workers lies in industrial solidarity. Even our present situation becomes hopeful when we observe that action in that direction is proceeding along class lines, thus embodying all the elements that make for the emancipation of the working class and overshadowing the petty aspirations of those who assist the master class by refusing to recognise that an injury to one is an injury to all.

In spite of the mass of sectional and individual aspirations that retard the progress of the labour movement we occasionally see the spectacle of united action directed against some glaring capitalistic aggression—a gleam of many determination that bodily lifts the working class out of the rut of slavish obedience, sets a greater value on the morality and adds a deeper significance to the labour movement. In such convulsive periods the value of class unity is patent to all, but the object (being only palliative), having been obtained, there remains no binding force, and the reaction that inevitably follows is by capitalist henchmen said to demonstrate a lack of cohesive spirit among the workers. But that is not so, for, when, sensible of a deep injustice, the workers are forced to unite, it is their only means of obtaining redress. When the capitalists overwhelmingly condemn any measure they are careful never to give offence on the same lines until they have again dragged the workers into an apathetic state. Through improperly understanding their economic position a vast number of workers fail to notice the aggressive spirit that characterises every movement of the capitalist class.

It is strange that although nearly every worker realises that solidarity is absolutely necessary, they cannot discern distinctive class interests, and it is incredible that they should condemn any individual or section fighting the battle for them. Yet it is so, and everything tending to a more complete organisation seems to meet with their marked hostility. While the more bewildered they become in their efforts to understand the insidious teachings of the ruling class, the more confirmed is their adherence to capitalist domination. The reason is due entirely to non-recognition of the class struggle, for without a thorough knowledge of all that it implies we must lack the understanding of how to turn to account the bitter lessons that we daily receive at the hands of the ruling class. Let us suppose that the coal miners were to go on strike upon a matter that I, probably, would not understand, and the Tory press were to announce that the miners were opposed to peaceful settlement by ignoring wages boards, arbitration courts, etc. What matters it to me? Commonsense bids me accept no capitalistic interpretation of any industrial trouble, and surely the collective intelligence of the miners concerning their own affairs is superior to the judgment of a sweated city worker. There is nothing analogous between their occupations except the fact that they are engaged in fighting a common enemy—the capitalist class. The worker fighting to escape degradation and the exploiter to maintain an offensive opulence, and it is certain that methods used successfully against the miners will be used with equal effect against the city, rural or any other body of workers, and there is absolutely no chance of combating them if craft blindness over rules class action. The meanest intelligence ought to discern the lines on which to proceed in the event of a dispute between the masters and workers, because all workers are fired with an ambition to improve their standard of living while from the masters' standpoint he is regarded as a dividend-producing machine devoid of manly qualities and feelings, realising then that the emancipation of the working class and amelioration of present conditions can only be obtained by a greater measure of solidarity. I must, irrespective of alleged breaches of faith or any other cause, give my unqualified support to any body of workers fighting to redress a grievance or to improve their lot.

PETE.

Push the sales of "Direct Action," the fightingest paper in Australia. Put your street and your town on the map. We want your assistance, and so do the lads at the Bay. Are you on?

Yes, 1917, for us!

Any old lumber can slouch down stream, but it wants fins and fight to oppose the current. The I.W.W. wants men with hearts like lions, who will face the gates of hell for their union. And such a spirit can not be licked, or goaled, or throttled. Let's see or hear from you.

Tom Barker.

A STRIKING PERSONALITY. HIS MISSION TO QUEENSLAND.

Probably there has been no more prominent figure in the public eye of Australia during the past 12 months than Mr. or, as he is more generally known, "Tom" Barker, I.W.W. advocate and editor of "Direct Action," the official organ of the organisation. His militant and uncompromising attitude towards the present evil capitalist system of society, and his fiery denunciation of the methods adopted during the present war to suppress freedom of expression and action, made him the special target of the Government and police, and as a consequence the inside of gaol has become familiar to Barker lately.

Last year an outrageous sentence of one year's imprisonment on Barker aroused an unparalleled storm of indignation and protest from the workers throughout the Commonwealth, so much so that the authorities deemed it wise to release him long before the sentence expired.

A BORN REBEL.

Out of the agitation for his release, waged by his comrades of the I.W.W., arose the charge, trial, and conviction of the 12 men now suffering the savage sentences of from five to 15 years' hard labour.

Barker is now in Queensland in order to tell the truth about the evidence and questionable methods adopted by the authorities to silence and suppress some of the most dangerous—from the capitalist point of view—members of the I.W.W. Mr. Barker, during the course of an interview with a representative of "The Daily Standard," appeared very optimistic regarding the release in the near future of the convicted men. His physical surprise to anyone, who naturally regarded him as a most dangerous character, expected to see a low-browed criminal face, with a corresponding degenerate mind. Tom Barker is, on the contrary, of a most kindly and joyous disposition, peculiarly boyish both in his manner and appearance—he is 30 years of age but looks even younger, and in these days of gloom and tragedy it was particularly refreshing to come in contact with Tom Barker, who, in spite of the terrible persecution he has endured at the hands of an anti-working class society still retains all the buoyancy, all the power of youth.

Rebels are born—not made—and Tom Barker is a rebel against all things which serve to degrade and enslave mankind, and place money and privilege before humanity.

LABOUR AROUSED.

Mr. Barker stated that a conference of Labour organisations was to meet in Sydney on January 12, for the purpose of taking concentrated action to obtain the release of the convicted men. Already many of the largest and most influential unions have appointed delegates to attend the conference, and the A.M.A. of Broken Hill, in addition to subscribing £100 to the Defence Fund, has sent two of its officials along to assist in the organising work. In reply to a query, Mr. Barker said that a grim determination was being evinced on the part of the workers of New South Wales, to spare no effort to get the victims of a diabolical political plot out of gaol, whilst in Melbourne, now that the holidays were over, the workers likewise were vigorously co-operating in the release movement. Owing to the appeal, and the case being sub judice, a number of Labour members had refrained from taking an active part in the campaign, but after the hearing of the appeal on February 18, they intended to engage wholeheartedly in the fight for justice for the men in gaol.

Mr. Barker feelingly described the intense sympathy with the convicted men which was prevalent among all sections of the community in Sydney, where the crimes were allegedly committed, and also where the true facts of the case were more generally known than elsewhere in Australia. When the terrible verdict was made known, the public of Sydney were astounded and indignant at the outrage perpetrated on these workers in the sacred name of justice.

UNANIMOUS SUPPORT.

On trams, trains, ferries, everywhere, nothing else was talked about, and the almost unanimous expression of opinion heard was that a gross miscarriage of justice had taken place, that the men had not received a fair trial, and that at least a new trial should be granted; in fact, a very large proportion of the people of Sydney, as distinct from the unionists, are strongly desirous of the immediate release of the prisoners.

Approximately, said Mr. Barker, the cost of the appeal would be £800, and he confidently anticipated that the money would quickly be raised by the workers of Australia, and already money was being sent from all parts of the land.

The foundation of the Crown charges against the convicted men was chiefly that they had used illegal means in order to obtain the release of him (Barker); of seditious conspiracy was alleged. He pointed out that the charge of conspiracy was the weapon which the capitalist class had from time immemorial brought against members of the working class, when they had dared to question

the rights and ethics of the master class.

AN ECHO OF THE PAST.

Without going back to the early days of trade unionism, or outside even of Queensland, Mr. Barker said that even as late as the big bush strike of '91, members of the now all-powerful A.W.U. were sentenced in Queensland on the same old charge of conspiracy to three years hard labour.

When asked what had been the effect of the conviction of its members had on the I.W.W., Mr. Barker said that, at least as far as Sydney was concerned, the wonderful enthusiasm of the anti-conscription campaign had been transferred by the workers to the movement for the release of the men so unjustly convicted. Magnificent meetings were being held every Sunday in the Sydney Domain by the release Committee, which consisted not only of members of the I.W.W., but also largely of prominent men in the various unions and similar organisations.

WORKERS ENTHUSIASTIC.

Outside of the great anti-conscription gatherings, no such meetings as those being held in Sydney had been seen; 20,000 or over was quite the usual meeting, and the fine feeling of solidarity amongst the audience was most marked and significant. The workers of New South Wales remember that it was largely owing to the fearless propaganda of the I.W.W. on the conscription question (long before the masses of the people realised the storm that was rapidly gathering and threatening Australian democracy) that blazed the path to the victory of October 28.

The evidence on which the members of the working were sentenced, said Mr. Barker was of the most flimsy and discreditable nature, and his mission to Queensland was to expose to people here the cunning and unscrupulous plot whereby innocent men were to-day being herded with criminals. He will remain in Queensland a considerable time, and will probably visit industrial centres of the State, and may be accompanied by one of the Broken Hill delegates.

In conclusion, Mr. Barker stated that Queensland unionists had a fine reputation in the South for militancy and class consciousness, and he was more than satisfied that the workers of this State would join with the forces now at work to obtain the release of the men whose great unforgivable "crime" that they were fearless advocates of the working class emancipation and were not afraid to champion the cause of the worker against the powerful owning class—JACK CADE. (In Brisbane "Standard").

OPINIONS.

THE I.W.W.

To the Editor.

Sir,—Judge Pring advocated the suppression of the I.W.W. and their Domain meetings. Then William "Maltese" Hughes introduced an "Unlawful Associations Bill," which has been put through all its stages by his (Hughes') National Government, with the aid of Federal Labour members, who came out on the anti-conscription platform, and said they did and would not stand for the shackling of the working class of Australia by Hughes and his capitalistic clique. Frank Anstey, in the House of Representatives, had said that in politics there is no morality or principle, but only political expediency. This last no doubt explains the attitude of him and his colleagues in voting for this bill. This bill has been put on the Statute-book of Australia, ostensibly to deal with the so-called criminal organisation known as the I.W.W., but in reality it can be used at any future date to budgeon any militant working class organisation that turned Hughes and his capitalistic clique down with a bump over the conscription issue. There are clauses in that bill which are a menace to the whole working class of Australia, and which can be put into operation against any association which breaks, defies, or opposes capitalist "law and order." Under the broad scope of this bill, the trades unions as well as the peace alliances and numerous other bodies can be declared "illegal associations," as well as the I.W.W. For it is inevitable that, in the course of economic evolution, the working class organisations will evolve to that stage when, if not prepared to put up a firm stand, and use concerted action against the machinations of capitalism, they will go under. And, when they do put up a bold front, what is going to happen? They will find they are up against the chicanery of the very men they elevated and put into power.

As for Hughes and his wild utterances re the I.W.W. trying to set fire to Sydney, the verdict of his capitalistic henchmen is doubtless by the majority of working class organisations. But there is no doubt about Hughes and his diabolical gang of political incendiaries; they tried to set fire and burn to the ground every shred of Australian democracy.

CONCERT AND DANCE

Will be Held in

SOUTHERN CROSS HALL

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27th, 1917.

In aid of the Wives and Children of the I.W.W. Men in Jail.

Tickets, 1/- each.

MISS V. NELSON, Sec.

MISS EWART, Treas.

Mesaba Range Strike Cases.

Besides the murder charges against eight strikers and organisers of the iron miners' strike, there remains a number of lesser cases which are being heard at present. These were sifted out of the six hundred arrests made by deputised gunmen the Steel Trust imported to break the strike. The indictments are for alleged rioting, assault, and kindred charges growing out of picketing. In themselves, these cases are not of great importance, yet they indicate the relentless attitude of the state when its forces are prostituted to the desires of organised capital.

In the case of Joe Blago, on trial for assaulting a deputy, Prosecutor Funk called for the state, a fourteen-year-old boy from whom, previous to trial, he had secured a statement—he writing the statements and having the boy sign it while under his influence and in his presence. Upon taking the stand the lad was admonished by the court as to the nature of an oath, and as a consequence, absolutely corroborated the testimony of witnesses for the defence. Funk then brought out the statement the lad with it—tried to have it admitted over the boy's sworn testimony. He was prevented by the court upon objection. Funk then asked for conviction because Blago was a foreigner. The jury brought in a compromise verdict of simple assault instead of assault in the second degree as charged.

Last week Eli Monovitch, Rafael Pette and S. Dronjak were tried for rioting. The state attempted to lay base for further prosecution for assault to kill as, on the day of the riot, Martin Teller, local chief of the Oliver gunmen, was stabbed slightly when attacking the picket line. Teller told the doctor who dressed his wounds that he did not see who cut him and didn't know he was hurt till afterwards; yet he had the story to tell the jury identifying Dronjak as the one who had stabbed him. All the trusty henchmen of the operators had the same general story. However a few conflicting things they had overlooked caused the jury to discredit their yarns entirely, its verdict exonerating the prisoners from violence, inciting to violence or carrying weapons. Regardless of this, possibly because some juror, for reasons best known to himself, hung out for conviction; the jury judged Pette and Dronjak guilty of rioting. Defendants having been clubbed and having suffered some imprisonment, apparently the jury decided a little more of the same wouldn't make much difference to them.

It was also shown that the deputies were so irresponsible that they clubbed one another during the excitement and that the fight was precipitated by a scab who had evidently arranged with the deputies to "start something" among the pickets.

One is reminded of the Industrial Relations Commission's Report, wherein it is stated that, "In some localities the control by employers of the entire machinery of the government is such that lawless acts on the part of the agents of the employers go unpunished, while vindictive action against leaders of the strike is accomplished by the methods unparalleled in civilized countries."

The U. S. Steel Corporation has announced a general rise of wages. Does anyone imagine this labour-hating crew has experienced a change of heart? Or does it fear that all workers in the steel industry may join with the miners now organized in the next fight with their exploiter? Does the Steel Trust wish to exculpate itself before working its murderous will upon Sam Scarlett, Joe Schmidt and Carlo Tresca?

HARRISON GEORGE

SEA DREAMS.

O place of wonder
Too deep for speech!
The great waves thunder
Along the beach.
What force they roll with
Against the rocks!
How thrills my soul with
Their mighty shocks!

O world of wonders!
O world of peace!
Man's crimes and blunders—
When will they cease?
The fading laurels
For which he tries,
The paltry quarrels
In which he dies!

O world of beauty!
When will he see
The blessed duty
Of unity!
The blessed vision
Of world-wide good—
The peace elysian
Of brotherhood!

—Dennis A. McCarthy in "Christian Endeavour World."

Economics.

(Mary Marcy.)

III. PRICES.

The value of a commodity is determined by the necessary social labor contained in it. If some one told me that an overcoat was equal in value to the value of (or contained in) a suit of clothes, I would know that the overcoat and suit of clothes were equal in value because they contained equal quantities of the same common thing—labor.

Generally speaking the value of four pairs of trousers is about equal to the value of one coat. Why is the coat more valuable than the trousers? And what determines the measure of value when we come to exchange commodities?

You exchange your labor-power—to the boss—for perhaps two dollars a day, and in turn the gold is exchanged for the necessities of life—food, clothing and shelter. Why do these commodities exchange for each other?

As we learned before, labor is the measure of value. The coat, mentioned above, exchanges for four pairs of trousers because the coat contains four times the quantity of social labor that one pair of the trousers contains.

The necessary labor contained in a commodity (shoes, coats, gold, bread, your labor power or whatever it may be) determines what it will exchange for. The natural tendency is for commodities of equal value to exchange for each other, or for other commodities of equal value.

For example: the amount of wheat produced by ten hours of necessary social labor time will exchange for the amount of cloth, shoes, chairs, gold or some other commodity that will be produced by ten hours of necessary social labor.

The value or values, for which commodities will exchange change constantly as the social labor necessary to their production changes. Last month we read of a new molding machine that enables one boy to produce as many castings in one day as four men had been accustomed to produce. These castings have now greatly decreased in value (in the individual plant where the new process is used) but the total value of castings in general has been only slightly reduced. The average labor necessary to produce castings is only a little less than formerly. When the new process becomes general and the average necessary labor greatly reduced, castings will greatly decrease in value.

"If we consider commodities as values, we consider them exclusively under the single aspect of realized, fixed, or, if you like, crystallized human labor. In this respect they can differ only by representing greater or smaller quantities of labor, as for example, a greater amount of labor may be worked up in a silken handkerchief than in a brick."

"A commodity has value, because it is a crystallization of social labor. . . . The relative values of commodities are, therefore, determined by the respective quantities or amounts of labor worked up (or contained) in them." (Pages 56 and 67, Value, Price and Profit.)

"In calculating the exchangeable value of a commodity we must add to the quantity of labor last employed, the quantity of labor previously worked up in the raw material of a commodity, and the labor bestowed in the implements, tools, machinery, and buildings, with which labor is assisted." (Value, Price and Profit, page 60.)

The value of barrels, for example, is determined by the social (factory) labor spent in producing staves and hoops, and the labor time used in producing the portion of machinery worn out in making them, as well as the necessary social labor spent in cutting and hauling (producing) raw logs for use in the mill.

Every time more social labor is needed in making commodities—shoes, hats, gloves, stoves or cigars—whatever these commodities may be—their value is increased. Every time the quantity of socially necessary labor is lessened in the production of commodities, their value is decreased.

Nearly all kinds of furniture have greatly decreased in value the past few years owing to the improved machines used in their production and the relatively small quantity of labor contained in furniture.

Gold has steadily been decreasing in value in the past ten years owing to the improved methods of producing gold and the decreasing quantity of labor contained in it.

Rubber is steadily growing more valuable because the available world supply has been nearly exhausted and it requires more time hunting or planting, and caring for rubber trees—more labor is contained in a pound of rubber than a few years ago.

Gradually we see huge machines replacing the smaller ones in all the great producing industries and, with the constant introduction of more improved machinery, the quantity of human labor contained in commodities produced by modern methods—grows less and less. Such commodities decrease in value with every decrease in the labor embodied in them.

Price.

Price is the money-name for which commodities exchange. We are accustomed to figure in gold prices. All our bank notes read "payable

in—so much—gold." But gold is a commodity just like bread, or overcoats, or dresses or automobiles. And commodities tend to exchange for the sum of gold containing a quantity of labor equal to the quantity of labor contained in them.

That is, if ten dollars in gold contains forty hours of necessary labor, that gold will exchange for (or will buy) as many pairs of shoes as forty hours of social labor will produce.

Generally speaking, a commodity containing ten hours of necessary labor will tend to exchange for gold, or any other commodity containing ten hours of necessary labor.

That is true when price and value are equal. But supply and demand cause commodities to exchange (or sell) above or below their value, temporarily.

A temporary shortage in coal—when the supply does not equal the demand—may enable the dealers to exchange coal above its value for a short time. An over supply of automobiles may cause the manufacturers to offer to sell (or exchange) autos below their value, for a time.

Prices are often a little above or below the value of commodities, but they are always inclining towards the value of commodities.

(Please remember that we are not here speaking of monopoly prices. We shall consider them in a later lesson.)

"If supply and demand equilibrate each other, the market prices of commodities will correspond with their natural prices, that is to say with their values, as determined by the respective quantities of labor required for their production. . . . If, instead of considering only the daily fluctuations, you analyse the movement of market prices for longer periods . . . you will find that the fluctuations of market prices, their deviations from values, their ups and downs, paralyse and compensate each other; so that, apart from the effect of monopolies and some other modifications I must now pass by, all descriptions of commodities are, on the average, sold at their respective values or natural prices. . . ."

"If, speaking broadly, and embracing somewhat longer periods, all descriptions of commodities sell at their respective values, it is nonsense to suppose that profit, not in individual cases, but the constant and usual profits of different trades, spring from the prices of commodities, or selling them at a price over and above their value. . . ."

"To explain the general nature of profits, you must start from the theorem that, on an average, commodities are sold at their real values, and that profits are derived from selling them at their values, that is, in proportion to the quantity of labor realized (or contained) in them."

"If you cannot explain profit upon this supposition, you cannot explain it at all." (From Value, Price and Profit, pages 68, 69, and 70.)

The Shearer.

A SHORT STORY.

A big bulk of humanity tumbled in the bar-door. "Give me a drink, Jack—I'm all of a shake. Look at me hand—won't stop trembling. How could I stay at the house—the kid, lying there with his little white face, and the old woman crying, and blaming it all on me. She's been carting him to the hospitals, these four years—since before he started to walk—wastin' disease, they said. 'Misus says its thro' bad air in the narrow crowded streets we've always had to live in—and cheap, shoddy food. See, there's five kids we've got, and Gord knows I work hard enough at the shearin' sheds, and give her most of the dough."

"She never used to growl like this—'till the damned doctor bloke attendin' the kid said he's got ter get inter fresher air and have purer foods, and the misus gets this on the brain and then she starts on me. Moving means extra money, and so it went on. The old woman fussin' over the kid and givin' me hell, 'till I hated ter come inter the house. 'And he died this morning early, . . . Let's have another drink, Joe."

"I can't go home—him lyin' there with his little white stark face and the old woman moanin' and blaming it all on me."

The bar tender, to change the distracted man's trend of mind, ventured: "What do you think of the — strike threatenin'?"

"Strike!" the other thundered in reply. "Too many damned scabs in this country—and that's why my kid is dead—for want of decent pay to buy a spot in clean fresh air, and decent food to keep him alive—scabs put the settler on it. Strikes—with an overflow of scabs! Bah, come, fill 'em up again, Jack, long time since I have been on the big booze, about six years sure, fill 'em up, buck me up, his little white face and the misus' tears is chasin' me."

BETSY H. MATTHIAS.

THE NUMBER OF THIS PAPER IS

106.

A Lament.

Doomed! The word seems to echo through the damned and darkened streets; through the filthy dens and dirty dragged lanes. The breath of the stinking dungeons and alleyways rises, choking the pureness from the air. Doomed to toil, to sweat and die, gasping for pureness, cleanliness and freedom, the inheritance of the "wild." Through foul and dark lanes of filth, choked with fumes and want of space, doomed to labour and toil that the few should luxuriate and idle, denied the right to the common necessities, the ordinary decencies, with want and misery, starvation, unemployment and worry, the lot of the damned, the outcast, the despised and the weary.

Doomed! Sentenced to 'life! Is this—this tragedy, this travesty of living, this mock of mirth and merriment, this filthy servitude, this back lane and that foul den, this oppressive, hideous monotony of servitude. Is this life?

"And that inverted bowl we call the sky, whereunder crawling cooped we live and die. Lift not thy hands to it for help—for it rolls impotently on as thou or I."

Sentenced to 'life! Life which is not life, but a filthy trap, caged to spin out wealth, to produce profits sacred profits, let us fall on our bended knees and worship profits, profits at any price, at any sacrifice, by all means let us groan and suffer, shed tears of blood, but don't stop the profits. What is beauty after all, what is freedom, or health, happiness and laughter, weighed against the sacred god of profits? What is human life, anyway, when profits can be made. Let us work, and be loyal, thrifty and industrious; we are wealth producers, that is enough.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organise as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.

We find that the centring of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping to defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organisation formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all. Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword: "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organised not only for the every-day struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organising industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

SYDNEY LOCAL.

Meetings, &c.

Street Propaganda at Bathurst and Liverpool Streets every Friday and Saturday Evenings, at 8 p.m.; also Sunday Evening, at 7.

Meetings in Hall:

Sunday, 8 p.m.—Propaganda.
Wednesday, 8 p.m.—Economic Class.
Thursday, 8 p.m.—Business Meeting.
Saturday Evening.—Speakers' Class.

WANTED

A file of Volume I, of "Direct Action" is wanted at this office. Forward price of same.

One thing ought to be aimed at by all men; that the interest of each individually, and of all collectively, should be the same; for if each should grasp at his individual interest, all human society will be dissolved.

—Cicero.

Published by Tom Barker, of 28-Francis Street, Sydney, for the Workers' Defence and Release Committee, at 403 Sussex Street, Sydney, and printed by H. Cook and Co., 200 Castlereagh Street, Sydney.