

One Big Union For the International Working Class



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ONE PENNY

Loafing.

Honorary Minister, Mr. R. Underwood of W.A., in a speech before the Leederville A.L.F., gave us another concrete example of the interests which Labor politicians and Labor governments represent.

The Minister's speech was reported in the "West" as "Loafing," and was given a prominent place in the master class daily. Inter alia, this labor politician remarked, "They had developed something new in Trades Unionism. . . . This system of loafing was un-Australian, and he believed that those who were leading the movement were not Australians, but imported men. They would not have conscription; they would not volunteer (see Underwood in Hell first), they would not work, etc., etc., in fact, the Minister's speech was a long wail, that the workers (especially the building trades in Perth) were not working hard enough; and that if the workers persisted in this "un-Australian" habit, that he, Underwood, would be likely to leave the Labor movement.

It would be easy for an I.W.W. man to abuse this obsequious hiring of the master class, this politician with the dunkey mind; but abuse, talk, "cuts no ice" with the master class, but only organisation, which is power.

This speech of Underwood's is only another example of what can be found every day under Labor governments in Australia, which we industrial unionists are continually pointing out to our fellow-workers, that all governments, Liberal or Labor, are servants of the big capitalists. The Labor politicians are just as willing to urge the workers to kill other workers in capitalist wars, just as willing to "speed up" the working class, and thereby fetch down the standard of living, just as willing to keep the workers in an impervious gloom of despair and abject misery, as any Liberal politicians. Of course Underwood's speech was a sly dig at the I.W.W.

To show how these Labor politicians come to heel when the capitalists want "industrial efficiency," Underwood, in times gone by, has been violently abused by the "West," called "brutal," "uncouth," and "illiterate," scoffed and sneered at by the Liberal politicians, and insulting and personal remarks passed about his crude speech and dress.

Anyhow, Underwood is typical of all politicians. So far as the I.W.W. is concerned, politicians are the workers' enemies. In cases where the labor politicians are too ignorant to see that they are the tools of the master class, then they are too bound up in their material interests to have a soul above a vote, or an idea above a seat in Parliament.

"Loafing?" Yes, organised loafing: that is "Sabotage," a weapon of "this new unionism," that we of the I.W.W. hope to have the pleasure of using against the capitalist class and their labor governments.

M. SAWTELL.

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.
Also Public Meeting every Sunday Afternoon in the Domain.

'Labor' Council

UNDER POLICE PROTECTION.

There is growing evidence that the workers are becoming ever more disgusted with their "representatives" at the Sydney Trades Hall. Following upon the hostile demonstration against the Labor Council, made the week before last at the meeting of that body when the Broken Hill strike was being discussed, a large crowd again turned up last week for the purpose of listening to the discussion, though the announcement that the strike had been settled appeared in the morning press of the same date.

The Council, evidently not desiring that the workers who elected it should be privileged to listen to its dialectics on the subject of whether a strike is a strike or a seah is a seah, had issued instructions that only delegates, who were to be provided with special badges for the occasion should be admitted.

This course of action very naturally aroused the ire of the workers who were interested in the matter, and who wished to attend. That Trade Unionists should be excluded from even listening to the deliberations of the body which they themselves elected to look after their interests was surely, to say the least, an anomalous situation; and well illustrates the characteristic blundering of Craft Union officialdom.

The precincts of the Trades Hall were unusually lively for an hour or more previous to the time set for the meeting, and delegates were obliged to force their way through the crowd waiting in the passages and on the stairs.

On the crowd realising that they were not to be admitted, their anger found vent in the breaking of the glass panels on the doors and the general clamour was so loud and long, the meeting was unable to start for half an hour after the usual time.

The President, O'Neill, in opening the meeting made a clumsy effort to conceal the fact that the hostility displayed came from trade union circles. Even craft unionists are people who cannot be fooled all the time; the rank and file, at all events are waking up sufficiently to realise the scabby functions of the institution they have so long supported.

O'Neill began by declaring that members of the I.W.W. were responsible for the whole trouble, though as a matter of fact there were not half a dozen I.W.W. men present in the crowd. The business meetings of the I.W.W. are held every Thursday evening, and at the time O'Neill was frothing at the I.W.W., ninety-nine per cent. of the active membership in Sydney were sitting in their hall calmly discussing ways and means of pursuing their propaganda, totally unconscious of Mr. O'Neill's existence, and the dilemma into which he and his scabby confederates had placed themselves.

The capitalist press, of course, took the tip, and the reports of the matter made it appear as if the I.W.W. was responsible. The truth is that all workers in Sydney who interest themselves in economic matters pertaining to their class are absolutely nauseated with this latest instance of treachery to their class interests in connection with the Broken Hill Strike.

The motion introduced endorsing the action of the strikers was ultimately defeated by 80 votes to 66. It was fitting that this act of working class betrayal should be consummated by its authors in calling up the forces of capitalist "law and order" to protect them from the righteous anger of the class whose interests they had pledged themselves to promote.

When a so-called labor body must have police to protect it from those whom it should represent, things have reached an interesting stage in our alleged labor movement.

Sydney Propaganda.

Week end propaganda in Sydney was highly satisfactory. The meeting in the Domain on Sunday afternoon was unusually large, collection, literature and paper sales being well above the average.

In Bathurst Street in the evening, some soldiers, instigated by two or three of their Christian comrades, who are members of the Salvation Army, endeavored to smash up the propaganda meetings. While the boys were singing, previous to the opening of the meeting, some thirty soldiers appeared, led by the "Salvies," and rushed the I.W.W. group. Things looked nasty for a few minutes, but matters subsequently quietened down, the "victory" achieved by Commissioner Slaterry's tools being something in the nature of a Gallipoli affair.

The meeting was continued until nearly 8 p.m., when an adjournment was made to the Hall, where, Fellow-worker King addressed an exceptionally large and attentive audience, thanks to Friend Slaterry's timely advertisement.

In the pursuit of Industrial Unionist propaganda, the I.W.W. has no desire to go out of its way to tread on the soldiers' toes, for we recognise that the soldier of to-day is the wage slave of to-morrow, who will have to be reasoned with and educated on class-consciousness lines for initiation into the only army that matters, the One Big Union of his class.

On the other hand, no sacrifice or compromise of revolutionary principles should be made in order to placate the rowdies in our audiences, be they soldiers or civilians. If the I.W.W. can only pursue its propaganda with the good will and approval of Slaterry's salvationist thugs and the hoodligan element in khaki, better that it should get out of business at once. Not sed.

"SENTENCED TO DESTITUTION."

The Victorian State Government in pursuance of its desire, apparently, to give the "voluntary" system of enlistment "a chance," has retrenched 1500 railway employees. The following resolution was passed at a meeting of the railway men held in Melbourne last Sunday:—

"That this mass meeting, representative of 25,000 railway employees, enters an emphatic protest against the wholesale dismissal of supernumeraries when necessary and reproductive works require to be carried out, and is of opinion that the State Government, with the assistance of the Federal Government if required, should raise sufficient moneys to carry on such works and maintain in employment the 1500 men sentenced to destitution."

Much lip service is being given by many unions in Australia to the anti-Conscription agitation, yet here is as vile a form of conscription as could possibly be imagined, and unionism is taking it lying down like the tamed cat it really is.

The plutes, their press, and their politicians have been making eloquent appeals to the workers to go and fight for "their" country, but here is proof that the workers have not alone no country to fight for, but they do not even own the natural right of the lowest thing that crawls, the right to exist and appropriate what nature provides.

"Sentenced to destitution" has been the fate of countless thousands of workers in the past. It is a power which lays with the master class by virtue of its ownership of the earth and the means of production, and it is a power which is always ruthlessly exercised in war as well as in peace, wherever profit and greed can be served by doing so.

The "patriotic" slush served up by the capitalists and their dunkeys in this war will go down to posterity as the greatest bluff in history.

The workers will never be able to repay their masters for all the good things received, until they acquire the power to "sentence the boss to work."

I.W.W. Men Arrested.

As we go to press news has reached us from Melbourne that two members of the I.W.W., Fellow-workers Laidler and Wilson, have been arrested. The charge laid against them is "abusive language," Laidler, it appears, having referred to "our" senb Prime Minister as "the blackest political scoundrel that Labor had ever produced," and Wilson, it is alleged, used similar complimentary remarks. We say "complimentary" advisedly, for surely a man who has been guilty of the vile treachery to the working class movement which Billy Hughes has, should think himself lucky in being described merely as a "political scoundrel." Both personally, politically, and in all his relations with the workers, who have raised him out of the gutter and placed him in a position of affluence, Billy Hughes is one of those whom Walt Whitman aptly describes as "swarms of cringers, doughfaces, lice of politics, planners of sly innovations for their own prement."

It appears that Tinker Billy is privileged to abuse and vilify to his heart's content those people whom he knows to "have taken a tumble" to the scabby functions which he exercises in the Labor movement, but we have yet to learn that Billy has usurped royal privileges in Australia—that he is above criticism in his political capacity and "can do no wrong."

The case will be tried in Melbourne on 22nd inst., and is attracting considerable attention in militant labor circles.

ECONOMICS FOR THE WAGE-PLUG.

Fellow-worker,—You ask a question that is pertinent to our last discussion about the modern wage worker. In that discussion we agreed that the wage worker is the necessary actor in production of all forms of wealth, whether it be in the form of means of subsistence, means of production, or that portion of surplus value which is squandered to further production.

So far you are on the right way to understand your relative position in society; and now your question as to the form of organisation, necessary for the class struggle.

Now that we are the proletarians, that is, without property of any kind, and hardly any semblance of skill, the craft union is out of date. To be in keeping with that form of organisation, workers must have property to sell, namely, their skill in using the hand tools.

But in modern machine-production machines have the skill, and the workers group around these machines to operate them; hence the employers buy labor power. This grouping of workers around machines has the tendency to bring in its train subdivisions of labor. So with the workers divided and subdivided into groups around the machines of industry, it is plain that the form of organisation must be industrial, determined by conditions of industry itself.

To construct this One Big Industrial Union, we must begin with the unit, and the unit is a number of workers of the one industry in a given locality; numbers of these local units linked together form a national union of the given industry; national unions of closely allied industries combined form a national Industrial Department linked with the national industrial departments of other industries; all combined form the general organisation of the Industrial workers linked up into the Industrial Workers of the World, a class organisation.

With the everyday struggles with the employing class, initiative and self reliance within the working class will thus develop, while building the structure of the future state of society within the old.

G.P.W.

DIRECT ACTION

Our Standpoint.

Labor Power Control

I.W.W. Preamble.



WEEKLY
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'The Sanctity of The Home.'

Whenever and wherever revolutionists have attacked the property interests of the Capitalist class the above cry has been raised. The "independent" working man is appealed to and told that those people who desire to overthrow the capitalist system are social incendiaries who would destroy society and dissolve all social ties.

These accusations are made, of course, not through any real fear which exists on that score, but rather in the endeavor to conceal the tendency of the existing system to accomplish that which they accuse others of desiring to do.

In England, at any rate, the war is rapidly bringing about a state of affairs which is destroying whatever apologies for homes the workers previously possessed.

The December number of the "British Medical Journal" informs us that when the war broke out workers in the factory districts worked over 100 hours per week.

To quote: "As soon as the war began, overtime was prolonged in munition factories, so that men worked over fifteen hours a day, and seven days a week. Night and day staffs were instituted, and the change from night to day was made in many factories by the men working an eighteen hour shift—for example, from 6 p.m. on Saturday to noon on Sunday; the other shift working from noon on Sunday to six a.m. on Monday."

Workers who slave from fifteen to eighteen hours a day, would seem to have but little leisure for enjoying that "home life" which the apologists for the capitalist system accuse revolutionists of wishing to destroy.

When we reflect that under the Munitions Act the worker is frequently fined for such "offences" as turning up late, sleeping on the job, and other delinquencies calculated to interfere with the production of surplus values, we are able to gauge at its true value, capitalist class solicitude for the working man's "independence" and its anxiety for his home and social well-being.

The number of fines, by the way, which have been inflicted under the Munitions Act on workers who go to sleep at their job can now be well understood in the light of eighteen-hour shifts, though the Capitalist press justify such punishments on the ground of the workers' "natural laziness," and his indifference to the "Empire's danger."

The Capitalists of Great Britain, however, would appear not to be content with keeping the worker from fifteen to eighteen hours a day from his "home." They apparently believe that a few hours social intercourse in such an environment has a demoralising effect upon his efficiency as a profit producing machine.

The Committee appointed by Lloyd George, Minister of Munitions, "to consider and advise on questions of industrial fatigue, hours of labour, and other mat-

The capitalist press congratulates "the people of Australia" on the success of the recent War Loan, over ten millions of the amount asked for being subscribed. A quarter of the total amount was invested by five subscribers, so "the people of Australia" have really something to be proud of in allowing themselves to be so handsomely fleeced in the past. Hence, we presume, the congratulation of the press. Otherwise it remains unintelligible.

London "Daily Mail" estimates that the income of the British Shipping Companies has increased from £22,000,000 to £250,000,000 since the outbreak of the war, an increase of over 1000 per cent! Who said "A Capitalists' War"?

The British Press is howling its rage at Germany for importing foodstuffs from Poland and leaving the Polish people destitute and in a state of starvation. But the British press has been silent for over a century during which the great mass of Britishers lived in the direst poverty, while millions of wealth were annually exported.

Re Billy Hughes' "terrible" treatment of German shareholders in Australian companies, which means that Billy's government is going to appoint a public trustee to take care of their dividends for them till the war is over, a "Herald" correspondent inquires why the "financial magnates of Germany on the signing of peace, will receive their accumulated dividends, earned, mark you, by Australian brain, bone, and sinew, and taken care of by a grateful, obliged Australian government." Why, indeed? Because any attack upon the system which produces dividends and other surplus values for parasites, produced by the "brain, bone and sinew" of the working class, would be a dangerous precedent to establish. The workers might begin to see that they could do without the big-bellied, John Bull type of parasite as well as his German fellow-exploiter.

Factors affecting the personal health and physical efficiency of workers in munition factories and workshops," has recommended the establishment of "industrial canteens" by the employers, adjacent to the factories, where the workers, during non-working hours shall eat, drink, and generally "live, move, and have their being."

One employer who, with others, has already established a canteen on these lines, has recommended its adoption by the Committee on the ground that he has "never had a moment's doubt as to the importance of a comfortable dinner hour for our people from the point of view of their efficiency in the afternoon."

Another recommendation by the Committee in connection with Sunday labor well illustrates capitalist hypocrisy, and shows that it is not so much "industrial fatigue" and the "personal health," etc., of the worker, which is in view, as the desire for increased efficiency and more profits, for it recommends the abolition of Sunday work, not merely for "social and religious" reasons, "but also economically, since it does not pay, the output not being increased."

The establishment of this sort of Industrial Feudalism is not going to end with the war. The capitalists do not go to the expense of putting up large establishments of this kind merely for temporary purposes. Conscription has been introduced in Great Britain mostly for the purpose of perpetuating this kind of industrial regimentation of the working class after the war is over, and the advocates of conscription in Australia have similar insidious purposes in view.

The assumed anxiety of the Capitalist class and its menial prostitutes for "the Sanctity of the Home," the "marriage tie," the worker's "independence," etc., is, owing to the exigencies of war, or more correctly, the greed for war profits, rapidly manifesting itself in devising methods of depriving him of all the benefits which home life confers, in forcing men and women into a social environment where the promiscuous breeding of slaves will best be promoted, in depriving the worker of all semblance of independence and individuality, and in the desire to bring about a state of industrial serfdom where the word "home" has no meaning except for the parasites who fatten and batten on the universal degradation of the race.

T.G.

THE SUPREME FORCE IN WORLD CONQUEST.

The vast European struggle has shown more clearly than ever before that the decisive factor in modern world warfare, whether on the battlefield, on the sea, or in the struggle between capitalists contending for world markets, is intensive organisation of the productive power of the industrial workers of a nation.

It is the splendid industrial organisation of Germany that has enabled the Central Powers of Europe to withstand for eighteen months the onslaughts of the vast British Empire, the hordes of Russia, and the military power of France, Italy and Japan—which form on paper an almost irresistible combination—and to remain, up to the present time, victors in the great war.

The world war offers a persuasive demonstration of the power of industrial organisation highly centralised under a government partaking in large measure of the characteristics of the medieval feudal state, to prevail against several modern governments which are expressions chiefly of the wills of individual capitalists, both large and small, exerted through parliaments and executive bodies, and one stupendous country in the agrarian stage of development, ruled by an hereditary aristocracy. In Germany the nobility and military dominate the capitalist classes and share with them the power to marshal, direct and control all the industrial and political activities of the German people. France and Great Britain, like Germany, are great industrial countries, but unlike Germany, are not able to marshal their industrial resources by the German method because their capitalist rulers lack real **capitalistic industrial solidarity**. In other words, they are unable to make full use of the industrial power of their working classes. Russia, which, like Germany, has never wholly escaped from the feudalism of the middle ages, is an agricultural country whose industries have never been extensively developed, and Japan is just entering into a period of great industrial development.

The lessons taught by the great war are being taken to heart by the capitalists the world over, and we see in this country especially, a demand for a greater co-ordination of industrial activity and more concentration of direction in order that the American of direction in order that the American capitalists may go out, after the European nations have exhausted themselves, and seize the markets of the world.

The large capitalists would like to prevent the smaller capitalists who exert influence upon the government, from interfering with the process of consolidation, by governmental regulation.

Intelligent workmen realise that government is capitalistic in its nature, but the vast majority lend a willing ear to those professional politicians who promise them relief and the smaller capitalists for the control of the government does make it appear to the superficial observer as though politics were an open field for working class as well as capitalist class action. But nothing could be more deceiving. All legislation claimed to benefit the working class has for its end some supposed benefit to the exploiters of labor and the owners of industry. Laws regulating education, and sanitary and health measures, are all framed either for the purpose of increasing the productive power of the wage earner, so that he may be more intensively exploited, or to allay that discontent which would make for loss to the exploiters in running their businesses. The whole structure of government is calculated to keep real power in the hands of the possessing class. Government rests in the last analysis on force. Control of government has always depended upon either military power coupled with the recognition of the divine right to the ownership of property, depending upon the stage of industrial development of the particular country.

Those who possess nothing but their labor power must always be pawns of those who own the machinery of production, until they, like their masters, take a lesson from the open book of experience, and organise to obtain possession of their labor power, which, as I have shown, is, when properly organised, the basis of world domination.

Individually, we are little men and women. Organised by trades, we are going to continue to be enslaved and our trade unions cut to pieces by the centralising tendency of wealth, and improvements in the mechanical processes,

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 centreing 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 wages 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 organized, not only for the everyday 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.

NOTICE.

Subscribers and members can now obtain a complete file of the 2nd volume of "Direct Action." The volume contains from number 21 to 55, inclusive, and dates from February 1st, 1915, to the same date in 1916.

The complete file will be forwarded to any part of Australia upon receipt of money order for 3s, which includes postage.

From an historical standpoint, as well as from an educational standpoint, the volume is essential. All the information re the Newcastle free speech fight, the poster and stickers case, the hundred and one strikes of the year, are contained within the volume.

It also includes "Cresset's" satires, Nicholl's cartoons, West's Ballad of Maitland Gaol, "General Strike," "Arbitration Court," and "The Interrupted Snooze," as well as dozens of first-class articles and criticisms upon matters industrial and political.

An early application is necessary, as the supply of files are limited. There are no files of the first volume left.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

In future all communications to the Literary Secretary, and Secretary of Sydney Local No. 2, the General Secretary-Treasurer, the Editor and Manager of "Direct Action" should be addressed to Box 98, Haymarket P.O.

Don't forget that all Efficiency and Speeding-up schemes are put forward in the interests of the boss. You and he have nothing in common.

which will make our skill of little avail. ORGANISED INDUSTRIALLY into ONE BIG UNION of wage earners, we shall be enabled to wield that power which lies at the basis of all INDUSTRY and without the control of which power must pass, from the hands of the masters of the world's governments, and be vested in the hands of those who are the source of the power, and the workers shall reap the benefit of the greater production which elimination of the parasitic capitalists will make possible.

THE dawn of the day of INDUSTRIAL SOLIDARITY of the working-class is upon us, and the events in the world war which are now moving before us with panoramic swiftness presage a great awakening of the working class.

J. STEPHEN WOOD in "Solidarity."

Direct Action

Current Comment.

The Underlings.

Literature List.

v. Legality

During the last few weeks some hundreds of migratory workers have blown into Mildura to assist in the fruit harvest. From all parts of Australia men have travelled hundreds of miles for a job which will last about six weeks at the most.

On such a short run, the best methods are for the workers to get on the job, start work, and then "put in" for more wages, shorter hours, and better conditions. If the boss does not come through with the goods, a system of irritation could be worked throughout the job. If the boss still remained tight, then Sabotage, which is generally successful in making him come howling for mercy.

Job organisation and agitation will win the day for the working-class, and finally defeat the organised efforts of the master-class.

But the A.W.U. are in control—at least they say they are—at Mildura, and, of course, they do things "legally."

On November 26th, 1915, an agreement was entered into between the A.W.U. and the fruit-growers of Mildura and Renmark, which is "to be binding until six months after the war." Things were therefore reckoned to be pretty right; but from an I.W.W. standpoint they were pretty rotten.

The minimum wage is fixed at 1/2 an hour for all over 18 years of age. But on reading down the agreement we come to this clause: "These rates may be lowered in individual cases with the consent of the Organisation in writing signed by the secretary of the Branch, or if the Organisation refuses with the consent of the appropriate Board of Reference." Later on we bump this sort of thing: "The functions of each board shall be the allowing, fixing or determining a lower rate of wages in the case of any employee who is unable to earn the minimum wage prescribed for him by the agreement." This is the sort of thing which the A.W.U. spends the slaves' money in securing. One clause nullifies the other, and the other kills anything which preceded it.

The cookies, if they wish, can refuse to pay the wages and have it referred to the board of reference if the local branch of the A.W.U. refuses to allow the reduction, and when the whole affair is fixed up, the harvest would be over and the women and children gone back to their homes.

The agreement deals only in a loose way with the hours of work and wages. Nothing at all about camping facilities, sanitary arrangements, shelter sheds, etc. The wonderful thing about all agreements is that there is never anything definite. There are always a lot of vague sentences and clauses which take skilled lawyers to interpret.

In many cases the men are camped along the road-side and have to cook their meals the best way they can.

In such a hot climate, and during the summer months, one can imagine what these slaves have to put up with, with all the pests of the bush buzzing around them.

Some "peace at any price" A.W.U. members will work under any conditions, and during the night, while engaged in an attack upon all sorts of insects and creeping things, will boast of the amount of work they have done, and express their satisfaction at the condition of things.

These union scabs are now being told in pretty strong language that the day is not far off when they will be branded as actual scabs and dealt with as such.

Some members of the I.W.W. have been successful through diplomatic methods, in securing a few concessions from the boss, such as camping facilities, more pay, sanitary arrangements, time off, etc., but there is a big chance of losing them all owing to the antiquated, blundering, and insane tactics of the A.W.U. £1 a day officials.

At a meeting of the A.W.U. at Mildura on February 5th it was decided to call out all hands working on the blocks of the cookies who have not signed the agreement, irrespective of what wages they are receiving or what conditions they are working under.

In the words of the president at the meeting on Feb. 5th: "It does not matter if you are getting £1 a day and working under ideal conditions, if the grower has not signed the agreement, you must stop work or be branded a scab."

The judge sitting in the Arbitration Court in the Tramway Case remarked re the living wage that "When the rule of the purchasing power of the sovereign was adopted as a basis on which to fix wages, it had been assumed that only small changes would occur in the prices of commodities, also that the standard of the living of the worker was stable." Is not this tantamount to an admission that according to Arbitration ethics, the worker is only entitled to the necessities of life after the exigencies of the commodity market and the greed of the bosses has first been considered? Arbitration will-o'-the-wisps have certainly landed the workers into deep quagmires.

Wharf laborers at Melbourne last week refused to handle 1200 tons of flour for export on the ground that bread was already too dear in Victoria. A little more direct action of this kind on the part of those engaged in handling foodstuffs would do more to reduce prices than all the tinkering of economists and politicians.

Labor Attorney-General Hall has apparently some sound I.W.W. ideas back of his "nut." The farmers on the South Coast are dissatisfied with the price of milk as laid down by the Necessary Commodities Commission. One Morton, a Liberal Member of Parliament, has advised the farmers to ignore the law in the matter. Commenting on this, Hall says, "If the farmers want lawlessness to rule, let them say so plainly. Once that idea gets round among the workers—that every section is entitled to what they can take by force—the gentlemen whom Mr. Morton represents in Parliament will have most cause to be sorry that they were the leaders in bringing about the change." Very evidently Mr. Hall is aware that "once the idea gets round among the workers" that Might is superior to Law, it will be a bad day for the capitalists.

Bandmen are wanted for the Sydney I.W.W. band. Write immediately, or call on Monday evenings at 330 Castlereagh Street after eight, and interview the band secretary. Sousa's will be catemst in about three months when the wobbly band gets busy fracturing the ozone.

All social agitation arises from the persistence of right against the obstinacy of law.—V. Hugo.

What a wonderful splash of ingenuity must be lurking within his brain! Is it a hit at the I.W.W. or merely the dunderheadedness of the A.W.U. officials? Are they really serious or only joking? What are they getting at? Surely all A.W.U. members are not so stupid as to swallow the words of their local president with seriousness?

Many men are working on blocks under better conditions than those laid down in the A.W.U. agreement, but the A.W.U. are going to brand these men as scabs just because the boss has not signed their dirty scrap of paper.

If these men pull out, and force the boss cocky to scratch his name upon a piece of paper, smudged with printer's ink, will the A.W.U. then supply men at the minimum rate of wages without any thought of the many conveniences already mentioned and thereby scab upon the men they previously branded as scabs? We are awaiting developments.

Many intelligent slaves are anxiously waiting to see what steps the wise guys of the A.W.U. are going to take to try and earn their £1 a day. Their insane cry of "legality" and "constitutional methods" has got them into a tangle, and they are now fighting the fight of the big cocky to the detriment of the working class.

All militant workers will wish to see a win for direct action and join in the cry "to hell with agreements."

The I.W.W. takes up the stand that they care not if the boss has signed ten thousand agreements or never picked up a pen in his life. So long as he is paying the ruling rates we care not whether he belongs to the Employers' Federation. The I.W.W. believes in organising at or the Labor Party.

The point of production—on the job, and by job agitation establish better conditions.

The A.W.U. is out of date. Its methods are obsolete. The future is with the I.W.W.—the scientific organisation of the working class.

N.R.

The masters stand at the head of things; They are lords of work and pay; And we must run till the set of sun, Because the masters say. For we, for we are the underlings, And the lords of bread are they; And we must eat though they screw and cheat, And when they nod, obey.

Sometimes there is work for every one, And sometimes, barred each gate; And why is it so, the masters know, We only wish and wait. They know when the freights will begin to run, And the factory whistles blow, And the fires burn and the spindles turn: These things the masters know.

We work and work at things we must, We don't so greatly care, By the rushing flume, at the roaring loom, In the coal mines' killing air. We fashion gems for a dule of crust, And silks, with a rag for pay; And the things we make, the masters take To make their women gay.

There is wit and grace and courtesy, When the masters meet and dine, And the lives of men are ticked off then, Over the nuts and wine; For before then they somehow seem to see All that the future brings: Our minds are dull as we mull and mull Over those puzzling things.

We shape the clothes that the masters wear With such easy air of right; We mine the coals that warm their souls, As we shiver at home to-night; We build the yachts that the masters bear With their graceful swallow wings: For they are free; but we, but we, Are only the underlings.

Our minds are dull, we mull and mull, But we're waking, masters: ay, We're waking now, and, with knotted brow, We're wondering dimly, why! Only wondering, slow and vast and dull, Brutal to do and dare; But if ever we shake ourselves awake, Masters of bread, beware! —Phillip Green Wright.

SPEAKERS' CLASS.

The Speakers' Class has been restarted at the Sydney Local. There is a pressing need for an ever-increasing supply of able propagandists—fellows who can expound and explain the philosophy and methods of the I.W.W. and make more converts, especially on the job. There are plenty who have a fair understanding of Industrial Unionism, but fail to make its principles clear to their mates owing to lack of practice in speaking and putting their case logically and concisely. The speakers' class aims at starting fresh ones on the road to effective speaking. It is held every Saturday at 7.15 p.m., at 330 Castlereagh Street.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANK

For

"DIRECT ACTION."

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

Name.....

Address.....

BROKEN HILL ACTIVITIES.

Rooms, Palace Buildings, Sulphide Street.

Wednesday Evening, at 7.30 p.m.—Educational Class.

Alternate Sundays, at 3 p.m.—Business Meeting.

Alternate Sundays, at 3 p.m.—Economic Class.

Sunday, at 7.30 p.m.—Outdoor Propaganda Meeting, near Post Office, in Argent-street.

Good Library. Also good collection of Literature for sale. All live rebels welcome.

E. J. KIELY, Secretary,

Local No. 3, I.W.W.

Capital: Karl Marx, 3 vol. 8/- per vol. Ancient Society: Morgan, Bound, 6/- Value, Price and Profit: Marx, Bound 2/-; Paper, 6d.

Evolution of Property: Lafargue. Bound 2/-.

The Militant Proletariat: Lewis. Bound, 2/-.

The New Unionism: Tridon. Paper, 1/8.

Sabotage: Pouget. Bound, 2/-; paper, 1/-.

Sabotage: W. C. Smith, Paper, 3d.

Sabotage: E. G. Flynn, paper, 3d.

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Political Socialism, or Capturing the Government: Nilson. Paper, 3d.

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Why the A.W.U. Cannot Become an Industrial Union: Alex. George. Paper 3d.

Industrial Efficiency and Its Antidote: T. Glynn. Paper, 2d.

I.W.W. Songs: Paper, 3d.

Summary of Marx's Capital: Hazel, 2d.

The Diesel Motor: Frankenthal. Paper, 1d.

Industrial Unionism: St. John, 1d.

BOOK OF POEMS.

It is the intention of the Press Committee to print a booklet of revolutionary poems within the next few weeks. Most of the poems that have appeared since the inception of "Direct Action" will be included.

The contents will include:—"Man With the Hoe," "The Dishwasher," "Evolution," "The Cry of Toil," "Born For What?" "Might is Right," "Mask of Anarchy," "The Way of Kings, Crowned and Unrowned," etc.

In all probability the booklet will run to 48 pages, and sell at 6d. per copy, with the usual reduction for quantities. Orders will be booked right away.

STICKERS.

The Press Committee have plenty of I.W.W. Stickers on hand. They are in large type, smart, and to the point. Each Sticker has an imprint on it in accordance with the boss's law. We will send along 1,000 to any address in Australia for 2/9, 5000 for 12/, and 10,000 for £12/6. Please send cash with order. Orders will be sent to New Zealand, provided 3d extra is enclosed per thousand for additional postage. Address: Manager, Box 98, Haymarket, N.S.W.

SUBSCRIBERS.

Subscribers who do not receive their "Direct Action" regularly and promptly are requested to write to the Manager, and give particulars, so that he may take steps to get the matter remedied.

ADELAIDE READERS.

can obtain copies of "Direct Action" and Industrialist Literature from Charlie Russell, bootmaker, Gibson-street, Bowden, Adelaide.

MELBOURNE ACTIVITIES.

Local No. 8, 243 William Street.

Monday, 8 p.m.—Business Meeting.

Thursday, 8 p.m.—Educational Class.

Working Class Economics.—T. Turner, Instructor.

Friday, 8.30 p.m.—Propaganda Meeting, Brunswick, corner Sydney Road and Victoria Street.

Sunday—Propaganda Meeting, Yarra Bank.

The rooms are open to all workers every night. All working class papers on file. Good Library. A welcome to all the "disobedient ones."

I entered Parliament with what I thought to be the lowest possible opinion of the average member, I came out with one still lower.—John Stuart Mill.

There is only one working-class. Why a thousand unions? A thousand isolated efforts united into one vigorous kick would land the boss in—overalls.

An Open Reply To Lord Derby's Letter.

By "CASEY."

The following letter appeared in the "Labor Leader" (England) on November 4th:—
TO LORD DERBY,—

My Lord,—At the request of many thinking people, consisting of I.L.P.-ers, U.S.P.-ers, Brotherhood members, Co-operators, Fabians, Quakers, Conservatives, Liberals, and many "Have Naughts" who work jolly hard for a living, I take this opportunity of answering the letter which you recently addressed to my son. Had we not first of all received your request from the War Office, we should not have had the presumption to write to a person in your exalted position.

Allow me, as parent, to thank you for the kind interest you are displaying in one of my children. I appreciate it all the more when I consider the terrible struggle his mother and I have faced during the last thirty years.

I cannot expect your lordship to understand the difficulty of rearing nine children on a miserable wage. Your lordship's outlook and mine are widely different. Possessing as you do almost 70,000 acres of Lancashire soil, with a rent-roll which must be clearing up to half a million per year, I can quite understand the wonderful patriotism and love of country which permeates your breast.

I am a country lover also, but, alas, I do not possess one solitary inch of soil, neither do I own any shares, stock, bonds, or aught except—debts. Under these circumstances your lordship may perhaps pardon my presumption in putting not only my position before you, but the position of millions of poor people in England to-day.

Many of us are poor, not because we drink or gorge fresh meat, or smoke rich tobacco, or as matters of fact many of us do none of these things. I can live without all these things and still be poor, whilst your lordship may have a surfeit of all three and yet be very rich.

Your lordship courteously requests my son to sacrifice himself for his country. That is surely a grim jest on your lordship's part—or it may be a clerical error?

He has no country, my lord.

Why, you yourself, own one-eighth of the country we are living in.

I pay 4s. 6d. a week for the privilege of living on top of another man in an underground cellar, and recently I lifted a paving-stone in the back yard to plant some linseed for the youngest lady of our family to gladden her eyes. Why does your lordship mock such poor folk as myself by saying "Our country"? Would not any country on God's earth give as much as much land as England has done to sober, steady, peace-loving people as we are? Could any country give less? If so, my lord, it would create a precedent.

For twenty-one years neither your lordship nor the Government evinced the slightest interest in us or mine. We went on short commons, tried to sell ourselves to employers, and when we had no money for rent the law commandeered our furniture.

But we Irish folk—for I am an Irishman—are very forgetful and forgiving; that story is past, though it may come again, and come again I firmly believe it will if the children, the props of our old age, are knocked under.

It is not our welfare your lordship is interesting himself in at this time of the day, at least your letter does not convey that impression to me. You say:

If this effort does not succeed, the country knows that everything possible will have been done to make the voluntary system a success, and will have to decide by what method sufficient recruits can be obtained to maintain our armies in the field.

That sounds like a volled threat, my lord.

If this effort fails, my lord, it will simply prove that a person who has always favoured compulsion has tried to make voluntary service a success and failed. You are not to blame. Your ancestors were not in favour of voluntarism or you would not to-day possess so much of English soil as you do.

To-day you are appealing for my boy. Now what is your voluntary offer to him? If I give him I give flesh and blood. Suppose he comes back doubled and racked with rheumatism, or legless and armless, or, as some already have come back, with generative organs removed or with injured brain? What chance has a poor invalid, requiring attention and nourishment, in a home where children are expected to work when they are fourteen to pay your lordship's rent roll, and to purchase provisions at famine prices?

'Twas only ten years ago, my lord, when you charged postmen who were keeping home and children on fifty miserable pounds per year with being "Blackmatters and Bloodsuckers." Has your lordship evolved since then? I hope so. I hope God has created a clean heart and a love of the sorrowing within your breast.

Our fight, my lord, never stops—a fight for bread and roses—and to get the roses we sometimes deny ourselves of the bread.

The poor man's Nemesis, "How to make ends meet," pursues him from the cradle to the grave, souring, embittering, and defrauding him of the sweet beauties of life he vainly would grasp. How could you, my lord, castigate thousands of pavement-punished letter-carriers, who longed for a little glint of the sunshine of plenty which was offered you in full, heaped-up measure the day you were born, and which even to-day is overflowing upon you?

Now, listen to me one more moment, my lord.

My children have been brought up to love

humanity—"Thou shalt not kill." "Blessed are ye poor," and "Blessed are the peace-makers," are mottos woven into their lives. They are quite prepared to die in defence of their faith. Their faith is my faith. Poor folk know how to die in defence of a principle. We truly believe that we cannot save another soul by slaughtering it, any more than you can put fire out by adding more fuel to it.

We think it better to die for humanity than to go on slaying and maiming it: desecrating the God-like temples of humanity.

And we are not alone, my lord, as time will prove. We are solemnly in earnest, thousands of us, buoyed up by that faith and love which must inevitably conquer.

Your ancestors have been warriors. They have received certain lands, privileges, and decorations from this Troglodyte pursuit; my ancestors have received, naught but poverty, calamity, and oppression.

War as far as my class is concerned, has been a ghastly failure; we will try "Peace," my lord.

This is the Casey versus the Derby position.

Faithfully yours,

CASEY.

Peace Office,
9 Chapel Street, Stockport.

Queer 'Goings On' At Broken Hill.

E. J. Kiehl writes from Broken Hill under date February 9:—

The strike for 44 hours was settled yesterday by a financial statement and the assistance of Cohen and Bennets of Melbourne Trades Council. The wire from Pearce asking the slaves to resume work on a four days per week basis, pending a settlement by Arbitration, was carried by about a 5 to 1 vote. Jos. Thomas, the Member for this Borough, fellow-parasite of Ed. Webb, saviour of N.Z. working class and receiver of easy meal tickets, and Cohen and Bennets took great pleasure in slinging bouquets at themselves for having through that aggregation known as the Industrial Disputes Committee of Trades Hall, Melbourne, kept the working class from the throats of the Master Class sixty-three out of seventy times, a record that Hughes or Gompers would envy.

Any questions on the financial statement were not allowed by the section in the meeting representing the bontheaded union scab. An endeavour on the part of several men to ask questions, and of Ned Hall to voice his thoughts on the matter, was prevented by a section of the audience, in contradiction to the cordial reception and hearing given to the parasites and upholders of Arbitration.

It was elicited at the meeting from the "highbrows" that the mineowners did not approach Pearce, but that Pearce approached the mineowners. Well that's what he's paid for anyhow. Webb spoke at great length on the hardships and privations he had gone through in the past, apparently for the job he now holds. He spoke of his imprisonment in N.Z.; the fellow-workers who were in N.Z. then knew that he was in gaol for one night; some of his pals also had an easy passage in the pen.

The financial statement showed that there was a shortage of £1500 on the coupons to be paid to-day (Thursday). All the speakers advised the workers to go back to work except Ned Hall, and those who wanted to work would not allow him to speak. After this meritorious action the "highbrows" and the "Comrades" retired to a drinkery to regale themselves. Truly a little talk with Cohen makes it right; all right. On the way to the drinkery a fellow worker informed them that they had achieved their end. On asking what end, they were told that of breaking the strike.

At the evening meeting outside the Trades Hall, the Highbrows showed pronounced signs of having liquidated. By some mysterious means the fifteen hundred pounds shortage, which was said to be impossible to get at the afternoon meeting in time to save the strike, was on hand. The crowd was told that we have enough to pay the coupons, and thousands more if necessary.

This is significant, as Major Bill Driscoll, who moved the motion to go back to work, when replying, said, "You men that do not vote for the motion don't come around for a coupon to-morrow." This morning from seven o'clock men were going to the Trades Hall after the coupons, there was a column two deep, extending for a distance of three hundred yards. This column was stationary for two and three-quarter hours, while coupons were handed out to the crowd.

The Strike Committee have formed a

The Man With The Axe.

By "Old Eureka."

Again the man with the axe has been wagging the class war in the endeavour to obtain better pay and working conditions that the wretched dole he has received during all the years since the monopoly by the Kurrawang Co. of the timber belt containing the important essential firewood—a primary necessity for the mining industry and the whole of the goldfields population.

As soon as it became assured that the deeper lodes of the Golden Mile were a permanent and payable concern, the hoodle sharks saw the value of the firewood supplies in a country not too heavily timbered, and intrigued successfully with the then existing government of this W.A. State. They obtained a concession of the forest belt parallel to, and out some distance from the auriferous line of country, and thus the criminal act of government robbed the goldfields' population of the free use of a prime necessary of life.

The method of this gang of Government preferential boddies was to charge a stiff royalty for cutting timber on their concession property, and the big contractors for supply of firewood to the mining companies, paid the impost and sublet to smaller contractors, who sublet portions to lesser contractors till finally the man with the axe cut it by the cord or ton at such a wage that only the champion axemen could make a living.

The climatic conditions, insect pests, life under canvas, frequent shifting of camp as the timber was cut out, made an environment that was a replica of Hell.

No wonder that under such conditions the men of the Kurrawang wood line have made their fourth attempt for betterment, but they have only succeeded in obtaining a part their too moderate demand of sixpence per ton.

With all the long line of pirate profit-mongers between the man with the axe and the nabobs of the Kurrawang Co., none of them forego the least rebate of their respective pounds of flesh, to enable the wealth producers to have in increase of sixpence per ton.

At the first sign of rebellion on the part of the cutters, Mr. Phil. Collier, Labor Minister and Acting Premier, rushed with frantic steps to the scene, where a number of ungrateful slaves had stopped slaving for such a petty reason that they couldn't get food enough for their slaving to enable them to keep on slaving—a mere crowd of helots who had the benign and blessed influence of the Arbitration Court to redress all fancied wrongs, and in which they had their own representative, who mostly concurs with "Your Honour," and the other members of the Court.

But there is a good strong leaven of the I.W.W. element along the wood line, and they are making use of previous failures to put their fellow-slaves wise.

The I.W.W. know the owners of the wealth they give existence to. They know that at the Coronation corroboree of Edward VII. there were men standing in the Court of England by virtue of their wealth, and such wealth was largely wrung from the men of the axe and the mining pick.

History informs us of times when the man with the axe and the king stood face to face and no man between. The man with the axe then had need of but one block of wood. It is true that history repeats itself, may it do so quickly, and keep on repeating itself till the crop of kings becomes extinct, and the man with the axe will have no further need to—strike.

Meanwhile, the fact remains that slight as the advance in the pay of the woodcutters is, it is more than has been gained by many sections of workers through the Arbitration Courts, and this fact will assist the wage slaves to recognise all legal means as a played-out artifice of their oppressors to keep them in bondage. When Arbitration is discarded by all the workers—the flood tide of Direct Action will begin to set in. Once it does the political spiliers' occupations, like Othello's, will be gone.

committee to collect evidence for the Arbitration Court.

The latest developments are that the mines have been thrown open for work on Sunday night without reference to Arbitration Courts or the Strike Committee.

Joe Hill.

AN APPRECIATION.

Blackwood,

South Australia,
Feb. 8, 1916.

The Editor, "Direct Action"—While staying in the home of Luke North (Editor of "Everyman," Los Angeles, California) in July of 1914, I had the privilege of reading a letter received by Luke North from Joe Hill in acknowledgement of some copies of "Everyman," which had been forwarded to the I.W.W. songwriter at the State Prison, Utah.

A copy of this letter was in my possession when I left America, but it has since, by mischance, been destroyed, I regret to say.

Joe's letter was fine, simple, direct—the personal note entirely subdued—and without the bitterness, or melancholy which, with a lesser nature, might well have tinged the words of one who must have realised, even at that early date, that his body would never be delivered back alive to his comrades from the clutches of the enemy.

Hill expressed interest in Luke North's work there in Los Angeles, where "the enemy is pretty strongly entrenched" in the midst of such exploiters as Gen. Otis, of the L.A. "Times," and his ilk,—and referred with quiet confidence to his own work and the great cause.

It was the letter of an unafraid human being, who leans upon nothing.

And while endorsing Ralph Chaplin's appreciation of the I.W.W. songwriter, I cannot subscribe to the pessimism of the note struck in the words: "Into the night unending; why was it you?"

For, although like that of another rebel who was shot because he was feared, Hill's body may not poach upon the monopoly with cheap theatricals and rise again "after three days," Joe Hill is not dead. He goes to "greet the sunrise"—such as he are integrally part of the dawn.

The minions of entrenched privilege killed Hill because they were afraid of him; that fact alone is significant. His work they cannot kill.

Best wishes for your efforts to advance the number of subs. to "Direct Action," I want to be one of the thousand,
"LILIAN GOODE."

FREMANTLE ACTIVITIES.

Hall, 35 Phillimore Street.

Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Hall: Lecture

night.

Friday, 8 p.m., at Hall: Economic Class.

Saturday, 8 p.m., at Hall: Business Meeting.

Sunday Afternoon, 3 p.m., Esplanade,

Perth: Propaganda.

Local 5 has now a library of up-to-date revolutionary economic working class literature at the Hall, and all rebels after some mental dynamite are invited to blow in and help swell the ranks of the rebel army.

The Big N.Z. Strike and Some of its Lessons, was the subject of fellow-worker Reeves that drew the attention of a big crowd at Perth Esplanade on Sunday afternoon, 30th ult. The subject was masterly handled by F.W. Reeves, who took an active part in the strike and was therefore able to speak from actual experience in outlining the cause, tactics, and ultimate defeat of the craft unions with their obsolete methods of carrying on the class struggles against the perfect scientific organisation of the master class.

After the lecture an appeal on behalf of Broken Hill miners, who are fighting for the 44 hour week was made to the audience, who responded quickly by throwing £2 8s. 3d. into the ring. The money is being sent to Broken Hill.

Sales of papers and pamphlets were well up to the usual satisfactory standard.

Politicians are a set of people who have interests aside from the interests of the people, and who, to say the most of them, are at least one long step removed from honest men. I say this with greater freedom, being a politician myself.—Abraham Lincoln.

Fight for "your" country if you wish, but what about owning your job.

Printed and Published on behalf of the Industrial Workers of the World, by John Hamilton, Chairman of Press Committee, 330 Castlereagh-street, Sydney, N.S.W.