

THE DECLINE OF THE I. W. W.

BY

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PREFACE

THE primary purpose of this study is to tell the story of the Industrial Workers of the World from 1917 to 1931. The organization has been in existence for more than a quarter of a century. The first half of its life has been chronicled by Professor Paul F. Brissenden. This present book essays to supplement Mr. Brissenden's work and to continue the story into the present; to contain between two covers a tolerably complete and reliable record of I. W. W. activities during the past thirteen or fourteen years.

A story is always colored by the prejudices of the storyteller. The historian always has a moral up his sleeve. It is therefore wise to acquaint the reader with the attitudes which went into the compounding of this record. I am, first of all, interested in social change; and only incidentally interested in the history of labor at large or of the I. W. W. in particular. I am interested in the philosophy of social change, in political reform, education, revolution, economic upheavals and technological advances. The history of the I. W. W. is important to me only if it has thrown some light on social change. Thus, some of the more specific questions which have occurred to me are:

1. To what degree can an American working-class organization hold fast to an ideal of revolutionary social change and at the same time attract a large and permanent following?
2. Is the theory of social change held by the I. W. W. fundamentally sound in spite of its apparent failure?
3. The American scene considered, have the Communists substituted better theories of social change?

4. Can any group in America achieve social change by the application of theories similar to those of the I. W. W. and the Communists?

In the pages that follow these questions will not be answered for all time. It is to be hoped, however, that some not too unsubstantial notions can be got from this discussion regarding the position of the I. W. W. as a revolutionary organization and the rôle, if any, that it has played in social progress.

To Mr. R. Jacob Baker I must express thanks for having suggested this study and for having given me much valuable information. I am under too many obligations to Lois Hayden Meek to be able to express my gratefulness here. Many members of the I. W. W. have given me time and have taken the trouble to write letters and to send press clippings and other material, which could not easily have been found without their help. Professor Carter Goodrich has given me much encouragement, and has made many helpful suggestions. Professor Leo Wolman has been good enough to read the manuscript and to give me a point of view on the place of the I. W. W. movement. From Professor Robert MacIver I have received some important cues for the first chapter.

I owe a great debt to Professor Paul F. Brissenden who, aside from having given generously of his time and counsel, has placed at my disposal a large number of I. W. W. publications, which, because of their ephemeral nature, could probably not have been procured elsewhere. He has also put into my hands much material which, because of its being out of print—and for other reasons—cannot be procured from the general headquarters of the I. W. W.

I am indebted in various ways to John Beffel, Annabelle Day, Joseph Dorfman, Nelson Frank, Harrison George, Frank Palmer, Howard Scott and Vern Smith.

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INTRODUCTION

THE history of the I. W. W. until 1917 has been told so often that only a few words are needed to remind the reader of the events which made the organization a well-known revolutionary industrial union at the time of the great war.

The spirit of industrial unionism was expressed in England nearly one hundred years ago, under the inspiration of Robert Owen. Some sixty years ago, in America, the Knights of Labor attempted to unite the unskilled as well as the skilled.

In 1905, delegates from forty-three labor organizations met in Chicago to form a new, all-inclusive organization, founded upon the principles of revolutionary industrial unionism. It was to be known as the Industrial Workers of the World. The right wing of the organization soon withdrew. In 1908 the political actionists withdrew;¹ and the organization was now "an organization of the unskilled and very conspicuously of the migratory and frequently jobless unskilled."²

Since the migratory worker does not vote it is easy to see that "political action" seems to him inadequate. The con-

¹ This group, renamed the Workers' International Industrial Union was never strong. In 1912, at its peak, it had 11,000 members; in 1920 its membership had declined to less than 2,000, and it was very poor. On June 1, 1924, the organization disbanded. Since the Workers' International Industrial Union has not played any part in the later history of the I. W. W., it will not be mentioned hereafter. See Brissenden, *The I. W. W.: a Study of American Syndicalism* (New York, 1920, 2nd ed.), chapters 9, 10; Savage, *Industrial Unionism in America* (New York, 1922), pp. 172, 173; *American Labor Yearbook* (New York, 1925), vol. vi, p. 108.

² Brissenden, *op. cit.*, p. 177. All references are to the second edition.

tempt, however, of the I. W. W. for political action is not based primarily upon a recognition of the fact that laws concerning legal residence deprive one of the right to vote. Labor organizations have always been suspicious of politics. To the I. W. W., trained in Marxian theory, economic winds are the winds that blow. Politicians are "sterile chatters."³ National congresses act "in behalf of the dominant economic and commercial interests of the country."⁴

Thus, in 1908, a group of 5,000 homeless men set about to organize, within the allegedly crumbling shell of capitalism, a new terrestrial home for man. To perfect the organization, and to hasten the crumbling, direct action was to be used. Political action was to be eschewed—in spite of the fact that many free speech fights of the I. W. W. were in reality a form of political action.⁵

Direct action involved the use of tactics some forms of which were new or rare in American industrial warfare. Passive resistance; ignoring of contractual relations; filling

³ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

⁵ A communist writer in the *Workers' Monthly* (Chicago), Aug., 1925, p. 447, accuses the I. W. W. of inconsistency in the matter of not realizing that much direct action is, in reality, political action. One is unable to find much in I. W. W. literature that convincingly answers such a charge; but in *Industrial Worker* (Seattle, weekly), May 12, 1928, the following appears: "An Industrial union cannot, because of its very form, take political action; but its members might. Outside the organization the members can sign petitions, vote, fight cases in the courts . . . but as members of the I. W. W. they can only act economically." Even in a strike, if the public is the final arbiter, a labor organization may be said to have taken political action. See Hiller, *The Strike* (Chicago, 1928), p. viii and ch. xix. See also, Coleman, Hays and Wood, *Don't Tread on Me* (New York, 1928), p. 36. It should be pointed out that the I. W. W. have been self-critical in the matter of political action. The institution of the free-speech fight, e. g., has been practically abandoned; and it will be shown in chapters iii and iv, *infra*, that the organization seeks to avoid all action that, on an I. W. W. interpretation, is not strictly economic.

local jails until taxpayers complained at the number of prisoners who had to be fed; striking "on the job"—these and other stratagems gave wide publicity to a handful of laborers, to an organization with a constantly changing membership,⁶ and a constantly embarrassed treasury.

The first chapter of the history of this organization has been set down from several viewpoints, by a number of competent writers. The most important book to appear before the war was John Graham Brooks' *American Syndicalism*. This was followed by the excellent studies of Parker and Hoxie. All three of these men had adopted the method, novel at that time, of studying labor at close range. They fraternized with members of the I. W. W., and came to know them as human beings. Paul F. Brissenden's book on the I. W. W., the first edition of which was published in 1918 (2nd, 1920) is the authoritative source to which all students turn. Since its publication nothing so comprehensive has appeared; nor has any work on the I. W. W. shown the same intimate knowledge of I. W. W. publications and history, or the same degree of personal acquaintanceship with leaders and members of the organization. It is a work which has received universal commendation, even from the wobblies themselves, who are always suspicious of the academic robe. Now and then, however, one hears a wobbly find fault with Brissenden's work on the ground that it does not make the I. W. W. the live, dramatic thing that it was.

Such a criticism could be passed over without comment in the case of most labor organizations. Or, it might be said that the injection of life, fire, and drama is the business of the journalist or artist, not of a sober student of labor problems. In the case of the I. W. W., however, the charge of a lifeless description takes on some seriousness. An

⁶ See Brissenden, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

organization which sang in deep-throated tones songs of sardonic humor and savage mockery; which evolved a vituperative cant of its own; whose picket lines were a thousand miles long; whose tactics of battle in free-speech fights and in the harvest fields were unexpected and bold; which laughed with inimitable, grim humor—such an organization cannot be completely understood unless some attention is given to its romantic side.

In justice to Brissenden it should be said, first, that his book is not so dead as the wobblies would have one believe; and second, that the I. W. W. were perhaps not so gallant and dashing as they and their sympathizers believed. It has been my experience, besides, that revolutionary labor bodies are likely to condemn as patronizing or unfaithful almost any artistic attempt to paint the life of the working class. Unless the artist identifies himself rather completely with revolutionary aspirations, his work is considered to be tainted by class bias—hence it is unfaithful and untrue.⁷

The I. W. W. also objects to the word "syndicalism", which has been used by economists in connection with the organization. In one of its pamphlets, the following appears:

In the United States the word [syndicalism] is so lost in a maze of misunderstanding as to mean almost anything. . . . When the I. W. W. began to assume power in this country, the phrase-

⁷ The following books of fiction or drama include among their characters one or more members of the I. W. W. I am indebted to Nelson Frank for its compilation. The list is intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. Dell, Floyd, *Love in Greenwich Village*, Doran, 1926; Dos Passos, John, *The 42nd Parallel*, Harper, 1930; Eastman, Max, *Venture*, A. & C. Boni, 1927; Grey, Zane, *The Desert of Wheat*, Grosset & Dunlap, 1921; Howard, Sidney, *They Knew What They Wanted*, Doubleday, Page & Co., 1925; Matson, Norman H., *Day of Fortune*, Century, 1928; O'Neill, Eugene, *The Hairy Ape*, Boni and Liveright, 1922; Sinclair, Upton J., *Jimmie Higgins*, Boni and Liveright, 1919; Sinclair, Upton J., *Singing Jailbirds*, the author, Pasadena, Cal., 1924; Sinclair, Upton J., *They Call Me Carpenter*, Boni and Liveright, 1922.

mongering apologists for the capitalist system attacked it most bitterly. To create a prejudice against it, they called it an importation—syndicalism from Europe. The name so attached itself to the organization that well-meaning "historians" have called the I. W. W. the syndicalist movement of America. The I. W. W. and the syndicalist movements of Europe differ widely in many respects. The I. W. W. is not a by-product of the syndicalist movement.⁸

In respect of this complaint, it may be said that every language has hundreds of words which have ethical connotations as well as technical meanings. The I. W. W. has a perfect right to resent the use of a term which, especially when coupled with the word "criminal", tends to stigmatize the organization. On the other hand, as labor economists, Brooks, Brissenden and others have a perfect right to use the word "syndicalism", as qualified in their books and as understood by other labor economists and by the informed public.

Since the appearance of Brissenden's work, only one full-sized book devoted in large part to the I. W. W. has appeared. That is *Bill Haywood's Book*, an autobiography. The narrative stops, however, at the beginning of 1921; and, as is obvious, the autobiography of a former leader of the I. W. W., however valuable as a source, is not an adequate history.

Saposs and Savage have written books^{8a} dealing with left-wing unionism and industrial unionism in America. These books contain sections on the I. W. W.; but the accounts are not detailed. Since the I. W. W., with the exception of one important strike, have been inactive since 1926, Saposs' book, published in that year, covers the later history of the I. W.

⁸ *Historical Catechism of American Unionism* (Chicago, no date), p. 83.

^{8a} Saposs, *Left Wing Unionism* (New York, 1926); Savage, *Industrial Unionism in America*.

W. in a very satisfactory but brief manner. For his purposes Saposs is justified in stressing I. W. W. activity in the East, and the failure of the organization to achieve stability. We, however, must remember that the most important I. W. W. activity has taken place in the West; and the goal of the union's efforts is not stability, but the inauguration of a new state, in which the producers of commodities are represented in a parliament with functional rather than geographic representation. Savage's book, published in 1922, adds very little that is important to Brissenden's account; but her chapter on the I. W. W. is a concise summary of the history and aims of the organization until about 1920.

In 1920 the so-called Lusk Committee of the Legislature of the State of New York made an investigation of "subversive movements" in the state. The study took the investigators far afield and the committee reported on subversive movements not only in America but in the major countries of western culture. Armed with search warrants and subpoenas the committee found it easy to seize documents and receive statements which might be denied the ordinary investigator. Some of the correspondence seized from the I. W. W. and published in the report is of interest and value. Most, however, of the important documents seized and reprinted could have been secured by anybody without benefit of search warrants. Perhaps the most significant thing about the Lusk Committee's report is that, in spite of the advantages of the committee, in spite of its Argus-eyed search for treason, the I. W. W. were not directly accused in the report of being German agents.

Much the same sort of estimate may be made of Frederick R. Wedge's pamphlet, *Inside the I. W. W.* Wedge, as a former, trusted member of the I. W. W.⁹ sets out to reveal

⁹ See appreciation of his revolutionary ardor, and his photograph, in *Industrial Worker*, July 7, 1923.

from the point of view of a favored observer, "the behavior of the I. W. W. with reference to primary causes." Apart from the author's sometimes acute observations of I. W. W. psychology, the pamphlet has small value.

The relevant publications of the American Civil Liberties Union, pieced together, offer a guide through the maze of I. W. W. prosecutions. The leaflets and pamphlets serve, however, a propaganda purpose first of all; they are often hastily prepared to meet a sudden emergency. They are therefore lacking in the precision which is demanded of the best types of scientific investigation. Their quotations from "authorities" for example, or from original sources often omit such matters as volume and page numbers. For these reasons, and for others, the Union's work cannot all be accepted by this writer as the fruits of painstaking and impartial research. Although complete acceptance is impossible, the publications of the Union deserve respectful consideration.

The Department of Research and Education of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America have made several important references to the I. W. W. in their *Information Service*, and have published other valuable studies.

The *American Labor Yearbooks*, first published in 1916 contain brief sections on the I. W. W. which are convenient for reference. Encyclopedias and other yearbooks are helpful.

Next must be mentioned the mass of periodical writing which has been published since 1917. The I. W. W. has attracted the pen of friend and foe. The value of this writing is uneven. In some cases the authors are unlearned in the subject of labor problems, unversed in the philosophy of revolution. As a rough index of the decline of popular interest in the I. W. W., a table follows, showing the number of articles listed by years in the *Readers' Guide to Periodical*

Literature under the heading, "Industrial Workers of the World:"

1917	31
1918	16
1919	10
1920	11
1921	2
1922	5
1923	8
1924	3
1925	1
1926	1
1927	0
1928	0
1929	1
1930	1
1931	0 ¹⁰

The most important source materials are:

1. I. W. W. pamphlets, newspapers, monthlies, minutes of conventions, general office bulletins.
2. Official organs of other socialistic organizations, particularly of the Communist Party.
3. The Congressional Record.
4. Trade-union publications.
5. Interviews with members and leaders of the I. W. W.

Much of the material published by the I. W. W. is unavailable for several reasons. War raids resulted in the destruction or loss of some I. W. W. publications and records. Complete files of I. W. W. publications are not kept by libraries, probably because they are deemed to be relatively unimportant. General office bulletins, while not exactly secret documents, are circulated only among members of the I. W. W. A search in the library of Columbia University

¹⁰ To June.

and the Public Library of New York; in the Library of Congress and the library of the Department of Labor in Washington, revealed only two copies of the general office bulletin. I have consulted some twenty general office bulletins; but I feel that I have been extraordinarily fortunate.

Brissenden's account closed about the middle of 1917. What happened during the remainder of 1917, during 1918 and during 1919, is treated cursorily, in footnotes, or in a brief preface (Sept., 1919) to the second edition. This present study will amplify that writer's discussion of the years 1917, 1918, 1919. Brissenden has included in his bibliography many articles, books and pamphlets published between January, 1917 and February, 1920. The most important of these will be included again in the bibliography appended to this volume for the reason that they had to be consulted for this study.

About 1917 it seemed as if two serious problems were facing the I. W. W.: (1) Will the organization be disrupted by the Western membership, (2) Will constructive activity replace propaganda activity?¹¹ The year 1917, however, was marked by two important events: prosecutions which seemed as if they might destroy the I. W. W., and the November revolution in Russia. There followed an interlude of at least five years during which the I. W. W. had to formulate policies and develop tactics to meet these new and startling developments. During this period the I. W. W. was less an industrial union than an organization devoted to the cause of defending and freeing "class-war prisoners"—as incarcerated members were described. During this period the I. W. W. had to contend less with disruptive forces arising from differences in the psychology of the urban Easterner and the migratory Westerner, than with disruptive forces

¹¹ See Brissenden, *op. cit.*, ch. xiv.

arising from the acceptance or rejection of communism. It is to these problems, prosecution and communism, that the first three chapters will address themselves.

By 1924 general prosecutions and communism were past history so far as concerned the I. W. W. But the organization emerged with mediocre leadership and a small membership. American revolutionaries outside the I. W. W., who had once discussed the relative merits of political and industrial action, were now discussing the philosophical differences between Lenin and Trotsky, and the possibilities of a modified price system as exemplified by the N. E. P. in Russia. The I. W. W., with its pre-war brand of Marxism, seemed rather quaint and old-fashioned. Its pronouncements were not taken seriously; its activity between 1924-27 is hardly worth recording. During this period the organization divided into two parts, and various changes in structure took place. A recrudescence of I. W. W. activity broke out, however, in Colorado during 1927. Chapters four and five will discuss these matters.

The sixth chapter will deal principally with the educational policies of the I. W. W. The final chapter will attempt to ascertain the influence of the I. W. W. on American working-class movements during the quarter century that it has functioned. The main body of the book will be followed by appendices, some for ready reference, some for the inclusion of miscellaneous information which does not fuse easily with the text.

CHAPTER I

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE I. W. W.

It seems to be a widely accepted belief that during and after the World War, the I. W. W. were "persecuted" or "stamped out." One could list a large number of outstanding persons and organizations that have taken this stand, or that feel at least that the I. W. W. were not always treated according to the highest standards of rectitude. Two American historians jointly refer to the tarring and feathering of Industrial Workers of the World in terms that reflect discredit on "leading citizens".¹ A professor of law likens the California injunction used against the I. W. W. to the methods of the Star Chamber.² The Philadelphia *Public Ledger*³ summarizes an interview with Senator George Wharton Pepper in these headlines: "Pepper Explains Plea for Convicts — Says Many 'Political Prisoners' Were Virtually Railroaded to Jail During War — Calls Offenses Minor."⁴ A book to which approximately ninety persons lent their names because they were in sympathy "with its purpose and approach",⁵ states that a group of California business men were instrumental in sending to prison 164 members of the I. W. W. for no other reason than that they

¹ Beard and Beard, *Rise of American Civilization* (New York, 1927), vol. ii, p. 738.

² Z. Chafee, Jr., *The Inquiring Mind* (New York 1928), p. 88.

³ *Evening Public Ledger* (Philadelphia, daily), December 22, 1922.

⁴ A longer statement by Pepper in the same vein is to be found in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (St. Louis, daily), June 17, 1923.

⁵ N. Hapgood (editor), *Professional Patriots* (New York, 1927), pp. v et seq.

belonged to the organization.⁶ The ninety persons who lent their names came from every part of the country. There were United States Senators and Representatives, college presidents, college professors, ministers, journalists, novelists, and others.

A plea for funds to defend the I. W. W. was published as an advertisement in the *New Republic* of June 22, 1918. The Chicago trial was referred to as one which involved "essentially the activities of the I. W. W. as a labor organization." The signers of the appeal included R. W. Bruère, J. A. Fitch, C. J. H. Hayes, Helen Keller, T. Veblen, W. E. Weyl, John Dewey, P. S. Grant, I. H. Irwin, J. H. Robinson, and G. P. West.

Two organizations, the American Civil Liberties Union and the Department of Research and Education, Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, have made studies of alleged injustices to the I. W. W. The former has usually found injustice quite plainly; the latter has qualified its findings; but, on the whole, it has found that the I. W. W. has not often received the benefit of doubt when questions involving justice were at stake.

A student of American industrial unions speaks of "the methods of suppression which have been used against the I. W. W.—the brutal clubbings, the horse whippings, the tarring and featherings, the raiding of halls and indiscriminate arrests, the lynchings, the deportations. . . ."⁷ Two other students speak, quite incidentally, of the government's stamping out the I. W. W.⁸ A textbook writer, discussing the organization, says: "During the war a vigorous policy of suppression was carried on by the government."⁹

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁷ Savage, *Industrial Unionism in America*, p. 156.

⁸ Spero and Harris, *The Black Worker* (New York, 1931), p. 335.

⁹ Patterson, *Social Aspects of Industry* (New York, 1929), p. 350.

This list of persons and organizations could be extended indefinitely. It would be found that newspapers, magazines, and weekly journals would be included among those who felt that doubtful methods had been used to mitigate the fancied power of the I. W. W. The President's Mediation Commission spoke of such matters as the Everett incident (to be discussed below) and the hanging of Frank Little as "repressive dealing with manifestations of labor unrest." It referred to them also as "acts of violence against workers."¹⁰ The very fact that all members of the I. W. W. convicted under federal laws were released within six years and four months after their arrest—even those sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment—may indicate that high governmental officials felt that the I. W. W. had been too severely dealt with. Most of them spent a much shorter time in jail; and not one served as much as five years and four months on his sentence.

The amount which has been written on the subject of "persecution" has been voluminous. Besides that which has been set down by interested persons there are the stenographic reports of the trials. One trial lasted five months and involved over a hundred defendants. The record would make a score of heavy volumes. An inquirer finds it all but impossible to come by the "truth". Sifting out fact from fancy would require the labors of a staff for a lifetime. Only one attempt has been made by a force of expert and disinterested men to inquire fully into any part of the alleged persecutions of the I. W. W. That was the report on the Centralia case by several church bodies. The labor involved in such a study may be gauged from this description of the method of investigation:

¹⁰ *Report of President's Mediation Commission to the President of the United States* (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1918), p. 19.

An extensive study has been made, with the aid of legal counsel, covering the entire court record, newspaper files, and much other documentary material. Many personal interviews were had, with the Governor, the trial judge, the present chief justice of the State Supreme Court, who wrote the opinion of that Court in the case, members of the staff of the prosecution, ministers, American Legion members, members of the Industrial Workers of the World and their sympathizers, nine of the jurors, and all the prisoners.¹¹

Such an elaborate investigation, culminating in a report of fifty pages, would have its justification if all readers were satisfied with the result. The person desiring unqualified conclusions, however, is left dissatisfied, for the report leaves in doubt the answer to the most crucial question, Who was the aggressor? Some persons, no doubt, would criticize the report because it lends some basis to the I. W. W. claim that at Centralia justice had been outraged. The I. W. W., on the other hand, read the conclusions as those of reactionary churchmen. Regarding the study they said in headlines: "Centralia Case Report Made by Church Bodies Indicates Bias of All Such Folk in Class War."¹²

Any so-called impartial report of I. W. W. prosecutions would still leave large groups unconvinced on the matter of whether the organization had been treated justly or unjustly. Each group has its own criteria of justice. One body of opinion would hold (speaking broadly) that revolutionary activity is perilous to the nation; that a revolutionist deserves

¹¹ *The Centralia Case*—Department Research and Education, Federal Council Churches; Social Action Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference; Social Justice Commission, Central Conference American Rabbis (New York, 1930), Foreword.

¹² *Industrial Solidarity* (Chicago, weekly), whole no. 626, Oct. 21, 1930, p. 1. *Industrial Solidarity* is the official organ of the I. W. W. It has changed its name several times, and will be referred to in the pages that follow variously as *Solidarity*, *New Solidarity*, and *Industrial Solidarity*.

swift punishment. Another body of opinion holds, however, that the revolutionist is a harmless talker; that civil rights should be respected under all circumstances; that revolution is not to be feared as a possibility—perhaps not even to be feared as a reality. It is beyond the purposes of this study to attempt to inquire into the validity of the two attitudes respecting justice mentioned in this paragraph—or, indeed, to inquire into any other possible attitudes regarding justice.

Three inferences may be made at this point. First, many people believe that the I. W. W. have been dealt with unjustly at times; second, anything approaching a satisfactory investigation of I. W. W. "persecution" requires a corps of field workers and legal experts; third, even an elaborate investigation undertaken by impartial workers, would probably leave unconvinced many persons whose opinion is worthy of notice.

If the argument in the preceding pages be accepted, the futility of attempting to tell the story of the I. W. W. "persecutions" will be obvious. Not only is the amount of documentary material too great to compass; but the story, also, when told, will carry weight with only those readers whose preconceptions regarding justice happen to be similar to those of the teller.

Perhaps the story of I. W. W. persecutions, fancied or real, is, besides, not so important as an analysis of the state of public opinion during the period that the I. W. W. felt itself to have been unjustly used. If, indeed, the organization was "stamped out," or if members were brutally handled by their fellow-citizens, then it is perhaps more important to know what public opinion had to say about the I. W. W. than to know all the details of I. W. W. trials, or to know whether members of the union were or were not the aggressors in an affray.

We shall, therefore, in the following pages of this chapter, attempt to recapture something of the spirit of those years during which the I. W. W. suffered—by their own statement—at the hands of their compatriots. We shall try to find out what the average citizen thought of the I. W. W. We shall read excerpts from the press during the last years of the World War. We shall hear snatches of Congressional debates during the summer of 1917, when the I. W. W. was involved in several industrial disputes.

Before going on, however, to this analysis of majority opinion, it would be wise to enumerate the persecutions of which the I. W. W. complain. The following section will give a résumé of some of the most important instances of violence in which the union was involved, and some of the most important legal conflicts. While I have attempted to be accurate and impartial, I do not claim for this résumé the qualities of complete accuracy and freedom from the reflection of interested points of view. The chief purpose of the summary is only to give the reader unacquainted with the gross facts a bird's-eye view of the events which have led some people to believe that the I. W. W. had been dealt with unjustly.

The most important I. W. W. "persecutions" may be treated summarily under the following heads:

1. Federal prosecutions (espionage law).
2. State prosecutions (criminal-syndicalism laws).
3. Violence against the I. W. W. by private persons and by deputized persons.
4. The Centralia "affair".

FEDERAL PROSECUTIONS. In 1917 and 1918 more than three hundred members of the I. W. W. were arrested by federal agents. During 1918 and 1919 they were tried in

Wichita, Sacramento, and Chicago on charges of entering a conspiracy to obstruct the war, and on other charges. Of the original number arrested, over one hundred sixty were convicted. The Sacramento trial is especially interesting because 43 of the 46 defendants refused to offer a defense; they maintained that a fair trial was impossible in a capitalist court, and that the energies of the I. W. W. should go into organization activities rather than legal action.

Taking the Chicago case as the most important of the three, a brief examination will be made of the conduct of the trial.

(1) The indictment has been declared defective in that it did "not give or convey to the defendants sufficient information of the nature and the cause of the accusations against them."¹³

(2). Most of the material submitted in evidence by the government was obtained in raids made on void and illegal warrants. This is an admitted fact; and the objection by the defendants to the admissibility of this material was the "point of greatest interest and keenest issue. . . ."¹⁴ The language of the appellate court on this point follows, in part:

Letters, pamphlets and other documents, identified by other witnesses, were competent evidence; and the trial judge, correctly finding them competent was not required to stop, and would not have been justified in stopping, the trial to pursue a collateral inquiry into how they came to the hands of Government attorneys. . . .

¹³ A. S. Lanier, "An Open Letter to the President," *New Republic* (New York, weekly), April 19, 1919. This was also published by the American Civil Liberties Union and the General Defense Committee of the I. W. W. Lanier had been a captain in the Military Intelligence Division, General Staff, United States Army. For further discussion of defects in indictment, see Brissenden, *Justice and the I. W. W.* (Chicago, no date, 3rd ed.), pp. 11 *et seq.*

¹⁴ *Law and Labor* (New York, monthly), Nov., 1920, p. 253.

Defendants were indicted as individuals, not as members of the I. W. W. That organization was not on trial. In seizing the outlaw property of the I. W. W. organization, the officers of the Government did not impinge upon the rights of any defendant under the Fourth Amendment. Consequently there was no error in impounding the property, overruling the motion for the return thereof, and refusing to quash the indictment.¹⁵

(3) The evidence was deemed by some observers to be insufficient "to show and establish beyond a reasonable doubt a conspiracy as charged in the indictment."¹⁶ On the other hand, Judge Landis, who had maintained an attitude of impartiality, even of friendliness¹⁷ throughout the trial, whose charge to the jury was considered favorable to the I. W. W., felt satisfied that the jury could have found no other verdict than that of guilty. The evidence, according to Judge Landis, was overwhelmingly against the defendants.¹⁸

(4) It is a matter of wonder to many that a jury, in less than an hour, could pass upon the guilt of one hundred individuals, each charged with four crimes. Individual culpability, many believe, was not properly sifted. A. S. Lanier, in the letter already referred to, says in regard to three of those convicted:

I defy anyone to show me one scintilla of evidence in the record of this trial that proves that either of the above defendants conspired with anyone to violate any law, or that they did,

¹⁵ Taken from *Law and Labor*, Nov., 1920, pp. 254 *et seq.*

¹⁶ Lanier, *New Republic*, *loc. cit.*; italics not in original. See Brissenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-24.

¹⁷ See *Truth about I. W. W. Prisoners*, American Civil Liberties Union (New York, 1922), pp. 20, 21. "Story of the I. W. W. Trial," Victor S. Yarros, *Survey* (New York, weekly), Sept. 14, 1918, p. 633. "The Social Revolution in Court," Art Young and John Reed, *Liberator* (New York, monthly), Sept., 1918, pp. 20 *et seq.*

¹⁸ See Yarros, *Survey*, *loc. cit.* Landis' charge to the jury is printed in *Defense News Bulletin* (I. W. W., Chicago, weekly), Aug. 24, 1918, p. 3.

in fact, violate any law, as charged and set forth in the indictment, or otherwise.¹⁹

CRIMINAL-SYNDICALISM LAWS. Although many states passed criminal-syndicalism laws or similar statutes, California was the state which enforced its law most vigorously. Washington and Idaho came second and third, respectively, in the order of vigorous enforcement. In California, about five hundred persons in all were apprehended of the (approximately) 530 charged.²⁰ Slightly more than half this number were actually tried; and 164 were convicted.

Taking California as most important, we find that the two most serious complaints of the I. W. W. in respect to the administration of this law were:

1. The use of doubtful, paid and dishonest witnesses;
2. The Busick injunction.²¹

Three witnesses, Coutts, Dymond and Townsend testified in several I. W. W. syndicalism cases. One of them, Coutts, testified in a large number of cases. He admitted to making his living by testifying.²² Dymond had been expelled from the I. W. W. as early as 1916.²³ Townsend was described by Justice Plummer as a person guilty of "despicable crimes."²⁴

¹⁹ The three "above defendants" were Charles Ashleigh, Leo Laukie and Vincent St. John.

²⁰ Kirchwey, *A Survey of the Workings of the Criminal Syndicalism Law of California* (New York, 1926), pp. 9, 10.

²¹ The terms of the restraining order, and substantially of the temporary injunction, are to be found in Chafee, *The Inquiring Mind*, p. 78. Chafee says: "The temporary injunction will be found in *In re Wood*, 194 Cal. 49, 52."

²² Kirchwey, *op. cit.*, p. 40. Cross-examination of Elbert Coutts; October, 1923, *People vs. Thompson*, Reporter's Transcript, pp. 525-526.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 40, Cross-examination of John Dymond; *People vs. McClennegan*, Reporter's Transcript, p. 1180.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40, *People vs. Cox*, 66 Cal. App. 293.

The Busick injunction made more easily enforceable a law which in itself was already deemed to be an unwarranted interference with personal liberty. The restraining order was granted by Judge Busick on July 16, 1923. Concerning it, Chafee says:

The Sacramento injunction combined two significant legal tendencies of recent years, governmental suppression of radical discussion and organizations, and governmental use of the injunction instead of criminal prosecutions to maintain "law and order."²⁵

VIOLENCE BY PRIVATE PERSONS OR DEPUTIZED PERSONS. Perhaps the first important manifestation of violence in the period under consideration was the Bisbee deportation. On July 12, 1917, 1186 men were deported from Bisbee, Arizona.²⁶ Some of the deportees were members of the I. W. W. and some were sympathizers; but the greater portion of them were merely striking miners. On August 1, 1917, in Butte, Montana, Frank Little, an active member of the I. W. W. was hanged by several unidentified men.²⁷ On November 9, 1917, seventeen members of the I. W. W. were "whipped, tarred and feathered and driven from town by [a] Tulsa (Okla.) mob."²⁸ A Finnish leader of the I. W. W. was horsewhipped at Billings, Montana; and two other members were hanged until they lost consciousness.²⁹

In San Pedro, on June 14, 1924, a group of persons forcibly entered an I. W. W. hall while an entertainment was

²⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 79. A full discussion of the Busick injunction is to be found on pp. 74-89.

²⁶ *New International Yearbook for 1918* (New York, 1919), p. 315.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

²⁸ Quoted from *New York Times Index* (New York, 1917), vol. v, no. 4, p. 189. See *New York Times* (New York, daily), Nov. 11, 1917, sec. i, p. 10, col. 1.

²⁹ *New York Times*, Nov. 24, 1917, p. 3, col. 4.

going on. Women and children were in the hall. The invaders are alleged to have tortured, mutilated, and scalded some of the children.³⁰

The general I. W. W. complaint regarding these acts is that practitioners of violence are not prosecuted; or, if prosecuted, are acquitted. They are, in general, protected by the powerful interests in the locality, it is claimed.

THE CENTRALIA CASE. On November 11, 1919, during an Armistice Day parade in Centralia, Washington, members of the American Legion in formation passed the I. W. W. hall. A shooting affray followed in which members of the Legion were killed. One member of the I. W. W. who took flight was caught and later lynched. Other members were arrested; eight were found guilty of second-degree murder. The lynchers were not prosecuted.

This case, no doubt, would be classed by the I. W. W. as a case similar to the horsewhippings and hangings mentioned above—a case of violence against the organization. It is here classified separately because in this instance the I. W. W., if not the aggressors, fought back. There is doubt as to which side was the aggressor.³¹

In addition to the instances in the above four categories,

³⁰ Mention of the San Pedro raid is made in the *New York Times*, June 17, 1924, p. 9, col. 1. Further details are to be found in many I. W. W. publications, and in *Singing Jailbirds*, by Upton Sinclair (Long Beach, California, 1924), "Postscript," p. 95.

³¹ For a report on the case which would generally be accepted as an impartial one, see *The Centralia Case*, issued by agencies of the Federal Council of Churches, the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

For a report by one who is sympathetic to labor, see L. Adamic, *Dynamite* (New York, 1931), ch. 28. For the I. W. W. point of view see the following I. W. W. pamphlets: *These Are the Facts; Suppressed Evidence in the Centralia Case; The Centralia Case; Eight Men Buried Alive; The Centralia Conspiracy*. The last-named pamphlet, by Ralph Chaplin, is the most complete among I. W. W. publications.

the I. W. W. cite a long list of miscellaneous instances of maltreatment or alleged maltreatment, most important being perhaps the deportation of scores of members, interference by the Post Office Department with the sending out of letters soliciting funds for defense, and police brutality. It should be added that, as a migratory worker, the wobbly has always incurred the liability of being arrested as a vagrant. He is, however, often likely to interpret arrest for vagrancy as a mere pretext to crush revolutionary activity. It may be said that so-called tramps have always been under a cloud of suspicion, and that their civil rights have never been jealously guarded by officers of the law.

With this brief and inadequate survey of alleged I. W. W. persecutions, let us go on to examine the state of public opinion, which tolerated horsewhippings and lynchings, which paid scant attention to the assertions of university professors, writers, and others, that some of the trials had their doubtful aspects.

With the more elemental forces that throw light on public opinion in America, we have little concern; nor can we go into sociological theories respecting the complexities of public opinion. We must note, however, that there is a pioneer tradition in America, a tradition of enforcing the rough equivalent of legal justice on a far-flung frontier in the absence of governmental authorities. North America has supplied Jesse James, Calamity Jane, the Ku Klux Klan of Civil War days, and has developed the lynching of negroes into a practice tolerated by kindly souls. Our tradition has approved of private means of dealing with offenders when the delay of law seemed to be too great.

With such traditions of self-help as a distant background, let us examine the foreground. This concerns the first decade, approximately, of the life of the I. W. W. Not

only was the organization socialistic and revolutionary, but it was also bold and reckless. The men who composed it, particularly in the West, were in a sense independent of jobs. That is, they could generally leave any job at any time and get along relatively well—relatively to the mill worker in the urban East. This independence, this ability to get along with or without a job made them disdainful of employers. To the owner accustomed to some degree of subservience and respect from employees, members of the I. W. W. seemed to possess traits of effrontery and impudence. They lacked the qualities of faithfulness and loyalty. In dealing with small employers, especially farmers and ranchers, for example, the I. W. W. often possessed superior bargaining power.³² They dealt with such employers, too, in a manner which made them feel that they had been outwitted; that the amenities of industrial warfare had not been observed. Even if it were true that the I. W. W. have never set fire to a barn or a haystack, or have never injured a piece of farm machinery, it is still very likely that gangs of I. W. W. farmhands have sometimes struck at the very moment that withdrawal of labor has meant the loss of a year's crop.³³ The long-standing practice of the I. W. W. of not entering into agreements with employers makes possible the calling of strikes without notice.

Thus the employee who was a member of the I. W. W. lacked the qualities of loyalty³⁴ and trustworthiness. His employer was never able to appeal to him effectively on the generally-recognized ground of the coöperation of employer and employee, or of moral obligations, or of the duty of

³² See Saposs, *Left Wing Unionism*, p. 161.

³³ For a description of a strike at the critical moment see *Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Unionism* (Chicago, no date), p. 47.

³⁴ In the conventional sense of loyalty to his employer; he had a perhaps exaggerated loyalty to his union and class.

labor. Revolutionary, socialistic, untrustworthy, unwilling to work³⁵—these were accusations which an ordinary employer could make with apparent, superficial truth. Violent, destructive, criminal—these were accusations which could also be made, but their truth was not always apparent.

With the coming of the World War—and the war years concern us most in this study—the list of I. W. W. vices was extended. To their other bad qualities, or imputed qualities, were added lack of patriotism, foreign origin and membership, indifference to the outcome of the war, degeneracy. The initials "I. W. W." became what Mr. Lippmann would designate as a stereotype. Although the stress and strain of the war years, years marked also by workingmen's revolutions in Russia and Central Europe, might alone explain why the I. W. W. were suddenly considered to be enemies within our gates, the question nevertheless arises, Did the I. W. W. do anything during the war years to deserve the abhorrence in which it was held? In order to answer this query, we must examine the actions of the I. W. W. during the World War.

In 1917 the I. W. W. took an active part in two great strikes, the lumberworkers' strike of the Pacific Northwest, and the Butte metal miners' strike. Both of these great strikes—not to mention several small ones—came at a particularly vexing time to American employers. Offers of more or less customary wages revealed a shortage of labor. Strikes were extraordinarily annoying because the reserve of labor was limited at the prices offered, whereas the demand for goods at high prices seemed insatiable. The goods affected, moreover, in the I. W. W. strikes, were goods especially needful in war-time: lumber from the Pacific Northwest, and copper from Arizona.

³⁵ Many popular jokes were current on the significance of the initials, I. W. W. One, for example, was Imperial Wilhelm's Warriors. But the interpretation most often found is, I Won't Work.

In November of 1916 a free-speech fight of the I. W. W. at Everett, Washington, ended in a gun fight, with several deaths.³⁶ In Philadelphia there was intense organizational activity going on. Longshoremen belonging to the I. W. W. were on strike in sympathy with sugar-refinery workers, who were being organized by the I. W. W. *The Survey*³⁷ reports that 2000 workers were involved. In the meantime the state of Idaho was taking steps to rid itself of the I. W. W. It was considering the adoption of a criminal-syndicalism law, which was approved on March 14, 1917.³⁸ During the same period wheat farmers were hearing of a rapprochement between the Non-Partisan League of North Dakota and the I. W. W. In the following month the state of Minnesota, the state in which the Mesaba Range strike had taken place, passed a criminal-syndicalism law.³⁹ About this time the lumber strike in the Pacific Northwest began. It continued intermittently for a year. A little later, in June, members of the I. W. W. in Rockford, Illinois, and other persons refused to register for the draft.⁴⁰ In the same month the Butte miners began their great strike.

Thus the twelve months preceding June, 1917, had been months of breathless activity on the part of the I. W. W. Things reached a climax in the summer of 1917, with a recent draft protest in Rockford, two great strikes in progress, the vigorous campaign of the I. W. W. in the wheat harvest, and an organization drive in Philadelphia. All this came upon the heels of a violent strike and the sanguinary free-speech fight at Everett.

Let us inquire more particularly into the two strikes of

³⁶ *San Francisco Examiner* (San Francisco, daily), Nov. 6, 1916, p. 1, cols. 7, 8.

³⁷ March 17, 1917, p. 696.

³⁸ Acts of 1917, chapter 145.

³⁹ Acts of 1917, chapter 215.

⁴⁰ Haywood, *Bill Haywood's Book* (New York, 1929), p. 297.

1917. The purpose of this inquiry is not only to learn about I. W. W. industrial activities, but to see if we can form some sort of opinion as to whether there was any truth in the accusation so frequently made during the war that the I. W. W. strikes were not really industrial strikes, but sinister attempts on the part of the labor union to cripple the prosecution of the war by the government of the United States.

The first strike to be considered is the Northwest⁴¹ lumber strike of 1917. From the point of view of the I. W. W. this strike was one of the most notable of its achievements. It is generally admitted, besides, that the improvement brought about in living and working conditions in lumber camps was the work of the I. W. W. Typical I. W. W. tactics were used: the intermittent strike, the strike on the job, and sabotage. Charges have been made that the I. W. W. drove spikes into logs in order to ruin them and to break saws in sawmills. These charges, to the best of my knowledge, have never been satisfactorily proved. The organization admits, however, that "companies lost heavily in logs left on the shores of the streams to be damaged by worms and rot during the summer."⁴² This, of course, is not a direct admission of sabotage. One is left to infer, however, that the strikers cooperated with Nature and Time rather than with employers.

Perhaps the word "strike" is not properly used to describe this industrial conflict. We are concerned with a series of strikes lying in the period between June, 1917 and March, 1918. These strikes, moreover, were sometimes strikes on the job and sometimes off the job. "Unrest" in the lumber industry would probably describe the situation most accurately.

⁴¹ Including the lumber areas of Idaho, Montana, Washington.

⁴² *Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Unionism*, p. 31.

President Wilson sent a Mediation Commission to report on the unrest in the lumber industry; and the remainder of this discussion of the lumber strike will constitute an abridgement of that report.⁴³

The report points out that the lumber industry is "still determined by pioneer conditions of life."

3. We are dealing with an industry still determined by pioneer conditions of life. Hardy contact with nature makes certain rigors of conditions inevitable, but the rigors of nature have been reinforced by the neglects of men. Social conditions have been allowed to grow up full of danger to the country. It is in these unhealthy social conditions that we find the explanations for the unrest long gathering force but now sharply brought to our attention by its disastrous effect upon war industries. The unlivable condition of many of the camps has long demanded attention. While large improvements in camp life have recently been made, many of the camps still require much betterment to make them fit human habitations. A number of employers have shown a most commendable understanding of the implications of operating camps unfit for men. Unfortunately, however, the old abuses were so long continued and so widespread that even after physical conditions are bettered a sense of grievance remains. This discontent gradually translated itself into demands not merely for physical comforts but for certain spiritual satisfactions.

4. Partly the rough pioneer character of the industry, but largely the failure to create a healthy social environment, has resulted in the migratory, drifting character of workers. Ninety per cent of those in the camps are described by one of the wisest students of the problem, not too inaccurately, as "womanless, voteless, and jobless." The fact is that about 90 per cent of them are unmarried. Their work is most intermittent, the annual labor turnover reaching the extraordinary figure of over

⁴³ *Report of President's Mediation Commission to the President of the United States*, pp. 13-15.

600 per cent. There has been a failure to make of these camps communities. It is not to be wondered, then, that in too many of these workers the instinct of workmanship is impaired. They are—or, rather, have been made—disintegrating forces in society.

The trade-union movement has made little headway in the lumber industry (the report continues) perhaps because of inherent obstacles to unionization in the industry, but principally because of the "bitter attitude" of the operators towards organization. As a result, the field is clear for the I. W. W.; few understand its subversive doctrines; to a majority of members, the organization is "a bond of groping fellowship."

The report goes on:

6. The unrest, which at bottom is the assertion of human dignity, focuses upon a demand for the eight-hour day. It is almost the only large industry on the coast in which the basic eight-hour day does not prevail. The operators doggedly opposed the eight-hour day on the ground that they are unable to meet southern competition operating under longer hours. . . .

7. In the judgment of the commission the introduction of the basic eight-hour day in the Pacific Northwest lumber industry is indispensable as a measure of national need.

The report also urged that lumber workers be given some sort of recognition so that they might deal with employers regarding conditions of work.

The conclusions of the federal investigators, therefore, although not to be construed as favorable to the I. W. W., are favorable to the lumber workers of the Northwest. They are favorable in the sense that the lumber industry is viewed as one in which workers have just grievances; as one in which a strike might justifiably be undertaken to remedy bad conditions. If it be true that working conditions are bad

enough to warrant a strike, then it follows that the strike was probably engaged in to remedy unsatisfactory working conditions rather than to hamper the prosecution of the war.

The situation in the copper industry is also best set before the reader by frequent references to the report of the President's Mediation Commission. The following paragraphs give the setting of the dispute:

1. About 28 per cent of the total copper output of the United States is produced in the four copper districts of Arizona dealt with by the commission. In the early summer of 1917 strikes became widespread in these centers, resulting, through the total and partial shutdown of the mines extending for a period of over three months, in a loss of 100,000,000 pounds of copper. Necessarily such an industrial disturbance results in continued diminution of output for a considerable time following any settlement of difficulties.

2. The occasions for such shocking dislocations of a basic war industry varied in the different mining camps. Behind and controlling, however, the factors which immediately led to the strikes are the underlying labor conditions of the mining industry of the State, which were devoid of safeguards against strikes and, in fact, provocative of them.

The report discusses the misunderstandings created in the mining district by distant ownership, and the difficulties arising from the fact that labor problems, unlike engineering problems, are not met by experts. The evils of migratory labor are mentioned, qualified by a sentence concerning its benefits. The large number of unassimilated foreign-born adds to the difficulties. The cooling influence of outsiders is absent, as is "generally true of a community serving a single industry."

The attitude of copper-mine laborers towards the war finds expression in the following quotation from the Commission's report:

7. The labor difficulties were further complicated by factors created by the war. This was particularly true of the situation in the Globe district. Doctrines of internationalism, the conviction that all wars are capitalistic, which before the war had permeated the minds of labor the world over, strongly marked the labor leadership in the Globe district. It led to resolutions of opposition to the war by the miners' local at the outbreak of the war. The situation was further intensified by refusal to display the flag at union headquarters. This incident provoked accusations of disloyalty against the men on the part of the company and its sympathizers. The uncritical opinion of the men that all wars are capitalistic and therefore that ours must be such, was encouraged by the heavy profits of the copper companies resulting from the European war before our entrance into it. The limitation of profiteering through price fixing and taxation had been only too recently accomplished to have made itself felt either in its actual operations or in the understanding of the workmen.

The report comments on the possible interest of the I. W. W. in stirring up discontent; but it is to be noted in the quoted sentences below that the wording of the Commission's report draws a sharp line between "enemies of our war policy" and syndicalists. Apparently the I. W. W. is considered by the Commission to be something different from "sinister influences."

To these underlying conditions and to the absence of processes of orderly government in industry the strikes of 1917 must, fundamentally, be attributed. These conditions may not have been left unavailed of by enemies of our war policy nor by exponents of syndicalist industrialism, but neither sinister influences nor the I. W. W. can account for these strikes. The explanation is to be found in unremedied and remediable industrial disorders.

Going on now to the demands which had been made by the miners, the Commission says:

The men demanded the removal of certain existing grievances as to wages, hours, and working conditions, but the specific grievances were, on the whole, of relatively minor importance. The crux of the conflict was the insistence of the men that the right and the power to obtain just treatment were in themselves basic conditions of employment, and that they should not be compelled to depend for such just treatment on the benevolence or uncontrolled will of the employers.

The remainder of this report on the copper industry details the methods by which the Commission achieved some measure of success in restoring industrial peace. These do not concern us here.

One is left to draw one's own conclusions from the material presented above. My own conclusions are that, while the I. W. W. and other laborers in copper and lumber did in fact hamper the successful prosecution of the war, the strikes were not engaged in expressly for that purpose, but for the purpose of improving working conditions which needed improvement. Similar conclusions were not always drawn by the American public.

In addition to these seemingly unpatriotic actions "at the point of production"—to use an I. W. W. phrase—the union took a pacific stand⁴⁴ that was generally interpreted to carry with it a desire to thwart the United States in the carrying out of its war program. William Haywood writes:

At this time the I. W. W. was doing much propaganda work against the war, everywhere pasting up stickers which read "Don't be a soldier, be a man. Join the I. W. W. and fight on the job for yourself and your class."

The Convention of the I. W. W. in 1916 adopted the following resolution which was formulated from the Lenin resolution at the Zimmerwald Conference. It was headed "A Declaration."

⁴⁴ Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, p. 331.

other persons exposed to the agencies which create mass attitudes. The I. W. W. explanation is, of course, simple and crude, and leaves entirely to one side the complexities of the development of a public opinion.

A few things indicate, however, that there may be at least a grain of truth in the I. W. W. point of view. The quotations which follow seem to give some substance to the theory that employers and employers' associations sometimes took the lead in stimulating an unfriendly attitude towards the I. W. W.

In discussing the situation with me certain large lumber operators said in effect: . . . But in war—and a strike is war—anything is fair. We have fought the I. W. W. as we would have fought any attempt of the A. F. of L. unions to control the workers in our camps. And, of course, we have taken advantage of the general prejudice against them as an unpatriotic organization to beat their strike.⁴⁸

Mr. Bruère, in his interviews with "the ablest mining employers in the State" of Arizona, finds that the remedy proposed was to take agitators "out into the desert and shoot them".⁴⁹

A captain on the Los Angeles police force is alleged to have made a statement which was substantially similar to the following paragraphs:

Somebody has been making holy asses of us policemen. Last summer at the time of the harbor strike I went to see old man Hammond. He told me to take a bunch of my men, arm them with clubs, go up on Liberty Hill and break the heads of the wobblies. I replied that if we did that they would burn down his lumber piles. "They will do it anyhow," he answered. But they didn't. Not an overt act have they committed.

⁴⁸ R. Bruère, *Following the Trail of the I. W. W.* (New York, 1918), pp. 18 *et seq.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

The police who raided the I. W. W. hall in San Pedro recently and threw that piano out in the rain did commit an overt act, however. In fact, we policemen have been made the tools of the big business interests who want to run things. I'm ashamed of myself for consenting to do their dirty work.

It's a good thing I'm not a wobbly. If I were and had been kept in San Quentin for 14 months unjustly, as have the wobblies just discharged because of a reversal of their case in the lower court by decision of the appellate division, I would come out a direct-actionist, and hell would be to pay. These wobblies are better men than we are—they show more self control.

The big fellows in this town can do anything they like and get away with it. But the workers can't even think what they want to think without being thrown into jail. This sending men to the pen for things done by wobblies seven or eight years ago is all wrong—it's an outrage.⁵⁰

In the case of *Ex parte* Jackson,⁵¹ Federal Judge Bourquin spoke of the fact that the I. W. W. hall in Butte had been "several times raided and [members] mobbed by employers' agents and soldiers duly officered, acting by federal authority and without warrant or process."⁵²

⁵⁰ "The above is substantially what Captain Plummer said in the office of Chief Vollmer, head of the Los Angeles police department on Wed. morning, June 11th, 1924. The occasion was a session of the new Academy of Crime and those present were the Chief, 18 captains, Attorney J. H. Ryckman and Rev. Clinton J. Taft. The two latter, together with Dr. E. P. Ryland of the Mt. Hollywood Cong'l. Church, had been invited to address the academy on the subject of the crime of Los Angeles and its cure. Dr. Ryland had left before Capt. Plummer made his statement. The fact that Capt. Plummer was in charge of the harbor police dept. at the time of the big strike last summer makes his utterance very significant. His remarks are not reported verbatim, but the substance of what he said is given briefly." Taken from letter under date July 21, 1931, sent to me by Clinton J. Taft, Director of the Southern California Branch of the American Civil Liberties Union.

⁵¹ 263 Fed. 110, 1920.

⁵² Quoted from *Justice and the I. W. W.*, Brissenden, p. 28.

That the I. W. W. are at least partially correct in assuming that the "lumber trust" was responsible for the events at Centralia, is to be gathered from the introductory pages of the report on the Centralia case by the church bodies, mentioned above. In discussing the background of the "tragedy" the report speaks of the economic element in "the hostile attitude of the community toward the I. W. W."⁵³ It states that "the president of the Eastern Railway and Lumber Company became highly incensed when the Centralia Chief of Police informed the gathering that the I. W. W. had a legal right to remain in Centralia."⁵⁴ The Legion Post at Centralia raised a fund to defray many of its expenses during the week following the shooting. Contributors to this fund were:

H. H. Martin Lumber Company	\$50.00
Lincoln Creek Lumber Company	100.00
Employees of the Lincoln Creek Lumber Co.	277.50
Eastern Railway and Lumber Company	100.00
J. P. Guerries Lumber Company	100.00
Lumber Manufacturers Agency	100.00
West Coast Lumberman's Ass'n	1000.00 ⁵⁵

On October 21, 1919, in the *Centralia Daily Hub*, under the caption, "Discuss Plans for Combating I. W. W. Menace," the following appeared:

The Citizens' Protective League recently organized in this city to combat the I. W. W. problem, held an interesting session at the Elks Club last night at which plans for handling the matter were discussed at length. . . . About 100 business men were present. . . .⁵⁶

⁵³ *The Centralia Case*, Federal Council of Churches, etc., p. 8.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁵ From *The Centralia Case*, Federal Council of Churches, etc., p. 20.

⁵⁶ The quotation from the *Hub* is reproduced in *The Centralia Case*, Federal Council of Churches, etc., p. 9, from which place the extract here given is taken.

It is alleged in I. W. W. publications and elsewhere⁵⁷ that in California the criminal syndicalism law was enforced with greater exuberance than elsewhere because a federation of business men coöperated with the forces of the state government.

Let us now turn to the newspapers of the period to see how they responded to the labor disturbances in which the I. W. W. were involved, and in what manner they reflected and perhaps moulded public opinion.

During the third quarter of 1917 the *New York Times* printed more than sixty articles on the I. W. W. Some of the more interesting titles follow:

Members have armed themselves and taken possession of narrow mountain passes in Wash. . . .

Bombs, powder, and other deadly weapons found in raids in Detroit and Cleveland. . . .

Nation-wide plan to burn cities and resist Govt. . . .

Federal officials warn S. D. farmers of plot to burn crops. . . .⁵⁸

In July, the official organ of the I. W. W. devoted a full page to excerpts from the American press. The title given to the article was: "The Spasms of the Brats of Ananias: Venomous Lies Hurlled at the I. W. W. by the Kept Press of Capitalism." Quotations from that issue follow:

" . . . the outrageous eruption of the I. W. W. in the far West . . . is nothing less than rebellion, and the most effective means of surpressing rebellion is to apply a little . . . 'direct action'."

⁵⁷ For example, in:

Bates, *This Land of Liberty* (New York, 1930), pp. 133-135.

N. Hapgood (editor), *Professional Patriots*, pp. 174-175.

West, "After Liberalism Had Failed," *Nation* (New York, weekly), May 30, 1923, p. 629.

⁵⁸ *N. Y. Times Index*, vol. v, no. 3, pp. 176-177.

Chicago Tribune

"While the country is at war, the only room it can afford
I. W. W.'s . . . is behind the walls of penitentiaries."

Cleveland News

There can be little doubt "that German influences are behind
the labor troubles at Butte."

Reno (Nev.) Gazette

" . . . the I. W. W. is an outlaw organization. . . ."

Fargo (N. D.) Forum

"Its members [members of the I. W. W.] live by the stiletto,
firebrand and bomb."

Sioux Falls (S. D.) Leader

" . . . The ringleaders [of the I. W. W.] . . . should be
branded as traitors to the country and treated accord-
ingly."

Salt Lake City (Utah) Goodwin's Weekly.⁵⁹

Theodore Roosevelt in an address at Saratoga on July 18, 1918, spoke of the "frank homicidal march of the I. W. W." This phrase was expanded into a full page by a writer for the *New York Tribune*.⁶⁰ The article was less concerned to expose the I. W. W. than to attack the logic of those who defended the organization. Two weeks later the *Tribune*⁶¹ listed a large number of mysterious fires, explosions, and other accidents in munitions factories and elsewhere. It suggested that the I. W. W. and German agents could account for these mysterious happenings. About this time the I. W. W., in order to raise money for trials, had hit upon the idea of selling to sympathizers "Freedom Bonds" and "General Defense Stamps." The *Tribune* looked upon

⁵⁹ *Solidarity*, July 21, 1917, p. 5.

⁶⁰ *New York Tribune* (New York, daily), July 21, 1918, iii, p. 4.

⁶¹ *New York Tribune*, Aug. 4, 1918, iii, p. 5.

this as a scheme to endanger the sale of Liberty Bonds and War Savings Stamps.

The *Los Angeles Times*⁶² spoke of the I. W. W. as "America's cancer sore." A wobbly is "a sort of half wild animal." A large number of I. W. W.'s travel with boys because of their degenerate habits, the article continues. The initials of the organization stand for, "I want whisky", and many members are habitually drunk, the *Times* observes.

A special word should be said for California and the forces moulding public opinion there. It is undeniable that the state was more intransigent in its attitude towards the I. W. W. than other sections of the United States. This is partly to be accounted for by several facts, one of which is that California has been more dependent than other states on migratory—hence I. W. W.—labor. The labor history of the state, too, can throw light on the Californian's impatience with radicalism. An author whose "sympathies are with labor"⁶³ says:

Labor leaders in San Francisco, as elsewhere, were go-getters of the first order, motivated by the same psychology as the directors of great trusts and corporations. They demanded high wages for labor and graft for themselves, and, holding an advantageous position, managed to get both. The membership of the trade unions was limited and corresponded to the body of stockholders in a capitalistic "racket." . . .

And the men around Tveitmoe were such fellows as Anton Johannsen and Tom Mooney, thick-fisted, bull-necked, dynamic men, trained in the rough school of labor leadership; intolerant, tyrannical, loud-mouthed, direct. Some of them were frank believers in dynamite. They loved Roosevelt's phrase about

⁶² *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, daily), Dec. 9, 1917, magazine sec., p. 4.

⁶³ Louis Adamic, the phrase is quoted from the author's note to his book, *Dynamite*.

"the big stick." They laughed at naive Socialists who were conducting classes in economics, educating labor groups. "What we need," they said with great emphasis, "is not classes in economics, but classes in chemistry!" They were barbaric Nietzscheans. The Socialists called them "gorillas." One of the few books read by trade-union officials in Chicago, San Francisco, and elsewhere at that time was Ragnar Redbeard's *Might Is Right*, in which the philosophy of power is discussed in terms of physics. They had small concern for the "laboring stiff" outside the unions; there were thousands of workmen in San Francisco who could not join unions, and therefore could get no work, because of prohibitive initiation fees. As with the rest of the A. F. of L. "racket," there was nothing sentimental or Socialistic in the San Francisco trade unions.

The unions were a thorn in the side of San Francisco business. Labor costs there were higher than anywhere else on the Coast, and San Francisco industrialists found it difficult to compete with Seattle, Portland, and particularly Los Angeles. The wages were nearly 30 per cent higher in San Francisco, and the workday from two to four hours shorter, than elsewhere on the Coast. San Francisco was falling down especially in ship-building; even repair work under the system of competitive bidding went elsewhere. Not only did new capital fear to come to San Francisco, but old capital was drawing out.⁶⁴

California was the state in which occurred the McNamara affair and the Mooney-Billings affair. California was the I. W. W. stamping ground. It is not altogether surprising, therefore, that in California the criminal-syndicalism law was sternly enforced.

American lawmakers in the Congress of the United States were discussing the I. W. W. Representatives from copper and lumber-producing states wanted to repel the I. W. W.

⁶⁴ Adamic, *op. cit.*, pp. 201, 202, 203. Reprinted by permission of the Viking Press, Inc.

"invasions".⁶⁵ Senator Ashurst of Arizona said that the I. W. W. had reduced perjury to a fine art and murder to a science.⁶⁶ Senator Poindexter of Washington advocated using force on the I. W. W. since they themselves used force; and force should be met by force.⁶⁷ Representative Jeanette Rankin, though from Montana, did not share the views of the Senators. In a general description⁶⁸ of the copper situation—the strike was going in Butte at the time—she condemned the deportation of "hundreds" of men from Bisbee, Arizona, and the lynching of "a man" (Frank Little). Representative Johnson of Washington rose to ask the lady if she were aware that the man lynched belonged to an "outfit" that "owes allegiance to no government"? Miss Rankin replied: "Yes; but this is a question of lawlessness. It is not a question of whom they hanged." This provoked applause.

In a later debate⁶⁹ Senator McCumber of North Dakota admired the shotgun methods used against the I. W. W. in his home state. Senator Borah of Idaho, however, felt that although the I. W. W. were elusive and destructive, they should be proceeded against by legal means. He condemned mob law. Senator Williams of Mississippi, in the same debate⁷⁰ made a concession to formal legality and averred that citizens armed with shotguns and deputized by the sheriff would "avoid the mob effect."

The opinions of some branches of organized labor in the United States followed the opinion of the press and of our

⁶⁵ Senator Myers, Montana, *Congressional Record*, vol. 55, p. 6264.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6104.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5949.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5896.

⁶⁹ *Congressional Record*, vol. 56, p. 3821.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3822.

lawmakers. The *New York Times* quotes a regional convention of the United Mine Workers of America as declaring that the I. W. W. is an "illegitimate organization trying to harass the Government in the successful prosecution of the war."⁷¹ Mr. Gompers in his autobiography juxtaposes "mysterious fires" on vessels, "'accidents' in munition factories" and the name of the I. W. W.⁷² He says that German propaganda "in the guise of I. W. W. preaching the doctrine of sabotage" made its appearance in the labor movement among the longshoremen of New York.⁷³

Enough has probably now been given to show the state of public opinion in respect of the I. W. W. during the last months of the World War and later. It has also been shown that the I. W. W., by their philosophy, by their strikes, and by their pacifism, helped to form that public opinion. The attitude of the citizen of the majority was bitterly hostile, either as the result of personal contact with the I. W. W. or as the result of vicarious contacts through the press and through patriotic and zealous citizens. There is some reason to believe that, however spontaneous the revulsion against the I. W. W. may have been, public opinion was in part moulded by business men who, besides being intensely patriotic, were likely to gain economically by the weakening of I. W. W. power. With public opinion in this state, and with the American frontier tradition brooding over the scene, it is not surprising that many members of the I. W. W. were grossly mishandled by their fellow-citizens.

It is not surprising to find that the legal justice of 1918 and 1919 did not conform to the minimum standards of (rather vague) ideal justice held by some persons. And it

⁷¹ October 5, 1917, p. 5, col. 5.

⁷² Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor* (New York, 1925), vol. ii, p. 337.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 336.

is to be expected that further researches even in matters regarding only legal justice might reveal that the I. W. W. were not always accorded the benefit of the most generous American legal practices.

At the end of 1917 the I. W. W. as a labor union ceased temporarily to function effectively. It was too much disorganized. Many of its leaders were in prison. Even as early as August an iron-mine strike was called off in Minnesota and Michigan because, the I. W. W. said, of the "overwhelming power of the local, county, state and military authorities."⁷⁴ For a while the chief energies of the organization and the bulk of its income went to legal defense. How the organization met this drain on its vitality will be detailed in the next chapter.

⁷⁴ *Solidarity*, whole no. 398, Aug. 25, 1917, p. 3.

CHAPTER II

THE RESPONSE OF THE I. W. W. TO SUPPRESSION

THE remainder of this book rather than one brief chapter might well be considered a discussion of the response of the I. W. W. to the Chicago, Wichita, and Sacramento trials, and criminal-syndicalism prosecutions. For the long train of legal conflicts which began in 1917 directly or indirectly influenced nearly all of the subsequent history of the organization. Chicago was a turning point.

Nevertheless, one may distinguish between the immediate and remote effects of the trials; and this chapter is concerned with the immediate effects. From one point of view the I. W. W. were not sorry that their organization was going through the test of fire. Many, of course, were frightened. Some scurried for safety in a manner which was looked upon as ignominious. But the spirit of the organization at first was to meet suppression with the feeling that the class struggle was now going on in grim earnest. Gone was the day of petty free-speech fights and inconsequential strikes. The revolution was "around the corner". The challenge of capitalism was met eagerly—sometimes with humor, sometimes with scorn, and sometimes with the fortitude of Christian martyrs.

Thus, during the early days of suppression the I. W. W. editorial page commented with epigrams upon the arrests, lynchings, and deportations:

After all, the I. W. W. has only been "frisked" for its card.¹

¹ *Solidarity*, Sept. 29, 1917.

Vigilance is the price of liberty and "Vigilantes" are the death of it.²

The I. W. W. is like a punching bag, the harder you strike it the harder it strikes back.³

Sometimes the official sentiment was less gay; solemnly it identified the I. W. W. with the martyrs of religion and science:

Christ was crucified. . . .

Gallileo [*sic*] was tortured Joan of Arc was burned at the stake. . . .

Today, many active members of the Industrial Workers of the World are in prison because [the organization] stands for the abolition of wage-slavery and exploitation.⁴

A fellow-worker wrote to *Solidarity*:

Although I am not a fanatic about going to jail, I'd feel mighty proud to have my name on that honor list.⁵

The honor list in that issue contained the names of seventy-nine I. W. W.'s jailed in eighteen states. There was a feeling that by going to jail one could punish the Government of the United States.⁶

A member of the I. W. W. actually begged that he be arrested.⁷ The faint-hearted would now be weeded out.⁸ And when the prison doors closed behind them, they smiled in their hearts. For, within a few weeks or months, the

² *Solidarity*, Oct. 20, 1917.

³ *Solidarity*, Oct. 20, 1917.

⁴ *Solidarity*, Oct. 16, 1917.

⁵ *Solidarity*, Oct. 13, 1917.

⁶ See *Workers' Monthly*, March, 1925, p. 209.

⁷ Haywood, *Bill Haywood's Book*, p. 313.

⁸ *Survey*, Oct. 1, 1922, pp. 29-31.

proletariat would rise in its might, and, even as the French revolutionists had liberated the prisoners in the Bastille, so the American revolutionists would set free the "class-war" prisoners.

In the prison cell we sit
Are we broken-hearted—nit—
We're as happy and as cheerful as can be;
For we know that every Wob
Will be busy on the job,
Till they swing the prison doors and set us free.⁹

Harrison George, a prisoner, writes¹⁰ that the morale during the first year was good; and that by way of protest the prisoners sang parodies of religious songs in chapel. The tedium was whiled away by writing and reading a journal laboriously wrought by hand, a prison newspaper named *The Can-Opener*, "official organ of the I. W. W. in Leavenworth Prison".

Several local defense committees had been in operation throughout the country before the important Chicago arrests. On the fifth of September, 1917, a general, national raid was made by federal agents on I. W. W. headquarters in many parts of the United States. About two weeks later, William D. Haywood summoned two members, Herbert Mahler and C. E. Payne, who were then in Seattle, to proceed to Chicago, there to be in charge of national defense work. C. E. Payne in a letter to me says that he did not know what place a national defense committee was to take in the structure of the I. W. W. or with what authorization Haywood acted in calling upon these two men. Hardly had Mahler and Payne got to work, however, than the Chicago

⁹ First stanza, "The California Prison Song," written by William Whalen, *I. W. W. Songs* (Chicago, 1928, 23rd ed.), p. 42.

¹⁰ *Workers' Monthly*, March, 1925, p. 209.

arrests took place. Mahler was taken into custody, but not Payne.

The general headquarters in Chicago, now without its regular staff, was in the hands of volunteers.¹¹ On October 3, it was decided to institute a "General Defense Committee" which was to coordinate the activities of all defense committees in the United States. Six months later this committee practically went out of existence until August, 1919. During part of this time Haywood, who had been out on bail, performed the work of the General Defense Committee.

In the fall of 1919 Haywood, out on bail a second time, went to Chicago to assume again his position of leadership in the I. W. W. He was disappointed that the General Defense Committee had raised only \$7,000 during his year in prison, and he promised to raise as much or more in a few months.¹² He says that in November he raised \$22,000 for general defense.¹³ "During the trials," says Haywood,¹⁴ there was an aggregate of \$400,000 received for general defense, and a half million dollars for bail."

The I. W. W. came by a great deal of money in those days. They raised surprisingly large sums among themselves and among former members and sympathizers. In the summer of 1920 I. W. W. dues were doubled.¹⁵ Liberals and socialists gave to defense funds. The list of contributors included men and women who had achieved eminence in the learned professions, in the arts, in journalism, and even in business. On June 1, 1922, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America donated one thousand dollars.

¹¹ E. F. Doree, Jack Law, Walter T. Nef, Fred Hardy, J. W. Wilson and C. E. Payne.

¹² Haywood, *Bill Haywood's Book*, p. 341.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 345.

¹⁵ *Solidarity*, whole no. 90, July 24, 1920, p. 4.

A few members mortgaged their houses to provide bail money.¹⁶

There is no easy way of checking up the estimate—nearly a million—given by Haywood; but a fair idea of I. W. W. income may be got by considering these facts: the Seattle Defense Committee alone raised over \$22,000 during the summer months of 1918,¹⁷ the Chicago trial cost \$108,715, of which amount all but about \$15,000 was raised by members of the union;¹⁸ towards the Sacramento “silent-defense” case \$6,000 was contributed by the national office.¹⁹ By April, 1919, the General Defense Committee had collected \$209,466.36.²⁰ Between April 1, 1920 and December 1, 1922, it had receipts of approximately \$172,000.²¹

At first the committee did hastily what it could. Gradually, however, policies and objectives crystallized. In 1923 the General Defense Committee announced that its work had “shaped itself under four general heads: 1. Publicity, 2. Organization of Amnesty and Defense forces, 3. Legal Defense, 4. Relief.”²² “Relief” meant, among other things, pecuniary aid to sick prisoners and “the upkeep of wives and children of political prisoners”.

¹⁶ *New Solidarity*, no. 12, Feb. 1, 1919, p. 4.

¹⁷ Between June 27 and Sept. 11, 1918; exact amount, \$22,181.11; from *Defense Bulletin of the Seattle District*, Sept. 16, 1918, p. 12; published by Seattle District Defense Committee, I. W. W. Seattle, Washington.

¹⁸ *Memorandum Regarding the Persecution of the Radical Labor Movement in the United States* (National Civil Liberties Bureau, 41 Union Square, N. Y. C., March, 1919), pp. 5, 6.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

²⁰ *New Solidarity*, no. 29, May 31, 1919, p. 3.

²¹ Exact sum, \$171,870.92. Taken from *Minutes 13th Convention of the I. W. W.* (Chicago, 1921), p. 39; and from *Minutes 14th Convention of the I. W. W.* (Chicago, 1922), p. 83.

²² *General Office Bulletin* (Chicago, monthly), Sept., 1923, pp. 20-21.

Although the I. W. W. exhibited a united front during 1917 and 1918, and afterwards, things were said and done which showed that former disagreements had not been forgotten and that internal dissensions loomed ahead. Legal defense, interpreted to mean political action, was frowned upon by many. The following quotation expresses the frame of mind of those who were uncompromisingly opposed to political (legal) action:

If this trial [The Chicago trial] had resulted in an acquittal, would it not have had a tendency to make the I. W. W. conservative and “respectable”? It would certainly have tended to increase our respect for and confidence in the capitalist courts, and to develop a “legal” and political psychology among the membership, and when we begin to depend on courts and lawyers instead of our own activities on the job, then we become decadent as an organization, and must soon go the way of all the unfit.²³

At the 14th Convention of the I. W. W. an officer spoke of the opposition to defense work by those who were interested only in promoting the work of organization; he said:

Some of the old opposition to defense work among the I. W. W. membership was due to the inadequate understanding of what the term “defense” involves. Many of the members who were opposed to defense felt that defense activities were taking away from efforts along organization lines. It is impossible, however, to draw any sharp line of demarcation between defense and organization work. The two are irrevocably knit together, one helps the other; each must always be ready to help the other.²⁴

²³ Written by James Rowan, *Defense News Bulletin*, Aug. 31, 1918, p. 2. Rowan's sincerity is assured by the fact that he received the maximum sentence on each count.

²⁴ *Minutes 14th Convention*, pp. 22, 23.

But many members would have disagreed with the attitude reflected in the preceding quotation. To a large number, defense (construed as *political* activity) was irrevocably distinct from organization work (construed as *economic* activity). Several members have, in correspondence and conversations with me, given it as their opinion that the conflict of organization work and defense activities led to the split of 1924.²⁵

In the spring of 1921, William D. Haywood, the most outstanding character of the I. W. W. and eight other members, all of whom were out on bond, did not return to prison. They thus forfeited \$80,000 in bail money. The assumption of this obligation by the union, added to heavy legal fees, not to mention the feeling that a leader had betrayed them, helped to stir up ill-feeling and misunderstanding.

Another cause of misunderstanding lay in the administration of defense funds, and, indeed, of defense work in general. Separate defense activity, independent committees, and autonomously published bulletins were maintained in several western localities, among them San Francisco, Seattle and Centralia; in the East, New York and Paterson worked—at least to some degree—independently of the central committee in Chicago. “The present branches of the Defense Committee, with a few exceptions, work entirely independent [*sic*] of the General Defense Committee and in some cases there is a decided hostility between the branch

²⁵ From a letter signed by C. E. Payne, member of the I. W. W.: “I may say, in passing, that it is my opinion that the discrepancy between the industrial statements of the organization and the industrial demands of the membership on the one hand, and the defense activities of the organization on the other, were a constant source of friction while there were any defense cases of any magnitude, and were basically a large part of the causes of the split of 1924.” Jan. 12, 1931, 900 Summit St., Aberdeen, Washington.

and what is supposed to be headquarters.”²⁶ “Prejudice against legal defense, and particularly against the General Defense Committee, was plainly evident among the membership of the I. W. W. This antagonism, based on old conflicts and misunderstandings, was so strong that it constituted a high wall which had to be torn down.”²⁷

A final source of dispute was the controversy among the prisoners in Leavenworth (and the I. W. W. at large) on the question of individual clemency—“clemency hounds” as those who were willing to accept conditional release were contemptuously named. The situation can be most easily presented to the reader by the quotation of extracts from the report of Harry Feinberg to the 14th Convention.²⁸

In May, 1921, representatives from the American Civil Liberties Union and the Workers’ Defense Union in New York asked the General Defense Committee to indorse a proposition that each prisoner apply for individual clemency. . . .

After lengthy debate, it was decided to let the fellow workers in Leavenworth decide for themselves what stand should be taken on the proposal of the New Yorkers. . . . By a large majority, the fellow workers in prison voted down the suggestion that they apply for individual clemency.

Some of the members in prison, however, did apply for individual clemency. In his report²⁹ the Secretary of the General Defense Committee says that harm was done by the applicants in the following ways: (1) creating dissension inside the prison; (2) “giving the Department of Justice

²⁶ Report of George Williams, Sec’y. Gen. Def. Com. to 13th Convention, *Minutes 13th Convention*, p. 12.

²⁷ Report of Harry Feinberg, Sec’y. Gen. Def. Com., *Minutes 14th Convention*, p. 20.

²⁸ *Minutes 14th Convention*, pp. 25 et seq.

²⁹ *Minutes 14th Convention*, pp. 25 et seq.

an excuse and opportunity to review individual cases"; (3) "dividing the forces of those working for amnesty."

The General Defense Committee tried for a while to keep aloof from the conflict of the men in prison, but soon found that circumstances would arise which would make it imperative to take sides. There was, for example, the matter of whether or not those sentenced for ten or twenty years and paroled had a right to the fifty dollars customarily sent to those who had been released upon the expiration of their short terms.³⁰

It should be remembered that to apply for commutation of sentence implies not only admission of guilt,³¹ but also a generally degrading procedure for one who believes himself to be entirely innocent of any wrongdoing. Indeed, to some the procedure was—or was interpreted to be—equivalent to apostacy. To others application for clemency was only a hollow ritual which had nothing to do with one's underlying faith. Between those who found compromise easy and those who found compromise difficult, there was some bitter feeling.³²

The delegates of the 1922 Convention passed resolutions³³

³⁰ The case of Godfrey Ebel, paroled prisoner who demanded his fifty dollars, is cited in Feinberg's report to the 14th Convention, *Minutes 14th Convention*, pp. 25, 26.

³¹ See form entitled "Application for Executive Clemency", Gov't. Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

³² Two leaflets, each entitled *Why Eleven Members of the I. W. W., Imprisoned at Leavenworth, Refused Conditional Pardon*, were circulated on behalf of the uncompromising group among the I. W. W. One leaflet was issued by H. F. Kane, 452 N. Franklin St., Philadelphia, Pa., July 30, 1923; the other, "printed free of charge by a friend", was issued from 24 Clarkson St., New York City. Preceding this was the statement of fifty-two I. W. W. prisoners in Leavenworth who had refused to apply for individual clemency; printed under the title *An Open Letter to President Harding* by the Gen. Def. Com. of the I. W. W. (Chicago, 1922).

³³ *Minutes 14th Convention*, p. 51.

to expel all members applying individually for clemency. This ruling was to be retroactive and was to include "bond jumpers". Moreover, copies "of all the names of those breaking solidarity" were to be published and placed in all I. W. W. halls.

This was rather severe; apparently many branches strongly rebuked the delegates for their action.³⁴ At the end of July, 1923, *Solidarity* announced that its columns were open for a discussion of matters relating to commutation, clemency and defense. Spirited communications were received and published—so spirited that on August 11 *Solidarity* refused to print any more letters; the discussion, however, was continued in the *General Office Bulletin*, which went only to I. W. W. members, and not to the public at large.

The *General Office Bulletin* of September, 1923, is a fiery document. Its twenty-four closely-printed pages contain many bitter sentences and a tangled mass of accusations and self-justifications. Some of the important and interesting matters included in it are:

1. The resignation, and its acceptance, of Ralph Chaplin as "publicity man" for the General Defense Committee. Chaplin had accepted commutation and for this reason he had been made the target, upon his taking a position with the General Defense Committee, of attacks by those who were unalterably opposed to individual pardon. Chaplin was one of the few capable men—perhaps the only capable man left in the I. W. W.—for the post. The resignation, although not demanded, was the outcome of the complaints of a very articulate group of the membership, including some of those still in the Leavenworth penitentiary. James Rowan, whom the reader will meet again as a prominent schismatic, wrote from Leavenworth:³⁵

³⁴ Supplement bound in the *General Office Bulletin*, Sept., 1923.

³⁵ *General Office Bulletin*, Sept., 1923, p. 15.

. . . . Chaplin is altogether unfitted to represent the remaining prisoners. . . . To put him in an office where he has the fullest opportunity to distort facts is not only grossly unfair, unjust and unreasonable, but is a direct insult and slap in the face to every sincere, clean-cut member, both behind the bars and outside. Class-war prisoners can get enough knocks from the capitalist press without the funds contributed for their defense being used to pay someone to stab them in the back.

. . . . This may look like a small matter, but the principle involved is vital, and the outcome may determine whether the I. W. W. is to remain a clean-cut, virile, militant organization, standing squarely on principle for emancipation of the workers or become a crooked, yellow, opportunistic fakeration dicker-ing with the bosses and selling out the workers for the benefit of a few job-holding politicians.

Chaplin resigned just while an intensive drive for "amnesty before Christmas" was going on. The General Defense Committee could ill afford the loss of a capable writer and cartoonist³⁶ at this time. But in the I. W. W., principle was more important than amnesty.

2. "Politics" and defense. The keys to an understanding of much that is important in the I. W. W. are a realization that the I. W. W. is uncompromisingly opposed to political action, and a knowledge of what the I. W. W. interprets to be political action. Thus, a general strike is not political; but hiring a lawyer and defending one's self in court are—at least according to some members of the organization. Voting and lobbying are forms of political action, obviously; less obviously, conferring with governmental mediators would probably be regarded as political action.

The telegram sent by the Sacramento "silent-defense" group, to be quoted below, is one of the first evidences I have found in this period of an expression of the idea that legal self-defense is political action.

³⁶ See statement of Gen. Def. Com., *General Office Bulletin*, Sept., 1923, p. 2.

SACRAMENTO, CALIF., Oct. 9, 1918

PETER STONE, *Acting Secretary, I. W. W.*

1001 W. Madison St.

Chicago, Ill.

Today fifty-four of us were arraigned on a brand new indictment including prisoners from San Francisco, Los Angeles, Fresno, Sacramento and Stockton. Judge Van Fleet presided; Vanderveer³⁷ absent. We caused an adjournment of court, held regular business meeting in court room. Mortimer Downing was elected chairman. Moved and carried unanimously, first, we refuse to ask charge [change?] of venue in spite of Sacramento's threats published to lynch us. Second, we ask for an immediate trial. Third, we voted unanimously to can all lawyers, put them in the discard. Fourth, we want a defense fund, but it should go to job organization. Fifth, we do this with the highest esteem for Van's³⁸ past efforts but in the hope that no more hard earned wages will go to courts. Mortimer Downing and Fred Esmond were elected as committee of speakers to present the Wobbly case in Court. Don't mourn! Organize! Organize!

H. STREDWICK, *Sec'y.*

FREDERICK ESMOND

MORTIMER DOWNING³⁹

As time went on the activities of the defense committees came to be looked upon as out-and-out political manoeuvres. This fact has been amply discussed in the present chapter; but what needs to be brought out at this point is that complaints relating to commutation merged insensibly into complaints that those who enthusiastically supported legal defense activities were "politicians". And to the I. W. W. "politician" is a word which expresses fundamental contempt. The *General Office Bulletin* in question has much

³⁷ George F. Vanderveer, counsel for the I. W. W.

³⁸ George F. Vanderveer.

³⁹ Telegram published in *Defense News Bulletin*, Oct. 12, 1918, p. 1.

more to say concerning the political activities of the General Defense Committee. P. J. Welinder, an outstanding member of the I. W. W., reminds his readers of the Marxian theory that political institutions are a reflex of economic forces. Why, then, he asks, should the I. W. W. "appeal to a reflex?"⁴⁰ "Why not concentrate upon operations against these fundamental [economic] forces in society and trust that the reflex will take care of itself?" He condemns appeal to public opinion in the matter of amnesty, for public opinion "is safely in the vaults of Wall Street bankers". Welinder refers sarcastically to the "literary products" turned out by the Los Angeles Defense Committee. In order to reach the public, defense committees have "prostituted our program" and "camouflaged and distorted" fundamental principles. After reading the most recent "literary product" one "gets convinced that the I. W. W. is absolutely 'Nothing'".

Mr. David Saposs⁴¹ remarks that the causes leading up to the breach of 1924 in the I. W. W. are obscure. This is true, and it is my task to shed some light on those obscure causes. The bitterness arising from the prosecutions of the I. W. W. takes its place among the forces of disruption. As the reader progresses he will find that many more causes working together will help to explain the decadence of the I. W. W.—causes which, if taken alone would explain very little, but taken together suggest the reasons for the present impotence of an organization which was once nationally feared and hated.

It has been related that even at the beginning of the prosecutions men and women of the so-called respectable classes gave sympathy, time and money to the I. W. W. for defense.

⁴⁰ *General Office Bulletin*, Sept., 1923, pp. 17 et seq.

⁴¹ Saposs, *Left Wing Unionism*, p. 174.

The end of the World War and the granting of amnesty to political prisoners by foreign nations stirred an interest for amnesty in this country after Woodrow Wilson's "blunt refusal to approve a general amnesty for political offenders."⁴²

An ever-widening circle took in business men, statesmen,⁴³ army officers, lawyers, and clergymen—not to mention other responsible types of persons whose vocations interpose no natural barrier against activities on behalf of political prisoners. Outstanding European writers, Romain Rolland, G. B. Shaw, and others, protested against the alleged injustices committed against the I. W. W. Liberals everywhere were busy, as evidenced by the complaint of William J. Burns, a detective: "Wherever we seek to suppress these radicals, a civil liberties union promptly gets busy."⁴⁴ A Joint Amnesty Committee was formed in the District of

⁴² Beard and Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization*, vol. ii, p. 671.

⁴³ The *New York Times*, May 28, 1923, p. 1, col. 5, lists five state governors as having signed a petition for amnesty. They were Governors Dixon, Montana; Davis, Kansas; Hunt, Arizona; Sweet, Colorado; Walton, Oklahoma. The article lists dozens of other important personages. Senator Borah also acted for amnesty. See *New York Times*, Sept. 25, 1922, p. 3, col. 3; Oct. 2, 1922, p. 10, col. 2; March 12, 1923, p. 8, col. 2. "Fifty congressmen from 21 States signed a petition sent to the White House . . . asking President Harding to release all prisoners convicted under the Espionage Act for expression of opinion and not overt acts." Taken from *N. Y. Times*, March 22, 1922, p. 16, col. 4. Resolutions were introduced in the House and Senate to secure amnesty for political prisoners; see *Congressional Record*, vol. 61, part 9, S. J. Res. 9, H. J. Res. 60, S. Res. 162. See also pp. 485 et seq., *Con. Rec.*, vol. 64, for Representative Huddleston's (Alabama) plea for amnesty; *Con. Rec.*, vol. 61, pp. 8143, 8152, 8153 for attitude of Rep. London (New York), and for references to a memorial to Congress in favor of amnesty signed by a million persons, to an appeal by holders of Congressional Medal of Honor, and an appeal to the President by World War Veterans (not American Legion).

⁴⁴ From testimony before a sub-committee of the House Appropriations Committee on April 1, 1924; quoted on cover of *The Record of the Fight for Free Speech in 1923*; published by American Civil Liberties Union, N. Y. C., May, 1924.

Columbia, which worked with other organizations for the release of political prisoners—including, of course, members of the I. W. W. In a pamphlet⁴⁵ published by the I. W. W. excerpts are given from editorials written in the American press on the subject of amnesty. Presumably these editorials were published during 1922 and 1923. A survey of this pamphlet reveals a strong sentiment for amnesty from every section of the Union. To the best of my knowledge the press campaign for amnesty—if one excludes working-class periodicals and the liberal weeklies—was most vigorously carried on by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. In its article, "Outstanding Achievements for Public Good in 1923"⁴⁶ nearly two full columns are devoted to the subject of executive clemency, and to the newspaper's work for the cause of amnesty. Even such a group as the National Civic Federation was willing that prisoners be released on parole "provided that if released they will pledge themselves by oath or affirmation to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitutions of the several States in which they may reside."⁴⁷

This campaign, it should be remembered, was directed—so far as the I. W. W. were concerned—only towards the federal prisoners. Those convicted of criminal syndicalism under state laws in California and elsewhere, and those convicted of murder in Centralia were not included in the amnesty campaign. "We frankly admit that we are concentrating on the federal cases."⁴⁸ At the end of 1923 all federal prisoners were released.

⁴⁵ *Public Opinion: Where Does it Stand on the Question of Amnesty of Political Prisoners?* (Chicago, no date).

⁴⁶ Dec. 30, 1923, beginning on p. 1B.

⁴⁷ From *Report Presented at the Twenty-third Annual Meeting* (New York, April 17, 1923), by Archibald E. Stevenson, Chairman Committee on Free Speech, The National Civic Federation.

⁴⁸ From "Program of the Defense Committee", *General Office Bulletin*, Sept., 1923, p. 22.

One could write endlessly on the response of the I. W. W. to suppression. But after all, even during the years 1917 to 1924, the conflicts of the I. W. W. with federal and state laws comprise only one aspect of I. W. W. activity. We must go on with the relations of the I. W. W. to the Communists, and to the split of 1924. Before passing along to these matters, however, a few words should be said concerning the so-called "general strike" of 1923 for the release of all "class-war prisoners."

The Twelfth Convention went on record to support the "slow-down" strike.

[When] members are arrested and prosecuted for their activity in the labor movement, all members in that part of the country [shall] show their disapproval by resorting to the 'slow down' strike so that the economic master in whose interest the persecution of workers is carried on may feel the effects of the persecution in such a decrease of profits that their material interests will force them to abandon these tactics.⁴⁹

At the Thirteenth Convention⁵⁰ the delegates concurred with the Resolutions Committee in the proposition, "That we preach the general strike as the only means for the liberation of class-war prisoners". Plans for a general strike were made in October of 1922. "Agitation for the strike was begun when it appeared that President Harding would not keep his promise of July 19, 1922, to free all men held in federal prisons solely for their opinions."⁵¹ At the Fourteenth Convention⁵² a resolution was adopted,

That this convention call upon all its component unions, branches, and members to exert themselves to the utmost in

⁴⁹ *Solidarity*, whole no. 82, May 29, 1920, pp. 1, 3.

⁵⁰ *Minutes 13th Convention*, p. 23.

⁵¹ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 236, May 12, 1923, p. 1.

⁵² *Minutes 14th Convention*, p. 47.

waging an organization campaign to the end that a general strike be put into effect for the before-mentioned purpose of freeing the class-war prisoners as soon as a strike may deem [sic] expedient.

On January 20, 1923, the General Defense Committee of the I. W. W. in Chicago issued a "General Strike Bulletin". It was "issued in compliance with the wishes of the delegates to the recent General Convention of the I. W. W."⁵³ It was a "call for immediate action for the release of all class-war prisoners in American penitentiaries and jails." It demanded "General Amnesty or General Strike!" During the first quarter of 1923 the *Industrial Worker*, Western organ, frequently discussed the impending general strike. On March 10 it published an instructive article on how to strike by an experienced leader of the I. W. W. It explained the strike on the job⁵⁴ and the strike off the job; it went into the most minute detail, even stressing the importance of using indelible pencils in making records, and of procuring receipts for all strike expenditures.

On April 25, the *Industrial Worker* came out with "THE GENERAL STRIKE STARTS", two inches high, across the page. On May 5, in equally large and black capitals, appeared: "GENERAL STRIKE SWEEPS ON!" On April 26, 1923, the *New York Times*⁵⁵ printed a brief notice that a general strike was on in the West; and on May 14⁵⁶ it said that of 40,000 lumber workers in the Northwest, 15,000 were on strike, and

⁵³ See *Minutes 14th Convention*, pp. 46, 47, for General Strike Resolution.

⁵⁴ A strike on the job implies the withdrawal of productive efficiency while wages are being drawn. It has numerous tactical advantages, according to the I. W. W.—among them the difficulty of employing strikebreakers and the maintenance of morale. See references given in index, Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, under: strikes, I. W. W. tactics, sabotage, direct action.

⁵⁵ P. 5, col. 3.

⁵⁶ P. 8, col. 1.

half of these were I. W. W.'s. Shipping was reported tied up in San Pedro with 3,000 longshoremen striking. The I. W. W. press, particularly the *Industrial Worker*, reported shipping strikes, lumber strikes, oil strikes, construction strikes on the West Coast, and shipping strikes in the East and South. *Solidarity* reported all ships tied up in San Pedro, California, for five days.⁵⁷ The New Orleans strike of the Marine Transport Workers was a particularly bitter contest.

Thus, throughout the spring and summer of 1923, sporadic strikes, on and off the job, large and small, intermittent, of short and long duration, took place under the leadership of the I. W. W., particularly on the West Coast and in the Northwest. The first demand was always "release of class-war prisoners". Immediate demands relating to hours, wages, working and camp conditions, came next on the list of grievances. The I. W. W. press claims during this period to have secured some of the immediate demands.

In July "several thousand loggers came into Seattle . . . to discuss ways and means of conducting" a general strike for the release of political prisoners.⁵⁸ Instead of being permitted to lay their plans, they were confronted "with a lot of wrangle about what the G.E.B.⁵⁹ had failed to do in the last strike . . . and then they were presented with letters condemning the fellow workers who accepted the commutation." After a few meetings, the "best" loggers left in disgust. And thus, instead of a well-organized strike committee, the I. W. W. had a "disgusted membership tired of the eternal quarrel and condemnation of each other."

A loggers' strike did, however, take place in September,

⁵⁷ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 247, July 28, 1923, p. 1.

⁵⁸ This account is taken from P. J. Welinder's article in *General Office Bulletin*, Sept., 1923, p. 19.

⁵⁹ General Executive Board.

a strike which, in the press of the I. W. W. was represented to be an ambitious undertaking. Since the pamphlets and the weeklies of the I. W. W. have a circulation outside the membership, the strikes of 1923 were made to appear very important and very successful. *Solidarity* said: "As long as history lasts, and the memory of man continues to run, the I. W. W. general strikes for the release of class-war prisoners will be told of."⁶⁰ Although the I. W. W. men of letters found in the 1923 strikes material for epics, there were hard-headed wobblies who saw the protest strikes in a true perspective. In the 1923 convention several delegates, implicitly or explicitly, referred to the strikes of the preceding nine months as failures or hastily undertaken adventures.⁶¹

About the time that the "general strikes" began, the *Industrial Worker*⁶² announced a series of boycotts. The list included restaurants, hotels, clubs, gathering places for migratories, card rooms, poolrooms, a theatre, a newspaper, an employment office, a clothing store, grocery stores, and a brand of gloves. The locations of the boycotted places were: Seattle, Sacramento, Klamath Falls, Fresno, Centralia, and several small towns in California and Idaho. Among the reasons given for boycotting were: contributing to the Centralia prosecution fund; being a rendezvous for stool-pigeons; doing business on property belonging to a contributor to the Centralia prosecution fund; feeding scabs through a strike (restaurant); being a "bad place to stop"; feeding the I. W. W. on doped and rotten grub (restaurant); poisoning the minds of the people and keeping them forever in the bondage of wage slavery (newspaper); being a glove-

⁶⁰ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 270, Jan. 5, 1924, p. 6; article entitled, "Events of the Year of Failure and Fraud".

⁶¹ *Minutes 15th Convention of the I. W. W.* (Chicago, 1923), pp. 13, 25, 26, 52, 53, 60, 61.

⁶² Whole no. 223, Apr. 28, 1923, p. 3.

maker who helped to murder Wesley Everest. Except for a threat made by a workers' club known as "Our House", in Seattle, no legal action was taken against these boycotts.

The above list was revised and lengthened in the same periodical on January 12, 1924.⁶³ Resolutions to continue and expand this boycott were introduced at the Fifteenth Convention.⁶⁴ An issue of *Industrial Solidarity*⁶⁵ carried a cartoon the message of which was that if sacks bearing the mark of San Quentin Prison manufacture were used on ranches, the I. W. W. working on that ranch were to declare a protest strike. In the I. W. W. press, during the years 1924 and 1925, many appeals were published to boycott all California products. In 1925 much was made of the diseases which were allegedly epidemic in California. The state was represented as a land of smallpox, leprosy, influenza, bubonic plague, typhoid fever and malaria.⁶⁶

At present all I. W. W. prisoners everywhere have been freed, except the half dozen still confined for murder in Centralia. The General Defense Committee still functions, and a *Defense News Bulletin* is sent out. It is now a circular letter. Each month an aggregate of \$135 is being spent to ease the lot of the prisoners and their dependents.⁶⁷ During the six months or more preceding May 1931, the General Defense Committee threw some of its energies into the Mooney-Billings affair. June, 1931 "will mark the begin-

⁶³ Whole no. 297.

⁶⁴ *Minutes 15th Convention*, pp. 52, 53.

⁶⁵ May 21, 1924, whole no. 291, p. 1.

⁶⁶ The *New York Times* quotes G. L. Fink, Assistant Federal District Attorney, as having resolved to round up Western I. W. W.'s because the organization was spreading the hoof and mouth disease. (See *New York Times*, June 20, 1924, p. 5, col. 3.) Nothing, apparently, ever came of Mr. Fink's resolution.

⁶⁷ Circular letter, Gen. Def. Com., May 15, 1931.

ning of a campaign for the release of the Centralia Prisoners that will be as far-reaching and as effective as finances will permit." ⁶⁸ Since the foregoing was written, one of those confined in the Centralia case has been granted a six months' reprieve. In June, the General Defense Committee sent a representative, Tom Connors into the Kentucky coal fields, where a strike is going on. Connors returned near the end of the month because he had been beaten by company guards or the local police, he said. I saw him on July 1 bearing obvious marks of head blows.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER III

COMMUNISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

AFTER the October days of 1917 in Russia, those who had merely hoped for the triumph of socialism now found hope converted into certainty. Crystal Eastman of the *Liberator* returned from Europe saying that never, hereafter, could she look at a wealthy's man's home without wondering how many factory workers would be assigned to it by the American Commissary of Housing. The *Liberator* of those days never tired in articles, cartoons, poetry and humor of making clear the inescapable dilemma of world-capitalism: either non-interference with Russia, or world-wide revolution.

Some I. W. W.'s however were skeptical. After all, the Russian revolution was a great mistake. On their interpretation it was un-Marxian. For, following their analysis, a new society grows within the shell of the old society. The economic state determines the kind of political state. Russia was, indeed, ready for the Kerensky (*bourgeois*) revolution; good Marxism demanded *bourgeois* democracy in Russia. But an agricultural state which had scarcely been touched by the machine process—in such a state the establishment of a workers' state was unhealthy. Russia was a precocious Marxian child, doomed to the maladjustments and delicate health commonly imputed to precocity. The "true" Marxian read almost with satisfaction of the death of Lenin, or of Trotsky, or of the mutual betrayals, or of the impending downfalls so frequently reported in those days. A co-operative state could not exist on an agrarian foundation; the sooner it fell, the better; it needed *bourgeois* democracy; it had to pass through the capitalistic cycle.

When therefore, after the first few months of success, the Soviet State began to totter; when famine and intervention seemed to be on the point of breaking the communist dictatorship; when the compromise with capitalism, expressed in the New Economic Policy, was announced—then the straight-laced I. W. W. could say, "Exactly what was to be expected." Two camps were inevitably formed: the camp that approved wholeheartedly of what the Russians had done and were doing; and the camp that felt the insecurity of an improperly constituted workers' state.

William D. Haywood was among the fervent supporters of the Soviets; he was immediately charmed. "As soon as the consolidation of the Communist Party in the United States was effected, I became a member," he writes.¹ Harrison George, an I. W. W., soon after the revolution, wrote a pamphlet, *Red Dawn*.² Its sympathetic attitude towards Russia and Communist politics, caused its withdrawal in 1920, when a new administration took over I. W. W. headquarters.³ Many members went to Russia⁴ to develop the Kuznetz area, others to take more individually important roles in the building up of the wasted land. One "Big Bill Shatov", was described in the *New York Times* as "the

¹ *Bill Haywood's Book*, p. 361.

² Published by I. W. W., Chicago, Feb., 1918.

³ Haywood, *op. cit.*, p. 360.

⁴ See *Nation*, Aug. 17, 1921, p. 167. The I. W. W. did not officially sponsor the Kuzbas venture; and, since it does not affect I. W. W. history in the United States, a recital of the activities of that colony will not be given here. The following interesting but unimportant note on Kuzbas appeared in *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 227, March 10, 1923: "The general officers of the Industrial Workers of the World have received the minutes of the Komerovo, Siberia (Kuzbas project) branch of the I. W. W. [which] . . . has been functioning very effectively as a protest medium in adjusting matters within the colony and has assumed a critical attitude in regard to the activities of the Communist Party."

hero of the largest construction work of the new Russia."⁵ He took part in the building of the Turkestan Railroad.

During 1919 the General Executive Board of the I. W. W. was in favor of establishing some sort of relationship with Soviet Russia. It voted unanimously in favor of the following:

Whereas, the Soviet Republic of Russia in its call for the organization of the Third International, included the I. W. W. as one of the bodies eligible to such new international, and

Whereas, the I. W. W. is the only revolutionary organization in the United States whose program is absolutely scientific and uncompromising, and is the logical American unit of the Third International, and

Whereas, The proletarian revolution is world-wide, and not national or local in its scope;

Therefore, The time has come for the I. W. W. to assume its proper place as the American Unit of the Workers' Red International, and to establish closer relations with groups of the same or similar principles in every country, such as the Communist of Russia, Hungary, Bavaria, etc., the Spartacans of Germany, the Syndicalists of France, Italy and Great Britain and other countries, and the Industrial Unionists of Canada and Australia; therefore be it

Resolved, that the I. W. W. shall create a committee on International Relations, which shall at once establish and maintain correspondence and fraternal relations with such afore-said revolutionary groups throughout the world and shall provide for the representation of the I. W. W. as a constituent member of the Third International.⁶

In May, 1920, the General Executive Board, before the I. W. W. Convention, further clarified its position by reporting:

⁵ Rotogravure Section, June 15, 1930. Also *Nation*, May 7, 1930, p. 533.

⁶ From Mimeographed *Bulletin* (Industrial Workers of the World, Chicago, October 1920). This *Bulletin* is not the report of the board meeting in question. I am unable to procure the original *Bulletin* of 1919.

The Board believed in so far as the Third International was the only workers' International that had ever come into existence throughout history that disagreed with the meek and mild parliamentary programs, that we should show our approval of it as opposed to the opportunism of the Second International; and particularly so, because we were convinced that our Russian Fellow Workers in Russia are only maintaining the political character of the first Soviet Government to hold and gain power temporary [*sic*] during the transitional period from Capitalism to Industrial Communism.⁷

But the new General Executive Board which came into office later in 1920 was hostile to the Third International.⁸ Presumably the new Board cast about for something which would give it an excuse to retract the action taken by the preceding board. It is not entirely clear whether the so-called "Philadelphia situation" (to be immediately described) was seized upon as an excuse by the Board to reconsider affiliation with the Third International; or whether the discussion emanating from the "situation" resulted inevitably in an airing of the entire question of affiliation with Moscow.

The Philadelphia Longshoremen⁹ of the I. W. W. in August, 1920, were loading munitions on ships—munitions said to be for delivery to Wrangel, a commander in charge of forces opposed to the Red Army. As will be described in a later chapter, the Philadelphia Local had not always complied with the strictest code of revolutionary ethics. The Union, with a declared membership of over 7,000, was promptly expelled after the official discovery that its adherents were loading anti-red ammunition.

To Communists outside the I. W. W. and to sympathizers

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Haywood, *op. cit.*, p. 360.

⁹ Marine Transport Workers' Industrial Union, No. 8.

within, the action was the only just one; the treason of the Philadelphians had been properly punished. When, later, the Board began to reconsider, to temporize, and finally to retract its expulsion order,¹⁰ a cry went up from the Communist group. In the meantime, the "situation" had somehow, got mixed up with the entire matter of the Third International. The relationship is obscure and difficult to understand. In the *General Office Bulletin* (Oct. 1920, mimeographed), the following statement appears: "When the G. E. B. came into office, they were confronted with the turmoil of the Philadelphia situation; Communist influence being exercised within and without the organization." It was therefore decided by a process of logic defying penetration to submit to a referendum of the entire organization the question of Moscow affiliation.

On August 14, 1920, *Solidarity* reproduced a letter¹¹ from the Russians, transmitted by Zinoviev to the I. W. W. In the same issue the editor promised to open his columns to correspondents who might wish to discuss affiliation or non-affiliation with the Communist International. For many weeks the discussion went on in the columns of the Chicago paper. Some correspondents were warmly in favor of joining; others professed great open-mindedness—they were willing to learn anything that Russia might have to teach. There were, finally, the good old-fashioned wobblies, who expressed themselves in this fashion:

Many of our members are falling for this political bunk. Recently one old member in Minneapolis openly stated in the hall that the clause, "building the structure of the new society

¹⁰ *Solidarity*, whole no. 111, Dec. 18, 1920, p. 3. Soon after reinstatement the Philadelphia M. T. W. were again suspended for demanding high initiation fees.

¹¹ Whole no. 93, p. 3. The text of this letter is given in full in Appendix I.

within the shell of the old " was bunk. This member is saturated with the Party! Party! Party! and State! State! State! stuff.

The Western publication of the I. W. W., the Seattle *Industrial Worker* seemed during this period to belong to a different organization. Whereas the Chicago paper was, indeed, full of Party! Party! Party! the Seattle weekly was all but silent on the matter of affiliation. On Sept. 11¹² it came out editorially with a flat, curt refusal to have anything to do with the Third International; and professed, in this editorial bull, to represent the western membership.

In the meantime the referendum propositions had been submitted to the rank and file. Each proposition had been previously voted upon by the new General Executive Board. The motions, and the preliminary Board vote, follow:

1. That we endorse the Third International. [Motion lost upon vote by G. E. B.]
2. That we do not endorse the Third International officially, and that we notify the Third International that our position makes it impossible to endorse same as it is outlined in the Zinovieff appeal to the I. W. W., and that we are in favor of an Economic Industrial International. [Motion carried by G. E. B.]
3. That we endorse the Third International with reservations, as follows: that we take no part in parliamentary action whatsoever and that we reserve the right to develop our own tactics according to conditions prevailing. [Motion carried by G. E. B.]¹³

The Communists, during the consideration of the referendum, invaded I. W. W. halls and expounded the virtues of affiliation with the Third International. The anti-Com-

¹² 1920, no. 73, p. 3.

¹³ From *Solidarity*, whole no. 95, Aug. 28, 1920, p. 2.

munists among the I. W. W. were also energetic. Before long the Communist Party felt their cause to be lost, and, in a publication, under the headline, "The Yellow Leaders of the I. W. W.," they said: "There can be no doubt by this time that the referendum for affiliation to the Communist International in the I. W. W. has been defeated."

The hostility of the yellow leaders (the article continued) had been apparent to the Communists for some time, because:

1. Hugh R. Richards, editor of *Solidarity*, had been removed on account of his sympathy with Communist propaganda. (Removed middle of Oct., 1920, "because of the various inconsistencies appearing in" the columns of *Solidarity*.¹⁴ About the time Richards was removed, the columns of *Solidarity* were closed to the free discussion of the question of affiliation.)

2. The I. W. W. had reversed their decision to expel the Philadelphia Longshoremen.

3. The I. W. W. had not removed or disciplined John Sandgren "for his vicious, counter-revolutionary attacks upon the Communist International and its affiliated organizations both here and abroad."¹⁵

*The Communist*¹⁶ went on to say that never before had leaders of a revolutionary movement fallen so low, or been so shortsighted, incompetent, vacillating, or reactionary. The Western member tries to humbug the Eastern member

¹⁴ *Solidarity*, whole no. 103, Oct. 23, 1920, p. 3.

¹⁵ *Solidarity*, whole no. 111, Dec. 18, 1920, p. 4. Sandgren, editor of I. W. W. organ, *One Big Union Monthly*. Sandgren was, a few days later, removed for his attacks on "revolutionary organizations of this and other countries."

¹⁶ The matter of these paragraphs is taken from *The Communist*, Official Organ of the Communist Party of America, Section of the Third Communist International, vol. ii, no. 5, Dec. 15, 1920, p. 2, published by Central Executive Committee; place of publication not given.

that the I. W. W. are revolutionists. The issue of affiliation has been deliberately confused. The Communist minority in the I. W. W. must organize nuclei in the local organizations and carry on a determined propaganda.

Coming back now to the I. W. W., we find the Executive Board giving directions to the membership on the matter of the referendum:

The referendum on the Third International should be thoroughly discussed and beware, as an attempt will be made to stampede the I. W. W. into parliamentary channels, also an attempt is likely to be made . . . to have us endorse all the wild theories put forth by persons seeking prominence by taking the extremist position. . . . BE CAREFUL.¹⁷

In the middle of December, *Solidarity* announced the results of the referendum:

	Yes	No
First motion	602	1658
Second motion	913	1113
Third motion	1111	994 ¹⁸

Three hundred nineteen defective ballots were thrown out. The balloting committee, in English that is obscure,¹⁹ spoke of 127 protest ballots voting *no*, "on all propositions of the Third International, that, therefore defeats the entire referendum of the Third International." The referendum was

¹⁷ *Solidarity*, whole no. 100, Oct. 2, 1920, p. 4.

¹⁸ Whole no. 111, Dec. 18, 1920, p. 4. The fact that only about 2,500 members voted is interesting, and will be discussed more fully in chapter vi. I have not been able to get figures on the geographical distribution of the voting, but would venture the opinion that the most important opposition to Communism came from the Western members.

¹⁹ I have spoken to some Communists concerning this referendum and the obscurity of the ballot committee's report. Their interpretation is that, in order to defeat the third motion, which was carried in the voting, the I. W. W. officers deliberately resorted to a rather hazy method of counting and presenting the results of the vote to the rank and file.

thereupon declared null and void.²⁰ Whatever role the protest ballots played, the fact is that the I. W. W. had definitely refused to have anything to do with the Third International. In keeping with its traditional policy, the I. W. W. had refused to ally itself with "politics".

To the Communists the capture of the I. W. W. seemed desirable. The rebuff given the Third International by the referendum did not dampen Communist ardor. The next move was to try to prevail upon the I. W. W. to join something else, the Red Trade Union International (also named the Red International of Labor Unions). The I. W. W. were made to believe that this International was a strictly economic organization, an international federation of labor organizations, and that adherence to it was consonant with the ideal of purely economic action.

It would be an interesting story to trace the history of the conflict of American and European syndicalism against the Russian Trade Union International.²¹ This cannot be entered into here, however. At the end of the chapter a few comments will be made giving the Communist point of view and suggesting to the reader the fundamental cleavage between the anarcho-syndicalist position and the communist position; but our present concern is to discuss the refusal of the I. W. W. to join the Red International of Labor Unions.

George Williams, a member of the I. W. W., was sent as a delegate to attend the first Congress of the Red Trade Union International, held in Moscow, during July, 1921. Upon Williams' return he made a very full report, first to the General Executive Board, and then to the membership through *Solidarity*. Two weeks before his first article appeared in *Solidarity* (Dec. 25, 1921), the Board had taken its stand.

²⁰ See also, *Minutes 13th Convention*, p. 13.

²¹ See articles on this subject during years 1922-23, *Die Rote Gewerkschafts-Internationale* (Berlin NW, Charitéstrasse, 7).

On December 10, 1921, it recommended that the I. W. W. do not in any manner affiliate with the International.²² Summarizing briefly the Board's arguments, the following reasons are given for not affiliating:

1. The R. I. L. U. Congress condemned the policy and tactics of the I. W. W.
2. The R. I. L. U. is the Communist Party in disguise—a party with which the I. W. W. could, under no circumstances, co-operate.
3. The intention of the R. I. L. U. is to destroy all labor organizations, including the I. W. W., which do not submit to its autocratic discipline.
4. The R. I. L. U. does not truly represent the international revolutionary movement.

On his way home from Moscow, Delegate George Williams, making an enforced stay in Berlin, attended a congress of German syndicalists. In his report to the I. W. W. he thus sums up his impressions of the Berlin Congress:

Discussions . . . indicated an unanimous opinion that the Congress of the Red International was not at all satisfactory to the Syndicalist organizations, but opinion was divided as to what action to take. It was considered advisable to allow the general situation to clear up by waiting until the many organizations represented in Moscow could decide on the reports of their delegates. This, of course, would take some time. When I left Germany for home the situation, as it appeared to me, was as follows:

That practically none of the Syndicalist organizations of Europe will affiliate with the Red International and that these organizations are still very anxious to, in some way, establish connections with other revolutionary organizations. All that is needed is initiative by some organization and the necessary pre-

²² Williams, *The First Congress of the Red Trade Union International at Moscow, 1921* (published by the I. W. W., Chicago, no date), p. 55.

liminary business for the establishment of an Economic International can be easily arranged. And I think that if the I. W. W. sponsored such a move it would get immediate responses.²³

Matters relating to the Berlin and Moscow conferences were quickly settled by the delegates at the Fourteenth Convention of the I. W. W. The following resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, The Industrial Workers of the World, as a revolutionary organization of the world-wide proletariat, believes in and constantly strives to bring about the international solidarity of labor, and

Whereas, There exists in Europe two nuclei for internationals, one at Moscow and the other at Berlin, with differences that prevent their consolidation into one international, and

Whereas, The Industrial Workers of the World is not in such agreement with one or the other of these internationals that it could affiliate with either without forfeiting fundamental principles—making more difficult their unification and lessening the chances for the international solidarity of labor, and

Whereas, We feel the necessity of constantly keeping in close friendly touch with our European fellow proletarians to the end that a greater and better understanding of our common problem, and of our duties and responsibilities in all the countries of the world may be arrived at; thus laying the basis upon which a real international for world labor may be constructed, be it

Resolved, That we do not send any delegate to any International at the present time, and be it further,

Resolved, by this, the 14th Annual Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World, that we instruct the General Executive Board of the I. W. W. to open and maintain through correspondence such friendly intercourse with both these internationals as will keep the workers of Europe and America, and the labor movements of Asia, Australia and Africa fully informed upon labor developments in both hemispheres and pave

²³ Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

the way for the formation of an international in and through which the interests of the workers of the world shall find true and effective expression.²⁴

These 1922 resolutions, coming after the 1920 referendum to have nothing to do with the Communist International, would seem to have ended the relations of the I. W. W. with communistic organizations. But this is to reckon without the persistence of the Communist Party and to ignore its fundamental tenets. The reader is again referred to the comments on the Communist point of view at the end of this chapter. We shall now look at Communist interference in I. W. W. activities from the I. W. W. point of view.

In their official publications the I. W. W. now try to refrain from unnecessarily harsh criticisms of the Communist Party and its subsidiaries; but there is a real hostility—not merely the hostility of differences in philosophy, but the hostility which comes from allegedly inimical actions. Communists are accused of meddling in I. W. W. affairs. They did take part in the split of 1924.²⁵ They are accused of malicious heckling at I. W. W. propaganda meetings; of trying to break up I. W. W. street-corner meetings by letting their own speakers declaim nearby, thus providing counter-attractions. J. Louis Engdahl, communist, has been accused of having identified for the police several I. W. W. to be arrested, following a street mêlée, in which Communists had (allegedly) been the aggressors.²⁶ They are accused of hav-

²⁴ *Minutes 14th Convention*, p. 34.

²⁵ Chapter 4, *infra*.

²⁶ Evening, Sept. 17, 1930, University Place and 14th Street, New York City. See *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 623, Sept. 30, 1930, p. 1. I have not investigated this, feeling that the facts were much less important than the I. W. W. interpretation of the facts. I have mentioned this incident in the presence of two outstanding Communists. They considered the charge too absurd to require refutation.

ing caused the failure of the Thunder Bay, Ontario, lumber workers' strike of 1926.²⁷

The persistence of Communist sentiment in the I. W. W. or of Communist activity, is evidenced by the fact that at the seventeenth convention (1925), four years after red affiliation of any sort had been voted down, a motion was again introduced to pave the way for flirting with Moscow.²⁸ Nor was this the first time since 1921 that the I. W. W. had had to reconsider its decision. At the fifteenth convention the R. I. L. U. asked that a fraternal delegate be seated. This request was denied. At the same convention C. E. Ruthenberg (Communist) attempted to establish a bond between the I. W. W. and the Workers Party. At the sixteenth convention a committee of the R. I. L. U. again presented itself, the object being to force the I. W. W. to reconsider its earlier decisions. The floor was denied to the committee.²⁹ The Communists approached some of the constituent unions of the I. W. W. hoping to win over parts if not the whole. In 1923, at the convention of the Marine Transport Workers' Union, it was necessary to refuse to affiliate with the R. I. L. U.³⁰ The agricultural workers were urged to affiliate with the R. I. L. U. at their 1924 convention.³¹

Regarding Communist activities, an I. W. W. pamphlet says:

It was during 1922-23 that the I. W. W. had its internal struggle with the communists, who undertook to do what all the other

²⁷ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 425, Dec. 15, 1926.

²⁸ *Minutes 17th Convention of the I. W. W.* (Chicago, 1925), p. 18.

²⁹ For the Communist point of view on this incident, see Harrison George, "The Wobblies Meet Again," *Workers' Monthly*, Dec., 1924, p. 69.

³⁰ *Minutes of First Convention of M. T. W. I. U., No. 510* (Chicago, 1923), pp. 24 *et seq.*

³¹ See *Daily Worker* (Chicago), Oct. 2, 1924, p. 1.

forces in American society had failed to do, namely, liquidate, i. e., destroy the I. W. W. The communists wished to drive the I. W. W. back into the A. F. of L. They wished to force on the I. W. W. the theory of revolutionizing the A. F. of L. from within. They have since learned the error of their ways, as the A. F. of L. has made "boring from within" impossible by throwing out the borers, in real old-fashioned style—body, boots and breeches. However, the I. W. W. declined to change and, in the short and decisive struggle that followed, the communists found themselves on the losing side in the I. W. W., just as they are in the A. F. of L.³²

An I. W. W. investigation revealed that "the Communists, by skilful maneuvering, had gained full editorial control of the I. W. W.'s eastern newspaper, the *Industrial Unionist*." ³³ Upon discovery of this situation the *Industrial Unionist* was ordered "to suspend publication, and it ceased to exist." ³⁴ About the same time the editors of the Italian and Hungarian papers in Chicago were removed "because both were Communists and were likewise loading the two papers with pro-Communist argument." ³⁵ During 1926 a "new editorial policy was enunciated, the editing of *Industrial Solidarity* and the *Industrial Pioneer* being combined, with hands off international and foreign affairs." ³⁶

The Communist Party is quite willing to admit its participation in I. W. W. affairs. The following is taken from a Communist document:

In the I. W. W. considerable progress is to be recorded in breaking down the prejudices [of the I. W. W.] . . . against the Red International and against cooperation with the Com-

³² *The History of the I. W. W.* (Chicago, no date), p. 25.

³³ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 212, Nov. 25, 1922, p. 2.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. viii, 1927, p. 99.

munists. This has been done chiefly through the activities of the Red International Affiliation Committee, which has entered actively into all the current questions of the I. W. W., given its revolutionary advice and encouragement, and brought the Communist position more and more before the members in such a manner as to overcome past prejudices. . . . More progress is to be seen in the past year than in all the years previously in realizing Lenin's advice that the militants in the I. W. W. must be won to Communism before a completely unified American Communist movement could be established.³⁷

The Communist Party has caused real losses to the I. W. W. The Communists are likely to exaggerate their influence, and the I. W. W. to minimize it and to restrict those losses to the large urban centres of the East. Possibly the I. W. W. have lost as many as 2,000 members to the Communists; possibly 10 to 20 per cent of the Communist Party is now composed of former I. W. W.'s or former active sympathizers.³⁸ The real advantage of the Communists—if one may speak of advantage in the case of two extremely weak organizations—lies, however, not in the number of persons who have transferred their payment of dues from the one organization to the other, but in the number of persons who now follow Communist leadership in strikes rather than I. W. W. leadership. It is also claimed by Communists that what drift there is, is always away from the I. W. W. towards Communism; a reverse motion has never taken place.

Some of the best men of the I. W. W. have become Communists. Although William Z. Foster did not leave the I. W. W. directly for Communism, it is probably true that his early dissatisfaction with the syndicalists was of the same

³⁷ *The 4th National Convention*, Workers (Communist) Party of America (Chicago, Aug., 1925), p. 16.

³⁸ Guesses, based on conversations with members of both organizations.

sort as the later dissatisfaction of men like Haywood. The reader may be amused by this apostrophe to Foster, addressed by the I. W. W.

Willie; you may print a ton of Labor Heralds each month in the year, and fill them from cover to cover with robber, thief, high-jack. You may shout reactionary, yellow, to the top of your breath, but after it is all over, the I. W. W. will still be the I. W. W. that it was when you were third cook in that lumbercamp in the Northwest.³⁹

To Haywood, members of the I. W. W. do not address playful apostrophes. The wound is too deep. Mere defection might have brought only bantering; but he let his fellow-workers go to Leavenworth without him; E. Gurley Flynn is reported to have said that the I. W. W. were "pretty sore."⁴⁰ There are, of course, two sides—or perhaps two legendary cycles—on the matter of Haywood's flight. Some believe—or, at least, believed—that he absconded with \$35,000. This is not true. Some say that he went on I. W. W. business; and that, once in Russia, it seemed folly to return for the purpose of going to jail. Among some of the extenuating circumstances given today by his former co-workers are, the state of his health, and the connivance of United States government officials. Haywood did suffer from diabetes; he was a very sick, broken man; and the indifferent medical attention of a prison would have permitted him to die within a few months. It has been said by some members of the I. W. W. that government officials connived to get Haywood out of the country. The alleged strategy behind the suspected action was to break the backbone of the I. W. W. the more easily by pointing out the apparent treachery of the leader. Haywood's autobiography evades any answer to the question of his flight.

³⁹ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 224, Feb. 17, 1923, p. 3.

⁴⁰ *New York Times*, Apr. 25, 1921, p. 16, col. 2.

Upon his death *Solidarity*⁴¹ published an article on Haywood, cold but not bitter. His courage was praised. The flight to Russia was termed a "great mistake". His name was linked with the name of another founder of the I. W. W. Frank Bohn, who had also apostatized, and had become, the journal stated, "a propagandist for the power lobby".

Other important members of the I. W. W. who became Communists are:

Harrison George, now acting editor of the *Daily Worker*
Vern Smith, now on editorial staff of *Daily Worker*

George Mink, now National Secretary of the Marine
Workers Industrial Union of the Trade Union Unity
League.

Harold Harvey, now National Organizer of the Marine
Workers Industrial Union of the Trade Union Unity
League

George Hardy, now in England, doing work for the Red
International of Labor Unions

Charles Ashleigh, now in England, on editorial staff of the
English *Daily Worker*

Roy Brown, now actively engaged in Trade Union Unity
League work in Pacific Northwest

Earl Browder, now party leader in New York City

James Cannon, not a member of the Communist Party, but
of the Trotsky opposition; editor of the *Militant* (25
Third Ave., N. Y. C.).⁴²

Perhaps a slight digression is permissible here to mention what has happened to a few members of the I. W. W. who are not Communists. Vincent St. John died in 1929 after a decade of relative inactivity in the I. W. W. I have heard it said that St. John, among outstanding I. W. W. leaders,

⁴¹ May 30, 1928, p. 1.

⁴² This information was secured from members of the staff of the *Daily Worker* during May, 1931.

was the best-loved and most completely trusted official the I. W. W. have ever had. Justus Ebert is editor of an A. F. of L. publication. L. S. Chumley conducts a restaurant in Greenwich Village, New York City. The former managing director of a well-known publishing house in New York is an ex-I. W. W. Several former members are reputed to be successful bootleggers; and a few are reported to be in league with labor racketeers. A former world-champion prize fighter is said to have belonged to the wobblies.

It has been stated in the foregoing pages that the I. W. W. refused to affiliate themselves with Moscow or Berlin and that they decided "to pave the way for the formation of an international in and through which the interests of the workers of the world shall find true and effective expression."⁴³ This was not the first time a similar resolution had been passed. The 1920 Convention had adopted a similar proposition.⁴⁴

The I. W. W. has long had so-called foreign "national administrations," or, more simply, "administrations" in foreign countries.⁴⁵ In 1930 the foreign administrations claimed⁴⁶ were located in Australia, Chile,⁴⁷ Germany, Mexico and Sweden.⁴⁸ They have engaged in important strikes; and, at least in Australia and Chile, have been the objects of a movement of suppression, as in the U. S. *Solidarity*⁴⁹ has referred to active branches in Liverpool, Stock-

⁴³ *Minutes 14th Convention*, p. 34.

⁴⁴ See *Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Unionism*, p. 71.

⁴⁵ See Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, p. 349; note 2, p. 349; pp. 341 *et seq.*

⁴⁶ Taken from *Twenty-five Years of Industrial Unionism*, p. 69.

⁴⁷ Referred to in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th Edition, vol. v, p. 490.

⁴⁸ The Swedish I. W. W. Marine Trans. Workers are said to publish an organ, *Marinarbetaren*. See *Industrial Worker*, *Seattle*, Dec. 17, 1924.

⁴⁹ Nov. 25, 1922.

holm, Antwerp, Hamburg, Sydney, Colon, Tampico, Buenos Aires, Valparaiso, and Rosario. In November, 1924, the Swedish administration gave a luncheon to commemorate the death of Joe Hill, an American I. W. W. Fifty persons attended.⁵⁰ One Otto Rieger, of Stettin, signed a petition, on behalf of an association of 1,000 German workers (he said) to be allowed to become part of the I. W. W.⁵¹ The following headlines appeared in the *Marine Worker* of June 5, 1924:

Want M. T. W. Branch in Japan
Fine Sentiment in Orient for International Organization
Members Want Hall in Yokohama

On May 22, 1920, *Solidarity*⁵² announced that it had "decided to recognize the Shop Stewards' and Workers Committees movement of Great Britain." Cards were to be interchangeable in the two organizations, and the two bodies were to work together for the uniting of all organizations which believe in economic direct action.⁵³

While the preceding paragraphs may give the reader the opinion that strong foreign branches of the I. W. W. girdle the earth, the facts are otherwise. It is only when one concentrates many exaggerated reports of foreign administrations into a few lines that the consciousness of a closely-knit world-wide organization appears. Contact with these organizations is very casual. And this contact—such as it is—seems to be made by the Marine Transport Workers of the I. W. W., who have been referred to in *Solidarity*⁵⁴ as the "missionaries" of the international movement.

⁵⁰ *Industrial Worker*, Dec. 17, 1924.

⁵¹ *Marine Worker* (official organ of the M. T. W. I. U., No. 510 of the I. W. W., New York), Dec. 15, 1923.

⁵² Whole no. 81, p. 1.

⁵³ See also, for discussion of same matter, *Solidarity*, whole no. 80, May 15, 1920, p. 3.

⁵⁴ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 212, Nov. 25, 1922, p. 1.

The Marine Worker, in several of its issues during 1925 and 1926 stirs up a tremendous amount of enthusiasm for an hemispherical and an international convention of marine workers. Plans for "one big marine strike in the whole of the western hemisphere some time in the near future" are to be discussed.⁵⁵ An international conference did take place in New Orleans, in the early part of 1925.⁵⁶ Delegates from Argentina, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and the United States were present. It was resolved that a world-wide conference be held every three years, and an hemispherical conference every year. The world conferences were to be held in two places simultaneously "in order that it will be available to delegates from the two Major Oceans." There were resolutions regarding an international strike, the boycott of California products, and the release of class-war prisoners.

The next international conference was to be held in Cuba; but the alleged persecutions of progressive labor bodies on that island made the delegates decide to meet at Montevideo, Uruguay. The congress met on March 20, 1926. The delegates resolved to work for the release of class-war prisoners, to deplore war-fascism, to select a propaganda committee which would gather statistical data on the labor conditions of marine workers. Delegates from Brazil, Chile, Russia, the United States, Uruguay and from the Red International of Labor Unions were present.

There is no need to go into further detail regarding the international activities of the I. W. W. The organization itself does not lay claim to having done much by way of international organization. The *American Labor Yearbooks* say nothing about the "world conferences" of the Marine Workers' Union. And in the official history, *Twenty-Five*

⁵⁵ *Marine Worker*, Feb. 1, 1925.

⁵⁶ Proceedings in *Marine Worker*, April 1, 1925.

Years of Industrial Unionism, nothing is made of its positive international activities.⁵⁷

The Marxian fatalism which decrees that inevitably the new society is developing in the shell of the old, the faith that the I. W. W. alone are true to Marxian philosophy—this fatalism and this faith govern the I. W. W. attitude in industrial relations. The union says:

Specifically the I. W. W. is the result of highly centralized American capitalism. This particular form and substance of capitalism is spreading rapidly all over the world. And as shadow follows the body, so the I. W. W. should and will follow capitalism to the farthest reaches of the earth.⁵⁸

An appraisal of the Communist attitude towards the I. W. W. may best be introduced by quoting an early pronouncement of the Communists:

The Communist Party regards the workers in the ranks of the I. W. W. as comrades in the class war. At the same time, the Communist Party rejects the absurd theory, entertained by the I. W. W., that the revolution can be accomplished by the direct seizure of industry without first overthrowing the capitalist state. . . . The Communist Party will put forth every effort to overcome the syndicalist prejudices of the members of the I. W. W. and to win them over to the position of the Communist International.⁵⁹

Most of what lies between the I. W. W. and the Commun-

⁵⁷ Some interesting but not important seized correspondence respecting I. W. W. plans for an international conference and international action is to be found in *Report of Joint Legislative Committee Investigating Seditious Activities*, filed April 24, 1920, in the Senate of the State of New York vol. i, pp. 893-902.

⁵⁸ *Twenty-five Years of Industrial Unionism*, p. 73.

⁵⁹ *Constitution and Program of the Communist Party of America—Adopted by the Joint Unity Convention of the Communist Party and United Communist Party of America* (no place of publication, no date), p. 27.

ists can be understood if it is sympathetically comprehended that the Communists consider themselves to be the ineluctable leaders of the revolutionary movement in the United States (and in the world). That is an axiom rather than a boast, from their point of view. If the reader accepts this self-evident premise—self-evident to any Communist—it is easy to understand that, what to the I. W. W. and perhaps to outsiders is Communist meddling, seems, to the Communist, to be necessary intervention. Specifically, the Communist feels himself to be the only possible creator of a revolution; anyone who interferes with this creative process must be re-educated. Now, to the Communist, the I. W. W., pretending to fight under the revolutionary banner, are spreading non-revolutionary doctrines. They are doubly dangerous; first, by being unrevolutionary, and second, by professing the philosophy of revolution. They are enemies, masquerading before the typical worker as friends. The anarcho-syndicalist is a “social-fascist.”

“Social-fascism”⁶⁰ is not an easy term to define, or even to describe. It resembles a little the contemptuous “*bourgeois* reformism” used by earlier revolutionists. The thought seems to be that today there are liberals, radicals, socialists, anarchists, neo-Malthusians, Gandhists, professed revolutionists like the I. W. W. and others, glib enough in their criticisms of capitalism as it now exists; many will speak of “economic planning,” or of “revolution by evolution”—but they are not authentic revolutionists. Such persons, for all of their dissatisfaction with the present economic order would uphold it in a crisis. Thus, let the day

⁶⁰ See Proceedings of Sixth World Congress, 1928, Communist International, Moscow. To be found in vol. viii, no. 92, *International Press Correspondence*, Special Number, English Edition, Dec. 31, 1928, “The Programme of the Communist International”, p. 1765—Berggasse 31, Vienna IX. Also, *Communism and the International Situation* (London, 1929).

of barricades arrive; in that day the Communist will find facing him those very persons who are now outraged both by Communism and capitalism-as-it-is.

The first proof adduced to uphold a charge of social-fascism is that the I. W. W. are not Communists. Another is that the I. W. W. are daily becoming less and less aggressive. The fact, too, that ex-I. W. W.'s find it possible to engage in labor racketeering and in A. F. of L. activities, shows that revolutionary ideals were never firmly implanted. It is charged that the I. W. W. had rather see a strike lost than see it won under Communist leadership. Examples of this are cited in a Duluth Longshoremen's strike of early 1931, and an Illinois coal strike of 1930. The I. W. W. are accused of being unwilling to organize the unemployed during the depression of 1930-31, because the jobless man cannot pay dues.⁶¹ The I. W. W. are said to have tolerated *bourgeois* religion in organizing certain Polish workers. In this case the I. W. W. proclaimed—so the charge runs—that it was not opposed to the Catholic religion as such; that the Communist Party was; that, therefore, the Poles would do well to accept I. W. W. leadership. Since the Communists are uncompromisingly opposed to organized religion, it is obvious that an appeal for membership based on religious tolerance is to be looked upon as treason to the revolution. The industrial surveys of the I. W. W., to be discussed later in this book, are considered to be the weird vagaries of cloudy minds. It is fanciful, says the Communist, to aid in the introduction of rationalization schemes under a capitalist regime, for the benefit of capitalism.⁶²

⁶¹ The I. W. W. have organized a dues-less unemployed union. See pp. 153 *et seq.*, *infra*.

⁶² The Communist charges in this paragraph, given out in an interview with members of the *Daily Worker* staff, may or may not be true. That is not the point. The important thing is that the Communist interpretation be given.

Before ending this chapter and going on to the next, which deals with the schism of 1924, we must pay careful attention to the fact that the arrival at a decision to reject communism was not achieved without great friction. It was not inconsistent with the constitutions and by-laws of either organization for men to be members of both the Communist Party and the I. W. W. It was inevitable that men serving two masters should clash with those who served only the I. W. W. The next chapter will bring this out more clearly.

CHAPTER IV

THE SIXTEENTH CONVENTION AND SCHISM

BRISSENDEN pointed out¹ that a decentralization crisis had taken place in the I. W. W. during 1913; that the issue of decentralization had been merely smothered; and he prophesied that the I. W. W. might yet be "unscrambled." That unscrambling took place in 1924; and it is the purpose of this chapter to shed light on the obscure forces which culminated in a split some seven years ago.

The superficial, summarizing facts are easy to state. In the fall of 1924 one faction of the I. W. W., composed in large part of lumber workers, seceded from the main organization. The seceders adhered to more or less definite principles which they later resolved into an "Emergency Program." For this reason they are generally referred to by the I. W. W. and others as the "E.P.'s."; and these initials will be used here to designate them, both before and after the adoption of their program. Their reasons for secession, as given to the *American Labor Yearbook*,² were that the 1924 convention of the I. W. W. was controlled by a political machine, and that power was too highly centralized at general headquarters. This group was led by James Rowan and M. Raddock.

The parent organization, represented by the leaders Tom Doyle and Joe Fisher, giving the reasons for the split to the

¹ Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, pp. 305 *et seq.* See also R. F. Hoxie, *Trade Unionism in the United States* (New York, 1917), pp. 142 *et seq.* Hoxie's brilliant analysis of the forces making for disunion in the I. W. W. is as appropriate to the crisis of 1924 as it was to the crisis of 1913.

² Vol. vii, 1926, pp. 182 *et seq.*

*Yearbook*³ says: "The controversy arose over the question whether the I. W. W. was to be a federation of industrial unions or a highly centralized organization." Thus, the E. P.'s and the I. W. W. seem to agree that the fundamental issue was that of centralization.

To an observer, however, the issue was not so clean-cut. The communist press, following with hawk-like eyes the motions of the I. W. W. during this period, made a different interpretation. They looked upon the schism as a process of clarification, in which the Doyle-Fisher faction would find that the only logical position to take would be the Communist position; while the Rowan-Raddock faction, muddle-headed and illogical, would, according to the Communists, run its futile, anarchist course to self-destruction. The *Daily Worker* abandoned this interpretation as the Sixteenth Convention neared its close; and at the end was as much exasperated by the imputed stupidity of the Doyle-Fisher faction as it had been by that of the Rowan-Raddock faction.⁴

³ *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. vi, 1925, p. 105.

⁴ As evidence of Communist interest, the following partial list of articles referring to the I. W. W. split, published in the *Daily Worker* during 1924, is given:

Date	Page	Date	Page	Date	Page	Date	Page
Aug. 2	1	Sept. 4	3	Oct. 18	1	Oct. 28	1
4	1	16	3	18	2	29	2
7	2	17	2	20	3	31	5
12	1	18	2	22	1	Nov. 1	6
13	2	19	2	23	4	3	3
15	3	27	1	23	1	4	1
16	1	29	3	23	2	4	6
18	1	Oct. 11	1	24	4	5	2
22	1	14	1	25	1	7	2
25	1	15	1	25	4	8	3
26	1	16	1	27	1	11	2
27	2	17	1	27	5	12	1
						26	2
						Dec. 24	6
						1925	
						Jan. 13	5

It is important to notice that, whereas the E. P. faction may be looked upon as an offshoot more revolutionary than the parent body, the Communists viewed it as a hopelessly reactionary group. This paradox may be explained by the differences in revolutionary philosophy between the E. P. and the Communists. The E. P. like the parent body was naive in its revolutionary philosophy. The Communists on the other hand have a very complex philosophy of revolution—one which was tested experimentally in 1905 in Russia; which grew and changed between 1905 and 1917; which has been tested again, amended and modified between 1917 and the present. To the Communists it seemed as if the Doyle-Fisher group, with their centralizing policy and potential tolerance of political action, were nearer to Communism than the pure and simple anarcho-syndicalists. Doyle and Fisher stood for a large, growing union, with small regard for strict anarcho-syndicalist theory; Rowan and Raddock for purer anarcho-syndicalism—something which seemed to the Communists more difficult to work with.

The point of view of this study, while not in conflict with any of the above interpretations of the schism of 1924, leads to the belief that the split was caused by many issues, petty and grave, which had harried the organization for many years. No single explanation is sufficient. Let us, in the next few pages, inspect the points of friction which had developed in the I. W. W.

INDIVIDUAL CLEMENCY. — The resentment of certain groups in the I. W. W. to individual clemency has already been taken up in a preceding chapter. The Emergency Program group, reflecting an earlier dissatisfaction, voted in their 1925 convention, that imprisoned members accepting parole or individual clemency, and those refusing to stand trial or face sentence were automatically expelled.⁵

⁵ For summary of 1925, E. P. Convention, see *American Labor Year-*

In the mimeographed minutes of the E. P. convention of 1925, the following sentences were included in a letter ordered sent to all "class-war prisoners":

The delegates . . . know that recourse to legal technicalities, crawling petitions, kow-towing to master class courts, and the building up of funds to keep a lot of worthless pie-cards in office has proved its uselessness. . . . Secessionists have done all in their power to disrupt the organization, to break down the only effective fighting weapon the workers have. (Minor typographical errors have been corrected).⁶

By "effective fighting weapon" is meant organization at the point of production.

It should be added that while no direct proof can be offered, there is much good reason to believe that the alignment which took place over clemency was a pre-existing alignment. The overt condemnation of "clemency hounds" did not break out until 1923. The alignment had probably existed since the trials of 1918; and the basis probably lay in the acceptance or rejection of Communism.⁷

VIOLATION OF BUSICK INJUNCTION.—Claude Erwin, member of the I. W. W., was the spokesman of those who resented the publication of the two following sentences in an I. W. W. organ:

We need thousands of workers to go to Southern California this winter and violate the Busick injunction.

We must assault, turn over, and entirely destroy this capital-

book, vol. vii, 1926, pp. 182 *et seq.* See also *General Referendum Ballot of the I. W. W.*, as Adopted by the Sixteenth Annual Convention of the I. W. W. (E. P. faction). Held at Ogden, Utah, July 15 to August 3, 1925; sent out from General Supply Station, box 1125, Chicago, Ill. No date; probably September, 1925. See also mimeographed report of convention minutes.

⁶ *Minutes of E. P. Convention* (mimeographed, 1925), p. 39.

⁷ See *Workers' Monthly*, March, 1925, p. 209.

ist system that sets us tasks, and steals our sustenance, and sports with our lives.⁸

The appearance of these sentences in an I. W. W. organ was looked upon as something that might make easier the imprisonment of members in California. An E. P. bulletin says: that the articles which included the above quotations "played right into the hands of the prosecutor in 'Criminal Syndicalist' cases and were used as evidence to railroad to the penitentiaries, some of our members in California."⁹ Vern Smith, their author, was therefore believed by some to have endangered, deliberately or thoughtlessly, the freedom of his fellow workers in California. Charges were filed against him, but he was exonerated.¹⁰ Thereupon Erwin expressed not only his personal feelings, but also those of the group for which he was spokesman:

I want to call the attention of the delegates here to what they have voted on and accepted almost unanimously. The Defense in California has spent hundreds of dollars in the courts on appeals in getting decisions that the I. W. W. preamble does not violate the criminal syndicalism law or the injunction. This decision has been handed down, and now the delegates to this convention accept and concur with a report . . . which states that the I. W. W. preamble does violate the Busick injunction. This will be used in the courts of California against the members on trial.

The grievance committee asked that I retract my charges and apologize to the accused. In answer to this I will state that when Vern Smith and the others charged, and the delegates who voted in favor of this report go to California and violate the injunction, when they go to California and attempt to assault,

⁸ *Minutes 16th Convention of the I. W. W.* (Chicago 1924), pp. 114 *et seq.*

⁹ *Emergency Joint Branch Bulletin, I. W. W.* (Mimeographed; Portland, Oregon; March 20, 1925).

¹⁰ *Minutes 16th Convention*, pp. 115, 117.

tear down and completely destroy the capitalist system; when they go to California and do the things they advocate in the September and October Industrial Pioneers; when they go there and assist the ones fighting for the right to organize in California instead of staying safely away and dictating to the ones doing the fighting, then I will apologize, and not before.¹¹

JEALOUSY OF CONSTITUENT INDUSTRIAL UNIONS AND INDUSTRIAL UNION PATRIOTISM. — "One-ten" was the agricultural workers' union. Brissenden has pointed out¹² that its strength might lead to a split "before many months". The prosecutions in which the whole organization was involved helped to hold the I. W. W. together. But in the early nineteen-twenties slumbering jealousies awoke. While the struggle of 1924 involved all the constituent unions, it was primarily a conflict of "One-twenty" (lumber workers) against "One-ten" (agricultural workers).

The E. P. did not direct its principal attacks directly against "One-ten" but rather against certain practices alleged to be in vogue at General Headquarters. Since Doyle and Fisher were both members of "One-ten", the conflict between the two large unions was obvious. In an E. P. unofficial publication¹³ the secretary-treasurer of "One-ten" is ironically referred to as "the bright young man". A few lines below we find named the members of the "gang" attempting to throttle free speech in the I. W. W. press. This "gang", it is alleged, includes several "One-ten" men or their "heelers and hangers on."

¹¹ *Minutes 16th Convention*, p. 117.

¹² Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, pp. 339 *et seq.*

¹³ *To the Members of the I. W. W.*—no date or source of publication given. Probably published in the late summer of 1923; probably written by, or under the direction of, Bert Lorton, or Jim Quinlan, or F. A. Blossom, or any two or all three. These three men were suspended for provoking a controversy. See *Industrial Solidarity*, July 2, 1924. The suspension of these members, while not important in itself, was one of the immediate causes behind the split.

The leader of the lumber workers ("One-twenty"), James Rowan, was for a time one of the leaders of the E. P. and the most important minority leader in 1924. A few words about him as an individual may help to explain both the conflict between "One-twenty" and "One-ten" and the larger conflict in the organization.

"Jimmy" Rowan, of the lumber workers' union, was a member of long standing and of some importance. During his confinement in prison until the end of 1923 he stood with those who had refused to make application for individual clemency. He was among those who had argued for organization on the job rather than legal defense ("political action"). Upon his liberation he took an active part in organization affairs, and was sent to headquarters in Chicago as a member of the General Executive Board, representing his constituent union, "One-twenty". His following among the lumber workers was so large that he was derisively named the "Jesus of Nazareth of the lumberjacks of the Northwest".¹⁴ Among those on the General Executive Board who, as later events proved, sided with him, were several representatives of other industrial unions. The general administration officials were solidly opposed to Rowan and his sympathizers.

Rowan in prison had got news of the I. W. W. and he had long ago made up his mind that affairs in the organization were not going properly. The Chicago group were labor fakirs, or, as I. W. W. cant has it, they were "pie-cards". They were intent upon shearing the power of representatives of constituent industrial unions, upon crushing the independent life out of small unions and making them mere appendages to the I. W. W. "machine". They were not promoting, to use a phrase he liked, "clean-cut industrial unionism." His business contacts with general administra-

¹⁴ *Minutes 16th Convention*, p. 125.

tion officials confirmed him in his view; since he was looking for grafters he found them, he thought, in the persons of Doyle and Fisher, the two leading general officers.

In brief, Rowan represented himself to be honest, and thus opposed to the dishonest throwing away of workers' dollars by headquarters officials; to be adespotic, hence opposed to centralization; to be uncompromising, hence antagonized by the mild tone of legal conflict, but joyously aroused by the sharp cry of industrial warfare. He was a rugged lumberjack, shaped in the frontier tradition. In spite, however, of his uncompromising spirit, he is accused of having written a letter¹⁵ to the Senate begging that he be not deported upon the expiration of his term in prison. In this letter he confesses to being thoroughly Americanized—he was Irish—and to liking the country and the people very much. On the other hand his pecuniary honesty has never been contested in the printed matter to which I have had access.

This rather long discussion of Rowan's attitudes has been given, first, because he was the central figure in the controversy for a time; and, second, because he probably stood as a type of those who seceded, or agitated for secession—the anarchistic, decentralizing, pioneer-like, far-Western type.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP.—To a revolutionary group which believes in uncompromising warfare against the institutions existing under capitalism, it seems inconsistent to acquire property and pay taxes. During the summer of 1924 there was a movement in the I. W. W. to buy a headquarters building, and a countermovement.¹⁶ A building was ultimately bought at 3333 Belmont Avenue with the aid of the Garland

¹⁵ Reproduced in *Special General Office Bulletin*, August 1, 1924, p. 18, published by the I. W. W.

¹⁶ *General Office Bulletin*, July, 1924, p. 12.

Fund. The I. W. W. moved in during the spring of 1925.¹⁷ At the 1925 E. P. convention it was resolved that the organization was not to own property.¹⁸

MILD TONE OF I. W. W. PUBLICATIONS.—The tone of the usual revolutionary document judged from the viewpoint of the average man, even though he be a liberal, is extravagant, turgid, magniloquent. A revolutionary tract alternates from delusions of persecution to delusions of grandeur. Now, when the I. W. W., during the period of the trials, had to send out appeals to the average man and to the liberal, the inflammatory material was smothered, and the appeals for funds were softly worded. This concession to the "bourgeois" was greeted with ridicule by the E. P., and even before 1924 by those who had considered themselves to be hardy revolutionists. Thus, P. J. Welinder, who later sided *against* the secessionists, said:

And how we have prostituted our program and our presentation of our principles in order to reach this powerless, imaginary "Public". In order to break into the capitalist press we have omitted anything obnoxious to them . . . and camouflaged and distorted other parts [of our program]. . . .¹⁹

Upon quoting the mild statements from a "circular letter sent out to liberal bourgeois", an E. P. group asks sneeringly, "Fellow workers, how long will we stand for this sort of stuff?"²⁰

The fear of falling into *bourgeois* habits recurs again and again in E. P. publications. Thus, in the 1925 convention of the E. P., a motion was made that "ways and means other than offering prizes *bourgeoise* [*sic*] style be devised [*sic*] as a means of increasing the circulation of our press".²¹

¹⁷ See *Daily Worker*, April 24, 1925, p. 3.

¹⁸ *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. vii, 1926, p. 184.

¹⁹ *General Office Bulletin*, Sept., 1923, p. 19.

²⁰ *To the Members of the I. W. W.*

²¹ *Minutes E. P. Convention*, p. 32.

At the twelfth convention of the I. W. W., held in 1920, a rather equivocal resolution was passed regarding sabotage and the circulation of books on sabotage in the organization. In this resolution the I. W. W. condemned violence or destruction, but—without positively stating it—maintained that sabotage was neither violence nor destruction.²² The E. P. did not make an issue of the rather nebulous attitude taken by the I. W. W. towards sabotage. Several declarations were made, however, by branches against the mildness of the official I. W. W. attitude towards sabotage. It may be stated, parenthetically, that the I. W. W. no longer uses the word sabotage officially. “Economic Action,” “Direct Action”, or “Economic Direct Action” are the phrases now used; and direct action is defined to be “such action as you use when you try to improve your conditions by acting in person, jointly with your fellows on the industrial field.”²³ Against this growing tendency, beginning before 1920, to mitigate the harsh sound of the word sabotage, protests were made. Thus, a Detroit branch of the Construction Workers’ Union protested in a three-page letter circularized²⁴ in the summer of 1920. At least one branch replied to this in a similar vein, in a letter purporting to represent the Transportation Workers Industrial Union (600), over the names of John Pajuoja and M. Merilahti. These protests, apparently, caused little stir in the organization; and, during the criminal-syndicalism prosecutions in various states, it was unwise and dangerous to air one’s views. On the other hand

²² This resolution is quoted in *Solidarity*, whole no. 81, May 22, 1920, p. 1, and is reproduced in appendix 2, *infra*.

²³ *What Is the I. W. W.?* (published by the I. W. W., Chicago, no date), p. 14.

²⁴ Issued by Branch 2, Construction Workers’ Industrial Union, Detroit, Michigan; undated, but obviously sent out during the early summer of 1920.

many a devout anarcho-syndicalist must have felt that his organization was backsliding.

As has been said, the E. P. did not make a point of the re-interpretation of the word sabotage. It had, however, a tendency to worship the phrase, “organization at the point of production”—a phrase which, if it does not suggest sabotage, at least suggests industrial action. This is rather interestingly brought out in contrast to a practice of the agricultural workers. The harvest workers’ jobs last but a few days; and the men go from job to job by stealing rides on freight trains. Part of their organizational strategy is to prevent non-members of the I. W. W. from riding. Sometimes this is done by offering to non-members the alternatives of buying a union ticket or getting off the freight train.²⁵ The E. P. disapproved of this method of organization because it was not organization at the point of production. It expressed its disapproval by including the following on the referendum ballot relating to the proceedings of the 1925 convention:

Whereas, box-car action of selling union cards for tickets on freight trains is out of date and does more harm than good,

Therefore, be it Resolved that the organization do away with such tactics and function as a strict labor union on the point of production and not on box-cars.

HEADQUARTERS EXPENSES.—From the E. P. point of view General Headquarters was extravagant. Some salaries, generous when matched with the earnings of a migratory laborer, and allowances for trips and other things, gave the E. P. the feeling that their hard-earned dollars were being spent frivolously. Complaints on this score are rather vague and abusive, the accusations running somewhat in this vein: that pretty much everybody connected with “Headquarters”

²⁵ Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, pp. 338 and 340.

or General Defense is a "pie-card" or "grafter," and that favorites or dupes are in their pay.²⁶

There was, to be more specific, real fury in the complaint that Ralph Chaplin, a prisoner who had accepted individual clemency, was now a paid and relatively well-paid, member of the General Defense Committee.²⁷ It was also complained that one Jack Leheney was employed as an organizer, that he was given \$800, and that he did not accomplish anything.²⁸

After the split the E. P. organized themselves in such a manner as to reduce to a minimum the number of paid officials. A general supply clerk, to be hired by the general executive board, only when his services were needed, was to replace the general administrative officials of the parent I. W. W. There was no national defense committee. There was to be no per capita tax to be paid to general administration headquarters. Each member of the General Executive Board was to be paid out of funds from the constituent industrial union that he represented.²⁹

ABSENCE OF FREEDOM OF DISCUSSION IN I. W. W. PRESS.—It is obvious that long before the summer of 1924 the I. W. W. press was not an open forum. One has only to look at the two chief organs, *Industrial Solidarity* and *Industrial Worker* to realize this, and to compare those two organs with the highly controversial *General Office Bulletins*,

²⁶ A perusal of almost any Rowan-Raddock or E. P. publication will confirm this. See bibliography.

²⁷ See *To the Members of the I. W. W.*, a leaflet identified in footnote, *supra*, p. 104. See also preceding chapter.

²⁸ *Look Back of the Injunction and Learn the Causes* (E. P., Chicago, 1924). Also, *Extracts from the Verbatim Report of the 16th General Convention of the I. W. W.* (I. W. W., Chicago, 1924?), pp. 91 *et seq.* Doyle asserted that the amount was only \$450; *ibid.*, pp. 25 *et seq.*

²⁹ *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. vii, 1926, pp. 182 *et seq.* Also, *General Referendum Ballot of the I. W. W.* sent out to membership after 1925 E. P. convention.

during the same period. Judging from the *General Office Bulletin*, with its restricted circulation, it would seem that great freedom of expression was granted in its pages. It appeared however, only once a month; and many members did not have easy access to it. It is not for us to decide whether the wisest policy was that pursued—the prohibition of discussion in the organs with wide circulation, tempered by free discussion in an organ of restricted circulation. We have only to note that one of the E. P. complaints was the crushing of free speech in the I. W. W. press.³⁰

It should be noted in passing that Blossom, one of the outstanding members of the opposition before the break, is said to have written that the "issue" should be "camouflaged" under the guise of a fight for free speech.³¹ If this be true one quite naturally wonders how many other matters were used as "camouflage" to hide the main issue, and what that main issue was.

TEMPORIZING WITH COMMUNISM.—At the 1925 Convention of the E. P. severe and probably quite untrue accusations were made that the majority was dominated in a sinister way by Communists. These charges, though perhaps exaggerating the nefarious purposes of Communists, contain at least this much truth, that the Communists sided with the Doyle-Fisher faction.³² The E. P. charges follow, in part:

Seeing that they [the Communists in the I. W. W.] could make no real headway, the communists in the organization, confessed or secret, formed a conspiracy into which the secret service

³⁰ This complaint comes from too many sources to require particularizing. See E. P. bibliography, *infra*.

³¹ *Bulletin* no. 1, Sacramento Branch, Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union No. 110, Sacramento, mimeographed June 1, 1925.

³² *The 4th National Convention*, Workers (Communist) Party of America, p. 16.

agents of the government and the pensioners and hangers-on of the organization gladly joined hands, each one for their special purposes. Some of them were interested merely in making a pitiful living on the organization. Others were merely interested in wrecking it, in accordance with instructions from Moscow and Washington, while others may have been interested in both these aims. (a few typographical errors have been corrected).³³

In a manifesto issued by Rowan, probably during the summer of 1924 (two-page mimeographed leaflet, *Look Back of the Injunction and Learn the Causes*) the general administration of the I. W. W. were described as: "The Grand Goblins of the IIO hi-jack communist machine."

"HOBO" v. "HOMEGUARD".—The hobo is the migratory worker; the homeguard is the non-migratory worker. The former is footloose, homeless, uncouth; the latter may have a home and family, and is perhaps not so much accustomed to hardship and rude living. In the I. W. W. the hobo and the homeguard psychology never fused. The following complaint will make this clear:

[The I. W. W. are] the industrial workers of the woods, and not of the world. That is, the migratory psychology dominates, to the disorganization of the I. W. W. itself.

Let's make this plain. In an Ohio city an I. W. W. headquarters is wrecked and organization almost entirely destroyed. Why? Because the migratory element emphatically insisted on making a "flop house" of club rooms to which the homeguards wished to bring their wives and families. Again, in New York City, a meeting is addressed by a migratory worker. He shouts, "To hell with your jobs. To hell with Defense! Be independent of your jobs; throw it up and go to jail, as I do." The result is the driving away of married homeguards, with wives and children, who cannot afford such sacrifices. . . .³⁴

³³ *Minutes E. P. Convention*, p. 34.

³⁴ *General Office Bulletin*, Sept., 1923, p. 16.

"HALL-CATS" v. "JOB-ITES".—In those places where the members of locals were mostly migratory workers there was a tendency for those away at work to have nothing to do with branch discussions, to cast no votes, to take no part in forming policies. The so-called "hall-cats", also known as "spittoon philosophers" existed somehow without working. They managed to be present at all branch meetings; and, without knowing much at first hand about conditions on the job, shaped policies for those who were at work. This situation was said to have led to the emergence of small governing cliques and to a loss of voice on the part of those who were really workers.³⁵

HIGH INITIATION FEES AND DUES.—The Marine Transport Workers of the I. W. W. had for a long time been straining at the rule which decreed that a low initiation fee and low dues were to be standard throughout the constituent unions of the I. W. W.³⁶ The nullification or abolition of this rule was deemed to be contrary to the spirit of revolutionary industrial unionism. The revolutionist takes the vow of poverty; and the industrial union whose coffers are too well filled is assumed to have lost its fervor.

During the early part of 1924 the members of the I. W. W. had submitted to them a referendum ballot on which they were to decide whether constituent unions might raise their initiation fees and dues. The Marine Transport Workers had been instrumental in pressing upon the membership these ballots. Many members of the I. W. W. were outraged at the effrontery of even entertaining such a proposition. When, in addition to this effrontery, the news leaked out from the ballot committee that approximately 750 ballots cast by the Marine Transport Workers appeared to be

³⁵ *Re-Organization or Abandonment of Principles* (published by Pat Cantwell; Jan. 12, 1925), p. 1.

³⁶ *Minutes 2nd Convention Marine Transport Workers* (New York, 1924), p. 16. See also Saposs, *Left Wing Unionism*, pp. 156 et seq.

fraudulent, the E. P. group had ammunition for veritable broadsides against the General Administration Officers.

Joe Fisher, a General Administration Official, was accused of unconstitutionally permitting the referendum; of winking at the fraudulent ballots; of making a superficial examination and of exonerating the Marine Transport Workers. His trip of investigation was held, besides, to have been undertaken without due authorization; indeed, the trip had been a junket, said the protagonists of the Emergency Program.³⁷

THE BURNS LETTERS.—There was some dispute in general headquarters, but apparently little among the membership, on the policy of publishing the so-called "Burns letters."³⁸ Some members of the I. W. W. came into possession—as the euphemistic phrase has it—of letters which tended to bespatter the integrity of a governmental official, Mr. William J. Burns, then Director of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice. The evidence of the documents as published by the I. W. W.³⁹ led to the conclusion that Mr. Burns, while a governmental official, employed detectives from an agency in which he had a pecuniary interest. From Vern Smith, then editor of *Industrial Solidarity*, one may learn that among several reasons for wavering on a policy, was the reason that publication of

³⁷ See *Special General Office Bulletin*, Aug. 1, 1924, p. 10; letter from a member of the ballot committee.

See *General Office Bulletin* (published by those who later became E. P.'s) August, 1924, pp. 2, 5; "Charges Against Organizer."

See *General Office Bulletin*, July, 1924, pp. 2, 14; "Constitutional Stagnancy or Revolutionary Progress;" "The Referendum Ballot Scandal;" "Letter from Ballot Committee Member."

See *Extracts from the Verbatim Report of the 16th General Convention of the I. W. W.*, pp. 76-114.

³⁸ See Sidney Howard, *The Labor Spy* (New York, 1924), pp. 128 *et seq.*

³⁹ Published in *Industrial Solidarity*, whole nos. 281, 282; March 22, 29, 1924.

the letters could be looked upon as "political action". Those most opposed to publication, according to Vern Smith, were two members who were linked with the E. P., Raddock and Bowerman. Both these men, it may be added, are suspected by individual members of the I. W. W. of having been *agents provocateurs*; and for this suspected reason they would have been opposed to the publication of the documents. It is also said that these two men being (allegedly) *agents provocateurs*, it was natural to find them among the disruptors, in the ranks of those who took the initiative in the schism.

OTHER CAUSES.—It would not be a proper analysis of the temper and attitudes of the I. W. W. at this time if it were not recognized that many other matters contributed to a spirit of dissension. Certainly personal ambitions, jealousies, and vanities played their part. The incompetency of officials, their tactlessness, their inability to inspire confidence, and to establish themselves as respected leaders—all these played a part. As a fact complementary to official incompetence should be mentioned the cynicism of members, their tendency to suspect their officers of sinister motives—a tendency which, it must be admitted, was partially the result of frequent betrayals on the part of former officers.

Finally it should be pointed out that in the several subsections given above, a factitious classification has been adopted. Thus, for example, the issue of communism is inseparably bound up with the principal issue of centralization, as well as with the subsidiary issues of clemency, the Burns documents, and other alleged forms of "political action." The quarrel was a smoldering fire rather than a series of blazes.

With the background given above we can now pass on to the events of the summer of 1924 and to the Sixteenth Con-

vention. The immediate cause of the split is to be found in the unwillingness of headquarters officials to call a meeting of the General Executive Board upon the request of several members of that Board. The fault here lay, probably, with the headquarters officials. Those members of the Board whose request had not been granted decided to constitute themselves as *the* executive board, and to meet alone. Thereupon they asked the membership to look upon them as the true governing body of the I. W. W. They sent out letters, announcements, and at least one general office bulletin, identical in format with the usual *General Office Bulletin*. While the seceders were thus exercising the functions of the responsible governing body of the I. W. W., the Doyle-Fisher faction it is alleged, three times used violence on the newly constituted executive board. Revolvers, blackjacks, and paid gunmen, it is declared, were used to oust them and to take possession of office equipment.⁴⁰ The Doyle-Fisher faction admit that some fifteen of them "removed" the "disruptors". But they deny that weapons or gunmen were used.⁴¹ The evasiveness of Doyle and Fisher upon a subsequent cross-examination by members of the I. W. W., and the admission that injuries had been, somehow, inflicted by somebody, leads one to believe that the ejection of the Rowan faction had not been done without commotion.⁴²

Evicted, the Rowan faction felt that they were called upon to protect the property of the general organization. They therefore applied for an injunction restraining headquarters officials from continuing to hold the funds and property of the organization. It was granted.

⁴⁰ *General Office Bulletin* (published by secessionists, Box 1125, Chicago, August, 1924), p. 23.

⁴¹ *General Office Bulletin*, July, 1924, p. 2.

⁴² *Extracts Verbatim Report 16th Convention*, pp. 17-45, 76-114.

This was a blunder on the part of the Rowan-Raddock faction. No action could have been better calculated to alienate potential followers of the E. P. movement. To take an internal dispute into "capitalist" courts; to have inveighed against political action yesterday, and to secure an injunction today; to padlock the entrance to I. W. W. headquarters—such actions were not the kind to inspire confidence in new leaders.

The situation may now be summed up in the amusing doggerel below. It is a parody on an I. W. W. song, written by an unnamed criminal-syndicalist prisoner in San Quentin. In mimeographed form it was circulated among the members. It satirizes "Second Jesus Jimmy Rowan", remarks on his predilection for injunctions, refers to the alleged use of guns, and to the jealousy between "One-ten" and "One-twenty".

TO FAN THE FLAMES OF COURT RESPECT

JAMES ROWAN FOREVER

I must save the proletariat from the tactics of the stools,
The officials, Doyle and Fisher, they have broken all the rules,
And the forty-thousand wobbles are a pack of ——— fools;
But the Injunction makes us strong.

Chorus

Second Jesus Jimmy Rowan,
Second Jesus Jimmy Rowan,
Second Jesus Jimmy Rowan,
And Injunctions make him strong.

It will cost them all the money; but I do not care for that.
I would rather pay a lawyer than to go and buy a gat,
And I must protect one-twenty from the bunch of one-ten cats;
So Injunctions make me strong.

Chorus

(Third stanza omitted)

To me the whole of labor ought to burn a special joss;
But for *me* this wobbly union would have been a total loss;
And I'm pretty sure His honor will appoint me as their boss;
While Injunctions make me strong.

Chorus

In the meantime the Sixteenth Convention was being called,⁴³ several weeks earlier than had originally been intended. It was felt that the impasse at headquarters demanded the immediate presence of delegates from the rank and file. Some delegates seemed to be bewildered by the situation upon arrival in Chicago. They did not know whether to meet with the Doyle-Fisher group or the Rowan-Raddock faction. After a few days of fumbling a large number of delegates met independently of either faction.⁴⁴ Doyle and Fisher immediately recognized this meeting as the properly constituted Sixteenth Convention.⁴⁵

In order to give this convention authority, the delegates sent messages to all known branches of the I. W. W., asking them to signify immediately their approval or disapproval.⁴⁶ Out of 65 branches replying, only four would not recognize the present convention as the authoritative annual meeting of the I. W. W.⁴⁷

The convention lasted four weeks. There were the usual reports of officials, now suspended, of editors, and of committees. In addition there was much debate, much stock-

⁴³ Letter sent to branches Sept. 11, 1924. It includes a ballot to be used by branches to signify their willingness to take part in a general convention.

⁴⁴ *Minutes 16th Convention*, p. 21.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁴⁷ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 315, Nov. 5, 1924. *The American Labor Yearbook*, vol. vi, 1925, p. 106 reports 60 branches favorable.

taking, a flood of resolutions, and the "trials" of several leaders. These trials are published verbatim in a pamphlet of nearly 250 pages. This record constitutes an important document in I. W. W. affairs, not because of its direct information, but because it serves to give one a feeling for the organization, the type of men who are members and leaders, their thoughts and ways of thinking.

Doyle was questioned about his having violated the constitution, his part in the schism, his alleged use of violence, his trip to Washington, and in general, his behavior in office.⁴⁸ He was discharged from office by a vote of twenty to four.⁴⁹ The other outstanding official, Fisher, was also cross-examined. He, like Doyle, was asked to defend several of his actions and alleged actions while in office,⁵⁰ particularly his part in the ballot fraud. He, too, was discharged from office.⁵¹ In summary of these cases, it seems that the delegates were loath to discredit Doyle and Fisher. Since, however, these two officials had permitted the organization to reach a point of open conflict, since they had apparently not used the best of judgment in some matters, it was decided to discipline them by removing them from office.

The leaders of the Rowan-Raddock faction were also summoned to appear before the trial committee. They refused, however, to present themselves, with an unimportant exception.⁵² Five leaders of this faction were ordered expelled, subject to a referendum vote of the membership.⁵³

A manifesto committee was appointed by the delegates to

⁴⁸ *Extracts Verbatim Report 16th Convention*, pp. 17-44.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-114.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 3-16.

⁵³ *General Referendum Ballot*, 16th Convention, p. 14, proposition No. 77.

prepare a statement of I. W. W. principles. The motive behind this was evidently that of clarifying the position of the organization both to its members and to the world. A majority report and a minority report were submitted.⁵⁴ Neither was accepted. Before the committee was dismissed, two motions to use these reports as guiding principles were lost. Nevertheless these reports are of some importance as indicating attitudes which might have become organic parts of the I. W. W. tradition.

Neither of these reports is in conflict with the other or with the preamble⁵⁵ of the I. W. W. The majority report is specific and unphilosophical. It discusses succinctly the press, education, sabotage, strikes, boycotts, injunctions, religion, and politics. The minority report is discursive, delves into the Marxian philosophy of the class struggle; avoids the word sabotage, but speaks of direct action—which carries broader meaning. The minority report stresses the importance of solidarity. Its position on religion and politics is not so clear-cut as the majority position. The minority report, to a greater degree than the majority report, lays stress on improving the workers' standard of living under capitalism. The majority report urges the violation of labor injunctions—something which gains significance if one believes that this was inspired by the Busick injunction in California. The minority report condemns the labor internationals in existence, and advocates an international "of action, not of talk".

The editor of *Industrial Solidarity* included in his report several matters that probed into the fundamentals of I. W. W. policy. Some of these follow:

Is the I. W. W. a revolutionary organization or not? In other

⁵⁴ *Minutes 16th Convention*, pp. 139 et seq.

⁵⁵ Reprinted in much I. W. W. literature; also in *The I. W. W.*, Brissenden, p. 351.

words, does the I. W. W. organize to overthrow capitalism and to take over industry, or does the I. W. W. merely organize to operate industry after capitalism shall have been overthrown [by some other agency]? . . .

On the other hand, if the I. W. W. is not now revolutionary, and does not believe in taking over industry, then this convention and the membership at large should frankly admit this, and free the members in California from a part of their danger. The I. W. W. will then fall into the same position in the labor movement now occupied by other industrial unions which are non-revolutionary in character, and will perhaps escape a good deal of the persecution which is always visited upon the most advanced portion of the labor movement. And in that event, the editors of the I. W. W. papers will of course be able to stop making themselves ridiculous by talking about "revolutionary" industrial unionism, "abolition of the wage system on the banner of the I. W. W.," "overthrow of capitalism" as one of the objects of the I. W. W., etc. . . .

. . . I have at various times stated that . . . we should militantly defend our legal rights. . . . I have been very much criticized for this, lately . . . and would like to know once and for all whether . . . we should announce a strict policy of non-resistance to violence of every description. . . .

Then there is the whole question of boycotts. The I. W. W. press is relied upon as the chief instrument for spreading news of the boycott. I am convinced that wherever we have not the power to enforce a boycott, it is ridiculous to advertise the same. . . .

Furthermore, there is another side to this boycotting business. Besides taking up a tremendous amount of space in our press . . . it does a lot of damage by soothing and fooling us, ourselves. We get the illusory notion that we are doing big things, and accomplishing a lot, when we really are not.⁵⁶

Upon the conclusion of the convention, a general referen-

⁵⁶ *Minutes 16th Convention*, pp. 117 et seq.

dum ballot, containing 78 propositions, was drawn up and sent to the membership. As a result of the referendum ballot, the following important decisions were made:

1. Two offices in the General Administration were abolished: General Organizer and Assistant Secretary.
2. The General Executive Board was to be composed only of representatives from constituent unions. No general administration official was now a member of the Board.
3. The General Executive Board was to have full authority and power over all I. W. W. publications and to guide their policy.
4. The expulsion of the E. P. group by the convention was upheld by a vote of approximately 1100 to 220. (It is interesting to note that this general referendum vote was acted upon by only approximately 1300 members).⁵⁷

It will be seen that the first three decisions above were decisions which sheared the General Administration of power, reduced the number of officers at headquarters, and gave more power to the constituent industrial unions. Thus the echoes of the Emergency Program reverberated in the General Headquarters of the majority group.

As for the E. P., the center of gravity of that organization moved westward, where many of its adherents lived and worked. In July, 1925, it held what it deemed to be the true Sixteenth Convention of the I. W. W. at Ogden, Utah. It simplified its structure as compared to that of the parent body. It adopted several resolutions which, in its eyes, were compatible with "clean-cut" industrial unionism, with rule by the rank and file.⁵⁸ The organization, beginning in April, 1925, published the *Industrial Unionist*, at Portland,

⁵⁷ Taken from report of ballot committee in *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 329, Feb. 11, 1925, p. 1.

⁵⁸ See *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. vii, 1926, pp. 182 et seq.

Oregon. The editors were to give their services without pay.⁵⁹ Publication was suspended in June, 1926.

The organization is very small. Several Communists—who are perhaps more neutral than members of the I. W. W.—have in interviews estimated the membership at several hundred, perhaps even less than two hundred. Forrest Edwards, of the I. W. W., estimated less than 200. The original membership was drawn principally from Western members of the following I. W. W. unions: Lumber Workers' Union (120); General Construction Workers' Union (310); Metal Workers' Union (440); and Railroad Workers' Union (520).

In May, 1931, I sent a letter to the E. P. requesting: (a) information concerning number of members, (b) information concerning strikes and organizational activities, (c) copies of their most important printed material. The letter was acknowledged; some printed material⁶⁰ was sent

⁵⁹ From a circular letter sent "To All Members and Branches of the I. W. W.", Portland, Oregon, March 21, 1925; over the names of True Tuttle, William Ford and William Rockwood.

⁶⁰ The material was made up of:

1. A copy of the I. W. W. constitution, as issued in 1924 by the parent body. (The Chicago faction has revised its constitution three times since).
2. Three pamphlets, also identical with those issued by the parent body.
3. A pamphlet on the Centralia prisoners, printed apparently by the E. P., probably in 1929.
4. A pamphlet printed by the E. P., setting forth their policies, printed in 1926, or later.
5. Five current copies of the *New Unionist*, present official organ of the E. P. (Box 1013, Los Angeles, California, published "every month". Jan., Feb., March, April, May, 1931).
6. Two copies of the *Road to Freedom*, a monthly journal of anarchist thought and interpretation. (P. O. Box 486, Madison Square Station, N. Y. C., published by Road to Freedom Association, monthly. March, June, 1931).
7. Several red stickerettes, 2½ by 3½ inches, bearing the words: "Organize and Demand the 4 Hour Day on Full Pay."

without comment; but the E. P. ignored my first two requests.

Several attempts were made by the E. P. and the Chicago I. W. W. to bury their differences and to come together. Regarding the last attempt, made in the latter half of 1930, the following statement is made:

This committee has not been able to accomplish the purpose for which it was called together. The main point at issue, as brought out in the joint discussion, was as to the degree of centralization or industrial union autonomy that is necessary to properly represent the interests of the membership of an industrial organization.

Our committee [Chicago I. W. W. faction] held that there must be a centralized organization that shall properly represent the will of the combined membership of the whole organization. The view was presented by our committee that modern industry is formed on such a broad basis that a purely democratic working class formation is impossible. An industrial organization must be on a representative basis, the representatives being at all times responsible to the membership. We maintained that our form of organization, as expressed in our constitution and by-laws, does correctly conform to the necessities of that purpose.

On the other hand, the E. P. Committee held that an organization should be formed with all power in the hands of the industrial unions, and no power in the general organization. This, we contended, would be to make a part of the organization superior to the organization as a whole. It was on this point that we came to a deadlock, and until the members of one group or the other shall change their views, we see no need of future conferences.

ROB'T HALL, *Chairman*
C. E. PAYNE, *Rec. Sec'y.*⁶¹

⁶¹ *Joint Conference Minutes of the I. W. W. and E. P. Committee* (a mimeographed report). The meeting took place in Portland, Oregon,

Another split may be in store for the I. W. W. Conversations with members reveal little. The factions seem to be followers of Tom Connors, on one side, and A. S. Embree, on the other. Embree was an important organizer of coal-miners before the Colorado strike (1927-1928). Soon after the beginning of the strike he was jailed, and replaced by Connors. The complaint is made by some that, whereas Embree would have devoted his time, if not imprisoned, to organization, Connors devoted his time to conferences with "politicians"—that is, members of the Colorado Industrial Commission. Connors is also accused of having "the Communist horrors." This probably means that he is likely to blame all misadventures in I. W. W. undertakings to the intervention of communism; perhaps this indicates an inflexible mind (if true).

In any case, whatever the obscure and perhaps trivial causes be there seems to be no doubt in the minds of some that sharp alignments are being made.

An interview with Tom Connors resulted in a denial of almost everything contained in the preceding paragraphs. Connors admitted having worked inharmoniously with Embree in the Colorado strike, but said that all differences of opinion are now patched up and that it is incorrect to speak of a Connors faction being opposed to an Embree faction.

Sept. 1, 1930. Representing the I. W. W. were: Larson, Payne, Setzer, DeJonge, Hall, Gracey, Duff. Representing the E. P. were: Alsbrook, McKelvie, Dunsmore, Aronson, Highett, Curd, Boylon.

CHAPTER V

AT THE POINT OF PRODUCTION

THERE has already been a discussion in these pages of much I. W. W. activity at the point of production. The first chapter, by showing how the vigorous economic activity of the I. W. W. in 1917 contributed to the moulding of public opinion, included the stories of the great lumber strike, and the Butte miners' strike. The second chapter discussed the "general" strikes of 1923. There is no need to go over this ground again. This chapter will, therefore, concern itself only with that economic activity which has not already been taken up under other headings.

Brissenden's volume contains much basic material on I. W. W. economic tactics in theory and in practice. Except for a diminution of vigor in carrying them out, I. W. W. methods have not changed in the period under consideration. This lack of vigor seems to result, however, in a qualitative rather than merely a quantitative change. Kindly, non-academic observers would probably say that the "good old I. W. W. spirit" has been absent for six or seven years.

With the arrests and trials of 1918 came a change in the use made of the word "sabotage" and its symbols, the wooden shoe and black cat. During 1916 and 1917, for example, there frequently appeared as the leading cartoon in *Solidarity*, a clean-cut wobbly in wooden shoes, accompanied by a black cat. Week after week this virile worker, accompanied by his feline pet, went on towards the rising sun of industrial unionism, or to the wheat fields, or to the mines. Sometimes phrases like this would appear in the journal:

"Kitty! Kitty! Kitty! Come to your Minnesota Milk! it's your fight; get on the job. Kitty! Kitty! Kitty! Mee-oo-uw!"¹

Beginning at least as early as the fall of 1918 this flaunting of the practice of sabotage was entirely absent in the official organ. For the last decade or more, "slow down" has been commonly used instead; and, in that period I do not recall the use in cartoons or otherwise, of the black cat or the wooden shoe.

At the risk of repeating some of the material which has already appeared in Brissenden's work, an examination will now be made of some types of I. W. W. activity at the point of production.

Not infrequently an I. W. W. strike trails off into nothingness by being "taken back to the job".² That is, the workers go back with the intention of making the strike more effective by slowing down. Sometimes it seems—at least to an outsider—that the order of the strike committee to return the strike to the job is a confession of defeat. Even the guerilla warfare of slowing down to be successful must be supervised, and a certain minimum amount of control must be exercised. This minimum of organization is probably not often present in I. W. W. strikes. Thus, returning the strike to the job may be a mere euphemism for going back to work with little or no headway made.

It must be remembered, however, that although the strike on the job may be a self-deluding failure, it may also be extremely successful. The lumber workers' strike of 1917 has

¹ *Solidarity*, whole no. 365, Jan. 6, 1917, p. 1.

² See for example, accounts of strikes on the job in the two following cases, which are by no means unique:

1. Duluth Longshoremen's Strike—July, 1921

2. Philadelphia Marine Transport Workers' Strike—May, 1920

The accounts are contained in the appropriate issues of *Solidarity*.

been looked upon by the I. W. W. as being one of their most successful strikes, thanks to striking-on-the-job tactics.³ By their own statement, however, good organization and favorable circumstances played important roles in this successful strike on the job.⁴

An interesting estimate of the strike on the job is contained in something a former I. W. W., now turned Communist, said to me. "There is always a critical time in a strike when the men will return to work or get their second wind. Once, the wobblies won a strike by taking it to the job at that critical moment. And now they think they can win every strike by taking it to the job as soon as difficulties appear."⁵ This is not entirely fair to the I. W. W., but it seems to contain some truth.

Closely connected with the strike on the job is the intermittent strike. This, too, was used in the lumber workers' strike of 1917, as well as in the Guthrie and Grant Smith camp strike of 1922.⁶ In such a case, spontaneous, mass action is permitted to take its course and to eventuate into a strike off the job. The unprepared and unorganized strikers are then urged to return to the job, drawing pay, while strike plans are being laid more carefully. The strike is then resumed off the job. In the case of the Guthrie and Grant Smith camp strike, one month was the period of preparation.

It goes without saying that such tactics as the job strike and intermittent strikes, like sabotage, are not peripheral manifestations of I. W. W. activity. Their roots dig deep into I. W. W. philosophy. According to the ordinary codes

³ Ralph Chaplin, *Centralia Conspiracy*, pp. 24 et seq.; *Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Unionism*, pp. 43 et seq.

⁴ *The Lumber Industry and Its Workers* (published by the I. W. W., Chicago, no date), p. 79.

⁵ Conversation with Harrison George.

⁶ *Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Unionism*, p. 48.

of industrial warfare there may seem to be something not quite chivalrous about the job strike and the intermittent strike. The strike of the proper moment may seem to some persons to be even worse—to be mere blackmail. An example of this type took place in Los Angeles in 1912. A group of I. W. W.'s hired as extras in a pageant, refused to go on when their cue was given until the pay agreed upon had been raised sevenfold.⁷ Perhaps a better example of the strike at the proper moment is the "general" strike of 1923. Most participating branches had planned to quit work on May 1. Several branches, however, including the important San Pedro Marine Transport Workers, decided, at the last moment, to quit on April 25 because stoppage on that date would be a complete surprise. Employers and civil authorities knew that they were to expect a strike on May 1. But a cessation of work nearly a week before would leave officers and employers unprepared.

Such tactics would not be possible to workers who did not consider their employers to be unalterable foes in the class struggle, to be enemies unworthy of any consideration or personal loyalty. The following paragraphs in the I. W. W. by-laws show how intransigent is the attitude towards employers:

No union of the general organization, Industrial Department or Industrial Union of the I. W. W. shall enter into any contract with an individual or corporation of employers binding the members to any of the following conditions:

- (a) Any agreement wherein any specified length of time is mentioned for the continuance of the said agreement.
- (b) Any agreement wherein the membership is bound to give notice before making demands affecting hours, wages, or shop conditions.⁸

⁷ *Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Unionism*, p. 47.

⁸ *Preamble and Constitution of the I. W. W.* (Chicago, 1929), p. 35.

In the years covered by this book many I. W. W. strike bulletins included in their demands the release of "class-war prisoners", or non-intervention in Russia. Obviously, the I. W. W. did not expect an employer, single-handed, to release prisoners or to withdraw troops from Archangel. The reason for including these demands was to give publicity to two causes which were dear to the revolutionist. Other impossible demands from the point of view of the individual employer were occasionally made—the six or four-hour day, for example. On one side this may be put down as mere propaganda; on the other hand, when the four-hour day was announced as "our immediate aim" by the General Executive Board⁹ there was probably something more substantial in the demand. The depression of 1921 might have been alleviated by the adoption of appropriate economic measures; and this was the "immediate" measure proposed by the I. W. W.

The I. W. W. have also at times proclaimed boycotts. These boycotts are sometimes specific, as in the case of the "Our House" boycott of 1923.¹⁰ Sometimes, however, they are vague and general—such as a boycott of Spanish-made goods in 1920, or of California products in 1924. Certainly in the case of the vague and general boycott, the amount of purchasing power controllable by the I. W. W. is too small to influence sales appreciably.¹¹

Although the strike of iron miners on the Mesaba Range (Minnesota) took place before 1917, we shall consider it here because adequate accounts of it are not to be found in

⁹ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 149, Sept. 10, 1921, p. 1.

¹⁰ The boycott notice appeared in nearly every issue of *Industrial Solidarity* and *Industrial Worker* during the summer and fall of 1923 and winter of 1923-24.

¹¹ See report on boycotting by I. W. W. editor, *Minutes 16th Convention*, p. 119.

other books dealing with the I. W. W. The strike began in June, 1916, and ended in September. Although the workers were mostly unorganized when they went out, they were soon organized by the I. W. W. The number of miners lay between 7,000 and 8,000; the number of companies involved was about twenty.¹²

The first group that went out demanded the abolition of the contract system. As the strike grew in magnitude, the demands were increased; they finally included an eight-hour day; a minimum wage for surface labor, and a higher minimum for underground labor; a semi-monthly pay day; payment of wages upon quitting; the abolition of the Saturday night shift; the return of all strikers; the abolition of the private mine police.

Two "deputies," whose report is quoted in the *Fifteenth Biennial Report* of the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industries, say that the complaints of the miners concentrate "on two conditions, the hours of labor and the contract system." In the case of the first complaint, the miners resented their having to be on the owners' premises from ten to twenty minutes before pay began and after pay stopped. The ten to twenty minutes were consumed in making the descent into the mine to the place of work, or in coming back to the surface from the place of work. The two deputies expressed themselves as not being "deeply impressed with this grievance of the miners."

The deputies, on the other hand, were more impressed by the evils of the contract system—which is the mining equivalent of piece-work in a factory. Since the conditions making for uniform individual output in a mine are more frequently absent than in a factory, it is obvious that piece-work in a mine is more often resented than in a factory.

¹² These figures, and other facts concerning the strike in this discussion, are taken mainly from the *Fifteenth Biennial Report* of the Department of Labor and Industries of the State of Minnesota, 1915-1916, pp. 168-171.

The miners not only resented this fundamental condition of iron-ore mining, but also the alleged abuses which arose under it. For example, it was claimed by the men that payment per unit of product constantly varied according to the conditions under which men worked, so that the miner never knew how much he was being paid. The men also said that mine captains assigned their favorites to the soft ore, and others to the hard ore; and that one ingratiated one's self with the captain by bribing him. The deputies were of the opinion that "all of the abuses complained of have existed to a certain extent," but doubted their existence "on a large scale."

The strike ended in a victory for the miners. The I. W. W. pride themselves on two points—that the Mesaba Range conflict was the second victory the I. W. W. had wrested from the "Steel Trust;" and that the miners' demands were granted without the workers' having to enter into any sort of agreement with the employers.

This strike had its share of violence. Three miners were sent to the penitentiary on charges of second-degree murder. No member of the I. W. W., however, was convicted, although several members were charged with murder. Haywood, in telling of this incident¹³ says that the miners were convicted at the expense of the indicted members of the organization in a shady courtroom bargain. He admits this, and speaks of it as "an indelible black mark against the organization." Haywood does not seem to mean, however, that guilty members of the I. W. W. were set free while innocent miners were imprisoned. He seems, rather, to mean that members of the I. W. W. by bargaining for their freedom, had violated a fundamental I. W. W. tenet—solidarity of the proletariat.

¹³ Bill Haywood's *Book*, p. 290 et seq.

The I. W. W. played unimportant or quite insignificant roles in the great strikes of 1919, and 1920, if the Seattle General Strike is excepted. When an important strike like the steel strike is going on without I. W. W. participation, the members concerned are likely to pass resolutions promising solidarity; they proclaim that they will support the strike by not scabbing or by boycotting the goods affected. This promise of solidarity does not, however, prevent the I. W. W. from commenting caustically upon the actions of strike-leaders and upon strike aims. The masses of the workers are generally looked upon with sympathy, but the non-revolutionary tactics of the leaders are severely condemned. Upon the conclusion of the steel strike of 1919, the I. W. W. found itself able to sit back and say:

Since the United States Steel Corporation came into being, at the beginning of this century, there has been only one organization of labor that waged even a temporarily successful fight with it. That was a very young and very crude organization. IT WAS THE I. W. W. AT M'KEE'S ROCKS in 1909.

There will be another great uprising in the steel industry.

It will not be a strike of twenty-four craft unions, but of one industrial union, solidly supported by other industrial unions in all related industries.

It will not be a strike to obtain recognition from Gary. THIS STRIKE WILL REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE GARY.

It will not be conducted upon the plan of seeing how long the workers can stay off the job and starve. . . .

It will not be a strike for the right of collective bargaining. It will be a strike to settle WHO SHALL OWN THE MILLS.

And this strike will win.¹⁴

The reader is reminded that during the years following the armistice there was a tendency to magnify the importance and power of the I. W. W. The hand of that organization

¹⁴ *New Solidarity*, whole no. 65, Jan. 31, 1920, p. 2.

was seen in every labor dispute, and workers on strike were generally accused of being I. W. W. revolutionists. In the Seattle general strike of 1919, however, the charge of I. W. W.-ism is tenable. The slogan of the strike was the I. W. W. slogan, "Solidarity". The union men of Seattle were represented on the Central Labor Council by perhaps a score of so-called two-card men—men who were members of both the I. W. W. and the A. F. of L. The number of strikers who were members of the I. W. W. amounted to nearly 3,500, according to Ed Delaney,¹⁵ a member active for years in the West. Delaney says further:

The I. W. W. played quite an active part in the strike, however, much of our activity, insofar as the publicity angle of it was concerned, was smothered because of the persecution and the subsequent raid in Centralia. . . .

Our speakers took the platform, our organizers the picket line and our every resource was behind the strike for a period of many months before it broke, during the strike and of course, after it was over.

Solidarity had very little to say about the part played by the I. W. W. in the Seattle general strike. The affair was reported with the same interest—but with the same detachment—which characterizes the reporting of any large strike in which the I. W. W. do not participate. A little later, however, the *One Big Union Monthly* said:

Thousands of I. W. W. men were involved in this general strike, and we do not hesitate to admit the truth of the accusation in the capitalist press that we were in a large measure responsible for this grand display of solidarity. . . .¹⁶

It is generally admitted that the I. W. W. were very powerful in Seattle during 1919. Louis Adamic tells the

¹⁵ Letter to me, dated July 3, 1931.

¹⁶ *One Big Union Monthly* (Chicago), March, 1919, p. 39.

story that at a welcome in 1919 for Woodrow Wilson, then President of the United States, the I. W. W. were able to line both sides of five city blocks with silent, stony-eyed men and women, whose mute demonstration was a protest against the continued imprisonment of members.¹⁷

From the point of view of organizational activities and job activity no component union of the I. W. W. presents more interesting facets than the Marine Transport Workers' Industrial Union, No. 510. On the basis of dues collected during the I. W. W. fiscal year ending in 1924, this union was second in size.¹⁸ Whether it would retain this same important position if the comparison were made on the basis not of dues collected, but of a fringe of chronic hangers-on—that can not be ascertained. In any case the Marine Transport Workers have long been among the leaders in point of size and activity. A brief outline of their history follows.

The dispute regarding high initiation fees relates to the Philadelphia Branch and involves questions crucial to the I. W. W. This Branch, like some Southern Branches of the Lumber Workers' Union, was composed mostly of negroes.¹⁹ The race question, however, though dormant existing, does not concern us.

In 1913 the Philadelphia Union of the Marine Transport Workers became part of the I. W. W. as a local. It was not necessary at that time that it affiliate itself to a marine workers' union which, in turn, was part of the I. W. W. During most of its existence it kept itself somewhat aloof. It was an appended local rather than an integral part, with an outlook on life quite different from that of the Western

¹⁷ *American Mercury* (New York, monthly), Oct., 1930, pp. 138-146.

¹⁸ *Minutes 16th Convention*, p. 34.

¹⁹ Spero and Harris, *The Black Worker*, ch. xv.

migratory. It loaded war supplies all during the Great War, and profited as a union by the demand for labor.²⁰

It was a powerful group and succeeded in wringing from an important number of employers the condition that only those wearing the Marine Transport Workers' button be employed as longshoremen.²¹ In order to gain shop control, the Philadelphians had found it necessary to charge a \$25 initiation fee at a time when the initiation fee was only two dollars in other I. W. W. unions. The Philadelphia fee was high enough not only to disbar the casual applicant for work but to encourage prompt payment of dues. It was now cheaper to pay several months' arrears of dues than to be re-initiated at two dollars, as in other parts of the I. W. W.²² Although the figures needed for a comparison are unavailable there is every reason to believe that the turnover in membership, which in most parts of the I. W. W. is high, was very low here. To charge a \$25 initiation fee was unconstitutional, however; and in December, 1920, the Branch was

²⁰ This historical summary is taken from *The Philadelphia Controversy*, compiled by Doree and Nef and others, published by the Philadelphia Branch, M. T. W. (no date), pp. 1, 2.

²¹ *An Open Letter to the Membership of the I. W. W.*, Philadelphia Branch of the M. T. W., Nov. 20, 1920. See also Saposs, *Left Wing Unionism*, pp. 156 et seq.

²² An example is quoted below of the difficulties of the agricultural workers: "Undoubtedly one of the reasons most responsible for new members dropping out of the organization is the fact that a card with only one or two stamps in it does not look very good in December or January, particularly when the stamps are for July or August. To offset this annual loss of members and revenue we should institute an intensive campaign to get the new members to pay their dues sufficiently far ahead to allow them to go through the winter without worry over this matter. Then when the grip of Jack Frost loosens next spring they can proceed down the country with the same card and help the delegates instead of merely adding to their task." *Bulletin No. 31*, August 15, 1923, Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union, No. 110 of the I. W. W., mimeographed, p. 1.

suspended by the General Executive Board.²³ The following March, it may be added, the Board suspended the Bakery Workers of New York for having charged an initiation fee of \$15.²⁴

The principles involved far more than constitutional matters. It was a question of whether there was any place in the I. W. W. for a group which maintained shop control by charging high fees, which had a relatively large treasury, which devoted its energies to the immediate welfare of a small group rather than to the "emancipation" of the working class.

Year after year the organization stood steadfastly against any attempt to raise initiation fees. The I. W. W. was a revolutionary organization to which anybody might belong; and for this reason initiation fees and dues had to be kept low. A wealthy union would lose its revolutionary fervor. In the end, the protagonists of the high initiation fee won a small, paper victory. At the 1925 convention it was decided to permit initiation fees of industrial unions to range between one dollar and ten dollars.²⁵ This was not a real victory, however, for two reasons. First, relatively high dues were permitted only after the I. W. W. had lost much of its power. Putting it differently, this means that the I. W. W. could probably have secured very few members at ten dollars after 1924. Secondly, the tradition of a two-dollar initiation fee and of fifty-cent dues persisted. The only exceptions to this rule today are two temporary exceptions. During the depression of 1930, the Agricultural Workers lowered their fee to one dollar; the Marine Transport Workers have dues of a dollar, but only because they are in debt to general headquarters.

²³ *Minutes 13th Convention*, p. 7.

²⁴ *Minutes 13th Convention*, p. 15.

²⁵ *Minutes 17th Convention*, p. 9.

Since the war the I. W. W. have apparently hesitated over next steps. They hesitated over Communism; they hesitated, as will be brought out in the next chapter, over education. The initiation-fee controversy, brought to a head by the Philadelphia Local of the Marine Transport Workers, is a symbol of their hesitancy over adopting business-union methods.

The second matter of interest relating to the Marine Transport Workers is the power of that union to harry two unions of the A. F. of L.—the International Seamen's Union and the International Longshoremen's Association. The period of intense I. W. W. activity in these unions lies between the spring of 1921 and the end of 1923.

In the spring of 1921 the seamen's strike or lockout ended unsuccessfully for the employees. During July a group of seamen in New York City who had not yet returned to work demanded of the Seamen's Union food funds to the amount of \$6,000 weekly. It is said that the I. W. W. were the moving spirits behind this demand.²⁶ The Union refused to grant it.

On the Pacific Coast more important events were stirring. The shipowners seemed to be indifferent to the fate of the Seamen's Union, in spite of the energetic appeals of Andrew Furuseth, president. The shipowners seemed to be satisfied with I. W. W. employees, and refused to give officers of the Seamen's Union leave to enter ships for the purpose of identifying and causing the discharge of I. W. W. seamen.²⁷

Furuseth communicated on this matter with Senator Jones, of Washington. He sent the Senator several documents which were reprinted in the *Congressional Record*.²⁸

²⁶ Albrecht, *International Seamen's Union of America* (Gov't. Print. Off., Washington, 1923), p. 99.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 102, 103.

²⁸ Vol. 62, pp. 2124 *et seq.* These documents had been used by Furuseth as propaganda against the I. W. W. elsewhere.

The constitution of the I. W. W. is here reprinted alongside the constitution of the I. S. U. The juxtaposition was intended to prove that the I. W. W. are autocratic, and give no shipwreck, burial, or strike benefits. A "sound" warning is issued that I. W. W. sympathizers in the I. S. U. are likely to be mistaken for criminal syndicalists, and punished. A copy of resolutions follows, in which John Vance Thompson, radical editor of the I. S. U. *Seamen's Journal*, is instructed to cease filling the publication with radical propaganda. Furuseth does not charge—but it seems to him—that "wobblies are carried on the vessels by the shipowners for their own purposes; that they protect them not only on the vessels but in the courts as well." The purpose of the owners, thus discreetly referred to, is the breaking up of the Seamen's Union by the I. W. W.

Senator Jones, in requesting of the Senate the privilege of inserting the documents referred to above, had said something which drew a reply from the shipowners. The shipowners had shown a lack of patriotism, the Senator had charged, if they were indeed employing expelled members of the Seamen's Union who were now affiliated with the I. W. W. The reply of the Pacific American Steamship Association²⁹ accused Furuseth of having advocated the use of "the oracle"—a practice alleged to be similar to sabotage as practiced by the I. W. W. The letter expressed its abhorrence of I. W. W. radicalism, but ended with:

Mr. Furuseth is attempting to mislead the public and the United States Congress as to the evils of the Industrial Workers of the World and kindred organizations, when the same complaints might be made against the organization which he represents.

The International Longshoremen's Association joined its

²⁹ Vol. 62, pp. 4500 *et seq.*

protest against the I. W. W. with that of the I. S. U. at the 43rd convention of the A. F. of L. (1923). Delegate McCullough, as secretary of the committee on the Executive Council's report, recommended that the Executive Council be directed to make an investigation of the I. W. W.³⁰ McCullough quoted from a speech by Madsen, of the Longshoremen's Association, part of which follows:

I want to say that my colleague, Brother Furuseth, is the one man on the Pacific Coast in the American labor movement who has by word of mouth and by the printed word traced the history of the I. W. W., and anyone who has read that as carefully as I have can easily trace the unholy alliance that exists between certain employers and the I. W. W. I believe that those employers are as guilty and as responsible for the conditions that exist on the Pacific Coast and throughout the country as any other one factor, and I believe the blame should be placed squarely upon the shoulders of those men who are willing to use the I. W. W. to destroy the legitimate American labor movement.³¹

McCullough, on his own behalf, said:

The organization [the I. W. W.] is the least expensive, the most effective and the most dangerous strike-breaking organization in this country.³²

He implied that the I. W. W. was subsidized by employers:

The I. W. W. is carrying on extensive propaganda in traveling, printing and speaking at an expense which obviously has not been gathered from actual or prospective members of the cult. Here and there information crops out of money furnished to

³⁰ *Report of Proceedings of the Forty-Third Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor* (Washington, 1923), pp. 333 et seq.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 336.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 335.

them. Here and there, we are informed, detective bureaus are guiding them, and it is beyond belief that such is done without ulterior purpose. . . .³³

To all this the I. W. W., among other things, replied with an invitation to the A. F. of L.

Press reports state that the American Federation of Labor has decided to appoint a committee to investigate alleged corrupt sources of income of the Industrial Workers of the World. We hereby extend an official and very cordial invitation to your committee to come to the I. W. W. General Headquarters where every courtesy will be extended and every facility lent your committee for a full investigation of every penny of income and expenditure of the organization. We shall select a committee which will work with yours to the end that such investigation be thorough and precise. We request only that a representative from some reputable firm of Certified Public Accountants be provided and that the findings be made public. Each of our organizations to bear its own share in connection with such investigation.³⁴

The American Federation of Labor did not reply.

By way of summary it may be said that to the I. S. U. and to the I. L. A., one result of an unsuccessful strike, stagnation in shipping, and I. W. W. activity, was a loss of membership. The I. S. U. lost 56.5% of its membership between 1920 and the end of 1921.³⁵ The Longshoremen's Union declined from 74,000 to less than 31,000 in the years 1920-24.³⁶ Comparable statistics indicating the rate of growth of the Marine Transport Workers of the I. W. W. at the expense of the A. F. of L. unions are not available, but it

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

³⁴ Copy of telegram reprinted in *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 263, Nov. 7, 1923, p. 1.

³⁵ Albrecht, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

³⁶ *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. viii, 1927, p. 72.

is probably true that the rate of growth was, for a short period, at least, very high. *Industrial Solidarity*³⁷ reported that I. W. W. growth among the marine workers was the "outstanding feature of the labor movement."

But with the general decline of the I. W. W. the marine workers' union has also declined. Today it shares the allegiance of militant seamen and longshoremen with the Marine Workers' Industrial Union of the T. U. U. L.³⁸ The power of the I. W. W. union to harry the A. F. of L. unions has probably faded. The old Philadelphia Local of the Marine Transport Workers' Union has all but disappeared. What strength the I. W. W. now has in the marine industry is probably greatest in the Gulf ports.³⁹

Before leaving this subject a few words will be said regarding the implications by Furuseth and others that the I. W. W. was paid by employers to wreck the I. S. U. and the I. L. A. The I. W. W. from its own point of view would have much reason to wish to wreck—or, rather, to capture—these two unions, without the prod of pecuniary gain. Both were craft unions; and that craft unions should be made to assume the industrial form is an old I. W. W. principle. Furuseth's union had spent more time, energy, and money to secure legislation than perhaps any other American union.⁴⁰ Surely the I. W. W. could have had but few scruples over sniping at a craft union which had so much faith in political action. As for the I. L. A. the impression among some radicals seems to be that this association is a

³⁷ Whole no. 203, Sept. 23, 1922, p. 1; see also *Liberator*, June, 1922, pp. 13, 14.

³⁸ Sparks, *The Struggle of the Marine Workers* (New York, 1930), p. 49.

³⁹ Some of the matter in the preceding paragraphs comes from interviews with Walter T. Nef and Tom Connors, both of the I. W. W. The former was for a long time a leader of the M. T. W. in Philadelphia.

⁴⁰ Albrecht, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

corrupt, racketeering union—one of the most corrupt in America.⁴¹ If this be true—or even if it be merely believed to be true by the I. W. W.—it is obvious that the Marine Transport Workers would have had no reason to cherish its continued existence.

It is my belief that the I. W. W. did not accept funds from employers' associations to wreck the seamen's and longshoremen's unions.⁴² On the other hand it is possible that the I. W. W. were perhaps overzealous in their attempts to gain members. This zeal may even, sometimes, have gone to the point of violating a sacred principle of the I. W. W.—proletarian solidarity.

As for the employers' preference for I. W. W. crews, that has been interpreted by at least one writer outside I. W. W. ranks as a plan to divide one's enemies the more easily to annihilate them.⁴³ On this theory the I. S. U. was to be wrecked by the I. W. W. and the I. W. W. by the invocation of the criminal-syndicalism law.

The Colorado coal-mine strike of 1927-28 while perhaps not so spectacular as other activities of the I. W. W. during the period covered by this book is, without doubt, the most important venture at the point of production after the strikes of 1917. It began in October of 1927 and ended the next February. The strike was more effective in the northern coal fields than in the southern. In the north all mines except the Columbine were closed; in the south the strike seemed to be most effective where union tradition was strongest.

In 1926 the "estimated possible average yearly earnings"

⁴¹ Sparks, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁴² See supporting view of George P. West, *Survey*, Oct. 15, 1923, pp. 86-90.

⁴³ George P. West, *loc. cit.*

of tonnage workers in the Colorado coal fields was \$1275.⁴⁴ This was a lower wage than a similar possible wage for the union states of Illinois and Indiana, but higher than the wage of the union state of Kansas. Compared with two non-union states the non-union state of Colorado wage was higher than the Kentucky wage, but lower than the West Virginia wage.⁴⁵

As is generally known, the Colorado coal fields have been the scene of historical combats of labor against employers. The use of violence is part of the tradition in Colorado labor disputes.

The most important company affected was The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company which employs about 5,000 coal miners, approximately half of the total number in the state. These miners were organized into a company union under a plan inaugurated by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in 1915. The Federal Council of Churches, reporting on the operation of the plan⁴⁶ notes matters both favorable to the workers and unfavorable. On the whole it seems that the Council's report would indicate that the advantage to the worker of the plan in operation has overbalanced the disadvantages. This, of course, is not the opinion of the I. W. W. or even of the United Mine Workers of America. The latter expresses its dissatisfaction by not permitting members to hold office in the company union, and in other ways.⁴⁷ Whatever the general conditions may have been under the plan between 1915 and the present, it seems obvious that as early as 1925 con-

⁴⁴ Taken from *Information Service* (New York, weekly), Department of Research and Education, Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, vol. x, no. 11, March 14, 1931, p. 3. Based on U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat. *Bul.* no. 454, p. 17; and *Bul.* no. 516, p. 11.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 11 *et seq.* This report contains an interesting analysis of both the Rockefeller plan and the plan of the Rocky Mountain Fuel Co.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

fidence was shaken between employers and employees by the manner in which wage cuts were made.⁴⁸

The year 1927 was marked by a recession in business, and conditions already unsatisfactory to the miner were getting worse. I. W. W. organizers were sent out to Colorado as early as December, 1925.⁴⁹ Following this, *Solidarity* would occasionally print a stereotyped article saying that progress was being made in organization activities in Colorado. In the spring of 1927⁵⁰ phenomenal progress was reported and some "persecution" by "state rangers and officials of the U. M. W. A." Why the I. W. W. sent organizers to Colorado is not clear. In interviews I have gathered that the man sent to Colorado, A. S. Embree, was looked upon as too strong a man to have near general headquarters in Chicago. He had recently been released from prison; he had a personal following: he was, therefore, a threat to office-seekers and office-holders. Embree was sent to Colorado, presumably, because it seemed a hopeless place to go to. It is further alleged by interviewees, that when Embree proved himself to be a successful agitator in Colorado, he was immediately withdrawn from the scene.

During the summer of 1927, the General Executive Board of the I. W. W. in Chicago, decided to go on record as approving a general strike to protest against the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti. In August the Board reaffirmed its decision.⁵¹ Protest meetings urging a general strike were held by the I. W. W. in many places, especially in Philadelphia; and great flaring headlines appeared in the August issues of *Solidarity* to suggest a protest strike on behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti. Apparently the only workers under the

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴⁹ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 376, Jan. 6, 1926, p. 5.

⁵⁰ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 439, March 23, 1927, p. 1.

⁵¹ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 459, Aug. 10, 1927, p. 1.

I. W. W. who responded effectively to this call were the workers in Colorado. The coal miners, urged by the I. W. W. organizers, protested in a two-day strike in Huerfano and Las Animas Counties.

The response to the I. W. W. strike call in Colorado was a surprise to all—greatest, perhaps, to the I. W. W. organizers. When they saw how successful they had been in Huerfano County they held a conference at Aguilar (September 4) to consider calling a coal-miners' strike in the state of Colorado. Under the Industrial Law of Colorado thirty days' notice must be given of an impending strike. On September 7, the Industrial Commission of Colorado received a letter announcing a strike to take place a month later in all Colorado if demands were not met in the meantime. The source of the latter was the Walsenburg, Colorado, Branch of the Coal Mine Workers' Industrial Union of the I. W. W., voicing the decision of a conference of coal miners who had met at Aguilar on September 4.

The Commission, after making a "most thorough investigation" came to the decision that the signers of the announcement did not represent the miners and that, therefore, the strike would be illegal.⁵² Attorney General Boatright was asked to give an opinion on the legality of the strike. His opinion seems to amount to this: that no one committee under the Colorado Industrial Law may issue a call for a state-wide strike. The employees of each coal company must give notice of an intended strike in their plant. "The present strike, therefore, is unlawful as to all employees who have failed to give their employer the statutory notice signed by themselves or by a number of them constituting a committee authorized to represent such employees."⁵³

⁵² *Tenth Report*, Industrial Commission of Colorado (Denver, 1928), p. 51.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

Although the Colorado Commission makes no mention of the fact, it seems that the I. W. W. did what it could to remedy the illegal character of the strike call. The Department of Research of the Federal Council of Churches says:

According to the press and statements by I. W. W. leaders to those conducting the present study, the strike committee, when postponing the strike date from October 8 to October 18, offered in notices mailed both to the Industrial Commission and to the operators, to submit the strike call to a vote of coal miners in meetings to be held at the mines and "addressed by members of the Commission, the I. W. W. and others the Commission may recognize."⁵⁴

A summary of the most important demands made by strike leaders follows:

I. Wages and Hours

Increases of wages—careful scales worked out for several types of work.

No work Saturday and Sunday.

Six hours from bank to bank to constitute a working day.

II. Working Conditions

Checkweighman and pit committee to be elected by workers.

Dead work to be paid for.

Contract miner shall not haul or hoist coal.

Timbering to be done by company.

III. General Demands

No increase for rent or light in company-owned houses.

No physical examination or age discrimination.

Labor organizers to be permitted to come and go in company-owned camps.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ *Information Service*, March 14, 1931, pp. 5, 6.

⁵⁵ Based on *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 463, Sept. 7, 1927, p. 3.

These demands may be compared with the causes of dissatisfaction as reported by the Industrial Commission of Colorado, which follow:

The people of Colorado have a right to ask what is wrong with the Coal Industry in this State; why did a large proportion of the coal miners accept the leadership of the Industrial Workers of the World? The answer, according to the evidence, is as follows:

1st: Lack of an organization of their choice among the miners. The miners believed they had many grievances; the Industrial Workers of the World organizers were there promising anything and everything; the miners through the lack of something better, followed their leadership.

2nd: Intimidation by some of the superintendents and mine bosses.

3rd: Dissatisfaction with the two cuts in wages in 1925.

4th: The prevailing opinion among the miners that they were not receiving correct weights for the coal mined.

5th: The interference of some of the superintendents and mine officials in the election of checkweighman.

6th: Lack of understanding as to pay for dead work, waiting for material such as props, ties and rails, bailing out water, shoveling coal three or four times in order to load cars, etc.

7th: Bad air and charges that the State Mining Law has not been complied with in regard to crosscuts in a number of the mines.

8th: Lost time waiting for tools, going into the mine, and waiting for mantrip or cage, going out of the mine.

The evidence presented to the Commission in all of these hearings indicates there was much dissatisfaction on the part of the miners employed on a contract or tonnage basis because rails, timbers and other materials were not delivered at the working places within a reasonable time after the same had been ordered. Many of the witnesses complained that they lost much time taking up rails in old working places and waiting for timbers and other supplies. More complaints were made about

these conditions than about any other condition presented to the Commission during our hearings. It is evident that the spirit and intent of this section of the law has received very little consideration on the part of many of the employers.⁵⁶

The strike began on October 18. The organization threw itself whole-heartedly into the conflict. *Solidarity* was full of Colorado news, or of the progress of fund-raising committees in the East. "Human-interest" stories were made possible by the formation of the Junior Wobblies, and by the idolization of Milka Sablich, the "rebel girl." She, with A. S. Embree, toured the country for funds.

The strike was bloody. Civil liberties, it is generally held, were not adequately protected. The most important outburst of violence occurred at the Columbine Mine on November 29. The workers were proceeding along a road which runs through the company's property. The Research Department of the Federal Council of Churches continues the story:

They claimed the right to enter the company's property because a post office and a school are located there. At the first gate of the property they were met by a deputy sheriff who warned them not to proceed further. Ignoring his warning they went on to a second gate guarded by the state police. They ignored a second warning and the stories are conflicting as to which party started the struggle that followed. When it was over five strikers were dead and about 60 had been injured. Many of the police were injured, they claimed, by clubs and stones used by the strikers, but it was reported that "if the strikers were armed their guns inflicted no wounds on the mine guards." The verdict of the coroner's jury stated that the victims met their death while invading the company's property "after having been properly and legally warned not to enter the same and of the perils attending such invasion" by proper and lawful

⁵⁶ Tenth Report, p. 54.

officers of the state. The "gunshots were fired by persons unknown and who were members of the state law enforcement department, and said deaths are not felonious."⁵⁷

Under a law enacted in 1897 the Governor of Colorado is empowered to use the militia when necessary to suppress violence and support the law. Operating under this law Governor Adams apparently gave the militia power to act without the necessity of employing the usual formalities of the courts.⁵⁸

The Department of Research of the Federal Council of Churches reports the following incident:

On January 12, 1928, following a forbidden parade by the I. W. W. at Walsenburg their hall was fired upon by the police. A boy 16 years of age (a bystander) and one of the strikers were killed. A companion of the latter was wounded. At the inquest the police refused to testify on the ground that they might incriminate themselves. The coroner's jury rendered a verdict that Clemente Chavez, who was shot while in the hall, came to his death by shots fired by the state police, "said shooting being unprovoked and said state police showed total disregard for human life by firing through windows into the street outside. And we the jury do recommend further investigation into the case."⁵⁹

As in all cases of industrial violence there is too much to be said on each side to permit of one's feelings satisfied with any general conclusion. The following general statement, taken from the study of the Department of Research of the Federal Council of Churches, is perhaps as good as any, and has the advantage of being issued by a body which would be deemed by many to be impartial:

⁵⁷ *Information Service*, March 14, 1931, p. 8.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

State officials and observers stated that the strike was conducted by the I. W. W. leaders without advocacy of violence. It was one of the anomalies of the strike that an organization like the I. W. W. with its revolutionary philosophy and its reputation for violence, in fact conducted a major strike with so little violence, while in the name of "Americanism" leading citizens in more than one community illegally and by force drove I. W. W. leaders out of town.

On the other hand, the "caravans" and parades of strikers did time and again push aside local sheriffs and march upon company's property, claiming that they had a legal right to enter in order to go to the United States post offices located in the company camps. On the occasion when Milka Sablich ("Flaming Milka") was injured by an armed guard, evidence shows that the crowd had also hurled rocks, and other missiles at the company guards at the gate.

To be sure, the very act of picketing, however peaceful, is against the law in Colorado. In picketing roads and mine entrances, the strikers therefore broke a state law.⁶⁰

The Colorado Industrial Commission's attitude towards the I. W. W. should be given brief mention here. The Commission's report on the strike begins by declaring that the I. W. W. "seemed to have no respect for any law."⁶¹ It says that the Sacco-Vanzetti protest strike was illegal. It believes that the I. W. W. came to Colorado for the express purpose of creating a disturbance.⁶² The Commission finds them without respect for law or the rights of others.⁶³ They misrepresent, vilify, and resort to "deliberate falsehoods". They were not "constructive". They offered no "practical solution." The Commission's report ends with the following constructive and practical suggestions:

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶¹ *Tenth Report*, p. 49.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

We would suggest that the employers endeavor to look at things from the viewpoint of the employees, and the employees see things from the employers' viewpoint.

It is impossible for any man to see another man's position except he put himself in the other fellow's place. This is necessary to get the other man's viewpoint.⁶⁴

In spite of its violence, the outcome of the strike was looked upon as a gain to the workers. According to the Federal Council of Churches, "wage increases . . . appear to be one of the most tangible results of the strike."⁶⁵ The Council finds that a "significant outgrowth of the strike may be said to be the new plan of industrial relations adopted by the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company. . . ." ⁶⁶ From the I. W. W. point of view the strike, as a strike, was an unqualified success. In an official publication the organization says:

After four months of striking the minors voted by a majority of ninety per cent to return to work. This was on February 19, 1928 and their demands had been practically all won.

An increase of wages of one dollar per day, checkweighmen on the tipples, pit committees in the mines, working conditions 100 per cent improved and all state mining laws enforced, were the exact concessions earned and received. The miners had cleared themselves in the eyes of a sleepy public and, best of all, had discovered their own strength if properly applied.

Some may say that the strike was too long, others that it was too short, but none can deny that it was pulled at the right time and that the tactics pursued were proper as well as new to the industry. It is not our purpose here to argue over the length or brevity of the strike but it is safe to say that the strike was about as accurately timed as any strike ever conducted.

The strike proved the soundness of the I. W. W. It proved the potential power of the miners. And it brought about con-

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁶⁵ *Information Service*, March 14, 1931, p. 6.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

ditions which could never have been achieved in any other way. Considering the number of people involved in it, it was the cheapest strike ever held in this country from a financial viewpoint. Yet, more was accomplished than in any other five strikes in the State.⁶⁷

At present I. W. W. organization in Colorado is admittedly weak. Members interviewed state that there are probably five hundred I. W. W.'s in the coal-mining areas of the state. This is probably a generous estimate. In commenting on their own number, five hundred, members of the union always say that each of these five hundred miners is a key person, and that together they are capable of directing any "spontaneous" movement which may arise.

As a postscript to this chapter a description will be given of the recently formed (February, 1931) Unemployed Union of the I. W. W. in New York City. The I. W. W. have rented a hall on 14th Street which is open to the homeless, unemployed men of New York. Some members are sent out to beg on the streets; other to try to get bushel baskets full of carrots and potatoes; others are set certain tasks, such as sweeping or serving. Initiation fees are waived; but dues books are issued. An entry is made at the appropriate time for each man who has actively taken part in propaganda work, clerical work, cooking, cleaning, begging. Upon employment a man holding such a card may be inducted into the proper industrial union with the status of a member of several months' standing. The only payment required is the initiation fee. A similar union exists in Chicago. During my visit to the hall (July, 1931) it was believed by some frequenters that similar unions existed on the Pacific Coast but no official word had been received from Coastal cities.

⁶⁷ *Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Unionism*, p. 58.

The handbill given out by the union is entitled, *Bread Lines or Picket Lines*. The following rather novel course of action to hasten trade recovery is suggested in it:

If you want more adequate relief organize in the mighty picket line of the unemployed today. Pick out some local enterprise where wages are being cut, where hours are being lengthened, where new processes are replacing old men, or where hours are abnormally long or the wages below the average. Go there and picket; stop these workers from forcing themselves into your ranks.

This plan of picketing one's way to prosperity is consonant with the policy laid down in the pamphlet, *What Is the I. W. W.?* an official publication of the organization:

The jobless have to get together, somehow, and make so much noise in the world as to attract attention. Only by making a public scandal in every city and town will you break the silence of the press and receive notice. Only fear of a general social conflagration will make the employers of labor, private or governmental, get together and devise ways and means. As long as you are contented to rot to death in silence, you will be allowed to do so.

If you are still able to stand on your legs for hunger, get up big meetings and demonstrations, without getting in collision with "law and order". Not a drop of blood should be allowed to flow. . . .

Do not hide the fact that you are jobless. On the contrary, it would be a good idea for the jobless to carry a simple "lodge decoration" over their shoulder with a legend such as "FOR HIRE," just as the taxicabs. If the streets were crowded with such signs, you certainly would attract attention, and *you would find it easy to locate one another and come together for common action.*

Such measures may not bring you relief in 24 hours, but they are bound to bring some results sooner or later. They are apt

to bring some artificial life into capitalism for a while by creating pressure in the proper place.

But then, when you do get a job, *then is your chance* to take steps that it shall not happen again. Organize industrially in such great numbers that you are able, with your organized might, to cut down the workday to the required number of hours to provide employment for the jobless. That will possibly tide us over until we are able to take complete control and put an end to unemployment forever.

*See that the unemployed get as much publicity and public attention as it is in your power to create, but keep out of the jails, the hospitals and the potter's field.*⁶⁸

All this is an interesting contrast to the words on unemployment cited by Brissenden more than a decade ago. He quotes the following from *Solidarity*:

[Unemployed] parades to City Halls, Capitols, *etc.*, should be discouraged as nothing more substantial than hot air is to be found in these political centers. The delegates agreed with Haywood that the places for the unemployed to demonstrate were the places where there was plenty of food and clothing so that they could help themselves.⁶⁹

The following sentence, said to have been spoken by Haywood, is quoted from the *Chicago Daily News*: "Where warehouses are full of food, go in and take it; where machinery is lying idle, use it for your purposes; where houses are unoccupied, enter them and sleep."⁷⁰

At present (August, 1931) the I. W. W. are reported to be active in the coal strike in Harlan County, Kentucky.⁷¹ There is not enough reliable information available yet to discuss the role of the I. W. W. in this conflict.

⁶⁸ *What Is the I. W. W.?* (Chicago, no date), pp. 27-28.

⁶⁹ Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, p. 329.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

⁷¹ *Nation*, Aug. 5, 1931, p. 122.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION AND ORGANIZATION

SINCE the discussion which precedes and which will follow is topical, it is inevitable that a few matters of a miscellaneous nature are left out under the major divisions. At this point we bring together these secondary matters for examination. They are: education, membership, free-speech fights, and organization structure.

The I. W. W. emblem has three stars in its design. They symbolize Education, Organization, and Emancipation. These words appear every week at the top of the first page of *Industrial Solidarity*. There is no question that the I. W. W. are very much interested in what they call education.

The following quotations from I. W. W. pamphlets will give the reader a fair idea of what the organization means by the word education:

Important though the achievements of the I. W. W. may be on the industrial field, its chief function so far has been *education*. It is through its efforts on that field that the I. W. W. has become a world movement. Unfortunately the I. W. W. is able to furnish only the most elementary industrial education at present. But the crying need is first of all a greatly improved general education. . . .

An illiterate workingman is as dangerous to the aspirations of the workers in these trying times as a small-pox or bubonic plague patient would be to our health. For this reason we tactfully but firmly try to prevail upon our illiterate fellow workers to go and learn how to read and write. . . .

If the people want a peaceful transition, they should build school houses. If they want a catastrophe, they should close

their doors. Instead of subduing desperate workers with jails and machine guns help them by educating them so they can solve the social problem.¹ Had the I. W. W. entrusted its destiny to the unrestricted control of parlor intellectuals whose experiences were not those of the industrialists, the organization would long ago have disappeared from the labor arena. The I. W. W. is not unmindful or neglectful of the need for intelligent guidance and action. It stresses education for the workers, but it has drawn its intellectual material from, and been guided by the experiences of the actual workers in industry. . . .²

Soon after the World War the I. W. W. made their most elaborate venture in the field of education. Without in any way questioning the courage of the I. W. W. it is probably fair to say that dread of further prosecutions and mob violence led the I. W. W., beginning about 1920, to attempt to substitute educational activity for the activity of strikes, free-speech fights, and similar overt acts. Harrison George, then a member, but a member imbued with communist philosophy, bluntly said that industrial research and surveys were an effort to dodge revolutionary struggles.³ Similar opinions were expressed in the *Industrial Unionist*,⁴ an I. W. W. paper.

Although it is difficult to see today what the net result of the industrial surveys of the I. W. W. was, the story itself is an interesting one. It is reproduced below as I received it from Howard Scott, a New York engineer whom the I. W. W. consulted.⁵

In the years 1918-1922 Scott had succeeded in inter-

¹ *What Is the I. W. W.?*, pp. 22, 23.

² *The I. W. W.—What It Is and What It Is Not* (Chicago, no date), p. 39.

³ *Liberator*, Aug., 1924, p. 28.

⁴ Vol. i, no. 7; quoted in *Industrial Unionism in America*, Savage, p. 162.

⁵ Mr. Scott has been good enough to verify the story as set forth here.

esting several men, including Thorstein Veblen, in a system of industrial engineering to which he gave the name "technocracy." The name implies, perhaps, rule by technical men; but this is not Scott's meaning. It is a system in which energy units are made the basic consideration in the production of commodities. The system carries with it analyses of the type to be discussed in the paragraphs that follow. Scott says, incidentally, that Veblen's *Engineers and the Price System* is a result of the discussions of technocracy engaged in by Veblen, a group of the Columbia University faculty, and others. The book is not, however, a summary of Scott's system.

Exactly how the I. W. W. got hold of Scott, or who first advised them to apply to him, seems to be in doubt. In any case, early in 1920 several members of the I. W. W. came to Scott without saying who they were or what use they meant to make of the information which they wanted to buy. The information they desired had something to do with the then current output and consumption of copper. Scott gave the men the information and handed them a bill for his services, charging his customary fee. The I. W. W. paid in cash. Scott did not yet know that he was serving the I. W. W.

Later he learned the identity of his customers, and was told that the information about copper had been used to mould I. W. W. policy in respect of a projected copper strike. On the basis of their facts, the I. W. W. abandoned the idea of striking at that time.

Further visits were made by the I. W. W. to Scott's office. In the meantime, at the 1920 convention, it was ordered that a Bureau of Industrial Research be created.⁶ Towards the end of 1920, an article appeared in the *One Big Union Monthly* under the authorship of "An Industrial

⁶ See reference to this resolution in *Minutes 13th Convention*, p. 13.

Engineer."⁷ This engineer was Scott. The following excerpts will give an idea of Scott's approach and of how he dealt fundamental blows at the I. W. W. philosophy:

"Workers of the world unite!" has come to have as great a political slogan value as "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!" had during the French revolution. It is a fine phrase, but the question is "Unite for What?" The unity so far achieved bears no relationship to work. . . . Any scheme proposed as a solution for the present unrest which does not contain within its plans for the operation of industry specifications for increasing the producing power and eliminating all extraneous occupations is a political scheme and doomed to but a brief existence. . . . To the economist and theorist the abolition of capitalism is the crucial point. Dealing only with financial wealth and its distribution these people seek their remedy only by making distribution equitable. But the very mechanism of material production and distribution has been built by the capitalistic regime, and its wastes of materials and energy surpasses the sum total of its production so that no matter who comes into possession of the present industrial system the result will differ little from the operation of today. (p. 7)

How fundamental Scott's criticism of I. W. W. philosophy was may be judged from the analyses made by the engineer of such basic tenets as sabotage, organization of the migratory worker, and racial equality.

Sabotage, as a withdrawal of efficiency, Scott said, defeats its own purpose under the Marxian theory of crises. If this theory be adhered to; if the social revolution is due to come with an increase in the number and severity of industrial crises, then the intelligent thing to do is to produce as much as possible, as efficiently as possible, with a view to bringing on crises of overproduction more rapidly.

The organization of migratory workers, Scott advised,

⁷ *One Big Union Monthly*, Oct., 1920, pp. 6-10.

was futile. The combine in agriculture and the electric cutter in lumbering would eliminate the migratory laborer. The workers who wielded critical power were the skilled machine operators. The revolutionist would do well to organize those key persons in industry.

In a discussion of the Australian I. W. W. and their attitude towards the exclusion of Orientals from Australia, Scott suggested that the I. W. W. in Australia would be well advised to lend their efforts to Oriental exclusion, in defiance of the I. W. W. principle of racial equality and the international brotherhood of labor. For, it was argued, if the Oriental, with his low standard of living be disbarred, the Australian agriculturalist would be compelled to introduce machinery; and, on the Marxian analysis, the introduction of machinery brings the revolution nearer.

Scott's suggestions to the I. W. W. apparently made a deep impression on some members of the organization—perhaps a hundred, Scott estimates, who came into more or less direct contact with him. To the membership at large the full force of Scott's theories was never transmitted. Nevertheless, a few things found their way to all members.

First, the *One Big Union Monthly* became the *Industrial Pioneer* with the February, 1921 issue—a name more in harmony with the engineering approach which Scott had conveyed to I. W. W. editors and leaders. During most of the year 1921 the magazine evidenced, in general articles, book reviews, and organization announcements, an eager interest in education, extension of technical knowledge, and in productive efficiency. The following list of articles, by the Bureau of Industrial Research, or about the Bureau, will give an idea of the ferment going on—at least in editors and leaders, if not in the rank and file:

Report on Waste, Part I, Oil Division

(V. I, No. 1, Feb., 1921, pp. 33-37—*Industrial Pioneer*)

The Wastes of War

(V. I, No. 2, March, 1921, pp. 31-34—*Industrial Pioneer*)

Editorial on the value of Industrial Research

(V. I, No. 2, March, 1921, pp. 14-16—*Industrial Pioneer*)

Wasteful Methods of Distributing City Milk

(V. I, No. 4, May, 1921, pp. 57-60—*Industrial Pioneer*)

Wastes in the Coal Industry

V. I, No. 6, July, 1921, pp. 53-58—*Industrial Pioneer*)

Industrial Research, an article by a member commending purposes of Bureau. (V. I, No. 8, Sept., 1921, p. 8—*Industrial Pioneer*)

The articles written by the Bureau approximated academic practice in their careful documentation, their use of generally accepted sources for statistics, and their use of governmental and academic publications as authorities.

By the end of the year interest had died down, apparently, for no more articles by the Bureau appeared in the *Industrial Pioneer*. For one year, however, a small but important group in the I. W. W. had shown a profound interest in "technocracy" and had pondered the engineering rather than the Marxian approach to social change. So profound was this interest that a student of the I. W. W. during those days says: . . . "the change in the direction of constructive planning for the reorganization of industry is going steadily on, backed by several of the general officers and finding a ready response among many of the rank and file, and is a most hopeful sign."⁸

It seems hard, ten years after, to evaluate this contact of the I. W. W. with Scott's theories. Obviously, it explains the sudden thirst for knowledge manifested by the I. W. W. during 1921. It may also explain the renumbering of in-

⁸ Savage, *Industrial Unionism in America*, p. 163.

dustrial unions adopted in 1920.⁹ Scott also has an ingenious system of classifying industries by a decimal system. Along with Communism, and other things, Scott's influence may help to explain why so many old I. W. W. leaders are no longer to be found in the I. W. W. It may be that the impact of communism, the impact of Scott's theories and a broadening outlook, caused many former lights in the I. W. W. to reconsider syndicalism, and to find it wanting. Certain it is that many of the best-known men of former days have left the I. W. W. or have been inactive for a decade. Among them are: Charles Ashleigh, Frank Bohn, Ralph Chaplin, Justus Ebert, Elizabeth Flynn, Harrison George, William Haywood, Vincent St. John, Art Shields, Vern Smith and William Trautmann. Other examples could be cited of men not so well known, but of great intelligence and ability.

Perhaps this incident possesses an added importance as a reflection of I. W. W. opinion with regard to the imminence of the proletarian revolution. The industrial surveys made were directed to the end of controlling production if and when the I. W. W. seized power. The Russian revolution, Europe in turmoil and the Seattle strike—these things must have made the I. W. W. believe that they would soon inherit the productive machinery of the United States, and that it was their solemn duty to know how to operate it and improve it.¹⁰

Since little more is heard of the Bureau after 1921, it is to be assumed that the enthusiasm for industrial surveys wore off. It was replaced by an Educational Bureau.¹¹ This new Bureau published several works, one of the most curious of which was a pamphlet entitled *Lessons in Economics*, by C. H. Chapman, Ph.D. It has a rather original approach

⁹ *Infra*, p. 174 and appendix 3.

¹⁰ Savage, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-163.

¹¹ *Minutes 14th Convention*, pp. 62 et seq.

to economics—an approach not easily classified under any of the schools now known to economists. It is decidedly not Marxian. Its theory of rent is Ricardian. It is much concerned over the power of the "money trust"; it classifies "law" as an industry (p. 5). It is inadequate from any point of view; and to the I. W. W. it was unquestionably inadequate because of its lack of emphasis on industrial unionism, revolution, and because of its unMarxian approach.

In the *American Labor Yearbook* the I. W. W. say:

It was ordered that the [educational] department should be furnished with an up-to-date reference library, with all the financial, industrial and trade papers necessary to keep it posted on conditions in the various industries. It in turn is to keep the membership informed through literature that is not too dry, statistical, or philosophical.¹²

The Educational Bureau has ceased to function. The I. W. W. has, however, since the decline of its more ambitious undertakings, published pamphlets quite as good as those published by the Educational Bureau. Prominent among these is the *Historical Catechism of American Labor*.

The I. W. W. maintains a Work Peoples' College in Duluth. It is in a Finnish locality. Formerly it was a Lutheran theological seminary. Upon the permeation of the Finns by socialistic doctrines, it was transformed into a socialist school; since 1916 it has been an I. W. W. school.¹³ Courses in Finnish and English are offered during the winter in economics, labor history, grammar, sociology, arithmetic, public speaking and other subjects. There is also a summer school. Scholarships have been offered by *Solidarity* to persons who solicited the greatest number of subscriptions

¹² *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. v, 1923-24, p. 95. The original resolution is to be found in *Minutes 15th Convention*, pp. 69, 70.

¹³ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 414, Sept. 29, 1926, p. 4.

over a given period. The College is, apparently, well supported. Men and women may enroll. In 1925 there were more than 70 students. Tuition and board at that time were \$39 monthly.

During 1928 and 1929 *Industrial Solidarity* gave space to an organization known as the "Junior Wobblies." This, no doubt, is the counterpart of the old Socialist Sunday Schools, or of the present "Youth" groups of the Communists. The Junior Wobblies were organized at the time of the 1927-28 Colorado strike. The preamble of the Junior Wobblies is:

The youth of our age have an important mission to fulfill if social progress is to continue. The youth of the working class must recognize that only as organized members of their class can they hope to achieve success.¹⁴

There have not been any recent references of importance to the junior organization in *Solidarity*. It may be pointed out, incidentally, that the name "Junior Wobbly" has a typically American ring. This is only one evidence of the essentially American flavor of the I. W. W. which, they claim, makes them superior strategically to the Communists.¹⁵

In a labor organization it is not easy to separate the question of numbers from the question of strength. A mere counting of heads is not an appraisal of power. And the average I. W. W. is more interested in the influence his organization exerts than in the number of paid-up members. This chapter is not concerned to inquire into the power of the organization, but rather into its actual size. An attempt to evaluate the influence and strength of the I. W. W. will be made in the last chapter.

¹⁴ *Industrial Solidarity*, July 11, 1928.

¹⁵ A fuller discussion of the I. W. W. as an *American revolutionary* organization is contained in the last chapter.

I. W. W. membership drives sometimes resemble the drives for converts made by evangelists. Brissenden estimated the average annual turnover in membership over a ten-year period to be 133%.¹⁶ A temporary accession to membership is likely to precede or follow a strike¹⁷ or to come after active seasonal organization drives, such as are perennially announced, in June, for example, on the Great Lakes and in the wheat fields.

The I. W. W. at their peak probably had a membership of approximately 100,000.¹⁸ In the Chicago indictment the organization was credited by the government with a membership of 200,000.¹⁹ But most observers believe that to be an exaggeration.²⁰ The following schedule gives an idea of the real or imputed membership of the I. W. W. over the period covered, and the sources of information. Since 1924 the I. W. W. have not given out membership figures on which one can place any reliance.

1916—December—40,000—*American Labor Yearbook*, 1919-20, Vol. 3, p. 191.

1917—January—60,000—*The I. W. W.*, Brissenden, p. 341.

1917—100,000—*American Labor Yearbook*, 1921-22, Vol. 4, p. 151.

1919—70,000—*American Labor Yearbook*, 1919-20, Vol. 3, pp. 195-196.

1919—I. W. W. claim total increase in membership between September 1918 to September 1919 of 50,000 but they account for a growth of only 20,000—metal miners

¹⁶ Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, p. 350. See also, Saposs, *Left Wing Unionism*, p. 144.

¹⁷ The I. W. W. claim an accession of 1,000 miners in the Wayne, Alberta, coal-mining strike of 1925, for example, *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 375, Dec. 30, 1925, p. 1.

¹⁸ See Brissenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 349 and 359.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 350.

and agricultural workers having greatest growth. *One Big Union Monthly*, Vol. 2, No. 5, May, 1920, p. 40.

- 1921—April—"Federal authorities" are reported by the *New York Times* to have stated that the membership declined from 400,000 in 1918 to 7,000 in April, 1921. Both figures seem to be absurd. *New York Times*, April 23, 1921, p. 15, col. 1.
- 1921—Credential Committee of the Red Trade Union International recognized the membership of the I. W. W. as between 15,000 to 16,000. *First Congress of the R. T. U. I.*, by George Williams, published by I. W. W. p. 21.
- 1923—November—58,000—*American Labor Yearbook*, 1923-24, Vol. 5, p. 93.
- 1924—"Membership during 1924"—37,600—*American Labor Yearbook*, 1925, Vol. 6, p. 104.
- 1924—Approximately 31,000 if computed from data given in *Minutes 16th Convention*, p. 34.
- 1925—May—12,061—*Workers' Monthly*, August, 1925, p. 447. This number is said to have been derived from the amount of the per capita payments to I. W. W. headquarters.
- 1926—"Barely 10,000"—*Left Wing Unionism*, Saposs, p. 174.
- 1928—Slight increase in membership among lumber and mine workers; loss among building and marine workers. *American Labor Yearbook*, 1929, Vol. 10, p. 132.
- 1930—September—7,000 to 8,000—estimate made in conversation with me by branch secretary of an industrial union, N. Y. C. Probably fairly accurate.
- 1930—Membership in agricultural workers' union showed slight decline. *American Labor Yearbook*, 1931, Vol. 12, p. 128; reported to be about as strong in membership in 1930 as in 1929—*American Labor Yearbook*, 1931, Vol. 12, p. 131.

The number of membership cards issued to date (July, 1931) is in excess of 1,220,000.²¹ In order to estimate the number of men who have, at one time or another, become members of the I. W. W., two deductions must be made from the figure 1,220,000. First is the loss of 30,000 numbered cards during war-time raids; and second, the number of cards issued to those who have rejoined. This number cannot be estimated. It is possible that some persons have rejoined the organization as often as ten or twelve times—though two or three would be a more likely number. Making allowance for these deductions it does not necessarily follow that the number of the currently issued membership cards is an exact record of the number of those who have joined the I. W. W.

The first card of the second million was issued in 1922. Very roughly this may indicate that in the period July, 1905, to December, 1921, the average number of annual joiners was 60,000. In the period January, 1922, to July, 1931, the average number may have been approximately 23,200.²² These figures tell nothing about the rate of re-joining during the periods in question. Inconclusive as these numbers are, they may be taken, along with one's general information about the I. W. W., to indicate that probably the average number of persons joining the I. W. W. during the first period was more than twice as large as during the second period.

It seems quite reasonable to believe that the most important decline in membership took place about the time of the 1924 schism and afterwards. The emergency program group took along some members, but also probably lost many

²¹ Taken from the serial number stamped on the current membership blanks, General Recruiting Union, N. Y. C., 90 E. 10th St.

²² Compare these results with the average annual number of approximately 26,100 joiners in the period, July, 1905, to January, 1917. Computed from data to be found in Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, p. 341.

who were repelled by internal conflict. There seems to be good reason to believe that, soon after the split, Communists within the I. W. W., despairing of success as proselyters, left the organization.

A study of the number and decline in numbers of I. W. W. branches confirms in a general way some of the beliefs already put forward in respect of membership. In 1924 and 1926 *Industrial Solidarity* printed lists of branches under the title "Where You Can Join the I. W. W." One hundred branches were published in 1924 and fifty in 1926, exclusive of stationary delegates.²³ In July, 1931, a request sent to the I. W. W. for a list of branches brought forth an unsatisfactory reply. A leaflet, listing thirty-two branches on the back cover, was sent with the following comment:

Enclosed you will find a leaflet with a large number of our branch addresses on the back page. While this does not give the names of any of our branches in the mining industry and some other industry [*sic*], it is fairly substantial. For reasons of policy, we do not disclose the addresses of the others.²⁴

Regarding this comment it is probably true that a few branches have recently (June, July, 1931) been opened in the Kentucky coal-strike area.²⁵ The "reasons of policy" I interpret, however, to be that the I. W. W. is unwilling to admit that it has only approximately thirty-two branches. It may be that, exclusive of the newly-formed Kentucky branches, the I. W. W. has a few branches in excess of thirty-two; but I am inclined to believe that the number of

²³ For complete data, see accompanying table. In localities where sentiment for the I. W. W. is undeveloped and where there are no branches, individual members may serve as "stationary delegates" to initiate new members and, in general to promote interest in the organization.

²⁴ Letter signed by Herbert Mahler, General Secretary-Treasurer of the I. W. W.; dated July 28, 1931.

²⁵ See *Nation*, Aug. 5, 1931, p. 122.

branches beyond the published list is hardly worthy of mention.

The principal free-speech fights²⁶ of the I. W. W. took place before 1917.²⁷ Ed Delaney, an active member of the I. W. W., in a letter to me says: "Free speech fights have been somewhat *passé* since the Everett affair of 1916." He then mentions as being of importance the Centralia fight of 1923 and the San Pedro fight of the same year. Other free-speech fights of the I. W. W. are:

Port Arthur, Texas, 1923; see *Industrial Solidarity*,
Whole No. 245, July 14, 1923, p. 1.

Great Falls, California, 1923; see *Industrial Solidarity*,
Whole No. 250, Aug. 18, 1923, p. 1.

Fargo, North Dakota, 1923; see *Industrial Solidarity*,
Whole No. 258, October 13, 1923, p. 1.

The San Pedro fight of 1923 grew out of the "general" strike of the Marine Transport Workers.²⁸ It was spectacular, and is described in *Solidarity* as follows:

San Pedro strike sentiment reached its peak of enthusiasm on Liberty Hill last night in one of the most sensational free speech fights the wobblies have ever conducted, when Los Angeles harbor police vainly tried to break up an outdoor mass meeting of five thousand striking sailors, longshoremen and their wives.²⁹

"To the jail", was the next shout and with a half dozen gaily dressed young women in the van the crowd marched . . . to the ugly stone structure . . . now filled with strike committee men and free speech fighters.

²⁶ For a discussion of I. W. W. tactics in free-speech fights, see Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, pp. 262-266.

²⁷ *Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Unionism*, pp. 20-25.

²⁸ *Supra*, ch. 2.

²⁹ *Industrial Solidarity*, whole no. 238, May 26, 1923, p. 1.

TABLE SHOWING APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF BRANCHES IN I. W. W. DURING 1924, 1926 AND 1931^a

[illegible]

TABLE SHOWING APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF BRANCHES IN L. W. W. DURING 1924, 1926 AND 1931—*Continued*

[illegible]

^a Data taken from *Industrial Solidarity*, June 11, 1924; Sept. 1, 1926; *Breadlines or Picket Lines* (I. W. W. Leaflet, published in 1931).

^b For types of workers represented by numbers of industrial unions, see Appendix 3.

* 1931 source does not give branches by Industrial Unions.

^a Stationary delegates and supply stations not included.

Round and round the long, snake-like line went. The "Red Flag" was followed by . . . "Remember" . . . [songs]

"In California's darkest dungeons

"For the O. B. U.

"Remember you're outside for us,"

they sang, and the fourth line came back faintly from the men behind the barred windows:

"And we're in here for you."³⁰

The play, *Singing Jailbirds*, by Upton Sinclair describes this fight. Sinclair was arrested for participating.

The *New York Times* article describing the Port Arthur free-speech fight is interesting because of the attitude taken in that article at a date as late as 1923. In 1923 national concern over the danger of an I. W. W. invasion had subsided; indeed, all federal prisoners were released during 1923. It reminds one of 1917 and 1918, therefore, to see the *Times* appearing with a front-page article which made much of an alleged movement of 20,000 "wabbies" (*sic*) to Port Arthur to avenge a kidnapping of three fellow-workers.³¹

The purpose of this section is to give an outline of the structural changes which have taken place in the I. W. W. during the period covered by this study, and of the present make-up of the union.³²

Before 1916 the unit of organization was the local union. In a district in which five local unions existed, a district council was formed. Locals, unlimited as to number, with a total membership of at least 3,000, might form a national industrial union. Two or more national unions formed a department.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

³¹ July 19, 1923, p. 1, col. 3.

³² Some of the material in this section is taken from articles in the *American Labor Yearbooks*, 1918-1931.

After 1916 the unit of organization was the industrial union, with unlimited jurisdiction, and power to make by-laws to cover its industry and to organize branches in its industry. A provision was made for branches to form an industrial union district council, not very much different from a central labor council of the A. F. of L. The General Recruiting Union served industries not providing a sufficient number of members to establish separate industrial unions.

In 1919 the I. W. W. was composed of several industrial unions, the General Recruiting Union and a few locals which had not yet formed into industrial unions. A list is given below of the names of the unions, their membership, and the number of branches, as estimated by the I. W. W.

<i>Name of Union</i>	<i>No. of Members</i>	<i>No. of Branches</i>
General Recruiting Union	4,000	12
Metal Mine Workers' Industrial Union ..	15,000	5
Construction Workers' Industrial Union..	5,000	5
Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union..	6,000	3
Lumber Workers' Industrial Union	20,000	Not stated
Metal and Machinery Workers' Industrial Union	4,000	Not stated
Railroad Workers' Industrial Union	2,000	Not stated
Hotel, Restaurant and Domestic Workers' Union	1,000	Not stated
Marine Transport Workers' Union	4,000	2
Ship Builders' Union	1,000	1
Textile Workers' Industrial Union	1,000	Not stated
Local 8, Marine Transport Workers' Union	5,000	1
Printing and Publishing Workers' Industrial Union	Not stated	1
Other Locals	2,000	Not stated ³³

The General Recruiting Union was abolished for a while and replaced by a Department of Small Industrial Unions.

³³ Taken from data in *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. iii, 1919-20, pp. 195-196.

There was much complaint at the time of the split of 1924 that industrial unions were being "put in the box"—that is, that they were being forced to join the Department of Small Industrial Unions, with control by headquarters officials and loss of personality. The General Recruiting Union is now, however, again part of the organization.

The unions of the I. W. W. are classified by a consistent numerical system. For example, all unions in the Department of Transportation and Communication lie between 500 and 600. Marine Workers are in Union 510; railroad workers are in 520; telegraph and telephone workers are in 530. The reader is referred to Appendix III for the complete classification and chart. The classification given is a theoretical classification of the world's industries rather than a list of unions active in the I. W. W. The I. W. W. chart is a blueprint of future society as conceived by them rather than a system of designating the unions actually in existence. In 1930 the chief unions of the I. W. W. were:

Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union	110
Lumber Workers Industrial Union	120
Metal and Coal Miners' Industrial Union	210-220
Construction Workers' Industrial Union	310-330
Marine Transport Workers' Industrial Union	510
General Recruiting Union (Not numbered; includes small industrial unions)	

General Headquarters serves as a "clearing house" to settle automatically all debts between component unions and headquarters. All credentials are universal, and are issued by the clearing house. All branch secretaries and delegates remit directly to headquarters.

A general convention of the I. W. W. is required to meet, constitutionally, each year. But there has been no convention since 1928; and there were none in 1926 or 1927. The

powers of the convention on I. W. W. policies are broad and, apparently, without limit if sustained by a referendum vote of the membership.

Membership is restricted to "wage workers". Editors of papers not controlled by the I. W. W. are ineligible to membership. *Officers* of trade or craft unions or political parties are excluded from membership. Creed, color and sex constitute no bar; and there is, apparently, no age requirement.

The organization is said not to have any debts and to be making "financial gains".⁸⁴

Although the I. W. W. is by no means a loose federation of industrial unions, the administration of organization affairs is democratic—that is, administration problems are settled by that portion of the rank and file who care to contribute to the making of decisions. That the number of this group is low is indicated by the fact that in such an important referendum as the Communism referendum there were less than 2,500 votes.⁸⁵ The twelfth convention referendum was voted upon by less than 1,200 members.⁸⁶ Approximately 1,300 persons, as has already been noted, took part in the important referendum following the sixteenth convention. No matter how low a reasonable estimate of the total membership be made at the time of these three referenda, it still appears likely that only approximately one-sixteenth to one-sixth of the membership took part. Aside from lack of interest and ignorance—both generally and of organization affairs—inactivity may be the result of members' being marooned in lumber or construction camps, remote from a post office; or, of their moving about so frequently that ballots are not forwarded.

⁸⁴ *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. xii, 1931, p. 130.

⁸⁵ *Supra*, p. 82.

⁸⁶ *One Big Union Monthly*, Sept., 1920, p. 32.

In any case, the I. W. W. is, theoretically, democratic. The word, "democratic," is not used much, probably because democracy, to the Marxian, is a word to be applied to the capitalist state, as distinguished from the feudal state, or other historic forms of government. "Rule by the rank and file" is a phrase in high repute among the I. W. W. Both in conversation with members and in publications, there seems to be an aversion to referring to a man as a leader in a strike or demonstration. The conversation reported below was given me by a young longshoreman who was head of a committee of prisoners at the time of the San Pedro free-speech fight of 1923. He was standing at the bars while the I. W. W. all over the jail were singing. A prison official came up to him:

Official: Who's the head of this gang?

I. W. W.: There is no head. The I. W. W. is run by the rank and file.

Official: Well, this singing has got to stop. Haven't you got a committee or anybody I can talk to?

I. W. W.: There is a tank committee, and I'm one of them; but if the men want to sing, that's their business. We can't stop them.

The attitude expressed in this colloquy is also expressed in the following quotation from an I. W. W. pamphlet:

I. W. W. strikes are run by the strikers. This is forcibly illustrated by the following incident in the great Paterson silk strike of 1913: Big Bill Haywood was seated in the Turn Hall headquarters of the Paterson strikers when he was approached by the leading rabbi of the city. A staccato dialogue took place as follows:

"Oh, Mr. Haywood, I am so glad to meet you. I've been wanting to meet the leader of the strike for some time."

"You've made a mistake," replied Bill, "I'm not the leader."

"What! You're not? Well, who is he?"

"There ain't any He."

"Perhaps I should have said 'they'," persisted the prophet of the Chosen people, "Who are they?"

"This strike has no leaders," answered Bill.

"It hasn't! Well, who is in charge of it?"

"The strikers."³⁷

According to the 1923 Constitution, the General Executive Board of the I. W. W. is given authority to call a strike in any union or organization of the I. W. W., when necessary, if other parts of the I. W. W. are already involved in a strike.³⁸ In the 1929 Constitution, the section giving this authority does not appear.

The fact that officers are elected for only one year³⁹ and the fact that formerly immediate re-election was not permitted⁴⁰ are further evidence that the I. W. W. have always insisted upon "rule by the rank and file."

³⁷ *Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Unionism*, p. 45.

³⁸ *Preamble and Constitution* (Chicago, 1923), p. 17.

³⁹ *Preamble and Constitution* (Chicago, 1929), p. 11.

⁴⁰ *Preamble and Constitution* (1923), p. 12.

CHAPTER VII

THE I. W. W. AND THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT

THE I. W. W. should be classified as a revolutionary industrial union. In gauging the extent of its activity in the affairs of the American working class, however, it seems that it can be conceived in two other lights, at least. It may be conceived as a union of migratory workers or hoboes,¹ and as a business union.

The American migratory worker has made several attempts to band himself with others of his kind. These attempts have, at times, been spontaneous, like Coxey's Army. Coxey's program was one of building roads in times of unemployment, coupled with a scheme for issuing non-interest-bearing bonds.² The movement had a mushroom-like growth, and ended in nothing.

Other attempts have been more self-conscious, like James Eads How's International Brotherhood Welfare Association. This organization used to publish, now and then, a journal named the "*Hobo*" *News*. In an undated copy, acquired in Washington, D. C., on May 1, 1928, the following platform is announced by How:

¹ The word hobo is not used here in a derogatory or humorous sense, but, roughly, as the equivalent of migratory worker. There is no objective evidence in the form of intelligence tests or accomplishment tests to prove that the I. W. W. hobo is superior to the common run of hoboes; but it is the general opinion of those who have had personal contacts with the Western I. W. W. hobo that he is younger, more intelligent, cleaner-cut than ordinary hoboes.

² Donald L. McMurray, *Coxey's Army* (Boston, 1929), *passim*.

First, we want provisions made for the care of the aged. When men and women get too old to compete in labor with the younger generation, they should be given a pension.

Second, the unemployed should be taken care of. If a man is willing to work, he should have it [*sic*]. If there is no work for him, then the government should give him compensation so that he can keep his strength, health and respectability.

Third, we are for a shorter day. Shorter hours make better, happier employes and create more jobs.

Fourth, men who live migratory lives should not be deprived of their right to vote. This is especially true in national elections. Any citizen should be able to vote, no matter where he happens to be, since the officers elected will have national authority.³

The International Brotherhood Welfare Association was incorporated under the laws of the state of Ohio. In 1928 it had, by its statement, fifteen branches, two in New York City, one in the South, six in the Middle West, and six in the West.⁴ How died in July of 1930,⁵ and the status of the Brotherhood is now uncertain. Few people, however, would deny its obscurity, past and present, as compared with the I. W. W.

Other, vaguer attempts to do something about the migratory worker are comprised in:

1. The attempts of "Mr. Zero," New York City. Described in *The Milk and Honey Route*, by Dean Stiff, pp. 174-175.

2. The "Hobo College," Chicago. Described in *The Hobo*, by Nels Anderson.

3. The Hobo Outcry, name of an organization, San Fran-

³ Taken from page 13.

⁴ "*Hobo*" *News*, p. 16.

⁵ For a brief, newspaper account of How's life, see *New York Times*, July 23, 1930, p. 23, col. 7.

cisco, mentioned in *New Masses*, V. 4, No. 9, Feb., 1929, p. 28.

The past of the I. W. W. among migratory workers is one of great success. The future, however, is doubtful. Since very little has been written about the American migratory worker that is scientific rather than literary, serious rather than humorous, any generalization must stand on shaky ground.

It seems reasonable to believe, however, that the migratory worker is a product of the frontier, of a country which built railroads through virgin territory; of a land whose lumbering and mining were pursued at the outposts of civilization. With the disappearance of the frontier, with the introduction of more machinery, it seems that the migratory worker of American tradition—the class that Josiah Flynt wrote about—is disappearing. This does not mean that labor will cease to migrate in search of jobs. It does mean, however, that the hobo attitude is being destroyed by our technological progress. As straws to show which way the wind blows, the following quotations are given:

Ford may, quite unintentionally, be the end of the I. W. W. Not Henry Ford, but Lizzie. For harvest-by-Ford has all but displaced the old gangs of hobos who bummed their way on a freight, joined the Wobblies and made the harvesting of the great western crops the most picturesque labor operation in America.⁶

In John J. Hader's article in the same number of the *Survey Graphic*, we find:

To the I. W. W. . . . the problem [of the gas tramp] is no less acute. Their tactics of force have boomeranged against them and the very men to whom their principles were offensive

⁶ *Survey Graphic* (New York, monthly), August, 1928, p. 451.

and who preferred to be thrown off the trains rather than join, are now going in cars. They do not gang up in the cities and job-action is the only resort left. Two men who appeared to be organizers were overheard agreeing that, "It's playing hell with us; we've got to go out and get next these fellows." Industrial Solidarity, the I. W. W. paper, vented its dissatisfaction with the "Gas Tramp" as follows:—

"The most serious situation which confronted and still confronts the organization is the worker traveling by auto. Men obtain old cars of any description and proceed into the field, willing to work for any wages. All attempts to organize the men prove futile."

When a roving organizer is asked what the plan is for dealing with the situation, the questioner is met with a good deal of reticence. A seasoned and well-bewhiskered Wobbly, leaning on a rail in Aberdeen, said, "A chisel through the radiator, a sledge hammer on the cylinder head, will fix them." (p. 455)

In a statement prepared for me by W. I. Fisher⁷ the following reasons, among others, are given for the decline of the I. W. W.:

The need for the "professional" migratory worker has disappeared, because the true migratory type has always worked on the frontier—on railroad construction, for example, or in virgin forests. The lumberman of today is a member of the home-guard, not a class-conscious migratory worker. He lives in the towns which have been built up on areas which were, until recently, frontier areas.

The growth of machinery has also reduced the importance of the migratory worker. In the wheat fields, for example, the increasing use of the combine has diminished the need for the great migratory hordes of the past. The flivver-hobo, with his homeguard psychology, has also succeeded somewhat in diluting the rebellious attitude of the class-conscious migratory worker.

A migratory worker writes to *Labor's News*:

⁷ Active member and former temporary official of the I. W. W.

Then there used to be a gang of 30 men doing what five men do now with a combine. The combine sure knocked us out of jobs.⁸

Thus, if it be true that increased mechanization is causing the extinction of the American hobo, then it is equally true that the ability of the I. W. W. to organize the hobo will atrophy for want of material on which to exercise itself.

Before leaving this subject and going on to the activities of the I. W. W. as a business union, we should note the fact that I. W. W. headquarters is the only home that some men have known since their leaving the paternal roof as youthful runaways. A very touching "poem" on this theme has been written by a member of the organization.⁹

The I. W. W. have been extremely successful in at least a few cases in securing "immediate demands"—that is, demands in respect of wages, hours and working conditions. Two examples of this, which involved job control, are Goldfield¹⁰ and the Philadelphia docks.¹¹ But the organization has probably often realized that job control meant mere growth at the expense of revolutionary progress. The following paragraphs, appearing in an I. W. W. journal at the time of the expulsion of the Philadelphia longshoremen is evidence of a feeling that business unionism and revolution are not good bedfellows:

The I. W. W. Marine Transport Workers had job control in Philadelphia, and that means that in order to get a job on the water front of that city you had to have an I. W. W. card.

⁸ *Labor's News* (New York, weekly, suspended Nov., 1931), Aug. 8, 1931, p. 1.

⁹ To be found in *Workers' Monthly*, Nov., 1924, p. 17: "A Harvest Stiff Comes Back to Town," Keene Wallis.

¹⁰ Brissenden, *The I. W. W.*, ch. viii.

¹¹ *Supra*, ch. v.

By holding the club of job control over the workers we made "adherents" and "converts" by the thousands. . . .

The Philadelphia Marine Transport Workers, at least part of them, have been taken into the I. W. W. by the wholesale without previous education in our principles. They lined up because they liked the economic advantages gained through the I. W. W. method of fighting and not because they had absorbed our philosophy. . . .

The lesson to be drawn from this incident is that EDUCATION IS THE PRIME FACTOR in our work. If we build up a membership without education it will grow into a tail which will wag the I. W. W. dog.¹²

It is generally admitted that the I. W. W. have brought about improved conditions and shorter hours in the lumber camps of the Northwest, especially in the period between 1917 and 1923.¹³ The symbol of this success was the disappearance of the "bindle stiff". A "bindle stiff" was a hobo who carried a bundle (blanket) rolled up on his back. As soon as the lumber companies began to supply adequate housing facilities and clean and ample bedding, it became unnecessary for the lumber worker to carry "the heavy balloon."

The better housing standards introduced by the I. W. W. over a decade ago are now being let down. With the absence of effective I. W. W. organization in the lumber camps, and the absence of any other effective labor union, conditions are getting to be rather bad, it is reported by workers who have recently been in the Pacific Northwest. Returning motorists tell of the reappearance of the "bindle stiff" on western highways. The *Industrial Worker*¹⁴ says that the blanket "stiff", buried in 1917, is being resurrected

¹² *One Big Union Monthly*, Sept., 1920, p. 7.

¹³ Todes, *Labor and Lumber* (New York, 1931), ch. ix; Saposs, *Left Wing Unionism*, p. 161.

¹⁴ Whole no. 700, May 17, 1930, p. 1.

from the dead; he is coming back with dirt, cooties and the heavy balloon. The slogan of 1917, "Burn your blankets on the first of May!" must be revived, says the *Industrial Worker*.

An ambitious attempt at business unionism which nearly resulted in success took place in 1917. The agricultural workers of the I. W. W. were considering a working agreement with the Non-Partisan League of North Dakota, an agreement which would have been a most interesting example of the collaboration of farmers and workers.¹⁵ I am informed by Forrest Edwards, former secretary-treasurer of the Agricultural Workers' Organization, that railroad officials had made a tentative agreement to permit workers to go from place to place in the harvest fields, on box cars, without molestation. He states that the mounting tide of unfavorable public opinion during 1917 caused the preliminary negotiations to be dropped by the railroads, and later by the Non-Partisan League.¹⁶

In spite of these occasional successes of the I. W. W. in securing "immediate demands" it seems that the conclusions of David J. Saposs in this matter are fundamentally sound. He says:

1. Outside of strike periods . . . [the I. W. W.] only indirectly concerned itself with the furtherance of the immediate material interests of its adherents.

2. Even during strikes many of its leaders regarded the im-

¹⁵ *Solidarity*, June 9, 1917, p. 1.

¹⁶ A discussion of the working conditions and attitudes of the Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union of the I. W. W. during 1918 is to be found in an unpublished memorandum written by Thorstein Veblen. His investigation of labor conditions in the grain-growing states of the northwest was undertaken at the instance of the Food Administration's Statistical Division, of the government of the United States. The copy of the memorandum at my disposal was kindly lent by Mr. Joseph Dorfman, of Columbia University.

mediate issues as secondary and were mostly interested in propagating their doctrines.

3. It failed to establish local organisations that would function continuously in guarding the economic interests of the striking workers.

4. By withdrawing the prominent leaders upon cessation of a strike, and diverting their energies to propaganda pursuits during normal times or to the conduct of affairs in other storm centres, it deprived the local leaders of the counsel and guidance necessary in order to perpetuate and maintain the mushroom strike organisation, so that they generally found themselves unequal to the task.

5. The I. W. W. policy of denouncing accumulation of funds for the financing of strikes and of routine activities, and its policy of discouraging retention of paid officials to conduct the business of the local organisation served as an additional and insurmountable handicap.

6. Since with the automatic disbanding of the local strike organisation and its reversion to propaganda activities, no organisation remained to guard the interests of the workers and to aid them in maintaining the conditions wrested from the employers, these concessions were gradually nibbled away by shrewd manipulations of foremen and superintendents, for whose skilful higgling neither the shop committees nor the individual workers were a match.

7. When changed conditions became unbearable and brought about a new crisis needing concerted action, the organising work had to be repeated. This emergency necessitated the improvising of a new strike organisation, begging for funds and so on.

8. Many of the local leaders also feared that, since the I. W. W. had become an outlaw organisation during the war, and had fallen into disrepute as being a revolutionary body, to engage again in strikes under its leadership, would be "playing" into the hands of the employers and of hostile public authorities.¹⁷

¹⁷ Reprinted by permission of International Publishers Co., Inc., Saposs, *op. cit.*, pp. 148, 149.

It is not, however, as a business union or a union of migratory workers that the I. W. W. wishes to be judged, but as a revolutionary union. In spite of several exemplars which, it is sometimes said, prove the contrary, it is probably true that the purposes of business unionism and revolutionary unionism are diametrically opposed. And, in a general way, it may be said that during most of its history whenever there has been a choice between a business course and a revolutionary course, the I. W. W. has chosen the latter. Let us now go on to see what the I. W. W. has accomplished as a revolutionary union.

It is not the purpose of this study to evaluate the method of revolution as a means of social change or social progress. Such an evaluation would carry us too far from our study of the structure and activities of one, American, revolutionary union. We have only to admit that there is a philosophy of revolution and that there are many revolutions. Our concern is to inquire into what the I. W. W. has done, theoretically and practically, to further the cause of revolution.

One cannot approach the theory of revolution with much confidence. To do justice to the subject, Hegel and Feuerbach ought to be invoked. The discussion below is entered into with the knowledge that many philosophical obstacles will have been hurdled rather than cleared away.

It should be pointed out, besides, that entirely apart from the difficulties arising from the Marxian dialectic and its interpretation, there are other difficulties. Is a non-militant union with a Marxian preamble less revolutionary than a militant union with a similar preamble? To put this differently: Is a union, founded on Marxian principles, more revolutionary when it is militant and engages in spectacular activity, than when it engages in peaceful, organizational activities? What, beyond a Marxian preamble and an

appropriate constitution and structure, must a union have or do to deserve the name revolutionary?

What shall we say of a union which ignores all but one aspect of revolutionary change? For example, the economic planning which has recently engaged the attention of economists and publicists connotes a revolutionary type of thinking, and would culminate in changes so great that they may well be termed revolutionary. Yet the I. W. W. and the Communists either ignore or combat the proposals thus far put forward in this direction. The attempts of men like Schlink and Chase, and of a magazine like *Ballyhoo* to discredit advertising and to make the consumption of goods more rational, are attempts to strike at the heart of our institutions. Such a movement, too, is ignored by the I. W. W. The technological approach of Howard Scott¹⁸ bristled with revolutionary implications. The I. W. W., after briefly considering it, turned away.

For our purposes we must say in respect of the questions and problems of the two preceding paragraphs, that the tests of a revolutionary labor union seem, in the popular mind, to be militancy and adherence to Marxian philosophy. We shall, at least temporarily, accept these criteria, and shall now examine the practical and theoretical contributions, if any, of the I. W. W. to revolutionary change. And by revolutionary change we shall mean change related to pure and applied Marxism, and to militancy animated by Marxian attitudes.

FUNCTIONAL GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM. Lenin has said that "industrial unionism is the basic state."¹⁹ This is simply another way of saying that in the coöperative hereafter a plan of unionism similar to the one explained in appendix 3 of this book, will constitute government. De-

¹⁸ *Supra*, ch. vi.

¹⁹ Quoted by Brissenden in *The I. W. W.*, p. 241.

Leon, one of the founders of the I. W. W., but afterwards a bitter enemy of the Chicago I. W. W., should be given credit for having evolved this type of union organization in the United States. Although originated in this country by DeLeon, it was independently worked out by Lenin and the Russians.²⁰

Thus the I. W. W. did not originate the idea of functional government or of industrial unionism. Since they were, however, the most important group in their day to practice industrial unionism, it seems proper to say of them that they probably influenced the growth of industrial unionism in America. This, and much of what follows, will have to be accepted on the basis of faith in an assumption of the continuity of social movements. We cannot say definitely that the I. W. W. influenced the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, for example; we can say, however, that since both are industrial unions and since the I. W. W. was organized first, it seems reasonable to suppose that the I. W. W. plan of organization contributed somewhat to the formation of the Clothing Workers' union. If, in addition, we should find that some of the leaders of the union were formerly members of the I. W. W., then we might feel a little surer of the truth of our assumption and of the conclusions to be drawn from it.

Before we go on to consider the debt of specific industrial unions to the I. W. W. let us stop a moment to see what the attitude of the I. W. W. is to the "new" unionism—to the "amalgamated's". First of all, the I. W. W. is perhaps a little proud of the fact that many unions are "copying" the industrial union structure. But this sense of accomplishment is overweighted by the fact that most other industrial unions are not revolutionary in the opinion of the I. W. W. Other industrial unions, they say, do not have an outlook

²⁰ Brissenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 241, 242.

on all industry, but are likely to belong to only one industry. The I. W. W. believes that the Amalgamated Clothing Workers breeds "collective egoism;" that, being an independent union, it is structurally inferior to the American Federation of Labor.²¹

In a two-page, mimeographed leaflet, undated, without mention of place of publication, entitled *False Industrial Unionism*, the I. W. W. says:

The officials of the largest unions in the clothing and allied trades—the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, Amalgamated Clothing Workers, United Cloth Hat and Cap Makers Union, International Furriers Union, and others—have announced with a flourish of trumpets that they are going to combine these unions into "One Big Union."

The demand for INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM—organization of the workers by shops and industries, in place of their present separation into craft unions and locals—has become so insistent that the officials realize they must head it off or they will lose their hold on the rank and file. They are, therefore, using the old politicians trick of pretending to give the people what they want, but in reality fastening the same old machine on their necks more firmly than ever.

The fact is that the proposed "One Big Union" is not industrial unionism at all, but merely a federation of craft unions. It is industrial unionism turned upside down—with the officials powerfully united at the top, where centralization of authority is always dangerous, but leaving the workers as divided as before in the shops, where unity is most vitally needed.

The leaflet goes on to complain of leaders in the "new" unionist movement who draw salaries of \$7,500 a year; of the splitting-up of homogeneous industrial groups into operators, cutters, pressers, finishers, Italians, Poles, Lithuanians and so forth. It then exhorts the workers to join the I. W. W.

²¹ *Solidarity*, whole no. 370, Feb. 10, 1917, p. 1.

Having sounded the I. W. W. on their attitude towards other industrial unionists, let us now see whether we can find out what debt, if any, other industrial unions owe to the I. W. W.

There is little doubt that the One Big Union of Canada borrowed more from the I. W. W. than the slogan, "One Big Union." Besides the name, it has several points of similarity with the I. W. W.—low fees, and belief in the efficacy of the general strike. There are, of course, many points of difference.²²

The influence on the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union of the I. W. W. is clearly indicated in a history of the former organization:

The I. W. W. thus played a dual part in the history of unionism in the industry. On the one hand, they brought in a new faith in unionism and a spirit of militancy which several years later helped to rejuvenate the International. On the other hand, during the years under consideration, they drained the International of some of its vital elements and were thus one of the factors which temporarily retarded its growth.²³

It is interesting to note that Morris Sigman, of the Union, was once a member of the I. W. W.

The Automobile Workers, the Food Workers and the Tobacco Workers, as will be told in detail below, have been influenced by I. W. W. tactics of industrial warfare. In the absence of adequate histories, similar to the history of the Ladies' Garment Workers, I have requested the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the Amalgamated Food Workers to state whether they felt indebted to the I. W. W. for

²² For a history of the O. B. U. and for a comparison of that organization with the I. W. W., see Savage, *Industrial Unionism in America*, ch. vi.

²³ Louis Levine (L. L. Lorwin), *The Women's Garment Workers* (New York, 1924), p. 126.

their acceptance of the principles of industrial unionism and whether any appreciable number of I. W. W.'s were in the ranks of the two organizations. The important sentences in the reply of the Clothing Workers are:

... it seems to me that since the I. W. W. was itself the result of a certain set of conditions in the American labor movement, the development of the Amalgamated should be traced to those conditions rather than to a single phenomenon such as the organization of the I. W. W.

... I can say that there are no officers or active members of the Amalgamated who I recall as ever having been connected with the I. W. W. It is probable that there are scattered individuals who were members of the I. W. W. but we have no record whatever of such persons and there is no way of discovering who they were.²⁴

From the Food Workers I have had no reply. Interviews with members of the food workers reveal that about 1920 there was a great deal of interest on their part in the I. W. W., and many members of one organization became members of the other.

The Trade Union Unity League obviously has traces of I. W. W. influence. In its draft program²⁵ it has, here and there, phrases and objectives which remind one of I. W. W. phrases and goals. One paragraph, in which the T.U.U.L. attitude towards dual unionism is expressed, speaks of avoiding the "many serious mistakes of the I. W. W." Surely one is indebted to an organization by whose mistakes one may profit. Low initiation fees and dues; salaries to officers equivalent only to wages in industry; the shop delegate system—these practices are in the I. W. W. tradition. The T.U.U.L., like all Communist organizations, has a generous sprinkling of ex-members of the I. W. W.

²⁴ From a letter addressed to me, signed by J. B. S. Hardman, editor of *The Advance*, New York, August 20, 1931.

²⁵ *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. xi, 1930, pp. 96-101.

The T.U.U.L. unions are also indebted to the I. W. W. for their nomenclature. The names of component unions of the I. W. W. end in "industrial union," as, Marine Transport Workers' Industrial Union. The T.U.U.L. unions also use this ending. It is probably true, as the I. W. W. allege, that this similarity in names was deliberately chosen by the Communists in order that they might take advantage of whatever good will the similar I. W. W. name might arouse.

The Industrial Union League, a new and obscure organization, traces its philosophy to DeLeon. A letter to the League brought the reply that, emphatically, no, it was not indebted to the I. W. W. This is probably true, for it is in the direct DeLeon line.

ECONOMIC ACTION. Insistence upon economic action rather than political action is good Marxism. This insistence is not original with the I. W. W. Even the Socialist Labor Party, with which the I. W. W. broke on the principle of political action, is probably rather indifferent to political action, except as a cloak for education. And the A. F. of L. has always insisted that it is a non-political organization. The contribution—if it is a contribution—of the I. W. W. to the economic-action domain of revolutionary philosophy may be classified under two heads:

1. A strict interpretation of the concept of political action. Legal defense is defined as political action; conferences with governmental officials from departments of labor are political action; joining the Red International of Labor Unions is political action.

2. The development of the belief that avoidance of political action makes a peculiarly American appeal to workmen. This idea, not yet clearly worked out in I. W. W. publications, is a development of the past decade. It is, unquestionably, a response to the Communists. The I. W. W. believe that American workmen can more readily

be won over to a movement which proclaims itself to be non-political, than to a movement, like Communism, which makes much of elections and other forms of political activity. This is one aspect of a feeling on the part of the I. W. W., as will be explained later, that it is creating a revolutionary movement on the American plan, of, by, and for Americans.

More specifically, economic action may be viewed under the following heads: (1) refusal of the I. W. W. to sign agreements with employers; (2) sabotage, including the slow-down strike and the intermittent strike. Have these forms of offense and defense, rooted in Marxism, been taken over by any labor groups? With regard to the trade agreement, Savage writes: "The I. W. W., The Food Workers, and the Tobacco Workers express their belief in the class struggle by refusing to sign agreements with employers for any definite length of time, and the Automobile Workers discourage such contracts just as far as possible."²⁶

I do not interpret this to mean that the unions mentioned are directly indebted to the I. W. W. for a policy of avoiding trade agreements. Since the I. W. W. was, however, first in the field; and since its message has been heard by millions of workmen, there is some reason to believe that the I. W. W. in an indirect way is partially responsible for the adoption of an anti-agreement policy by other unions.

With regard to sabotage, or—as it is now described by the I. W. W.—"slowing down", I am unable to discover any union in which this policy is openly advocated, under an easily recognizable name. The T.U.U.L. speaks of employing revolutionary methods; perhaps these include sabotage.²⁷ That old-line trade unions have long had restrictive policies is a well-known fact; that unorganized workers also restrict output is also a well-known fact, and the fact has recently

²⁶ *Industrial Unionism in America*, p. 316.

²⁷ See "Draft Program," *American Labor Yearbook*, vol. xi, 1930, pp. 96-101.

been elucidated at some length by Stanley B. Mathewson and others.²⁸

Where sabotage is practiced without an open avowal of the policy, the gathering of information is difficult; and when gathered, it is perhaps not quite reliable. No doubt, Louis Adamic's *Dynamite* is the best account available to the student. Adamic believes pretty definitely that American Communists practiced sabotage of a rather violent type in 1920;²⁹ and, in later years he describes other examples of supposed Communist sabotage. To what extent I. W. W. theory and practice contributed towards Communist sabotage (if practiced), is not easy to say; it is unreasonable to suppose, however, that the I. W. W. did not exert any influence. Adamic also describes individual acts of sabotage.³⁰ Here, too, it is reasonable to speak of the influence of the I. W. W. It should be remembered, however, as Adamic points out, that theoretically I. W. W. sabotage was part of an idealistic program, not a random act of revenge.

The future of sabotage is probably not bright. With improved bookkeeping methods, and improved devices for measuring individual output; with the introduction of the conveyor and other means of gearing the man to the machine, it would seem that the employer may be able to defeat gross forms of poorly organized sabotage.

In respect of such I. W. W. tactics as filling the jails until taxpayers complain, closing speakeasies during a strike³¹ and the securing of publicity in other ways—ways which, by their humor, sometimes win the sympathies of indifferent observers³²—in respect of such practices, it may be said,

²⁸ *Restriction of Output among Unorganized Workers* (New York, 1931).

²⁹ Adamic, *Dynamite*, pp. 378 and 381.

³⁰ "Radicalism, Ltd.," *New York World*, Jan. 25, 1931, Editorial Section.

³¹ *Nation*, May 23, 1923, p. 588.

³² Adamic, *Dynamite*, p. 380.

first, that the I. W. W. seem to be losing the ability or desire to repeat some of the spectacular acts of their past; and, second, that the Communists have been and are now employing spectacular methods.

THE MARXIAN DIALECTIC. The I. W. W. have always been unphilosophical about revolution and the Marxian dialectic. If one compares Trotsky's autobiography with Haywood's, one will get a just idea of the differences between philosophical and unphilosophical revolutionary thought. Haywood is never concerned with such problems as: If, according to the Marxian dialectic, the proletarian revolution is inevitable, why do I urge workingmen to join the I. W. W. for revolutionary purposes? Of, If the revolution is inevitable, why do I prefer to see a gifted organizer go out into the lumber camps rather than a poor one? Haywood could never have written anything like this:

The path had been predetermined; all that was required was to indicate the work. No arguments were necessary, and very few appeals. Without hesitation or doubt, the masses picked up what was suggested to them by the nature of the situation. Under the stress of events, their "leaders" did no more than formulate what answered the requirements of the people and the demands of history. Marxism considers itself the conscious expression of the unconscious historical process. But the "unconscious" process, in the historico-philosophical sense of the term—not in the psychological,—coincides with its conscious expression only at its highest point, when the masses, by sheer elemental pressure, break through the social routine and give victorious expression to the deepest needs of historical development. And at such moments the highest theoretical consciousness of the epoch merges with the immediate action of those oppressed masses who are farthest away from theory. The creative union of the conscious with the unconscious is what one usually calls "inspiration." Revolution is the inspired frenzy of history.³³

³³ Trotsky, *My Life* (New York, 1930), p. 334.

This quotation is not given for the purpose of showing that Trotsky's thinking is better or more lucid than Haywood's. The aim is merely to show that Trotsky's is a philosopher—a philosopher of revolution, whereas Haywood was not. And what is true of Haywood is probably true of most other members of the I. W. W. Among people who like to brood on revolution, the revolutionary philosophy of the I. W. W. is now considered to be out of date.

To conclude this section a quotation will be given from Max Eastman's study of revolution:

The Industrial Workers of the World have a more business-like way of talking than some of the European syndicalists, but the motto which they substitute for the Marxian plan of a political dictatorship—"Build the new society within the shell of the old"—shows a similar disregard of the practical terms of the problem. It shows the same reliance upon magical transformations—reliance indeed upon a metaphor—to solve the essential problem of the transference of power.³⁴

AMERICAN REVOLUTION PHILOSOPHY OF THE I. W. W. By way of replying to those who deem that the I. W. W. have not kept abreast of the most recent research in the science of revolution, a member of the I. W. W. would probably reply that these discoveries, however well they apply to the Russian or Central European situation, have no application in the United States.

The most peculiarly American quality claimed by the I. W. W. is its democracy, or the power of its rank and file. This virtue, like its non-political stand, is doubtless paraded as a response to Communism, which is deemed to be a movement autocratically directed. The average American is more likely to be attracted to a democratically run organization than to one despotically controlled, says the I. W. W.

³⁴ Eastman, *Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution* (London, 1926), p. 137, footnote.

The I. W. W. has not yet published a pamphlet entitled "The I. W. W.—A Revolutionary Union for One Hundred Percent Americans." Yet it is implicit in occasional articles and explicit in interviews with members, that the I. W. W. revolutionary philosophy is considered to be a necessary adaptation of revolutionary philosophy in general to American conditions and to the American temper. An interview with Tom Connors of the I. W. W. revealed that he, for one, was in favor of so-called Americanization programs. He felt that the I. W. W., with its American appeal, would be more successful as an organization in homogeneous groups.

Few observers would contest the opinion that the I. W. W. is an American product. It is democratic, puritanical; it professes to permit religious freedom. It is good-natured, easy-going, shrewd, humorous, friendly. Go to the headquarters of the Communists in New York, and then to the I. W. W. Recruiting Union in New York. In the former place the visitor will find suspicion, lack of warmth, a frankly-expressed unwillingness to coöperate. There are posters in strange characters; and every person addressed replies in broken English. At the I. W. W. headquarters, casual, friendly interest is evinced. American posters and the American accent predominate; the men loafing at the tables tell American stories and play American card games. Except for the French word, "*bourgeois*," the vocabulary of the I. W. W. is the vocabulary of the American hobo. Its peculiar contributions to hobo cant, have an American flavor: "dehorn,"³⁵ "scissorbill,"³⁶ "fink."³⁷ It does not use the foreign or strange-sounding vocabulary of the Communist: "plenum," "comintern," "eccei." The I. W. W. is indeed American, but many who would admit of its

³⁵ liquor, low quality contraband.

³⁶ a worker who lacks class-consciousness.

³⁷ an employment shark; a stoolpigeon; a renegade.

Americanism are puzzled to know just what is meant by the claim that the organization is a peculiarly American, *revolutionary* body. That the organization may gain adherents because of its American flavor seems reasonable; but that it may make revolutionary progress because of its American revolutionary quality, is open to question.

EQUALITY OF SEXES AND RACES. In the sense that to the Marxian inequality of the sexes and of the races is fundamentally a matter of economic inequality, we are justified in including a consideration of I. W. W. activity in matters relating to sex and race under the contributions of the organization to revolutionary thought and practice.

The I. W. W., more than two decades ago, proclaimed the equality of the sexes and of the races. Wherever, in American labor organizations, there is tolerance of women, negroes, and Orientals, there the I. W. W. has played at least a slight role. It may be noted in passing that Communists are more interested in the race problem than the I. W. W.

Unlike some Marxians and most liberals, the I. W. W. is not at all concerned in its publications with the tyranny of marriage, the freedom of love, or divorce, or inhibitions. Like all Marxians, however, the I. W. W. believes marriage to be an institution ancillary to the institution of private property. But the I. W. W. press evinces little interest in matters pertaining to sex, except to point out rather often that prostitutes are recruited among the daughters of the poor.

As a conclusion to this section on the place of the I. W. W. as a revolutionary union, one is probably justified in saying that for a quarter of a century, the organization has fostered militancy and the principles of industrial unionism in the American working classes. It has kept alive the idea of functional rather than geographical representation in government. It has helped to further the causes of sexual equality

and racial equality. It has preserved if it has not strengthened the American labor tradition of non-political action.

If the Communist influenced by Russian theory be taken as an authority in revolutionary philosophy, then the I. W. W. has contributed practically nothing to "the science of revolution." To this statement the I. W. W. would reply by saying that it had created a very definite theory of revolution—one in harmony with American traditions. Since nobody knows much about the philosophy of revolution it is wise not to try to assay the amount of truth in either claim.

One statement, however, must be made: any organization which aspires to produce a social change so profound as to be revolutionary in character—revolutionary in the Marxian sense—any such organization must treat the Russian revolution as an event which has grave lessons to teach. This is not to be interpreted as a suggestion that the I. W. W. would do well to identify themselves with American communists; it does mean, however, that they must not believe themselves secure in denying Russian facts by the invocation of a Sorel-Kautsky-DeLeon-Haywood brand of Marxian theory.

Before closing this book with an estimate of the future strength of the I. W. W., let us see if some answer may be made to the questions raised in the prefatory pages. They were:

1. To what degree can an American working-class organization hold fast to an ideal of revolutionary social change and at the same time attract a large and permanent following?
2. Is the theory of social change held by the I. W. W. fundamentally sound in spite of its apparent failure?
3. The American scene considered, have the Communists substituted better theories of social change?

4. Can any group in America achieve social change by the application of theories similar to those of the I. W. W. and the Communists?

In reply it should be said first that this book as a whole is an attempt to answer these questions; and this last chapter especially has been written with them in mind.

The first question asks whether a union can be revolutionary and can at the same time attract a large and permanent following. The experience of the I. W. W. and, up to the present, of the Communists, plainly points to a negative answer. The experience of the "amalgamated's" points—but not so plainly—to a positive answer. Certainly the Amalgamated Clothing Workers have a large and permanent following. Many persons would, however, question their tenaciousness of revolutionary purposes.

A proper answer here depends on one's interpretation of the word "revolutionary." If one means by revolutionary a desire partially to stabilize an industry, to secure unemployment insurance, to provide for consumers' coöperation, then it is perhaps possible to reconcile revolution with a large and permanent union membership. But if revolution is to include the abolition of the right to ownership of the means of production, the substitution of a religion of social service for the Christian religion, an overturning of our ethical standards, violent changes in our educational system, the infusion into a nation of sharply different attitudes in family relationships—then it is less likely that revolutionary aims can be entertained by a union with a large and permanent following.

If the analysis above be accepted, it will have to be assumed, in the replies to the next three questions, that a revolution may somehow be initiated and perhaps consummated by an organization which does not have a large and stable membership. This seems not to be an entirely unwarranted assumption.

tion, for it may be that a revolution could take place under the initial guidance of ten thousand men; and that, in the course of its progress, the revolution would daily win its hundreds of thousands of adherents.

Turning, now, to the second question, we find that we must define the phrase, "theory of social change." This may be expanded to: a theory that inevitably the capitalist system will give way to a system in which the workers are the owners of the tools of production; but that, in order to make sure of the inevitable, direct economic action (including the general strike and industrial union organization) must be resorted to. Viewed in the light merely of formal logic, such a theory may seem inconsistent with itself. It is not, however, inconsistent with immemorial custom; for mankind has always attempted to bring to a rapid unfolding—or even to balk—that which is ordained by the stars.

The real questions are: first, is the next important stage of development to be a workers' state? Second, will sabotage, industrial-union organization, the general strike, and non-political action bring about a workers' state? That the next developmental stage is not inevitably a workers' state is obvious to most persons, including such faithful Marxians as the Communists. They fear, more than anything else, that the seeds of revolution may bear the fruit of fascism rather than of socialism. Today, when the industrial nations of Europe seem to be on the verge of profound social change it is commonly held that they have an approximately equal chance of becoming fascist or communist. It is also held by some that fascism and communism do not by any means exhaust the possibilities; and that some other form of state may be the next stage of development.

That sabotage, the general strike and industrial unionism constitute the best means to hasten the appearance of the workers' coöperative state, is a proposition which seems to

have few adherents today. If sabotage has revolutionary virtues, surely the proletarian revolution would have taken place long ago, for our economic system suffers from a constant restriction of output on the part of owner and employee alike. As for industrial unionism, although some revolutionary virtues seem to be inherent in the mere form of an industrial union, it should be remembered that there are several conservative industrial unions in existence, and that fervor rather than form will probably bring on a revolution. Finally, in respect of the general strike, the reader is referred to the proper authorities,³⁸ who look upon it as a doubtful operation.

The third question concerned the merit of Communism, as opposed to I. W. W.-ism. The question may be restated thus: Are the Communists, by their tactics, more likely to produce a revolution than the I. W. W.? The answer to this question, even more than the answer to the preceding one, is a matter of personal opinion. Thus far the Communists of America would seem to have evolved the following superior tactics:

1. Party discipline. There is no discipline worthy of the name in the I. W. W.
2. Seizing upon any alleged injustice to the downtrodden as an opportunity for demonstration and propaganda. In this way the Communists hope to become the rallying point for disgruntled farmers, for negroes, and

³⁸ For example, W. H. Crook, *The General Strike* (Chapel Hill, 1931).

The general strike envisaged by the I. W. W. seems to be somewhat different from the general strikes which have occurred in the past. General strikes of the past have been episodes in long-standing conflicts between groups which have more or less opposed interests both before and after the strike. The general strike contemplated by the I. W. W. is a peaceful taking over of the machinery of production—an appropriation which will put to an end conflicts between groups with opposing interests.

for others besides industrial proletarians who have real or fancied grievances under the present social system.

3. Flexibility. Although the Communists are probably quite as dogmatic as the I. W. W., their dogmas seem to be subject to change from time to time. This willingness to change, to try a new course, is perhaps more apparent in Russia than in the United States. These changes seem to be made in response to problems as they arise.

The virtues enumerated in the preceding paragraph may, however, become vices. Thus, party discipline may be carried too far to suit the American temper. Or, the attempt of Communists to use a racial dispute, for example, as an opportunity to proselytize may be viewed as officious meddling. A statement concerning Communist superiority must be inconclusive. Perhaps the best answer to the second question is that neither the Communists nor the I. W. W. seem, in America, to have the skill, intelligence, leadership or membership to bring on a proletarian revolution in the calculable future.

Until now it may seem that I have taken the viewpoint that a revolution could be achieved at will, if only some organization like the I. W. W. or the Communists possessed the proper formula. The fourth question inquires into this matter, and asks whether in America any group, following some sort of Marxian interpretation, can bring about a workers' state.

That workers will eventually be given some opportunity to share in the control of the industries of which they are a part is a proposition which many will agree to and approve of. It is also generally admitted that means should be devised to provide for greater economic security to all persons. It is, finally, the opinion of many that such reforms can be

lutionary today. Perhaps the observers confound militancy, violent talk about sabotage and spectacular deeds with revolution. For our purposes it is safest to say that, however revolutionary the I. W. W. may be in theory, it has become a mild, comparatively gentle organization.

And the question arises, What is the place and function of a mild, gentle I. W. W. in the American labor movement? Is it likely to grow or to decay?

Size and militancy have nothing to do with the power exerted by an organization. Two thousand Fabians have done more to change England than twenty-thousand wobblies have done to change the United States. A small, highly disciplined group of Bolsheviks, non-militant if contrasted with the Russian bomb-thrower, have uprooted centuries of Russian tradition.

The I. W. W. need not grow in size to be heard from again; it does not need to engage in spectacular activities. It must, however, have able leaders and intelligent members. These it lacks today. Many reasons may be given for this: the suppression of the I. W. W.; the small pay to officers; the competition for members and officers of the more or less radical "amalgamated's" and of the communists. There is, however, a reason more fundamental than any of these. One of the prime tests of intelligence is the ability to grow and develop; to meet the problems of a changing environment.

The I. W. W. is willing to change the world, but it is not willing to change itself. Members with constructive suggestions for change and adaptation to post-war conditions are not encouraged to express their opinions. Inflexible, dogmatic, fatalistic—that is the I. W. W. today. Unless the organization changes, it may not survive at all. If it survives the years, it will probably survive as did the Blanquist Party or the Knights of Labor—for futile decades after its hour of lustihood.

APPENDIX I

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL APPEALS TO THE I. W. W. (FROM SOLIDARITY, AUGUST 14, 1920)

Comrades and Fellow Workers:

The Executive Committee of the Communist International in session at Moscow, the heart of the Russian Revolution, greets the revolutionary American proletariat in the ranks of the Industrial Workers of the World.

Capitalism, ruined by the World War, unable any longer to contain within itself the tremendous forces it has created, is breaking down.

The hour of the working class has struck. The Social Revolution has begun, and here, on the Russian plain, the first vanguard battle is being fought.

History does not ask whether we like it or not, whether the workers are ready or not. Here is the opportunity. Take it and the world will belong to the workers; leave it—there may not be another for generations.

Now is no time to talk of "building the new society within the shell of the old." The old society is cracking its shell. *The workers must establish the Dictatorship of the Proletariat which alone can build the new society.*

An article in the ONE BIG UNION MONTHLY, your official organ, asks, "Why should we follow the Bolsheviks?" According to the writer, all that the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia has done is "to give the Russian people the vote."

This is, of course, untrue. The Bolshevik Revolution has taken the factories, mills, mines, land and financial institutions out of the hands of the capitalists, and transferred them to the WHOLE WORKING CLASS.

We understand, and share with you, your disgust for the

principles and tactics of the "yellow" Socialist politicians, who, all over the world have discredited the very name of Socialism. Our aim is the same as yours—a commonwealth without State, without Government, without classes, in which the workers shall administer the means of production and distribution for the common benefit of all.

We address this letter to you, fellow workers of the I. W. W., in recognition of your long and heroic services in the class war, of which you may have borne the brunt in your own country, so that you may clearly understand our Communist principles and program.

We appeal to you, as revolutionists, to rally to the Communist International, born in the dawn of the World Social Revolution.

We call you to take the place to which your courage and revolutionary experience entitles you, in the front ranks of the proletarian Red Army fighting under the banner of Communism.

COMMUNISM AND THE I. W. W.

The American Capitalist class is revealing itself in its true colors.

The constantly rising cost of living, the growing unemployment, the savage repression of all efforts of the workers to better their condition, the deportation and imprisonment of "Bolsheviks", the series of anti-strike laws, "criminal syndicalist" laws, "red flag" laws, and laws against propaganda advocating the "forcible overthrow of government and the unlawful destruction of property"—all these measures can have but one meaning for every intelligent worker.

BUT NOW THE CAPITALISTS OF THE WORLD—THE AMERICAN CAPITALISTS AS WELL AS THOSE OF FRANCE, ITALY, ENGLAND, GERMANY, ETC., ARE PLANNING TO REDUCE THE WORKERS ONCE FOR ALL TO ABSOLUTE AND HOPELESS SERFDOM.

Either this, or the Dictatorship of the Working Class—there is no other alternative. And the workers must chose *now*.

Capitalism is making desperate efforts to reconstruct its shattered world. The workers must seize by force the power of the State, and reconstruct society in their own interests.

THE COMING SLAVE STATE

Before the American Civil War, the Negro slaves of the South were bound to the land. The industrial capitalist of the North, who needed a floating population to operate their factories, declared slavery to be an outrage, and abolished it by force. Now the industrial capitalists are attempting to bind the workers to the factories.

In every country, during the world war, it was practically forbidden for the workers to strike, or even to stop work. You will remember the "Work or Fight" laws in your own country.

And now that the war is over, what has happened? The cost of living has gone up and up, while the capitalists have actually tried to reduce wages. And when the workers, faced by starvation, are forced to strike, the whole power of the State is mobilized to drive them back to the machines. When the railway shopmen walked out, the United States Marshal of California threatened to bring in Federal troops to force them to work. When the Railroad Brotherhoods demanded higher wages or the nationalization of the railways, the President of the United States menaced them with the full armed power of the Government. When the United Mine Workers laid down their tools, thousands of soldiers occupied the mines, and the Federal Court issued the most sweeping injunction in history, forbidding the Union leaders from sending out the strike order or in any way assisting in conducting the strike, and forcibly preventing the payment of strike-benefits. And finally, the Attorney General of the United States declared officially that the Government would not permit strikes in "industries necessary to the community."

Judge Gary, head of the Steel Trust, can refuse the demand of the President of the United States to meet a committee of his workers. But when the steel-workers dare to go on strike for a living wage and the elementary right to join a Union, they are called Bolsheviks and shot down in the streets by the Pennsylvania Cossacks.

And you, fellow workers of the I. W. W., with your bitter memories of Everett, of Tulsa, of Wheatland, of Centralia, in

which your comrades were butchered; with—your thousands in prison—you who nevertheless must do the “dirty work” in the harvest-fields, on the docks, in the forests—you must see plainly the process by which the capitalists, by means of their weapon, the State, are trying to inaugurate the Slave Society.

Everywhere the capitalists cry: “More production! More production!” In other words, the workers must do more work for less wages, so that their blood and sweat may be turned into gold, to pay for the war-debts of the ruined capitalist world. In order to accomplish this the workers must no longer have the right to leave their jobs; they must be forbidden to organize so that they may be able to wring concessions from the bosses, or profit by capitalist competition. At all costs the Labor Movement must be halted, and broken.

So save the old system of exploitation, the capitalists must unite, and chain the workers to the machines of industry.

OR THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

Will the capitalists be able to do this?

They will, unless the workers declare war on the whole capitalist system, overthrow the capitalist governments, and set up a Government of the working class, which shall destroy the institution of capitalist private property and make all wealth the property of all the workers in common.

This is what the Russian workers have done, and this is the ONLY WAY for the workers of other countries to free themselves from industrial slavery, and to make over the world so that the worker shall get ALL HE PRODUCES, and nobody shall be able to make money out of the labor of other men.

But unless the workers of other countries rise against their own capitalists, the Russian Revolution cannot last. The capitalists of the entire world, realizing the example of the danger of Soviet Russia, have united to crush it. The Allies have quickly forgotten their hatred for Germany, and have invited the German capitalists to join them in the common cause.

And the workers of other countries are beginning to understand, in Italy, Germany, France and England the tide of Revo-

lution is rising. In America, too, even the conservative members of the A. F. of L. are realizing that strikes for higher wages and better conditions don't mean anything, because the cost of living is always higher and higher. They have proposed all sorts of remedies, reforms, such as the Plumb Plan, nationalization of mines, etc. They have founded a so-called “Labor Party”, which works for municipal and Government ownership of industry, more democratic electoral machinery, etc.

But these reforms wouldn't solve the problem, even if they could be achieved. SO LONG AS THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM EXISTS, THE SAME MEN WILL BE MAKING MONEY OUT OF THE LABOR OF OTHERS. ALL REFORMS OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF SOCIETY SIMPLY FOOL THE WORKER INTO BELIEVING THAT HE ISN'T BEING ROBBED AS MUCH AS HE WAS BEFORE.

The social Revolution has begun, and the first battle is on in Russia. It will not wait for the Workers to experiment with reforms. The capitalists have already destroyed the Hungarian Soviet Republic. If they can dominate and break the Labor movement in the other countries, then will follow an industrial Slave State.

BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE, the class-conscious workers of the world must prepare to meet the shock of the capitalist assault, to attack and destroy capitalism, and root it out of the world.

THE CAPITALIST STATE

The war and its aftermath have revealed with startling clearness the real function of the capitalist State—with its legislatures, courts of justice, police, armies and bureaucrats.

The State is USED to defend and strengthen the power of the capitalists, and to oppress the workers. This is particularly true in the United States, whose constitution was framed by the great merchants, speculators and land-owners, with the deliberate purpose of protecting their class interests against the majority of the people.

AT THE PRESENT TIME THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES IS OPENLY ACTING AS THE WEAPON OF THE CAPITALISTS AGAINST THE WORKERS.

The I. W. W. should realize this more clearly than any other body of workers, for it has been savagely persecuted by the Government—its leaders imprisoned, its papers suppressed, its members deported, jailed on false charges, refused bail, tortured, its headquarters closed, and its propaganda declared illegal in many States.

Any worker can see this fact with his own eyes. All the people vote for Governors, Mayors, Judges, and Sheriffs; but in time of strike the Governor calls in the militia to protect the scabs, the Mayor orders the police to beat up and arrest the pickets, the Judge imprisons the workers for "rioting", disturbing the peace", and the Sheriff hires thugs as deputies, to break the strike.

Capitalist society all together presents a solid front against the worker. The priest tells the worker to be contented; the press curses him for a "Bolshevik"; the policeman arrests him; the court sentences him to jail; the Sheriff seizes his furniture for debt; and the Poor House takes his wife and children.

In order to destroy Capitalism, the workers must first wrest the State power out of the hands of the capitalist class. They must not only SEIZE this power, but ABOLISH THE OLD CAPITALIST APPARATUS ENTIRELY.

For the experience of Revolutions has shown that the workers cannot take hold of the State machine and use it for their own purposes—such as the Yellow Socialist politicians propose to do. The capitalist State is built to serve capitalism, and that is all it can do, no matter who is running it.

And in place of the capitalist State the workers must build their own WORKERS' STATE, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

Many members of the I. W. W. do not agree with this. They are against "the State in general." They propose to overthrow the capitalist State, and to establish in its place immediately the Industrial Commonwealth.

The Communists are also opposed to the "State." They also wish to abolish it—to substitute for the government of men, the administration of things.

But unfortunately this cannot be done immediately. The destruction of the capitalist State does not mean that capitalism automatically and immediately disappears. The capitalists still have arms, which must be taken away from them; they are still supported by hordes of loyal bureaucrats, managers, superintendents, foremen, and trained men of all sorts, who will sabotage industry—and these must be persuaded or compelled to serve the working class; they still have army officers who can betray the Revolution, preachers who can raise superstitious fears against it, teachers and orators who can misrepresent it to the ignorant, thugs who can be hired to discredit it by evil behavior, newspaper editors who can deceive the people with floods of lies, and "yellow" Socialists and Labor fakers who prefer capitalist "democracy" to the Revolution. All these people must be sternly suppressed.

To break down the capitalist State, to crush capitalist resistance and disarm the capitalist class, to confiscate capitalist property and turn it over to the WHOLE WORKING CLASS IN COMMON,—for all these tasks a government is necessary—a State, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, in which the workers, through their Soviets, can uproot the capitalist system with an iron hand.

This is exactly what exists in Soviet Russia today.

BUT THIS DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT IS ONLY TEMPORARY.

We, Communists, also want to abolish the State. The State can only exist as long as there is class struggle. The function of the Proletarian Dictatorship is to abolish the capitalist class as a class; in fact, do away with all class divisions of every kind. And when this condition is reached then the PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP, THE STATE, AUTOMATICALLY DISAPPEARS—to make way for an industrial administrative body which will be something like the General Executive Board of the I. W. W.

In a recent leaflet, Mary Marcy argues that, although the I. W. W. does not theoretically recognize the necessity for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, it will be forced to do so IN FACT at the time of the Revolution, in order to suppress the capitalist counter-revolution.

This is true, but unless the I. W. W. acknowledges beforehand the necessity of the Workers' State and prepares for it, there will be confusion and weakness at a time when firmness and swift action are imperative.

THE WORKERS' STATE

What will be the form of the Workers' State?

We have before us the example of the Russian Soviet Republic, whose structure, in view of the conflicting reports printed in other countries, it may be useful to describe briefly here.

The unit of government is the local Soviet, or Council, of Workers', Red Army, and Peasants' Deputies.

The city Workers' Soviet is made up as follows: each factory elects one delegate for a certain number of workers, and each local Union also elects delegates. These delegates are elected according to political parties—or, if the workers wish it, as individual candidates.

The Red Army delegates are chosen by military units.

For the peasants, each village has its local Soviet, which sends delegates to the Township Soviet, which in turn elects to the County Soviet, and this to the Provincial Soviet.

Nobody who employs labor for profit can vote.

Every six months the City and Provincial Soviets elect delegates to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, which is the supreme governing body of the country. This Congress decides upon the policies which are to govern the country for six months, and then elects a Central Executive Committee of two hundred, which is to carry out these policies. The Congress also elects the Cabinet—The Council of People's Commissars, who are heads of Government Departments—or People's Commissariats.

The People's Commisars can be recalled at any time by the Central Executive Committee. The members of all Soviets can be recalled very easily, and at any time, by their constituents.

These Soviets are not only LEGISLATIVE bodies, but also EXECUTIVE organs. Unlike your Congress, they do not make the laws and leave them to the President to carry out, but the members carry out the laws themselves; and there is no Supreme Court to say whether or not these laws are "constitutional."

Between the All-Russian Congress of Soviets the Central Executive Committee is the SUPREME POWER in Russia. It meets at least every two months, and in the meanwhile, the Council of People's Commissars directs the country, while the members of the Central Executive Committee go to work in the various government departments.

THE ORGANIZATION OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

In Russia the workers are organized in Industrial Unions, all the workers in each industry belonging to one Union. For example, in a factory making metal products, even the carpenters and painters are members of the Metal Workers' union. Each factory is a local Union, and the Shop Committee elected by the workers is its Executive Committee.

The All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the federated Unions is elected by the annual Trade Union Convention. A Scale Committee elected by the Convention fixes the wages of all categories of workers.

With very few exceptions, all important factories in Russia have been nationalized, and are now the property of all the workers in common. The business of the Unions is therefore no longer to fight the capitalists, but to RUN INDUSTRY.

Hand in hand with the Unions work the Department of Labor of the Soviet Government, whose chief is the People's Commissar of Labor, elected by the Soviet Congress with the approval of the Unions.

In charge of the economic life of the country is the elected Supreme Council of People's Economy, divided into departments, such as, Metal Department, Chemical Department, etc., each one headed by experts and workers, appointed, with the approval of Unions by the Supreme Council of People's Economy.

In each factory production is carried on by a committee consisting of three members: a representative of the Shop Committee of the Unions, a representative of the Central Executive of the Unions, and a representative of the Supreme Council of People's Economy.

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALIZATION

The Unions are thus a *branch of the government*—and this government is the MOST HIGHLY CENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT THAT EXISTS.

It is also the most democratic government in history. For all the organs of government are in constant touch with the working masses, and constantly sensitive to their will. Moreover, the local Soviets all over Russia have complete autonomy to manage their own local affairs, provided they carry out the national policies laid down by the Soviet Congress. Also, the Soviet Government represents ONLY THE WORKERS, and cannot help but act in the workers' interests.

Many members of the I. W. W. are opposed to centralization, because they do not think it can be democratic. But where there are great masses of people, it is impossible to register the will of individuals; only the will of majorities can be registered, and in Soviet Russia the government is administered only for the common good of the working class.

The private property of the capitalist class, in order to become the SOCIAL property of the worker, cannot be turned over to individuals or groups of individuals. It must become the property of *all in common*, and a centralized authority is necessary to accomplish this change.

The industries, too, which supplies [*sic*] the needs of all the people, are not the concern only of the workers in each industry, but of ALL IN COMMON, and must be administered for the benefit of all. Moreover, modern industry is so complicated and interdependent, that in order to operate most economically and with the greatest production, it must be subject to one general scheme, and one central management.

The Revolution must be defended against the formidable assaults of the combined forces of capitalism. Vast armies must be raised, drilled, equipped and directed. This means centralization. Soviet Russia has for two years almost alone fought off the massed attacks of the capitalist world. How could the Red Army, more than two million strong, have been formed without central directing authority?

The capitalist class has a strongly centralized organization, which permits its full strength to be hurried [hurled?] against the scattered and divided sections of the working class. The class war is war. To overthrow capitalism, the workers must be a military force, with its General Staff—but this General Staff elected and controlled by the workers.

In time of strike every worker knows that there must be a strike Committee—a centralized organ to conduct the strike, whose orders must be obeyed—although this Committee is elected and controlled by the rank and file. SOVIET RUSSIA IS ON STRIKE AGAINST THE WHOLE CAPITALIST WORLD. THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION IS A GENERAL STRIKE AGAINST THE WHOLE CAPITALIST SYSTEM, THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT IS THE STRIKE COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

Probably the coming proletarian revolutions in America and other countries will develop new forms of organization. The Bolsheviki do not pretend that they have said the final word in the Social Revolution. But the experience of two years of Workers government in Russia is naturally of the greatest importance, and should be closely studied by the workers of other countries.

POLITICS

The word "politics" is to many members of the I. W. W. like a red flag to a bull—or a capitalist. Politics, to them, means simply politicians—usually "yellow" Socialist candidates trying to catch votes to elect them to some comfortable office, where they can comfortably forget all about the workers.

These "anti-political" fellow workers oppose the Communists because they call themselves a "political party", and sometimes take part in political campaigns.

This is using the word [word?] "politics" in too narrow a sense. One of the principles upon which the I. W. W. was founded is expressed in the saying of Karl Marx, "EVERY CLASS STRUGGLE IS A POLITICAL STRUGGLE." That is to say, every struggle of the workers against the capitalists, is a struggle of the workers for the POLITICAL power—the State power.

This is the sense in which we, Communists, also use the word "politics."

The "yellow" Socialists believe that they can gradually gain this political power by using the political machinery of the capitalist State to win reforms, and when they have elected a majority of the members of Congress and the Legislatures, and the President, Governors, Mayors and Sheriffs, they can proceed to use the State power to legislate capitalism peacefully out, and the Industrial Commonwealth in.

This leads the "yellow" Socialists to preach all sorts of reforms of the capitalist system, draws to their ranks small capitalists and political adventurers of all kinds, and finally causes them to make deals and compromises with the capitalist class.

The I. W. W. do not believe in this, and NEITHER DO THE COMMUNISTS.

We, Communists, do not think that it is possible to capture the State power by using political machinery of the capitalist State. The State being the particular weapon of the capitalist class, its machinery is naturally constructed so as to defend and strengthen the power of capitalism. Capitalist control of all agencies molding public opinion—press, schools, churches, and labor fakers, capitalist control of the workers' political conduct through control of their means of living, make it extremely improbable that the workers under the present capitalist "democracy" could ever legally elect a government devoted to their interests.

And at this time when the capitalist class the world over is launching a desperate campaign of repression against all conscious working class organizations, it is unthinkable.

But even if it were possible for the workers to win the State power by means of the political machinery, the capitalist State could never be used to introduce the Industrial Commonwealth. The real source of capitalist power lies in CAPITALIST OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION. The capitalist State exists for the purpose of protecting and extending this ownership and control—it cannot therefore be used to destroy it.

So far the Communist and the I. W. W. are in accord. The capitalist State must be attacked by DIRECT ACTION. This, in the correct meaning of the word, is also POLITICAL action, for it has a POLITICAL aim—the seizure of State power.

The I. W. W. proposes to attain this end by the General Strike. The Communists go farther. History indicates clearly that the General Strike is not enough. The capitalists have arms—and the experience with White Guards in Russia, Finland and Germany proves that they have sufficient organization and training to use these arms against the workers. Moreover, the capitalists possess stores of foods, which enable them to hold out longer than the workers, always on the verge of actual want.

The Communists also advocate the General Strike, but they add that it must turn into ARMED INSURRECTION. Both the General Strike and the insurrection are forms of POLITICAL ACTION.

REVOLUTIONARY PARLIAMENTARISM

If this is so, if the Communists do not believe in capturing the State power by means of the ballot-box, why do the Communist Parties participate in elections, and nominate candidates for office?

The question of whether or not Communists should participate in elections is of secondary importance. Some Communist organizations do, others do not. But those who do act on the political field, do so only for PROPAGANDA. Political campaigns give an opportunity for revolutionists to speak to the working class, pointing out the class character of the State and THEIR class interests as workers. They enable them to show the futility of reforms, to demonstrate the real interests which dominate the capitalist—and "yellow" Socialist—political parties, and to point out why the entire capitalist system must be overthrown.

Communists elected to Congress or the Legislatures have as their function to make propaganda; to ceaselessly expose the real nature of the capitalist State, to obstruct the operation of capitalist government and show their class character, to explain

the futility of all capitalist reform measures, etc. In the halls of the legislative assembly, against the sounding-board of the Nation, the Communist can show up capitalist brutality and call the workers to revolt.

Karl Liebknecht showed what a Communist in the Parliament can do. His words, spoken to the German Reichstag, were heard around the world.

Others in Russia, in Sweden (Hoglund) and in other countries, have done the same thing.

The most common objection to electing candidates to capitalist legislatures, is that, no matter how good revolutionists they are, they will invariably be corrupted by their environment, and will betray the workers.

This belief is born of long experience, chiefly with Socialist politicians and Labor Fakery. But we, Communists, say that a REALLY REVOLUTIONARY PARTY WILL ELECT REAL REVOLUTIONISTS, AND WILL KNOW HOW TO KEEP THEM UNDER ITS CONTROL.

Many members of the I. W. W. are bitterly opposed to making ANY use of legislatures and other Governments [*sic*] institutions for purposes of propaganda. But the I. W. W. as an organization has often used them. In the Lawrence Strike of 1912 the I. W. W. made good use EVEN OF VICTOR BERGER, THE SOCIALIST CONGRESSMAN, who advertised the strikes and the I. W. W. on the floor of the House of Representatives. William D. Haywood, Vincent St. John, and many other I. W. W. leaders voluntarily testified before the Industrial Relations Commission of the United States Government using this method to make propaganda for their organization. But the most striking example of using the political machinery of the State for purposes of propaganda occurred in 1918, when the Federal Court in Chicago was turned into a three-months-long I. W. W. agitation meeting—extremely valuable for us—by one hundred I. W. W. leaders on trial there.

These are all cases of using the political machinery of the capitalist State to make revolutionary propaganda among the masses. This method of propaganda should be used as circumstances dictate—as should parliamentary action. No weapon should be totally condemned.

The special and particular business of the I. W. W. is to train the workers for the seizure and management of industry. The special function of the Communist political party is to train the workers for the capture of political power, and the administration of the Proletarian Dictatorship. All workers should at the same time be members of the revolutionary industrial union of their industry, and of the political party which advocates Communism.

THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION AND THE FUTURE SOCIETY

The aim of the I. W. W. is "to build the new society within the shell of the old." This means, to organize the workers so thoroughly that at a given time the capitalist system will be burst asunder, and the Industrial Commonwealth, fully developed, shall take it [*sic*] place.

Such an act requires the organization, and discipline, of the great majority of the workers. Before the war there was reason to believe that this might be feasible—although in the fourteen years of its history the I. W. W. had been able to organize comparatively only a small fraction of the American workers.

But at the present time such a plan is utopian. Capitalism is breaking down, the Social Revolution is upon us and HISTORY WILL NOT WAIT UNTIL THE MAJORITY OF THE WORKERS ARE ORGANIZED 100% ACCORDING TO THE PLAN OF THE I. W. W. OR ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION. There is no longer before us the prospect of normal industrial development which would alone allow the carrying out of such a plan. The War has hurled the peoples of the world into the great Cataclysm, and they must plan for IMMEDIATE ACTION—not for the working out of schemes which would take years to accomplish.

The new society is not to be built, as we thought, within the shell of the capitalist system. We cannot wait for that. THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION IS HERE. And when the workers have overthrown capitalism and have crushed all attempts to re-establish it, then, at their leisure, through their Soviet State, they can build the new society in freedom.

In the face of the Social Revolution, what is the immediate important work of the Industrial Workers of the World?

They, as the most important organization based on revolutionary Unionism in America, should take the initiative in trying to establish a basis for the uniting in one organization of all Unions which have a class-conscious revolutionary character, of all workers who accept the class struggle—such as the W. I. I. U., the One Big Union, and certain insurgent Unions in the A. F. of L. This is no time to quibble about a name, or minor questions of organization. The essential task is to draw together all workers capable of revolutionary mass action in time of crisis.

They, as revolutionists, should not repel the attempts of the American Communists to come to an agreement with them for common revolutionary action. The political party and the economic organization must go forward shoulder to shoulder, toward the common goal—the abolition of capitalism by means of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the formation of Soviets, and the disappearance of classes and the State.

The Communist International holds out to the I. W. W. the hand of brotherhood.

G. ZINOVIEV

*President of the Central Executive Committee
January, 1920.*

APPENDIX II

STATEMENT OF THE I. W. W. IN REGARD TO VIOLENCE.¹

“Ruthless persecution fails to draw a red herring across the trail and swing Industrial Workers of the World from its work of organization on the job to the advocacy of destruction or violence as a means of accomplishing industrial changes.

“Its historic attitude in opposition to violence was reaffirmed at its 12th convention which unanimously turned down a communication favoring change in its tactics. The convention without a dissenting vote, reindorsed this resolution passed several years ago by the General Executive Board:

‘WHEREAS, The Industrial Workers of the World has heretofore published, without editorial adoption or comment, many works on industrial subjects, in which the workers have a natural interest, including treatises on ‘Sabotage’ and

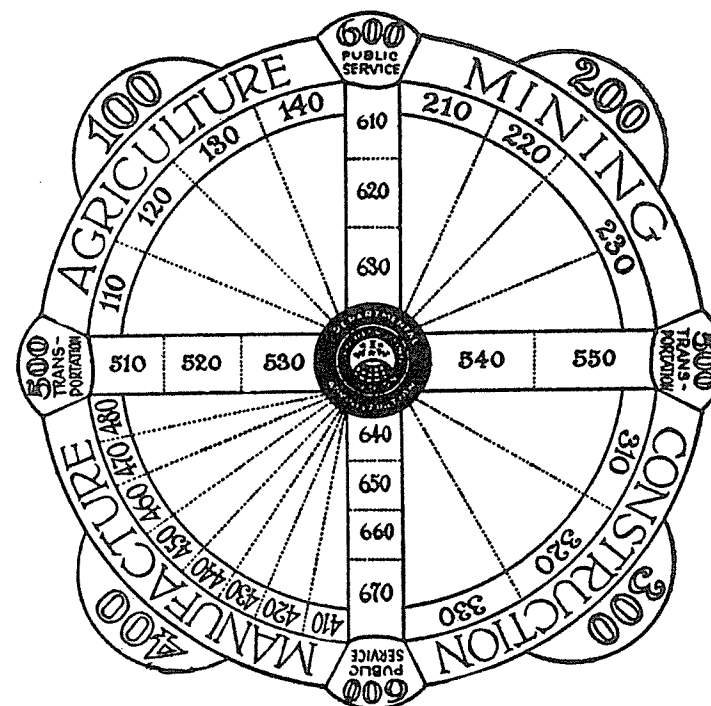
‘WHEREAS, The industrial interests of the country, bent upon destroying any and all who oppose the wage system by which they have so long exploited the workers of the country, are attempting to make it appear that ‘Sabotage’ means the destruction of property and the commission of violence and that the Industrial Workers of the World favor and advocate such methods; now,

‘THEREFORE, In order that our position on such matters may be made clear and unequivocal, we the General Executive Board of said Industrial Workers of the World, do hereby declare that said organization does not now, and never has believed in or advocated either destruction or violence as means of accomplishing industrial reform; first, because no principle was ever settled by such methods; second, because industrial history has taught us that when strikers resort to violence and unlawful methods all the resources of the government are immediately arrayed against them and they lose their cause; third; because such methods

¹ *Solidarity*, whole no. 81, May 22, 1920, p. 1.

destroy the constructive impulse which it is the purpose of this organization to foster and develop in order that the workers may fit themselves to assume their place in the new society, and we hereby reaffirm our belief in the principles embodied in Report of this body to the Seventh Annual Convention, extracts from which were later re-published under the title, 'On the Firing Line'."

APPENDIX III

STRUCTURE OF THE I. W. W.¹

"A systematic revision of the Industrial Union numbers has been needed for a long time. It has been generally recognized that the present system of numbering was long ago outgrown. No matter how perfect the One Big Union plan of organization might be it will always be imperfect if the numbers of the vari-

¹ From *One Big Union Monthly*, vol. ii, no. 10, whole no. 20, Oct., 1920, pp. 36-37.

ous Industrial Unions are meaningless. An efficient organization requires efficient order and arrangement in its industrial groupings as well as in its fundamental plan. The last convention decided to rectify the old system and the present General Executive Board, carried out these instructions. The changes will go into effect as soon as the General Office can issue formal instructions to the various Industrial Unions.

"Numbers that have been issued to the various Unions run from 8 to 1500. These numbers, while they have served their purpose in the past, are at present arbitrary and meaningless. First of all it is easy to misconstrue the I. W. W. One Big Union Chart unless a scientific system of numbering is used. For instance: No. 620, Boot and Shoe Workers Industrial Union is a misnomer. There should be a Leather Workers Industrial Union charter for a branch organization. The same thing applies to 470, Rubber Workers Industrial Union, which should by right be a branch of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union.

"Numbers, in these days, are used to convey the idea of relationship. All big business concerns have their departments keyed with certain numbers to help simplify the intricacies of business management and control. In the I. W. W., however, the number "400" has been spread over three separate and distinct Departments—not to mention industries: 400, Agriculture. 450, Mining and 470 and 480 in Manufacture. This is hopelessly misleading and confusing.

"The Decimal system, by Melwill [sic] Dewey, is used largely by big corporations in organizing the various units of their business. It is also used in every library in the land. It is so simple that a child can understand it at a glance. This system permits of ten classes, ten sections and ten divisions. But since there are only six logical divisions for the Department of modern industry we need only six of the decimals for our Industrial Departments. The industrial Unions follow in their natural order—each one being branched off from its Department. The number will show the exact relationship at a glance. In due time it is possible to number the branches in the

same manner. In this way each number MEANS SOMETHING—it shows the Department the Industrial Union, and, if necessary the Branch [sic]. The confusion of the old system of numbering is done away with and Delegates are no longer in doubt as to just how to make out cards for new members. We are indebted to Fellow Worker Robert Russel of Minneapolis for this adaptation of the Decimal System to fit the needs of the I. W. W.

"Members are urged to study the chart carefully and to be guided by it in the future. A list of the Industrial Unions as they appear in the light of this scientific system of numbering appears below:

"List of Industrial Unions to be used for the information of Delegates in lining up new members:

Department of Agriculture—100

Agricultural Workers Industrial Union No. 110
Lumber Workers Industrial Union No. 120
Fishermen's Industrial Union No. 130
Floricultural and Horticultural Workers' Industrial Union No. 140

Department of Mining—200

Metal Mine Workers Industrial Union No. 210
Coal Miners and Coke Oven Workers Industrial Union No. 220
Oil, Gas, and Petroleum Workers Industrial Union No. 230

Department of Construction—300

Railroad, Road, Canal, Tunnel and Bridge Construction Workers' Industrial Union No. 310
Ship Builders Industrial Union No. 320
House and Building Construction Workers Industrial Union No. 330

Department of Manufacture and General Production—400

Textile and Clothing Workers Industrial Union No. 410
Woodworkers Industrial Union No. 420
Chemical Workers Industrial Union No. 430

Metal and Machinery Workers Industrial Union No. 440
 Printing and Publishing House Workers Industrial Union
 No. 450
 Foodstuff Workers Industrial Union No. 460
 Leather Workers Industrial Union No. 470
 Glass and Pottery Workers Industrial Union No. 480

Department of Transportation—500

Marine Transportation Workers Industrial Union No. 510
 Railroad Workers Industrial Union No. 520
 Telegraph, Telephone and Wireless Workers Industrial
 Union No. 530
 Municipal Transportation Workers Industrial Union No.
 540
 Aerial Navigation Workers Industrial Union No. 550

Department of Public Service—600

Health and Sanitation Workers Industrial Union No. 610
 Park and Highway Maintenance [*sic*] Workers Industrial
 Union No. 620
 Educational Workers Industrial Union No. 630
 General Distribution Workers Industrial Union No. 640
 Public Utility Workers Industrial Union No. 650
 Amusement Workers Industrial Union No. 660
 "Initiating new members be sure and place members in the
 Industrial Union to which they belong [*sic*]."

APPENDIX IV

PARTIAL LIST OF STRIKES IN WHICH THE I. W. W.
 HAVE TAKEN PART

The most important strikes are marked with an asterisk. A complete file of I. W. W. periodicals published during the year 1918 is not available to me; in those periodicals consulted, no mention of strikes was made during that year. Inquiries addressed to members of the I. W. W. and other persons brought forth the opinion that certainly the I. W. W. did not engage in any important strikes during 1918, and probably even the small strikes were of no consequence. Most strikes of the I. W. W. during the period of this book, especially between the years 1919-1924, have included as one of the demands the release of "class-war" prisoners. This demand is not listed under the column "issue", in the following table.

Year and Month Called	Place	Class of Workers Affected	Issue
1917			
Jan.....	Virginia, Minn.	Lumber workers	Wages, hours, night work, discrimination.
Jan.....	Philadelphia, Pa.....	Longshoreman	Sympathy with sugar strikers.
April * ..	Pacific Northwest	Lumber workers	Eight-hour day, wages, camp conditions.
May	Erie, Buffalo, N. Y....	Longshoremen.	Wages, hours.
May	Rockford, Ill.....	Construction workers..	Wages, hours.
May.....	Jerome, Ariz.....	Metal miners	Method of payment, working conditions.
June * ..	Butte, Mont.	Metal miners	General dissatisfaction, lack of safety appliances.
1919			
Feb.*...	Seattle, Wash	General strike.....	General strike sympathy.
Feb.....	Patterson, N. J.	Silk textile workers ..	Hours.
Feb.....	Butte, Ariz.....	Metal miners	Against cut in wages.
Feb.....	Los Angeles, Cal.	Orange pickers	Wages.
Sept.....	Oatman, Ariz.....	Metal miners	Wages, hours.
Oct.....	Idaho, Montana.....	Lumber workers	Troops, in Russia, wages, camp conditions.
1920			
Feb.....	Bingham district, Utah.	Metal miners	Hours, wages, working conditions.
April * ..	Butte, Arizona	Metal miners	Six-hour day, blacklist, wages, working conditions.
May.....	Superior district, Wis., Mich., Minn.	Lumber workers.	
May.....	Philadelphia, Pa.....	Marine transport workers	20% wage increase.
Aug	Cazadero, Oregon	Construction workers..	Hours, camp conditions.
1921			
May.....	Tonopah, Nev.....	Metal miners	Wage reduction.
July	Duluth.....	Longshoremen	Speedup.
Sept....	Burke County, N. D...	Agricultural workers..	Local persecution.
1922			
April ...	Wenatchee, Wash	Construction workers..	Hours, wages, camp conditions, fortnightly pay days.
May.....	Portland, Ore.....	Marine transport workers	Sympathy strike.
Aug	Skagit, Wash.....	Tunnel workers	Wages, work conditions.
Aug	Portland and vicinity, Ore.	Construction workers..	Hours, camp conditions.

Year and Month Called	Place	Class of Workers Affected	Issue
Sept....	Butte, Mont.....	Metal miners	Hours, wages, working conditions, blacklist, safety.
Oct.* ...	Philadelphia, Pa.....	Marine transport workers	44-hour week.
Oct.* ...	Groveland, Cal.....	Construction workers..	Hours, camp conditions, blacklist.
Oct.* ...	Portland, Ore.....	Longshoremen	Discrimination against I. W. W., overtime, wages, working conditions.
Nov	Big Creek, Cal	Construction workers..	Hours, camp conditions.
1923			
Jan.....	Friant, Cal.....	Construction workers..	Wages, hours, piecework, camp conditions.
Jan.....	Portland, Ore.....	Longshoremen.	
April ...	Near Wenatchee, Wash.....	Construction workers..	Wages, hours, camp conditions.
April * ..	Pacific Northwest....	Lumber workers	Protest ("general" strike).
April * ..	General	Marine transport	Protest ("general" strike).
May * ...	Cazadero, Ore.....	Construction workers..	Protest ("general" strike).
July * ...	San Pedro, Cal.	Marine transport workers	Protest ("general" strike).
July	Kimberly, Nev.	Metal miners	Wages, working conditions, bonus system.
July	Hoboken, N. J.	Longshoremen	Wages, overtime.
Sept.* ..	Pacific Northwest....	Lumber workers.....	Protest ("general" strike).
Sept.* ..	New Orleans, La....	Marine transport workers	Protest ("general" strike).
Dec.....	Whitefish, Mont.....	Lumber workers.....	Camp conditions.
1924			
Jan.....	Cranbrook, B. C.....	Lumber workers.....	Hours, camp conditions.
Feb.....	Winnemucca, Nev....	Metal miners	Camp conditions, working conditions, wages.
March ..	Coos Bay, Ore.....	Lumber workers.....	Wage cut.
March ..	Park City, Utah	Metal miners	Discrimination against I. W. W.
March ..	Del Ray, Cal.....	Tunnel workers	Pay, contract work, camp conditions.

Year and Month Called	Place	Class of Workers Affected	Issue
April ...	Stettin, Germany.....	German marine workers	Sympathy with general strike.
May	Raymond, Wash.....	Lumber workers	Wage cuts.
May	Santa Eulalia, Mex....	Metal mine workers ..	Better conditions.
May	Golconda, Nev.....	Railroad workers.....	Better conditions.
May	Leavenworth, Wash...	Lumber workers.....	Wages, camp conditions.
Aug	Salt Lake City, Utah..	Metal miners	Camp conditions.
Sept....	Klamath Falls, Ore...	Construction workers..	Camp conditions.
Oct....	Concrete, Wash.....	Construction workers..	Protest against discharge of 40 men who demanded higher pay.
Nov	Whitefish, Mont.....	Construction workers.	
Nov	Hornbrook, Cal.....	Construction workers..	Wages, camp conditions.
1925			
April....	Philadelphia, Pa.....	Longshoremen	Employer discrimination against I. W. W.
Aug	N. Y. C. and Mobile, Ala.	Marine transport workers	Sympathy with British seamen.
Dec....	Wayne, Alberta.....	Coal miners	Abolition of check-off.
1926			
May	New York, N. Y.....	Marine transport workers	Blacklist, hours, wages, working conditions.
Sept....	Thunder Bay, Ont....	Lumber workers.....	Camp conditions, Sunday work.
1927			
Aug *...	Walsenburg, Colo....	Coal miners	Protest, Sacco-Vanzetti.
Oct.*...	Colorado	Coal miners	Wages, hours, working conditions.
1929			
March ..	Oakfield, N. Y.....	Gypsum miners	Wages, safety, sanitary conditions.
Nov	Port Arthur, Can.....	Pulp workers.	
1930			
May	Nyack, Summitt, Mont.	Construction workers..	Wages, hours, camp conditions.

APPENDIX V

I. W. W. SONGS AND POEMS

The most significant changes in the I. W. W. song book since Brissenden wrote are the omission of "Hallelujah! I'm a Bum" and the inclusion of many new songs or poems relating to federal and state prosecutions, and to I. W. W. "martyrs." The three "martyrs" are Wesley Everest, Joe Hill and Frank Little. The first and last were lynched; Joe Hill, best beloved of the three, was put to death by the authorities of the state of Utah on what the I. W. W. believe to have been an unjust conviction. Eight poems in the current (23rd) edition of the song book are dedicated to these men.

The two outstanding writers of songs and poems for the I. W. W. were Ralph Chaplin and Joe Hill. The former has greater technical mastery than the latter. Hill has gusto and humor. T-Bone Slim probably follows the two leaders in excellence. In addition to writing poems and songs he has from time to time conducted a column of humor in *Solidarity*.

There are several poems relating to organization, industrial action and working conditions which seem to be important to an understanding of the I. W. W. temper.

The following poems and songs, mostly taken from the twenty-third edition of *I. W. W. Songs*, are selected on the basis of their relation to the discussion above. None of the songs reprinted by Brissenden are given here.

TO MY LITTLE SON¹

By Ralph Chaplin

I cannot lose the thought of you,
It haunts me like a little song,
It blends with all I see or do
Each day, the whole day long.

The train, the lights, the engine's throb,
And that one stinging memory;
Your brave smile broken with a sob,
Your face pressed close to me.

Lips trembling far too much to speak;
The arms that would not come undone;
The kiss so salty on your cheek;
The long, long trip begun.

I could not miss you more it seemed,
But now I don't know what to say.
It's harder than I ever dreamed—
With you so far away.

JOE HILL

By Ralph Chaplin

High head and back unbending—fearless and true,
Into the night unending; why was it you?

Heart that was quick with song, torn with their lead;
Life that was young and strong, shattered and dead.

Singer of manly songs, laughter and tears;
Singer of Labor's wrongs, joys, hopes and fears.

Though you were one of us, what could we do?
Joe, there was none of us needed like you.

¹ Does not appear in *I. W. W. Songs*. It appears on many I. W. W. pamphlets published about 1922.

We gave, however small, what life could give;
We would have given all that you might live.

Your death you held as naught, slander and shame;
We from the very thought shrank as from flame.

Each of us held his breath, tense with despair,
You, who were close to death, seemed not to care.

White-handed loathsome power, knowing no pause,
Sinking in labor's flower murderous claws;

Boastful with leering eyes, blood-dripping jaws . . .
Accurst be the cowardice hidden in laws!

Utah has drained your blood; white hands are wet;
We of the "surging flood" NEVER FORGET!

Our songster! have your laws now had their fill?
Know ye, his songs and cause ye cannot kill.

High head and back unbending—"rebel true blue",
Into the night unending; why was it you?

JOE HILL'S LAST WILL

(Written in his cell, November 18, 1915, on the eve
of his execution)

My will is easy to decide,
For there is nothing to divide.
My kin don't need to fuss and moan—
"Moss does not cling to rolling stone."
My body? Ah, if I could choose,
I would to ashes it reduce,
And let the merry breezes blow
My dust to where some flowers grow.
Perhaps some fading flower then
Would come to life and bloom again.
This is my last and final will,
Good luck to all of you,

—JOE HILL

THE RED FEAST

By Ralph Chaplin

Go fight, you fools! Tear up the earth with strife
 And spill each other's guts upon the field;
 Serve unto death the men you served in life
 So that their wide dominions may not yield.

Stand by the flag—the lie that still allures;
 Lay down your lives for land you do not own,
 And give unto a war that is not yours;
 Your gory tithe of mangled flesh and bone.

But whether in the fray to fall or kill
 You must not pause to question why nor where.
 You see the tiny crosses on that hill?
 It took all those to make one millionaire.

It was for him the seas of blood were shed
 That fields were razed and cities lit the sky;
 That he might come to chortle o'er the dead—
 The condor Thing for whom the millions die!

The bugle screams, the cannons cease to roar.
 "Enough! enough! God give us peace again."
 The rats, the maggots and the Lords of War
 Are fat to bursting from their meal of men.

So stagger back, you stupid dupes who've "won,"
 Back to your stricken towns to toil anew,
 For there your dismal tasks are still undone
 And grim Starvation gropes again for you.

What matters now your flag, your race, the skill
 Of scattered legions—what has been the gain?
 Once more beneath the lash you must distil
 Your lives to glut a glory wrought of pain.

In peace they starve you to your loathsome toil,
 In war they drive you to the teeth of Death;
 And when your life-blood soaks into their soil
 They give you lies to choke your dying breath.

So will they smite your blind eyes until you see,
 And lash your naked backs until you know
 That wasted blood can never set you free
 From fettered thralldom to the Common Foe.

Then you will find that "nation" is a name
 And boundaries are things that don't exist;
 That Labor's bondage, world-wide, is the same,
 And ONE the enemy it must resist.

THE HARVEST WAR SONG

By Pat Brennan

(Tune: "Tipperary")

We are coming home, John Farmer; we are coming back
 to stay.
 For nigh on fifty years or more, we've gathered up your
 hay.
 We have slept out in your hayfields, we have heard your
 morning shouts;
 We've heard you wondering where in hell's them pesky
 go-about's?

Chorus:

It's a long way, now understand me; it's a long way
 to town;
 It's a long way across the prairie, and to hell with
 Farmer John.
 Here goes for better wages, and the hours must come
 down;
 For we're out for a winter's stake this summer, and we
 want no scabs around.

You've paid the going wages, that's what's kept us on the
bum;
You say you've done your duty, you chin-whiskered
son-of-a-gun;
We have sent your kids to college, but still you rave
and shout,
And call us tramps and hoboes, and pesky go-about.
But now the wintry breezes are a-shaking our poor
frames,
And the long-drawn days of hunger try to drive us boes
insane.
It is driving us to action—we are organized today;
Us pesky tramps and hoboes are coming back to stay.

THE MYSTERIES OF A HOBO'S LIFE

(Air: "The Girl I Left Behind Me.")

By T-Bone Slim

I took a job on an extra gang,
Way up in the mountain,
I paid my fee and the shark shipped me
And the ties I soon was counting.
The boss put me driving spikes
And the sweat was enough to blind me,
He didn't seem to like my pace,
So I left the job behind me.
I grabbed a hold of an old freight train
And around the country traveled,
The mysteries of a hobo's life
To me were soon unraveled.
I traveled east and I traveled west
And the "shacks" could never find me,
Next morning I was miles away
From the job I left behind me.

I ran across a bunch of "stiffs"
Who were known as Industrial Workers,
They taught me how to be a man—
And how to fight the shirkers.

I kicked right in and joined the bunch
And now in the ranks you'll find me,
Hurrah for the cause—To hell with the boss!
And the job I left behind me.

FIFTY THOUSAND LUMBERJACKS

(Tune: "Portland County Jail")

Fifty thousand lumberjacks, fifty thousand packs,
Fifty thousand dirty rolls of blankets on their backs.
Fifty thousand minds made up to strike and strike like
men;
For fifty years they've "packed" a bed, but never will
again.

Chorus:

"Such a lot of devils,"—that's what the papers say—
"They've gone on strike for shorter hours and some
increase in pay.
They left the camps, the lazy tramps, they all walked out
as one;
They say they'll win the strike or put the bosses on the
bum."
Fifty thousand wooden bunks full of things that crawl;
Fifty thousand restless men have left them once for all.
One by one they dared not say, "Fat, the hours are long."
If they did they'd hike—but now they're fifty thousand
strong.

Fatty Rich, we know your game, know your pride is
pricked.

Say—but why not be a man, and own when you are
licked?

They've joined the One Big Union—gee—for goodness'
sake, get wise!

The more you try to buck them now the more they
organize.

Take a tip and start right in—plan some cozy rooms,
Six or eight spring beds in each, with towels, sheets
and brooms;

Shower baths for men who work keeps them well and fit;
A laundry, too, and drying room, would help a little bit.

Get some dishes, white and clean; good pure food to eat;
See that cook has help enough to keep the table neat.
Tap the bell for eight hours; treat the boys like men,
And fifty thousand lumberjacks may come to work again.

Men who work should be well paid—"A man's a man for
a' that."

Many a man has a home to keep same as yourself, Old Fat.
Mothers, sisters, sweethearts, wives, children, too, galore
Stand behind the men to win this bread-and-butter war.

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I. PARTIAL LIST OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE I. W. W. AND OF COMPONENT INDUSTRIAL UNIONS

There probably does not exist a complete file or record of I. W. W. publications. The list below, for the most part, constitutes merely a partial enumeration of the printed matter which has been in my hands during the preparation of this study. Publications which appear in the bibliography of Brissenden's *The I. W. W.* are, in general, omitted here except when they have been relevant to the discussion contained in these pages.

In the case of most periodical publications, particularly the bulletins of component industrial unions, it is practically impossible to secure accurate information concerning dates and periods of publication. In a general way it may be said that each industrial union of the I. W. W.—or any large, homogeneous group within the organization—has always tried to publish a bulletin appropriate to its interests. Sometimes the bulletin has taken the form of a well-printed publication, distributed through the mails, issued at regular intervals over a long period of time; sometimes it has taken the form of a poorly mimeographed sheet passed around at meetings, undated, and published irregularly. Only those bulletins which have passed through my hands are listed here.

I. W. W. non-periodical publications are often undated. This is a matter of indifference rather than policy. Even periodical publications sometimes omit the year in which they are published. In the list that follows, dates are given without a question mark if the date appears on the publication cited. A date followed by a question mark indicates that good evidence points to the date given. Publications which are not followed by either a supposed or real date were, in a majority of cases, apparently published before 1925.¹

A. BALLOTS

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G. PERIODICALS

For an exhaustive list of periodicals published by the I. W. W. about 1918 and before, see *The I. W. W.*, by Brissenden, second edition, pp. 395 *et seq.* During 1922 the General Executive Board of the I. W. W. announced in various publications, that the periodicals listed below were "authorized". Those periodicals marked with an asterisk were being "issued by the General Executive Board" in July of 1930.²

From the point of view of the investigator, the most important periodical throughout I. W. W. history has been *Solidarity*. Its name has varied. When it was suppressed in the fall of 1917, it was superseded by the *Defense News Bulletin*. This name was changed to *New Solidarity* in November, 1918. This, in turn, gave way to the old name, *Solidarity*, in 1920. The present name, *Industrial Solidarity*, has been used since 1921.

The only important I. W. W. periodical publications omitted in the "authorized" list below are the *One Big Union Monthly* and *Bérmunkás*. The former was first published in March, 1919. The name was changed to *Industrial Pioneer* in February, 1921; and in 1926 the periodical ceased to be published. *Bérmunkás* has been published irregularly since before 1919. It is a Hungarian weekly published in Chicago.

A Felszabadulás. Emancipation, Hungarian. Chicago, weekly.

Golos Truzenika. The Voice of the Laborer, Russian. Chicago, twice monthly.

* *Il Proletario.* The Proletarian, Italian. Chicago, weekly (In 1930, published in Brooklyn, N. Y.).

* *Industrial Solidarity.* Official organ of the I. W. W. Chicago, weekly.

* *Industrial Worker.* Seattle, weekly.

² *Industrial Solidarity*, whole number 711, Aug. 2, 1930, p. 2.

- * *Industrialisti*. The Industrialist, Finnish. Duluth, daily.
 * *Jedna Velka Unie*. One Big Union, Czecho-Slovakian. Chicago, monthly (In 1930, published weekly).
Muncitorul. The Worker, Rumanian. Chicago, twice monthly.
Rabotnicheska Mysl. Workers' Thought, Bulgarian, Chicago, weekly.
Snaga Radnika. Power of Labor, Croatian. Chicago, twice monthly.
 * *Solidaridad*. Solidarity, Spanish. Chicago, twice monthly (In 1930, published in New York City).
 * *Tie Vapauteen*. Road to Freedom, Finnish. Chicago, monthly (In 1930, published in Duluth).

H. SOME PUBLICATIONS BY THE EMERGENCY-PROGRAM GROUP

Ballots

- General Referendum Ballot of the I. W. W. as Adopted by the 16th Annual Convention of the I. W. W. Ogden, Utah; July 15 to August 3, 1925.*
Official Ballot Issued by General Construction Workers' Industrial Union, No. 310, I. W. W., as Adopted by G. C. W. I. U., No. 310 Convention, Held at Ogden, Utah, September 20-29, 1924. Chicago; Jan., 1925.

Bulletins

- Emergency Joint Branch Bulletin, I. W. W.* Portland, Oregon; Portland Branches of Industrial Unions 120, 460, 310, 510; March 20, 1925.
General Construction Workers' Bulletin. Ogden, Utah; No. 5, March 15, 1925.
General Office Bulletin. Chicago, Box 1125 (address of E. P. during 1924); August, 1924.
Lumber Workers' Bulletin. Chicago; No. 48, Aug., 1924; No. 49, Sept., 1924; No. 50, Oct., 1924; No. 52, Jan., 1925; No. 53, Feb., 1925.
Northwest District Bulletin No. 7. Portland, Oregon; sent out by General Construction Workers' Industrial Union, No. 310, I. W. W. (reorganized), Box 892, Ogden, Utah; Oct., 1925.
The Weekly Bulletin. Chicago; vol. i, no. 1, August 28, 1924; suspended.

Leaflets and Pamphlets

- Emergency Program Submitted to the Membership by the General Executive Board of the I. W. W.* Chicago; Oct. 27, 1924.
Look Back of the Injunction and Learn the Causes. Chicago (?); Aug., 1924. Bears the seal of the Lumber Workers' Industrial Union No. 120, I. W. W. and the signature of James Rowan.
More Power to You. Published by the Los Angeles General Membership of the I. W. W. Reorganization Movement. 1926 (?).
Pie-Card Gang Raids I. W. W. Headquarters with Guns and Drives the G. E. B. into the Street. Chicago (?); Aug., 1924 (?).

- The Rank and File versus Dictatorship.* Spokane; Jan. 7, 1925.
Reorganization or Abandonment of Principles. No place of publication given; signed by Pat Cantwell; Jan. 12, 1925.
To the Members of the I. W. W. New York (?); Aug., 1924 (?). Authorship probably by or under the direction of one or more of the following persons: F. A. Blossom, Bert Lorton, Jim Quinlan.

Letters

- Circular letter, signed by Leonard Bolton, Ogden, Utah, July 27, 1925; addressed to "All Class War Prisoners." States that only by organization at point of production can freedom of prisoners be secured. Signed by P. D. Ryan, Chicago, Dec. 1, 1924; addressed to "Fellow Worker." A tentative plan of reorganization is outlined.
 Sent by Frank Shamblin, E. Busse, Paul R. Tucker, and Ed. Moriarty, from Los Angeles, California, Nov. 14, 1924; addressed to "Fellow Workers." A call urging members to repudiate 16th convention of Chicago faction and to repudiate advocacy of violation of Busick injunction.
 Signed by Caesar Tabib, no place of writing, no date; addressed "To the Membership of the I. W. W." Tabib protests against his unseating as a delegate to the 16th (1924) convention of the I. W. W.
 Sent by True Tuttle, William Ford, and Wm. H. Rockwood; Portland, Oregon; March 7, 1925; addressed "To the Membership of the I. W. W." Discussion of plans for forthcoming *Industrial Unionist*.
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Minutes of Meetings

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 Aug. 14, 1924; Chicago; Minutes of the regular business meeting of the Chicago Branch of the Metal Workers' Industrial Union, no. 440.
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 March 26, 1925; Ogden, Utah; 310 Emergency Business Meeting.
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II. STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

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³ Formerly known as the National Civil Liberties Bureau. The present address of the organization is 100 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

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