

June 2, 1974

Julian Beck, Livg. Thea. br.
Richard Christopher, Boston
Henry Devlin, Stud. Synd. Lg.
Sam Dolgoff, IWW-Libert'n Lg.

Gary Jewell, Toronto
Merrill Moss, NY
Pat Murfin, Chicago
Steve Parr, GDC

Bob (R.) Pestalozzi,
Lancaster, Pa.
Joel Rice, NY
Ron Sigler, Montreal

Copies: IWW GIC, Chicago; IWWA, Limoges, France & SWF, London, England

Bulletin: IWWA offers recognition. The IWWA has agreed to the various possibilities we discussed for forming a North American section, and sends warmest fraternal greetings. More below.

Summary of Developments to Date

We seem to be moving ahead pretty fast - possibly enough to constitute the section formally at a side-meeting during the fall IWW convention - considering that everything had to be on a tentative basis of 'what-would-you-say-if', since it will be up to the section to make the decisions when organized.

1. Hunter Conference

Apr. 21: IWW-Syndicalist workshop on 'What's our place in the Movement?', at the Hunter College libertarian-anarchist festival, found itself faced with: (a) a new Student Syndicalist League; (b) a move to set up a continental intergroup federated anarchist movement; (c) correspondence with the IWWA by a growing number of Wobblies; (d) the need for clear expression of syndicalist principles in the face of a 'you-own-thing' anarchist movement drifting away from class struggle; (e) same need, to strengthen our appeal among youth, liberation movements, and especially collectives.

2. Committee of Inquiry

Workshop decided to set up a committee of inquiry to look into the possibilities of forming a volunteer liaison group that could enter into such alliances as a unified body, upholding our principles, without disturbing the IWW's own traditional avoidance of alliances and isms. If possible, the group would try to set itself up as a section of the IWWA. The workshop members would meet again at the 5/26 powwow.

3. Proposals

There, and at subsequent discussions, it was tentatively proposed: (a) The group or section would not try to commit the IWW, or any IWW branch, in any way, but would be merely for those who wanted to join it. (b) It would not be a rival to existing organizations, but would limit its membership to those individuals, or willing to become members, of designated organizations (IWW, GDC, Student Syndicalists, or existing IWWA sections overseas). (c) It would not be a 'faction', but would refrain from any attempt to influence the internal affairs of its feeder organizations. (d) It would stress study and principles.

4. Committee of Correspondence

May 26: Meeting held during E. Coast conference at State College, Pa., enlarged and formally established the group as a Committee of Correspondence. (The name is not particularly important, since the plan was to call ourselves by the name of the International.) After checks on acceptances, by phone, the names at the top of the page now constitute the initial members of the Committee.

5. The IWWA

Meanwhile the IWWA responded warmly to the proposals (#3), saying we could readily qualify as a section provided: (a) we accept the declaration of principles and statutes (which I'm now translating for circulation, but which seem to present no major difficulties), (b) we accept the principles of anarcho-syndicalism and non-political direction, (c) we are not open to Marxists 'including the new breed of Anarcho-Marxists' (Amen!).

(over)

5. The IWMA (cont'd)

I have asked about a few points of translation, including using 'anarcho-syndicalism' for 'comunismo libertario' and the possibility of inserting 'Women's and', to make it IWWMA (combining two historic sets of initials). We also had to discuss the question of national boundaries which don't fit North American conditions, either Canadian-U.S. or Mexican-U.S. (in view of the migratory farm workers' situation).

6. The Anarchists

Meanwhile, too, we seem assured of a prominent place in the future Anarchist clearing house, since our New York committee members are active on its working committee, which has now drafted a declaration and is sending it out for signatures. We would be the natural group in such a federated body to seek to win over the collectives (and make union shops of them).

7. The IWW

A tentative appeal for 100 members (let's be realistic and say 50 to start with) is slated to appear in the next issue of the GOB. While I took the liberty of thus getting the show on the road, I want to stress that this means nothing, by itself. Few people will write in by themselves. It's just an opportunity for each of us to refer to it, in contacting people to join us. If we don't, they won't. And we'll have to do it again at the IWW convention, which will be our only chance to hold a continent-wide meeting.

8. Student Syndicalists

It seems to me we'll have a terrific opportunity here to undertake joint membership drives of the IWW and the Student Syndicalists among student bodies, since we will now have the advantage of being able to advance principles in terms of the movement that can have a wider appeal than the bare emphasis on just-organize-the-workers-in-the-shops. At the same time, all such untied-down people entering the labor force, who can be slotted into shops where needed, will help the IWW do just that.

9. International Aid

The IWMA is currently aiding the Portuguese fellow workers (their representatives were shown a copy of our correspondence) to recruit into the Portuguese CNT in the face of the present combination of benevolent militarists and of Socialist and Communist labor falsies. The Industrial Workers will carry an appeal for contributions, and I've already sent one myself. Once we find out the dues, we may want to add a small assessment, perhaps.

10. Material from Overseas

As stated above, a translation of the statutes along with excerpts from the correspondence may have to be our first 'publication' (or we'll get out a summary if the full job takes too long). We've already got in publications from other countries. We'll ask the English SWF for 50 copies each, to be passed out and in each town. Other copies will depend on how many here read Spanish or French.

11. Further Correspondence

Please pool all names and addresses of interested parties and we'll get out a joint list for everybody. Also send in any information and comments, single-spaced and as compact as possible, so we can put them together in paste-ups for xeroxing or for mimeo-electro-stencils. Meanwhile, excuse this lousy typing and all the typos, which are due to impaired vision after a recent eye operation.

M. Moss, IWW, Box 570 Radio City Station
New York, N.Y. 10019, U.S.A.

June 2, 1974

(for publication in G.O.B.)

8 September 1974

Fellow workers:

The Anarcho-Syndicalist Organizing Committee of North America sends its fraternal and revolutionary greetings to the members of the IWW.

This letter is meant to dispel some confusion that seems to have arisen in the IWW recently. A few months ago a communication from our Committee of Correspondance was published in the IWW General Organization Bulletin, asking that IWW members interested in our ideas and our proposed organization communicate with us. Apparently, this has been interpreted by some IWW members that we are agitating within the IWW for affiliation with the International Workers Association, of which we hope to form a North American section. Some have even accused us of factionalism within the IWW.

Let there be no question, the Committee disavows any intent to interfere with the internal affairs of any organization to which some of our members may belong. We do not advocate that the IWW affiliate with the International or any other organization of a political nature. We hereby repudiate the actions and/or statements of any individual to the contrary.

Anyone wishing to discuss these issues further may communicate with us c/o myself at 500 E. 11 St. Apt. 12, N.Y., NY 10009.

Yours for the abolition of wage slavery,

Steven Parr

for the Anarcho-Syndicalist Organizing
Committee