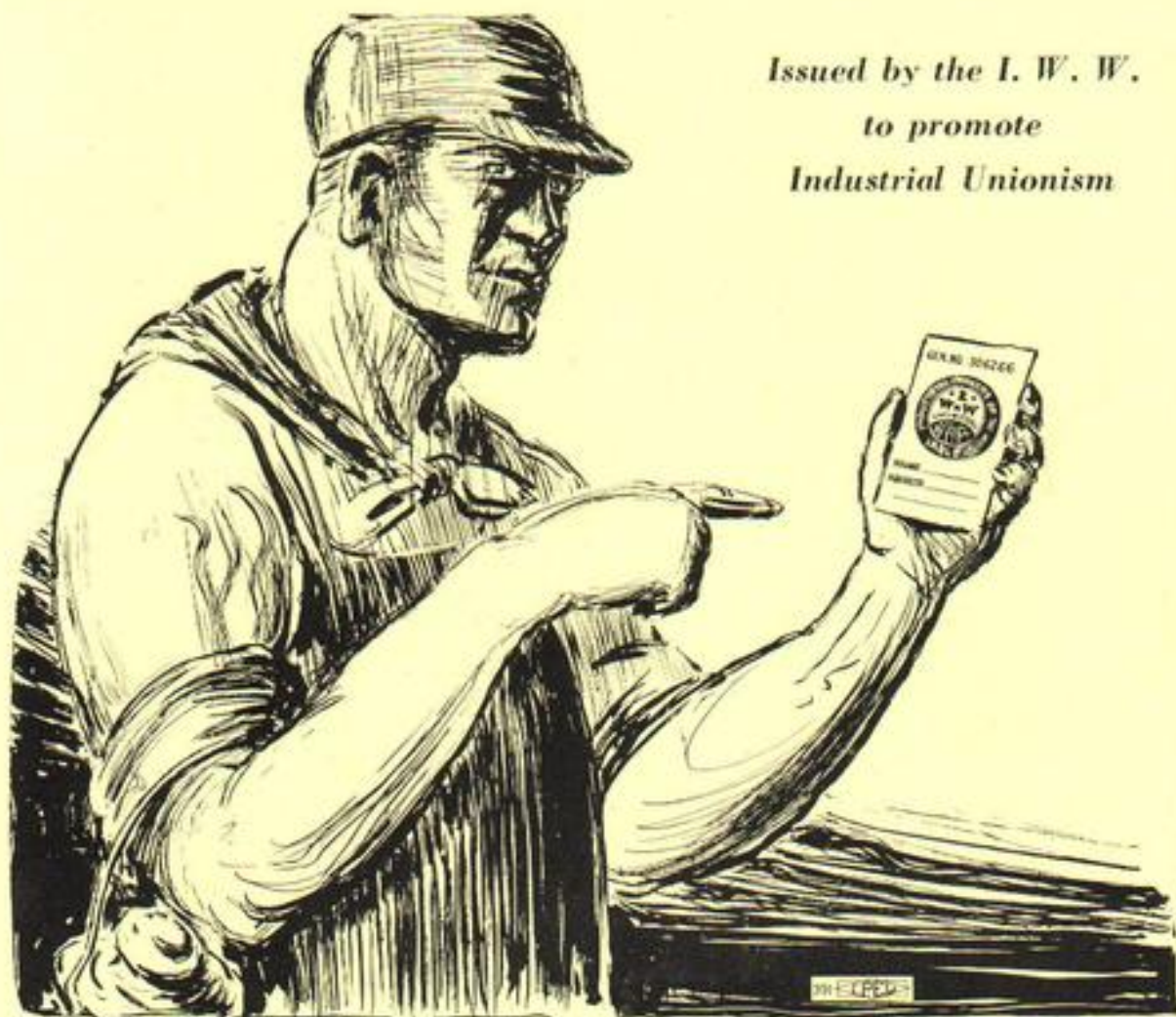


# *The* **ONE BIG UNION** *Monthly*

*Issued by the I. W. W.  
to promote  
Industrial Unionism*



New Series: Vol. I-No. 2

FEBRUARY, 1937

Price: 15 cents



## **Direct Action - -**

"Who would be free, himself must strike the blow!"

So said the poet Byron.

"The emancipation of the working class is the work of that class itself."

So said the great economist and social philosopher, Karl Marx.

"Don't ask for rights. Take them. An' don't let anny wan give them to ye. A right that is handed to ye f'r nawthin has somethin' the matther with it. It's more than likely it's on'y a wrong turned inside out."

So, according to Peter Finley Dunne, observed that most observant political commentator, Mr. Dooley.

When a poet, an economist, and an Irishman all agree, they surely can't be wrong.

And even if they hadn't said it, we ought to know by now that nothing much is going to be done for the working class.

Yet great things wait to be done by the working class.

So their one chance of being done is direct action of, by, and for the working class.

That is why we strive to build One Big Union that will enable our class to act together for itself, and do the things that we all know need to be done, yet will never be done otherwise.

Are you with us?

Also issued by the I. W. W.:

**THE INDUSTRIAL WORKER**  
A Weekly Labor Paper  
\$1.50 per year; \$1.00 six months

**BERMUNKAS**  
A Hungarian Weekly  
\$2.00 per year; \$1.00 six months

**IL PROLETARIO**  
Italian Fortnightly  
\$1.00 per year; \$.50 six months

**TIE VAPAUTEEN**  
Finnish Monthly Magazine  
\$1.75 per year; \$.90 six months

**INDUSTRIALISTI**  
Finnish Labor Daily  
\$4.25 per year; \$2.50 six months



**ONE BIG UNION MONTHLY**  
\$1.50 per year; \$.80 six months

published by

**THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS  
OF THE WORLD**  
2422 N. Halsted Street  
Chicago, Ill.

Entry as second class matter applied for at  
the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the  
Act of March 3, 1879.



# Is Machinery Destroying Organization?

By JUSTUS EBERT

**"NO!" answers this veteran labor editor who knows the answers. The industrial proletariat is growing, and the need of the hour is labor organization with the vision and structure to save society from chaos and ruin.**

With 52 million gainfully employed in the United States, it would appear that there are still many unorganized to organize. All of the statistics of labor organization, whether A. F. of L., or C. I. O., railroad brotherhood, or independent, show less than one-tenth of that number as members of labor unions. So there is still considerable room for more organization, especially in view of the many racketeering and warring tendencies at work among the so-called organized.

There are some among working men and women, however, who regard organization as useless. As they see it, the machine is destroying the need for labor and so will, in the course of time, destroy organization also. This argument, voiced by Stuart Chase and Alfred Bingham, middle class spokesmen with technocratic leanings, is well answered in the January 1937 Marxist Quarterly, by Lewis Corey. Writing on "American Class Relations," tending to show the decline of the middle class and the impossibility of a classless society in America, Corey, who is an economist and statistician of considerable standing, declares:

"Wage workers are now a clear majority of the gainfully occupied. Yet there are some who speak of the 'disappearance' of the proletariat. They say: 'America still has a proletariat, but every automatic process, every battery of photo-electric cells, diminishes its numbers and political importance'. . . 'During the last generation the tendency to weaken the proletariat has been gaining in every advanced country. Numerically there has been an increasing shift from manual to white collar occupation', emphasized by a decrease of the industrial proletariat in 1919-29.

"The Industrial proletariat did not decrease during the 1920's; it was at least one-tenth larger in 1930 than in 1920. Although the rate of increase was smaller than in former years, the industrial proletariat by 1930 constituted 65 per cent of all wage workers compared with 50 per cent in 1870. The decrease in rate of growth was a result of more intensive mechanization, it is

true, but it also was a result of the downward movement in the rate in the growth of American capitalist industry; hence it marks the beginning, not of the disappearance of the proletariat, but of the decline of American capitalism. To assume disappearance of the proletariat is nonsense; it presupposes a development of technical-economic forces that would strangle capitalism in an unprofitable abundance."

So much for Corey. His statements would suggest that, for some time to come at least, there'll be plenty of proletariat around to be organized and that it will be some time yet before the machine will have thoroughly caused the proletariat to disappear.

Further, Corey also suggests the need for organization to anticipate and meet the economic breakdowns that are so marked a feature of capitalist decline in this country. Few workers know what happened in this country in 1929. Unless all signs of the elements of weakness in the present "recovery" fail—the 10 to 14 millions of unemployed, despite 1925-26 output; and the disproportions between profit and wages—another and more severe collapse will be upon us in another year or two! What then? May not the occasion then arise when an industrially organized working class may have to take over and operate industry for the benefit of society, regardless of capitalist profit? Or are we workers, competent producers all, to stand idly by and starve, while society reverts to the wars and savagery of fascism, as manifested today the world over?

Therein will be found another reason for industrial union organization of the right kind—to save society from chaos and ruin when capitalism shall again have collapsed.

This is labor organization with vision; with a way out of the modern capitalist hell for the workers. And this is the vision and structure that all other labor organizations than the I.W.W. lack.

We workers need more organization and what is more important, better organization still.



## Red Samson

## Goes to Work

By

Sugar Pine Whitey



The long drag of the Western Pacific came to a jerky stop as the snug brake shoes clung to the polished wheels. A jolly shack in striped dashboard overalls said that the train would stop for at least an hour. The switch men were breaking up the train to put on a few lumber cars and the two "helpers" needed to push the heavy train up the steep grade to Portola, California. Groups of dusty and hungry "passengers" swarmed off all along the yard, some making a bee line for the coffee pots and the fire places in the "Jungle," while others rushed up the tracks to rustle chuck in the none too friendly town of Oroville. The train had pulled out of the yards in Oakland during the cold dark hours of the previous night, stopping at Tracy; changing crew at Stockton, where I got on; then on to Sacramento, but whistling and rattling through the one-horse towns where the manifest had the right-away, side-tracking only twice for passenger trains on the whole run.

Now it was hot in the late afternoon and the weary passengers of the "side door Pullman" variety suffered more from thirst than from hunger. The majority was a motley conglomeration of unemployed that had been dumped off "Relief" subsistence in the California cities by a policy of "curtailment." They were now looking for the elusive "job"—somewhere—because honest and timid workers must work to eat—and eat to work—and they had been told by the relief officials and the Chamber of Commerce that Prosperity was returning to the land of humming industries—in fact, it was here.

A bunch of stiffes were waiting to get on when the train stopped. Some of them were tunnel stiffes and dirt movers out of L. A., going into Nevada or wherever jobs could be found. There were tramp line-men and building mechanics going east to wait for the "boom." A few prospectors going up the Canyon to "snipe" in the banks and gullies along the Feather River. The rest I recognized as "pine cats," a common species of California loggers. But one man among them certainly looked like anything but a woodsman. . . .

I was sure that I knew him—no, it couldn't be! . . . Blackie? Naw, this man had red hair—sort of curly, too . . . then I spotted his fourteen gallon hat and open shop pants tucked into fancy riding boots, and I knew that this cross between a cowboy and a snake oil peddler could not be the "Blackie" I used to know . . . the damn old roughneck and jack of all trades! . . . Knew his stuff, too . . .

But it was him! . . . "E' lo, Whitey!" he said and stuck out a mitt . . . the same old drawl—but why the make-up? . . . Oh, well, no use being a hoosier and giving a stiff away—after all, this was in California! "Hullo! Bla . . ." . . .

"Samson," he said. "I reckon' you've forgotten, eh?—Bill Samson" . . .

"Yeah, that's right—I remember now!" . . . Jack Baxter, as sure as the color of his hair had been changed! . . . Delegate, organizer in many tough spots . . . What's he up to now? . . . Worked with him on many jobs . . . down south—Louisiana, Texas, Arizona . . . Tampico oil fields—in



our younger days . . . spoke the language like a native . . . Together on the picket line in Washington and Idaho—1917 . . . Campaigned with him in Coos Bay when Westley Everest and other union men were run out by the scabby mob . . . Klamath-Siskiyou . . . Redwoods . . . drove tunnel on the Hetch Hetchy . . . fight with dehorn scabs in Stockton and nearly killed . . . funny how time flies! . . . Stool pigeon Coutts spotted us on the Southern Edison out of Fresno—arrested by company gunmen—months in the bullpen in L. A.—C. S. trial—beat the rap . . . Arrested again in Oakland—tried . . . Oh, well . . . Justice is a blind and drunken harlot in California! . . . Gave us a chance to meet the **best** people in California on both sides of the wall—friends at such a time are friends indeed!—Sancho, Barry, Older, Sonja and her sister—others . . . fine people all, though not members of our organization, hm . . . we parted in Frisco when he went north and I drifted into Chi . . .

And here we meet again!—"Red Samson," who used to be "Barney Armstrong" down south and "Blackie Larson," with an uncertain Scandinavian accent, on the Puget Sound! . . . He changed his name often, when circumstances made it necessary, but his principles and integrity to his class—never.

The "helpers" were put on and the new train crew was coming through the yard and boarding the "crummy," the brakes were tested with the hiss of an angry rattler—all of which indicated that the engineer was about to give the highball and pull out. The head shack and the conductor, whom I recognized to be boomers, gave Red the once over and winked at me. Wise cracks and jibes were coming from some of the stiffes in the direction of Red, but the latter paid no attention to that.

"This is going to be ah-right," he said, as we climbed into the cleanest of the three empties. Soon we were on our way.

The air turned cold in the narrow canyon as the day faded into darkness. The floor of the boxcar was covered in sardine fashion with hoboes. Some spread paper on the floor and lay down as in bed. Others huddled like low caste Orientals and shook from cold and the swaying motion. Two young fellows who looked to be twins were sound asleep before the train was five miles out of town. They had come to Cali-

fornia from the East, looking for work and had landed in the bread line in Frisco. Now they were "sure to get a job on the East coast" when they got back. Nice boys, too, with hope shining in their eyes, but one coughed continuously in his sleep while the other snored.

Two young Negroes were sitting together, chatting and laughing as if they were home among friends.

"I wish I was one of them Christian Scientists or . . . could go to sleep and dream about a big juicy T-bone steak!—The sandwich I got from the kind ole' lady in Oroville has shook loose from my ribs!" . . .

"I've got a lady friend in Ogden—I can sure eat there!"

"But dat's a long, l-o-o-n-g ways from here, black boy!"

Red and I sat in the door way, facing the river. Lights from cabins across the canyon blended with the stars and the Man in the Moon seemed to flit from the tree top to tree top as in a Mickey Mouse comedy. I asked Red where he had the rest of the circus and he answered that I hadn't seen anything yet.

"Wait till tomorrow when we see the bull of the woods—ever heard about the Romans and the customs in Rome? . . . Well! . . .

"This country is not what it used to be when



*When it was rumored about that Prosperity had returned to the land, the soup grew thinner in Los Angeles, and the freight trains were crowded with hungry men looking for the elusive job.*



the I.W.W. was strong in these pine hills! It's overrun with scurvy finks and spineless Scissor Bills who have flocked here to get away from Unionism and the draught. . . . Some of the old-timers who used to be all-right have gone the de-horn route and are useless to themselves and the organization. . . . The Slough camp was pulled two weeks ago but the men were outnumbered by the rats and the strike—if you can call it that—was broken. I'm hitting for there now, and Shorty and Slim over there in the corner will double back from Reno and try to set in later. . . . If the Puget Sound fog has dried on your brains, maybe I can drag you along!"

We got off at Quincy and waited for daylight. From his roomy suit case Red dragged out some bizzare rags and dressed with the expert care of an actor. I swore that he would have a better chance for a job on a dude sheep ranch than he would in a logging camp, but he only grinned.

"That's what all the rest of the hoosiers think—but the boss knows better. . . . It didn't do me any good to play hide and seek with 'em—so now I carry the sort of brass band that plays their kind of music." . . .

He folded a black kerchief around his neck and ran the ends through a transparent dice with green spots. A heavy imitation gold chain stretched across his chest between the pockets of a pink shirt which was generously decorated with useless buttons. A bear carved from redwood burl hung from the watch chain and made a clinking noise against the mystic dice when he walked. A broad metal-studded belt with an engraved round silver buckle kept his leather-lined riding breeches from falling into his Russian boots. A red and white calfskin vest was open in the middle so as not to hide any of the fineries. Over all this he put a long, black claw-hammer coat, with copies of the Sacramento Bee and the Christian Advocate showing above the side pockets. He carried an old bulging suitcase with a rope tied around the middle. . . . He was a heluva looking logger but he looked pretty much like a man at that! With his rugged body, serious mien and Soap Lake complexion—old and young would give him a second look—even in California.\*

\* \* \*

Frank Overmann, superintendent for the Slough Lumber Co., was in town looking for men. We met him at the grease joint where Red and I had some kind of a breakfast. Since the strike at the camp, the labor-hating "super" had trusted no one but himself to hire the crew. His mancatcher in Sacramento had been worse than useless. When Overmann had warned him not to send "any Wob-

blies or other damn union men and radicals," the m. c. had hired "the most useless trash in the valley—hay hands, canned heat maniacs and the sweepings of the soup-line . . . who in hell could log with such people? . . . What good was it to have millions of unemployed if you couldn't put the fear of Christ into the damn timber beasts and make 'em snap into it without a lot of squawking and striking? . . . What's needed in this country are stricter laws and strong men to enforce them . . . all this foolishness in the busy season is an outrage—but I'll learn them dirty bums yet! . . . Those dryland farmers from Oklahoma and Arkansas may be loyal and all that but they certainly didn't know how to get out the round stuff—ruined more damn supar pine than they were worth, falling the damn stuff in the rocky ground."

So opined Mr. Overmann.

Red Samson created quite a sensation in the little mountain town. Overmann spied us and gave us the once over.

"How'dy, boys! Looking for work?"

We were. He ran his eyes over us as if he were buying cattle. His patronizing look of amusement changed to suspicion as his eyes rested on my staggard water-repellent pants.

"Northern man, eh?"

"No'th or sou'h," I said. "Worked with Red heah' in South Cah'lina and Louis'anna . . . Can do mos'ly anthing, I recon' you need any cat skinna'hs?"

"Well, yes came to think of it—I can use a couple good cat men." Then he turned to Red: "Ever run a donkey?"

"You all mean just one donkey? He, he, he! I've run as many as twenty of 'em at one time down in Geo'gie—yes, suh, twenty . . . I recon' I can handle the mos' o'nery donkey you all have on the place—why, my ole' pa said befo'h he was kicked in the haid by the meanes' ole' mule you eva'h saw that thar was no better mule boy than me nohow."

Red was putting it on, all right. He was born in the south and he could mix the dialects of many states without half trying.

"All right," said Overmann, contemptuously grinning and meditating to himself. "I've got a good job for you." Then he dogeyed me once more.

"You can come along, too—I'll give you a cat, if you think you can hack 'er."

We drove out with the "super" in his new Packard, going by way of Huck's Ranch. Nobody spoke on the way, but I could see that Overmann was amused and satisfied. We stopped in front of the camp office where we met the timekeeper and

\* Soap Lake, Wash., credited with capacity to cure many ailments, at least does change black hair to red.



foreman. The foreman grunted when he saw Red and he turned to the super.

"What's this fellow going to do?"

"Oh, I just had a bright idea, Daniels—this fellow will make a good helper for the bull cook. . . . Are any of you guys Wobblies?"

I told him that I had "no use for them thar fellahs," but Red was more specific.

"No, suh! I used to be a Baptist when I was a straplin' but I guess I'm not much of anything now—he, he, he!"

"Well, that's fine . . . We gotta be on the lookout for the Wobblies. They are trying to horn in here since the strike . . . they've been here with their damn poison stickers an' unpatriotic propaganda . . . But they didn't stay. And I want you, Buffalo Bill, to be on the lookout, and tear down them damn stickers whenever you find 'em, and report to us. There will be no strikes or meetings in this camp!"

The timekeeper was a vest pocket edition of the super. Superciliously he took down our records. He said "we" and "us" as he referred to the company while giving us the third degree. I told him that I had been fishing in Alaska for several years but that I paid no attention to the names of the fish buyers as by brother tended to all of that.

Red's record was a bit more complicated. By the time the timekeeper had got around to his mother's maiden name, he was that worn out that he gave us each a number and two tags, one to give to the bull cook for a bed and the other to carry on the job.

There was no bed maker and we had to get blankets from the office and make our own bed; and the musty old blankets might have been used by people who were suffering from hydrophobia.

The stiffs made wise cracks and sarcastic jibes and even the prune pickers and the poison oakers snickered when Red and I lined up for supper. The chuck was terrible. Butter was dished out in small chips as in a Japanese restaurant, but the man on Red's left had a dish of it in front of his plate. Red reached over and helped himself to a sizeable chunk.

"Say there you! This is my butter! You'll have to buy your own here if you are not satisfied with what is served on the table."

"Gosh, pard, you don't say! I'm a stranger heah but I reckon I'll learn directly."

"Oh, shucks, stranger; there is no harm done. I don't like to buy my own butter, but my doctor said that I must eat more butter." Questioning Red with a silent stare, he whispered confidentially: "That's one of the reasons why the reds and the floaters struck . . . they told Overmann he'd have to take his pick between them and 'Ole'—he,

he! Imagine, calling butter 'Ole'? Funny fellars them radicals!"

We fought bedbugs the first part of the night, but we slept soundly when the gut hammer called us in for breakfast. The latter was a mere routine. After breakfast, I was shown around by "Slim" Daniels, the quiet-spoken foreman. "You better be careful in these steep rocky hills," he warned. "We had to bury one of the skimmers last week."

The "cat"\* was a new "Seventy-five" with a mammoth arch. After chugging around in the hills for eight hours over rocks, bumps, logs and deep dust banks, I lost all human feelings and appearance and my only interest in life was a cold drink of water in a shady glade. Logging in this camp was done by "cats" and "steam." A "two speed" donkey engine was whizzing and snorting as the "turns" were pulled out of a deep ravine and the steam rose in white rings into the clear air. The rigging crew bounced and ran back to the line as the chokers were skinned back from the spar tree to where the sugar pine lie deep in the bottom of the ravine. It was a "hard show," but the tall and sturdy sugar pine was of good quality in this high altitude. The company could well afford to pay better wages and furnish better food and camp conditions. But the company was organized with the rest of the operators and the majority of the lumber slaves were not.

My back felt as if it was broke and my face was a brittle cake of dust when the day was over. It was Red's time to stare this time. He had taken off all the camouflage but the hat and boots. His chief function beside cutting wood and being a handiman around camp was to tear down I.W.W. stickers wherever he found them and to be on the lookout for "radicals" and "red literature," which seemed to be increasing despite the eager snooping of the "loyal" bull cook, Frick Windgate, who was supposed to be the master stool pigeon in charge of Red. Both worked under the direction of Overmann. The foreman had the reputation of being a good logger who knew how to get the most out of men and machinery, but he seemed to have no interest in being a detective. Despite all warnings of the super, who was in deadly fear of the "radicals," "Slim" Daniels refused to spy on the men. . . . He saw things, but what of it? That had nothing to do with logging. He was young yet and he had a family. The job was not to be sneezed at these days, he thought . . . and if the crew could stand having their underwear inspected by the company stools, why should he squawk? But he lay drunk in his cabin for two days after

\* Skinning a cat is driving a tractor (with caterpillar tread) used for hauling out the logs. The rigging crew handle the cable, which runs through blocks on the top of the tall spar tree, by which the steam donkey engine accomplishes a similar purpose.



the crew walked out for better chuck and a bathhouse.

The crew sat outside the bunk houses at night until bedtime, as is customary in the California pine woods where the air is dry and clear. A bon fire was built when the nights were chilly. This used to be the place to spin yarns and express fellowship, but there was little of that here. Suspicion and mistrust hung over the camp. The decent element with union cards in their pockets trusted only those they knew before, and they were waiting and preparing to take a stand whenever possible. I lay on my bunk nursing my sore back and muscles the first few nights in camp, but the talk drifted up to me about logging, sports, the movies, women and the coming election.

Said the stoop shouldered brush piler who had orders to eat more butter: "Things are bound to pick up after the election, if Marionette is elected Governor. He is for the pension, and besides . . . The sup' told me the other day that if Sinclair is elected it will turn California into a desert,—practically speaking, you know."

" . . . So we went up to the hook shop back of the Mission . . . and there we turned over a few . . . the pimp got sassy and we threw him downstairs . . . I smacked the landlady in the puss and my pardner grabbed a pot and heaved it at the piano, but it glanced off and struck the blond angel-face right smack in the mush . . . We was stewed to the eyebrows, see, and the last thing I could remember was that we went down the street and saw some fellah talking radical on a soap box, and we knocked him right in the guts . . . I never had so much fun since grandma was kicked by the old mule."

The "floaters" that had arrived since the "strike" didn't say much as they sat looking out over the peaks and summits of the Sierras across the valley below, beckoning purple and blue in the still summer night . . . beautiful, peaceful, clean — despite human degeneration . . . oh, hum! Tomorrow is another day . . .

Then thing began to happen. One by one the crew go sick and had to lay off from work. Some quit. New men took their places. It was especially the old hands that were stricken. The cook and the water got the blame—and maybe it was. The symptoms were aggravating, to say the least. Even Windgate, who carried written recommendations for being an efficient dependable bull cook, was stricken with the plague; in fact, he had to go to bed. He could hardly drag himself away from the little house back of the camp and he itched and scratched night and day. Red, who showed a stubborn resistance against sickness, offered to do the work for both of them. The super was not feeling so well himself, and he was puzzled. Perhaps there should have been more butter.

Eight

Two men were found to have L.W.W. literature in their bunks. They were fired and Overmann warned them never to come back. There was something queer about it, because they had been heard to say they had no use for any union and that hanging was too good for the "Wobblies." But matters went from bad to worse after the men were fired. Not that Red Samson shirked his duties—he had never been so busy in his life! Mr. Overmann told his wife that he wouldn't know what to do but for Red, and Mrs. Overmann agreed that Red was "a very nice looking man," and she found plenty of work for him to do around their place. "Picturesque" was the term she used to describe the camp handyman. He was as popular as the plague with the stiffes and they swore bitterly what they would like to do to the "dirty sonofa." But Red neither heard nor saw anything as he went about pulling stickers right from under the nose of Overmann. But for every one that was torn down there seemed to be two back in the same place the following day.

The silent agitation was very annoying. Here the price of lumber had risen, with hands plenty there was a chance to make up for the lean years—but now these pests were agitating for higher wages and better conditions which amounted to profit sharing. . . . "They should be thankful for having a job! Healthy work, too, though maybe a cat skinner didn't last many years before his back gave out—and if the chuck was not the best, it was better than in the soup line by gosh!" If an employee was injured, he would receive state compensation; if he was killed, he was out of his misery! . . . So they had nothing to worry about—but what about the employers and the stock holders who had their money invested and were taxpayers? Did the damn trouble makers ever think of them? And who would employ them when they went broke? "Ungrateful sons of bitches!" said Overmann, as he tore off another sticker from the bill board in front of the office.

Yes, indeed, those little stickerettes were annoying. Worst of all, they even made a man think! . . . Colored stickerettes they were, mostly red . . . there was one with the picture of a giant breaking heavy chains and claiming the whole world—that was Awakening Labor. Then there was a hoot owl sitting on a branch and hooting warnings down to a gypso who was reaching for a doughnut on the end of a long bucking saw . . . there were others—and then there would be showers of leaflets expounding the merits of Industrial Unionism and the need of Solidarity. But the most exasperating of all, the super and the time keeper agreed, was that young sober-faced man looking down at you from a black and white stickerette with a red background, telling all lumber workers to "Line up in the L.W.I.U. 120 of the

ONE BIG UNION MONTHLY



I.W.W.!" Overmann would have liked nothing better than to "send that fellow down the road talking to himself."

Mrs. Overmann was a credit to the California climate. She could hold her own anywhere in a state that is justly credited with beautiful women. But it was not her graceful shape and features which struck one at first glance as much as it was that come-hither-please, stop-I-love-you kind of a look. It sort of got you in the weakest spot and made you think that the high altitude was too much for your heart.

It was part of Red's duties to cut wood for Mrs. Overmann. He told me confidentially: "She wants more service than anyone I've ever seen—and I get dizzy to be around her. I've never torn down any fences to get into anybody else's orchard; but when I'm around her the sweat under my arms gets so strong that I feel like a billy goat."

"That ought to be as pleasant as to tear down stickers and put more back in their place!" I remarked.

"Uh-huh . . . but I can't simply stay there and dummy up when she wants to know what I think of Clark Gable or the Prince of Wales. She wants to know what movie actress I like the best and why . . . She wants to know if I'm married and all such stuff. I'd leave tomorrow, if it wasn't for something else—Bill and Tom ought to be here soon from Reno. She is ah-right and all that but, of course, she is bound to be lonesome living with that scabby baboon!"

The following day, after Overmann had left for Sacramento, beautiful Jezabel called Red over to the house. A picture had dropped off the wall in the bed room, nearly killing the cat—and would Red please help her to get it back in place? Of course, he would . . . She was dressed in a blue silk kimono . . . her hair brushed against his face as she helped to straighten the picture in the right angle. They stood looking at it together. Then a thought came to him. Well, maybe the psychology guys would have another name for it.

She told Red before he left: "I'm so darn lonesome that I'll die or go crazy if I don't get away from this place."

The camp had been showered with bulletins and leaflets and nobody seemed to know by whom. The super was getting ferocious and threatened to bring armed guards into camp for night and day service. The timekeeper even suggested the militia. Everybody was talking about it. The old "loyal" crew was thinning out and some of the new arrivals were suspected of being from the north (which meant anywhere north of the California border, but especially where the I.W.W. influence was reported to be stronger). But no one had shown his hand yet.

The super was storming in the office: "I don't like them nor their damn foolish papers, nor their stickers—now nor ever!"

"So I've noticed," drawled the foreman. "But the time may be coming, by gad, when we may have to put up with 'em whether we like 'em or not! . . . There is something about those people which reminds me of the steam in the boiler or the moving of a glacier . . . I don't understand what they are driving at—and some of them are mostly talk to make impression on people who are asking for more than the chronic growlers—but I know that as long as there is fire under the boilers we may be thankful that there is water in the boilers and a safety valve to keep the whole thing from blowing up beyond repairs of anybody . . . Came to think of it, somebody left a paper on my bunk last night and I read some of it.—Say, there is news and stuff in that paper you can find nowhere else . . ."

"Huh, I suppose you'll be taking out a red card next!"

The camp was short handed and when Bill and Tom arrived from Reno with Bob Ryan, they were put to work. All were fellow workers and active members of L.W.I.U. 120. The organized workers were coming out more in the open now, but the rambunctious super did not feel so lucky as he did with the "loyal" crew. The epidemic had subsided, but the bull cook, Frick Windgate, still had serious relapses and was talking of quitting.

One night Bob Ryan got up at the table and announced that there would be a meeting after supper. "It's an open meeting and you will all be welcome—we only ask that you help to make it an orderly meeting and to allow no interference with our business of organization."

You could have heard the proverbial needle drop. The time had come! Windgate and the timekeeper turned red in the face and were about to explode. But now there seemed to be a new power in the camp, and there was a look of hope in the eyes of some you would least suspect of such extravagance.

Fellow Worker Ryan stood on a stump in front of the cookhouse at the announced time. There was no chairman—that would be tended to later. This was primarily an invitation to organize in the union and to form a grievance committee that would function between meetings.

"Fellow workers," he said, "this is the first job organization meeting held in this Canyon in many years. And this camp is a fair example of the results of having no meetings of this sort. Individually we can do little or nothing about it. Collectively we can."

"Those of you who aren't members know something of what we're after—decent camp conditions, decent chuck, shorter hours, more pay. And



when we got these things by organized action, we get something else with it—self-respect, and respect for and confidence in our fellow workers, and a new spirit on the job and in the bunk-house.

"We want you also to know something of how the I.W.W. and Lumber Workers Industrial Union Number 120 runs its affairs. It is run by the rank and file, by meetings like this on the job, but where every man packs a union card, where you elect your chairman, decide the policies of your organization, and tell your officers what they are to do."

The setting sun turned the green-clad pine hills to purple and gold. The heads nodding assent, the gladness that shone from these men, as they seemed to break an oppressive chain that bound them, all made the speaker grow a bit poetic as he finished his short talk with a picture of how these job organization meetings were slowly but surely building the structure of a new society within the shell of the old.

Then the meeting got down to business, and it was found that more than half of the crew that had arrived since the strike were members. Besides Ryan, there were Tom and Bill with credentials, and they were kept busy writing out membership cards. A committee was formed to interview the crew regarding the walk-out and who was who. Those who were proved to be dyed-in-the-wool scabs were barred from the union. But inasmuch as there had been no regular meeting held and vote taken at the recent "strike," the latter was considered as a walkout, and younger workers without previous experience were not held responsible. Finally a Job Grievance Committee was elected to tend to business between meetings. The chairman of this committee was to be the Job Steward who was to take his orders from the committee and the membership at the regular meeting.

A new era had arrived in the Slough Camp . . . the tide of organization was coming back in the pine woods. Similar meetings were being held in other camps . . . conditions were improving. No longer did the men at Slough's camp furnish their own butter . . . No longer did the men in the Klamath-Lakeview-Siskiyou districts have to furnish their own tools and scab on the saw filers. Unorganized walk-outs were discouraged as futile. Job organization got results through a system of Job meetings—Job Committees—and action according to circumstances. "Pine cats" were learning to walk erect and to have confidence in their organized efforts—and in nothing else.

\* \* \*

Red Samson quit the morning after the meeting. He had been in the background during the

meeting. His purpose was accomplished. He belonged to the vanguards that go ahead blazing the trails for the pioneers. He was a builder by his inherent nature . . . but sometimes he found it necessary to tear out rotten planks and timbers in order to build a new healthy structure.

Windgate, the snoop bull cook, was caught rifling a pack sack. Before the camp committee had a chance to function, he was beaten and thrown out of the bunk-house. He begged for his life and promised never to do it again. But he quit the following day, the same day when Red quit. Overmann brought them both into town in his new Packard. The super was not so cocky now. He was undecided what to do—allow the "damn Wobblies" to organize right under his nose? Or fire the whole crew and comb the country for "Poison oakers" who would be "loyal" to the company until they learnt to be loyal to themselves? So he just pretended to have the situation well in hand and hoped for the best—for him and the company. To Red he offered a written recommendation for his good work against the I.W.W.!

The timekeeper gave the bull cook and the handyman a condescending "s' long," as they were leaving. The foreman was standing on the office steps, stroking his chin. He grinned and sort of winked at Red but said nothing.

Red Samson was dressed again in all his barbaric splendor. He was heading north to a camp in Oregon. There was a hardboiled foreman, a blustering gun man and company sucker—that was Red's meat . . . Now he felt like he should be fumigated and take a germicidal bath after associating with scabs and the scab-herding super. He would "clean their clock" if they gave him half a chance!

None of them saw a woman in a blue kimono who was hiding behind a curtain as the car zipped down the dusty road . . . Red looked at the timber line with a far away look. How tall and straight and clean the sugar pine stood in the sun-swept slopes . . . they too were alive—very much so—but they lacked that spark of consciousness which made for pleasures or pain . . . no philosophers among them to wonder about their purpose in life, or make them feel inferior to their fellows, or strut peacock feathers in a brief moment before they passed on to extinction or a new life.

He looked at Frick Windgate and felt in his roomy side pockets . . . "the dirty fink!" . . . then he brought two colored pieces of paper to his mouth and licked on them—and with his open hand slammed one on the bull pack sack, the other in the side of the car.



# Murmansk

By A. Yourniek

## *The narrative of a seaman cast upon the white-guard fringes of the Russian Revolution*

In the middle of September, 1917, I got an able-bodied seaman's job on the U. S. Shipping Board ship, the S. S. Oshkosh. She was taking on cargo at the Brooklyn side.

I had just come out of jail where I had served a six month sentence for my I. W. W. activities. Just then the Russian revolution was in full swing. I had made up my mind to go there; and I was glad when I saw that some of the cargo stowed away in her hold was marked with consignments to Russian ports. The cargo consisted of the usual war material and railroad equipment. As soon as the crew were signed on, the ship pulled out in the stream where she took on an additional 200 tons. This last batch was dynamite.

The Oshkosh was one of the many confiscated German ships. In normal times she would have been condemned. She was overaged, rusty, neglected, and we found out later her engines were in very poor condition. She was stalling all the way across. The best speed she could make was about seven knots an hour. It was a hell of a ship to be on in wartime, and after she got under way we began to doubt whether she'd ever make it.

A few days after we left New York, we put in at St. Johns, Newfoundland, for bunkers.

Discontent was brewing among the crew ever since we let go the lines, and by the time we put in at St. John everybody was grumpy. The cook skinned out of her because of a quarrel with the steward. I too had the mind to get to hell ashore, but that yearning to see the "workers' fatherland" for myself kept me on the Oshkosh.

It was a bright Sunday morning when we cast off the coal dock and steamed for the sea. The weather was calm with a heavy swell rolling westward.

During the trip across lookout for submarines was kept on both masts. On the foremast the crow's nest wherein the lookout was kept was a home-made affair, just a common oil-drum riveted up there for that purpose. The lookout was kept by the regular crew.

The mainmast lookout was kept by the gun crew, all of whom were regular navy men. A lieutenant was in charge of them and their specific duty was to man the guns in the event of an emergency. The Oshkosh had two guns. One was mounted on her bow and the other on the stern. It was be-

lieved that these two guns were sufficient protection against a submarine attack.

On good weather days we were put through some sort of training. We mustered to our stations and there we were told what to do should a submarine pop up. At times,



we'd pitch a barrel overboard and aim at it with our guns. At such times the men off duty had to pass up ammunition. It was tough, hard work, and we strongly resented it. The shells were stored in the forepeak, some decks below our living quarters.

The days on the Atlantic were passed quietly and without any excitement. We sighted nothing all the way across.

Only off the Oakney Islands we stumbled across the path of a British patrol ship. She had once been a passenger liner. At the patrol's request we hove to. An officer and some of the crew came aboard. After the usual inspection they released us and we proceeded on our way.

A few days later we dropped the hook in Bodo, Norway, close by a German freighter. We were in a neutral port and our stay here was limited—it wasn't to outlast the night. The Oshkosh and the German were enemy ships. Should we meet out on the open sea, we'd try our damndest to sink one another; but we were in a neutral port, and the captain and the officers, and the naval crew had to be nice.

Early next morning two pilots came aboard. We heaved up anchor and were on our way again wriggling through the fjords.

Later we made Kirkeness. It was our last port in Norway, about 30 kilometers from the Russian border. There we took another pilot and sailed for nearby Petchinga.

One can't really call Petchinga a port. It lies in the embrace of a large bay which resolves into a narrow opening. During the war it was used as a naval base for mine trawlers. From there we picked a Russian convoy to Archangel.



At last on a late afternoon we pulled in Archangel. At once various immigration officials piled aboard. The American consul came aboard too to look things over. That night we were told that no shore leave would be given anybody.

In the morning a barge filled with longshoremen drew along side and they took off the dynamite. We shifted across the way to a place called Bacaritzza, where all the war material was discharged and stored. There again we were told that nobody from foreign ships was allowed to go ashore.

Bacaritzza was lorded over by a British naval commander with chin whiskers that made him look something like the Tzar. Though still under the nominal control of the Russians, it was overseen by the British because of an alleged mildness on the part of the Russians in dealing with German spies. These spies had already succeeded in blowing up a Norwegian freighter laden with ammunition; and the explosion caused the bigger part of the war material stored on the docks to blow up too.

That morning I had my first look at the inhabitants of revolutionary Russia. They were longshoremen's work. A lot of other people were bouncing about giving orders; they were dressed up in uniforms somewhat similar to those worn by state employees during Tzarist times, brass buttons, high pressure caps and the rest of such paraphernalia.

Among these longshoremen were many Latvians from whom we learned what was actually taking place. The revolution, they said, had given them the right of free speech and of organization, but no bread, and of course that much promised peace had not been realized. It was bread and peace that they had wanted. They had been fooled, they said, hoodwinked by leaders who mouthed workers' phrases to make their hoodwinking effective. But they still had hopes. They talked of a new party coming to the front, the Bolsheviks, a party composed of workers, they said, with a platform of taking over the factories by the unions, the farms by the farmers, the abolition of private property and the ending of the war.

The October revolution took place while we were still lying at Bacaritzza. Around Archangel during this time things were surprisingly quiet.

When we had finished discharging, we moved over to Solombala, a suburb of Archangel. There we started at once to take on cargo for the United

States, and it was there for the first time since we had arrived in Russia that we were tendered permission to go ashore.

At the announcement that the captain was giving out draws, all of us scrambled midships and put in for as many rubles as we could get. Then we spruced up, got ready and beat it ashore to investigate things for ourselves. I still had a few I. W. W. papers and pamphlets left, stowed away in my locker. I crammed them down in my pockets and left with the rest. We remained ashore having a good time until the Oshkosh got through loading. At that time, although bread and other foods were scarce, if one had the price for it, he could get whatever he liked.

From Solombala we moved down the river to a place where we took on bunkers. We were about to start for home, and we would need plenty. It took two whole days to coal up the ship. The work was done in a very primitive way. The coal was shoveled from a stock pile on the river bank into wheel barrows and trundled thus to the ship.

Most of these coal heavers, a lot of women amongst them, were Latvians. Their quarters were by the river. They were long sheds lined on the inside with a double row of shelves which were used for beds. Men, women, and children all lived together.

Monday morning the breakfast dished out to us was positively lousy. This particular breakfast was the occasion for throwing me high and dry to a different world entirely. As soon as the food was brought into the fore's'le, which was also our messroom, the fireworks started. Across the alleyway were the firemen's quarters. We could overhear them growling and cursing too. We called them over to talk things over.

We decided to form a Ship's Committee and have them interview the steward and captain. The result of the first interview was unsatisfactory. We were plainly told that the food was the best that would be given us. The captain made himself quite clear to the committee members that he was running "his" ship, and wasn't taking orders from any deckhands or firemen.

The committee report served like a match to a gasoline tank. We grew defiant, and agreed to lay





off work until adequate and better food was provided.

We knew how much stores we had taken aboard at the beginning of the voyage. It was enough for the round trip, and here we were with only half of the trip over, and run out of grub already. Either the steward had sold the stuff to the long-shoremen, and the "old man" had had his finger in the pie, or the shipchangers had sent short stores aboard. Now the ship was ready for sea. Cargo and bunkers were gotten aboard, and everything on deck was secured.

It was cold, and every hour it was getting colder. Over night the river got thickly caked with ice, so that in the morning the ship couldn't get away without the help of an ice-breaker.

The day we sent our ultimatum to the captain our time was whiled away pleasantly enough. We stayed indoors and played cards with the gun crew, with whom we were on fairly good terms.

Next day the "old man" informed us we had to get up steam and be ready for departure as soon as the ice-breaker made its appearance. We stood pat on our demands. We wouldn't budge. Particularly determined were the firemen. At sea they had the toughest part of the ship's work.

When the captain realized that we wouldn't give in, he began to run the old bluff about mutiny. He roared we were delaying the ship's sailing and that we were interfering with the successful carrying on of the war. But we considered ourselves in the right. We demanded to see the American consul about the matter.

The ship was lying about ten miles from Archangel and the communications not being of the best, and the weather being very cold, we told the "old man" to go and fetch the consul aboard. He went up to Archangel, returned the next day and called everybody amidships. There he laid the law down to us, and recited what the consul had empowered him to do. He said we were to turn to right away and take the ship to Murmansk. There we were to get some stores from a British cruiser.

We returned to the forecabin and held another meeting. "The 'old man' is bluffing, is kidding us again," said the chairman of the committee. "He is just trying to get the ship out at sea, and once there, he'll head straight for home without

putting in at Murmansk." We decided not to work until our demands for better food were granted.

When the committee made its report to the captain, the old shell-back ran amuck. He threatened the so-called "ring-leaders" with imprisonment, and called us a "bunch of sea-lawyers and I. W. W.'s" which most of us were. "I can lock most of you guys up right now if I want to. I can put you in irons. I've got navy men aboard, and I can do it. This ship is government property. You're striking against the government."

But the "old man's" threat's notwithstanding, we stuck to our guns.

Of a sudden he changed his tune. He became compromising. "Boys," he said, "this country is in war and in a state of revolution. There is no food to be had here, and if you don't take the ship to sea, we'll freeze here or die of starvation. These people ashore ain't going to feed you. They ain't got a damned thing for themselves even."

But food could be bought in Archangel, and Jack, one of the seamen who could speak Russian well, promised to get all the victuals necessary, provided the captain was ready to foot the bill. But at this the captain only growled.

One morning things came to a head. We were called amidships and were told that the ice breaker would come after us, and we were ordered to "turn to". The captain said these were the orders of the consul at Archangel, and he asked the committee to go with him to the telephone. Jack with another seamen walked across the ice with the captain, called up the consul, Mr. Cole. As it was expected, Mr. Cole sided with the captain and advised us to take

the ship to Murmansk.

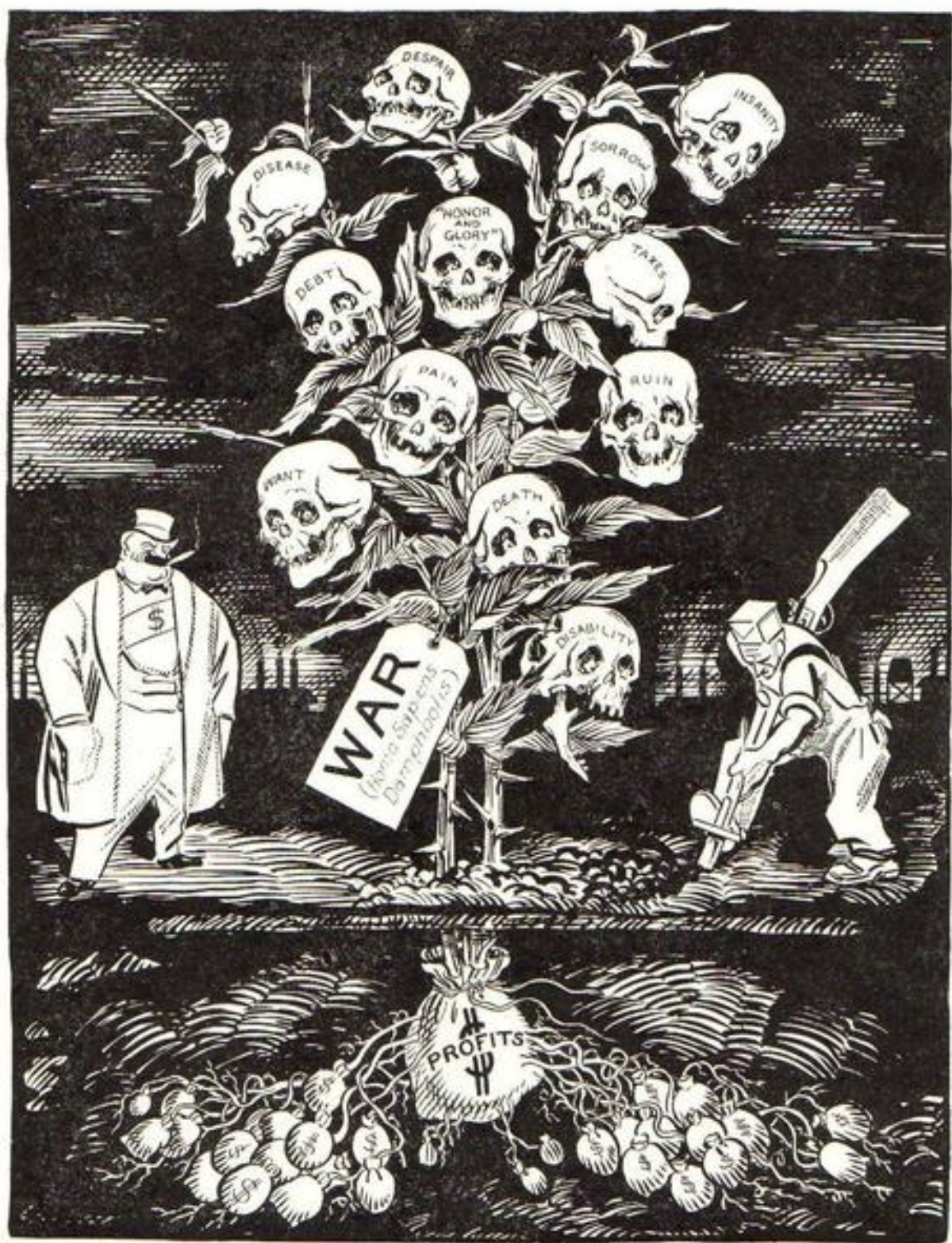
Again we agreed not to carry out the consul's orders, and demanded that the captain go and fetch Mr. Cole to the ship. The harassed captain made his way across the ice and called up Mr. Cole. He returned with a new proposition.

"You," he said, pointing directly at me, "if it was any other place than this I'd have you in irons long ago. You're the ring leader. You're like these people ashore who are stirring up this revolution business. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll pay you off right here, and then you can make all the revolution you want. The rest of the men

(Continued on Page 29)









# A Mad World's Nightmare

## Prologue

A number of Europe's most high powered diplomats gather at a hotel on the Riviera.

"A great war impends Messieurs—Yes, yes, indeed! We are all armed to the hilt!

"Signor, what do you say?"

"Tis the reaction signors—the terrible aftermath! We are billions in debt, all of us and the

workers are murmuring—even in my own country! 'Business will never recover this time.' "

All are silent for a time.

"Signors, Signors! I have a most brilliant idea—it will pacify the penurious, satisfy the jingoes—save our several national honors and incidentally enrich our good friends the honorable munitions maker!"

"We listen most eagerly! Go on, go on—"

## „The Children's Hour“

*Broadcast by that eminent European commentator, Mr. Imi Ghoul.*

"Well folks, you shall be thrilled today I promise you. They are assembling and you should see them—French, German, Polish, Austrian, Russian and Italian—and Oh yes, I can just now make them out approaching—the English also—Children of all the great nations of Europe and **not one over ten years of age**—think of it! All dressed in bright military uniforms, and here's something really spectacular, all armed with genuine rifles, swords, lances, bombs, etc.—small of course, but none the less real as you shall see very soon.

"They are parading now, before marching to the battle-ground, which has been selected by Europe's foremost leaders, and folks! many an eye is wet among the spectators as the brave little fellows march by the saluting posts before massing for the really tremendously inspiring speeches to be delivered in person by Leader Higler of Germany and Mapolini of Italy—and many others.

"The speeches are over folks—the children are

now proceeding to the battle-ground—soon you will hear the opening gun—Ah! there it is—Really folks you are missing the thrill of a lifetime—you should be viewing this most amazing spectacle. The youngsters are quite gay about it at first but soon warm up to their work and you should just see how the little German boys cut and slash with their sharp bright little sabers. Huh,—here is little Petro Mussano, small son of the famous Italian fencer—so dexterous with his little lance—neatly spearing a little French boy in the gizzard—how he squirms and wiggles for all the world like a frog on a sharp stick.

"The battle is raging quite merrily now, and soon the ground is thickly spotted with little forms, their bright uniforms now powder stained and muddy. The English boys are quite adept with their rifles and are picking off their opponents as coolly as their bowman grandsires did at Poitiers and Cressy some hundreds of years ago."

## Epilogue

First Vulture—"Ah! This is a feast indeed—such tender flesh—so sweet and juicy, (licks beak) by the way, what is that you are rolling around in your mouth?"

Second Vulture—"Hah—twas a merry brown eye a short time ago—I picked it out of a little Russian boy—it's flavor is wonderful!"

Third Vulture arrives (old and rusty—observes smirking) "Ah! twas not thus in '14 and '15 my

dears, nor even in Spain,—such a difference in the pickings. Ugh, how stringy and tough those Australians were and scarcely any meat at all on the Scots—and the Moors, Phew! even as disreputable a picker as myself could not go them! Well, well, are you both rested? Let's return to our work then—"

Squawking raucously they flap away.

—X-229641.



# The Brass Check Buys the Air

## A STUDY OF RADIO CENSORSHIP

By  
**Bert Russell**

"Because of this control by the advertisers and employers in general, censorship may and does include anything from the denial of time to a radical group to the deletion of a humorist's reference to roller skates on the protest of an automobile manufacturer that 'roller skates are a form of competition'."

So concludes the author from his experience directing I. W. W. publicity over radio station KMO, Tacoma.

"The censorship bugaboo is a myth from radio's childhood days, kept alive, like all other superstitions, by prejudice and ignorance." So says a former vice-president of two broadcasting stations and a former member of the Federal Radio Commission.

A look at the Federal Radio Act of 1927 would seem to justify this statement. Nothing is forbidden except "obscene, indecent or profane language." In fact in Section 29 the Commission is denied "the power of censorship" and is forbidden "to interfere with the right of free speech by means of radio communication."

But this section of the Act no more guarantees free speech over the radio than the Constitution of the United States guarantees free speech from a soap-box. The essence of the Federal censorship is laid down in Section 11, providing that the Commission may "determine that the public convenience and necessity shall be observed." Public interest is determined by the Commission, and public interest determines whether or not a thing shall be said over the radio.

In Washington there is but one state ruling covering the statements of a speaker on the air, and that is merely the extension of the law of criminal libel to cover radio utterances of "false and scandalous matter with intent to injure or defame." The owner of the station is held equally responsible in some states for defamatory remarks made by persons broadcasting over his station.

It is because of the difference in methods of censorship in this country and in other countries where governments own and control the stations, that the restrictions entailed on what may be said, are not well known by the average person. Where public interest in Germany is determined by the Nazis, and in Russia by the Communist Party, in this country it is the echo of the advertisers' interests. Because of this control by the advertisers and employers in general censorship may and does include anything from the denial of time to a radical group to the deletion of a humorist's reference to roller skates on the protest of an automobile manufacturer that "roller skates are a form of competition."

The most pernicious radio censorship is that performed by the radio station operators. Here, despite all laws to the contrary, free speech is entirely restricted to arbitrary wishes of the management. You may speak or you may not speak, and the management is the final arbiter.

Only one federal stipulation limits the arbitrary decisions of the management. It refers only to political candidates. If a radio station permits one candidate for an office to speak, it must permit all other candidates for that office to have time for the same considerations. But it may legally refuse the air to all candidates. This apparent freedom is, at the most, a negative freedom. The tremendous expense of hiring radio facilities during the heat of a campaign far outstrips the meager budget of minority groups. Another contradiction arises. Political speeches are above censorship by the managers, once the time has been let to one politician running for an office, but still the station's license may be revoked for permitting "obscene, indecent or profane language." Knowing the politicians' ascent to Billingsgate, even in moments of sanity, the station management is on an unenviable spot if they wish to keep their license.

In addition to the management's personal opinion, that of advertisers and what is commonly called public opinion is taken in consideration. The advertisers' good opinion means millions of dollars to the stations of this country. Public opinion may be anything from the opinions of the American Legion or of a mob antagonistic to some radical group, to that of a church whose members may have felt slighted by some speaker's reference. On top of all this the station has ever to be on guard to protect itself against any other group that wants the channel the station is enjoying, and will take any chance to acquire it.

The I. W. W. broadcast in Tacoma encounters a censorship that springs from all these sources. Protests have been received by the management from the super "patriot" groups. There has been a personal visit by the representative of the Packers' Association from Portland with the request for an

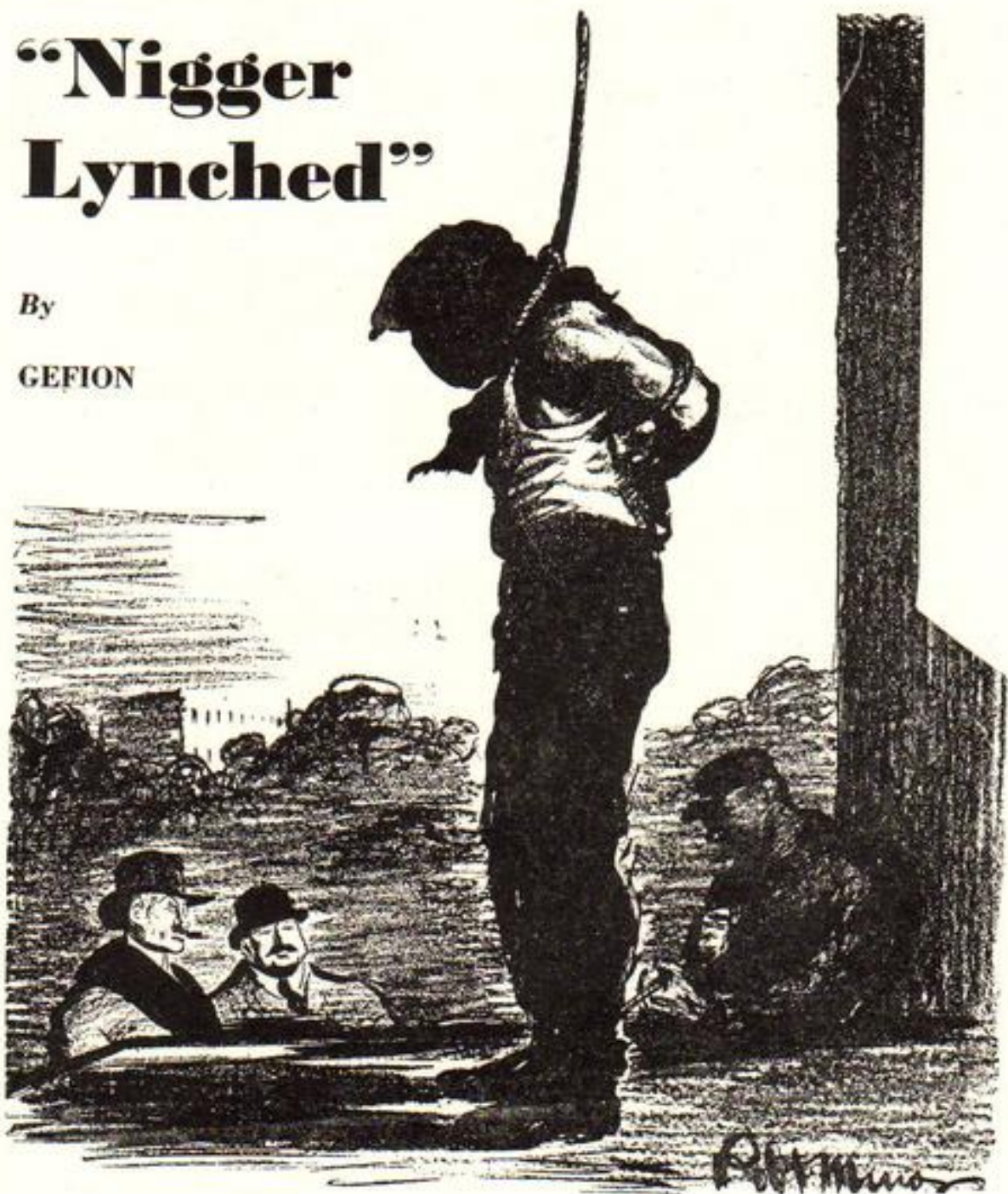
(Continued on Page 32)



# "Nigger Lynched"

By

GEFION



The stone walls of the ancient hoosegow were oozing slime. It trickled its way in gooey and serpentine brooks down the hewn granite, only to come to rest in a border of stinking beads on the flagstone floor.

And around the bullpen, we hiked the fool's parade—black men, Mexes and whites—natives and damn furriners—working stiffes, thieves,

murderers and hiwaymen—the young and the old—the fat, the lean—the scum of Earth. And at night we lay lousy and cursing in our stinking cells. Of a Thursday night there might come to our ears the staccato tempo of hammed beats—and the next morning some guy would be dropped through a hole in a nice new scaffold. And through the bars we would howl impotent ravings



against the guy's being swung. But in the afternoon we would again tread the fool's parade in the filth-spattered bullpen.

Louie and I were nearing the end of a six months' jolt—outside agitators, b'gosh and all that boloney, in a mill strike in Southern City. The bozo that dished out the presents informed us that we didn't have no darn business down thar—so mebbe we didn't. He fixed his judicial lamps on Louie's mobile Neapolitan mug and sternly let him know that furriners who didn't appreciate the particular liberties prevailing on these shores could doggone it well make a one-way excursion back to Ur'p. Louie must have heard the saga before because he kept right on gaping at Mr. Washington crossing the Delaware above Hizzone's bald dome. Anyway, six months and take 'em away!

Louie was Dago and a fine plug. He could sing Workers of the World Awaken better'n any Wob I ever heard—red card paid up to the last minute—tender and with the savvy of a jane—and he could swing a left hook with the best of 'em. Louie was nobody's mutt and no mebbe about it.

And now we were on the home stretch. Three more days and the crool world would have us to contend with once more. Stone walls do not a prison make. Well, mebbe they don't. Anyway, there was no love lost between us and the granite that separated us from the possibility of an application of ham an'. Three more days.

\* \* \*

It was on the morning of the third day when they heaved the Negro in. He was bruised and battered and the screws yelled at him goddamit to get into that thar cell befoh they kicked his guts out. Outside the mob was howling like hyenas sensing a dying wildebeast on the velt.

The parade in the bullpen had just started. It came to a dead halt. What in t'hell was up? The screws wouldn't let's near the black boy's cell. But from the runners on the galleries we found out that he had croaked a bird by the name of Colonel Barclay—fine citizen, owned a big dump in town and had a barrel of dough. Details didn't flow very freely. But some of the local wise guys grinned and said that mebbe the Kunel wasn't such a darling pillah of society after all—mebbe not—liked his punks purty well—heh, heh, heh—too bad on the niggah, though. And outside the can, the mob howled like hyenas smelling a dying animal in the bush.

\* \* \*

Louie and I were given the gate—time's up—c'mon, get t'hell outta heah—and get t'hell outta town, too. Oh, yeah? Louie's mug twisted and he said dio earni and bastards in his whiskers. As we passed the Negro, he threw his makin's and matches, as fast as a cat swats a mouse, in to the battered human pacing behind the bars. Louie

was Dago and a fine plug—tender and with the savvy of a jane.

They kicked us outta the back gate into the alley among the garbage cans. What in t'hell did we give a damn. Louie's mug twisted and he said dio earni and bastards loud and plenty. And in the front of the stir, we saw the howling mob milling in a maelstrom of lunacy.

\* \* \*

We were lousy. We were gutted hungry and we had three bucks and sixteen cents between us. Louie was for a slug of spaghetti in some grease joint right away. I said hell no—there's no dump with grub enough to fill our guts. Let's get some chuck and make for the great open spaces. The ayes had it. We gathered enough nourishments to feed Armenia. And we got plenty of soap for the municipal varmins, and Louie got himself some fresh makin's.

And on the corners, the kids were hollering with extras telling all about how the Colonel got bumped off. We got one. No mistake, the gent must've been some big shot, all right—plenty of mazuma—old family, never married, somewhat eccentric, never permitted females at his parties, the paper had it.

And in a cell in the hoosegow there paced a battered human—four steps this way and four steps back. And the extras said that he had been the croaked Colonel's houseboy—young, married a few months—had never been in trouble before—queer what had come over him—no motive for the crime—his slanderous ravings about the Colonel's having "made advances" were of course preposterous. Such outrages had to be stopped—justice must be swift and commensurate with the dastardly crime. To the bereaved family of Colonel Barclay, the TIMES extends its most heartfelt sympathy.

And in his cell a battered black boy paced four steps this way and four steps back.

\* \* \*

Lord almighty, it was swell to be naked in the moonlight. Louie and I had just had a swim in the river. Our duds were on the bushes steaming before a fire. The river—the lovely, the cool, caressing river—meandered its way toward the sea, carrying with it six months hoosegow filth and a legion of dead varmins.

And on the fire the chuck and java smelt sweeter'n roses. No mistake, we were live guys once more.

\* \* \*

Louie had just lit a smoke when it happened. Like the muffled rumble of a sewer emptying itself over a cliff, the distant howling of the mob came to our ears. Louie began to curse in Dago. We got into our still wet rags and kicked the fire into the river. It sizzled and died and sent a tail of acrid vapor up into the moonlight.



There must've been a thousand of them. They came pushing and milling up over the sand dunes. In the dim moonlight, they looked like miasma taking on the forms of fantastic monstrosities. They came near and their howls would have delighted Nero.

In their midst, they dragged the Negro. A rope was around his shoulders—four of them lugged a broken rail. It was rammed into the hill. Louie cursed a blue streak and was going to make for the bastards on the hill side. I grabbed him and told him we'd only get ourselves bumped off.

And up into the beautiful, moonlit night, the flames of a shrieking human torch flared skyward.

\* \* \*

Living human flesh stinks horribly when it burns. It is sickening to hear the thud-thuds of lead being fired into quivering tortured flesh. And it is sickening and degrading to lie helpless and impotent while a defenseless human gives up his soul in a hell of agony.

Louie's swarthy mug had turned to alabaster. He puked into the river and cursed in a voice I'd never heard before. He cursed me and himself and the goddamned world in general.

On the sand hill a human being had died. One by one the monsters sneaked each to his own hole. The night became silent again.

\* \* \*

On the banks of the Potomac, a town spreads its streets. In its dusty archives lies a parchment written in beautiful script. It tells the world in general that all men are created equal. Mebbe.

The stars became pale blurs and the morning began to paint the dunes with a golden brush. An eon had passed since a man had been tortured in the moonlight.

We sat silent by the river, each with his own thoughts. Then we sensed the presence of another being. Louie reached over and touched my arm. I looked up. He motioned me to be still.

Up over the dunes came a young Negress. She was a mere kid. She was in a thin house dress and her belly was heavy with child. She walked heavily through the sand. Her tracks were lost among those of the monsters of the night. She looked up. Driven into the hill stood a broken rail. On it hung a few shreds of burnt flesh. A slender column of smoke twirled skyward in the clear morning air.

The woman's body stiffened as if she were an animal at bay. She looked about her in dumb bewilderment and her face began to quiver as if she were a child left alone in some strange place.

Step by step she walked toward the rail. For long she stood with her arms hanging limp at her sides—still and tearless. Then abruptly she turned toward the town and a shriek of horror rung through the silent dunes. She lifted her arms above her head as if to ward off a blow and her child-heavy belly drew her thin dress taut above her knees.

\* \* \*

We took her to a paintless shack in a stinking side street. On the corners the kids were yelling with the first morning extras: "Angry citizens avenge Colonel Barclay! Nigger lynched!"





# Woman of Spain

By SOPHIE FAGIN

"When her husband fell beside her  
she grabbed her gun and went forward  
into the fight."—From a letter to the  
author from a friend in Spain.

*I speak of a woman  
Who is more than a woman,  
And yet even more than a man . . .  
I speak of a mother  
A sweetheart and lover  
Who rose when the battle began . . .*

Half in the black of oppression,  
Half in the sunlight of life,  
Blood soaks deep in the soil of Spain  
Blood so that men may live again  
Free from their masters, and free from their chains  
And free from this deathly strife.

Clenching the hilt of a bayonet  
Wearing the garments of war,  
She who longs for peace must fight,  
Who loves the day must have the night,  
Who knew but mercy, must use might  
In the din of the cannon's roar.

Matron and mother whose humble task  
Was that of sweetheart or wife  
Must now arise before the sun  
To dig a trench and load a gun,  
To fight until the fight is done  
And the final bullet's shot.

Beautiful maiden whose gentle caress  
Was that of sweetheart or wife  
Must march beside her loved one dear,  
And when he falls, no time for tears,  
Nor time for tenderness, nor fear . . .  
She must grab the fallen gun,  
Rise until the battle's done,  
Fight until the fight is won  
Forget her sorrows and her pain—  
Is there not a world to gain?  
A world, and victory for Spain?

*So I speak of a woman  
Who is more than a woman,  
And yet even more than a man  
I speak of a mother  
A sweetheart and lover  
Who rose when the battle began*

*To sing a victory song in a dearth,  
To bring a free new world to birth  
And life to man throughout the earth.*



# "Ain't We Free Americans?"

*Mrs. Pederson Wants to Know*

A Story of Snooper on the WPA

By I. STEPHENS

The clock above the Old Girl's office door stood at half past three—thirty minutes before quitting time. I slipped a black hood over the typewriter. The Old Girl's office door was wide open. You couldn't see the gilt sign, Project Director's Office. Instead, you saw the project director herself, the Old Girl, with gray hair and eagle beak, bending over her desk in earnest conversation with the woman from the state WPA office. At least, someone on the project had said she was from the state WPA director's office, but some of the others thought she was head of the Woman's Division or the County Supervisor. Only God alone knew what her official title was.

The Old Girl looked up. Our eyes met. I never did like gimlet eyes, set close together in the head. She was probably growing suspicious over my leaving early on Fridays, over my taking only half an hour for lunch, but there was no other way out of it. The women from the other projects got off at 3:30, and we were allowed to have the hall only from three-thirty to four-thirty.

I turned and walked down the aisle, past Miss Donohue who insisted that prayers alone got her on WPA, past Miss Katsoff. Miss Katsoff had nice eyes, clear and honest. We needed her in our union. Somehow, I didn't feel that Miss Katsoff would object to joining an organization along with the women from the sewing and the hospital projects. She seemed a different sort from Dorothy Whitcomb. Dorothy was on our project, too. At one time she had served as assistant society editor on a local newspaper. When I asked her to join our Union she had raised her beautifully arched brows disdainfully and laughed. "Do you think I'm going to belong to the same organization that a lot of cheap, ignorant women belong to?" Then she laughed again. I never bothered Dorothy Whitcomb after that.

It was a five minute walk to the hall. When I reached the place I found the gang from the sewing project clustered around Bessie Heinrich, our secretary—all talking at once, all babbling excitedly. Fat Mrs. Anderson was pounding the table. Her long, green earrings shook. "Ain't we free American citizens?"

No one answered. The women went on talking.

"Let's call the meeting to order," somebody suggested. "we won't get anything done this way." Mrs. Du Plessis, a gaunt woman with a sour smile that seemed to match the puffs under her eyes,

called the meeting to order. Always she displayed tact and impartiality, but parliamentary procedure was new to her. Sometimes she forgot to call for a vote. Bessie read the minutes, and I told them there was five dollars in the treasury.

Angry murmurs still flowed along the rows of women sitting before us. I had no chance to ask Bessie what had aroused them, but after we had elected our two delegates to the county conference I discovered the reason. Mrs. Anderson gave the report. She stood up in the front row and began by thumping her broad chest indignantly and asking, "Are we free American citizens or ain't we?"

No one answered.

"Honestly, I never seen anything like it!" Then she told us. Our committee of five had appeared before the Superintendent the morning before. There had really only been four on the committee—Mrs. Du Plessis, Mrs. Anderson, Vera Torkelson, and a girl named Gladys. Minnie Saunders got cold feet the last minute and ran into the toilet. The four women told the Superintendent that the machine operators were not going to make up lost time, that they wanted their pay in full. It wasn't their fault if WPA was so inefficient that five days were required to set up the machines. The Superintendent said he couldn't do a thing about it so he called in a Big Shot from the WPA office. Not only that, he called in the grievance committee, too.

Again, angry whispers among the women. The grievance committee! That was a sore spot. No one on the project trusted the grievance committee. A committee of stool pigeons, a company union outfit, they called it. The committee had been nominated and elected under the protecting wings of WPA officials and foreladies. In one room there were more ballots cast than women present. In another room the forelady pointed to Miss Cannon and said, "There's a good woman for the grievance committee." And so it went.

"Of course, that grievance committee doesn't mean a thing," Sadie Murphy interrupted, "a fancy set-up to make us think we've got something. Nobody turns in any grievances to them, but they go right on meeting in the office just the same. And you know what Alice said that day she went in with a letter—the Superintendent was telling them to watch us girls and not let any papers circulate like the one last winter that someone brought in, telling us to organize."



Mrs. Anderson continued with her story. The Big Shot said they had to make up time or take a deduction in pay. Orders from Washington. The grievance committee just sat there, dumb, saying nothing. Then, in the afternoon, Alice, the Superintendent's stenographer, got word to Mrs. Anderson that the grievance committee was arguing in the Superintendent's office. Mrs. Anderson, they said, was a "red." They wanted her and Mrs. Du Plessis thrown off the project. They, the grievance committee, were tired of hearing grumblings about the wage cut. Mrs. Du Plessis and Mrs. Anderson were just agitators—like Miss Peterson who'd been fired in February for protesting against the wage cut and the way the elections were conducted.

"But the worst," Mrs. Anderson added, "happened today." Mrs. Maxwell, from the WPA office, had been interviewing the women, one by one, in the office. She asked questions. How did they like the work? Were they getting along on the \$60.50? Did they have any other means of support? Those were the questions Mrs. Maxwell asked, but she had asked other questions, too. Only that morning she had inquired if Mrs. Anderson were a friend of Miss Peterson's.

"Certainly, I'm a friend of Miss Peterson's," Mrs. Anderson retorted, "she's a nice clean woman. She don't drink nor smoke. Is there any reason why I shouldn't be a friend of hers? And is it any of your business?"

"Are you going to refuse to make up lost time?"

Mrs. Anderson never answered.

"If you do refuse," persisted Mrs. Maxwell, "you'll be fired."

Of Mrs. Du Plessis, Mrs. Maxwell asked, "Do you pay dues to any organization?"

The women sitting before us smiled broadly. "They've heard we're organizing. They're going to try to stop it."

Vera Torkelson reported that one of the girls in the millinery department said there was going to be a strike. The forelady, overhearing her remark, answered, "You can't strike. You can't go to meetings. Somebody will follow you and report you to the office."

"She's a free American citizen," Vera had insisted, "she can do what she wants."

"You'd better watch out," warned the forelady, "you'll be fired for agitating, just like Miss Peterson."

"What in hell is agitating?" shouted Gladys.

Mrs. Anderson seemed to be the only one who knew. "It's standing up for your rights—like a free American citizen."

After the meeting I went out to make some house calls. I had a list of names—turned in by our members—of women on the project who might regard organization favorably. I called on four. None of them were opposed to organization, just timid and frightened, and none of them had heard of Bulletin 36.

At dusk I reached Agnes Sherwood's red brick tenement. She lived in the rear end of a flat on the third floor. An odor of burnt cabbage and fried onions dominated the front hall. On the second floor landing two anemic-looking children were quarreling over a bright red rubber ball.

On the third floor a small grave-faced lad in shiny knee pants led me through a pantry, a kitchen, and into a bedroom where his mother, Agnes Sherwood, lay ill with a cold. Everything in that room was very, very worn—rugs, chairs, bed-clothing, and the woman, too. She spoke in husky whispers. Sure, she'd like to come to the meetings when she got back on the project, but she didn't believe she would be allowed to go. No, she had never heard of Bulletin 36, but she remembered what the Assistant Superintendent had said the morning after Miss Peterson was fired. She had pointed to Miss Peterson's empty chair, "If there's any more agitating around here, there'll be more empty chairs."

When I reached home it was dark. Street lights gleamed pale yellow along the boulevard. Up in the apartment the telephone was ringing.

"Hello."

"This is Miss Katsoff," I caught a thread of suppressed excitement in her voice. "I'm going to tell you something—you'll keep it confidential?"

"Certainly."

"This afternoon, after you left the office, someone—never mind who—was asked to follow you around, to check up on the places you visited and the people you met." I didn't say anything.

"That person refused—but someone—someone else on the project promised to do the work."

"Thank you, Miss Katsoff," I said, "I certainly—"

The telephone clicked. She had hung up.

So someone was stooling on me! What the—Aw, hell, I said to myself, I'm a free American citizen, ain't I?





# Direct Action

Instances of many ways that the I. W. W. has devised to get results.

"Lord, send me a chicken." That was the Negro's prayer, we are told, but he got no chicken. "Lord, send me after a chicken," he prayed. He got the chicken.

Getting what we are after by going after it ourselves is the reliable way to gain our ends. Labor has learned this by experiment and at great cost. In learning it, labor has also found that this direct action for ourselves releases a tremendous source of initiative and energy, and discloses many ways to skin labor's troublesome cats.

The I. W. W. was new-born union when the American Steel Foundry in Granite City, Ill., discharged about one half its molders in an effort to stop the I. W. W. from organizing the plant. The I. W. W. actually had only a handful of members, but the men struck. The company police closed the gates and would let no one out. The men broke down the gate and went home. They decided that if men had to be laid off, it was time to cut the hours instead of cutting the force. Next morning all 2,200 employes were there, both those who had been laid off and those who hadn't. They stayed outside until the company agreed to a 16 per cent increase, and a nine instead of a ten hour day.

A bit later they were told to come to work earlier and work ten hours. They came, but remained outside the gate until the starting time that suited them. They did this again the next day. The third day they heard that strike breakers had been imported. That morning they went in early. Later in the week the strike breakers were sent away. They renewed their old tactic of waiting outside the gate, and they held the shorter hours. This was the work of largely unorganized men, their native initiative and sense of solidarity released by the I. W. W. program of direct action.

"The highest point of efficiency for any labor organization was reached by the I. W. W. and Western Federation of Miners in Goldfield, Nevada," wrote Vincent St. John organizer there for the I. W. W. in 1907. "Under the I. W. W. sway the minimum wage for all kinds of labor was \$4.50 per day, and the eight hour day was universal. No committees were ever sent to any employers. The unions adopted wage scales and regulated hours. The secretary posted the same on a bulletin board outside the union hall, and it was the LAW. The employers were forced to come and see the union's committees."

It is still the firm belief of the I. W. W. that when good laws are made they will be made in the union meeting, in the hall or on the job, and enforced by the economic power of labor.

The effectiveness of such union hall legislation, as shown by a report of the Boston secretary of

the Marine Transport Workers in 1916, should be of interest to marine workers today. He wrote: "A bill of fare for every day in the week is made up in the Union Hall, and signed by the secretary, and stamped with the I. W. W. seal, then posted in every mess hall aboard ship. Stewards are notified to pay strict attention to these bill of fare."

The law made by the union comes in conflict with the law and discipline that employers attempt to enforce through their economic pressure, their private police forces, and the public forces over which they exercise control. In the 1909 strike at McKees Rocks against the pressed Steel Car Co., a U. S. Steel subsidiary, two troops of state constabulary were brought in to intimidate the strikers with their usual wanton bloodshed. On August 12, after eighty had been seriously wounded by these cossaks, Stephen Horvath, a striker, was killed. The strikers sent a note to the cossaks:

"For every striker's life you take, a trooper's life will be taken."

The cossaks killed four strikers all told. The strikers killed three cossaks—and had no more trouble with them. As Secretary Trautman reported the affair: "Then the chief of the cossaks called off his blood-hounds. After that no strikers or deputies were killed. Organized and disciplined 'physical force' checked violence and the wanton destruction of life."

In a strike against the Standard Steel Car Co., in East Hammond, Indiana, the following year, a similar policy, largely the work of the wives of the strikers, converted a strike badly hit by the plug-ugly work of special police, into a clean-cut victory. These special deputies made the sad mistake of bullying and insulting these women. The women formed their own defense league, and informed Mayor: "Retaliation against the Hessians is proclaimed if outrages continue."

This time the women didn't change their minds. They were out to meet the army of thugs the next morning, some with broom sticks, others with rolling pins, and some most menacingly with tea-kettles of boiling water. The thugs and special police did not care for this species of warfare.



The company conceded all demands—and the Mayor very hurriedly released all strikers who were in jail.

Discipline among strikers is of course equally necessary for the winning of strikes. I. W. W. strikers ordinarily elect their own vigilance committee to see that neither alcohol nor provocative oratory and proposals divert the energies of the strike unto futile channels. The Portland longshore strike in the spring of 1923 showed that direct action by the strikers could close up the blind pigs that the police had been unable to close in many years.

When the strike is won, and the job made into a union job, it is equally necessary, in order to prevent company unions from being established, and to retain organization on the job, to see that all remain members in good standing in the union. Since the I. W. W. relies on the actions of its members, and deals with workers rather than employers, it is averse to any check-off system, and finds, as for instance in the shops organized by the I. W. W. in Cleveland, that the "Chinese strike" of going to work but refusing to work with the fellow who refuses to pay his union dues, a very satisfactory discipline in such cases.

Many strikes of any vigorous union are against discrimination. An efficient means that produced results without any cost to the employees, was introduced in a strike of I. W. W. employees against Lamm and Co., Chicago garment makers, in June of 1910. The scab problem was overcome by the sympathetic action of workers in shops providing material. Somehow the material was so cut that the scabs couldn't make satisfactory garments. The company offered to concede all demands if one man, the fellow who had organized the shop, and whom the company called a "trouble maker", would not have to be re-hired. After extensive discussion it was decided to accept the terms, and win inside the shop instead of outside it. They didn't put much spirit in their work. Asked why, they said the shop didn't feel right without their other fellow worker being with them. As the organized reported: In a few hours "as a result of 'passive resistance methods' the firm found it more expedient to call for a shop committee. The bosses agreed to remove the last cause for 'interrupted operation of the plant' by re-instating this one man, and agreeing to deal with workers as a collective body."

The spirit of direct action is a generous spirit. It fosters solidarity. It recognizes no boundary lines in the struggle of labor. This is seen in the spirit that animates American labor's support for Spain. It is seen this year in the vigilance with which I. W. W. Marine Workers struck the United Fruit S. S. San Jose when they learned that the explosives aboard her were intended for transshipment to the Spanish Fascists. It was with a

similar spirit that two I. W. W. armies in 1911 crossed into Mexico to support the revolutionary efforts of Ricardo Flores Magon. One of their temporary achievements was the capture of Tia Juana. As Laura Payne Emerson described the I. W. W. army of occupation, which by the way, contained the as yet songless Joe Hill:

"The first thing they did was to open the jail and never use it any more . . . Many of the rebels are Americans. Many of them I have seen on other fields of battle, the economic field, and as I shook hands with them, while cartridge belts and guns made up a conspicuous part of their apparel, I knew it was the same old battle in a different form."

This action has been criticised largely on the grounds that it was not successful. But the battle of labor has ever been a forward thrust, and a rebound, gaining bit by bit—and the growing achievements of labor in Mexico today, are in no small measure the result of the spirit of direct action that the I. W. W. so carefully, and at the cost of our own blood, nurtured among our fellow workers to the south.

This feeling that an injury to one is the concern of all, and that all ought to do something about it, has resulted in many instances of spontaneous aid that converted difficult strike situation into victory. The building of the Canadian Northern from Hope to Kamloops in British Columbia in the spring of 1912 resulted in the recruiting of scabs in places as far removed as Frisco and Minneapolis. Fellow workers tried to check this by publicity at all such points, and when this failed, by shipping out themselves, with suit-cases and gunny sacks full of old newspapers and bricks, either persuading the scabs en route, or breaking up the shipment at the end of the trail. One shipment of scabs made it, so one fellow worker stuck with them, and got the job of cook. The scabs didn't stay any longer than the cook. In the extensive strikes on construction projects conducted by the I. W. W. in the spring of 1923 the scab problem was handled similarly.

The spirit of direct action of course is one that can be evoked only when full power and responsibility is put in the hands of the rank and file. The negotiations in the settlement of the hard won victory at Lawrence against the American Woolen Co., will illustrate the technical advantages of such settlement without the use of legalistic intermediaries. The strike by the way had introduced the endless chain picket line as a new tactic in American labor, and despite the militia brought down from Boston officered by Harvard's mis-educated brats who thought it a lark to stab women in their bellies, it ended in a victory that electrified American labor. As one of the committee reported the famous negotiations:

"On March 12th a conference was held between



representatives of the workers of the American Woolen Co., who were drawn from the ranks and could talk shop much better than any professional labor leader or company attorney could, and the attorneys of the company." A new set of terms much better for all employees than the company's offer of a flat increase of 5 per cent, especially for those in the lower wage brackets, was drawn up, and ratified by a mass meeting of all strikers on Lawrence Commons two days later.

It is little wonder that Harry Emerson Fosdick commented in the Outlook of June 1912: "Wages have been raised, work has been resumed, and the whirring looms suggest industrial peace; but behind all this the most revolutionary organization in the history of American industry is building up an army of volunteers. The I. W. W. leaves behind as hopelessly passe the methods of the American Federation of Labor."

Another instance of how to avoid the run-around in negotiations is given in the settlement of the 1916 strike against the Detroit plant of the Solvay Process Co. It was arranged for Mr. Greene, the manager, to come to a meeting of some 700 of the strikers and deal directly with them himself, instead of with any committee. He told the organizer, Weber, to get the men to go back to work, and he would do what he could for them, but he couldn't give any increase without the consent of the Board of Directors who were all in New York. Some of the strikers favored this course; but the I. W. W. organizer insisted that Mr. Greene reach the directors by long distance and have it settled. Greene got busy and reported that the directors who had been considering a one per cent raise had agreed to the five per cent raise demanded by the strikers. They went back to work when Mr. Greene was convinced that five plus one made a six per cent raise all around.

The depression that preceded the world war led the I. W. W. though modeled primarily for the job, to apply its direct action program to other fields. In 1912 when Kelley's Army of unemployed left San Francisco for Sacramento, the I. W. W. members were in the vanguard. They camped on the sand lots, and were routed by the irresistible pressure of great firehoses. But they resolved not to let the "best people", who were responsible for the injuries to their fellow workers, have so much peace while they went hungry. Dressing one of their number up tolerably well, and pooling their resources, they secured an option on a vacant lot in the Oakridge development where the aristocrats lived. There the army moved in during the night. The "best people" woke up next morning to see the "filthy hoboos" with their boiling-up cans going full blast, and their laundry suspended from the trees. Sheriff Ahrens, who had directed the terrorism on the sand-lots, rushed out to chase them away, to be confronted with

the little piece of paper that gave the hoboos their property rights. It is a matter of record that the sheriff suffered such a heart attack that he had to go at once to the hospital.

Or again, in Sioux City, in 1914, there was extensive organization of the unemployed. Among the species of direct action devised by them was a visit to a banquet sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce to consider the problems of the unemployed, by a good-sized group of the unemployed themselves. They solved their immediate problem directly by eating the banquet. Such conduct led to trouble with the police, and one of the numerous I. W. W. free speech fights grew out of it. Large number were arrested, but more I. W. W.'s kept coming in. Those in jail were set to work on a rock pile. As Wallace Short described it in the Survey:

"When the prisoners were led out to work they went as peaceably as a flock of sheep—and sat down passively on the rock pile . . . The fire hose was turned on them, but the rock pile remained untouched." When the police gave in to their demands for free speech and the unemployed struggle that went with free speech, they showed their contempt for the rock-pile by collecting the materials for a stew large enough to feed the couple of hundred men involved, built a fire on top of the pile of rock, and as an expression of their utter contempt for the police, cooked their stew and ate it, without police interference.

The war situation produced some direct action on a large scale. With Bernard Baruch offering 25 cents a pound for copper, copper miners agreed with the I. W. W., that all the profits should not go to the flag-waving profiteers. Direct action brought recruits in large numbers. As Woelke, very bitterly complained in the Sunset Magazine:

"When the I. W. W. element on the spur of the moment organized a new union in June and called the miners out on strike, the Gompers organization cheered and marched boldly into the camp of the forces commanded by Haywood. Similar desertions took place in Bisbee, Globe, Miami, and Clifton, Arizona. In Butte, the blacksmiths, the machinists, and other crafts twiddled their thumbs at Gompers, and, disregarding their signed agreements, went out on sympathetic strike."

By direct action the copper trust was tied up tight alike in Butte, Utah and Arizona. Flag-waving aided in such offenses against the strikers as the historic deportation from Bisbee. The I. W. W. countered the flag-waving hysteria directed against them with the proposal that the government take over the mines, let the I. W. W. run them on the basis of \$8.00 for six hours, and showed it would cost the government only 22 cents a pound for copper instead of the price they were already paying. The government forced a settle-



ment without committing such atrocities against the Anaconda.

The direct action policy of a rank and file union when it became necessary to deal with the government instead of with a private employer, again showed its usefulness on the docks of Philadelphia. The Shipping Board, recognized the Marine Transport Workers of the I. W. W. as the only power to reckon with, and insisted on an agreement that the members of M. T. W. Local No. 8 "individually and collectively agree to abide by any decision or agreement made by the person we elect by general vote of all the members of M. T. W. organization to represent the M. T. W. organization as a member of the local Adjustment Commission of the U. S. Shipping Board, regarding the adjustment of wage disputes etc., at Philadelphia." The local organization wired to the General Executive Board of the I. W. W. to find out if such an agreement would be approved. The G. E. B. wired back:

"Your proposed election of a member of Adjustment Commission to act without consultation with membership of the M. T. W. making his position binding upon the membership, is autocracy and a violation of I. W. W. principles. The only condition under which No. 8 can send a representative to sit on this commission is as follows: That the M. T. W. No. 8 elect a representative to be under instructions and supervision of the membership at all times. He must be subject to recall at all times. His actions upon the commission shall be ratified by the membership before going into effect."

But it was in the lumber industry that direct action probably achieved its most permanent results. The war-time activities of the I. W. W. converted this industry from one where labor was a body of unwashed "timber beasts" to one where labor was respected and self-respecting living in vastly improved conditions that have substantially endured to the present time. In the spring of 1917 a wave of job strikes on the spring drive, called at the most effective moment, resulted in growth and demands granted. One result was that "camp after camp has reported that the Union has moved from the hall to the bunk-house." In the summer the strike became general on the coast and east of the Rockies. Arrests and beatings did not stop the growth of the organization, but slowly a skeleton force of scabs was secured largely by the misrepresentation of scabbing as patriotism by the newspapers, and it was decided "to transfer the strike to the job". The idea of transferring to win by job action methods was explained to the strikers. All branches and picket camps were instructed to call meetings for Sept. 7 to decide on the policy. The result was that strikers went back determined to work eight hours and then quit, whether the boss liked it or not. One job action striker described how it worked:

"In the first camp I was in we loafed on the job three days. The bull of the woods quit because he could not get out the logs. The fourth day we all got fired, and the camp shut down for a new crew. At other camps the whistle would blow when the eight hours was up, and we would all go to camp. There were instances where the job delegate would get fired, and the whole crew would walk out. . . . The 'hoosier' act was played to a finish, and the 'loaf on the job' and other tactics not only hit the lumberman's pocket books, but they got the eight hour day."

With strong I. W. W. sentiment among the loggers, it was easy to arrange for new crew to carry on the policy or a more annoying one, that the discharged crew has adopted. It was this policy that made for continuous improvement in camp accommodations, wages, food and all other job matters of concern to the lumber worker.

The manner in which a spark of direct action can ignite smoldering discontent, convert it from futile grumbling into effective action, and evoke solidarity where it was never thought to exist, was well shown in the very trough of the depression by a series of strikes on construction projects out of Cle Elum, Wash., starting May 7, 1932.

Wages were low, conditions were bad, and several members passing through getting the "creeps" from the sense of helplessness of the unorganized workers, thought it a job to pass up. It was felt that with so many unemployed around that section, and so many farmers' sons looking for a chance to earn some hard cash even at 30 cents an hour, a strike would be doomed to failure. But a few members set in. They were fired when they showed their hand. But a meeting was called under the surprised boss' nose, demands drawn up and presented, and the strike was on. The citizens of the district were approached to support the strike for higher wages to keep more cash circulating in that stricken country. Their support assured the strikers of plenty to eat. The job-hunters in the jungles pledged that if they went to the job it would be to back up the picket line and not to scab. Three who attempted to scab were captured, put in a cage in a truck, with a sign "Don't feed the scabs peanuts", and driven through the near-by towns, and then released. The strike was won promptly, and followed by other successful efforts.

The Colorado coal strike of 1927 was another instance of the invigorating influence of direct action. The miners were almost entirely unorganized. In the south they were intimidated by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. Most people would have said a strike was impossible despite the many grievances of the miners. Yet there was a strike. It started not over their grievances, but over the I. W. W. agitation for a general strike

(Continued on Page 29)



# THE GANDY DANCERS

By One Of Them

There was a sudden lull in the Seattle Free Employment Office as the door opened to admit a clean-looking, albeit raggedy young fellow coming in out of the rain. He looked around hesitatingly, then shuffled to the low partition where several men were standing. He found from them that all of the miscellaneous assortment at the counter were shipping out to N. P. extra gang No. 5 down at Chehalis, and that there was always room for one more.

Some mental computations absorbed John Gray's thoughts. Eight hours a day at 35 cents an hour was \$2.80, and six days a week was \$16.80. He reviewed the fact that he had had only a "coffee an" that day, and that he could feel the sloppy sidewalks with his feet, for cardboard over the holes in his shoes had not stopped his socks from giving way to the carresses of the pavement.

His thoughts of what he could do with \$16.80 were interrupted by a clerk's "Whadya want?"

"I want to see about going out on that N. P. job."

"Read the contract and sign here."

John didn't give a damn about the white slip of paper, but he read it anyway. It revealed the additional fact that a dollar a day was deducted for board and lodging. That would leave him \$9.80 a week clear. It wasn't as cheerful a figure as \$16.80. But, hell, nobody would make any profits feeding him.

Down at the freight depot he waited out of the rain with the rest of the stiffies for an hour and a half before they were loaded on the southbound local. He settled down for a nap. The run was ninety miles and they ought to get in about one o'clock.

A hand on his shoulder was shaking hell out of him. It was the agent who had gone along to make sure that none of the suckers took French leave or got a free ride on the cushions for nothing. "Wake up! You get out here," he was told.

With the rest he walked half a mile down the track to where the gandy-dancer's rolling bunk-houses were side-tracked. It was miserable, damp, and cold. They looked for a warm car to get in, but it was no use. So they waited around until six when the cook lit his fire.

The cook rang the chuck call on an iron triangle,

and he and the rest filed in to be ogled by the flunkies lest they merely be 'boes from the neighboring jungles. They sat down to eggs that didn't smell quite right, bacon without a streak of lean meat in it, refrigerated hot cakes, and coffee that had been boiled at least three times. It later developed that not even the oldest gandy-dancer on the crew had ever seen any coffee grounds thrown out.

After struggling heroically to swallow what he had put on his plate, John picked up his grip of tattered belongings and his work clothes, and went to look for an empty bunk. He found that the bunks were alive with vermin. His stomach felt queasy. He thought of walking down the track. He thought of his shoes. He thought of \$9.80. He decided to stay.

He picked a bunk and started to clean it out. "Well," said a voice from the bunk overhead, "so you're another bird who can't take it."

"No-o-o," said John, "but I need the money so damn bad that I'll try to stay a week if I can get this bunk cleaned up."

The foreman stuck his head in the door to holler: "Hurry, it's late."

"It's going to take all day for me to clean up this bunk fit enough for an animal to sleep in it."

It didn't please the foreman. But husky young fellows were hard to get hold of, so he went on his way.

There wasn't much that he could do to clean the bunk up, so after a noon meal which was worse even than breakfast, he reported for work, and landed on the jack crew. It was their work to jack up the low spots as the foreman sighted along the rail, while the tamping crew came behind to pound the gravel under the ties to hold them there.

The men on the jack crew were encouraged to high-ball by the promise of fifteen minutes rest and time for a couple of smokes while the tamping crew caught up with them. On the tamping crew, which was all the way from a quarter to a half mile behind, was a straw boss telling the men to take the lead out so as to catch up with the jack crew.

At the end of the day the jack crew were sent back to help the tamping crew catch up where they had left off. As no over-time was paid for less



than a half hour, this was gravy for the N. P. So the jack crew not only worked a full day after deducting their fifteen minute rest, but worked it at high-ball speed for 35 cents an hour. Also they were the cause of the tampers, who do the most back-breaking work, putting in a full eight hour day at full speed, and 20 minutes extra time at still higher speed for which they were not paid.

It took three days for Gray to see through it, and then only through the analysis given him free of charge by a fellow workers on the spacers.

That night he lay in his bunk and thought of quitting. He would have five dollars anyway, and that would get him a pair of shoes. He said so to the fellow alongside of him at breakfast next morning.

"You know that you have to pay 20 cents a day extra if you quit before you have a full week in."

"No. My contract said a dollar a day deducted for board."

"Look," and the fellow pointed to a sign on the chuckhouse wall:

*Those men hired who have not a full week in before leaving our employ, will be charged for meals at the rate of 40 cents apiece.*

Gray swore feelingly at the flunkies for bringing some more cold sweat-pads for hot cakes, and reluctantly figured on staying out the week.

At noon he saw one of the jack crew who had quit the day before.

"What's the matter?" asked Gray, "I thought you had quit."

"Couldn't afford to. After they deducted this, that and the other thing, I had only 72 cents coming."

Gray asked for the details.

"The first day, it seems, took \$1.00 for blanket rent for the month, there was \$1.20 plus sales tax for meals, 85 cents for hospital assessment, 4 1/2% on the day's earnings for general taxes, 1% for unemployment insurance and 3 1/2% was deducted for railway pensions. And the railway pension won't do us any good, as we're not permanently employed . . . Now the next day was Sunday. I was deducted the \$1.20 plus sales tax for meals, and didn't earn anything. That meant that Monday morning the way me and the company stood, was that I owed the company \$1.84.

"Monday I earned \$2.80 but board and taxes and pensions left the company owing me only 53 cents on Monday night. Tuesday noon I figured on quitting and thought I had about \$3.50 or \$4.00 coming. But I didn't know all about these other deductions. Started out Tuesday with 53 cents coming to me, I earned \$1.40, that makes \$1.93,

and they took away 80 cents for two meals and another penny for taxes, and that left me only 72 cents coming to me. It took me all yesterday afternoon to figure it out that way, so I stayed."

"And how do you stand now?"

"Figure it out for yourself. I had 72 cents coming after dinner yesterday. I ate supper and breakfast. That left me owing the company 8 cents before I started in to work this morning. Yeh, I wanted to work a few days and get enough so I could get over to the Idaho spuds."

By Saturday, when Gray was thinking of quitting, the extra gang had reached Tacoma. They were in the cars as the work train pulled into the yards, in the early evening fixing themselves up as best they could to go up town and see the sights. A lot of people were laughing outside. He opened the door and saw a fellow talking to a group of gandy-dancers. He was making a regular speech about lousy bunks, hitting the ball, sweat pads for hot-cakes, and no money in the jeans.

"Let's go up town and hold a meeting, and do something about it. We'll ask the I. W. W. if they won't let us use their hall."

Gray was going up town anyway, and the fellows he got along with the best, and who found the most colorful words to describe the chuck, were going right along with the fellow who had been doing the talking, so he trailed along too.

Up on Market Street they went into a little hall that must have been a store once upon a time. More kept coming in, and the more that came in the more they felt they were going to do something about it. There was strike talk in the air. Someone called the meeting to order, and talked about how organized action might remedy conditions. Gandy-dancers got oratorical and said their say. Some people who had been in the hall when they came in, and who looked as though they belonged in town, told them that it would be hard for one extra gang on the whole N. P. railroad to do very much about conditions, but that whatever the gandy-dancers decided to do, they would help them out.

Gray decided not to quit but to stay and see what would happen. They ended their meeting with the decision to get the rest of the crew and have another meeting the next day. So more of them gathered in the hall on Market street, and took a strike vote, and elected a committee, and drew up demands for the committee to give to the foreman. The Ten Days That Shook The World had little on the nine days of strike that shook the N. P. management, when a few rather poorly organized but enthusiastic fellows "went to town" on the picket line.

It was something new for John Gray. He found a lot of good people were ready to back them up



in such a fight. In fact they ate much better on strike than they did when they were working. He learned about unions. He learned that with a strong enough union they could win. He learned also that the Brotherhoods that had most of the other railroad workers organized wouldn't help them at all—though their individual members were glad to. There were many speeches in their strike meetings, but he remembered best what one old engineer who didn't sound as though he had ever made a speech before, told them.

"We have it a bit better than you fellows. So does almost everybody else have it a bit better than you fellows. But we're all in the same boat. It takes us all to keep the railroads running. And what we should have is One Big Union for railroad workers—the kind of thing Gene Debs tried to build, the kind of thing railroad men have been

looking for all the time, and you can have it right in the I. W. W."

Gray got a picture of something big. If one extra gang found it hard to win, how would it be if all extra gangs quit? How would it be if these fellows who were always quitting anyway, started to quit systematically, and had a system of keeping in touch with each other all over the railroad systems, and had bulletins to put around on each gang about what was going on the other gangs—that would be a step toward One Big Union of Railroad Workers.

He had come into Tacoma swearing that never again would he ship on an extra gang. And here he was with a little red card in his pocket, trying to figure out how many extra gangs he could ship on in three months if he put in a week on each one.



## Direct Action

(Continued from Page 26)

to demand justice for Sacco and Vanzetti. The southern field came out solid. The miners were surprised to find that their fellow workers whom they had so long viewed with distrust were almost all men like themselves, anxious for a chance to stand together. Direct action had brought them a revelation—and it was but a few months after that for the first time in the history of Colorado coal mining, all fields in the state were out in a unified strike that brought them increases of a dollar a day.

Such is direct action. It is not merely the reliable and effective way to win. It is a tonic to workers who feel hopeless. It is vigor for those that feel helpless. It is a revelation to labor of its own mighty powers. It evokes solidarity and fosters initiative and ingenuity. It leads to the invention of new tactics. It releases hidden and undreamt of abilities. It is labor's own key to the life abundant.

February, 1937

## Murmansk

(Continued from Page 13)

will take the ship to Murmansk, and there we'll get provisions from the limey cruiser."

Upon this practically all of the crew announced their intention to be paid off if I was forced off the ship. It was a splendid show of solidarity. But it would have been criminal to leave these men behind in that part of the world, as none of them spoke the language, and there was a shortage of food, and the weather was icy. So I advised the men to remain on the ship, Jack and I and two other men would get paid off, and the rest return to the United States. Then I marched up to the "old man's" quarters, told him what we had decided to do, but with the stipulation that when he got to the U. S. A. he would not press charges against the crew. Six years later I found out that he had lived up to the agreement.

(Continued next month).

Twenty-nine



# The Mask of Fascism

By  
TOR CEDERVALL

An analysis of its prospective slogans, and some pertinent questions on the aims of John L. Lewis.

In discussing the prospects for fascism in the United States, many take inordinate stock in the fact of the uneven development of fascism, that it forms not all over the capitalist world at once but materializes country by country. In other



Without this, fascism—

words, it is contended that since we here in America have had many years in which to study the phenomenon of fascism in Italy, have had several years in which to observe the vaporizing promises of Hitler for a fairer and more prosperous Germany, have viewed the ruthless strangulation of all culture and progress in the fascist nations, and have had ample time to sicken of the "purifying" butcheries and brutalities of fascism (in putrid florescence in present-day Spain), we here in America, because of these observations, will be very unlikely to fall prey to the dread plague.

However, the United States is far from being out of danger.

Fascism when it makes its bid here certainly

will not come to the fore in its own name. Its slogans will perhaps play upon our fears of fascism, will undoubtedly toy with the wishes of the populace for some sort of socialized industry. Perhaps by the very slogan of "peace" it will combat workingclass radical organizations by accusing them of leading us into an international conflict such as we see threatening in the Spanish situation! We must bear in mind that Hitler rode into power as a national "socialist."

Fascism breeds and feeds upon a confused concept of the class character of capitalist society. Despite the extreme revulsion of the liberals toward being placed in the same bed with fascists, all attempts to deny or obfuscate the class struggle in the modern capitalist world lead but to the pitfalls of fascism.

Capitalist democracy, which fascism everywhere seeks to displace, remains acceptable to the capitalist class only so long as the class concept of society is in the main rejected by the workingclass. Assisted by the feeble freedoms of capitalist democracy, the pressure of industrial facts have created in all democratic nations independent workingclass organizations threatening, actually or potentially, the exploiting rule of the capitalist class. Ultimately, the capitalist class has no alternative to complete capitulation other than to embrace fascism.

The capitalist class is a comparatively small social group, a decided minority of the total population of any country. A small minority can scarcely hope to rule a large majority by abruptly taking up arms and seeking to crush the rest of society into submission. This is the course the Spanish fascists have been forced to adopt, and, even with the aid of Hitler and Mussolini, they have not attained their objectives.

An exploiting minority group can hope to impose successfully its "iron heel" upon the populace only by first "preparing" the people. It must rally large numbers to its banner. Obviously, an exploiting group can do this only by hiding the class character of the society it dominates. The paramount task of any fascist organization is to convince the workers that class-consciousness is an



error, that there is no class struggle but a common struggle of worker and capitalist alike against the evils that beset the country.

These evils may take the form of other nations, making for the extreme nationalism of fascism, or, the sins of the capitalist class may be heaped upon a racial minority, such as the Jews. In the United States low wages and unemployment may be blamed on "the foreigner", or the Negro. The fascists even may enliven their campaign by proposing to put all married women in the home and off the job. It is by such "preparation" that the fascists can safely expect to take power.

It is only after power has been taken, with all strategic positions occupied and bolstered by its propaganda machine in possession of every educational and articulate outlet, that fascism can afford ruthlessly to turn upon every attempt of the workingclass to protest or to better its position in society. All this while, of course, fascism has built up the proper sadistic efficiency in its followers by having them, officially or unofficially, "work out" on the groups earlier isolated as the roots of evil, Jews, "foreigners", Negroes, labor militants, or whatever they may be.

This tremendous ballyhoo for the rejection of the class concept of society, this stupendous camouflage of the authentic source of the ills of society cannot be engineered with capitalist democracy as its political adjunct. For, it is all a mammoth, tragic hoax. Only a fascist dictatorship palsying the nerve centers of all societal life can hope to maintain the fraud for long.

It is in industry that the division of wealth occurs. It is in industry that the mass of the workers toil for a mere existence while the major fruit of their labor maintains their masters in opulence and power. It is in industry that the "freedom" of capitalist democracy becomes less than a sham and autocracy smites the worker full in the face. It is industrial exploitation and industrial autocracy that breed the concept of class consciousness and its material twin, the labor union. And it is toward industry and the labor union that fascism turns its most earnest attention. The first step of fascism in power is the regimentation of labor into the "labor front".

In European countries turned fascist, the fascists experienced the most serious opposition to their schemes from the labor unions (in present-day Spain it is proving wellnigh insuperable). When the successful fascists of Europe strode upon the scene they found the majority of the workers already organized into labor unions. They found that their propaganda could scarcely make an appreciable dent in the ideology of these organizations as such. Instead, the fascists were forced to rely upon the much less effective method of

attempting to convert the individual members of the labor unions.

Here in America we have a workingclass as yet largely untouched by the labor union. It is very logical to suppose that as a clear-cut fascist strategy develops, the promoters and backers of a fascist coup as one of their "preparatory" steps will jump at the chance beforehand to launch their plans for a "labor front" and thus save themselves some of the traditional opposition from the labor union quarter. Without such a move, the workers will continue their present trend toward more and more organization on their own initiative, and thus ultimately stiffen opposition to a fascist adventure.



—can not achieve this.

We are told the world is a stage. Though it is true that history is largely written by material forces and there is small room for ad libbing, the lines are yet spoken by groups and individuals. Many a mountebank has knocked upon the stage-door if history and begged for a part. And no matter how rigid the lines to be spoken, some may capture a spot-light role—not by "stealing the show" from some subordinate position in the caste, but by capturing the leading role through careful study of the part. Is John L. Lewis, for instance, an historical thespian? Does he sense this need that fascism has for an industrial base?

It was only when Hitler struck a bargain with the Junkers and industrialists of Germany that he rushed forward to his fascist victory. Is John



L. Lewis under the guise of collective bargaining for the workers preparing to bargain them collectively and trade them off for a fascist berth for himself? In a nation-wide radio address on the night of December 31, last, was it Lewis the mountebank minstrel who spoke these concluding words?

"The stage is set. Industry can go forward with profit to its investors, and with security to our

citizenship; or it can elect to destroy itself by blindly following its unreasoning prejudices, and refusing to conform to the modern concept of proper industrial relationships.

"The leaders of industry will decide, and upon them rests the responsibility of deciding wisely."

But isn't it time that we ourselves organized, to make this decision, instead of letting the leaders of industry make it for us?



## The Brass Check Buys the Air

(Continued from Page 16)

apology because of a broadcast that proved the old adage "the truth hurts." The management is presumed to look upon it from a purely business standpoint. If we have money to buy the time, we can have it, providing these groups do not succeed in inciting more imitation public opinion against us. Even then it is purely business. Money is tied up in something that will yield no revenue if the license is revoked. In deference to these protests, each broadcast is preceded and followed by the announcement of the rather self-evident fact that "the time has been leased by the Industrial Workers of the World."

One thing very plain in the management's censorship is the impression that the business men and the American Legion do not like to recall the Centralia massacre. Any mention of the Centralia cases must be stricken out. In our broadcast for the Class War Prisoner's Christmas Fund, a good one-fifth of the manuscript was stricken out.

Names of the various beneficiaries of the fund were not allowed, although a general discussion of the nature of the courts and of their working class victims was admitted. As the local censorship follows no particular rule, we are not in a position to anticipate its niceties.

One conclusion that we come to, and a most agreeable one, is that the level of discussion of the two other labor organizations on the same station is free from the personal vituperation and vindictiveness that has in the past characterized far too much the speeches and writings of these parties to an almost complete exclusion of the statements of their fundamental beliefs.

All things taken into consideration, the management of the station, though perhaps possessing liberal and broadminded views in his own right, recognizes that the intelligent people of the northwest are interested in the program of the I. W. W. —X226183.



# NOTES ON BOOKS ABOUT LABOR

## "Educar Es Redimir"

"Mexico, A revolution by Education", by George I. Sanchez, The Viking Press, \$2.75.

There are constant press releases on socialistic education in Mexico. For a long time I could not resolve the contradiction between this and the fact of Mexico's capitalist state.

Most of the bulletins and books on Mexican milieu have been written by reporters who have seldom ventured off paved roads and away from hotel accommodations. This volume under review is by the president of the New Mexico Educational Association, a native of this state and a Catholic. Financed by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, he did not disdain to travel muleback to Mexico's back country.

Although the federal government applies the term Socialistic to its elementary schools, this should be taken in a broader sense. The program is in essence one to create a national consciousness. Mexico's population is 64 per cent rural and in total 70 per cent illiterate. Separated by a score of Indian dialects; torn by bitter religious strife fostered by disgruntled priests and fanatical Cristeros; exploited by native Sacendados and foreign concessionaires, all are in deepest poverty.

Before the people could be made cognizant of proposed government reforms, they first had to develop national pride. Their immediate level had to be raised by self-improvement. To understand the value of hygiene, better housing, handicrafts and improved agricultural methods, these mestizos were given the rudiments of learning. Educar Es Redimir, To Educate is To Redeem.

The foundation of the educational and school movement were the Cultural Missions. These traveling groups of teachers and technicians established schools, trained teachers and other adults. The obstacles to overcome were prejudice engendered by religious hatred, murderous assaults by Cristeros and most pressing of all, lack of finances. All these have been conquered and elementary rural and urban schools are reaching and teaching more and more mestizos.

This revolutionary educational program does not include the National University, the technical and professional colleges. The aim is to raise the cultural level of the lowest masses, without whose co-operation and support social and economic advance is impossible.

The chapter on Education, The Church and The State clears out many popular errors. There is a foreword by Rafael Ramirez co-founder of the Cultural Missions, 30 splendid photographic reproductions, a glossary of Mexican and Indian words and an index.—James DeWitt.

## Literary Illusions

### About the I. W. W.

Gilbert Seldes has written criticisms that have endeared him to sophisticated drama lovers. But this does not qualify him to discuss the labor movement. That, unfortunately for the literati, is a subject one has to know something about before discussing it. His new book "Mainland", a study of American life and the future of economic society in America, contains statements that would surprise one as coming from a celebrated critic, were it not the habit of these people to get all twisted and tangled when they write about unions.

"The International Workers of the World," writes this vendor of second-hand myths about labor who doesn't even bother to get his names right, "were far western, violent, loosely organized, democratic, and a new thing in the history of labor, bouyant and humorous."

The I.W.W. has been and is humorous enough to enjoy the strange legends that circulate about its name, and bouyant enough to persist in trying to correct them. One fact is that the I.W.W. was born back east, has organized all over the country, and its strength today is about evenly divided between east and west.

"They took in the hobo harvester, the waterfront workers, the loggers in the lumber camps—outdoor men, not miners or factory workers." So writes Seldes insistent upon keeping up the tradition of the literati who never bother with facts. Tying up the copper trust during the war, defeating the steel trust on the Iron Range, making the Colorado coal operators come across with a dollar more a day in the first strike that united all miners in all Colorado coal fields—just by way of instances—would certainly indicate that the I.W.W. "took in miners." And probably it suits the literary concept of a nicely pigeon-holed and phrase-worthy labor movement, to picture the Gen-



eral Electric employees, the workers of Paterson and Lawrence, the auto workers of Detroit, the rubber workers of Akron, the metal workers of McKees Rocks, or the very considerable membership that the I.W.W. has today in such places as Cleveland and Detroit, shod as lumberjacks, garbed in a harvester's blue cotton shirt, and carrying a longshoremen's hook.

"Dramatic and picturesque," says Mr. Seldes, "the I.W.W. was always chaotic." Never have there been strikes of the magnitude that the I.W.W. has conducted, conducted with the orderliness and efficiency and co-ordinated purpose that the I. W. W. has achieved alike in strikes and in everyday

organization. Observers on the spot have repeatedly said so.

"The I.W.W. withdrew from politics." Someday we hope some one of the villagers will in form the rest of the villagers that the I.W.W. never was in politics.

"The I.W.W. created whatever is American in the tone of the American Communist movement. Whenever American Communism is sardonic and untheoretical and lights on its feet and is un-European, it is the descendant of the Wobblies." So says Mr. Seldes; and we say: Dear Mr. Seldes, don't you know it isn't polite to accuse anyone of fathering such offspring?—Tabby.



John G. Neihardt

## *The Cry of the People*

Tremble before your chattels,  
Lords of the scheme of things!  
Fighters of all earth's battles,  
Ours is the might of kings!  
Guided by seers and sages,  
The world's heart-beat for a drum,  
Snapping the chains of ages,  
Out of the night we come!

Lend us no ear that pities!  
Offer no almoner's hand!  
Alms for the builders of cities!  
When will you understand?  
Down with your pride of birth  
And your golden gods of trade!  
A man is worth to his mother, Earth,  
All that a man has made!

We are the workers and makers!  
We are no longer dumb!  
Tremble, O Shirkers and Takers!  
Sweeping the earth—we come!  
Ranked in the world-wide dawn,  
Marching into the day!  
*The night is gone, and the sword is drawn  
And the scabbard is thrown away!*



## *Circulating a Big Idea - -*

The biggest and best and healthiest and sanest idea there could be at this time is that of a One Big Union of industrial unions built to put across a program of militant direct action.

To circulate this idea, we suggest leaflets like "Why You Should Join the I. W. W." or "Revolutionary Industrial Unionism", which we can let you have at two dollars a thousand to put around where they will do the most good.

And stickers of various descriptions—well, now that you have read about Red Samson going to work in this issue, you know what stickers will do.

Circulate a few I. W. W. pamphlets among your friends—and where you had mere friends you will soon have colleagues in the struggle for a new social order. For a dime you can have "Unemployment and the Machine", "Twenty-Five Years of Industrial Unionism", "The Lumber Industry and Its Workers", or "Coal Mines and Coal Miners". For a nickle you can have "One Big Union of All the Workers" with a chart showing the structure of the I. W. W. For half a dollar you can have that amazing book "The Blood Stained Trail—A History of Militant Labor in the United States."

Keep the idea in circulation!

### **I. W. W. PREAMBLE**

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

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

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

*These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.*

*Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work", we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."*

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



*The Capitalist's*



*Is in his pocketbook  
And he uses the*



*Over you so he can wear*



*By organizing right we  
can give him a*



*With which to earn an  
honest living.*

*WBT*

The right way to organize is the way we work — all on the job together —  
all in an industry together — and everyone together in One Big Union.  
That's the I.W.W. way!

