

# INDUSTRIAL WORKER

★ EDUCATION



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INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

## NEWS

OF THE WORLD

★ EMANCIPATION

VOLUME 84, NUMBER 4, WN 1487

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, APRIL 1987

25 CENTS

Simpson-Rodino

## WHAT'S BEHIND THE SMOKESCREEN?

The Immigration Reform and Control bill has passed after 10 years of rhetoric and confusion, and in the last few months we've seen a flurry of interest in the "immigration problem". The new legislation supposedly is designed to secure the border and to grant humanitarian amnesty to many undocumented workers. It's a complex law, but even if it were simple, it would still be a law. And that's the problem.

Concerned people in the border community of Juarez are squeezing our thinking about immigration into a narrow, legalistic framework. Did Senor Fulano arrive in the US before January 1, 1982 and is he thus *legal*? Or is he a latecomer and henceforth or forevermore a *lawbreaker*? Did he suffer discrimination when his job application was rejected simply because the boss *illegally* acts like he thinks all brown-skinned people are *illegals*?

Questions like these are surely of utmost importance as we gear up to help those directly affected by Simpson-Rodino. But community work should never obscure our opposition to what led up to this bill, nor our understanding that it is a smokescreen covering some of this country's gravest problems.

The US economy is faltering, and many Americans have been thrown out of work in the last 15 years. An easy response to this crisis has been to blame "illegal aliens" for "taking away our jobs". In reality, though, more than half of the eight million new jobs created between 1979 and 1984 in the US paid less than \$7,000 a year, while the number that paid more actually fell. This situation has come about because investors have deemed it more profitable to put their money into the low-paid, non-union service sector of the economy, or to export it to the Third World, where profits are even higher.

What does this mean for the citizen laid off from a "disappeared" decent-paying job? He's being asked to buckle down at minimum-wage McDonald's and other work many Americans rightly consider slave labor.

And what does it mean for a Third World worker, such as a Mexican? If he's from the rural interior, the plot of land his family raised corn on a generation ago has probably been bought out and merged with other plots into a plantation owned and engineered by foreign investors to grow luxury crops destined for export to the US. Thus several million former peasants are roaming around Mexico adding to its 50% unemployment rate. Their children make up the 60 to 80% of the population that is suffering malnutrition. So if a Mexican is able-bodied, he is likely to put up a spirited battle against starvation by migrating north to a city like Juarez.

Once there, he may try working in one of the "twin plants". There are almost 700 of them in Mexico today, with a quarter of a million workers. Juarez has some 190 "maquilas" employing more than 80,000. These are the plants where US assembly jobs paying \$6 an hour and up have migrated south of the border, changing overnight into *three-dollar-a-day* slave labor. The very existence of these plants is predicated on a permanent high rate of female unemployment in the Mexican border cities. If it sank too low, wages would rise, and plants would flee to countries like Haiti where wages are even lower than in Mexico.

Meanwhile, the citizens of El Paso have watched the city's garment industry disappear during the last seven years as local factories have joined in the international exodus toward Third World cheap labor (in this case,

just blocks away). El Paso currently has double-digit unemployment.

But nothing north of the border compares with the misery faced by working people just south of it. Three dollars a day doesn't even buy enough *food* for the average family, let alone clothes, rent, medicine, and other necessities that even at their cheapest run no less than half their cost in the US. So is it any wonder that most Mexican workers will risk hell and (literally) high water to immigrate to the US? Legalisms have little meaning compared to hunger pangs. And ironically, US business welcomes the undocumented for the new American jobs few citizens want.

The law won't change that. It won't change the investment patterns of the US economy, or the economic inequality of Mexico. Nor will the law alter the fact that Mexico's Government has long been both cultivated and pressured to welcome foreign investments that benefit few there and impoverish many. Simpson-Rodino won't keep immigrants from coming to this country to work (and to pay their share of taxes).

The INS has almost never been budgeted well enough to do its official job of closing down the border. But that is no accident, because the real function of the INS has not always been to close the border. Rather, its agents have regulated the flow of cheap labor into the US during economic boom times and expelled it during economic downturns and periods of social and political tension when scapegoats are frequently needed to deflect people's frustration.

In the process, xenophobia and racism have flourished. Even before there was an INS, the US Government passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, booting out immigrants who had built the West through their backbreaking work on the railroads. And the Border Patrol was created in 1924, the same time the national quotas were instituted to severely limit immigration by people who weren't from Northern Europe.

Mexicans, though, could cross the border with a wink from the Border Patrol, because they were needed to work in the fields. But during the Great Depression between 300,000 and a million were booted out of the US, on the excuse that they were taking citizens' jobs. Then, when the Second World War created a labor shortage, they were welcomed back with the *bracero* program. As

late as the early 1950s, "wetbacks" were "dried out" by Border Patrol agents who acted as labor contractors.

Now we have Simpson-Rodino and such related anti-immigrant projects as the racist move to declare English the "official" language of the country and to eliminate bilingual education and election information in immigrant languages. We also have the "War on Drugs", with its promise to inundate the border with more military personnel and weapons ranging from M14 rifles to personnel carriers. We hear talk of invasions of terrorists and of "foot people" from Central American countries ravaged by the miseries of war and economic disaster, much of it aided and abetted by US political and economic interests. Who is this hysteria really directed at? Simpson-Rodino itself has a provision for the Department of Defense to begin a census of available prisons for deportable immigrants.

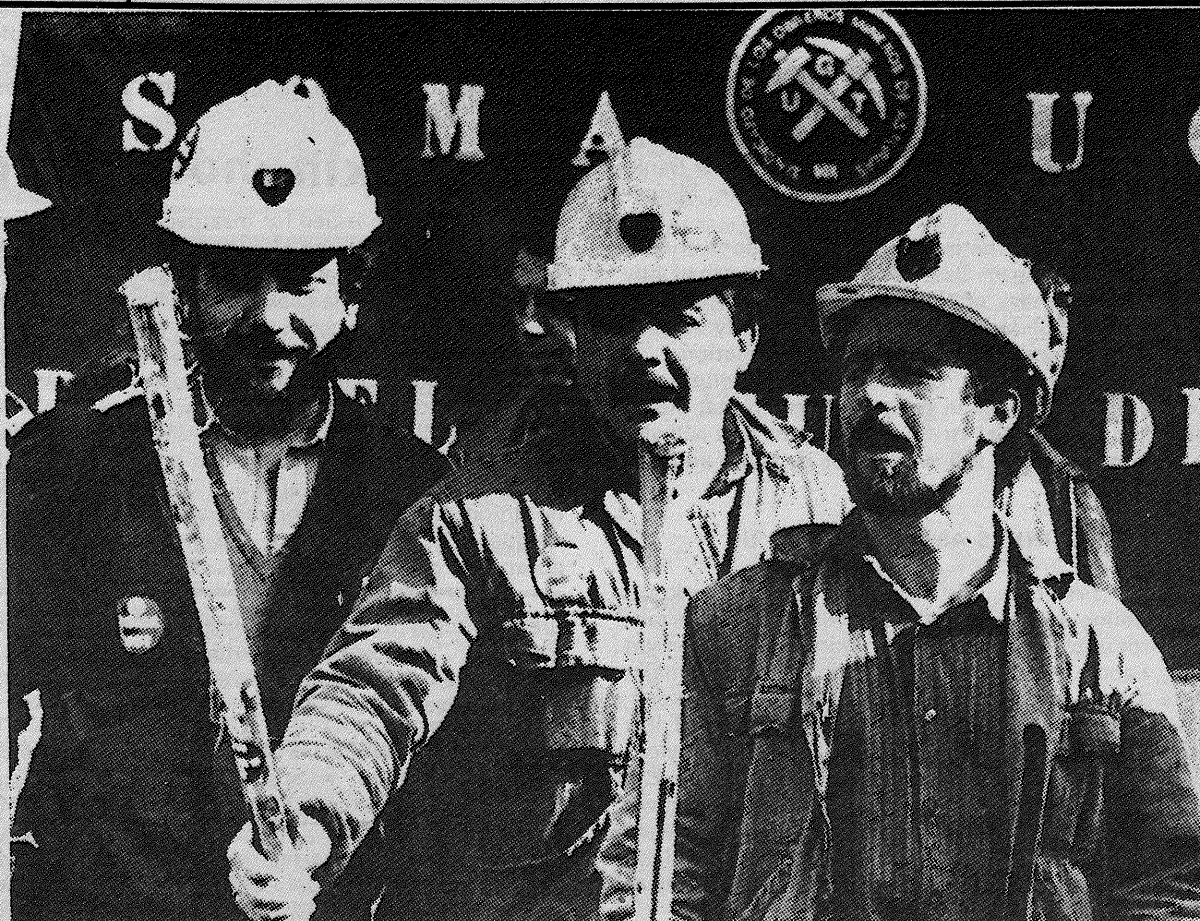
The members of the League for Immigration and Border Rights Education believe we need to dig beneath the surface to the racist, anti-labor hysteria implied in Simpson-Rodino. We think the people affected by the problems of this society will make no firm headway in solving them until both citizens and immigrants say No! to being divided by the mythical lines of legal status reinforced by the new law.

## Mexican Labor Fights

Two members of the "19th of September" Garment Workers Union—an independent, militant union formed by women garment workers in Mexico City following the 1985 earthquake that killed several women and leveled the sweatshops where many of them worked—were arrested and beaten by police after they stopped their employer from removing some sewing machines from the Jovana clothing factory, where they were on strike.

Women workers had been picketing the Jovana plant for five months, since the employer closed the plant without giving notice or paying workers their legally-mandated severance pay. The union is also assisting 19 garment workers from the Rotili SA plant in their efforts to collect severance pay.

(continued on Page 3)



Striking Miners protest job cuts in Madrid March 5.

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# TURN THE HEAT UP ON HORMEL . . . .

It was standing room only as nearly 2,000 workers packed the National Guard Armory in Austin, Minnesota March 14th to "Turn the Heat Up on Hormel". The rally, preceded by a spirited march through downtown Austin, was organized to boost the international boycott of Hormel products and those of its subsidiaries, Jenny-O and Dubuque, to back up demands that the 1400 workers left out in the cold when Hormel and the United Food and Commercial Workers' Union (UFCW) signed a sweetheart deal last September be returned to their jobs under conditions they could accept. Among the 1400 displaced workers are 850 members of Local P-9 who have refused to give up the struggle against concessions they began in August of '85, and the 550 meatpackers from Ottumwa, Iowa and Fremont, Nebraska Hormel plants who were fired for honoring P-9's roving pickets.

Despite attempts by Hormel and the UFCW to make it seem that all is well in Austin, there are many indications that the boycott is taking a toll. All of the members of P-9's trustee General Executive Board have received termination notices and been removed from the preferential re-hiring list for continuing their boycott activities. Hormel spent over \$70 million on advertising in 1986, and was joined by the UFCW in sending specially-designed literature to vending executives, touting an end to the strike, in a bid to regain lost sales. (Still, many union locals have continued to pressure their employers to keep Hormel products out of the vending machines in their lunchrooms.)

Though Hormel claims that profits were up in 1986, a closer look shows that the increase amounts to only .3%, and that much of this minuscule increase is due to Hormel's acquisition of FDL Foods and a 1.5-million-dollar contract from the Pentagon. In addition, first-quarter profits for 1987 are down by \$4.5 million; the Austin plant is running at only 50% capacity; and the bosses have threatened to close the Ottumwa plant permanently. Clearly, the fight is far from over.

While the main purpose of the March 14th rally was to boost the Hormel boycott, it was obvious from the many speeches and the participation of rank-and-file union activists from many industries that a secondary purpose was to re-inforce the general movement against concessions that has emerged in the last few years at the base of American unions, thanks to the fighting example of the Austin fellow workers. Speaker after speaker—flight attendants, auto workers, miners, and meatpackers—told of the many struggles against concessions derailed and sabotaged by the Internationals and the AFL-CIO. All testified to the need for a profound democratization of the Labor Movement to regain rank-and-file initiative and to break through the barriers erected by the bureaucrats.

It was this spirit of resistance and solidarity that most impressed this writer and added force to the proposition that the struggle itself is a radicalizing experience—that the working class learns to fight by fighting and forges class-consciousness in the heat of battle. Just how deep and long-lasting the radicalization inspired by the Hormel struggle is cannot be known for certain, but what is clear is that the P-9 fighters and supporters have come a long way since August 1985, and for them nothing will ever be the same again.

For more than 18 months our fellow workers at Hormel have been on the front lines of the class war. They have faced the National Guard, been betrayed by their own International Union, been referred to as dogs, dung, and terrorists by company stooges. Still, they fight on. We must do our part and take up the boycott of Hormel products, Jenny-O, and Dubuque. You can:

(1) Obtain boycott literature for local distribution from the Austin United Support Group, 711 4th Avenue Northeast, Austin, Minnesota 55912, (507) 437-4110.

(2) Contribute to the moral and physical support of the P-9 fighters and their families by sending letters of support and financial contributions to the Hormel Rank-and-File FightBack Fund, PO Box 903, Austin, Minnesota 55912.

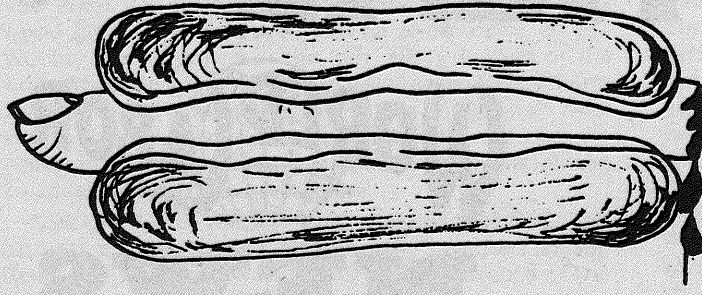
(3) Plan on participating in upcoming actions in Austin: "Cram Your Spam Days" around the Fourth of July (the 50th anniversary of the "birth" of Spam), and the second annual Solidarity City campout in early August. Write to the Support Group for more information.

(4) Most importantly, help to build a revolutionary movement that will put an end to the system that breeds strikes and other social strife; a movement that will give the working class the full product of its labor, and give parasites nothing.

## US STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS UP

For the first time this decade, strikes and lockouts are increasing as unions are more willing to undertake work stoppages and bosses are more willing to fight them. Labor Department figures for 1986 for major strikes (those involving at least a thousand workers), total number of striking workers, and number of lost workdays were all above the levels of the two previous years. Major work stoppages, which declined from 235 in 1979 to 55 in 1985, increased to 69 last year as more than half a million workers either walked out or were locked out of their jobs, as against a third of a million in 1985. Nearly 11.9 workdays were lost to strikes or lockouts last year, a 68% increase over 1985.

Faced with the third or fourth round of concession demands from their employers in many cases, workers



## YOU'RE BUYING MORE THAN A HOT DOG

### Is This Union Better Than No Union?

Leaders of two Central Illinois locals of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) informed their members December 11th that they had decided to meet with the management of Eagle Food Centers to discuss the company's request for new concessions.

Eagle's parent company, Lucky Stores, has asked workers at Eagle's 105 Midwestern stores to take nine million dollars in wage cuts (7%) to discourage another company's efforts to take the company over. (You figure it out—I sure as hell can't.)

After concessions of up to 23% agreed to by the union two years ago, starting pay for Eagle checkout clerks is a mere \$3.43 an hour. That's only 8¢ an hour over minimum wage, and it's a pretty safe bet that workers could make better money at a non-union shop.

The local paper reports that after five and a half years on the job workers make \$8.74, and it's presumably workers at this end of the pay scale who would absorb the bulk of the new pay cuts (it simply isn't possible to cut starting pay). Apparently the last round of concessions was one of these two-tier schemes so popular with the bosses and the business unions these last few years where they take the pay cuts out of the hide of the workers at the bottom of the totem pole (and especially those who have yet to be hired). Now the chickens are coming home to roost.

Workers are reportedly complaining about this latest round of concessions, and the AP notes that "Many at the meeting criticized Lucky Stores executives for reportedly giving themselves nine million dollars of 'golden parachutes'..." In the IWW Preamble it states that "The employing class and the working class have nothing in common." Some would have us believe that this statement is overly broad—that it no longer holds true in this more-enlightened age of labor-management co-operation.

The UFCW has shown itself to be of this sort. We saw it in Austin, Minnesota, where UFCW picards stabbed Hormel workers in the back when they dared to fight back. We saw it several years ago, when one of the UFCW's predecessors provided management with an entire crew of scabs in order to break the IWW's Cedar Alley strike. A few generations ago, one might have suspected that payoffs were involved. The shame of it is that the bosses, for the most part, no longer need to bribe business-union picards. Today, the UFCW leaders (and far too many of their compatriots) are scabbing on the crooks.

If you listen to the AFL-CIO's publicity hacks, they will tell you that UFCW-type organizing points the way to the future. Well, if this is the future I want no part of it.

Jon Bekken

## Packinghouse Workers Call Conference

A call has been issued for meatpacking and processing workers throughout the Midwest to go to Austin, Minnesota May 1st through 3rd for a "Mid-America Conference of Rank-and-File Packinghouse Workers". The purpose of the conference is to bring together union and non-union meatpacking and poultry-processing workers to discuss jobs, wages, health and safety conditions, and the state of the unions in the industry.

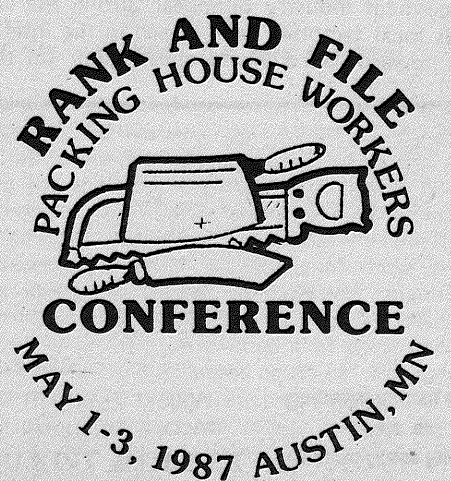
As the call asks: "Why a Rank-and-File Conference? Packinghouse workers are divided among at least three different unions, and a large and growing number are in no union at all. But as the rank and file of the industry we face the same problems and many of the same corporations."

are beginning to see that concessions won't save their jobs. The "concessions or shutdowns" ploy has thus far been so successful for the bosses, however, that they are loath to give it up.

**MINIMUM-WAGE DECLINE:** Congress last acted to raise the minimum wage in 1977, when it stipulated a gradual increase from \$2.30 an hour to \$3.35 in 1981. Between 1977 and 1985, however, the cost of living went up about 75%. Thus a nominal wage of \$3.35 in 1985 was the equivalent of only \$1.88 in 1977, well below the actual minimum wage rate of that year.

The conference is being put together by "... an organizing committee that includes rank-and-file meatpacking workers from Austin, Minnesota, Ottumwa and Algona, Iowa, and Fremont, Nebraska (Hormel); Madison, Wisconsin and Sherman, Texas (Oscar Mayer); Albert Lea, Minnesota (Farmstead); South Saint Paul, Minnesota (Iowa Pork Industries); and others."

For further information write to the Rank-and-File Conference, 103 4th Avenue Northeast, Austin, Minnesota 55912, or call (507) 437-8580.



TIME FOR THE FOUR-HOUR DAY



# NORTH AMERICAN LABOR NEWS

## PURSuing PRESSER'S POLTERGEIST PAYROLL-PADDING PAYMENTS

A public citizens' litigation group recently filed a four-million-dollar lawsuit against Teamsters President Jackie Presser and Vice-President Harold Friedman on behalf of three members of Cleveland Teamsters Local 507 who are also members of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. The suit asks for recovery of money the piecards paid "ghost" employees over a seven-year period—plus interest, treble damages, and about \$2 million to recover Presser and Friedman's combined salaries while they were making illicit payments. The suit was filed only after requests to the local's executive board and to the International to try to recover the embezzled funds got no results.

A grand-jury investigation was launched against the piecards, but it was closed when FBI agents claimed that Presser was a mob informant who had been authorized to make the payments. One of the FBI agents has since been indicted on charges of lying about Presser's role, and the grand-jury investigation has subsequently been re-opened. Presser and Friedman are currently under indictment.

## MISCELLANEOUS SHORTS

The Georgia state legislature passed a bill last month that would prevent Mickey Mouse from receiving legal votes in Georgia elections. Mickey is a popular choice of voters who would rather write in a name than vote for a candidate on the ballot. The cartoon favorite must have received plenty of votes for the legislature to take such action; but as the saying goes: "If voting changed anything, they'd make it illegal."

Health Tex Incorporated announced that by March 31st they will close their plants in Brunswick, Gardiner, and Portland, Maine and Petersburg, Virginia, laying off more than a thousand (mostly women) workers. Many of these workers have already been permanently laid off, often with less than a week's notice. Health Tex has cited foreign competition as one reason for the closings, but has already subcontracted work to other areas of the US and to Asia, despite the ACTWU's contract requirement that nothing be subcontracted till existing plants have been supplied with work. Other plants have offered to share their work with the plants scheduled for closing till the immediate crisis has passed, but Health Tex has not responded and plans to go ahead with the closings.

Workers at the Simplex Wire and Cable Company of Portsmouth, New Hampshire have been locked out since last August. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers think that Simplex, which supplies wires to the likes of AT&T, is trying to destroy the union by eliminating the seniority system and union shop, initiating a two-tier wage system, and requiring negotiations through a company-appointed arbitrator.

**TENSIONS STILL HIGH** at Boise Cascade: Dalton Thomas, a worker at the Boise Cascade Paper Group Mill in Rumford, Maine, was handed a three-day suspension in February for disconnecting a television surveillance camera he discovered hidden behind some ceiling tiles in the men's locker room at the Mill.

Boise spokesman Gary Guimond said the camera was installed after "vandalism" aimed at scabs had increased in the area. Tensions have been running high at the Mill following the settlement of an 11-week strike by 1200 paper workers last September in which 342 workers lost their jobs to scabs. Although 132 of the displaced workers have either retired or been called back to work, 210 remain on the street, and many are losing their homes and cars or being forced to abandon their community in search of a job. Several unfair-labor-practice charges leveled by the company at Local 900 of the United Paper Workers International Union in a bid to regain these lost jobs have been dismissed by the NLRB.

Although mill manager Douglas Daniels says that everything is going fine at the Mill, vandalism, the television surveillance, and the suspension of Dalton Thomas indicate otherwise.

**WATSONVILLE STRIKE ENDS:** After 18 months on strike, workers at the Watsonville Canning and Frozen Food Company ratified a three-year concessionary contract March 12th by a margin of 543 to 21.

The agreement, which imposes a wage cut from \$7.05 to \$5.85 per hour (the company had originally demanded a cut to \$4.25), came in the wake of a decision by Wells Fargo Bank to foreclose on the financially strained company. Watsonville Canning owner Mort Console owed Wells Fargo more than \$23 million in loans granted him during the strike to keep him going, but a consortium of 14 growers agreed to take over the company's assets and inventory in exchange for the millions of dollars Console owed them. Wells Fargo agreed to this arrangement, and it was this new entity, Norcal Frozen Foods Incorporated, that settled with the strikers, who had been out since September of '85.

Norcal spokesman David Gill said that about two-thirds of the 1,000 strikers could be re-hired by the new company, on a seniority basis.

## Food Store Owners Demand Givebacks

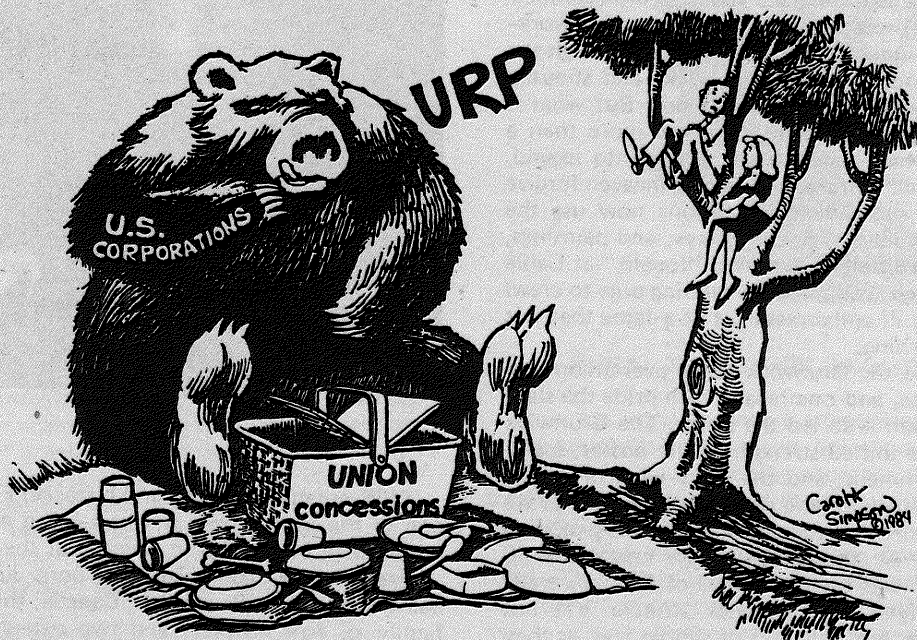
After workers at eight Eagle Food Centers rejected management demands for mid-contract concessions that would have left many of them making only minimum wage, the company suddenly announced that it was going to close all stores where the pay cuts had been rejected. (Earlier, the company had merely said it would sell the chain if workers didn't accept the pay cuts.)

Faced with this threat, and with a lack of support from union officials (the UFCW had recommended the concessions), many workers went to the union asking for a re-vote on the concessions. When the UFCW refused, several workers filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board against the union, represented by an attorney who just happens to be the father of one of Eagle's managers.

In early March management called a meeting of Eagle

workers at each of the stores that had rejected the concessions, circulating a petition agreeing to the wage cut. At most of the stores a majority of workers signed the management petition, though several later told reporters that they objected to the company's move and felt they had been forced to sign. At at least one store a majority of workers refused to sign the petitions despite management threats.

Eagle has announced that it will close all stores where workers have not accepted the pay cuts by March 28th. UFCW representatives have contended that this is illegal, but have not indicated what (if any) action they plan to take to contest it. Eagle workers accepted deep concessions of up to 23% two years ago in order to keep the 105-store chain open. But concessions can't save jobs—they just whet the bosses' appetite for more.



"Who said feed 'em a few scraps and they'll leave you alone?"

## FERRY CREWS FIGHT BOSSES' GREED

Captains and deckhands of the Casco Bay Lines ferries, which supply the islands of Casco Bay, Maine with passenger, freight, and auto service, are involved in a bitter dispute over wages and working conditions. For the last four years, the ferry crews have accepted only a cost-of-living raise to help "get the Transit District's feet on the ground" after it took over CBL. During that time, workers' wages stood still while the District made profits of \$60,000 and \$22,000 in 1985 and 1986. Now the crewmen are asking for a 70% wage hike, but CBL is offering only 4%, claiming that anything more will result in a fare increase for passengers. Yet there have been fare and freight increases over the last year without any increase in the wages of crews, leading workers to think this is an attempt to blame crews for already-planned fare increases.

These are experienced captains and deckhands. Yet while captains for other ferries average \$15 an hour, CBL captains get only \$8.91. Deckhands average \$8.50, but make only \$6.41 at CBL. Inexperienced crewmen can't handle the job safely, and one captain has already left in disgust, yet CBL seems unwilling to compromise. The crew had been bargaining in good faith, but discovered on the last day of negotiations that all budget decisions had already been made and were not open to discussion. This is what brought negotiations to an impasse.

Union members had come to bargain for only seven new changes in their contract, from the 7% raise to input on the new uniforms they will be required to wear and new positions available with the purchase of a new boat. The negotiators from the board and management came to the bargaining table with six pages of concessions they expected the union to make, ranging from a reduction of sick days from 12 to 6 a year, to additional duties, to a 66% reduction in pensions.

Management seem to have forgotten that to run a safe operation they need to keep experienced crews. Maybe they feel that the profit they would derive from a non-union crew would be worth jeopardizing the safety of their passengers. And a non-union crew is exactly what they'll have if they push workers much harder. Unless the crews can come up with a way to pressure the bosses, they're going to end up having to accept concessions and leaving one by one as they become more frustrated. And the next crew will have it even worse.

David Beringer, X329157  
Peaks Island, Maine

continued

## Mexican Labor

The "19th of September" union is one of the few unions in Mexico under worker (as opposed to government) control. But despite ruthless repression of labor militancy, the Government has not been able to completely suppress the rank and file. The National Co-ordinating Committee of Education Workers (CNTE), for example, has been organizing marches and demonstrations in support of its demand that the Teachers Union (SNTE) allow SNTE Locals 7, 22, and 40 to hold their state union conventions. Local 7 in Chiapas and Local 40 in Oaxaca have been fighting for the right to hold a state teachers-union convention for more than two years. Teachers have been fired, beaten, and even assassinated for participating in this campaign.

The attitude of the government-run unions is perhaps best exemplified, however, by Alberto Juarez Blancas, the head of the "Revolutionary" Confederation of Workers and Peasants (CROC): "There are workers who eat caviar," he contends, "and I haven't seen anyone dying of hunger." Mexican inflation is at an all-time high, leaving workers' real wages devastated. Officially, unemployment is at 8%, though in reality it is much higher. But perhaps Juarez Blancas eats caviar.

Meanwhile, workers at Distribuidora Comercial of Cerveceria Moctezuma are continuing their strike, which began October 24th. Cerveceria Moctezuma is one of Mexico's biggest brewers, and the company announced in November that it was closing the distributor and firing all 900 strikers. It has continued distributing Moctezuma beer in private trucks and in trucks belonging to a competitor owned by the same conglomerate.

When strikers have discovered these scabs they have confiscated the beer (leading to some arrests), and they now have several thousand cases in storage. Nearly 500 workers remain on strike, and are asking that the Moctezuma beer labels (Lager, Moctezuma, Nochebuena, XX, and XXX) be boycotted.

The above information was culled from the February 1987 edition of *Mexican Labor News* (2310 Vista Gordo, Los Angeles 90026).

## FIRESTONE LAYS OFF 3,000

Firestone Tire and Rubber is shutting plants in Des Moines, Iowa; Oklahoma City; and Bloomington, Illinois, costing some 3,000 workers their jobs. But that's not the full extent of the damage. Firestone has warned union officials at the company's Decatur, Illinois plant that some hundred jobs will be lost there as a result of the closings.

None of this, of course, includes the hundreds of jobs that are sure to be lost in the communities where plants slated for shutdown are located. The bosses decide to re-organize production, and thousands of our fellow workers and their families pay the price. It's time we organize to put an end to this crazy system.

**THERE'S NO FUTURE  
IN NUCLEAR POWER**



## Sound of a Distant Drum

From the gray skies the gray rain drains onto the gray grass of these small sad little islands, and it is time for old men to huddle around the gas fires of the Old Age Pensioners Clubs and retell their tales of old street battles that have now become living legends through their constant retelling. As with the French Resistance of the Second World War, in which anyone who leaned out of a bedroom window to blow a raspberry at the vanishing rear of a German mobile kitchen queued for his medal of valor earned in the glorious defense of the Republic, so everyone able to lift a brick or a pint mug of beer can now recount his part in the battle of London's Cable Street.

And battle it was, for the people formed human barricades to stop the black-shirted fascist army and their solid ring of police protectors mocking the London working class by marching in military formation through the city's east end. And we threw our bricks and shouted "They shall not pass!" and they did not. But what is by the standard of our violent times no more than a major street riot has passed from reality into legend, and thence into folk culture, and finally (heaven forgive us) into art. For succeeding generations now use the "Battle" for their novels, poems, plays, and paintings, and if you are identified as one who "fought" at Cable Street you may well feel an overwhelming urge to crawl under the barstool in embarrassment at a fame that was so slight in the earning.

Yet 10 years ago the Grunwick strike over union recognition took place, and one recalls with pride the slim, slight Indian woman who led the strike. The Grunwick strikers lost to the united strength of the bosses, scabs, police, and Government, and the right-wing organizations that helped pay for the strikebreaking; but as we filled the narrow street in the now-illegal mass picketing of the workplace, we knew then, as we know now 10 years later, that it was the godfathers of Britain's trade unions who betrayed the Grunwick strikers. Yet not through evil intent, but only out of simple fear, as they acted also in the 1926 coal-mining lockout, the 1980s coal strike, and the Wapping printers' strike. For they saw that these three strikes and one lockout were forced on the British working class by a firm right-wing government determined to break working-class trade-union power, and each time the TUC godfathers in their plush offices feared to accept the challenge.

At Grunwick it was so simple, in that while the mass picket filled the street until mounted police and scab lorries forced their way through, three streets away the TUC godfathers would and did arrange a major trade-union march with bright banners floating in the passive breeze; and as the strikers retreated before the police horses and the battens and the slow and steady pressure of the scab lorries, way back there in some distant street the mass banners of the TUC were marching over hill and dale to the sound of pipe and drum. And that, comrades, is what betrayal is about.

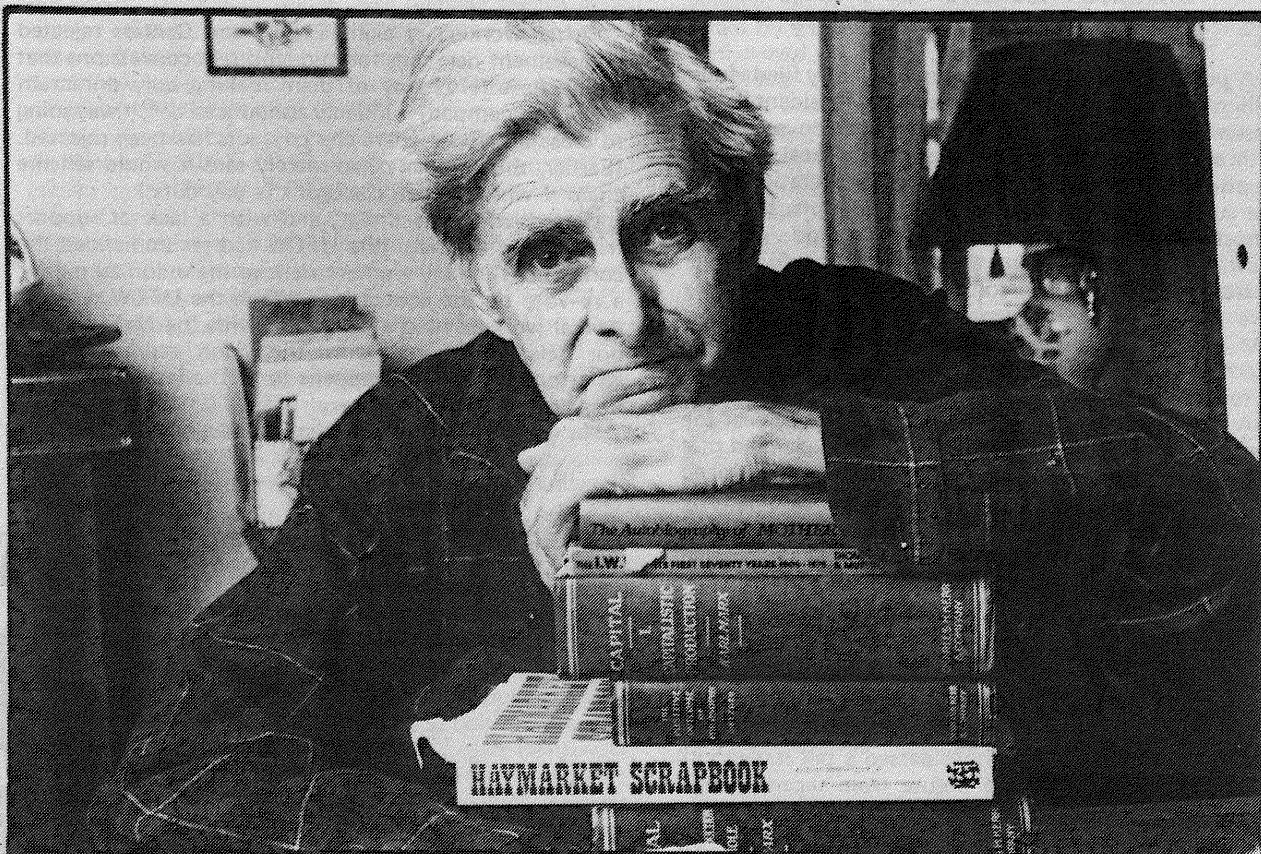
One can still see that dreary factory from a passing train and wonder what became of that brave little Indian woman standing between us and the police horses armed only with her megaphone, her courage, and her idealism. But now it is all legend, for all around one lie the remnants of the British trade-union movement, broken and de-gutted by Ma Thatcher's right-wing government. And who would dare venture a major strike today? For Ma Thatcher is a fanatic, and the message is now accepted loud and clear that her answer to any working-class strike action is to let it burn itself out, no matter what the human or economic harm. Thus London public-transport workers are seeing their State-owned routes handed out to any cowboy operator and their garages closed down one after another with total loss of jobs, and there is nothing they believe they can do about it. Working hours without pay are being lengthened and accepted, and overtime payments are being abolished.

In Margam, South Wales, a hundred-thousand-dollar coal mine is to be dug; but one of the prime conditions demanded by the victorious State Coal Board is that the miners must now work a six-day week, and the miners'-union (NUM) bosses know that once this is accepted, the six-day workweek will become the norm in every coal mine whose management demands it. (Will the NUM trade-union bosses agree to this savage attack on the miners' working week, comrade? The answer is yes; for Des Dutfield, the miners' South Wales area president, has declaimed that "It would be hypocritical of us to throw aside nearly 800 jobs for our school leavers and unemployed, merely on a false argument of increased working hours.")

I didn't say it, the coal bosses didn't say it, Hitler didn't say it, Stalin didn't say it, and Ma Thatcher didn't say it. But good ol' Des, the president of the very South Wales NUM coal miners who fought that long and angry strike, said it. So you can kiss your 40-hour workweeks goodbye, lads, as yet another tarnished chapter in your betrayal.

Arthur Moysé, London

## Farewell Fellow Worker



FRED THOMPSON (1900-1987)

IWW organizer, editor, and historian Fred Thompson, one of the best-known and best-loved members of this union, died March 9th in Chicago at the age of 86.

Frederick W. Thompson was born June 5th, 1900 in Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada, the youngest in a family of five brothers and two sisters. At 15 he was already a radical, attending meetings of the Socialist Party of Canada, which he soon joined. He took part in the Halifax shipyards strike in 1920, and later that year, heading west, became a member of the IWW-oriented One Big Union of Canada. In September 1922 in San Francisco Fred joined the Industrial Workers of the World, signed up by Fellow Worker A. L. Nurse. With Red Card Number X22063 in his pocket he devoted the rest of his life to the cause of working-class Education, Organization, and Emancipation.

The life of a Wobbly organizer is not always a little slice of heaven, and Fellow Worker Thompson had his share of the manifold miseries that the boss class generously makes available to working people everywhere. In April 1923 he was arrested in Marysville, California and charged with "criminal syndicalism" (IWW organizing). Convicted after two trials, he spent the next several years as a resident of San Quentin. In a lifetime of helping wage slaves organize for more of the good things in life, he was more than once set upon and beaten by gangs of plug-uglies in the pay of the profiteers. Strange as it may seem, such experiences did little to convince him that the interests of Capital and Labor are identical.

When his term as a class-war prisoner ended in 1927, Fred returned to the point of production, IWW leaflets and membership applications in hand. He organized miners out in Butte in the late 1920s, auto workers in Detroit in the early '30s, and metal workers in Cleveland later in the decade and all through the '40s. First elected to the IWW General Executive Board in the late 1920s, representing Construction Workers IU 310, he served often on the GEB in later years. He was secretary of the Cleveland Metal and Machinery Workers IU 440 branch from 1943 to 1946, and also served as IWW General Secretary-Treasurer. Many times editor of the *Industrial Worker*, he also wrote much of the union's organizing literature, from the famous "Bread Lines or Picket Lines?" leaflet of the early 1930s—which had a large impact on unemployed organizing in those Depression years—to more recent pamphlets such as *World Labor Needs a Union*.

Throughout the 1930s and into the '40s Fred taught Marxist economics and labor history at the IWW Work People's College in Duluth, Minnesota. Interested in history even as a youngster, in the 1920s he was already "digging"—that was his expression—IWW history, and before long he was recognized as the union's "official" historian. Several of his surveys of Wobbly development were serialized in the *Industrial Worker* over the years, culminating in his justly-renowned full-length study *The IWW: Its First Fifty Years*, published by the union in 1955 and re-issued, with updated material, in 1976. He also wrote an important pamphlet on Joe Hill that is still available.

Fred's prodigious knowledge of IWW history and lore was drawn on by every historian in the field. His running commentaries and reviews in this newspaper remain a key source for "diggers" into any subject touching the history of the OBU. A charter member of the Illinois Labor History Society, he maintained an extensive correspondence with scores of labor historians all over the world. His files are now part of the IWW Archives at Wayne State University.

Like most radicals of his generation, Thompson got much of his education in the class struggle from books and pamphlets published by the Charles H. Kerr Company of Chicago. It was therefore fitting and proper that he played the leading role in re-organizing the venerable firm after it had fallen on hard times at the beginning of the last decade. He was elected vice-president of the Kerr Board in 1971, and became president last July.

No one did more than Fred Thompson to prepare the way for the 100-year-old Kerr Company's current resurgence. Among his last writings were an introduction and supplemental material for Kerr's forthcoming edition of Joyce Kornbluh's *Rebel Voices: An IWW Anthology*, and texts to be included in a compilation on the history of the Kerr Company. At the time of his death he was working with other members of the Kerr Board on a collection of his autobiographical writings, to be published by Kerr next year. In earlier years he contributed long and important introductions to *The Autobiography of Mother Jones* and Paul Lafargue's *Right to Be Lazy*, both published by Kerr and available from the IWW.

Long denied US citizenship because of his IWW membership (the IWW was placed on the now-defunct Attorney General's list of allegedly "subversive" organizations in 1950), Thompson became a US citizen in 1964 after a drawn-out court battle.

A Fred Thompson Memorial Meeting co-sponsored by the groups to which Fred belonged—the IWW, the Kerr Company, the Socialist Party, Workers Education Local 189, and the Illinois Labor History Society—will be held in Chicago on the afternoon of Saturday, May 9th. Call the IWW headquarters (312-549-5045) for exact time and place.

On November 11th, Fellow Worker Thompson's ashes will be scattered at Waldheim Cemetery near the Haymarket Martyrs' monument.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Fred's companion, Fellow Worker Jenny Velsek of Chicago, and to his daughter, Florence Tromater, of Richmond, Virginia.

Fred Thompson died as he had lived, in good standing with his union and with the workers of all countries. His favorite slogan—"Let's make this planet a good place to live"—sums up his broad Wobbly vision of the possibilities of working-class solidarity, and also conveys something of his passionate honesty, humor, and warmth.

Everyone who knew Fred Thompson is a better person for having known him. He was a friend and fellow worker we shall never forget.

Franklin Rosemont

### COPY WANTED

Anything militant/funny/unusual happening on your job? Type up a *short, double-spaced* account of it and send it to the *IW*. If we use it, we'll send you a copy of Henry Pfaff's *Didactic Verses*. If you're a metalworker, say so, and we'll send you a copy of *A Metal Worker's Guide to Health and Safety*.

### MAILING LISTS WANTED

Sending sample copies to people who might be interested in subscribing is one way of helping to build the *Industrial Worker's* circulation. If any interesting mailing lists come into your hands, please send copies of them to the *IW*. If you see an interesting letter to the editor in your local paper and the complete address is given, jot it down and send it in. Let's all help spread the good news of industrial unionism.



# The Other Apartheid . . . . .

We hear a great deal about the conflict in the Middle East from the boss press. What we don't hear about is a massive and routine deprivation of fundamental human rights so severe that Israel Shahak, chairperson of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights has termed it "the other apartheid".

Palestinians have been stripped of much of their land, and are barred from living in vast stretches of Israel and the Occupied Territories. Arab workers who do not hold Israeli citizenship or work permits (which employers are reluctant to pay for) are not permitted to spend the night in Israel, but instead must commute to work—sometimes across vast distances—each day. Rather than bear the cost of transporting their workers, some employers lock them into factories at night while others keep them behind barbed wire in factory detention camps, including one owned by Histadrut (the "socialist" union federation).

Seasonal agricultural workers at two *moshavim* (semi-collective settlements) were required to commute from their homes in the Gaza Strip 200 kilometers each day. Their workday thus ran from 3 am to 8 pm, and the resulting fatigue led to inefficient work. So illegal housing was arranged, which became public when the Moshav movement condemned the two settlements for arranging "decent housing" for these workers.

A headline in the newspaper *Haolam Haze* described the situation: "Too far away for any eye to see, hidden in the orchards, there are the sheep pens for the servants, of a sort that even a state like South Africa would be ashamed of." The workers have since been evicted from these facilities, and must once again spend hours each day getting to and from their jobs.

Arab unions are routinely suppressed, and few Arab workers are eligible to join the Israeli labor federation. These workers—often mere children—perform the hardest, worst-paid labor, and are denied the most basic of human rights. Israeli troops regularly fire on demonstrations and refugee camps, killing and wounding hundreds of Palestinians each year.

Censorship is pervasive. Israeli authorities raided a Palestinian book exhibit last July, confiscating nearly 1,000 books and beating and arresting three organizers. In August they shut down three East Jerusalem newspapers, including the daily *Al-Mithaq*. Several journalists have been placed under house arrest, and newspapers are often temporarily closed (or prohibited from circulating in certain areas) for alleged violations of censorship reg-

ulations—which often entail nothing more than publishing verbatim translations of articles that have already appeared in the Hebrew-language press. This censorship extends even to crossword puzzles.

Observes Israel Chahak of the League for Human and Civil Rights: "Police brutality happens everywhere, but in the Occupied Territories one has much more of it than in most places. . . . No American police authority has the power to enter a private house and confiscate a cake, order a shop to display shirts in a different manner, or censor a crossword puzzle. An ordinary person faced persistently with such examples will come, must come, to the conclusion that a regime which does such things is a tyranny."

The December 9th, 1986 *Wall Street Journal* published a report on torture and maltreatment of Palestinian suspects in Israeli jails. The most-common complaint from detainees is of having a canvas bag tied over their heads for hours at a time. Jamil Khadr Abdul-Karihn, for example, reports that for 21 of the 35 days he was under arrest he was handcuffed to a metal-frame chair with a hood tied over his head, released only for meals and interrogation. About 90% of all convictions in Palestinian security cases are based on confessions, many of which are apparently obtained through torture.

The Israeli Government's continuing policy of evicting Palestinians from the land, both in Israel and in the Occupied Territories, has aroused intense opposition from both Arabs and Jews. These evictions, and the destruction of olive groves (an economic mainstay of most Palestinian villages), have sparked some of the few joint Israeli-Palestinian actions—one of the few hopeful signs in this bitter conflict.

In the Israeli magazine *Problemen*, Joseph Luden observes that racism against Arabs is increasingly prevalent and argues that "Israelis must learn to live in friendly relations, in justice and equality with the Arabs. . . ." Unfortunately, relatively few Israelis seem committed to pursuing such a program. Instead, the Government is increasingly intransigent, and continues its bloody reign of terror and oppression against the Palestinian population unchecked.

The bloody conflict that has wracked the region for the last few decades will continue as long as Palestinians are deprived of basic rights. Any lasting peace must be based on an end to the apartheid-style regime that currently holds sway, largely maintained by the taxes paid by US workers.

JB



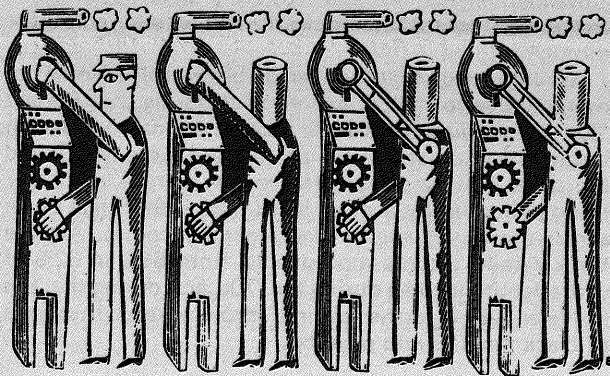
## RURAL TRANSPORT AND POVERTY

How has rural transport affected poverty in developing countries? Experience has shown that transport planning in most developing countries takes insufficient account of the needs and requirements of the bulk of the rural population.

In the Philippines, for example, fewer than half the rural villages have access to the road system. In Bangladesh the situation is worse, with 80% of the villages having no direct access to mechanized means of transport. Most studies indicate that a majority of rural communities depend on footpaths and tracks, rather than engineered roads, for the bulk of their movement. This situation is a natural result of an exaggerated concern with economic rather than socio-economic development.

In many instances only the transport demands of a few large farmers producing for the export market are catered to. The needs of the rest of the rural population, for the movement of small loads over relatively-short distances, are largely ignored.

Asia Pacific People's Environment Network



## BOLIVIAN WORKERS HIT BY DEVALUATION

After the rampaging inflation of 1985 (which topped 20,000%), the Bolivian Government has succeeded in reducing 1986 inflation to about 10%, largely as a result of a harsh austerity program and a fierce crackdown on Bolivia's labor movement.

But the cost of an ordinary hamburger is still \$1.60 (three million pesos), and like other basic food items is far beyond the reach of workers, who earn (on average) from \$15 to \$20 per month when working. (Unemployment has reached record levels as a result of the Government's austerity program and the closing of several of Bolivia's tin mines.)

Now the Government has initiated a 100,000% currency devaluation, renaming its one-million-peso notes *bolivianos*. The papers say this measure will aid banks in keeping track of account balances and merchants in fitting prices on price tags, but will do nothing to aid Bolivian workers in feeding their families or paying the rent.

The papers report that with US troops out of the country many workers are returning to the cocaine trade to make ends meet. Cocaine is now Bolivia's primary export, and the industry is largely controlled by right-wing generals who rake in superprofits while paying subsistence wages to workers who otherwise could not survive.

While Bolivian workers are organized into one big union, the COB, they have in the past relied on politicians to improve their conditions, limiting their industrial actions to general strikes aimed at recovering some of the wages lost to inflation. Clearly such action cannot make up for the effects of Bolivia's hyper-inflation, particularly in the face of military repression. Instead, industrial action is required to abolish the wage system altogether and to organize free distribution of food and other necessities. (And, of course, to organize the rank-and-file of the Army to refuse to intervene against the working class.)

## JAPAN JOBLESS RATE AT 3%

In January Japan's unemployment rate rose to 3% of the labor force, the highest level since monthly reporting began in 1953. In large part Japan's January statistics reflected workforce reduction in steel, textiles, shipbuilding, and cars, all export-oriented industries that have been under severe pressure because of the yen's rise against the dollar in the last 19 months.

Though 3% is low compared to the recent averages of 12% in Europe and 7% in the US, it is unacceptable in Japan, where the rate had stayed below 2% till a decade ago. There has been a steady but ultimately inconclusive debate among economic analysts over whether the Japanese rate would be higher if American computation methods were used.

## BACK IN THE USSR

We hear a great deal about economic reforms in the Soviet Union these days. Recently the boss press reported an experimental showpiece for this brave new future, and it looks awfully familiar.

It seems 20,000 workers at the Frunze machinery-manufacturing complex in the eastern Ukraine are working under a system of piece-rate incentives and bonuses that brings their wages up to as much as \$610 a month (nearly twice the average Soviet industrial wage), in exchange for dramatic speedup and markedly tightened quality-control systems.

The enterprise is required not only to pay its own way, but also to generate substantial profits (out of which, after the Government collects its half, management pays for bonuses, workers' housing, and investments in new plant and equipment).

A former plant manager is now Minister for Chemical and Petroleum Machinery, and is planning to spread the (they call it "self-financing", but let's not mince words) capitalist system throughout the industry.

**ISRAELIS SHUT PALESTINIAN PAPERS:** Recently *al-Mithaq*, a Palestinian Arabic-language daily published in Jerusalem, and the weekly *al-Ahd* were shut down by the Israeli Interior Ministry. *Al-Mithaq* is the first Palestinian daily to have lost its license to publish on a permanent basis. Israeli authorities said: "Although we offer them freedom of expression . . . it is forbidden to permit them to exploit this freedom in order to harm the state of Israel."



**WHY JOIN THE IWW?**

Because there are things we can do together that we cannot do alone. Some of these things will benefit your job and some will merely benefit the human race. Whether we are in a position to get you a pay raise or not, your conscience will repay you and your self-respect will increase if you join with us to get things done.

Since we are a union, this offer is open only to those who work for wages or salary; but since we are building One Big Union, it is open to wage and salary workers whether they happen to bargain through other unions or not. Look at the directory on Page 7. If you can readily reach someone there, do so. If not, write to the General Secretary, IWW, 3435 North Sheffield, Chicago, IL 60657, with a line about your job. The initiation fee is \$5 in the U.S., and dues are \$5 a month.

\*EDUCATION \*ORGANIZATION \*EMANCIPATION

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL  
ONE UNION ONE LABEL ONE ENEMY

**Industrial Worker**

Carlos Cortez, Mike Hargis, Penny Pixler

General Secretary-Treasurer: Penny Pixler

The *Industrial Worker* (ISSN 0019-8870) is the official organ of the Industrial Workers of the World, 3435 North Sheffield, Suite 202, Chicago, Illinois 60657, phone (312) 549-5045. Second-class postage paid at Chicago. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Industrial Worker, 3435 North Sheffield, Chicago, Illinois 60657. Unless designated as official policy, articles in the *Industrial Worker* do not necessarily represent the official position of the Industrial Workers of the World. No paid or commercial advertising accepted. The *Industrial Worker* is published monthly and is mailed without a wrapper to reduce expenses, but a wrapper can be requested. The deadline for all copy is the 18th of each month.



# Labor History Book Reviews

*When Freedom Was Lost*, by Lorne Brown, Black Rose Books, Montreal, Quebec, 1987, 208 pages, paper, \$14.95

"Little-known" is the way the blurb refers to the story of the Canadian work-camp resisters during the Great Depression. Probably totally unknown to most US readers, what with the class viewpoint of our school system.

With the Canadian economy so dependent on agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining, the Canadian workforce in the first part of this century included a large proportion of transient workers, mostly young single men. In the early '30s, as unemployment soared, they were shunned by the local authorities as an unwanted expense and feared as a potential source of disorder. To systematize relief and remove the unemployed from the city centers where they might be exposed to "communist agitators", the Federal Government set up a network of military-run labor camps where single unemployed men could get room, board, and 20¢ a day in return for hard labor.

The camps were virtually compulsory for many who, denied relief in the cities, could only keep moving, face arrest for vagrancy, or go to the camps. Work in the camps involved highway and airport construction by hand labor, partly to save the expense of heavy machinery and partly to create work for the sake of work. Needless to say, the camps were sites of escalating protest. By 1931 the British Columbian unemployed in the cities and camps were distributing a newsletter throughout the entire province. By 1933 strikes in different camps were being co-ordinated by the British Columbia Relief Camp Workers Union, which was quickly evolving into the national Relief Camp Workers Union (RCWU).

By December 1934 the RCWU and its allies in the labor unions began to converge on Vancouver to present their demands for a minimum wage of 40¢ an hour in the camps, recognition by the camp authorities of committees set up by the workers, and an end to blacklisting and military control. Eventually most strikers returned to the camps in exchange for a vague promise by the British Columbia premier of an independent tribunal to investigate the camps.

But nothing changed, and in April the RCWU and its supporters staged a mass walkout from the camps across the province. Some 2,000 strikers gathered in Vancouver and as before demanded food and lodging from municipal and provincial authorities pending negotiation of their grievances with the Federal Government. The local authorities refused, but the strikers, who enjoyed strong public support, were able to survive on donations while they pressured the powers that be with a series of building occupations, including a mass take-over of the city museum.

At the end of May the strikers decided to trek to Ottawa by freight train and confront the Federal Government with their grievances. Support for the strikers snowballed as they trekked across Canada. In Regina, the local government mustered enough police to halt the march, but the strikers' point was made. The Government fell and the camps were abolished, but much more importantly the camps had been an organizing school for hundreds of workers. Veterans of the camp resistance and the trek went on to help build the CIO union in the late '30s, and many went to Spain. Canada sent more people per capita to the international brigades than any other country except France.

plp

## ENGLISH PEASANTS' REVOLT OF 1381

The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 was not the first such uprising in England, or in Europe, but was significant in terms of the support it received, its impact on English society, and political history. It was studied by Edmund Burke, Friedrich Engels, and Tom Paine. The Revolt was known to later generations of peasants on the Continent, particularly in Germany in 1524, the year the great peasant wars began.

The lives of peasants were changing radically in the 14th Century. The system of serfdom, which had never offered peasants a good life, was becoming even more oppressive. Traditional rights of hunting, fishing, and fowling were being usurped by landowners, and more and more work was being demanded of peasants by their lords.

Because towns were developing rapidly, a demand for labor existed in various crafts and trades. If a young man could escape from the manor to which he was legally bound, he could become apprenticed to a trade.

Then, in 1348, a cataclysm occurred which altered the face of English life: The Black Death broke out in England. By the time it had run its course, a third of the population lay dead.

The plague led to marked changes in economic relations between lords and barons, peasants, and townspeople. The drastic reduction in population created a labor shortage in both urban and rural areas. Workers demanded and usually received higher wages. The peasants were paid grudgingly, as the alternative meant unharvested crops and untended livestock.

The landowners attempted to fight back, trying to roll back wages to their pre-plague levels through an act called the Statute of Labourers (1351). But the Statute was too hard to enforce widely.

The 14th Century was also the era of the Hundred

Years War, which took a heavy toll on the resources of the realm. The King's jewels were pledged against loans needed to prosecute the War and pay the troops, who showed a marked disinclination to fight when not paid. Since new taxes were needed to raise revenue, a poll tax on all subjects over 14 was levied.

Because collections were sloppy and administration inefficient, special commissioners were appointed to collect taxes. But their methods aroused the people to anger. One collector, John Legge, and his assistants would enter a village and seize young women, publicly holding them aloft and inspecting them for virginity. To avoid such humiliation, parents would pay if they could. For such outrages, Legge was eventually beheaded by rebellious peasants.

The Peasants' Revolt started in Essex on June 2nd, 1381, when 50,000 men rose up to burn manor houses and behead barons, tax collectors, and the like, parading the heads of their victims on poles. They made special targets of lawyers and their apprentices, jurors, and royal servants.

A week later, 60,000 men rose in Kent behind the two best-known leaders of the Revolt, Wat Tyler (a tiler by trade) and a parish priest named John Ball who had been preaching incendiary sermons for some time. The rebels entered Saint Thomas Church in Canterbury at high mass, and demanded that the monks elect a new archbishop to replace the one they were about to behead.

Like so many other parish priests, Ball resented the power and wealth of the bishops and higher clergymen, and of the religious houses which were great landholders. He advocated doing away with all the bishops, abbots, and priors and most of the monks, and dividing monastic wealth among the laity. He also authored the memorable revolutionary couplet:

*When Adam delft and Eve span,  
Who was then a gentleman?*

It was translated into many languages, and was known to the German peasants in the 16th Century.

The two peasant armies converged on London, destroying manor houses, freeing prisoners, and executing the gentry as they came. They demanded to meet with King Richard the Second at Smithfields outside the Tower of London. The Archbishop of Canterbury came out of the Tower, and the crowd beheaded him, as the

## The Inside Strike

In Southern Illinois, thousands of teachers have gone out on strike—usually for only a few days, but often winning significant support from parents and others in the community. Yet on a few occasions, school boards have threatened to re-open with scabs—a threat that was carried out in at least one district two weeks before this writing. And in none of these strikes do teachers seem to have done much more than hold the line, even where they've "won".

New tactics are clearly needed. For decades now, teachers have organized along craft lines—leaving other school workers (bus drivers, substitute teachers, maintenance workers, and the like) either unorganized or organized into different unions with different contracts. This, of course, makes it much easier for school boards to break strikes, as each group of workers fights alone (though there have been a few instances in which workers of different groups have stood together). Deprived of the strength that comes from industrial organization, education unions have put much of their energies into political action—and have succeeded in electing many "friends of labor", for all the good it's done them.

Yet another problem is that school boards suffer little, if any, economic harm from a teachers' strike—though it does inconvenience them. The people who must bear the short-term costs of strikes are parents, children, and the teachers themselves. Thus the strike is not a particularly-powerful weapon. Clearly, industrial organization needs to be combined with new tactics.

Why not strike on the job? Instead of shutting the schools down, educational workers should take them over—teaching subjects like workers' economics and labor history. School boards would be quick to settle, if only to regain control of the curriculum. (Which, of course, a revolutionary industrial union would refuse to cede.)

For most public-service workers, the strike is of only limited use. The politicians suffer less from strikes than do our fellow workers who rely on the services we provide. But in many—perhaps most—cases, direct action on the job (such as refusing to bill people for services) could win both public support and our demands. (In other cases, a little solidarity might be needed.) Why not give it a try?

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## LIES, DAMN LIES AND STATISTICS

A lot of people have been pointing to a 1986 Rand Corporation report showing that the average black male worker earned 73% as much as his white counterpart in 1980, compared with 58% in 1960 and 43% in 1940, as proof that blacks have made substantial economic progress in the last 25 years. But in fact the doors of opportunity that blacks cracked open through the civil-rights

monks had been promised. But as Wat Tyler later addressed the King, the peasant leader was unhorsed and killed by the Lord Mayor of London, and the demoralized crowd dispersed.

Though not the only focus of the Revolt, the risings in Essex and Kent and the marches to London were the most significant. Indeed, the news of these events spread throughout the kingdom. There were other risings (of both peasants and artisans in the towns) in East Anglia, York, and locations further from London, for many of the same reasons, and sometimes for more-local ones.

The aftermath saw the torture and execution of many leaders of the Revolt, among them John Ball. A general drive for retributive violence (some of the nobles wanted to exterminate the entire British people) was blunted by the King. In the end, most areas received some form of amnesty, usually after being obliged to pay restitution, though minor riots still broke out later that year and in those following.

The long shadow of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 extended into the 16th Century, when another clergyman, Thomas Muentzer, would lead German peasants in the years 1524 to 1526.

A good collection of readings from the period is to be found in *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, edited by R.B. Dobson, MacMillan, 1983 (second edition). A paperback edition also is available, including a splendid bibliography.

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movement in the '60s and '70s are swinging shut again, and at best only a few blacks have been able to squeeze through.

While it's true that the average black-male income has risen relative to that of white males during the '70s and '80s, the median black-male income stagnated. (Median income means that half the people earn more than it and the other half earn less.) Hence the average is actually being pulled up by a small black elite rather than by an across-the-board rise in black men's incomes. Average black family income moved only from 61% to 62% of white family income during the '70s, and during the '80s has been falling further behind, throwing record numbers of black families into poverty.

## TEAMSTER-ARMY COLLUSION UPSET

The US Army illegally helped the teamsters' union try to oust the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) at an Oklahoma military base by taking part in a White House meeting arranged by Teamsters president Jackie Presser and President Reagan's aides, according to a judge of the Federal Labor Relations Authority. The judge ruled that the White House meeting—seven days before the bitterly-contested union-representation election at Fort Sill, Oklahoma—was an unfair labor practice.

The Teamsters, the only major union to support Reagan in the 1980 and 1984 elections, distributed fliers after the meeting boasting of their clout with the White House. Shortly afterward (October 1985) the Teamsters won the union election 591 to 516 over the NFFE, which had represented 2500 civilian motor-pool and missile-maintenance employees at the base for 15 years.

The judge's ruling sets the stage for the Federal Labor Relations Authority to order a new election, as requested by the NFFE. In the meantime as the incumbent union, the NFFE still represents the Fort Sill workers.

## MINE AGENCY ACCUSED OF LAXITY

On March 11th, Davitt McAteer, head of the Occupational Safety and Health Law Center, testified before the Senate Labor Committee that the Labor Department's coal-mine agency had muzzled many of its most-vigorous inspectors, dissolved its most-successful criminal-investigation team, and administratively reduced serious safety violations to minor ones. McAteer pointed out that since passage of the Federal Mine Safety Act of 1969 there have been 2,029 fatal accidents in US coal mines, including 30 multiple-fatality accidents. Yet there have been only 38 attempts to prosecute those responsible for mine conditions under criminal provisions of the law.

The Committee also heard from a panel of eight present and former agency inspectors in the Appalachian coal fields. They testified that coal owners' complaints to the safety agency about citations for violations had brought demands from inspectors' superiors that they reduce the seriousness of the violations reported and tighten the scope of their inspection activities.





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**ALASKA:** Ruth Sheridan, Delegate, 4704 Kenai, Anchorage 99508. Barry Roderick, Delegate, Box 748, Douglas 99824.

**AUSTRALIA:** IWW Delegate, 417 King Street (1st Floor), Newton, Sydney.

**VANCOUVER:** Vancouver General Membership Branch, PO Box 65635, Station F Vancouver, British Columbia V5N 5K5, Canada. West Kootenay IWW Group, Box 941, Nelson V1L 6A5, Canada. J.B. McAndrew, 7216 Mary Avenue (1204), Burnaby V5E 3K5, Canada.

**CALIFORNIA:** San Francisco Bay Area General Membership Branch, Box 40485, San Francisco 94140. Richard Ellington, Delegate, 6448 Irwin Court, Oakland 94609, (415) 658-0293. San Diego IWW Group, PO Box 16989, San Diego 92116. General Defense Committee, Arthur J. Miller, Secretary, PO Box 2576, San Diego 92112.

**FLORIDA:** Fred Hansen, Box 824, New Port Richey 33552.

**GUAM:** Shelby Shapiro, Box 864, Agana 96910.

**ILLINOIS:** Chicago General Membership Branch and General Defense Committee Local 2, 3435 North Sheffield (Suite 202), Chicago 60657, (312) 549-5045. Meetings first Sunday of each month at 1 pm. Champaign-Urbana IWW Group, Jeff Stein, Delegate, Box 2824, Station A, Champaign 61820.

**KENTUCKY:** Louisville IWW Group, 2024 Baringer Avenue, Louisville 40204.

**LOUISIANA:** IWW Group, PO Box 37581, Shreveport 71133.

**MASSACHUSETTS:** Boston General Membership Branch, Box 454, Cambridge 02139. Western Massachusetts IWW Group, Box 465, Hadley 01035.

**MICHIGAN:** Southeast Michigan General Membership Branch, 42 South Summit, Ypsilanti 48197, (313) 483-3478. Meetings second Monday of each month at 7:30 pm in Room 4001 of the Michigan Union. University Cellar IU 660 Job Branch, 425 South Summit, Ypsilanti 48197. People's Warehouse IU 660 Job Branch, c/o Sarah Rucker, 727 West Ellsworth Road, Ann Arbor 48104. IWW Delegate, 415 Ethel, Grand Rapids 49506.

**MINNESOTA:** Minneapolis-Saint Paul General Membership Branch, PO Box 2245, Saint Paul 55102. Nancy A. Collins, Delegate. Meetings third Wednesday of each month.

**MONTANA:** Clark Fork Valley IWW Group, Box 8562, Missoula 59807, (406) 543-5731. A. L. Nurse, Delegate, Route 5, Box 88, Thompson Falls 59874, (406) 827-3238.

**NEW YORK:** New York General Membership Branch, Box 183, New York 10028. Delegates: Robert Young, Box 920, Wingdale 12594. Joe O'Shea, Winklers Farm, Towners Road, Carmel 10512. Rochelle Semel, 788 Columbus Avenue (16D), New York 10025, (212) 662-8801. John Hansen, 302 Avenue C, Brooklyn 11218. Henry Pfaff, 77 Eckhert, Buffalo 14207, (716) 877-6073. Jackie Panish, 99-12 65th Road (5-J), Rego Park 11374, (212) 868-1121.

**OHIO:** Southwest Ohio General Membership Branch and General Defense Committee Local 1, c/o Prison Education Project, Box 56, West Elkton, Ohio 45070. General Defense Committee Local 3, c/o John Steward, Number 158-903, PO Box 45699, Lucasville 45699-0001.

**OREGON:** R.M.R. Kroopkin, Delegate, 2226 Fairmount Boulevard, Eugene 97403.

**PENNSYLVANIA:** Tom Hill, Delegate, Box 41928, Philadelphia 19101.

**SOUTH CAROLINA:** Harbinger Publications IU 450, 18 Bluff Road, Columbia 29201, (803) 254-9398.

**TEXAS:** Gilbert Mers, Delegate, 7031 Kernel, Houston 77087, (713) 921-0877.

**VIRGINIA:** IWW Delegate, 18 Boxwood Lane, Newport News 23602.

**WASHINGTON:** Bellingham General Membership Branch Box 1386, Bellingham 98227. Seattle General Membership Branch, 3238 33rd Avenue South, Seattle 98144. Spokane IWW Group, PO Box 1273, Spokane 99210. Tacoma/Olympia General Membership Branch, 2115 South Sheridan, Tacoma 98405, (206) 272-8119.

**WISCONSIN:** Madison General Membership Branch, c/o 1846 Jenifer, Madison 53704, (608) 251-1937 or 249-4287.

There's a Reason WHY INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM AND THE WORKERS REPUBLIC WILL TRIUMPH

**BOOK REVIEW**

*Memoirs of a Wobbly*, by Henry E. McGuckin, Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, 1740 West Greenleaf, Chicago, Illinois 60626, 96 pages, illustrated, paper, \$5.95. Also available from the IWW.

Henry "Mac" McGuckin, born in Paterson, New Jersey in 1893, left Catholic school in 1905 and took his first ride on a freight train in the spring of 1906, when he was not quite 13 years old. He hoboed all that summer and for the next several years. He took out a red card in mid-January 1912 during the Aberdeen free-speech fight.

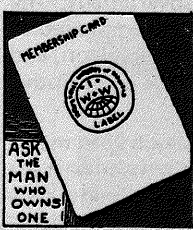
For plain good reading I like best his account of his boyhood hobo trips. But McGuckin's delightful memoirs also add much fresh material to the data on IWW history. He tells how free-speech fighters entering Aberdeen in December 1911 got in touch with each other without letting the stoolies know, and how they timed their soap-boxing at various points to make it tough on the cops. He adds similar details about the 1912 Vancouver free-speech fight and organizing on the Canadian Northern, as well as strike and jail conditions there, a very-brief free-speech fight in Stockton (1913), omitted from the records; and IWW efforts to bring out dye houses in Passaic and Allentown during the 1913 Paterson strike. The chapter titled "The Flying Squadron" covers a 1914 Nevada (largely Tonopah) IWW story that history books omit. McGuckin's account of the Agricultural Workers Organization 1915 drive stresses soapboxing, while other accounts stress a rejection of soapboxing. For memoirs, the sense of time and sequence is remarkably accurate.

Fellow Worker McGuckin's whole story is mighty interesting reading, and if it could somehow be given the Jack London treatment or made into a movie, it could do much to convert the unconverted. Consider the situation when he went to Aberdeen for his first free-speech fight just before Christmas 1911, and risked getting his head beaten off in a town he had never been in before. This sort of thing is a focal point in IWW history, yet has never been clearly told before. A large proportion of the free-speech fighters were new members, and in some cases not yet members. They damned near froze and starved to get to the proper place to get clubbed. Why? Respect for the amenities of untrammelled discourse? More likely it was a feeling that if working stiffs lost the free-speech fight, then through that town and a hundred others they and their kind would have to mope and move furtively and ashamed, expecting harassment wherever they went.

This sort of feeling springs from a consciousness born not of books but of the very-unpleasant sense of singularity one has when, on a summer day, one walks through a small town with a winter overcoat under one's arm, knowing one will need it to keep warm that night, even though it marks one as a pesky "go-about" in the meantime. It is the same sort of solidarity—and we sometimes overlook it—that is needed to explain the fact that in the Marysville trial of Ford and Suhr, as recounted by McGuckin, the Establishment sought among the hungry derelicts of the state for a few to say what they would pay them to say, and found not one.

McGuckin's 1914 article "On the Scrap Heap", from Mary Marcy's *International Socialist Review*—published by the same firm that now, 73 years later, brings out these exceptionally-good memoirs—is reprinted as an appendix. An afterword by Hank McGuckin Jr., who teaches in San Francisco, tells of the later life of his Wobbly father and mother, Muriel Larson, who was long active in the IWW General Defense Committee.

Fred Thompson



**Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World**

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 UPHOLD 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, THIS MAKING AN INJURY TO ONE AN INJURY TO ALL.

INSTEAD OF THE CONSERVATIVE MOTTO, "A FAIR DAY'S WAGE FOR 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 EVERY-DAY STRUGGLE WITH CAPITALISTS, BUT ALSO TO CARRY ON PRODUCTION WHEN CAPITALISM SHALL HAVE BEEN OVERTHROWN. BY ORGANIZING INDUSTRIALLY WE ARE FORGING THE STRUCTURE OF THE NEW SOCIETY WITHIN THE SHELL OF THE OLD.

**BOOKS FOR UNION PEOPLE**

**IWW PUBLICATIONS**

- One Big Union (about the IWW) . . . . . 1.25
- The General Strike (by Ralph Chaplin) . . . . . 2.50
- IWW Songs: The Little Red Songbook . . . . . 1.75
- Collective Bargaining Manual. . . . . 2.50
- Workers' Guide to Direct Action . . . . . .35
- Unions and Racism . . . . . 1.00
- Metal Workers' Guide to Health and Safety . . . . . 50
- A Quiz on You and the Arms Race . . . . . 10
- The IWW: Its First Seventy Years (cloth) . . . . . 15.00
- The IWW: Its First Seventy Years (paper) . . . . . 4.95
- Joe Hill: IWW Songwriter . . . . . 1.00
- History of the IWW in Canada . . . . . 50
- The Rebel Girl (sheet music) . . . . . 1.00
- We Have Fed You All for a Thousand Years (LP record—no discount) . . . 8.50
- IWW Preamble and Constitution . . . . . 1.00

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- Joe Hill
- General Strike
- Fat Cat
- Huelga General
- Draftees of the World, Unite

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- For More of the Good Things of Life . . . . . .75

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- Bye! American—Labor Cartoons by Gary Huck & Mike Konopacki . . . . . 7.95
- Haymarket Scrapbook . . . . . 14.95
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- Reasons for Pardoning the Haymarket Anarchists by John P. Altgeld . . . . 3.95
- Crime and Criminals by Clarence Darrow . . . . . 2.50
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- Mr. Block: 24 IWW Cartoons . . . . . 4.95
- Rise and Repression of Radical Labor . . . . . 3.95
- The Flivver King: A Story of Ford-America by Upton Sinclair (50th Anniversary Edition) . . . . 6.95
- Lucy Parsons: American Revolutionary . . . . . 6.95
- Autobiography of Mother Jones . . . . . 7.95
- The Right to Be Lazy by Paul Lafargue . . . . . 2.75
- The Head-Fixing Industry by John Keracher . . . . 3.00
- Soul of Man Under Socialism by Oscar Wilde . . . . 3.95
- The Life of Thomas Skidmore by Amos Gilbert . . . . 3.95
- Labor Law for the Rank-and-File . . . . . 2.50
- Didactic Verse by Henry Pfaff (IWW humor) . . . . 2.00
- Proceedings of IWW Founding Convention . . . . 15.00

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40% discount on prepaid bulk orders of five or more copies of any item on this list, unless otherwise indicated. 30% discount on similar orders that require invoicing. Postage will be added to all orders that are not prepaid. Please allow three weeks for delivery.

**AVAILABLE FROM IWW LOCALS**

- A Worker's Guide to Direct Action. 50¢ from New York IWW, P.O. Box 183, NY 10028.
- Fellow Union Member. 10¢ each; 5-15 for 5¢ each; 16-500, 3¢ each; over 500, 2¢ from Tacoma/Olympia IWW, 2115 S. Sheridan, Tacoma, WA 98405.
- Introduction to the IWW. 10¢ each; bulk rate 40%, prepaid, from San Francisco IWW, P.O. Box 40485, San Francisco, California 94140.
- Solidarity Bulletin (monthly publication) \$10 a year from Vancouver IWW, P.O. Box 34334, Station D., Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6J 4P3.
- IWW baseball caps (one size fits all) \$4 each plus \$1 each for shipping from General Headquarters, Chicago, or from University Cellar IU 660 Job Branch (checks payable to IWW), 42 South Summit, Ypsilanti, Michigan, 48197.
- Amnesty for British Miners (enamel and gold buttons) \$10 each from Chicago IWW Branch, 3435 North Sheffield, Suite 202, Chicago, IL 60657. (All proceeds to British miners.)

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# AROUND OUR UNION

## WOBS IN THE NEWS

The IWW's been in the news quite a bit lately; largely as a result of the closing of the University Cellar bookstore, but also in connection with the IWW art show that has been on the road the last several months.

A lengthy and sympathetic, if not entirely accurate, article based on the exhibit—but also discussing the Bay Area GMB's activities—ran in the *San Francisco Chronicle* earlier this year. Bay Area corresponding secretary Marc Janowicz is quoted explaining that "The Wobbly philosophy of One Big Union is as pertinent now, possibly even more pertinent, than it's ever been," noting that business-union tactics have failed: "Labor is on the run. Unions are selling their members out."

Several newspapers across the country ran articles on the closing of the Cellar, which threw 75 Wobblies on the streets. Most of those accounts were based on a rather inaccurate *New York Times* report that ran January 19th, though various Michigan papers published more-detailed accounts of their own.

In Champaign, Illinois, a columnist for the *Daily Illini* made the Cellar's closure the occasion for a column on how capitalism is the most-wonderful economic system imaginable, and the Cellar proved that socialism couldn't work. The paper refused to publish a response from the local IWW group pointing out that the Cellar was a victim of capitalism and arguing that Cellar workers "can hardly be held responsible for the store's demise, unless for their failure to boot out management and run the store themselves". However the paper did publish two responses challenging the columnist's rosy portrayal of capitalist economies.

Having our members lose their jobs is not the best way to break into the boss press, of course. But at least hundreds of thousands of our fellow workers have been reminded that the IWW still exists, and continues the fight for a better world.

## Cal Wobs Stay Busy

On April 19th, the movie *The Wobblies* will be shown at the Rio Theater in Rio, California as a benefit for the Peace and Justice Committee, made up of 30-year union people. This anti-nuke group is active in the Redwood Empire of Northern California. The IWW will be selling literature at the event, and all fellow workers in the area are encouraged to attend. For more information call FW Charlie Latham, (707) 762-6158.

On May 2nd there will be a barbecue with speakers.

The event will be held in Occidental, also in the Redwood Empire. The speakers will be Joe Murphy, an ex-Wobbly who appeared in the film; Harry Bridges of the Longshoremen's Union; Cesar Chavez of the United Farm Workers; and Henry Anderson, author of *So Shall They Reap*. This May Day celebration is also a benefit for the Peace and Justice Committee. Further information can be obtained at the above number.

**SOLIDARITY FROM THE WAREHOUSE:** The workers at the People's Warehouse, members of the General Distribution Workers IU 660 Job Branch of the IWW, donated some 1200 pounds of food staples to the striking Hormel workers in Austin, Minnesota as 1986 came to a close.

Fellow Worker Danny Meely of the P-9 strikers' communications committee received the food and took it back to Austin. FW Meely was in the Detroit area to spread the word of the boycott against Hormel and the ongoing battle to regain the jobs of 1400 Hormel meat-packers.

Warehouse workers had started gathering returned and damaged goods for the Hormel fighters in September, and only a lack of adequate transportation kept the food from being shipped sooner. The semi-truckload of goods was received in Austin with great joy and relief, as the food-distribution program of the Austin United Support Group was about to be suspended due to lack of provisions.



AUSTIN, MINNESOTA: Fifteen Wobs from Chicago, Denver, Minneapolis-Saint Paul, and Spokane took part in the "Turn the Heat Up on Hormel" march and rally in Austin March 14th (see story elsewhere in this issue).

Fellow Worker Utah Phillips, along with the "Grand Industrial Band", made up of FWs from the Twin Cities, Jeff Cahill, J. B. Freeman, Maureen McElderry, and Sharon Muir, provided the entertainment for the throngs gathered at the National Guard Armory. FW Phillips in particular did an outstanding job of getting across the IWW message with his usual mixture of songs and humorous anecdotes. Fellow Worker Gary Cox of Denver was singled out for recognition by rally organizers for his efforts as a stalwart P-9 supporter in the mile-high city.

**VANCOUVER:** The Vancouver General Membership Branch continues to be extremely active, as even a cursory examination of their branch newsletter, *Solidarity Bulletin*, makes clear. Branch members worked at the bar at a recent fund-raiser for the exiled South African Congress of Trade Unions, and sang labor songs for a social celebrating the unionization into the CWA of 125 workers employed in door-to-door distribution of advertising material. Other events include a continuing series of video documentaries on workers' struggles around the world, and a raffle to raise funds to support the Branch's ongoing activities and an upcoming campaign to inform workers that it is possible to organize into a democratic union like the IWW without going through government procedures.

**CHAMPAIGN-URBANA:** Local Wobs joined a rally against CIA recruiters at the University of Illinois campus February 12th, hoping to call attention to the CIA's record of bloody suppression of militant unions around the world. IWWs also continue to be active in the local community radio station, where recent programs have discussed the Hormel boycott, efforts of Mexican seamstresses to organize independent unions, State-sponsored terrorism, Ben Fletcher: Black Labor Pioneer, and an interview with striking Homer, Illinois teachers. In addition, the local IWW group has been setting up regular literature tables on the campus and at community events likely to attract a sympathetic audience, distributing IWW literature and leaflets on such issues as the Hormel boycott and appeals for solidarity with Bolivian and Thai workers.

## MAY DAY 1987

The *Industrial Worker's* May issue will carry appropriate greetings and messages commemorating Haymarket and celebrating May Day, providing that they advertise neither commodities nor ideologies. Our rates are \$10 for one column inch, \$30 for four column inches, \$50 for a half-column, and \$100 for a half-page. All copy should be camera-ready; if not, please add \$10 to your remittance. Should we receive additional income from your greetings, we will produce an expanded 12-page issue featuring a surprise special supplement.

**POVERTY:** In their book *Aid As Obstacle*, researchers of the Institute for Food and Development Policy write: "The official aid agencies' diagnosis is that the poor are poor because they lack certain things... [but,] in studying country after country, it becomes clear that what the poor really lack is power, power to secure what they need."

**WHERE THE BODY IS:** Honduras, the linchpin of US military policy in Central America, now has the largest contingent of Peace Corps volunteers of any country in the world.

**POLISH MINE DISASTER:** 17 coal miners died in Southern Poland when a methane-gas explosion ripped through the 150-year-old Myslowice mine February 4th. Twenty other coal miners were hospitalized, five in serious condition, in the worst reported coal-mining accident in Poland since December 22nd, 1985, when a similar explosion killed 18 miners in the southwestern city of Walbrzych. Polish authorities re-opened the mine the next day.

**HERBERT MARCUSE:** "The Enemy is permanent. It is not in the emergency situation but in the normal state of affairs... The Enemy is the common denominator of all doing and undoing. And the Enemy is not identical with actual communism or actual capitalism—it is, in both cases, the real spectre of liberation."

## DYING FOR THE BOSSES

US Labor Department statistics recently released report that 3,750 workers were killed on the job during 1985, while another 5.4 million workers lost worktime due to job injuries. (The injury rate does not include long-term occupational diseases such as asbestosis, nor does the death rate include workers who die from these job-caused illnesses.) Two-thirds of these on-the-job deaths occurred in the construction, manufacturing, transportation, and public-utilities industries.

It has long been established that most occupational injuries, illnesses, and deaths could be eliminated with a proper regard for safe working conditions. But this costs money, and eats into the bosses' profits. So our jobs won't get any safer unless we organize on the job to make them that way.

## DID YOU NOTICE?

A MOTHER OF THREE CHILDREN would have to make \$5.30 an hour at a full-time year-round job—nearly \$2 more than the minimum wage—to reach the 1985 poverty level of \$10,989. (The average income for all women in 1985 was \$10,173.)

**THE LAST STRAW:** In early March Ervin Motl, a young Czechoslovakian worker, was sentenced to three years in prison for reading emigre literature, listening to foreign radio broadcasts, and discussing conditions at the factory where he worked.

**SOUTH AFRICAN SUPERMARKET STRIKE ends:**

On February 25th a 10-week strike by a black-dominated union against one of South Africa's largest supermarket chains came to an end. More than 7,000 workers, most of them black, went out on strike December 18th against the OK Bazaars chain. During the strike the company dismissed more than 500 workers who were reported to have vandalized property or intimidated customers. Scores of workers were arrested or detained. Formal South African censorship and informal US censorship make further details unavailable.

**WESTERN AIRLINES TO MOVE WORKERS:** On February 24th Western Airlines reported that between 2,000 and 3,000 of its employees in Los Angeles will be required to move to Atlanta. Employees refusing offers of positions in Atlanta will lose their jobs but will receive severance pay.

**US DEATH ROW LIST AT RECORD HIGH:** A record 1,838 US prisoners were waiting on death row at the close of 1986, waiting to see whether they too were to be electrocuted, gassed, poisoned, hanged, or shot dead. Amnesty International reports that the US and Pakistan have the largest death rows in the world.

**PARAGUAYAN PRISONERS RELEASED:** Amnesty International has reported the release in Paraguay of Benjamin Ramon Livieres, a member of the Sindicato Independiente de Periodistas and an activist in a recently-formed union movement known as the Agrupacion Independiente de Trabajadores (AIT: Independent Workers' Association). Carlos Filizzola, Hector Læognata, and Elsa Mereles also were released from detention. Amnesty believed their arrests were connected with their peaceful activities as president, nurses' representative, and students' representative, respectively, of the Asociacion de Medicos, Enfermeras y Estudiantes del Hospital de Clinicas in the State-run teaching hospital in Asuncion.

**CANADIAN AND US UNIONISM:** About 10 years

ago, the same percentage of the workforce (about 27%) was unionized in both Canada and the US. Since then, the percentage of union workers in the US has fallen to less than 18%, while in Canada it has gone up to about 38%. The Canadian and US workers work for essentially the same corporations: US-based multinationals.

**US DESTROYS GREEK UNION OFFICE:** In early March the US demolition of offices used by a Greek labor union at a US military base in Greece brought protests from both the union and the Greek Government. The union represents many of the 770 Greeks employed at the logistics and communication base at Hellenicon, and has been held responsible by Americans for a disruptive strike in 1984.

**STRIKING WRITERS RALLY:** On March 18th members of the Writers Guild of America on strike against the ABC and CBS radio and television networks held a rally outside the CBS offices in New York to protest the company's setting up a temporary studio for their Channel 2 program for the convenience of people who don't want to cross a picket line physically, but don't mind doing it morally. The Writers Guild represents 525 writers, producers, and other TV personnel in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington who began their strike on March 1st.

**CHICAGO READER REPORTS:** "I think we've got to spend more money on national defense," writes Wes Jackson. "If we don't, we're going to be taken over from the outside. And the only way I can see that we can increase our defense budget is to take it away from the military—put it all into soil and water conservation. That's national defense. This other stuff is just giving money to people who liked to play with matches when they were kids and didn't get spanked enough for it."

**LAST RAIL STRIKERS SETTLE:** By March 18th the last four striking Long Island rail unions voted to ratify new contracts, though in the case of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers by a narrow margin of 172 to 169. The New York rail strike began January 18th, but effectively ended when the strikers obeyed government orders to return to work.

**CHINESE WORKERS KILLED:** An explosion at a flax factory killed 45 workers and injured 185 others in the northeastern city of Harbin March 15th, according to China Legal News. The report said some 470 workers were in the factory that day.