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May Day 2014: Reviving The General Strike

By Staughton Lynd

On May 1, 1886, the first general strike in U.S. history brought workers into the streets on behalf of one simple demand: an eight-hour working day. Their anthem was:

"We want to feel the sunshine;
We want to smell the flowers;
We're sure (that) God has willed it
And we mean to have eight hours.

We're summoning our forces from
Shipyard, shop and mill;
Eight hours for work, eight hours for rest,
Eight hours for what we will."

As is the case in the movement of low-wage workers today, the movement for eight hours was characterized by skilled and less-skilled workers, and workers in different trades, making common cause.

On May 3, 1886, union members at the McCormick Reaper Works in Chicago, who had been locked out, confronted strike-breakers as they left the plant. A firefight broke out involving the police, and strikers were killed. In response a protest rally was called at a downtown open area called The Haymarket. The rally was peaceful, but as the meeting was coming to an end someone threw a bomb and seven policemen died. After a dramatic trial and unsuccessful appeals, four so-called "anarchists" were hanged.

This story became familiar to working-class movements all over the world. May 1 became international May Day. In Mexico City, it has been a tradition that every May Day translated excerpts from the last words of two of the executed men, Albert Parsons and August Spies, are read aloud to huge crowds in the central public square, or *zocalo*.

An excellent recent book by James Green, entitled "Death in the Haymarket," tells the story in more detail. Perhaps you, like myself, will be most moved by the fact that Parsons escaped the police dragnet, made his way to Wisconsin, changed his appearance, and then...came back to Chicago, walking into the courtroom so as to share the fate of his comrades.

Another General Strike?

There is a live possibility that within the year 2014 there will be another general strike in the United States.

It would not be a strike of the entire working-class. But it would be a strike, in many parts of the country, by prisoners, among them prisoners in "supermax" (highest security) prisons serving indefinite sentences in solitary confinement.

A statement circulated last fall by prisoners at the Pelican Bay supermax in California declared that they were "members of the working-class poor, warehoused in prisons." A dramatic example of the spreading insurgency is the hunger strike and court victory of Hispanic workers detained for deportation at the federal facility in Tacoma, Wash.

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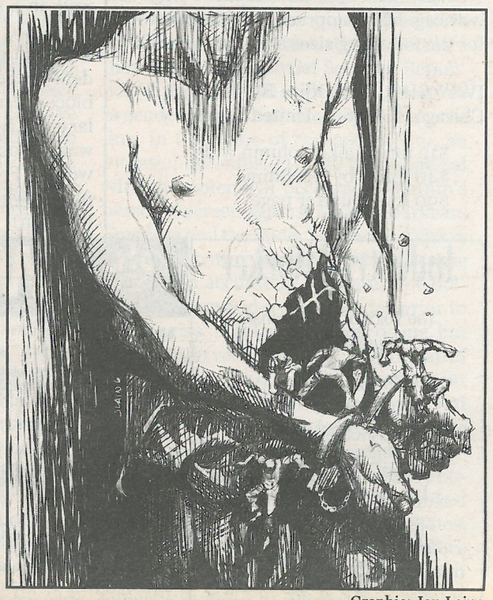

Graphic: Jon Laing

Penny Pixler: Loving Sister, Daughter, Aunt, Friend And Fellow Worker

FW Penny in 2008. Photo: The Pixler family

By the Denver IWW

Penny Lynne-Diane Pixler was born July 9, 1947 to Ivan and Doris (Gardner) Pixler in Spencer, Iowa. She graduated from the University of Iowa with a degree in Psychology in 1969. She also attended George Washington University's graduate school. Whether she brought her political activism to Washington, D.C. with her or honed it there in the capitol, she actively participated in the anti-Vietnam War movement. After living in Berkeley, Calif. for a time, she moved to Chicago where she continued her activist activities. As a member of the Chicago Women's Liberation Union (CWLU), she traveled with one of the first American tourist groups allowed in to China after former President Richard Nixon's opening of relations in 1972.

When the CWLU disbanded in 1977, Penny turned her activism for human rights to the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). She served for one year (1987) as the General-Secretary Treasurer (GST) and maintained her membership the remainder of her life, taking satisfaction in their solidarity and organizing successes. Uncompromising and steadfast in these ideals, she supported all union groups in their efforts to organize and prevail.

Penny earned a second degree in Physics and Education from Northeastern University and began teaching high school physics and mathematics in the Chicago Public School system. She actively participated in the Chicago Teachers Union and stood with them long after she retired.

Penny was an environmentalist from before she knew the word. She worked to restore the Cook County Forest Preserve prairie outside Chicago to its natural state before the white settlers came, often up to her hips in mud, setting wetland plants. She learned to distinguish frog calls in order to monitor parks in Chicago to check for re-habitation of cricket frogs in the ponds.

She hoped to become involved in similar pursuits after her move to Denver in the fall of 2013, but her metastasized breast cancer stopped responding to treatment and Penny lost her fight on March 29, 2014.

Penny's sister, Janis, recalls an example of the depth of her solidarity: "We were driving her cross-country in September 2013 to move from Chicago to Denver. It was hot and we stopped at a rest stop in Nebraska. The bottled water picture on the vending machine was Aquafina, but what was dispensed was a generic bottle from Walmart. Despite the money already spent, Penny tossed her bottle, took a sip from the drinking fountain, and said that was enough for her!"

Penny was preceded in death by her parents, and is survived by her sisters Barbara (Richard) Gielow and Janis (Tom) Lindsey, her brother Ivan (Patti) Pixler, as well as five nieces and nephews, four grand-nephews, and numerous friends and fellow workers.

Condolences or support can be sent to elevation9000@q.com.

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College Football Players Are Workers Too!

By Neil Parthun

"This will give a totally different meaning to wildcat strikes." - Sean Swain, in a letter to me

Months after the Bowl Championship Series National Champion was crowned in college football and as we prepare for the end of March Madness in Division I college basketball, players won a major victory off the court.

In late March, the Chicago regional chapter of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled that Northwestern University football players have the right to form a union if they desire and that the Wildcats team members should legally be considered employees.

The ruling from the NLRB stated that "...players receiving scholarships to perform football-related services for the Employer under a contract for hire in return for compensation are subject to the Employer's control and are therefore employees." It agreed with the argument that scholarships are payment for services

Graphic: Benjamin Ferguson

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Letters Welcome!

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IWW GHQ, Post Office Box 180195, Chicago, IL 60618, United States.

$12 for 1" tall, 1 column wide
$40 for 4" by 2 columns
$90 for a quarter page

Inspired By Rosa Luxemburg, From A Texas Prison

Dear *IW*,

Greetings from the Texas gulag. I want to send kudos out to Staughton Lynd for his inspiring little piece about Rosa Luxemburg who was obviously a real hero ("Rosa Luxemburg: A True Revolutionary," March *IW*, page 6).

I have spent the past several years here in "super seg" (administrative segregation: a cell that isolates the inmate from contact from others, restricts access to recreation facilities, commissary, and other services), studying the lives and works of revolutionaries of all stripes (not much else to do here but go crazy). I was particularly taken by Lynd's words: "When released from her cell for brief periods in which she might walk in a small courtyard, she was careful not to crush the structures made by ants and other burrowing insects." This demonstrates a particular sensitivity to biocentrism (to steal the words of a popular country song "back when [biocentrism] wasn't cool"). Also [I was moved by her words] "Freedom is always freedom for the person who thinks differently" (emphasis my own). These demonstrate a genuine reverie for life and freedom, not merely freedom to agree with us (which, after all, isn't freedom at all).

Graphic: IWW

I have learned over time the most important attributes a person can have are compassion and intelligence, but they must be combined to have meaning. Ms. Luxemburg obviously had both in abundance. I will make it a special point to study her.

Also, I want to thank everyone who contributes subscriptions of *IW* to prisoners: it really means a lot!

Peace!
Richard

Editor's note: ***Sponsor an* Industrial Worker *subscription for a prisoner!*** *The IWW often has fellow workers and allies in prison who write to us requesting a subscription to the* Industrial Worker, *the official newspaper of the IWW. This is your chance to show solidarity! For only $18 you can buy one full year's worth of working-class news from around the world for a fellow worker in prison. Just visit: http://store.iww.org/industrial-worker-sub-prisoner.html.*

On Resisting Patriarchy

Greetings to Luz Sierra,

I'm inspired by your courage to rise above systemic marginalization (see "Being A Woman Organizer Isn't Easy," March *IW*, page 1, 6). You are blessed with a spirit of resistance to patriarchal double standards. The personal is political. You are teaching your siblings by example that authoritarian conditioning can be neutralized. The seeds of liberation that you are sowing may encourage them to deprogram/reprogram their everyday lives. We all need to expose and confront the patriarchal institutions that distort our natural perceptions and play us off against each other. Our emancipation from bondage starts inside us and then moves out in all directions. When we trust our own instincts, and pursue our particular theories of liberation, it becomes easier to cope with friends and relatives who try to block our free flow of energy. We feel less alienated or isolated as we keep reaching out to other people who are also moving in positive ways and provide mutual aid for each other. Support networks are essential for promoting a socialist workers' revolution. Dare to struggle, dare to win.

Solidarity,
Neal Rysdahl

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Salt Lake City GMB: P.O. Box 1227, 84110. 801-871-9057. slciww@gmail.com

Vermont
Burlington GMB: c/o John MacLean, 204 N. Winooski Ave #Z, Burlington, 05401. 802-540-2561. macgilleain@gmail.com. Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/VTIWW

Virginia
Richmond IWW: P.O. Box 7055, 23221. 804-496-1568. richmondiww@gmail.com, www.richmondiww.org

Washington
Tacoma GMB: P.O. Box 7276, 98401. TacIWW@iww.org. http://tacoma.iww.org
Seattle GMB: 1122 E. Pike #1142, 98122-3934. 206-429-5285. seattleiww@gmail.com. www.seattleiww.org, www.seattle.net

Wisconsin
Madison GMB: P.O. Box 2442, 53701-2442. www.madison.iww.org
IUB 560 - Communications and Computer Workers: P.O. Box 259279, Madison 53725. 608-620-IWW1. Madisoniub560@iww.org. www.Madisoniub560.iww.org
Lakeside Press IU 450 Job Shop: 1334 Williamson, 53703. 608-255-1800. Jerry Chernow, del., jerry@lakesidepress.org. www.lakesidepress.org
Madison Infoshop Job Shop:1019 Williamson St. #B, 53703. 608-262-9036
Just Coffee Job Shop IU 460: 1129 E. Wilson, Madison, 53703. 608-204-9011, justcoffee.coop
Railroad Workers IU 520: 608-358-5771. railfalcon@yahoo.com
Milwaukee GMB: 1750 A N Astor St., 53207. Trevor Smith, 414-573-4992. www.facebook.com/milwaukeeiww
Northwoods IWW: P.O. Box 452, Stevens Point, 54481

Readers' Soapbox

Reflections On The Brick: A Wobbly Reader Of Marx

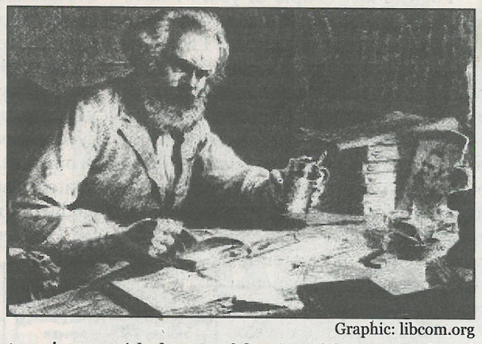
By Andrew Stewart

My congratulations and expressions of hearty solidarity with Fellow Worker (FW) Lou Rinaldi regarding his astute review of Karl Marx's "Capital" in last month's issue ("The Best Brick You'll Ever Read: Why Wobblies Should Read 'Capital,'" April *IW*, page 10). I have been feeling many of the same opinions myself in my own journey, not just through life as a laborer but as specifically one who, restrained by physical impairment, labors in the academic discipline. It is impossible to avoid Marx when slogging through the early part of graduate school and the rather shallow refutation of Marx I sometimes hear from certain radical circles is likewise preposterous. However, in the matter of biography and the now rather infamous confrontation between Marx, Friedrich Engels, and Mikhail Bakunin, it is also important to grasp why and how mythology and reality separate in this strange tale of the ongoing confrontation between communism and the Wobbly brand of industrial organization, and indeed if Bakunin himself was truly in the same line of philosophy as the modern Wobbly may believe.

Of course, many have already defined the historical origins of the Wobblies much more astutely. Theodore Draper's "The Roots of American Communism," a history of American unionism from its post-Civil War birth until 1923, notes: "The I.W.W. accepted violence as a natural and inevitable part of the organizing job. It owed much less to the tradition handed down by the old Bakuninist immigrant intellectuals than to the gun-toting morality generally prevalent in the Western states. Some European theories happened to fit into the I.W.W.'s practice, but the practice would have existed without the theories." The honest reality is that the outlaw spirit of the West, especially in the era between 1865 and 1895, when the Native Americans were most brutally exterminated and finally defeated, truly was the force that spawned the original Wobblies—men and women who were witnesses to some of the most brutal colonialism and capitalist expansion in American history up until that point. But Bakunin's points, even though they may in fact differentiate from the Wobbly vision, do also carry some relevant insights.

To begin: in one of his copious footnotes in Volume 1 of "Capital," Marx writes an aside about why he believes the notions of direct barter and of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon in general are "philistine" and utopian. Indeed, despite writing a rebuttal to Proudhon years earlier with Engels, Marx constantly was haunted by hanger-on followers, calling themselves "Marxists," who were proposing ideas melding Proudhon and other thinkers into a miasma of mystical social organizations. Marx was trying to propose an observational theory, rather, and hated these people so much he once proclaimed, "Thankfully, I am not a Marxist!" Marx was not positioning himself or anyone for any leadership in a dictatorship; he rather insisted that the only seed that would bloom into the real and only effective rival of capital was the proletarian class. "Capital" is a book based essentially on dissection, on observational research, and most importantly, non-interference and objectivity of the researcher. In Marx's case, he does not write a book called "Socialism," showing his notion of scientific socialism is to be made real; instead, he shows how the most brutal, the most scandalous, the most oppressive form of business capital will finally cause a reaction in response by the proletariat which will completely undermine the norms of social organization itself. Proudhon's notion of barter and invocations of mysticism in "The Philosophy of Poverty" are not unlike the writings of his contemporary poets, especially Percy Bysshe Shelley. This sort of religious nonsense only hinders the scientific maturation of the proletariat, a maturation created by radicalization and education about the concepts Marx so brilliantly explains.

So what of the infamous Bakunin-Marx feud? Partly this extends from personality; Marx was a family man and Bakunin was, in his more rambunctious moments, a drunken mess, prone to crude behavior and vulgarity. And partly this extends from the vision Marx held; he believed the proper way to scientifically create a socialist society would be based on an electoral success of the German Social Democrats who in turn would rely on his work to lead the revolution. In that regard, Germany is no longer the international power it once was, the Social Democrats are no longer a radical party, and so the Marxist notion of German revolutionary primacy is outdated. Instead, Marx would have been forced to re-direct his intentions to either America, as the center of capital, or perhaps to the post-colonial world, as Vladimir Lenin later tried through the Comintern. What is certain in reality is that his opposition to Bakunin stemmed from electoral and political motivations; Marx wanted to legitimate his program through the German Reichstag, and also Bakunin's "parties-within-parties," secret cadres of specially chosen revolutionaries, which ironically bore more resemblance to the Leninist vanguard party than meets the eye. His intent to form an "International Alliance of Social-Democracy" that would function from within the greater International Workingmen's Association as a conspiratorial and secretive sub-division of the body was both absurd and counter-productive, a strategy taken from the era of Freemasonry and secret societies.



Graphic: libcom.org

A century later, publishers in the United Kingdom and United States began to re-issue these writings simultaneously with the era of the rise of the New Left and the Frankfurt School. In some regards, academically most of all, these publications carried historical insights about the true nature of Marx's thought and showed he was in fact a philosopher whose work was far more applicable to the modern era than the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) let on, especially in regards to gender theory. But somewhere along the line, in the name of commercialism, an intentional confusion of the philosophical with the polemical occurred. Bakunin's personal screed against Marx, "Marxism, Freedom and the State," an enraged vision of utopia lost, is haunting today because it portrays accurately the nature of Bolshevism four-and-a-half decades prior to Lenin's rise. This fact is not lost on me, but the Bakunin version of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" is quite strikingly different from that of Marx 's, whereas Lenin and Bakunin's are identical. In this sense, the publishing industry tried to equate Leninism with Marxism, for a reason exactly opposite to the one that the U.S.S.R. invoked Marx for at that time. In the United States, Marx equated with Lenin was therefore negative and totalitarian, whereas Lenin equated to Marx in the U.S.S.R. was intended to propose a nominal notion of social and political freedom. But through the insight of FW Rinaldi, perhaps further scholarship like his into the corpus that is pre-Leninist Socialist literature will promote a wider respect not just of Marxist insights into labor issues but indeed a greater understanding of how to most effectively communicate these messages to the working class.

Readers' Soapbox continues on 15.

IWW Constitution Preamble

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life. Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the earth.

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

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

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

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

Join the IWW Today

The IWW is a union for all workers, a union dedicated to organizing on the job, in our industries and in our communities both to win better conditions today and to build a world without bosses, a world in which production and distribution are organized by workers ourselves to meet the needs of the entire population, not merely a handful of exploiters.

We are the Industrial Workers of the World because we organize industrially – that is to say, we organize all workers on the job into one union, rather than dividing workers by trade, so that we can pool our strength to fight the bosses together.

Since the IWW was founded in 1905, we have recognized the need to build a truly international union movement in order to confront the global power of the bosses and in order to strengthen workers' ability to stand in solidarity with our fellow workers no matter what part of the globe they happen to live on.

We are a union open to all workers, whether or not the IWW happens to have representation rights in your workplace. We organize the worker, not the job, recognizing that unionism is not about government certification or employer recognition but about workers coming together to address our common concerns. Sometimes this means striking or signing a contract. Sometimes it means refusing to work with an unsafe machine or following the bosses' orders so literally that nothing gets done. Sometimes it means agitating around particular issues or grievances in a specific workplace, or across an industry.

Because the IWW is a democratic, member-run union, decisions about what issues to address and what tactics to pursue are made by the workers directly involved.

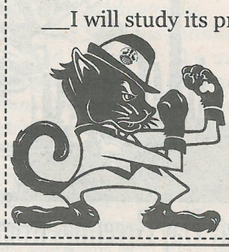
TO JOIN: Mail this form with a check or money order for initiation and your first month's dues to: IWW, Post Office Box 180195, Chicago, IL 60618, USA.

Initiation is the same as one month's dues. Our dues are calculated according to your income. If your monthly income is under $2000, dues are $9 a month. If your monthly income is between $2000 and $3500, dues are $18 a month. If your monthly income is over $3500 a month, dues are $27 a month. Dues may vary outside of North America and in Regional Organizing Committees (Australia, British Isles, German Language Area).

__I affirm that I am a worker, and that I am not an employer.

__I agree to abide by the IWW constitution.

__I will study its principles and acquaint myself with its purposes.



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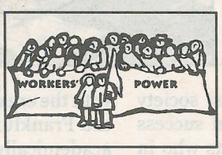
What's Wobbly About It?

By X347979

For the last couple of years I have been involved in an organizing campaign at my workplace. The company I work for is large and there are a number of craft-based unions present in it. My craft, however, doesn't have a union and we aren't eligible for representation through the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) process. Nonetheless, we have managed to build up an organizing committee with approximately 30 active members and have begun our first public campaign around a particular set of grievances.



I haven't tried to develop our organizing campaign into an IWW campaign for two reasons. The first is the sharply ideological nature of my craft. People have very strong opinions and are uncritical of the capitalist system. In addition, they tend to come from wealthy backgrounds and are not open to discussions around class war. Instead of changing the economic system most of my co-workers want to fix it.

My first reason, however, is significantly less important than my second one. There are several people in the organizing committee who think we should affiliate with one of the large AFL-CIO or Change to Win Federation unions. I know that if I pushed for an affiliation with the IWW, those who want to affiliate with a large business union would quickly win the argument and we would end up being part of another union. The situation that has resulted is a stalemate. We aren't affiliated with anyone and we aren't seeking affiliation.

Several of my co-workers know about my previous experiences organizing with the IWW. Recently, I had a conversation with one of them about what we were doing and my approach to building our organization. I told him that even though we weren't affiliated with the IWW I thought that our organizing was, thus far, very much in the style of the IWW. So, he asked me, "What's Wobbly about it?" Several things I told him: we run our organization democratically; we treat every member as an organizer; our organization is built on the strength of our relationships with each other; and we are not, currently, seeking formal recognition from our employer, instead we are organizing around grievances. None of this makes our organization a revolutionary union but it does make our organization one with radical potential. To see how, let me explain, briefly, how the union works.

We have an organizing meeting once a week for an hour. The meeting is open to everyone who works at our company and in our craft, who someone in the union has invited to attend. Meeting sizes range from slightly more than 10 to slightly less than 25. The meeting is run by a chair. The chair rotates week to week and while the agenda is set in advance, any member can place an item on it. Decisions at the meeting require a two-thirds majority and the meeting only has authority with respect to how the union relates to external bodies: management, the press and other unions. In other instances members are encouraged to take action around specific issues that affect them. As a result, members engage in small organizing projects that intrigue them and cooperate on the larger ones.

In addition, we hold semi-regular organizer trainings. Not everyone attends these but they are designed to help members grow into organizers. Everyone is encouraged to bring other people into the union and the emphasis on this has meant that the organization has grown organically. It also means that people are beginning to see the union not as some abstract body but, instead, as made up of the relationships they have with each other. Standing up to management becomes, in part, an issue of standing up for friends. People end up committed to the union not because they are committed to some set of abstract ideas or even improving their working conditions. They end up committed because they are committed to each other.

I hope that this structure means that people won't think of the union we're building as a workplace-specific organization. Instead, I hope that they will come to think of it as a way of being in the world. If being part of a union means developing a certain kind of relationship with one's co-workers, then that attitude becomes something that is transferred from workplace to workplace, as people change jobs. And that infuses even a non-revolutionary union with revolutionary potential. And that's what's Wobbly about it!

End Dangerous Railroad Practices

By Ron Kaminkow,
Railroad Workers United (RWU)

The last year has witnessed a number of long and heavy train wrecks, resulting in a loss of life and property, wholesale evacuations, injured train crews and environmental devastation. Nevertheless, the rail carriers have a professed interest in continuing to operate such long and heavy trains—and even expand upon this trend—as a way to make perceived savings on fuel, motive power and labor costs.

Such overly long and heavy trains create an unsafe situation for many reasons. It takes far more time and distance to slow or to stop such a train. And the longer and heavier the train, the more severe the "slack action," thereby increasing the potential for a train break-in-two, emergency brake applications and derailments. In addition, the longer and heavier the train, the more severe the train wreck if and when such a train does derail. Long trains are more likely to have air brake problems, especially in cold and inclement weather. And all things considered, it is more difficult for the train crew to safely run, inspect, work, test, and otherwise operate such a train. Therefore, it follows that reducing train length and tonnage would undoubtedly result in an all-around "risk reduction" for the train and its crew.

The longer and heavier the train, the greater likelihood of blocked road and pedestrian crossings, creating at best an inconvenience to the public, and at worst the inability to provide emergency services when crossings are blocked. In addition, blocked crossings in effect "train" motorists to "run the gates" in order to avoid being impeded for what might be long periods, resulting in grade crossing accidents and fatalities.

Finally, such trains tend to increase the number of hours the train's crew spends getting the train in and out of the terminal and over the road, making for exhausting hours of duty for train crews. The result is more crew fatigue, reduced situational awareness, more time at the away-from-home terminal, and a lower quality of work and home life for trainmen and engineers.

Therefore, Railroad Workers United (RWU) opposes any expansion of the current length and tonnage of existing trains. Furthermore, we support a reduction in the length and tonnage of already existing trains, especially those hauling hazardous materials, traversing steep grades and/or operating in very cold temperatures. We expect that these goals can be achieved through both legislative efforts and at the bargaining table.

May Day

May Day, May Day, that's the real workers' day
Labour's history says don't trade your day away
We won't go out with the bosses,
Stuff Labour day up their asses,
And we'll look sweet when we take the street
in the glorious month of May
(Tune: "Daisy, Daisy";
Words: Smokey Dymny, May 1,1989)

WOMEN WORKERS' HISTORY

Chapter 72
New Bedford's 'Courageous Women'

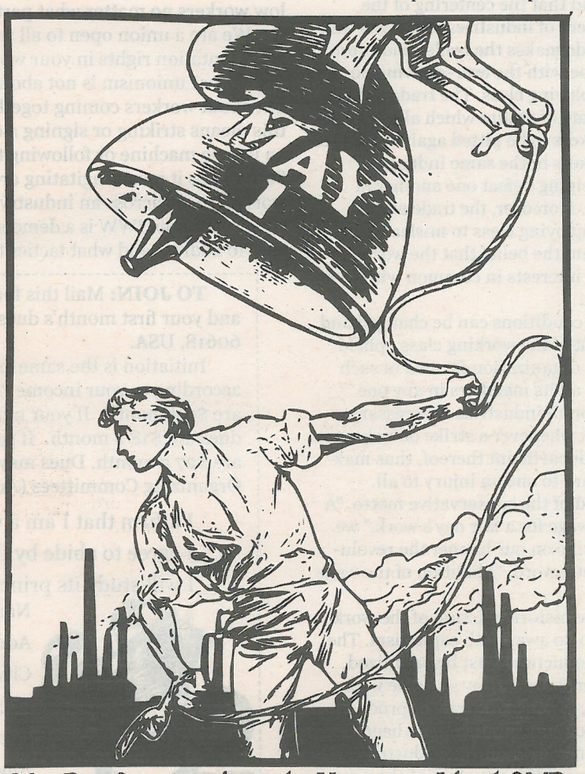
Wages were already low in the cotton textile mills of New Bedford, Mass. in April 1928 when the manufacturers slashed wages by 10 percent. The 5,000 skilled workers, represented by several unions affiliated to the American Federation of Labor, went on strike to restore the 10 percent.

The mills also employed some 27,000 unorganized workers, more them half of them women, who were urged to strike by the radical-led Textile Mill Committee. And strike they did, united behind the TMC's demand for a 20% wage increase and equal pay for equal work. Production stopped in 58 mills owned by 27 companies. Headlines in the *New Bedford Evening Standard* revealed that "Four Out of Five Pickets Women." Veteran organizer Ann Washington Craton, who came to assist the strikers, said: "Women are better at this sort of thing than the men. They are more courageous."

A showdown came on July 9, when the employers tried to open the mills. The owners turned to the law. The strikers held out despite mass arrests and the intervention of armed troops. The strike spread to nearby Fall River. And in September, New Bedford and Fall River strikers attended the founding convention of the National Textile Workers Union.

The AFL unions agreed to accept a five percent wage cut. The National Textile Workers Union fdught on, but was forced to call off the strike in October with winter coming and the mass arrests of activists and supporters. The courageous women strikers had brought to birth a fighting new union and had helped stop the wage-cut trend.

Graphic: Mike Konopacki



May Day Greetings from the Vancouver Island GMB

Wobbly & North American News

Around The Union: Victory For Toronto IWW, Progress For Other Wobbly Branches

Compiled by FN Brill

The **Chicago General Membership Branch (GMB)** recently opened a storefront office located at 1700 S Loomis Street, which seeks to aid both internal and external organization. Salting and organizing work have been underway within the food service industry, and workplace committees have been formed. The **Mobile Rail Workers Union** is still negotiating a contract; we have so far made it clear that a "no-strike" clause will not and cannot be included. We have also rejected an arbitration clause. One of our head organizers was fired (again) for whistle blowing to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) on safety violations by the employer. Organization and agitation is ongoing.

The **Ottawa-Outaouais GMB** currently has two slow-boil campaigns going on: one in coffee and another in retail. The committees in each are still in the early days of their formation. A fellow worker (FW) was organizing his workplace until he and all others were recently laid off. Due to the fact that their employer is a temporary agency and the work is cyclical (numerous recalls over the years), organizing is difficult and now on hold. However, many one-on-one conversations have been had and many workers expressed an interest in organizing, some of whom are long-term and permanent workers. The GMB continues having discussions on the establishment of a temporary worker cooperative as a way of retaining and helping to organize and train temporary workers. All of the IWW members involved in these campaigns have attended the Organizer Training (OT) 101.

Regarding wage reclamation, unfair dismissal, and other casework, the Ottawa-Outaouais GMB has successfully settled a number of cases on favorable terms for our membership. We have one new case which is at the investigative stage at this point. Retaining membership from our casework, which often involves supporting individual workers and rarely has any association to ongoing organizing in the shops involved due to the nature of the work, has been an ongoing challenge. On the other hand, this organizing has also given many of us a lot of valuable experience in fighting and winning campaigns, legal knowledge, tactical knowledge, as well as profile in the community as an organization that gets the goods, and has attracted new GMB members.

Ottawa-Outaouais Wobs are also planning to outreach to seasonal agricultural workers in areas east of Ottawa, based on an earlier request for specific support from the community and in alliance with other groups working with non-status and migrant workers. FW Rivas is our lead on this work, which will involve leafleting and postering in town where the workers come to shop on the weekend.

Not unsurprisingly, the Ottawa-Outaouais GMB also continues to grow, with six to seven new members joining in the past few months. Most are activists in the local labor and radical communities who support what we are doing and want to get involved. And some have come to us for casework support (who hopefully we will retain). We are trying to improve on our processes and reporting. Branch meetings have had (for us) a healthy attendance rate of 10 to 15 people lately, although that is not the only indicator of membership involvement in the organization.

Toronto Wobs celebrate. Photo: Toronto IWW

Wobblies in Portland, Ore., report their High $5 Campaign is getting underway. The goal is to get all low-wage workers a $5 per hour raise. We have been doing foundational work and training for about 10 months and have recently been doing a lot of canvassing. Our going public is a few months off yet, but we're making steady progress. Find out more at http://www.high5pdx.org.

Toronto IWWs are happy to report a victory in their first wage theft case! FW Jordan says: "In January our Solidarity Committee was contacted by Mohamed, a general laborer who found short-term contract work through an unregistered temp agency (a.k.a. job shark!) in North York, Ontario. On Wednesday, Feb. 19, Mohamed, the Solidarity Committee and its supporters confronted the boss and produced a demand letter detailing the specific jobs Mohamed had worked and the total sum of $230 in unpaid wages. Following a series of phone zaps and escalating actions at the office itself (including nearly getting the temp agency evicted from its premises), the dispute finally came to its close on March 29, with Mohamed getting paid and joining the union!"

The **Albuquerque IWW** is developing a Workers' Rights 101 workshop. The workshop outlines what relief the state provides for workers' grievances (it ain't much) and then offers a short introduction to the Wobbly outlook on organizing as the best protection. Additionally, members in our branch have an organizing presence in the K-12 education sector. We have forged connections with teachers from schools across our district, and we are refining an organizing focus which confronts day-to-day workplace issues as well as major changes to public education.

Vermont Bus Drivers Strike An Impressive Victory

By Matt Dubé

The 59 bus drivers employed by the Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA) in Burlington, Vt., ended their three-week strike with a victory on April 3. Armed with strong union solidarity as well as broad community support, the workers, members of Teamsters Local 597, were able to win on almost all their demands. The bus service which is critical to this Vermont community resumed on April 4, after the CCTA management ratified a new collective bargaining agreement.

The negotiations had been dragging on for almost a year; the drivers had been without an agreement since June 30, 2013. Reasonably exasperated by the lack of progress, the drivers walked off the job on March 17. The workers, who drive in the hard weather conditions of northwestern Vermont, were opposed to the modifications that CCTA management was proposing which would have made their work unsafe both for them and for the users of the bus service. The workers have split shifts, one each in the morning, afternoon and evening with a maximum of total 12.5 daily hours. Management wanted to increase this maximum to 13.5 hours. They also wanted to increase the mandatory overtime for the drivers to a 15-hour day. The agreement keeps the split shifts at 12.5 hours and includes restrictions on mandatory overtime to limit it to 13.5 hours. The workers also won provisions against what they described as "predatory practices" by supervisors' surveillance of their work. Management is using cameras in the buses and issuing reprimands for the silliest things such as when the workers were deemed to take too many bathroom breaks. The management also wanted to slowly replace permanent workers who voluntarily leave, to retire, for instance, with part-time workers. The agreement, while allowing up to 15 part-time positions, prevents management from gradually replacing permanent jobs with part-time ones. Finally, the workers won a 2 percent salary raise per year for the three-year duration of the contract. The workers stood united regarding the compensation given to them as a result of having worked without a contract for nine months. Although the raise will not be retroactive, they will receive a one-time payment. Management offered that this payment would only go to workers who had been employed for a year or more. The workers refused and insisted that all workers, including the recent hires, receive compensation and they won on this demand as well.

Photo: We Support the CCTA Drivers
Community picket for drivers.

The community rallied around the workers and showed support. Two groups whose members were directly affected by the strike, the University of Vermont student body and a group of educators in Chittenden County, wrote letters in solidarity with the workers demanding a change in the CCTA management's attitude towards the workers. Numerous people from the community participated in the pickets of the drivers as well as several of their rallies. Community groups leafleted in Burlington in support for the drivers and the people's responses were almost unanimously in favor of the workers' demands. Rob Slingerland, one of the striking drivers, had this to say about the backing the workers received: "I couldn't begin to remember everybody who supported us—there were so many. But a heartfelt thanks to everyone—because we couldn't have done it without all that support."

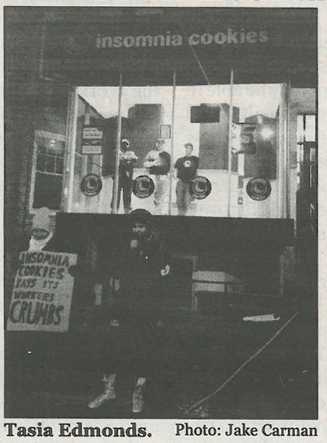
Boston IWW Makes Gains, Continues Drive At Insomnia Cookies

By Jake Carman

The Boston IWW achieved two victories at Insomnia Cookies in March, seven months after workers at the fast food chain's Harvard Square location began a wildcat strike for higher wages, benefits and union recognition. On March 3, the union won a settlement resolving the strike, and on March 20, forced the company to revoke the suspension of a union organizer at their Boston University store (see "Striking Workers At Boston Insomnia Cookies Win Settlement," April *IW*, page 1, 6).

On March 9, just six days after the settlement, the company suspended bicycle delivery "driver" and union organizer Tasia Edmonds. Edmonds was disciplined for speaking out against workplace injustices, which the boss called "insubordination." The IWW claimed the company violated the terms of the settlement, in which Insomnia Cookies promised "WE WILL NOT fire you or take any other action against you because you engage in protected activities with your fellow employees that concern your wages, hours and working conditions, including a strike."

"I believe I was suspended for my union involvement," said Edmonds, a 22-year-old who has worked for the company for five months. "I have never been disciplined before. I was not served any paperwork detailing why I was suspended. A few days after my suspension, the company even called me to ask for my story, as if they were asking me why they suspended me and didn't even know themselves." Edmonds went public with her union affiliation on Dec. 7, 2013. In February, according to the union, a new manager began harassing her about her union membership.



Tasia Edmonds. Photo: Jake Carman

After the suspension, the union jumped to action. The union filed new charges against the company with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) on March 12, and launched a phone and email blitz. Two dozen IWW members and allies picketed the Insomnia Cookies location on Commonwealth Ave. in Boston, where Edmonds is employed, on March 14. Workers and allies held signs, sang songs, and handed out fliers demanding the company bring back Edmonds, make up for any lost wages, and uphold the promises outlined in the recent settlement. Edmonds addressed the rally, speaking about life working at Insomnia Cookies, while the manager who suspended her and a new security guard subcontracted through Securitas glowered down from the window above. Alberto Giorgio Peniche, from Boston Resist the Raids, also expressed his solidarity with Edmonds and other fast-food employees, drawing connections with the struggles of undocumented workers. After almost two hours of rallying, the IWW promised to return with double the numbers. "Are you tired of having us in your face?" they chanted. "Then get some justice in this place!"

Organizers planned another rally after student allies from the abutting Boston University returned from spring break, but the company capitulated on March 20, ending Edmonds' suspension.

While Insomnia has reinstated Edmonds, as of press time there is no confirmation that she will receive back pay for time lost during her suspension. The union is prepared to fight to win Edmonds' lost wages, and to ensure Insomnia Cookies sticks to its promise not to discipline or intimidate workers for union organizing.

According to a recent leaflet produced by the union, along with the strike settlement and Edmonds' reinstatement, IWW workers at Insomnia have won several other demands. Through the two-pronged approach of direct action tactics and legal charges with the NLRB, the union is "making the workplace better for employees today. These victories include: minimum wage compensation for drivers, reimbursement for damaged property of 'independent contractors,' and a management more willing to consider the needs of the workers."

The IWW plans to continue their drive and keep winning demands. The same leaflet says that by organizing together in union, "Workers at Insomnia Cookies can win sick pay, vacation pay, a substantial raise, fair scheduling, consistent breaks, the end of 'independent contractor' status for drivers, workers' compensation, healthcare and other benefits."

Special

Gauging Organized Labor: An Interview With Staughton Lynd

By Andy Piascik and Staughton Lynd

For more than 50 years, Staughton Lynd has been a leading radical in the United States. He was an engaged supporter of the Black Liberation Movement in the Deep South in the early 1960s, most notably as coordinator of the Freedom Schools during Mississippi Summer in 1964. He was an active opponent of U.S. aggression in Indochina, including as chairperson of the first national demonstration against the war in Vietnam in April 1965. In recent decades, Lynd has been an attorney representing prisoners, particularly at the Ohio State Penitentiary in Youngstown, and has written a book, a play and numerous articles about the 1993 uprising at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility in Lucasville.

Since the late 1960s, Lynd has also been deeply involved in the labor movement as an activist, attorney and prolific writer. Inspired by Marty Glaberman, Stan Weir and Ed Mann, Lynd has been a passionate and prolific proponent of decentralized, rank-and-file driven unionism. In November 2014, Haymarket Books will publish a book by Lynd entitled "Doing History from the Bottom Up: On E.P. Thompson, Howard Zinn, and Rebuilding the Labor Movement from Below." A new edition of his book "Solidarity Unionism: Rebuilding the Labor Movement from Below" with an introduction by radical labor scholar and activist Immanuel Ness will be published by PM Press in the spring of 2015.

Andy Piascik (AP): What is your general view of the state of organized labor in the United States today?

Staughton Lynd (SL): My general view, like that of everyone else, is that the labor movement is in catastrophic decline. My particular view is that the reason for this decline is not the Supreme Court, or the McCarthy period, or anything that might be remedied by changing the top leadership of unions, but the model of trade union organizing that has existed in all CIO [Congress of Industrial Organizations] unions since 1935. The critical elements of this model are: 1) exclusive representation of a bargaining unit by a single union; 2) the dues check-off, whereby the employer deducts dues for the union from the paycheck of every member of the bargaining unit; 3) a clause prohibiting strikes and slowdowns for the duration of the contract; and 4) a "management prerogatives" clause giving the employer the right to make investment decisions unilaterally.

In combination, these clauses in the typical CIO contract give the employer the right to close the plant and prevent the workers from doing anything about it. So long as collective bargaining agreements conform to this template, the election of a Miller, a Sadlowski, a Carey, a Sweeney or a Trumka will not bring about fundamental change.

AP: You have written extensively about the working-class upheaval of the 1930s, both the early years of the decade and the formation of the CIO. How and why was the CIO consolidated as a top-down organization?

SL: It tends to be forgotten that the CIO was created by John L. Lewis. There is now a significant body of scholarship to the effect that 1) Lewis centralized the administration of the UMW [United Mine Workers of America] so as to minimize the traditional influence of local unions and ran the national union in an altogether high-handed manner; 2) Lewis went out of his way to assure the business community that if they bargained with the CIO such phenomena as wildcat strikes would become a thing of the past; 3) many liberals and radicals such as Roger Baldwin of the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] opposed the Wagner Act, believing correctly that the result would be exactly what has occurred and that alternatives such as the Progressive Miners in southern Illinois would be steamrollered; and 4) contrary to popular belief, the revival of unionism among miners began from below before the passage of the National Recovery Act with its Section 7 during the spring of 1933 and the long-lasting miners' strike the following summer was created and persisted in by rank-and-file miners despite endless attempts by Lewis and his lieutenant Philip Murray to settle it from above.

AP: You consistently underscore the importance of local initiatives. What do such initiatives look like in practice and why might they be more fruitful than national reform campaigns?

SL: At first glance any imaginable agglomeration of local groups appears helpless in contrast to gigantic international corporations. Indeed, in my early struggles with this dilemma, I highlighted the absence in the steel industry in the 1930s of effective coordination between new local unions improvised by the rank and file in a variety of locations.

The same problem presents itself today as low-wage workers in a variety of communities are simultaneously assisted, but also managed, by existing national unions like the UFCW [United Food and Commercial Workers] and SEIU [Service Employees International Union]. For the moment, the unions say they only want to help these workers win specific demands through direct action. Down the road, however, these same unions may seek to make local direct actions serve as stepping stones to their familiar objective: exclusive bargaining status, complete with dues check-off and no-strike clause[s].

I have come to feel that the sense of helplessness experienced by local groups may be exaggerated, even illusory. In a single workplace, workers in a particular strategic unit or department may be able to bring the entire enterprise to a halt. Vicki Starr (a.k.a. Stella Nowicki) described how this was true when the "beef kill" stopped work in the Chicago stockyards in the 1930s ("Rank and File: Personal Histories by Working-Class Organizers," Haymarket Books, 2012).

Something like that occurred at the giant Walmart warehouse in Elwood, Ill., near Chicago, two years ago. That particular warehouse handled most of the products flowing into the multitudinous Walmart distribution points throughout the United States. So severe was the disruption caused when these particular workers walked out for a couple of weeks over local grievances that the company not only granted some of their demands but also welcomed them back to work and paid back pay for the time they were on strike! Thus even when confronted with the challenge of national coordination, inquiry circles back to the willingness of small groups of workers in particular critical segments of the production or distribution process to stop work.

Energy should go into building strong nuclei of self-activity on the workplace floor. Stan Weir called such entities "informal work groups." He was convinced that such groupings come into being wherever humans bring work together and develop leadership of a sort from below, as needed. Energy should not go into electing new top officials.

Alice and Staughton Lynd. Photo: ohiocitizen.org

AP: Would you elaborate on the drawbacks of the "exclusive representation" stipulation in the NLRA [National Labor Relations Act]?

SL: There are at least three or four drawbacks to the idea of exclusive representation:

1) The initial contact between a union organizer and a group of workers involves activities meaningless in themselves, such as collecting signatures on cards or petitions which are then forwarded to the NLRB [National Labor Relations Board]. The obvious alternative is to build solidarity, what Stan Weir called creating a "family at work," by means of small direct actions.

2) Once a union is successful in winning a representation election pursuant to Section 9 of the NLRA (now LMRA [Labor Management Relations Act]), it becomes extremely difficult for a group of workers to "decertify," that is, to choose another union to represent them. In contrast, in Nicaragua during the 1980s, a union was selected only for the duration of a single contract, at the expiration of which there was a new election to choose a union to negotiate the next contract.

3) Self-evidently, the Section 9 process made it seem impossible for a minority of workers to do anything meaningful until it became a majority. As everyone knows this need not be the case, in a workplace or any other setting. The idea of "minority" or "members-only" unionism has accordingly been gaining ground. Its leading exponent is Professor Charles Morris, who argues that under the NLRA as originally conceived, the employer had a legal obligation to bargain with any group of workers, even if was not a majority ("The Blue Eagle at Work: Reclaiming Democratic Rights in the Workplace," ILR Press, 2005). Thus a group in a particular department that was strategic in the enterprise could successfully bargain for better terms for itself. If successful, other workers would be drawn to join the union.

The main problem with Professor Morris' perspective is that he makes it quite clear that bargaining status for a minority union is only a stepping stone to becoming an exclusive representative. It is my understanding that in many European countries there can be many minority unions, each aligned with a different national political tendency. Such unions may join together for bargaining purposes.

4) I think the right has a point when it says that existing law and practice strips away the dimension of voluntariness from union membership.

AP: How about automatic dues check-off? It's taken almost as gospel among progressives and radicals, not just bureaucrats, that it's essential to the survival of unions.

SL: When Alice and I did interviews for what became "Rank and File," roughly in 1970, we asked: What do you think is the main reason for the failure of CIO unionism to fulfill its promise? The answer that received more support than any other was, "The dues check-off."

Sylvia Woods said that in her UAW [United Automobile Workers] local at Bendix during World War II, they deliberately did not seek the check-off because what happens when you have it is: everybody sits on their duffs and nobody does anything ("Rank and File: Personal Histories by Working-Class Organizers," Haymarket Books, 2012). The argument for dues check-off is inseparable from the argument for exclusive bargaining status. If you believe that a voluntary minority can accomplish more than an involuntary majority, the check-off recedes in importance.

Moreover, absent the check-off there is of necessity a greater tendency for activists to stay in the workplace rather than seeking a desk at "union headquarters" in a separate building.

AP: Given the severe constraints of no-strike and management prerogative clauses, why is there virtually no discussion even among rank-and-file oriented unionists of the need to get rid of or even modify them?

SL: I have asked myself this question over the years. I believe that the Wagner Act is Exhibit 1 for many radicals and liberals looking back on the successes and failures of the New Deal and of their own lives. I think of my own father, Robert S. Lynd. As a member of the governing board of the 20th Century Fund in the 1930s, he critiqued the Wagner Act for mistakenly presuming that the act would equalize the bargaining power of management and labor. Yet at a UAW educational conference after World War II, my dad delivered a speech that was well-received by the delegates and, according to Victor Reuther, reprinted as a pamphlet by the UAW because of insistent rank-and-file demand. Therein my father said that organized labor was the only force big enough to counter big business and that the country would move toward socialism or fascism depending on the outcome of this confrontation.

Roger Baldwin of the ACLU, on the other hand, opposed the Wagner Act because he saw how Lewis would use the mechanism of exclusive representation to squeeze the life out of the Progressive Miners in southern Illinois, the union actually preferred by the membership. See Cletus Daniels' book on the ACLU in the 1930s ("The ACLU and the Wagner Act: An Inquiry Into the Depression-Era Crisis of American Liberalism," ILR Press, 1980).

It is always easier to blame someone for the failure of a cherished remedy to deliver a solution than it is to critique the remedy itself. It is especially puzzling that folk on the left have been so insensitive to the dictatorial heavy hand that John L. Lewis laid on dissidents within his own union, and on naysayers within nascent

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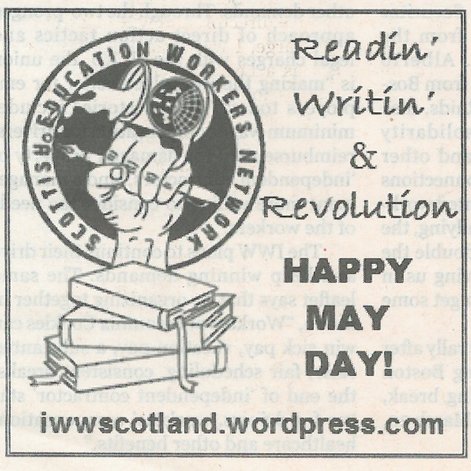

Special

Gauging Organized Labor: An Interview With Staughton Lynd

Continued from previous page

CIO unions. When an initial convention of the UAW voted not to support [Franklin D.] Roosevelt in 1936 and to look toward a new labor party, Lewis prevailed through UAW President Homer Martin and CIO staff man Adolph Germer to have that vote reversed.

In truth, we live through the cycle of over-adulation of a leader, followed by disillusion with his or her performance, over and over. Labor historians and union staffers sequentially idolize Lewis, Reuther and Murray, followed by Arnold Miller, Sadlowski, Sweeney, Carey, Trumka and others, only to recognize when the smoke clears that the structure of unionism in the United States has not changed...but to go looking for another maximum leader! As we sang in the 1960s, "When will they ever learn?"

AP: What experiences did you have with unions that led you to your present conclusions?

SL: Let me describe three experiences:

1) Around 1969 or 1970, while still living in Chicago, I attended with some friends a Labor Against The War gathering at the hall of Harold Gibbons' Teamsters local in St. Louis. The occasion was sponsored and steered by top national officers such as the Foners, Emil Mazey, Jerry Wurf, and as it turned out, Harry Bridges. The labor movement was five years late in opposing the Vietnam War, leaders like Walter Reuther having supported the war, but the occasion was promising. I found myself attending a rank-and-file caucus. We offered a motion from the floor that there be a single day on which workers all over the country would protest the war in whatever manner suited their circumstances (extended lunch hours, leafleting, local union resolution, press conference, etc.). His voice dripping with sarcasm, Mazey invited delegates to vote on this crazy idea. The resolution passed by about three-to-one. So the apparatchiks canvassed over lunch and brought on Harry Bridges in the afternoon to ask the delegates to withdraw their approval. They did.

2) In Youngstown, the national office of the United Steelworkers refused to support a campaign against the steel mill shutdowns. Their advice was to be concerned about benefits: what Ed Mann and John Barbero derisively called "funeral arrangements." The national union red-baited Gar Alperovitz and myself. We were defended by the Catholic bishop of the Youngstown diocese, Father James Malone. After our spirited campaign but courtroom defeat in district court, the Steelworkers refused to file even a friend of the court brief in support of our appeal to the federal Sixth Circuit. Now the national union makes happy talk about worker buyouts, more than 30 years too late.

3) Packard Electric, now known as Delphi Packard, had about 12,000 employees when we moved to Youngstown in 1976. Along with or next to GM [General Motors] Lordstown, it was the largest employer in the Youngstown area. The local had originally been part of the UE [United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America] and there was a clause in the local union constitution to the effect that any contract amendment had to be approved in a membership referendum. When the local violated this clause by agreeing to new language permitting 10- or 12-hour days without membership approval, we went to federal court and won. The company and union pushed through an approval process in a fog of misleading propaganda that we were unable to rebut. There are now less than 1,000 workers for Delphi in Youngstown and over 40,000 in Mexico. The national leadership of these mainstream unions was simply endlessly behind the curve of membership sentiment.

AP: You mentioned the unsuccessful efforts by steelworkers to take over control of closed mills in Youngstown 35 years ago. In many places, perhaps most notably Argentina, as well as at Republic Windows and Doors in Chicago, such efforts have been quite successful. Is assuming control of shuttered workplaces something unions, together with communities and local officials, should be attempting to do more of, and if so, how might it most effectively be done?

SL: This is the problem that in Youngstown and Pittsburgh we called, "socialism in one steel mill." Historically, most single distressed companies that have attempted worker or worker-community ownership have either failed or over time become capitalist enterprises again. One runs into a variety of problems.

In Youngstown, we felt it would be a cruel temporary solution simply to buy any of the closed mills without modernizing them. Mere purchase might have cost $20 million. Necessary modernization to replace antiquated open hearths would have cost an additional sum of about $200 million, 10 times as much. This was at a time when the guaranteed loan fund, created by the U.S. government to assist the industry throughout the country, was only $100 million. In arrangements for worker "ownership" as at Weirton Steel, the new start-up capital was often derived by cutting workers' wages and substituting common stock of the company. Pension experts specifically warn against a pension portfolio overly emphasizing any one company. Note, too, that Weirton was advised by Lazard Freres (head of a global financial and advisory firm headquartered in New York specializing in investment banking and asset management), and that while workers held a majority of the common stock, they were not permitted to fill a majority of the seats on the board of directors of the "worker-owned" company.

In a worker-owned meatpacking plant, the union president became a member of the board of directors. Only in retrospect did it become clear that the arrangement created a conflict of interest.

Note, too, that it is not clear to me that Republic Windows and Doors has been successful. I believe it has passed through a number of ownership arrangements.

I think there is no substitute for public ownership of the "commanding heights" of the economy. In the midst of our Youngstown struggle, representatives of Swedish metalworkers visited us. It was like a fairy story! In Sweden, when a plant was scheduled to close, printouts of available jobs were posted every day on the shop floor. Each worker received a year's severance pay, and husband and wife were financed by the government to make a trip to a possible new job site. And public assistance went beyond "benefits." Sweden had three separate steel mills: one in the far north, where iron was abundant; one inland, where the steel was poured; and one on the seacoast. Our visitors told us that the government insisted that they be combined into a single company.

I worked more than 15 years for a public enterprise, Legal Services, which provided legal assistance to persons who could not afford a private attorney. It was a highly decentralized operation, and it worked. I remain, as I have been for the last 70 years, a socialist.

AP: You participated in Occupy Youngstown and have drawn parallels between the Occupy phenomenon and youth-led revolts in 1905 Russia and 1956 Hungary that were joined by workers and became general insurrections. How is this different from traditional views of revolutionary change and how might it apply to the United States specifically, and the anti-austerity, anti-imperialist movements around the world in general?

SL: There are different groups and subgroups in any imaginable Rainbow Coalition for fundamental change. After a good deal of thought, I believe that neither soldiers nor prisoners can be the basic force for such change. The reason is that neither group is permanent. Prisoners are released one by one onto the street and usually go back to the old neighborhood. They struggle to survive and not to be again imprisoned. Soldiers, too, hopefully come home.

Students are a distinct group but they, too, are temporary. At Oberlin College, students concerned about criminal justice kept that concern alive for two or three student generations, but then it lapsed.

Thus one comes back in the end to workers. Here also there are divisions and subgroups. Stan Weir used to emphasize how disruptive it was for the informal shop-floor networks formed during the 1930s when conscription for World War II picked them off, one by one, and broke up the subgroups. Adjunct professors represent a potential for change that has not yet organized itself whereas tenured full professors are unlikely to be helpful, at least in significant numbers.

There is a potential for transformative change within the working class, and, I conclude, only there. Manny Ness says that most full-time workers are now in the Global South, and, as in India and South Africa, have been driven to open revolt, not only against employers but against do-nothing hierarchical unions.

Especially in an economy like that of the United States, stripped of manufacturing, "workers" need to be broadly defined. Moreover, it obviously will make a great deal of difference whether workers are encouraged to focus on individual material benefit, or, in solidarity, on common interests.

As women come into the workforce more fully and into positions of leadership, I believe that solidarity will be nurtured.

AP: You've written extensively about "accompaniment" as well as about your decision in the 1970s to "accompany" as an attorney, historian and writer rather than get a mill or factory job. Could you talk a bit about what accompaniment means and what you would suggest to a recent college graduate or professional who wants to support the kind of working-class movement we've been discussing?

SL: I continue to believe (see the conclusion of my book "Accompanying: Pathways to Social Change," PM Press, 2013) that persons with college degrees can make their best contribution not as manual workers but as the kind of professional they have been trained to become, in daily contact with, and support of, other kinds of workers. Instead of pursuing a professional career in an academic or upper-middle-income setting, a person who acquires credentials to practice as a useful sort of professional—teacher, doctor or nurse, lawyer—should consider locating and putting down roots at an address that gives poor and working people easy access to him or her. Perhaps I can best explain what I mean by describing my own experience.

After I got graduate degrees in history, my first teaching job was at Spelman College, a school for African American young women (who included future Pulitzer Prize winning novelist, Alice Walker). We lived on campus, around the corner from Howard Zinn and his family. As a result, I was able to hold an honors seminar in our living room. It would have been difficult, in the segregated Atlanta of the 1960s, to do so off-campus.

While I was in Mississippi, as coordinator of the Freedom Schools in the summer of 1964, before starting to teach at Yale, my wife Alice found an apartment for us in New Haven, in a moderate-income downtown neighborhood near a good public school. Members of the Yale faculty asked her, "Why would you want to live so close to the university that it will be easy for students to visit you?"

Of course accompaniment is not just a question of where you live, but of whom you serve. I was fired by the main union-side law firm in Youngstown for assisting individual workers who were at odds with the unions who were the firm's main clients. When "Labor Law for the Rank and Filer" was published, Alice and I debated whether to give a copy of the book to the boss. We decided to do so. I was fired at 10 a.m. the next morning.

Fortunately, I had already become a member of the board of directors of the local Legal Services office. I called the executive director, and within a week of my discharge, I was practicing employment law as a Legal Services attorney. From time to time, local lawyers at private firms would ask me when I would be moving on to the "real" practice of law. I responded that I was happy as a pig in mud at Legal Services.

Since retirement, Alice and I have been volunteer attorneys for the ACLU of Ohio. From 1978 to the present moment, 36 years, I have been able to practice law for needy clients whom the Legal Services office or ACLU served without charge!

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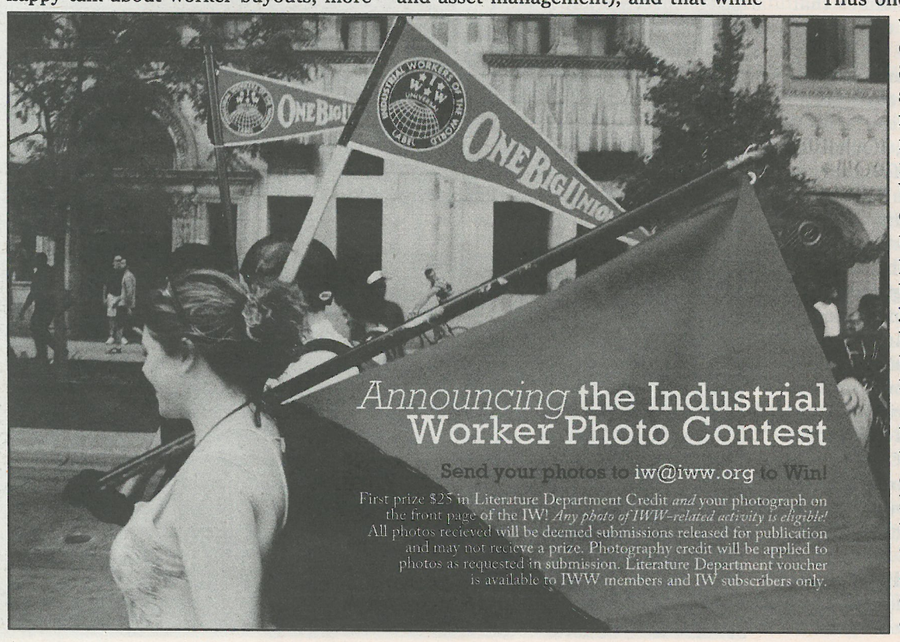


Special

What It's Like To Organize At Starbucks

By the Miami IWW

In November 2013, the Miami IWW conducted an interview with James, an IWW barista, about his experiences working and organizing.

Miami IWW (M): At the Starbucks stores you've worked at, what are the demographics of your co-workers?

James (J): It's mostly people my age, except most of them still live at home. They are almost all American born and also a majority (of them) are students.

M: At both shops you've worked at?

J: At the shops in Miami, yes. (At) the one I worked at over the summer in north Florida, a few of the people were married and had kids. One person actually had graduated years ago with a master's degree.

M: Had you thought about organizing before joining the IWW at Starbucks?

J: No I didn't think about it much. But I joined the IWW and started working at Starbucks about the same time.

M: As you started to think about work in that way, what issues came up? Were there any problems that you started seeing you could work around?

J: The problems I wanted to work around were staffing and wages.

M: Were those the problems that mattered most to you, or did you want to focus on them because that's what people talked about?

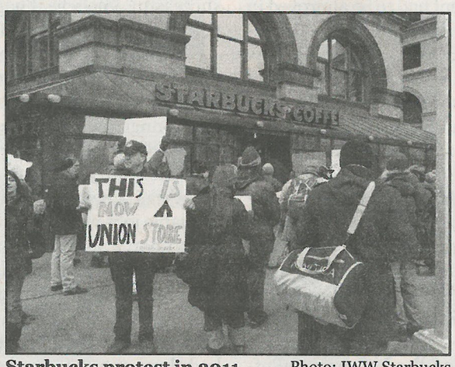
J: Those were what mattered to me; people don't talk about the problems they have, or they act like they don't have any. But once you ask them about those things, they usually agreed. People are just super content with the status quo. It's hard to get people to say negative things about Starbucks, but when they do it's usually about the corporate structure and how there are just a bunch really rich people, and that's just the way it is.

M: Were you able to ever agitate people or times when your co-workers challenged conditions at work?

J: Not really, people have been super reluctant to do anything to change their conditions.

M: What's your sense of that? What have you tried that hasn't worked?

J: I've brought up having more people on the floor, and people really agree, but they don't think they could change anything. I'll keep asking people about it, because that issue comes up whenever we get super busy and not enough people to handle it. I'll try to get a one-on-one with someone about it.



Starbucks protest in 2011, New York City. Photo: IWW Starbucks Workers Union

M: Since joining the IWW has your approach changed as you've learned about organizing?

J: Yeah totally, I feel like I know more about being tactful when talking to people, listening better, being more observant and knowing how to not alienate people by sounding, to them, like a hardcore commie or something.

M: What are the barriers and challenges you see that stop you from getting to actions or committees at work?

J: I think it is just because I need to reach out to more people, not just the ones I've been talking to. I'm not entirely sure though. Also, I find the temporary nature of this job is limiting. No matter how long people have been at Starbucks, they are always trying to move on to something better, at least in their mind. For example, a co-worker told me yesterday that the only reason she is working at Starbucks is so she can put it on her resume. That's not a terrible thing, but from hearing stuff like that, I can tell it will be hard to agitate people like that.

M: Anything you would do differently a second time around? Advice for people starting out fresh?

J: I think I would try to learn more about people's individual situations and figure out what they are all about, outside of work, and appeal to those things. For new people (I still try to give myself this advice) I say take your time, nothing happens overnight, learn as much as you can about your co-workers and form genuine relationships.

M: One last question: What role does your politics play in your organizing at work?

J: Politics always plays a role for me when I'm trying to organize. I see this all, at least for me, as a learning experience; how to work together with one another, how to produce things, and then I think about if there were no bosses. Building a new world in the shell of the old I guess. Even if I can't do anything to change the conditions at my workplace now, I am still learning more about myself, other people, capitalism, work, etc., so that I can use them in whatever I do later in life.

M: As you know right now, unions, the Democrats, and other electoral political parties are targeting your workplace for reforms. There are a number of legislative proposals aimed specifically at you and your co-workers. What do you think about this? What role do you see for workers organizing in relation to state intervention?

J: I think it would be great to increase the minimum wage, because it is basically impossible for someone to survive solely on the minimum wage. I feel it is important to emphasize that because it will do a lot to improve people's immediate economic situation. However, I do not see that as a way to necessarily advance the working class. Because even if people make more money, it doesn't change the fact that people are alienated from their work and are unsatisfied with their lives outside of work.

As far as the political side goes, I haven't put a whole lot of thought into it lately. Most of the liberals really don't want any type of conflict, so raising the minimum wage is just another way to placate working people and to get more votes from them. If workers organized and made demands for themselves instead of by legislators, workers would feel more empowered. But that is difficult, slow, it doesn't generate revenue and it is not media friendly and not glamorous, so political parties are not willing to do that.

The people who work at Starbucks feel powerless and like they might be stuck with those shitty jobs for the rest of their lives, because the economy has very little room for passionate, creative people.

A union run by workers can do a lot to affect the workplace, the communities we live in and serve, the schools we study at.

Also, I feel like the Starbucks PR machine would only spin a minimum wage increase to make it look like they supported it all the time, that they care about their "partners," that they are enthusiastic to comply with minimum wage laws, and even go above them (even if it is just 20 cents an hour).

They did the same thing for Obamacare. They sent out all kinds of "look at all these new health care options" propaganda, while they are still really expensive for workers at Starbucks, and you have no guaranteed hours and no sick days.

May Day 2014: Reviving The General Strike

Continued from 1

This movement is taking shape spontaneously, from below. Some general features can be discerned:

1) When will it occur? It seems clear that activity will occur in the period between Labor Day and Thanksgiving. Sept. 9 is the 43rd anniversary of the Attica uprising. Oct. 27 is the anniversary of the date on which the lockdown at Marion penitentiary in Illinois was made permanent. A major support network has called for action throughout the month of October concerning "mass incarceration." Within this general framework, it doesn't really matter if different groups do different things on different days.

2) What are the general demands? Will there also be local demands? Will everyone be expected to hunger strike? "Stop mass incarceration" will surely be one general demand. "No solitary confinement longer than 15 days" is likely to be another. In addition, every group will presumably have demands specific to its situation. Thus at Menard, Ill., prisoners want to know why they are being placed in administrative detention and how long it will last.

Critically, whatever prisoners initiate will not be limited to the liberal strategy of prohibiting solitary confinement for juveniles, pregnant women, and prisoners who are mentally challenged. It will insist that all human beings, no matter how resilient, are damaged when they are cut off from other persons. It will seek to end solitary confinement for everyone.

A hunger strike has been the strategy of choice for many insurgent prisoners in recent years. But one assumes that groups and individuals may choose any non-violent approach.

3) What about divisions among prisoners of different ethnic and racial groups? A great achievement of the initial struggles in Ohio, California, and Illinois during the past few years is that prisoners have set all such differences aside in the interest of solidarity. A small but successful hunger strike by three members of the Lucasville Five in Ohio involved a Sunni Muslim imam, a longtime leader of the Aryan Brotherhood, and an unaffiliated African American. In 2013, representatives on the Pelican Bay Short Corridor of African Americans, Caucasian, Southern Californian and Northern Californian Hispanics declared a truce and invited groups on the street to join them in doing so.

4) What about non-violence? Without any exception known to me, all the prisoner movements of recent years, whatever the issue or location within the United States, have insisted on non-violence.

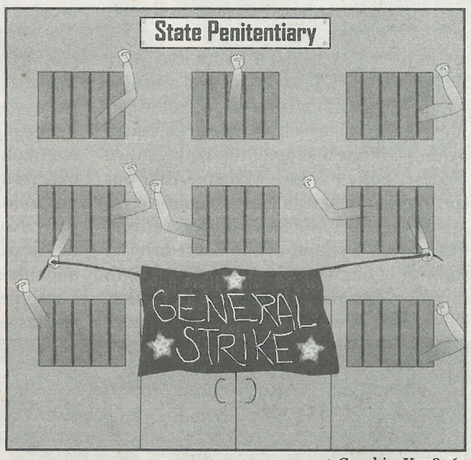
This is a strategy dictated by circumstances. Before Nelson Mandela was imprisoned he was in charge of preparations by the African National Congress for guerrilla warfare against the apartheid government of South Africa. On Robben Island there was no opportunity to organize armed insurrection and Mandela became a legendary advocate of mass non-violent resistance. Similarly, as David Shulman writes in *The New York Review of Books* for April 24, 2014, in Palestine "anyone who knows the Palestinian grassroots activists...knows that the dream of mass Gandhian-style action is their great hope."

From the Bottom Up

The key thing to remember, and hold on to, is that general strikes are not "organized." The people themselves, in their infinite variety, make them happen.

In the Russian Revolution of 1905, as described by Rosa Luxemburg in her book "The Mass Strike," workers themselves in city after city across the vastness of Russia, with quite different issues serving as sparks of rebellion in different places, turned Russian society upside down.

It can happen in the United States as well. When campesinos in the fields of California in 1970 decided to throw their support to the United Farm Workers of America (rather than the Teamsters), Marshall Ganz says it was "one of those moments":



Graphic: X378461

"Really, it was a general strike, from north of Watsonville all the way south to below King City, a coastal area of about 120 miles. Companies were going on strike that we didn't know existed. People would come and say, 'We're the brussel sprouts workers. Help us strike.' 'We're the radish workers.' It was led by committees of workers, and we were trying to coordinate it as best we could."

How ironic it would be if the men and women scorned by society as "the worst of the worst," and even by some radicals as a "Lumpenproletariat," were to lead the way toward rediscovery of the only force that can truly transform this brutal capitalist world: the spirit of solidarity.

The struggle must go on; long live the One Big Union! For a Wobbly Maine in 2014 and beyond - Southern Maine IWW

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL
I W W
MAINE

Special

Chomsky, Others Ask You To Support Victims Of Army Spying

"I was in Tacoma during the court martial of Lt. Ehren Watada when, at the local campus of Evergreen State College, I and other members of a citizens' jury heard Daniel Ellsberg and several veterans give the testimony they were not permitted to offer at the trial. I wrote amicus briefs for Lt. Watada and for Kevin Benderman, imprisoned at Fort Lewis after he too was court martialed for refusing to deploy to Iraq. I can understand why the United States government is concerned about non-violent war resisters in the Northwest. I am privileged to stand in solidarity with them."

– Staughton Lynd

Friends,

We are activists, scholars, musicians, journalists, artists, actors, lawyers, and politicians who are writing to ask you to help in a modern-day David and Goliath story that implicates the very types of military and law enforcement abuses of surveillance and power that Edward Snowden and others have warned us about. This story involves a lawsuit, *Panagacos v. Towery*, a landmark civil rights case in which a group of citizens sued the U.S. Army for infiltrating, spying, and disrupting their peaceful activities and for violating their constitutional rights (see "New Evidence Shows U.S. Government Spied On Wobblies, Activists," April *IW*, page 1, 6).

Right now, a group of attorneys, activists, legal workers, and law students are working around the clock to prepare for trial in June. Leveraging the talents of several resourceful young peace activists who uncovered proof of U.S. Army spying on their political organizing and groups, along with a team of volunteer legal interns and the testimony of nationally-renowned experts, they are mounting a lawsuit with little funding but with a strong will to expose illegal activity and call for accountability. Their opponents are formidable; the U.S. government is claiming that spying is necessary to protect national security and is represented by a well-resourced, aggressive and prominent law firm.

With your help we can prevail.

This case, *Panagacos v. Towery*, is being closely watched in the media and by civil experts. Over a two-year period beginning in 2006, Army intelligence analyst John J. Towery (under the alias "John Jacob") infiltrated and spied on the Olympia anti-war group Port Militarization Resistance (PMR) and several other organizations, including Students for a Democratic Society and Iraq Veterans Against the War as well as other activists in Olympia and Tacoma. Towery's "intelligence" was passed on to the Washington State Fusion Center, a shadowy post-9/11 communications nexus of local, state and federal law enforcement as well as the military. This information was used by local police to target activists for repeated harassment, pre-emptive and false arrest, excessive use of force and malicious prosecution. The pinnacle of this harassment was discovered in which it was revealed that the fusion center disseminated "domestic terrorist" dossiers on some of the plaintiffs before a 2007 Domestic Terrorism Conference in Spokane.

These activists are no more domestic terrorists than you or I. Like so many others, they're committed to social justice, non-violence, raising awareness of unjust government policies, and ultimately creating a more egalitarian world free of war and violence. To know that the U.S. government would label peaceful activists as "domestic terrorists" should concern us all.

This shows the hollowness of the so-called War on Terror.

Photo: peoplevtowery.org

Larry Hildes, a National Lawyers Guild attorney who filed the lawsuit in 2009, cautions that "Profiling non-violent anti-war activists as domestic terrorists and breaching confidential attorney-client communication should be alarming to most Americans." We hope you agree.

Although this surveillance program started under the Bush administration, it was the Obama administration that tried to dismiss this lawsuit, but in late 2012, the Ninth Circuit rejected the government's arguments, finding plausible allegations of First and Fourth Amendment violations and ordering the case to proceed to trial. In addition to Towery, the lawsuit named defendants including the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard, and certain officials within the military, the City of Olympia and its police department, the City of Tacoma and its police department, Pierce County, and various personnel from those jurisdictions. The number of agencies involved with the spying, however, is vast.

No wonder the government wants to dismiss this case! It threatens to expose their multi-level, covert surveillance apparatus on lawful U.S. residents.

With just a few months remaining before trial, the legal team needs funding to finish pouring through thousands of pages of legal documents from the Army, for travel, and for other related legal costs. Several National Lawyers Guild attorneys are consulting on the case, and the Guild's national office is also providing technical assistance. This is truly a team effort that has elicited great generosity among some of the nation's most prominent experts in military and government spying.

Please join our team! We are making personal donations to this case, and ask you to do the same. Make your tax-deductible gift payable to the National Lawyers Guild Foundation, noting "Towery" in the memo line, and mail to:

National Lawyers Guild
Attn: PMR Fund
132 Nassau Street #922
New York, NY 10038

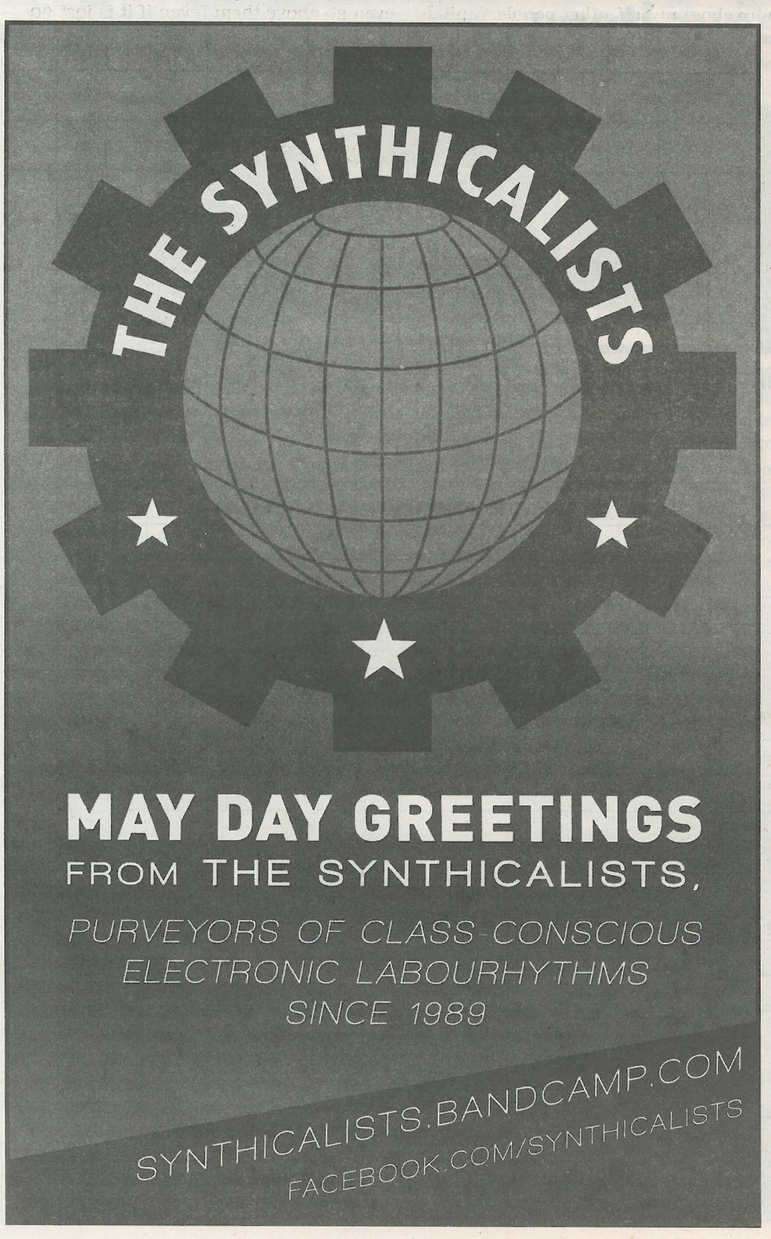
Or make a donation on our website http://www.peoplevtowery.org.

You'll be standing up for justice, helping this case move forward and showing that might doesn't always make right. Since Sept. 11, 2001, there have been hundreds of court challenges to unlawful measures taken in the name of protecting national security. Many have failed. But more and more, the public refuses to accept living in a state of perpetual war in which our civil liberties are increasingly imperiled.

Please give generously today. Please make a stand with us for justice, for dignity, and for freedom.

Sincerely,

Aaron Dixon, Andrej Grubačić, Arun Gupta, Bill Quigley, Caroline Kaltefleiter, Cindy Sheehan, David Rovics, Ed Mea, Howie Hawkins, Jeff "the Snowman" Monson, Josh Simpson, Kevin Bacon, Kyra Sedgwick, Larry Mosqueda, Malalai Joya, Mark Cook, Maru Mora Villalpando, Mecke Nagel, Noam Chomsky, Peter Bohmer, Reyna Ramolete Hayashi, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Sarah Lazare, Scott Kimball, Staughton Lynd



College Football Players Are Workers Too!

Continued from 1

rendered as well as saying that coaches are agents of the school and have employer-like control over the players.

Most notably, the NLRB in Chicago ruled that the players are "primarily athletes," which undercuts the long-standing mythos of the "student athlete" portrayed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). While harkening back to nostalgic views of pure amateur status, the term "student athlete" was created as a legal argument to prevent the NCAA and its member schools from having to pay out workers' compensation and wrongful death claims when they were taken to court. The argument falls apart as the NCAA allows schools to revoke scholarships from athletes on a year-to-year basis if they do not, or cannot (due to injury), perform at a level required by coaches.

During the hearing, Northwestern quarterback Kain Colter testified that players work 40 to 50 hours per week on football-related activities before and during the season. This isn't an isolated instance or an outlier but commonplace throughout big-time college sports.

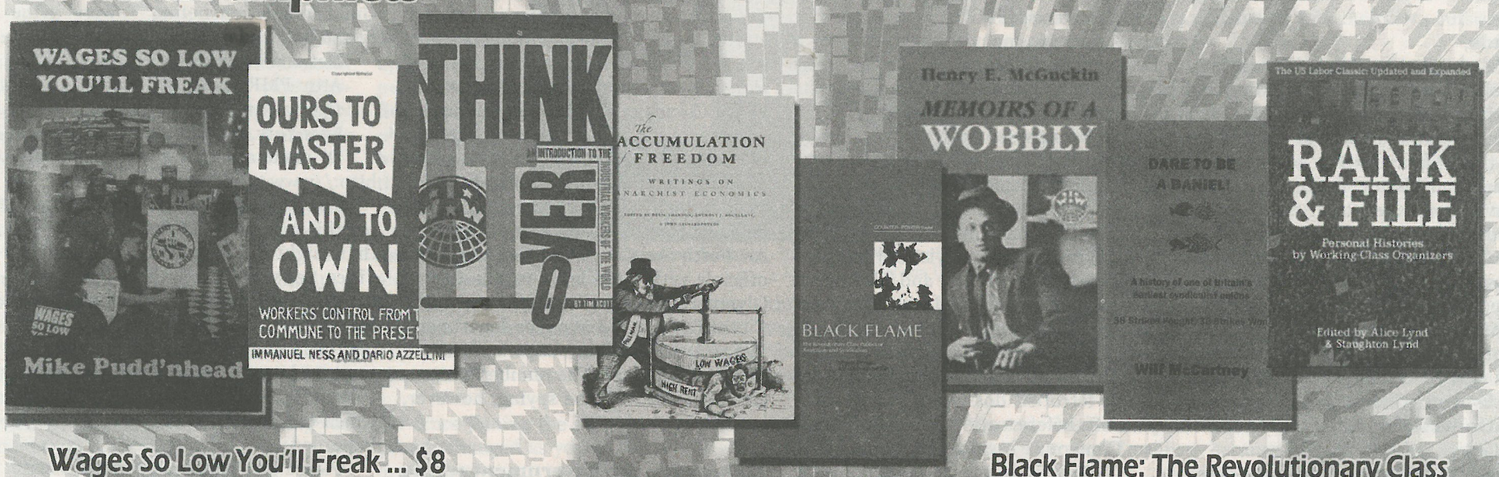
Soon after, Northwestern University announced that they would appeal and request a hearing before the full NLRB. At press time, they had until April 9 to file. Meanwhile, the NLRB announced that the Northwestern football team would vote on April 25 to decide if they would become a union affiliated with the College Athletes Players Association (CAPA).

The victory at the NLRB comes at a time when the framework of collegiate athletics is under more criticism than ever before. Players at multiple schools, including Northwestern, have silently protested during games by wearing the letters "APU"—standing for "All Players United"—on their athletic tape. Former University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) basketball player Ed O'Bannon has filed a class action lawsuit against the NCAA over the lack of compensation for the use of player names and likeness in commercials, video games and other media. Four players are currently suing the NCAA and the major sport conferences over scholarships not being enough to fully cover the cost of attending the universities. Former West Virginia running back Shawne Alston has filed a lawsuit alleging that the NCAA and its member conferences have violated anti-trust rules by colluding to keep scholarships at an amount less than the true cost of attending the colleges. Prominent journalists have called out the NCAA repeatedly for its rank hypocrisy, including civil rights historian Taylor Branch, stating that its labor dynamics have an "unmistakable whiff of the plantation." Meanwhile, documentaries like "Schooled" (about the shame of college sports) are being widely screened.

While the ability of Northwestern football to unionize may only apply to private schools (public schools would have to deal with state labor laws), this groundbreaking victory will give the players a greater voice to make demands like ensuring scholarships for the duration of their schooling experience and gaining tangible benefits in their workplace. It may also be a harbinger of things to come and be the latest move in dismantling the indefensible and immoral structure of NCAA athletics that makes billions for the coaches, conferences and their organization while the players who create the value get zero.

I.W.W. Literature Department

Books & Pamphlets



Wages So Low You'll Freak ... $8

Ours To Master And To Own ... $19

Think It Over ... $6

The Accumulation of Freedom ...$21

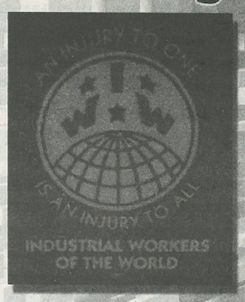
Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism & Syndicalism: ... $23

Memoirs of a Wobbly ... $7

Dare to be a Daniel! ...$3

Rank & File: Personal Histories By Working Class Organizers ... $20

Clothing, Apparel & Miscellaneous Items



Black Globe T-shirts ... $16

IWW Sabo Hoodie ... $45

Winter Hat ... $16

Coffee ... $12.50

Iron-on Embroidered IWW Cloth Patch ... $6

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Name: _____
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City: _____
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Zip: _____
Telephone: _____

Please add $1 per item for shipping! **Total:** _____

Wobbly Arts

Untitled

By Phillip Ruiz

The following poem was written by Phillip Ruiz, and provided by Kent Books to Prisoners and FW Mike.

As if cast in a dark cruel spell
That adeptly withholds freedoms fresh smell
I find myself stuck in an artificially lit prison cell
An uncanny proximity to a torturous living hell
Can you not see you, can you not hear, can't you tell...
Why so many prisoners actively protest and defiantly yell?
Gaze into the bottom of the oil well
Where we're buried alive...
Right next to the broken liberty bell
Looking up to the glimmering stars
Wondering if a colonized Mars
Will too have a bunch of prison bars
Or will it have a deadly hybrid strain of stars
Zipping around like futuristic solar powered cars?
Do you notice the perpetual flaws
In nation state imposed drug laws
That lock up multitudes in prison without pause
Repressing and dissident cause;
Gears the steel saws
And let's cut off the crushing capitalist claws
As the poor reach into their empty wool pocket
We find we're next on the court docket,
Unless you have a giant golden locket...
The size of Davey Crocket.

Write to Phillip at: Phillip Ruiz#V91301 C.I.M. B-PH-308, P.O. Box 441 Chino, CA 91708.

Empty Promises

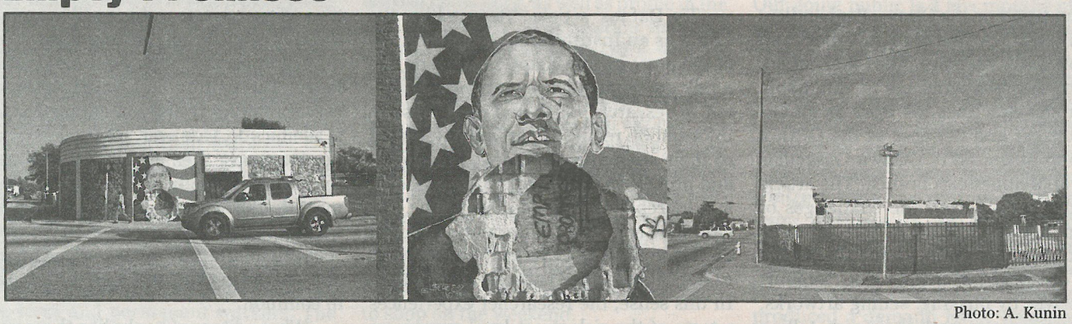


Photo: A. Kunin

Solidarity Greetings for May Day!

from the *Industrial Worker*, the official newspaper of the Industrial Workers of the World

Chop From The Top *or* The Anti-Austerity Song

By Scott Fife

To the tune of My Darling Clementine in 3/4 time.

Chop from the top C
Chop from the top C
That's the place we ought to start C G
It's politicians who need attrition F C
and from bought off ways must part G C

Chop from the top x 2
That's where we need to hack
The cancellation of Corporations
as we take our power back

Chop from the top x 2
That's where we'll make the cuts
We'll dispose those CEOs
Keep their bonus, can their butts

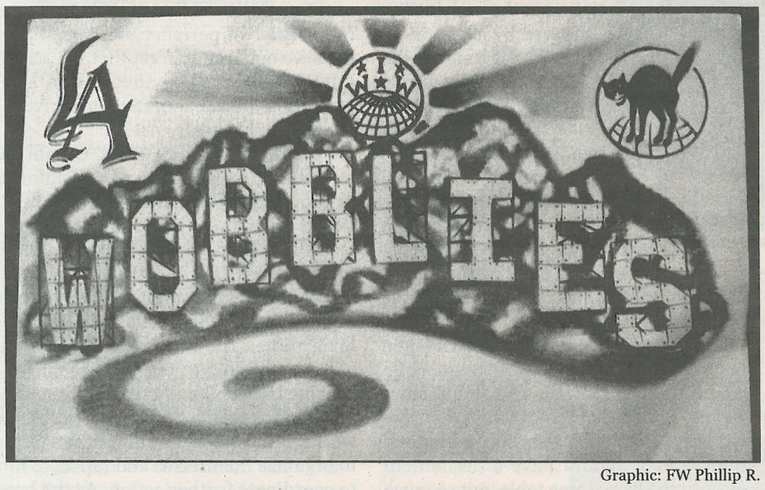
Chop from the top x 2
That's where we'll start this time
Jail the Banksters, those ruthless gangsters
and end their life of crime

Chop from the top x 2
That's where we should start first
The administration needs deflation
from their bloated size must burst

Chop from the top x 2
That's where we should reduce
The Pundits we'll make redundant
Blowhard's mouths will have no use

Chop from the top x 2
That's where we should begin
We'll defeat all the elite
Down they'll go in a tailspin

Chop from the top x 2
That's what we should extoll
Let the bosses take the losses
and the workers take control!



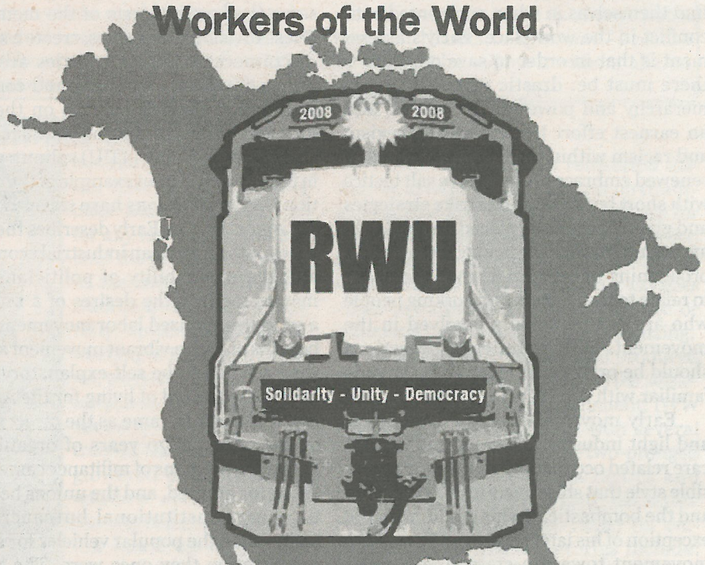
Graphic: FW Phillip R.

Dump The Bosses Off Your Backs

By Ken Lawless

When the Teamsters make an offer, CCTA management grabs.
What they call "replacement drivers," we call scabs.
Are you forlorn and hungry? Are there lots of things you lack?
Is your life made up of mis'ry? Then dump the bosses off your back!
When Teamsters make an offer, CCTA management grabs.
What they call "replacement workers," we call scabs.
It's illegal to rip off the payroll, it's illegal to hold up a train,
but it's legal to rip off a million or two
that comes from the labor that others folks do,
to plunder the many on behalf of the few is a thing that is perfectly legal.
When the Teamsters make an offer, CCTA management grabs.
What they call "replacement drivers," we call scabs.
I spent my whole life making somebody rich, I busted my ass for that son-of-a-bitch,
and he told me I'm all used up.
He used up my labor, he used up my time, he plundered my body and squandered my mind,
and he gave me a pension of handouts and wine, and he told me I'm all used up.
When the Teamsters make an offer, CCTA management grabs.
What they call "replacement drivers," we call scabs.
If the bosses are in the way, if the scabs are in the way, if the cops are in the way,
whoever's in the way, we're gonna roll the union on!
When the Teamsters make an offer, CCTA management grabs.
What they call "replacement drivers," we call scabs.

May Day Greetings
from
Railroad Workers United
to the
Workers of the World



Railroad Workers united is a cross-craft caucus of all railroad workers from all unions, all sectors and all crafts in north America. To learn more about our efforts to build solidarity, unity and democracy on the railroad, see the website at www.railroadworkersunited.org.

Want to hire out with the railroad? Good pay and benefits and all the class struggle you can handle! Give us a shout and we will hook you up! info@railroadworkersunited.org 206-984-3051

Reviews

"Lumpencity" Reaches For The Margins

Lumpencity: Discourses of Marginality / Marginalizing Discourses. *Eds. Alan Bourke, Tia Dafnos, Markus Kip. Ottawa: Red Quill Books, 2011. Paperback, 446 pages, $39.50.*

By Peter Moore

"Lumpencity" is a book that tries and fails to bridge the gap between the academic world and social struggle. It has 12 chapters, a foreword and an afterword, and 14 authors eager to be activists and challenge the academy and its production line, methodologies and motivations.

The book is separated into three sections: "Contesting Discourses of Marginality," "Contested Representations," and "Methodological Reflexivities." Rough translation: how people talk about the poor or people outside of the mainstream; fighting oppression through and by identity; and thinking about how academics analyze things and produce what they do.

Indeed, this book needs translation. The many graduate students and Ph.D. candidates who wrote the chapters use academic language that is difficult to absorb, let alone think about how to apply what they have learned to our many struggles for justice. I had hoped that this book would achieve that elusive mesh between intellectual inquiry and making ideas and lessons learned useful for street-level action. After all, this goal is one of Red Quill Press' principles: "We are committed to disseminating critical academic works to a mass readership in formats that are accessible and that raise awareness and promote political engagement."

Unfortunately, this book does not achieve those goals; it is difficult to read and the authors, as well-meaning as they are, use academic rhetoric and jargon with relish. This is the crux of the challenge for academic writing about community: the academy demands one format and the community needs another.

In this sense, the chapters dealing with how academics try to mesh the two needs are useful. Kate Murray reflects on how she tried and failed to apply Institutional Ethnography to create a map of social relations (and domination) that would prove useful to anti-poverty activists in Ottawa. Her failure was inherently due to her primary role as author and analyst; working alone allowed her to impose her own view on things. Her proposed solution is to work in a cooperative way with the participants and remain accountable to them in the production of the map and its knowledge.

The article on the Ottawa Panhandlers Union (OPU) by one of its members and a fellow IWW member, Matt McLennan, is what first attracted me to this book. McLennan describes his work as an Ottawa busker and member of the OPU, a job shop of the IWW Ottawa-Outaouais General Membership Branch. The article provides insight into the challenges of working within a union structure, even one as flexible as the IWW, on the street. The OPU, composed of people who "support themselves by busking, selling artworks, helping people to park their cars, telling jokes, selling erotic services, and so on" have had a long slog against the mainstream media, city officials and police derision from the beginning, asserting that they are both workers and union members and the street is their workplace. The OPU brings the union idea back to its roots as an organization of people banding together for mutual aid and defense. The OPU itself pays the initiation fees of its new members; those who can pay monthly dues do so, but all are welcome to participate and vote in union meetings regardless of their standing. According to OPU co-founder, Andrew Nellis, the union "is a vehicle for the defense and empowerment of individual street-involved people against police, reactionary politicians, landlords, and in some cases, homeless shelters." In one sense the union is an IWW attempt to organize the so-called "unorganizable," taking on the major challenge of working with people who are not only at the margins of society and the union movement too, but who are also struggling with problems as individuals, such as addiction, substance abuse and destructive relationships.

Tia Dafnos' article, "Researching the Police as an Institution of Power," is one of the more legible chapters; it reads like a talk and shares her experiences of trying to research police and use access to information requests, particularly related to their responses to Aboriginal Peoples and protesters. She highlights how being a researcher is double-edged: one can gain new and useful information, but at the same time, it exposes the researcher to police and other authorities' scrutiny. In this sense, the researcher experiences a taste of the risk street-level organizers face on an ongoing basis.

Markus Kip's chapter, "Making Sense of Failure," similarly outlines the challenge of bringing the working class and the unemployed together to fight cuts to social welfare programs. His study centers on the Hartz IV reforms brought into effect in 2005 that reduced unemployment benefits considerably, with the blessing of the mainstream labor union federation. Kip argues that "the organizing mantra of realizing common interests through collective action is not a sufficient condition. The case study shows that for movement success it is indispensable that individuals act on these interests even as they face risks, difficulties, and the uncertainty of whether their commitment will accomplish anything." In short, the individual laborer, the activist, and the unemployed person must try and try hard or nothing will be won, in the short-, medium-, or long-term.

Graphic: tower.com

"Lumpencity" took on a major challenge. The editors and contributors deserve credit for trying something that few academics do. However, academic workers need to choose their audience. Ultimately, the choice in language betrays the actual master—the academy and its publication standards. There appears to be little "complementarity" between "academic and activist praxis"; really, they have little in common.

What editors of books like these need is to have the authors write a two-page summary of their learning without all of the self-qualifications and methodological waffling and make it available on the Red Quill website. That would be a better method of bridging the divide and sharing what they have learned.

Steve Early Examines Modern-Day Business Unions

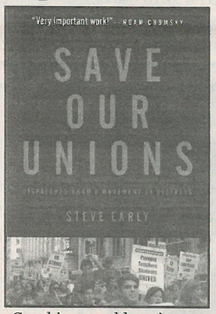
Early, Steve. Save Our Unions. *New York: Monthly Review Press, 2013. Paperback, 304 pages, $29.95.*

By Michael John Como

Steve Early's book, "Save Our Unions," is a collection of articles chronicling recent developments in the world of organized labor over the course of the past 30 years. As a long-time labor journalist and himself an active organizer and union staffer with the Communications Workers of America (CWA), his personal insights into the various struggles he treats are illustrative of the unique situations which unions find themselves in when confronted with conflict in the workplace. Early's assessment is that in order to save our unions there must be: drastic restructuring of hierarchy and power in the unions, and an earnest effort toward ending sexism and racism within the labor movement; a renewed embrace of aggressive salt tactics with short but paralyzing strike strategies and greater emphasis placed on solidarity among unions in a particular sector; and a broadening of organized labor's message to relate to the concerns of working people who are not personally involved in the movement. Early's strategic suggestions should be pretty well-received by anyone familiar with the IWW.

Early moves seamlessly from heavy and light industry to service and healthcare related occupations and has an accessible style that shies away from pretension and the bombastic. To his credit, with the exception of his later section on Vermont's movement toward a state single-payer healthcare system, Early also steers clear of engaging politics unless directly related to the task at hand. Avoiding polemics serves to keep the reader's focus on what unions are doing rather than how the union might ingratiate itself to political interests—a practice which he clearly feels has not served the interests of workers in the past. By the same token, however, Early does not explicitly discourage forming strategic relationships with politicians, so much as he urges caution, as much of his discussion recalls numerous examples of the labor movement being betrayed by the political class.

Early pretty extensively discusses what he sees as the greatest hindrance to contemporary labor organizing and collective bargaining, which are the shape and nature of unions themselves. In Early's opinion, most unions are far too hierarchical and closed to rank-and-file participation in structure, while those who hold leadership have become too entrenched in their own positions to serve the best interests of the members. These divisions, he argues, create a severe disconnect in what strategies are best pursued in both organizing and contract negotiation. Early's chapter on the history and emergence of the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU) splinter group in the 1970s is a great example of the direction that most unions have traveled since the 1950s. Briefly, Early describes the high times of the American industrial economy, and the amenability of politicians and management to the desires of a militant and well-organized labor movement. The benefits of such a vibrant movement at that time seemed to be self-explanatory, that the high standard of living for the American middle class came as the direct result of the previous 70 years of organizing. However, the gains of militancy came to be taken for granted, and the unions became top-heavy institutional bureaucracies rather than the popular vehicles for social organization they once were. The 1970s TDU was a reaction to that organizational complacency. Unfortunately, the moral of the story is that great things happen when a union makes a conscious effort to democratize itself, but those changes are always caused by rank-and-file action and are very rarely successful.



Graphic: monthlyreview.org

It's worth noting here that part and parcel of the democratic shift that Early encourages is the creation of more space for women to become active in strategy. Early recounts that the most important efforts towards winning flex-time, childcare, and alleviating endemic sexual harassment at a Boeing Massachusetts contract negotiation in the early 2000s were initiated by an informal working group of women who would later advocate for formal recognition by the union and Boeing itself. While a change in management and concessions during union elections fell short of establishing a women's council, it is important to note that the issues raised were not exclusive to women at all. If we are to take seriously the idea that all workers have bargaining and organizing rights under a union banner, then both women and men ought to have the option of on-site child care and added work time flexibility, since far more often than not, both parents are working. It should also be understood that women should have a permanent place at the bargaining table, not so much because they have responsibilities unique to women, but that a tremendous double standard would be operative for women to lack such an organized body to meet a plurality of perspectives from within the union.

Early draws from the brief "Day Without An Immigrant" strike on May Day 2006 to illustrate similar opportunities for non-native workers to strengthen the labor movement. If encouraged by unions to organize, as "Big Bill" Haywood explained some 100 years ago, labor would never lack for people to fill its ranks and stand up to the bosses. Immigrant workers often suffer the hardest working conditions and have some of the most important narratives concerning conditions that must be addressed for the benefit of all. If we add that the overall message of organized labor has been too narrowly defined, a major step in the right direction would be to once again return to a more populist understanding of the purpose of the labor movement. Simply put, organized labor was once a grassroots movement in the same way that immigrant rights, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights, and civil rights continue to be. Should labor once again recapture the imagination of Americans as a uniting force among grassroots movements, it will find itself at the center rather than the periphery of struggle. Perhaps we ought not forget that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was involved in black sanitation workers' organizing drives at the time of his assassination.

Chapters 12 and 13, titled "Organizing for the Long Haul," describe California organizing drives in August 2007, in which salting was integral to creating a stable group of worker/agitators. Early focuses on a UNITE HERE organizing drive in which the salt dedicated years to organizing co-workers at a Ritz-Carlton luxury hotel. The organizer, Steve Strong, was a college-educated young man who became bilingual and organized separate committees within the hotel for different workers—bellhops, cleaning crews, etc.—to organize themselves and report to him to coordinate further action. As the hotel administration created racial and gendered divisions of labor within the hotel, Strong exploited these divisions to create subcommittees in the process of organizing. Unfortunately, the UNITE HERE drive occurred under the auspices of the Change to Win Federation, which abandoned the drive as initiatives for a card check/neutrality agreement were to be presented to the hotel's anti-union managers. The coalition had, so to speak, sold the organizing drive down the river. This section exemplifies both Early's previous argument about the bureaucratic disconnect between rank-and-file workers and organizers and a union leadership whose broader strategies sometime counteract years of organizing or bargaining efforts.

Overall, the book reads like a "what has happened in the last 40 years" and a "where should we go" manual at the same time. It might, for at least the next five years, be considered required reading for those thinking of getting involved in the labor movement, as it illustrates history, strategy, tactics, theory, and points out some of the less glamorous elements of the job all at once.

Reviews

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn: More Than A Fellow Worker

Flynn, Elizabeth Gurley. The Rebel Girl: An Autobiography, My First Life (1906-1926). *New York: International Publishers, 1973 (new edition). Paperback, 368 pages, $9.95.*

Flynn, Elizabeth Gurley. Alderson Story: My Life As a Political Prisoner (McCarthy Era). *New York: International Publishers, 1972 (new edition). Paperback, 228 pages, $53.14.*

By Raymond S. Solomon

In his inaugural address, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said Fiorello LaGuardia was New York City's greatest mayor, and declared his aim of modeling his administration after LaGuardia's. Howard Zinn has described Fiorello LaGuardia as a radical congressman. LaGuardia was first elected to U.S. Congress on a combination of the Republican and Socialist party tickets.

Both as a congressman and as the mayor of New York City, this eccentric, but excellent, public servant's many accomplishments and activities included: co-sponsoring the 1932 Norris-LaGuardia Act that outlawed injunctions in private industry, in non-violent strikes. It additionally outlawed yellow dog contracts, in which a worker had to sign a promise not to join a union; interrupting one of President Warren G. Harding's fishing trips in order to secure the admission of a refugee ship to America; as mayor, sitting as a magistrate, and fining a man $10 for stealing a loaf of bread, and fining everyone in the courtroom 50 cents for living in a city where people had to steal in order to eat, and giving that money to the man he fined; stopping the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority from purchasing concrete from Nazi Germany to build the Triborough Bridge, even though that was outside his technical legal authority as mayor; advocacy for his congressional constituents who lacked money to buy food; proposing a chamber of horrors exhibition about Nazi Germany, at New York City's World Fair, which led to a diplomatic incident when Nazi Germany protested to the United States State Department. U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull apologized and called for a general cooling of tempers; and, of course, his trademark activity as mayor, of riding the back of fire trucks heading towards fires.

As a congressman, this future mayor of New York City worked with Industrial Workers of the World organizer Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. As reported by Flynn in "The Rebel Girl," LaGuardia took pleasure in introducing her to members of Congress, especially conservative ones, and after all the formalities saying, "She's an IWW you know."

Photo: libcom.org

LaGuardia was also very helpful to Flynn's companion of many years, anarchist and IWW organizer, Italian immigrant Carlo Tresca. LaGuardia helped him get a significant sentence reduction for publishing material on birth control.

Flynn went through three or four political phases. But in all of them she was strictly loyal to the workers of the United States. After joining the Communist Party, she was tenacious about that commitment. While I disagree with her about that last commitment, I can only have the greatest possible respect for her tenacity on behalf of American workers, and her great courage. She served time in federal prison because she was a communist. She was arrested many times, on behalf of workers and in free speech fights in the United States, even if she did not fight for free speech for people in the Soviet Union. She had worked closely with Italian anarchists. LaGuardia advised her to stop working with Italian immigrant anarchists, and to concentrate her activism in the mainstream American labor movement.

The many labor activists she knew and worked with include "Big Bill" Haywood, Arturo Giovannitti, Vincent St. John, Eugene Victor Debs and Joe Hill. In fact Joe Hill's song "The Rebel Girl" was written about Flynn and was dedicated to her. Hazel Dickens, the late labor singer, often sang "The Rebel Girl." The back cover of the International Publishers edition of "The Rebel Girl" book reprints a letter from Hill to Flynn; and the page opposite the title page displays the song "THE REBEL GIRL with Joe Hill's dedication to the author," Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. Flynn had worked very hard to save Joe Hill from a Utah firing squad on trumped up charges. These efforts included meeting with President Woodrow Wilson. That helped a little. In the letter Joe Hill sent to Elizabeth Gurley Flynn before his execution he wrote about all the people he had been saying goodbye to. It sounded more like Hill was going off to college than to his execution. Among Hill's last words were, "Don't mourn, organize."

In that full-page letter in Joe Hill's cursive writing, displayed on the back cover of "The Rebel Girl," composed a few hours before his execution, he told Elizabeth Gurley Flynn that:

"You have been more to me than a Fellow Worker. You have been an inspiration and when I composed 'The Rebel Girl' you was [sic] right there and helped me all the time."

Two other letters that are displayed in "The Rebel Girl" book were written in connection with a banquet given for Flynn by The League for Mutual Aid. That organization specialized in giving interest-free loans to workers, radicals and labor activists in need. There was close to a 100 percent rate of repayment in full.

Eugene Victor Debs' letter dated Feb. 1, 1926, writing about Flynn, regretfully declining, was addressed to "Ruth Albert, Executive Secretary League for Mutual Aid."

In this, Debs wrote: "Elizabeth Gurley Flynn is a typical proletarian leader, an intrepid warrior of the social revolution, and after 20 years of single-hearted devotion and unflinching service to the cause she is loved and honored throughout the labor movement of the United States."

About 10 days later, Bartolomeo Vanzetti, writing a letter to Flynn from jail, said: "Yes, Comrade, good health and long life to you; and long life [for] the brave struggle for the triumph of liberty."

But Flynn's life (1890 to 1964) was not that long and was probably shortened by the federal prison term she served during the cold war anti-communist hysteria. She wrote about her imprisonment in "The Alderson Story: My Life as a Political Prisoner." Her fellow prisoners could not understand for what "crime" she was jailed. Flynn saw many of her fellow prisoners as victims, but unlike many liberals and radicals she saw that there were real criminals. As she said in "The Alderson Story," "There was, of course, a hard core of our prison population who were of the underworld. To them parole was a tactic, a stepping stone back to the ranks. They had no intention of changing their ways... they despised work and had contempt for workers." These people "seemed to lack any moral sense and reveled in filthy language."

But there were "Others generous to a fault, sharing everything."

Most of us are to a large extent products of our backgrounds and Flynn had a very Irish background. The Flynn side of her family was Presbyterian. But these and other Irish Presbyterians were also staunch Irish nationalists and enemies of British occupation. Her Irish Catholic ancestors were also staunch Irish nationalists. Although Flynn did not consider herself Catholic, she loved the progressive role of the Catholic Church in Ireland and Irish history. All four of her great-grandfathers fought for Irish freedom.

It was perhaps her Catholic family background which made her non-judgmental when she first met Sacco at an early stage in the Sacco-Vanzetti case, when he had rosary beads. Sacco was apologetic and somewhat embarrassed. He explained that it was his wife, who was Catholic, who gave him the rosary beads. Flynn shed light on the personality of Sacco. Shooting someone in a payroll hold-up was something inconceivable to Sacco's strong moral code, and intrinsically strong human and humane feelings.

Flynn concludes "The Rebel Girl" with the story of a 1940 meeting with LaGuardia. The mayor inquired, "Elizabeth, I hear you joined the Communist Party." Flynn answered that she had, reminding the mayor that he had told her to leave the Italian anarchists, and get back to the mainstream American labor movement. LaGuardia said to her that he would rather see her with the communists than with Italian anarchist "freaks."

But she could not take his advice in 1924, as she wrote, "because I was...deeply involved in a battle for justice for two anarchists who were not freaks but honest workers...Sacco and Vanzetti."

A Petroleum History Of The United States

Sinclair, Upton. Oil! *London: Penguin Books, 2007 (reprint edition). Paperback, 560 pages, $16.*

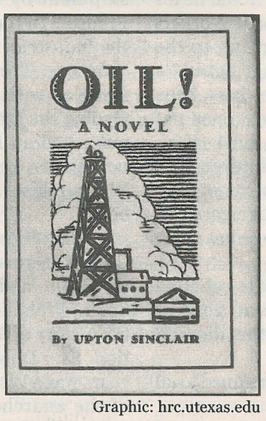
By Jérôme Diaz

"The road ran, smooth and flawless, precisely fourteen feet wide, the edges trimmed as if by shears, a ribbon of grey concrete, rolled out over the valley by a giant hand. The ground went in long waves, a slow ascent and then a sudden lip. [...] The cold wind of morning whistled by, a storm of motion, a humming and roaring with ever-shifting overtones," – "Oil!", pg. 3

This is "Oil!"—a masterpiece of literature by Upton Sinclair published in 1927 and adapted for the screen in the movie "There Will Be Blood" in 2007. It is about the adventures of black gold tycoon J. Arnold Ross and his son Bunny at the dawn of 20th century, the pioneers' era.

Oil, business and finance: amazingly modern issues for an 87-year-old novel that hasn't aged a bit.

A scathing and thrilling chronicle, "Oil!" speaks of puritanism, religion, power, justice, war, movies ("The world grows one, and it is the 'cinéma-mélodrame de la Société' that is doing it—which is to say that the world grows American," pg. 479), politics ("All the oil men purchased the government, all big business men did it, either before or after the election," pg. 498), syndicalism, privileges of the elites, education, lies, making of the information ("they never print any news which injures or offends any business interest," pg. 536), friendship, love, road police ("Yes, it must be a dreadful thing to be a 'speed-cop' and have the whole human race for your enemy!" pg. 9), people's insurgencies ("How could a mass uprising succeed in America, with the employing class in possession of all the arms and means of communication?" pg. 446).



Graphic: hrc.utexas.edu

Politically incorrect and hilarious, this truly is the "great American novel" of a country we love to criticize, one that Sam Mendes' "American Beauty," the crazy but great fun "God Bless America" or recently "Lone Ranger" have greatly pictured.

"Yes, when you drove past, sitting in a comfortable car, you might mistake it for a fairyland. You had to remind yourself that an army of men were working here, working hard in twelve hour shifts, and in peril of life and limb. [...] Then your fairytale was turned into a slaughter-house, where the many were ground up into sausages for the breakfast of the few!" (pg. 113).

Fiction and reality evolve as pages go by: workers strike, the threat of World War I looms, and political convictions of the characters disturbed by war atrocities unfold. In the middle of all that, the young Bunny, who gets older, discovers life, love, and begins to grow away from an almighty father:

"Was it possible for men to go on doing what Dad had been doing in the conduct of his business? Could any civilization endure on the basis of such purchase of government? No, Bunny told himself; but then—he should have tried harder, more lovingly, and persuaded his father to stop it! But at what stage?" (pg. 498).

The story is one of a "dad" getting older too, and very far from a war he doesn't really catch, apart from the fact that he earns lot of money through it: "Talk was right, but after all, what was going to win the war was bullets and shells, and to get them to the battle-field you had to have transportation...The one thing that was troubling him was that he could not make three times as many contracts and put down three times as many wells," (pg. 205-206).

The war, a massive slaughter that appears while another conflict, between workers and exploiters, arises: "To the oil exploiters it seemed most unpatriotic on the part of workers, to demand the eight hour day and an increase of wages at this crisis. What? When the country was about to defend itself, and would need oil as never before in history!" (pg. 172).

Oil = business = money: the perfect equation of the "Made in USA"'s notion of capitalist achievement, a sacred principle for the famous "banksters" to play with others' money: "[...] it was the Federal Reserve system at work; a device of the big Wall Street banks, a supposed-to-be government board, but really just a committee of bankers, who had the power to create unlimited paper money in times of crisis. This money was turned over to the big banks, and in turn loaned by them to the big industries whose securities they held and protect. So, whenever a panic came, the big fellows were saved while the little fellows went to the wall," (pg. 312).

Caustic, very funny, superbly written to tell 20 years of American history without ever losing the reader (even sometimes taking the latter as a witness: "You drove up" (pg. 312), "you understand" (pg. 173), "you could see" (pg. 426), we can just wonder the whys and wherefores of the absence of such an awesome novel from the slightest educative program (college, high school and after...) in Europe at least.

IWW History

History Of A Workers' Revolution In Catalonia

By Raymond S. Solomon

During the early stages of the Spanish Civil War, Spanish anarchists and socialists set up an economy in Loyalist Spain that very closely resembled the type of industrial organization advocated by the Industrial Workers of the World. It was also believed by many that this worker-controlled revolution might spell the death knell to fascism and Nazism, and usher in new day for the workers living in a worldwide depression. One of these people was Buenaventura Durruti. In a 1936 interview with world famous journalist Pierre van Paassen, anarcho-syndicalist leader and Spanish Loyalist general Durruti said:

"We are giving Hitler and Mussolini far more worry with our revolution than the whole Red Army of Russia. We are setting an example to the German and Italian working class on how to deal with Fascism."

Durruti may have been overly optimistic about the abilities of the Spanish anarchist militias (which were more than most excellent) vis-à-vis the Soviet Russian Red Army. After all, the Red Army of Soviet Russia performed very well during World War II—what Russians call the "Great Patriotic War." But the Spanish Loyalists did have many surprising successes.

As told by Spanish anarchist survivors of Spain's Civil War (1936-1939) in the Spanish documentary "Living Utopia," the beginning of the Spanish Revolution ignited on July 19, 1936. Juan García Oliver, Spanish anarchist leader and Minister of Justice in the popular front government, at an early stage of the Spanish Civil War, made the remarkable point that this was the first time the people defeated the army.

But the background of the revolution goes back to at least the year 1868, with the beginning of the anarchist movement in Spain. The anarchists were the most important component in Loyalist Spain, but by no means, the only one. The ability of the anarchists to quickly and spontaneously resist the fascist military rebellion in late July 1936, together with the ability to take over industry and form effective agricultural communes, goes back three generations. The best history of this appears in "The Spanish Anarchists" by Murray Bookchin.

The anarcho-syndicalist Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT) trade unions and Spanish socialist trade unions were in the vanguard of the resistance to the fascist rebellion, but other groups included the Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista (Workers Party of Marxist Unification, or POUM), the Catholic Basque region, other socialist groups and the Republican Action Party.

In his book "Homage to Catalonia," published in April 1938, George Orwell wrote that when he arrived in Barcelona, Catalonia, in Loyalist Spain, in late December 1936, he witnessed a true workers' society. The anarchists were in control of Barcelona. "The working class was in the saddle." Also in "Homage to Catalonia," Orwell described there was almost complete equality in the POUM militia, in which he served. The motivations of fear of the boss and bourgeois competitiveness were absent. This was the beginning of the turning point of his life. Among his observations were:

"In the Barbers' shops were Anarchist notices (the Barbers were ... Anarchists) ... explaining that the barbers were no longer slaves."

In describing life in the POUM militias, in "Homage to Catalonia" on the Aragon Front in 1937, Orwell said, "One had been in a community where hope was more normal than apathy or cynicism, where the word 'comrade' stood for comradeship... One had breathed the air of equality."

In New York, the anarchist youth group, Vanguard, in addition to publishing their own magazine, *Vanguard*, published a monthly newspaper called *Spanish Revolution*. Herbert Mailer, a prominent Wobbly labor activist was also involved with *Spanish Revolution*.

In the first issue of *Spanish Revolution* (Vol. 1, No.1 August 19, 1936); the lead item identified, "From the Press Service of the CNT and the FAI [Federación Anarquista Ibérica]" dated in Barcelona, Spain, on July 24, 1936:

"At the price of bloody battles and sorrowful losses, the Catalon capital has reconquered its title of Red Barcelona. It was a spontaneous popular uprising which answered the first onslaught of the Fascists. The city, deserted in the early morning hours, suddenly awoke as if by magic drum call; the people seemed to rise from the pavements. The armories were seized and in a flash almost everybody was armed.

"The groups of the CNT and the FAI with the help of various workers' parties and organizations marched resolutely against the Fascists whose aim was to take possession of the strategic points of the city. The latter employed military experts and war technicians, using cannons and machine guns, and though in the minority, they did succeed in delivering death 'scientifically.' But nothing could check the popular surge. The hatred against Fascism wrought miracles; party differences and political quarrels disappeared before a 'popular front,' not the one which arose from the elections, but *the popular front spontaneously created in the streets*" (emphasis in the original).

As *Spanish Revolution* reported, party and labor union-based militias were quickly raised in Catalonia. Most of these volunteers were from the CNT-FAI (about 13,000) followed by the POUM, then the Unión General de Trabajadores (General Union of Workers, or UGT) and other groups. Many women also served in the militias, and were involved in the street fighting when the fascists were beaten down in the cities.

The CNT and FAI were anarchist organizations, the first being a trade union, and the second, a political group, aimed at maintaining the purity of Spanish and Portuguese anarchism. There was also the anarchist Asociación Internacional de los Trabajadores (the International Workers Association, or AIT). According to the Spanish documentary "Living Utopia," a member of the FAI could not have been married in the Catholic church, must not have served in the military, must—if affordable—have sent their children to a Ferrer Modern School, and must not have had any addiction to alcohol or cigarettes, or other substance, and had to be in a faithful relationship.

When the fascist generals rebelled against the Spanish Republican government, three things happened that they did not count on:

First, the Spanish Navy remained loyal to the Loyalist Spain.

Second, the Catholic Basque region remained loyal to the government. There was also a considerable presence of anarchist and socialist organizing in the Basque. Catholic priests in the Basque had organized labor unions.

Third, there was a massive spontaneous popular resistance. This resistance resulted in a far-reaching revolution, which went further in Catalonia than in some other parts of Spain. *Spanish Revolution* was devoted to this revolution. *Spanish Revolution* described the spontaneous resistance in certain parts of the country.

There were many far-reaching elements of social and economic revolution in anarchistic Catalonia. For example *Spanish Revolution* reported, "Libertarian Youth Organize the People's Univ. of Barcelona."

SPANISH REVOLUTION

A BULLETIN PUBLISHED BY THE UNITED LIBERTARIAN ORGANIZATIONS

U.G.T. Condemns Stalinist Slaughter of Anti-Fascist Front

"UNCONTROLLABLE" LISTER DIVISION TRIES TO SMASH COLLECTIVES

U.G.T. SPLIT THREATENS

Spanish Revolution. Graphic: libcom.org

There was a "Committee to Aid Fascist Victims." Workers had taken over factories. Peasants had taken over estates and farms. All this was reported in *Spanish Revolution*.

There were many foreign volunteers who came to Spain to either defend democracy or to support the revolution, but in all cases to fight against fascism. Of course, there was the communist-sponsored International Brigade, the Independent Labour Party contingent, and anarchist volunteers, but much less-known are the number of IWW members who volunteered and fought for Revolutionary Loyalist Spain.

To quote from the Wobbly book "Rebel Voices" published by Charles H. Keer Publishers:

"During the Spanish Civil War, the IWW had an assessment for the support of the [anarchist] CNT and maintained friendly relations with anarchist International: Workingmen's Association. Many IWW fought with CNT forces." Following this introductory statement on page 378, there is a moving article by Wobbly Raymond Galstad describing his experience during the Spanish Civil War.

Recently, the *Industrial Worker* had an article titled "IWW Members Who Fought In The Spanish Civil War" by Matt White (November 2013 *IW*, page 9). Nine of many Wobblies who fought in the Spanish Civil War were profiled. As this article made clear, IWW members fought with comrades in both the Lincoln Battalion (part of the International Brigade) and with anarchist CNT forces.

In addition to fighting, according to Allen Guttmann, author of the book "The Wound In The Heard: America and the Spanish Civil War" (1962, Free Press of Glencoe), "The *Industrial Worker*, a publication of the IWW, which gave its eager support to the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists, reprinted dispatches from CNT publications, and exposed the illegal shipment by Texaco, of oil to General Franco." In the endnotes Guttmann cites the *Industrial Worker* of May 22, 1937.

Carlo Tresca, who was a Wobbly involved with major Wobbly strikes including the 1913 Paterson silk strike, and published an Italian-language anarchist newspaper, raised money for the Spanish anarchists and gave speeches on their behalf.

In addition to fighting in the Spanish Civil War, raising money for revolutionary Spain, and reporting on Wobblies in Spain, Wobblies also sought to preserve the history of Spain's syndicalistic revolution. Sam Dolgoff, who since his teenage years was a Wobbly and lifelong anarchist of the anarcho-syndicalist persuasion, published the book "The Anarchist Collectives: Workers' Self-management in the Spanish Revolution 1936-1939" (published by Black Rose Books Ltd.). Thus we see that the commitment of Wobblies to the workers revolution in Spain included the dissemination of information for historical memory and lessons for the future.

The extent of this workers revolution is proven by the following, as reported in *Spanish Revolution*: "The English consulate in Barcelona has sent a list of all its citizens residing in Spain so that the necessary measures might be taken for their security and eventual return. To whom has the English consulate sent these lists? To the official authority which is in Barcelona, the Catalonia government? On the country, the lists were officially sent... to a committee of the CNT."

But revolution and war were occurring in other parts of the Spain. Let us look at what this first issue of *Spanish Revolution* says about the struggle in Valencia. On page 4 of the first issue, headlined, "Victory In Valencia," and datelined "Valencia, Spain (FP)—(By airplane to Paris)" I do not know who wrote this report about Valencia. The story went on to say:

"For a week the tension in Valencia was so great that nobody slept or went home. The workers camped in the streets.

"The civil authorities had refused to open the arsenals and arm the people as Madrid had ordered. At the end of the town, across the river, three regiments of soldiers were confined to the barracks. They gave no sign of sympathy. But their officers were known to be adherents to the fascist rebellion. Any moment it was feared that the troops march in, and occupy the town, and set up a white terror. The workers covered the city with barricades in anticipation of a fierce struggle. They were going to receive the military with cobblestones and kitchen knives and with their bare hands if need be.

"The colonel commanding the regiment called his men in the square of the barracks. 'We will occupy Valencia this morning' he said. 'Tomorrow we will take Madrid.'"

After speaking, "A sergeant named Jose Fabra...killed him. A moment later all the officers" were killed. The soldiers left the fortress and distributed arms to the people. "Fascists in the city began to fire on the loyalists from roof tops." But the revolutionary forces triumphed in Valencia in the early stages of the Spanish Civil War.

Spanish Revolution published an appeal "TO THE WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES." They noted that a cable to *The Nation* which confirmed the reports.

There was a new system of fighting crime. There were civilian patrols. Defendants in criminal cases could be represented by a lawyer or a non-lawyer. People employed in nursing homes were chosen on the basis of their compassion. Workers and peasants controlled most of Catalonia. Businesses where the boss was not pro-fascist were usually not seized. Also, the British government delivered a list of businesses to the CNT-FAI that where not to be touched.

Michael Shelden discovered and wrote in "Orwell: The Authorized Biography" that Orwell's serving in the POUM militia during the Spanish Civil War was used for recruiting purposed by an organ of the British Independent Labour Party.

A number of members of the Industrial Workers of the World fought on behalf of the Spanish Loyalists, that is on behalf of the Spanish revolution. In what George Orwell said, in his essay "Looking Back On The Spanish War," this was essentially a class war.

Sadly this revolution was betrayed by the Soviet Union and defeated by Franco's forces, with German and Italian weapons and manpower. One of the ironies of the Spanish Civil War was that the Spanish anarchists welcomed the Republic in 1931, and would have been willing to live under a republican form of government. But once the fascist rebellion had started, the response was the Spanish revolution.

Many books have been written on the Spanish Civil War, but few on the Spanish revolution that happened at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War.

In late November 1936 Durruti was killed in the frontlines. The *New York Times* reported that there were at least 500,000 in Durruti's funeral precession. Emma Goldman believed that his ideas and ideals lived on. The survivors of the Spanish Revolution said in the Spanish documentary "Living Utopia" that they were fortunate to have lived through that revolution.

Readers' Soapbox

Drifting From Dogma: Towards Growth And Power

By Bill Zoda

I am going to go out on a limb here and say that both the IWW and the "progressive" end of the mainstream labor movement have a lot to learn from each other (I would define the term "progressive" in a practical sense as kind of "Labor Notes on over," including the National Union of Healthcare Workers [NUHW], certain radical nurses unions, the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America [UE] and others who still believe in fighting bosses and organizing workers instead of organizing bosses and using staff to control outright the direction of the union like complete a third party). Let me first say that this is a statement based less on ideology and more on the reality of the current state and time of the U.S. working force. Turn of the century class struggle and revolutionary mass action is no longer on the radar as a goal for the overwhelming majority of U.S. workers. For the most part, the boss is winning and the labor movement as a whole, with a few exceptions, remains in rapid decline currently on the way to being legislated out of existence.

So what can radical labor do? First and foremost, the current IWW of mostly disconnected individuals with little workplace connections to one another is a serious impediment to the growth and strength of the union. We need more job shops and less branches and individual members. We need to secure more collective wins, both in the short and long term, for more workers in specific workplaces. We then need to hold on to those wins while planting the flag of the IWW. These wins can reverberate through an entire workplace and sustain an IWW presence.

Contracts, grievance procedures and National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) elections are not and do not have to be an end. They can, believe it or not, be used as a means to more progressive and radical ends. To refuse to engage with them on principle will stymie the kind of organizing that I would argue we need more of to grow as a union.

Organizing within shops, collectively against a boss in a specific workplace, is how we can establish a foothold with job shops. Job shops under contracts, managed and created by the workers who work under them, are worth more than most will realize. To accomplish this, the Organizing Department Board (ODB) needs to grow in size and resources and then begin to search for and field realistic organizing leads.

When a lead is discovered, a team of trained and experienced organizers, under the direction of the General Executive Board (GEB), should assess it. If the lead is assessed to be ripe for a strong campaign, a trained organizer will be dispatched based on geography. The organizer will help develop a rank-and-file organizing committee.

This organizer needs to either dedicate their full-time work to aid in organizing the workplace in question, or work closely directing a team of volunteers, one of which needs to be able to dedicate their full-time hours to aiding the organizing campaign.

This of course would require a stipend paid to at least one person, within the budgetary constraints of the IWW, for a time period through an NLRB election and at least one month or more after. The ability to utilize a full-time organizer could easily be the difference between winning and losing an election.

Once the election is won, the committee of rank-and-file organizers needs to demand that the boss negotiate with them over not just wages and benefits but also turning over more control of the workplace to the union itself. This could include health and safety, working conditions, control over scheduling and discipline, discharge and hiring, etc.

While the boss will likely not do anything without the union surrendering its right to strike, the union may be able to trade that right temporarily for concrete gains in all aspects of workplace democracy and higher wages. These concrete gains will prove to the workers, a majority of whom would have not wanted a union before the process started, that the union is right for them and will now fight to defend it.

Why should we not be dogmatic about an endless right to strike in exchange for gains in workplace democracy?

1) Depending on what the workers want and what the boss is willing to give, a noticeable net positive for the workers could be won, a net positive that can grow with struggle. That struggle requires time and organizing.

2) We are not surrendering our right to strike forever, only temporarily. A smart union will use the time to champion the initial gains made while simultaneously preparing to strike.

3) Strikes involving a sizable workplace (say over 100 workers) are not easy to conduct or win. As described in the above point, they take a lot of planning and that time is going to have to pass regardless without a strike. Strikes are more effective after a union has demonstrated to the workforce that it is worth fighting for. They are of course also more effective when you have a workforce completely prepared and willing to strike. It is very rare to have the immediate support of the majority of workers you would need to win a strike right after a union is organized.

4) Rushed strikes lacking real support amongst the community and workforce elevate the risk of losing the union entirely; this is a victory for the boss even if he has to pay off one or two workers to never come back due to an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) settlement.

5) The kind of organizing I am proposing we delve into is going to involve workers with much stronger bonds to their employers than we are used to. Quite frankly, many of these workers are going to be scared of joining a union, let alone striking. The coercive power the boss has on their lives is real. While our job as organizers is to push them to a point of striking and taking risks, that decision is theirs and theirs alone. These workers cannot be ignored nor simply punted into business unionism. I believe we will do a better job at getting them to the point of fighting than a business or service model union. These workers can grow our union's power immediately and in time get to a point where some of you reading this would prefer they be at immediately.

In short, signing a contract that most will see as a huge and sustained net positive for the union is basically giving the boss the sleeves off of your vest. You now have a strong unionized workforce that you can organize and build to strike. And yes, you would, at times, need to litigate through a fairly confining process, if, for example, someone gets unjustly fired. But we don't need to buy into the management culture of using lawyers and spending lots of money. It is not necessary and members can be trained to handle such a process. A little training and confidence could put a member/organizer on par with many lawyers. The same goes for helping workers conduct hearings before the Unemployment Compensation Board of Review (UCBR), which is something else I argue the union needs to get more involved in. Winning people's jobs back can be very demoralizing for the boss and be quite energizing for the union, even in this process. (Many times winning people's jobs back can happen even quicker using the UCBR than through a ULP settlement). This process does not need to be exclusionary to workers. It can be used as a tool to organize and involved them if the will of the union to do that is strong.

I also believe that it is key to have specific language in any future IWW contract that releases a rank-and-file worker, at least one day per week (depending on the size of the workplace) to help organize the union on an ongoing basis. This is where dues check-off can be useful, although we need to be careful not to get lazy and use it as an excuse to not talk to workers.

If the boss is forced to provide the union with a check every pay period, this is big and guaranteed influx of resources that can be put to good use. Half of these funds could go to IWW General Headquarters (GHQ) and half could stay at the local. The half for the local should primarily be used to pay the lost time of the rank-and-file worker who is spending that day or two helping to organize the union. Not having to spend all that time hounding workers for dues and could allow time for instead proactively organizing with them around issues and aggressively fighting the boss.

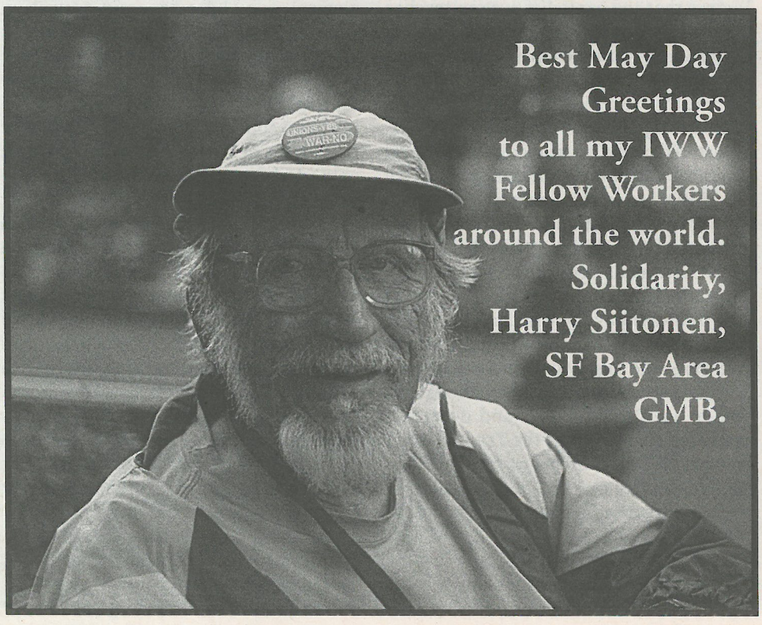
The union I work with was (and still is) engaged in a particularly brutal battle with a viciously anti-union employer. To try and break the union they ceased dues check-off deductions after our contract expired. We were able to hand-collect dues from upwards of 80 percent of the membership. This went on for several months with a few hundred workers in the shop. It reduced the income of the union by a non-trivial amount (as it was a union shop and now those who refused to pay didn't have to) and it also devoured an immense amount of organizing time and resources that could have went to more proactive ways of fighting the boss.

Of course there were positives, as there are with all sides of this debate. Showing management that we could hand-collect dues, and actually doing it, was certainly a blow to boss morale, but without us striking once and threatening another strike on May Day, management would have never backed off that issue (and others). The boss would have been happy to keep us out collecting dues by hand forever and it would have become more difficult and divisive over time for the workers.

A lot of what we see as corrupting business unions: dues check-off, grievance and arbitration, no strikes, contracts, paid organizers, etc., corrupts them primarily because they are business unions to begin with. We are not the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). I have seen smart and aggressive unions use these tools against the boss and to organize workers to fight. If the radical intent and drive of the IWW remains the same, I would not expect contracted job shops to hurt the union or its politics. I don't expect an IWW member in a job shop, even if they spend a day a week doing work for the union, avoid talking to workers because of dues check-off. I don't expect them to stop building to strike because they are under contract, nor would I expect them to let the union atrophy after it's certified by the NLRB by becoming some kind of pork chopper pie card.

I think this type of organizing I describe is essential if the union is to grow, especially in the arena of job shops and workers new to the labor movement.

Editor's note: the views expressed in this piece are solely those of the author and do not reflect those of the Industrial Worker *or the IWW. Indeed, in this case, the editor of this paper disagrees quite strongly with the conclusions reached in this piece.*



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World Labor Solidarity

A COLUMN BY THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY COMMISSION

The IWW formed the International Solidarity Commission to help the union build the worker-to-worker solidarity that can lead to effective action against the bosses of the world. To contact the ISC, email solidarity@iww.org.

International Labor News

By the IWW International Solidarity Commission (ISC)

The following collection of short messages from labor struggles and actions around the globe represent just a bite of revolutionary activities.

Brazilian sanitation workers celebrate victory. Photo: Revolution News!

Bangladesh

On March 31, the National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF) organized a human chain of orphans and victims to remember the tragedy of the Rana Plaza collapse in April 2013, leaving behind 1,129 dead and more than 2,500 injured workers as well as the tragedy of Tazreen Fashion factory fire in November 2012, in which 117 workers were killed and 200 injured. The speakers demanded compensation for the families as well as justice and penalty for the bosses responsible.

Sweden

After the Nazi attack in Malmö on March 8, a bright anti-fascist demonstration took place in Stockholm. The violence of the growing fascist movement in Sweden is shocking and so is the normalization of fascist movements. "Therefore fascist violence can never be tolerated," said the general secretary of the syndicalist union Sveriges Arbetares Centralorganisation (SAC).

Brazil

On March 1, sanitation workers reported that after a monumental eight-day wildcat strike they can claim a victory as their demands were met. Prior to the walkout, the representing Union of Employees of Cleaning and Conservation Companies of Rio de Janeiro Municipality (SEEACRMJ) made a settlement of 9 percent pay increase while the workers were demanding 50 percent, as well as an increase for food stamps, no dismissals and overtime pay. Rio's government and the Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (PMDB) criminalized the sweepers, and the Municipal Urban Waste/Cleaning Company (COMLURB) started to fire workers in order to nip the strike in the bud. With broad public support and the serious problems the strike caused for the Carnival, the street sweepers could announce their successful settlement. Bruno Lima, a strike committee member pointed out the motivation for the sweepers to follow up with more grassroots organizing. "We're very happy," he told *Agencia Púlsar*, "but we're aware that this is a process that isn't ending here."

With files from Revolution News!, Ruptly and World War 4 Report.

Don't Transfer Reza Shahabi Back To Prison!

By Sherkat-e Vahed

Photo: Sherkat-e Vahed
Shahabi's family, supporters.

When friends and colleagues of Reza Shahabi—a transit worker and a member of the board of directors of the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Sherkat-e Vahed) who has been incarcerated in Tehran's Evin Prison since June 12, 2010—had gone to visit him in the hospital, accompanied by Mr. Shahabi's wife and their two children, they were hoping that Reza would be able to spend the Iranian New Year with his family. Although he was ill, this visit would have reduced his enormous pain and suffering. But one day before the New Year, against all humanitarian values and even without finishing his treatment, Mr. Shahabi was suddenly transferred back to Evin Prison at night, crushing his family's hopes.

Sherkat-e Vahed condemns this inhumane action. We ask all trade unions and other international organizations to condemn this anti-worker action and support the unconditional and immediate release of Reza Shahabi.

With hope for the expansion of peace, freedom, and justice all over the world.

More Labor News From Around The World

Compiled by FN Brill

News from global labor struggles.

Algeria

A new Autonomous General Confederation of Algerian Workers (AGCAW) is being formed, and a second national meeting will be held in Algiers, focusing on three points: the trade union situation in Algeria, barriers to independent unionism, and building the AGCAW.

The Algerian government seeks to control all trade union activity and exerts continuous interference on unions, divisions within the same power and does not allow unionism that is not under its control. The Algerian government allows its official union, Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens (UGTA), to have a monopoly in tripartite negotiations in which the government, employers and the UGTA are the only participants. This tripartite establishes the general framework of collective bargaining in Algeria.

The AGCAW approved a 14-point action plan at their convening meeting on March 29. The launch of a public campaign for union formation, the implementation of a strategy of struggle, and the consolidation of independent unions are among the priorities. Another priority is the launch of a campaign to mobilize solidarity campaigns for workers fired or disciplined because of their union activities.

Independent union organizing training courses will be held, covering topics such as collective bargaining and union strategy. The development of a legal guide to labor relations and union activity has also been included in the action plan.

Brazil

Construction workers on the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games Olympic Park walked off work for better conditions and wages on April 3. This followed an incident one week earlier, when a construction worker died while working on the project.

Egypt

The North African Working Group of the Spanish Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) reported on April 4: "Strikes are still very numerous in Egypt. In recent weeks, strikes have spread across various sectors: education, health, postal, textile, transport, metallurgy, trade, the shipping industry and public works...The claims focus on improving the living conditions of workers, especially the demand for wage increases. But they also demand union and political freedoms."

India

It was reported on April 5 that more than 4,000 workers at Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) near Bangalore refused to return to work after management locked out union workers in mid-March. At press time, the union's leaders declared an indefinite hunger strike to protest the lockout.

Indonesia

British newspaper *The Mirror* reported that Nike workers in Indonesia are being paid 5,642 rupiah, or just 30 pence (50 cents) an hour to make 2014 England World Cup football shirts that sell for £90 each. *The Mirror* reported that "Nike justifies the price by pointing to the research and development that goes into the kits and technology that includes using material from eight recycled plastic water bottles in each shirt."

South Africa

The nation's largest union, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), has broken its ties with the ruling African National Congress-South African Communist Party Alliance (ANC-SACP). NUM leadership said they are upset with the ANC-SACP capitalist ruling class politics and wants a return to the alliance's working-class Stalinism of the past.

With files from the CGT, The Mirror *and LabourStart.*

Scottish Wobs Agitate, Educate & Inoculate

By Susan Dorazio, Clydeside IWW

Graphic: SEWN

The Scottish Education Workers Network (SEWN) is now in its second year as an IWW-initiated industrial organizing project. Our purpose is to help bring together workers throughout the education sector and across job titles. SEWN stands for eliminating the disparity in status, pay, and benefits within the sector, and discrimination based on gender, religion, ethnicity or physical difference. We believe that all workers in the education sector have a right to make workplace decisions via grassroots democracy.

We believe that through initiatives like SEWN, we can become more aware of and break down ways of thinking and acting that the capitalist system teaches us and reinforces at every turn. We can create new paths toward working-class comradeship and empowerment. We recognize that attaining these goals requires both workplace and community efforts. Bolstered by the assistance of our general membership branches and supporters, we in SEWN are working in both spheres.

For example, this past fall and winter we acted in solidarity with higher education and further education workers fed up with negotiations that go nowhere on the issues of pay, pensions and working conditions. Thanks to our dual-carders, we were able to stay informed about and respond to upcoming strike actions and the hypocritical rhetoric and deceptive and collusive tactics of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) bureaucrats. As an alternative, SEWN put together "Escalation Not Capitulation" leaflets for distributing on the picket lines.

This spring we will have new leaflets for students; will be challenging the action by some schools to dock workers a whole day's pay for two-hour strikes; and doing more outreach throughout the education sector, particularly the nursery, primary, and secondary sections of it.

Issues we will be focusing on include the unconditional right to strike; higher wages and lower work-loads; an end to zero-hours contracts, privatization, and wage gaps within the sector; reversing pension and program cuts; no pre-set curriculum or teaching to the test; and education for liberation by teacher-learners in a culture of sharing and trust.

Along with workplace agitation, we are committed to connecting our issues and organizing goals to campaigns such as uniting health care, housing, transport, clerical, social service, and education workers to fight budget cuts and take a stand on workfare and medical assessments; providing full funding for public services by taxing the rich; and pressuring town councils to pay back the money they made by privatizing common lands entrusted for centuries to the Common Good Fund.

During the coming months, we also will be discussing how we can expand the settings for our work—bringing our values and resources to neighborhood centers and other groups and projects within our community. Collective action, class consciousness, open learning, alternative structures, worker solidarity, the common good, and socialism are ideas that are as pertinent and important to campaigns and to efforts at community organizing as they are to industrial organizing. Just as an injury to one is an injury to all, so is the strength of one the strength of all.

For more information, write to us at contact.sewn@gmail.com.