

# INDUSTRIAL WORKER



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## #ResistenciaMovistar: A Strike Of This Century In Spain

By Javier Lázaro Sanz, Member of the Confederación General del Trabajo (CGT)

One of the main worries we've had in the radical labor movement lately is proving (to ourselves in the first place) that the 19th century invention of the labor movement is a thing of the 21st century. Of course, we've had to learn the internet. We do social networks, memes, hashtags, and, occasionally, trending topics. It's taken a lot of effort to master new technologies, but we are now cybernetic, multimedia-oriented, electronic, interconnected, and even cyberpunk if necessary.

However, the real challenge of adapting to these mutable, fast-paced times is still there. Apart from many new gadgets (useful gadgets, useless gadgets, hyped up gadgets, gadgets that become obsolete in one week, gadgets that change our whole perception of the world around us), the

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Strike of workers of Telefónica Movistar in April 2015, in Madrid, Spain.

Photo: Carlos Delgado, Wikimedia Commons

## IWW Statement On Baltimore Uprising And Police Repression



Wobblies rally in Baltimore.

Photo: Bill Hughes

*This is an official statement from the Baltimore IWW. If you or your group would like to sign on to this statement, send an email to [baltimoreiww@gmail.com](mailto:baltimoreiww@gmail.com). We will update the list of signatories on our Facebook page as they come in.*

We the undersigned declare our solidarity with the struggle for justice in the case of Freddie Gray and all other victims of police brutality. While we celebrate the May 1 announcement that the six police officers responsible for the death of Freddie Gray will face criminal charges (an outcome that would not have happened if not for the massive resistance in the streets of Baltimore and other cities), we also recognize that this is only a tiny step toward addressing the underlying causes that

led to this injustice. As long as entrenched poverty, institutional racism, lack of educational and recreational opportunities, and an unaccountable and increasingly militarized police force continue to exist, there will be no justice or safety for people of color or the working class in general in Baltimore or anywhere else. We believe that these root causes must be addressed both in the streets and in the workplace. Workers, including the unemployed, must unite around these crucial issues or the labor movement will become irrelevant.

As for the immediate situation in Baltimore, we the undersigned endorse the following demands:

- An immediate end to the curfew and the "state of emergency."
- The immediate withdrawal of all National Guard troops, state police and other occupying forces.
- The immediate release of everyone arrested in connection to the Baltimore Uprising and the restoration of *habeas corpus*.

• Full amnesty for everyone arrested in connection to the Freddie Gray protests, including two IWW members who were arrested for peacefully defying the curfew on May 1st.

• Fair restitution for protesters injured by the police, including an IWW member who sustained visible injuries as a result of being beaten by police during his arrest.

We call on the Baltimore Police Department, the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and Maryland Governor Larry Hogan to implement these demands at once.

An injury to one is an injury to all!

**In solidarity,  
IWW—Baltimore General  
Membership Branch**

See full list of signatories at: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/IWW-Baltimore/97451807925?fref=ts>

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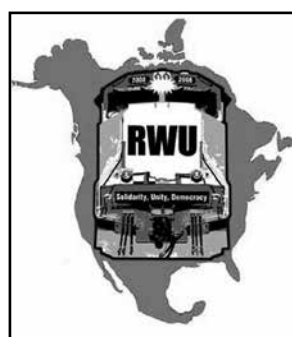
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## Amtrak Wreck Could Have Been Prevented

By Railroad Workers United (RWU)

On May 12, 2015, Amtrak Train #188 derailed at speed east of Philadelphia, Pa., killing eight people and injuring more than 200 others. The following weeks have witnessed endless speculation as the official investigation into the cause of the derailment. Those of us in the rail industry anxiously await the findings. Meanwhile, regardless of what the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and other agencies discover and conclude about the tragic wreck, there are a number of facts that are worth considering:



Graphic: RWU

executives, union officials and industry insiders that had Positive Train Control (PTC) been in place and in effect on this section of track, the wreck would more than likely not have been possible. PTC would have resulted in a train brake application in order to slow the train, recognizing that its speed was excessive and therefore unable to negotiate the tight curve ahead.

PTC has been mandated by Congress, but its complete implementation has been delayed on the Northeast Corridor line and elsewhere for a myriad of reasons. In Amtrak's case, one of these reasons is a lack of adequate funding from Congress.

2) Amtrak has been underfunded for

1) It is roundly agreed by railroad ex-

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**Letters Welcome!**

Send your letters to: iw@iww.org with "Letter" in the subject.

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**Get the Word Out!**

IWW members, branches, job shops and other affiliated bodies can get the word out about their project, event, campaign or protest each month in the *Industrial Worker*. Send announcements to iw@iww.org. Much appreciated donations for the following sizes should be sent to:

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

# Remembering Our American Comrades Killed In Chile

Dear Fellow Workers and Readers:

The article "Killers Of Fellow Worker Frank Teruggi Sentenced In Chile" (*Industrial Worker*, April 2015, page 9) by Fellow Worker x331980 moved me very deeply. This fellow worker has, as the proverbial saying goes, "hit the nail on the head." The U.S. government was a prime mover in the coup overthrowing Salvador Allende and bringing Augusto Pinochet to power, which was accompanied by the murder of an untold number of people. It was a major atrocity. The United States was deeply involved with the murders of Wobbly Frank Teruggi and his American comrade, Charles Horman. Imagine the agony of the families in not knowing what happened to them. Think of how you may worry if your husband or wife is one or two hours late in coming home. Multiply this a billion times.

In the movie "Missing," an American diplomat, in the American Embassy in Chile, explains to Teruggi's father, played by Jack Lemmon, that American prosperity depends on this exploitative relationship between the United States and Latin American countries, and that Teruggi's



Charles Horman (left) and Frank Teruggi (right).

Photos: tlaxcala-int.org

son, by poking his nose into this relationship, was responsible for his own death. Our fellow worker x1331980 has discussed "The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability" by Peter Kornbluh. This good book is filled with heavily redacted documents. "The Pinochet File" was published by The New Press, a publisher devoted to publishing books of quality and significance, not just for monetary gain.

At least there is some justice for

Charles Horman and Frank Teruggi. But it is still very light, considering the crime committed against them and against the Chilean people, including the prisoners in the stadium.

For their crime of wanting to observe and contribute in some way to a new day for Chile, they, and their potential descendants to the end of time, have been blotted out.

**In solidarity,  
Raymond S. Solomon**

## Industrial Worker

The Voice of Revolutionary Industrial Unionism

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Madison Infoshop (IU. 620): c/o Rainbow Bookstore, 426 W. Gilman, 53703. 608-260-0900. madinfoshop.wordpress.com/  
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## Workplace Safety

# Blood On The Shop Floor

By Anonymous

On Friday, March 24, 2015, a worker was killed on the shop floor at the Quad Graphics plant in Oklahoma City, Okla. His death came as a shock and horror to his co-workers. While servicing equipment on a maintenance call he was crushed to death under a crane. Quad Graphics decided to not shut down and workers were sent back to the presses.

Quad Graphics (based in Sussex, Wis.) was founded in 1971 by Harry V. Quadracci. Previously, Quadracci was an executive at the print company W.A. Krueger. Following a protracted labor strike in 1969, Quadracci resigned to start his own anti-union print company Quad Graphics, named after himself. Quad is the fastest growing print company in the United States. They are second overall but first in various categories such as magazine production. They have a presence throughout the world with plants in Mexico, Argentina, Chile and other Latin American countries, as well as Poland and India. They are infamous among labor activists for their sweatshop conditions, vicious anti-union policies (similar to Walmart, they will shut down a location if a union push is successful) and the lowest pay in the industry, averaging about two-thirds what their competitors pay. They are also large financial backers of Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker and of the misnamed "right-to-work" laws in various states.

Oklahoma was picked as an ideal location for shipping and distribution. Being in the middle of the country and with major highway arteries like Interstate 40 heading east and west and Interstate 35 heading north and south, the Oklahoma City plant can ship anywhere. It is the largest print facility west of the Mississippi River at nearly 1,500,000 square feet, housing nine web offset presses, six gravure presses, and a huge finishing department with co-mailing capabilities. It is Quad's premier



Graphic: clipartfree.net

magazine and catalog plant, printing such titles as *Time*, *Sports Illustrated*, *People*, *US Weekly*, *Boys Life* magazines and much more.

Labor conditions at the plant are horrible. Workers pull 12-hour shifts without breaks or even a sit-down lunch. You are generally expected to eat while you work—if you have time at all. It is common for workers to skip meals if the shift is especially busy. The base pay is horrendously low, so most workers expect to do at least some overtime if they wish to survive. Working 60-plus hours a week is routine while 84-hour work-weeks are also common. Various levels of exhaustion among workers is also normal. Quad is kind enough to stock their vending machines with overpriced energy drinks. Crewing levels are kept as low as possible so very often workers have to handle multiple tasks at once. The company has a preference for hiring vulnerable and desperate workers such as those with felony convictions. While the hiring of felons is commendable (and socially necessary if people with convictions are ever going to piece their lives back together), they do so mostly for the tax write-off and because a desperate workforce is theoretically less likely to fight back against abuses. The turnover rate is well north of 90 percent with more than half of new hires not sur-

viving the first week.

Quad practices a policy sarcastically known as "promotion without pay." Due to the very high turnover rate they will rapidly promote out of sheer necessity anyone who sticks around and tries, but will do so without pay increases for as long as possible. At a traditional (generally unionized) print plant the turnover rate is much lower and it can take years to move up to the next position. It can take several years to move from material handler (the entry level position on press) to roll tender, while at Quad it can happen as quickly as 30 days. It is not uncommon for people to move from new hire to second pressman in less than a year, all without any pay increase. Management will tell their workforce to take a variety of utterly useless classes before any pay increases can occur. Even then it is very rare to get the full pay grade reflecting the current position held. Various labor, safety, and environmental laws are routinely ignored. Workers are told to dispose of chemicals down the sink drain (something the Environmental Protection Agency outright bans), and working with paper and flammable chemicals fires is not uncommon. Occasionally the air scrubbers used to maintain air quality (per the Clean Air Act) will malfunction and polluted air is pumped into the building, forcing the workers to breathe the air, so that the press

does not shut down. During those times the air is thick and hazy around the press. Injuries are common and though mostly minor, they can occasionally be catastrophic. Several years ago a worker lost an entire arm. Finger tips are more common. New hires are lied to at orientation and are told they will get two 20-minute breaks per shift and a 20-minute sit-down lunch. No one on press actually gets a break. The more class-conscious workers will often bend this rule and, if time allows, help give each other breaks in an act of solidarity, but management frowns on this practice. The attendance policy is very strict. Calling in on an overtime day counts as two occurrences, so if an emergency happens and you end up calling in several times in a row you may be without a job. People very often show up to work sick for fear of losing their jobs.

The mood on the shop floor is dark and pessimistic. Morale is horribly low. Anger about these conditions sometimes boils over in a variety of ways. Spontaneous acts of sabotage are not uncommon, nor are threats of violence towards management. In at least two incidents, recently laid-off workers came back to the plant with weapons and threatened management. Following this a contract was struck with the local police department and now police cars can be seen in the parking lot at shift change with uniformed officers roaming the halls watching the workforce. There are more locks on more doors, and cameras have been installed everywhere. Management fears its workforce but is utterly unwilling to improve conditions. A constant state of class war is evident everywhere. Equipment is often badly maintained. The mechanics and electricians in the maintenance department want to fix equipment, but far too often their hands are tied. Parts are never ordered and instead things are repaired as much as possible with whatever is on hand. Sometimes vital parts of presses will operate in a sub-optimal, if not an outright broken state for many months on end.

On March 24, an experienced veteran electrician was called out to the gravure press department on a maintenance call. During the service call an incident occurred in which he was crushed to death under a crane. It is not fully clear if it was a malfunction or a freak accident. No press in offset was shut down nor was the plant ever shut down. Workers continued to work as a comrade and co-worker lay dying. Lawyers and insurance agents were in the plant before his family was even notified of the incident. Fearing what the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) might discover, workers were told to clean up, properly label chemicals, and to make the plant appear safer than it actually was. Within a few days of the death the affected press was operational again. Production continued even while his blood dried. The outrage is palpable but for now people are keeping silent out of fear.

Conditions at Quad are unbearable on a good day. Now that a worker has died it is plain for all to see just how little employees matter to the company as individuals. Life has no dignity at Quad. Anger at times reaches a boiling point. Even senior skilled workers are known to walk out mid-shift out of sheer frustration at the situation and conditions. The anger is evident but a deep fear is even stronger. Quad is infamous for its scorched earth policy towards unions. So what to do? Solidarity is evident and everywhere. Workers supporting other workers, giving each other *de facto* breaks if the situation allows, giving each other lunches despite policy, and supporting one another in a wide variety of inspiring ways. What is evident is that this situation cannot continue. Life has dignity and this method of production, of profits before all other considerations must cease. The working-class creates society, we should run it.

## 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.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Post Code, Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership includes a subscription to the **Industrial Worker**.

# Whore And Housemaid

By Madeira Darling

I want to talk about feminized labor. I want to talk about sex work and domestic labor. I want to talk about the intertwining nature of these two types of work that are intimately connected with women and with the home.

I want to talk about the way these forms of labor are treated. I want to talk about how frequently people deny that sexual and domestic laborers are workers. A sex worker is often told to “get a real job;” a domestic worker is treated as subhuman, paid a pittance for work that requires specialized knowledge to do well, and is intensely physically demanding. I want to talk about how often sexual and domestic labor is extracted from women by men using violence or threats of violence. I want to talk about how the majority of victims of human trafficking end up doing domestic or sexual labor or both. I want to talk about how both domestic and sexual labor often take place in isolation, in the employer’s home or in the home of the worker, away from other employees one might find solidarity with, and away from the meager protection of labor law (and the law in general). This makes these workers even more vulnerable to their boss’s whims. I want to talk about how sex workers must maintain the illusion that their labor is not labor, that they are pleased to be there, how they have to answer “yes” when a potential client asks if this gets you off. I want to talk about how domestic staff are expected either to be unseen or to act as if they feel they are “one of the family,” that they love the children they are paid to mind, that they are happy to make their employer’s dinner, that they walk a line between not overstepping their subservient position and not undermining the illusion that they are oh-so-pleased to be there, that they do not feel they are a servant, that they do not mind their inferior position.

A worker who can be denied the label “worker” is a perfect worker for an employer. It absolves them of the guilt of exploitation, either because they can deny the reality of the exploitation or deny that they are to blame, and it denies us the framework best suited to explaining our condition. They label us “whore,” they label us “victim,” they label us “friend,” they label us “help,” they label us “invisible,” they label us “object,” they label us “wife,” but they never label us “worker.” To label us “worker” would allow us to understand our problems as workers’ problems and put an end to their ability to propose false and harmful solutions to the misery of our conditions to keep us occupied and afraid. We are expected to hide the amount of work we do so that they can deny that we deserve greater compensation, and to allay their own guilt at being served. Paying workers in these most feminized fields is something people resent intensely. You can see this in the degrading wages paid to domestic workers, the clients who get away with “theft of services” charges when they rape a sex worker. We can see this in the fact that the vast majority of victims of human trafficking end up performing sexual or domestic labor, the dehumanizing stereotypes of immigrant domestic laborers (see any number of TV housekeepers speaking broken English played for laughs) and of sex workers (see “CSI” episodes where nameless dead hookers litter the caseload). We can see this in every cultural trope that labels us anything, *anything* but worker, because these are things men and the bourgeois are loathe to admit that they pay for or *should* pay for, of course. We see this in society’s horror at the idea that a homemaker should be paid for their contribution to society. A traditional homemaker—the archetypal housewife—earns her living in a dual capacity. She provides domestic labor in the form of cooking, cleaning, childcare and so on, and she provides sexual and emotional labor to her spouse. Except



Graphic: Sarah R from Toronto GMB

society brands the housewife (at least the working-class housewife, see especially Peggy from “Married With Children”) as lazy, useless and a burden (the upper-class white housewife is quite a different matter, though even the bourgeois housewife is the subject of jokes, see the numerous neurotic and sponging TV housewives of fiction and “reality” TV).

Society sees sex work as both an easy way to make a lot of money and inherently degrading. The first statement is incorrect; the work is hard and the pay is not enough for the amount of labor done and lack of benefits provided. This is the case even if one is a fairly successful independent worker and is a portrayal of sex worker rooted in bourgeois propaganda about the inherent virtue of “hard work” (how money must always be a reward for virtue). As to the degrading nature of sex work, I argue that to suggest sex must inherently degrade a woman is to argue that a woman’s worth depends inherently on her sexual conduct which is the height of misogyny, but also that, no shit, all labor is degrading under capitalism. Being forced to sell your labor to avoid dying is degrading, and utterly dehumanizing, and so by blaming the sex in sex work for degrading workers, rather than where it rightly lies with the work portion of sex work, capital misdirects people’s concerns over sexual labor to obscure the wholly exploitive nature of the system in which it occurs.

Similarly, society throws accusations of laziness (and thus lack of capitalist virtue) at domestic laborers to justify their ill treatment. How many times has some bourgeois asshole who’s never done a real day’s work in their life, whined about how the cleaning lady (likely exhausted and paid a pittance) failed to thoroughly clean under some heavy piece of furniture or adequately de-scum their filthy bathtub?

As well both domestic labor and sexual labor are considered by society to require no skill (skill is another virtue prized by the bourgeois) which, while blatantly false, justifies using domestic and sexual laborers as acceptable targets.

In both cases, accusations of laziness and lack of skill (i.e. lack of virtue) are used to justify the subordinate social position of the working class, and thus capitalism as a system, as well as to pit “good” proles (those who work hard and thus “deserve” compensation) against “bad” proles (those who are “lazy” “unskilled” “disruptive” or “greedy” and thus “deserve” to be destitute) and create a scapegoat for capital: the “bad” prole, to whom is ascribed all the parasitic gluttony of the capitalist, and whom society blames for all the suffering of their class. The whore, the welfare queen, the lazy and uneducated cleaning lady, the domineering and frivolous housewife; isn’t it convenient that these “bad prole” archetypes are most commonly from groups which society has most oppressed? Women, especially women of color, are those most often invoked to keep workers divided and punching down.

The only good whore is a whore who doesn’t charge, or at the very least a happy, passive, undemanding whore. This is the whore that the neo-liberal “empowerment” narrative of sex work demands. If we feel ill done, we are told we are admitting to the inherently degrading nature of

## WOMEN WORKERS' HISTORY

Chapter 83

The New Deal and the Old

To revive an economy stuck deep in depression, the Roosevelt Administration pushed its “New Deal” legislation through Congress in the spring of 1933; among the laws passed was the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA).\* The NIRA created codes for each industry which set maximum hours of work and minimum wages, and guaranteed the right of workers to join unions and to engage in collective bargaining.

In most cases, the industrial codes provided for lower wages for women than men. Rose Schneiderman of the Women’s Trade Union League, the only woman appointed to the NIRA labor advisory board, worked with Eleanor Roosevelt (the president’s wife) and women’s groups in arguing for a single minimum-wage standard for industries employing men and women.

Many codes were revised. Schneiderman hailed the reforms as representing a “Magna Carta of the working woman.” But a fourth of the codes still specified wage differentials based on sex. And in the other codes — like the one for electrical manufacturing — the “old deal” often canceled out the benefits of the New.



In the electrical industry, the NIRA code set a minimum wage of 40 cents an hour. But a worker who had earned less than 40 cents as of July 15, 1929 was to be paid 32½ cents. And because the companies could pay inexperienced help at 80 percent of the minimum wage, many women who had been laid off before the code went into effect found it impossible to return to work. This provision, said the Women’s Bureau, “defeated the real meaning of the minimum wage by perpetuating the status of any low wage group, such as women or Negroes.”

Testifying on the textile industry code, Ann Burlak, secretary of the National Textile Workers Union (see Chapter 80), urged the government to adopt a clause barring discrimination against any employee because of race, sex or creed. Not willing to antagonize Southern mill owners, Congress refused.

\*The NIRA was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in May 1935.

Graphic: Mike Konopacki

our work, and thus justifying the denial of our rights and our own imprisonment and murder. If we discuss the problems of our work we are told we are handing ammo in the form of admission of the inherently misogynistic nature of the sex industry to the enemy, those who see us as traitors to womankind, and would like to see us shot. If there is bad, the only solution is for some kind person to step in and rescue us from our work and never for us to fight to improve the environment and society in which we work. You can see the ingenious nature of this rhetorical catch-22.

The only good domestic laborer is tireless, cheerful and never resentful of her employer. She is the nanny who accepts the most meager of pay and truly loves the little cuckoos she is paid to rear in preference to her own children. She is the maid who makes the house spotless, demands less than minimum wage and takes an unpaid break to hear about her employer’s problems because she regards them as such a good friend. She takes castoffs with touching gratitude, and never asks why it is right that she should only have

castoffs. She has for her employer all the awed adoration a dog has for its master. If her employer is attracted to her, she returns their feelings (see: “The Nanny”). If she might compete with her employer for romantic attention she fades into the background, asexual, never to outshine her “superiors” (see: Dot in the “Phryne Fisher” mysteries, the nanny archetype). A nanny who does not love her charges or even prefers her own children to her employer’s is told she is cruel, unfeeling and the monster from a fairy story. A maid who does not work herself into the ground is lazy, selfish and taking advantage of her employer. If she does not provide her employer with the emotional labor of seeming fond of them and overjoyed to do her ill-paid and physically-demanding job she is whiny, ungrateful, undeserving and bad tempered. To fight back is to become the villain.

A good whore, a good domestic, a good wife, does everything and demands nothing, because we are told we justify our own mistreatment if we dare ask for anything more than the smallest scraps.



## Wobbly &amp; North American News

## Wobblies Train In The Twin Ports

By x372712

Fifteen Wobblies underwent the Organizer Training 101 (OT101) on April 11 and 12, hosted by the Twin Ports General Membership Branch (GMB), which covers Duluth, Minn., and Superior, Wis.

Workers from across the Upper Midwest and Canada underwent the two-day training in the Duluth Labor Temple, learning the ABCs (or, rather, “AEIOUs”) of building worker power on the job. Wobblies from three GMBs were represented—Twin Ports, the Twin Cities and Winnipeg. Two fellow workers from a growing group in the Saint Cloud, Minn. area also participated.

“This training really has three benefits,” said Twin Ports delegate Justin Anderson. “The first, of course, is the content. These trainings help newer members learn to organize at the same level as workers who’ve been in for a longer time. There’s no other organization that gives this kind of training and opportunity for involvement. Second is strengthening the branch—we’re a new branch, and a lot of members get their first real taste of IWW culture and organization through the Organizer Training. Third is public exposure. Doing this training in the Labor Temple really shows everyone that the IWW is here.”

In addition to the training, the Twin Ports GMB treated visiting workers to a showing of the documentary “The Wobblies” at the Jefferson People’s House,



Wobs at the OT101. Photo: Hans Buelke, Twin Ports GMB

a worker-run coffee shop.

The Twin Ports GMB, chartered in 2014, is a return of the IWW to a city that once had a strong Wobbly presence. The IWW first appeared in the city in 1911 during a free speech fight. In 1913, a strike at the ore docks established the IWW as a force in the city’s labor struggles. The union drew support from many immigrant workers, especially people from Finland, who founded the Work People’s College. The IWW campaigned mostly in the iron and timber industries until 1917 when the police and U.S. National Guard collaborated to suppress the movement.

The return of the IWW to Duluth reflects the union’s wider trend of growth both internationally and regionally. Recent years have seen new GMBs in Twin Ports, Red River (covering Fargo, N.D. and Moorhead, Minn.), and Milwaukee, in addition to a growing presence in central Minnesota.

## For A Revolutionary Movement In Education

By FW db

This was a speech given by Fellow Worker db at a launch event for education organizing in the Twin Cities called “Spring Dream.” For more information please contact [sjemiww@gmail.com](mailto:sjemiww@gmail.com) or [db@riseup.net](mailto:db@riseup.net).

The Social Justice Education Movement (SJEM) is an affiliate of the IWW, so I’m here to tell you a little about our broader organizational family. The IWW is a revolutionary union, organized, funded, and run from the bottom-up by the members themselves. We are open to workers, students, the unemployed, and those incarcerated. Some local highlights of our work include organizing with people in prison and their allies against police brutality and the prison industrial complex; organizing low-wage workers for \$15 per hour at a major local distribution center; an annual Junior Wobblies family camp (Wobblies is a nickname for IWW members); and our work here with SJEM.

In the IWW, we believe in education for liberation and in another world that is possible, one liberated from oppressive systems like hetero-patriarchal, white-supremacist capitalism. We believe in solidarity: all for one and one for all! We have come to the conclusion that this system we inhabit—the educational, criminal justice and economic system—isn’t built to create justice and freedom. The system isn’t broken; it’s working when we see daily racism and racist outcomes in our schools and when we see decisions made to divest and corporatize our learning and working conditions. The system is working when we see students, parents, staff, and community feeling helpless to change the urgent issues in our schools.

But they are our schools, and schools are nothing without students, parents, staff and community. We are the majority and schools cannot happen without our learning, work, money and love. Our power lies in organization. If we get organized and exercise our power directly—not by the letter of the law but by the law of conscience—we can change



Photo: donaldthomasdesign.com

M, Social Justice Education Movement organizer, showcasing two of the group’s citywide demands.

our schools by having more empowering and empowered staff and teachers of color, developing alternatives to police in school, and creating the multi-racial, multi-generational, bottom-up, action-based *revolutionary education movement* we need to transform our educations and our futures. The goal is to shift power to the people in each school and to transform our schools for community/worker control and social justice.

This is one of our spring dreams, and we know the power of the people and the power of a dream. From a handful of educators, the Social Justice Education Fair has grown to become a touchstone for reimaging education in the Twin Cities attracting hundreds of diverse and inspiring students, parents, educators, and community members. Please lend your help, your advice, and your leadership to grow the Social Justice Education Movement (of the IWW) to be a force for liberating education.

## Pittsburgh BBQ To Stop Police Brutality

By Kenneth Miller

Wobblies from all over are invited to Pittsburgh for the Black and White Reunion’s 5th Annual BBQ to Stop Police Brutality on Aug. 1, 2015 at Overlook Shelter in Shenley Park, to protest at the Fraternal Order of Police’s National Conference in Pittsburgh starting on Aug. 9. You are also invited to the 18th Annual Summit Against Racism



The 4th Annual BBQ To Stop Police Brutality on Aug. 24, 2014. Photo: IWW James L

on the Saturday after Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 2016. For more information

about these events, please call Kenneth Miller at 412-512-1709.

## Ein Angriff auf einen, ist ein Angriff auf alle!

*An injury to one is an injury to all!* A report on the successful and inspiring spring meeting of the IWW German Language Area Regional Organizing Committee (GLAMROC).

Since its founding in 2006, the IWW in the German language area grows continuously. Now, there is a new generation of very committed organizers discussing the future of the One Big Union (OBU) in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Our GLAMROC meetings take place twice a year, in the spring and then in the fall. Whereas the fall meeting is more concentrated on our concrete political work like the progress in organizing and the situation in the shops, during the spring meeting we focus on our structures and administrative issues. We usually meet for two days in a city where Wobblies are organized. This time, during a wonderful sunny and spring-like weekend, it brought us to Kassel where the second IWW office in Germany was opened last July (called “die Rothe Ecke”). There were about 15 Wobblies (10 men, five women) from Germany, representing six branches including Frankfurt, Hamburg, Leipzig, Kassel and Berlin as well as a fellow worker (FW) from Bochum.

We started our meeting on Saturday morning with reports from branches, officers and committees. After this we turned quickly to discussing how we could improve our structures and how to grow as a union. Here two points are worth mentioning. First, thanks to an FW from Frankfurt, we finally have a “cloud” (a “place” to save and store data online, also known as intranet) which enables us to share any sort of digital material much easier. This way the work done by one branch (the design of a new logo, statements, translations, reflections on international/national organizing campaigns, etc.) can instantly be used by other FWs.

Secondly, we started a discussion about the strategy of the IWW, asking in what direction the IWW in the German language area should develop. For this purpose two FWs prepared theses and presented them at the meeting. Those theses included the organization of workers with a migration background, whether the IWW should focus on those employees not included by the business unions or also on core workers, and finally how to do justice to the diversity of living conditions of those who want to organize within the IWW. This little paper is now taken back into the branches for further discussion, whereby the evaluation will take place during the fall meeting in October.

On Sunday, besides the allocation of responsibilities, we discussed a currently developing labor conflict in which a comrade from Berlin is involved. Because the activists present come from different backgrounds and experiences, the advice and ideas shared during the discussion turned out to be very inspiring and helpful for everyone in attendance, especially for the FW in need.



IWW Kassel banner.

Photo: IWW Kassel

All in all, we had a great mix of reports on recent organizing campaigns taking place in several cities and sharing of international experiences in the IWW. This allowed an exchange of all kinds of strategies and tactics among each other. For example one FW gave talks about his internship with Brandworkers and the New York City IWW last summer, which brought in a lot of new ideas and tools for GLAMROC. These talks have taken place in Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg, Kassel, Leipzig and Vienna so far— and more cities will follow. They have helped us reflect on the recent status of our organizing campaigns and on the IWW as a whole as well as allowed us to realize more about our strengths and weaknesses.

Also, thanks to a good working atmosphere, capable moderation and a general respectful speaking behavior by all participants, we had a very productive weekend. And although such meetings always take energy (e.g. on Saturday we started at approximately 10 a.m. and finished nine hours later), it was a lot of fun! Not just because we got some work done but also because the GLAMROC meetings are of course a great way to meet fellow workers and to socialize. Usually the hosting branch takes care of this matter, and the Wobblies from Kassel did an excellent job. Participants stayed at other FWs’ houses, food was provided all the time (technically the meeting doesn’t start with the first point on the agenda but with joint breakfast in the morning) and in the evening a cozy get-together also for non (or not yet) Wobblies was organized.

In conclusion, the spring meeting led to a lot of hope and confidence in the future of our union as represented in GLAMROC as well as in the IWW in its entirety! Although there is still a lot of potential for actually making progress, we are optimistic and motivated since we have great fellow workers here. So for the next fall, we can only hope that more GLAMROC Wobblies will find the time and feel like joining our meetings; because as any organization, we need more people to get involved and accept responsibility. The fall meeting will take place (for the first time actually) near Leipzig in October this year. And everybody who is around is strongly encouraged to drop by!

**Solidarität! Solidarity!**  
Levke Asyr (Leipzig) and Mark Richter (Frankfurt am Main)



## May Day

# IWW Demonstrates Against Austerity in Montreal

By IWW Montreal

To celebrate May 1, 2015, the IWW Montreal organized and participated in numerous disruptive actions. In the works for nearly a year beforehand, this day of mobilizations was set in the context of a struggle against austerity measures imposed by the government. For the past year, the call for a general strike was heard throughout various workplaces, universities and schools, hospitals and postal services, and in community organizations. By the eve of May 1, hundreds of workplaces and organizations, as well as higher education establishments, had voted day-long strike mandates in their general assemblies.

On the evening of April 30, the IWW Montreal organized a blockage of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) tower, where significant staff cuts and layoffs are being planned. Several hundred people were present, allowing for the action to be a frank success, despite several arrests and the use of pepper spray. While a very imposing police presence initially blocked the demonstration and forced it to march in a circle, we eventually were able to disperse without attracting attention in order to reunite in front of the demonstration's original target.

At 7 a.m. on Friday, May 1, several dozen Wobblies blocked all four exits of the Montreal Police's Division of the Application of Parking Regulations. For nearly two hours, no vehicle was able to leave the parking lot until riot police intervened.

After a popular metro operation, we converged with several striking organizations in order to massively participate in the morning demonstration organized by the Coalition Main Rouge (Red Hand Coalition)—a broad coalition of Québec



Photo: IWW Montreal

organizations against austerity), which we joyously prolonged with a spontaneous demonstration around Square Victoria (the center of Montreal's business district). Several hundred people joined us just as spontaneously. We then added our support and numbers to the demonstration of the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ, or Québécois Workers' Federation—a major union federation).

Between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m., the Montreal IWW organized a barbecue in the park adjacent to our offices. Once again, our capacity to mobilize large numbers of allies surpassed our wildest expectations, transforming a well-deserved moment of rest into a blockage of an adjacent street.

We then joined up with the demonstration from the northern neighborhoods in order to march downtown, where a blockage of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) tower had been planned by the Convergence des

luttes anticapitalistes (CLAC, or Convergence of anti-capitalist struggles). A few minutes before our arrival, the main demonstration was very violently attacked by riot police forces, fractioning the principal group into several smaller demonstrations that spread throughout the downtown area. Several hours of clashes with police ensued, whose violence was proportional to their uselessness all throughout the day. The police protected and served no one but capital itself.

It is important to note that all of our actions received frank support from workers and passersby. It is indeed rare to receive as much support from passing drivers as we did, especially as we proudly displayed our red and black. Workers of the establishments we blocked voiced their desire to also be on strike, despite restrictive legal conditions forbidding them to do so. We urged them to take their legitimacy into their own hands.

Of course, the Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM, or the Montreal police force) was also strongly mobilized. Their courage was only equalled by their inability to control the crowds; so great was the number of actions organized. We can confirm that the police force was clearly unable to manage the sheer amount of events during the day, and sought to catch itself up during the evening's demonstration. It is evidently much simpler to repress one large and localized demonstration than hundreds of diffuse actions. Information on the SPVM's logistics informed us that the IWW was a privileged target (even the "number 1 priority" according to some reports) following our blockage of the police's parking agents that morning, and allowed us to escape being kettled around noon (thanks to the FTQ's support). As such, we were able to avoid any criminalization of our members and allies, and we ended the day with only five tickets issued.

In the end, we are deeply proud to have participated in the organization of this day. The benefits in terms of the IWW's image, of the wider dissemination of our message, and of signing up new members are already being felt. We were able to present ourselves as a uniting force for other unions and struggling working folks without ever having to disavow or hide our revolutionary convictions. The efforts put into the organization of these actions will undoubtedly allow future May Days to be as interesting and stimulating as this one—to make it a true day of revolutionary struggle. But we rest not, and already we are organizing new struggles.

Beyond May 1, we continue to organize, because the workers' struggle must only intensify.

## Wobblies Reclaim May Day In Chicago

By the Chicago GMB May Day Committee

Over 400 people took to the streets in Chicago for the IWW-headed Radical Coalition's March, Rally, and Noise Demonstration on May Day. The event was the largest distinctly anti-capitalist local showing in recent memory.

Called by the Chicago General Membership Branch (GMB) in late 2014, the Chicago May Day Radical Coalition brought together 10 organizations in an effort to facilitate collective decision-making and revitalize the historical working-class spirit of International Workers' Day in the holiday's birthplace. The coalition members, consisting of unions, leftist organizations, and affinity groups, agreed to a set of principles, including refraining from sectarianism, appealing to reformist legislative solutions and agreeing to the promotion of direct action.

After months of planning, the coalition was met by hundreds of supporters turning out for the announced march starting in Union Park on May 1. Black-and-red flags and bandannas were distributed to participants as police staged around the mass. The Chicago Police Department (CPD) staged by the dozens, but their showing was quickly dwarfed by a sea of red and black. Though the crowd's diversity allowed syndicalists, communists, anarchists, and unaffiliated rank-and-filers to co-exist throughout the day, the heavy-handedness from authorities that Chicagoans have grown to expect was strangely absent.

Police kicked off the May Day weekend with an attack on the Chicago GMB's annual fundraiser concert. State officials issued the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America (UE)—whose union hall would be hosting the

GMB's benefit event—three cease and desist (C&D) orders mid-week leading to May Day. The orders were written targeting the May 2 show, effectively shutting down the anticipated musical follow-up to May Day. In conversation with UE officials, Chicago GMB officers were told the CPD had made an in-person visit the day prior to issuing the C&D orders, where CPD accused the IWW of being an organization that "causes civil unrest." Officers of the Chicago GMB and other coalition organizers found this attack to be a source of strengthened resolve and promptly responded via social media, ultimately drawing more attention to the May Day events.

Shortly after the march left Union Park, CPD forces gave way to the crowd. National Lawyers Guild (NLG) representatives relayed to organizers the intent of the police, to "avoid anything like Baltimore." NLG contacts also relayed that the two target destinations had closed their doors early in anticipation of our arrival. It was clear by this point that the months of work put in by organizers had paid off; the City was afraid of the potential of May Day once again.

Organizers navigated the crowd to the first scheduled stop: the Mexican Consulate. Member organizations staged in front of barricades enclosing the Consulate's front doors in the Pilsen neighborhood for a short speak-out addressing concerns over 43 disappeared students, calling for a moratorium on deportations, for free movement of people, for an end to state terror on both sides of the border, and calling for a showing of solidarity with international working-class struggles. While speakers shouted through bullhorns, activists plastered images of the disappeared students on the walls and windows of the Consulate.

The march continued throughout the West side to the Cook County Jail and Courthouse, arriving at roughly 5:30 p.m. Cook County Jail is the largest holding facility in the United States, covering over 96 acres in the heart of the Little Village neighborhood of Chicago. Over 100,000 people pass through this institution annually. The Courthouse had been pre-emptively shut down by City officials at 2:30 p.m., so the demonstrators took this time to enjoy a meal

provided by Pilsen Food Not Bombs and listen to short speak-outs from the coalition members and individuals. While some sat to eat, the black-and-green flags of vegan anti-fascists stood firm in surrounding streets and held traffic at a standstill.

As demonstrators cleared their plates and speakers left the stage, Food Not Bombs distributed pots and pans for a noise demonstration in support of the incarcerated workers at Cook County. Starting with the main holding facility, the remaining 100 to 200 people used drums, cookware, sticks and bullhorns to make as much noise as possible, then chanted in support of those inside. Shortly thereafter, the crowd shifted across the street to the much heavier-policed female lockup, where the crowd grew increasingly loud as incarcerated workers waved bed sheets and clothing in the windows. Demonstrators collectively shouted to them that they were not forgotten, and that we would not rest until all their cells were empty.

May Day served to show Chicagoans what we had known all along: Chicago has a thriving anti-capitalist community that is more than ready to burst out of



Photo: Ianthe M. Belisle Dempsey

dormancy. Organizers saw just as many new faces as familiar ones, and many attendees stated they were galvanized by the Chicago GMB's efforts. As a city, we saw how we can come back stronger after what seems like a critical blow is dealt by authorities, and we saw that it can only happen with solidarity across the broad scope of the working class. This year, May Day was about more than having a local scene or coming to a single event; it was a part of laying out the foundation for a community, and a much more powerful movement.

Called by the Chicago General Membership Branch of the Industrial Workers of the World, the 2015 Chicago May Day Radical Coalition consisted of: The American Party of Labor, Chicago Socialist Party, Pilsen Food Not Bombs, Feminist Uprising Resisting Inequality and Exploitation, Chicago Torture Justice Memorial, Black Lives Matter Chicago, Moratorium on Deportations, Semillas Autonomas and the Gay Liberation Network.

More information can be found at <http://www.May1Chicago.org> and <http://www.Facebook.com/May1Chicago>.



## May Day

## Boston Wobs March All Over Town

By Geoff Carens

This year local Wobs participated actively in the Boston May Day Coalition (BMDC). The BMDC planned marches through the center of town on International Workers' Day, linking up with actions in Everett, Chelsea, and other nearby cities. Wobblies attended planning meetings, strategized with organizers on planning the route, helped make signs for a rally on the Boston Common, and provided a speaker for the rally and security for the march. We also voted to make a \$100 donation to the BMDC from our branch's treasury. On May 1, Wobblies were the first to arrive to decorate the Parkman Bandstand with signs denouncing police brutality and attacks on workers, and calling for \$15 per hour and a union for all workers, along with many other demands. We hung our "Big Red" banner on the bandstand. A lively rally followed, some of the amplification also provided by our General Membership Branch (GMB). Several of those who addressed the rally described labor struggles at local schools including Tufts and Emerson College. There were also, very appropriately, international speakers who exposed the conditions of workers in underdeveloped countries, and the fightbacks in places such as India and Peru. Our GMB's speaker mentioned our work at Harvard University, fighting alongside members of campus unions, as well as unorganized workers, teaching fellows and student allies, for better wages and conditions, and an end to discrimination on campus. With \$42 billion



Photo: Geoff Carens

in its endowment and other investments (its endowment alone is larger than the gross domestic product [GDP] of half the world's countries), Harvard is nevertheless trying to force unionized employees to pay more for their healthcare, and has already imposed the equivalent of a huge pay cut on faculty and non-union employees in the form of healthcare cost spikes.

After the rally we marched through the city, stopping at a Burger King and a Hyatt hotel to reiterate the demand for \$15 per hour and a union. The streets rang with the chants of marchers. We swung by Dewey Square, the site of Occupy Boston, after which Wobs hopped on the bus to Chelsea to march to Everett with hundreds of other local residents, advocates for immigrants' rights and against police brutality, among many other causes. We ended up at a dance party and poetry reading organized by the Black Rose Anarchist Federation. Boston Wobs made the most of May Day this year, and handed out hundreds of copies of the "One Big Union" pamphlet in both English and Spanish to celebrants.

## First Aberdeen IWW May Day



The Aberdeen IWW group participated in their first May Day, in this new incarnation, with a new flag.

Photo: Aberdeen IWW

## NYC Wobs March



Photo: NYC IWW

The NYC branch marching on May Day with the Immigrant Justice Tour.

## May Day In Glasgow



Photo: x348444

May 1st stall, Buchanan Street, Glasgow. The Glasgow branch also took part in the Trade Union Demo on May 3rd through streets of the rain-soaked city on the Clyde.

# Atlanta IWW: Fighting Racism, Connecting Struggles

By Jeremy Galloway

While there were massive protests and direct actions in other parts of the country and around the world, May Day 2015 was a mostly quiet affair in Atlanta. There was a march in support of Freddie Gray and Black Lives Matter organized by the Atlanta Trayvon Martin Organizing Committee, but the only other organized event was an Atlanta IWW screening of the documentary film "Wildcat at Mead."

The film chronicles the struggles of mostly black workers at the Atlanta Mead Packaging facility during the 1970s. These workers, whom the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants of North America Local #527 represented, led a wildcat strike after conflicts with both union leadership and management. The local union was notorious for under-representing workers and for its open support of white supremacy. While black workers outnumbered whites two-to-one in the workplace, nearly all shop stewards and all elected union officials were white. Several leaders of the local union were openly involved with, or members of the Ku Klux Klan. In response, workers at the Mead plant formed the Mead Caucus of Rank and File Workers to fight for their own interests.

In August 1972, 250 members of the caucus walked off the job without approval from the union. Sherman Miller, a member of the communist October League, led the strike at a time when communist organizations were active across the urban and rural South. One of the earliest supporters of the strike, Gary Washington, a Black Panther from New York who was 21 years old at the time, spoke at the May Day screening about his experiences. The striking workers received widespread support from the community and local civil rights groups but were constantly antagonized by union leadership, management, and Atlanta police, leading to the arrest of Miller and several other organizers.

During the strike, 75 percent of workers held firm and the stayed out of work.

The strike ended after eight weeks when all parties reached an agreement that satisfied many of the workers' demands, providing for the local union to represent all workers, making the union establish committees inside the plant to hear and address grievances about racial discrimination and poor treatment of black workers, and preventing company retaliation against strike leaders. However, 36 workers were suspended during or after the strike and many lost their jobs. Some workers, including Washington, were reinstated after a lengthy arbitration process by the National Labor Relations Board. Washington still works at Mead and has been elected several times as a shop steward with the new union, Teamsters Local #728. He was joined on the post-screening discussion panel by Dianne Mathiowetz, an Atlanta activist who worked on General Motors (GM) assembly lines for 30 years with United Automobile Workers (UAW) Local #10. Mathiowetz serves on the national committee of Workers World Party and has hosted the Labor Forum on Atlanta progressive radio station WRFG for several years (a role previously filled by Washington).

The post-screening discussion raised some interesting points about Atlanta labor history that have, in many ways, been lost or forgotten. The Atlanta Church's Chicken strikes of the 1970s fostered a strong sense of solidarity and working-class consciousness within the local black community, and along with the Mead wildcat strike, have made a lasting impact on Atlanta's labor movement. In 1972, Church's Chicken workers shut down a majority of locations around the city in a protest against discriminatory hiring and promotion practices and poor working conditions. The immediate impact of that strike gained workers some concessions and caused the company to make minor contributions to civil rights organizations and civic groups in black communities. When their demands remained unmet, Church's workers went on strike and

launched boycotts again in 1977 and 1979. While they gained few concessions as a result of the strikes (which were hijacked by civil rights leaders) and any wins were quickly lost without a union to protect them, Church's became much more conscious of how it treated its mostly-black customer base and made substantial contributions to civil rights groups like the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity) during the 1980s. This had the unfortunate effect of neutralizing the strike campaign and taking attention away from worker struggles.

Both Washington and Mathiowetz stressed the connection between the strikes of the 1970s and the current social movements like Black Lives Matter and the Fight for \$15 campaign. Washington said that workers today face the same oppressive forces they did during the Mead strike and that "All workers share a solidarity with Ferguson and Baltimore Black Lives Matter movements because when police are called in they don't come to serve and protect the workers, they come to hurt, maim, or kill working people and protect the interests of the ruling class and the state."

A number of recent campaigns, like a student-organized fight to gain union recognition and a living wage for food service workers at Emory University, and solidarity networks in Atlanta and the North Georgia mountains have exploited some cracks in the ruling class infrastructure to build working-class consciousness and effective social movements. Still, it is especially important to remember that while many younger activists dismiss veteran organizers of the 1960s and 1970s who might not seem as radical or don't jump to the front line of conflicts, we have a great deal to learn from their experiences



Jeremy Galloway (left) and Gary Washington (right).

Photo: Tori Galloway

and how we can apply them to our current campaigns.

In addition, Washington and Mathiowetz each spoke to the critical need to connect issues like racism, patriarchy, worker exploitation, immigrant rights, and other social divisions together, arguing that all of us, as workers, are fighting against the same oppressive ruling class and that we can only win when we stand together. Washington made a point to stress the importance of including women, LGBT, and gender-non-conforming workers in our struggles. He said that, without financial backing from an anonymous pair of Atlanta lesbians and solidarity from local white workers, the Mead strikers couldn't have stayed out as long as they did.

While labor organizing and the radical Left in Atlanta (and much of the South) have been mostly dormant in the last few years, with a few notable exceptions, we hope that conversations like these and events like the #RestInPower memorial service, which honored victims of police violence in Georgia the following day, will serve to unite working people from across the city, our state, and the South as we continue to fight for justice and build solidarity among workers from all backgrounds and political traditions. As these experiences so clearly demonstrate, our fight for one is a fight for all!



## Review

# The Community Organizing Tradition of Saul Alinsky

Aaron Schutz and Mike Miller, ed. *People Power: The Community Organizing Tradition of Saul Alinsky*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2015. Paperback, 368 pages, \$34.95.

## Reviewed by Staughton Lynd

It was an evening late in August 1968. I was in the bathtub. Believing that the critical issue at the national Democratic Party convention would be whether First Amendment activity could be carried on outside the building where the delegates were meeting, I had organized a march from the lakefront to the convention site in southwest Chicago. Several of the demonstrators, including myself, had been arrested. All tension past, I was luxuriating in the hot water of the bath.

The phone rang. It was Saul Alinsky. He wanted to talk with me about becoming a member of the faculty, along with Ed Chambers and Dick Harmon, at the new Industrial Areas Foundation Training Institute.

Two things made me want to accept. First, I needed a job. I had been blacklisted by academia. At five institutions of higher education in the Chicago area (Chicago State College, Northern Illinois University, Roosevelt University, the University of Illinois Circle Campus and Loyola University) I had been offered a full-time, tenure-track job, and I accepted, only to have the contract overridden by the trustees or Board of Governors. The Lynds were surviving on the “sweat of my Frau” and a regular paycheck was inviting.

Secondly, I was curious. The central organizations of the New Left, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), were in the process of destroying themselves. Although I shared criticisms of Alinsky’s work common to members of these two organizations, I wondered what I might be able to learn from Alinsky organizers. I conjectured that becoming a so-called teacher might be a good way to be a student. So I said “Yes.”

And I did learn some very valuable things. The *modus operandi* of the New Left was that if you were incensed about an issue, you tried to do something about it. Mr. Alinsky advised newcomers to the Institute to spend some time in a target neighborhood in order to discover what issues were already “there” in the minds of residents. Also, in my experience Alinsky did not emphasize coalition-building with the principal figures in existing organizations. He challenged us to discover the informal leadership of a community: the persons to whom neighbors went for help if they had problems. The next step was to bring these informal leaders together and to stress to those gathered that all structural arrangements (who would be chairperson, for example) would be preliminary and tentative. This gave the organizer an opportunity to observe who seemed to



Saul Alinsky in Chicago.

Photo: freedomoutpost.com

take a natural leadership role, and who followed through on what he said he would do. These were important insights.

Three of us were assigned to organize an Alinsky-type community organization in Lake County, Indiana, which includes the city of Gary and is dominated by U.S. Steel. We did so, baptizing our creation the Calumet Community Congress. There was an impressive founding convention, in which the picket line captain at the 1937 Memorial Day Massacre (George Patterson) and a district director of the Steelworkers who would run for national union president later in the 1970s (Ed Sadlowski) played prominent roles.

After the founding event, however, the organization fell apart. One of my colleagues was persuaded by a Catholic dignitary on the East Coast to use the convention as a personal jumping-off credential and leave town. His replacement as lead organizer was my second colleague.

I had developed the issue of the minimal taxes paid by U.S. Steel on its Gary steel mill property. I had talked with Ralph Nader and he had publicly supported that concern. The Gary newspaper had run an issue with a headline about the tax controversy all the way across the front page.

Colleague No. 2 decided not to pursue the tax issue. Instead he guided the new organization to take on a local pornographic bookstore. Within a matter of months the Congress slowly sank from sight, never to reappear.

At the same time that I lost out on how to build an organization for those who “cared about democracy and social and economic justice” (p. xiv), I was asked by Colleague No. 2 to withdraw from all activity on behalf of the new community organization because I was too radical.

## Cardinal Sins

Because I was so intimately involved, and inevitably approach the subject with a strong personal bias, I prefer to let the editors of the book and the organizers quoted in it express their own critique of the Alinsky organizing tradition. I have no reason to believe that the shortcomings described have been corrected.

To begin with, we might consider Cesar Chavez. Chavez was the one human being whom I can recall Alinsky speaking of with love. It is likely, the editors write, “that by the mid-1970s more people knew his name than Alinsky’s.” Yet, according to this account, within the farmworkers’ organization that Chavez created and led: “[i]nternal purges eliminated from the staff many talented and dedicated organizers, while others quietly resigned in protest. The boycott became the principal strategic weapon of the union; on-the-ground organizing of farmworkers at workplaces was shunted to the sidelines. Power increasingly was concentrated in the hands of Cesar Chavez, who brooked no internal opposition “from below”—i.e., from among farmworkers—and vigorously worked to defeat leaders whose views were different from his own (pp. 106-107).

The editors add a criticism that has also been expressed by Marshall Ganz and others, namely, that Chavez insisted on appointing the members of local ranch committees rather than permitting them to be elected, and opposed the creation of local unions of farmworkers with the result that “[e]verything was run from union headquarters” (pp. 108-109). Chavez was also “vigorously anti-Communist, no matter what kind of Communist you happened to be” (p. 111).

The farmworkers’ organization that Chavez created under Alinsky’s guidance hardly appears to offer a desirable template for the future.

Similar caution recommends itself when considering Alinsky’s admiration for John L. Lewis, “one of Alinsky’s major teachers” (p. 19). Lewis crushed internal opposition, a practice from which A.J. Muste and Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union recoiled. From the beginning, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) entered into collective bargaining agreements that forbade for the duration of the contract the very strikes, plant occupations, and other direct action tactics that had won union recognition. The CIO undertook organizing campaigns that were not radical but were militant, and often were made to appear more militant than they really were by a focus on a single personal antagonist. Exactly as in the case of union organizing, a suc-

cessful Alinsky campaign might end in a congenial sit-down with the principals on the other side. Alinsky never confronted or denounced capitalism as a system.

The most comprehensive critique of the failings of the Alinsky model that I found in “People Power” was expressed by Dick Harmon, my erstwhile colleague at the Training Institute. Dick is quoted as saying that during the mid-to-late 1970s “[s]ome of us, including myself, lost our moorings.” Dick voices the following devastating assessment:

Our operating assumptions were that you didn’t ask basic questions about the economy because that would label you a ‘pinko,’ an ideologue, and worse. If you raised these kinds of questions, the climate of the time would shut you down, so you had to be pragmatic... We had no ongoing, fundamental analysis of the economy, no long-term diagnosis. No one was asking about alternatives to all the companies moving to the South, Latin America, Asia. We didn’t have any alternative except, just keep building organizations (pp. 208-209).

Local institutions, Dick Harmon also commented, “no longer ask questions about fundamentals such as where corporate capital is taking us.” There is no consideration within the Alinskyian community that “Corporate capitalism is One system, a Whole, assaulting both human beings and the rest of our natural world” (pp. 212-213).

The years in which I was closest to the Alinsky operation were the years in which American service men and women in effect ended the Vietnam War by refusing to fight. They fragged their officers and refused to go on nighttime patrols or to provide targets for American planes by drawing fire from Vietnamese ambushes. I cannot remember even a comment by Alinsky or his staff that might have led to an organizing campaign directed against the war and the worldview that underlay the war.

I may be mistaken but to the best of my recollection there was also no staff response to the massacre at Kent State University on May 4, 1970. I do remember intense telephone calls with a student at the Institute (Zeke, where are you now?). And when the largest student strike in U.S. history followed the events at Kent State I believe the Institute played no role, initiating or supporting.

I also remember that as the Calumet Community Congress was being planned I questioned whether there should be a “color guard” drawn from the different branches of the military and a presentation of the flag. My concern was brushed aside with a comment to the effect that “we always do that.”

## A Hope

Like the editors, I mourn the fact that there was no melding of New Left and Alinskyan worldviews in the 1960s. The editors have the candor and humility to recognize the barriers Alinsky traditionalists have put in the way of working with young idealists from the New Left or Occupy. They explicitly recognize:

[t]he IAF’s macho style, organizational arrogance, dismissal of “movements,” avoidance of any coalition that it didn’t control, unwillingness to look at mutual aid as a strategic organizing tool that could lead to the development of substantial worker- and community-owned cooperatives and credit unions... (p. 317).

Participants in Occupy needed the help of experienced organizers in making the transition from sitting-in at the downtown public square to beginning to construct what the Zapatistas call “un otro mundo,” another world. We still need that help.

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## Front Page News

# #ResistenciaMovistar: A Strike Of This Century In Spain

**Continued from 1**

last decades have brought with them a new capitalism and new forms of working-class oppression. Some things remain: there's still work to be done, and there's still a working class that is doing the work while capitalists take the benefits and leave us only the crumbs. (In a world where few things are left unchanged, the fact that some old-fashioned truths are still in place would be rather soothing... if we weren't talking about exploitation, of course).

Having this in mind, unions should still be useful and necessary in order to fight against social injustice. The question is whether we can adapt to the new economy and its changes. The factory is no longer the place where most of us work; labor laws deteriorate before our eyes as capitalists demand a more flexible workforce (and we wonder how workers could possibly increase their flexibility as they're already bending over backwards); companies become corporations that become multinational conglomerates; globalization and the growth of the tertiary sector of the economy (the most mobile sector) make relocation of businesses easier than ever, making national labor legislation meaningless in many cases; and outsourcing is becoming more and more ubiquitous. In this context, precariousness is the main obstacle to effective workers' organization. Many workers feel that strikes are a thing of the past. How can they even think of it? If they went on a strike they'd lose their jobs in no time.

The solution is not easy, but perhaps it's one of those few reassuring things that haven't changed so much. The unity of the working class is essential, like it has always been. You're a precarious worker, and your job is at risk if you strike. But still your job has to be done, and if your boss can't find a strikebreaker to do it in your place, he has to sit down with you and negotiate. That's not really new: we've always had a

problem with scabs, haven't we?

Let this long introduction serve as an explanation of the importance of something that's going on in Spain. Something that's long overdue. For many years we've been hearing, "I wish I could fight for my working conditions, but I'm in a precarious situation. If I go on strike, my boss will kick me out." Among the precarious workers, perhaps the most precarious are the freelancers, those who depend on a company to give them work but don't have a labor contract with that company, leaving them without the few guarantees that laws still provide other workers. Well, now it is precisely those vulnerable workers who have gone on strike, and they've done so against one of the biggest companies in Spain—a company that's iconic of the new economy: the formerly state-owned telecommunications giant Telefónica Movistar.

The strike by Telefónica's subcontracted and freelance technicians began in Madrid on March 28, and it quickly spread to the rest of Spain. Reasons for this strike had been building up since the privatization of the company. As outsourcing increased, so did precariousness, and working conditions have been worsening every day. At the same time that the company was in a period of expansion and reaping huge benefits, labor costs had to decrease constantly to please its owners. Since workers directly hired by Telefónica still have some protection, subcontracted workers were the perfect targets for the "necessary" cuts.

The strikers organized, as it was decided, horizontally in workers' assemblies. It is the workers themselves who were running the show.

The big, institutional, bureaucratic unions have had nothing to do with the real mobilization. They called for a make-believe, partial strike in order to try to interfere with the real strike. They engaged in negotiations with the company even though they didn't have the strikers' con-



**The struggle of Movistar workers is also called 'the ladders revolution.' These are workers at a recent demonstration.** Photo: #ResistenciaMovistar strikers

sent. Finally, they reached an agreement (not approved by the workers either) and called off their puny strike. Mass media has silenced the strike even as breakdowns in phone lines proliferated all over the country... and then those same media outlets informed of the illegitimate agreement and the "end" of the strike.

Unions such as the one to which I belong, those that really believe in the struggle of the working class, have supported the strike in many ways. We have given legal coverage to the mobilization by calling officially for a statewide strike. We've tried to make the conflict visible (for example, by using the internet and social networks, which is where the hashtag in the title of this article, #ResistenciaMovistar, comes from). We've helped raise funds for the workers and their families (this is a very important aspect, as the strike has already lasted for more than a month). We've never tried to lead the mobilization;

we've never wanted to, but also the strikers wouldn't have let us do it. This strike belongs to them.

Workers' solidarity has also had a huge importance since the beginning. Thousands have helped raise the funds needed to keep the strike alive. Also, in a turn that's great news for those who believe in the unity of the working class, workers directly contracted by Telefónica who had been asked to take on tasks that the subcontracted workers used to do, not only refused to do so, but also have denounced the company's attempt to interfere with the strike.

As of this writing on May 7, the Telefónica Movistar contractors, subcontractors and freelance workers' strike continues. Let's hope it does so until all their demands are satisfied.

For the future of the labor movement: **PRECARIOUS WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!** Long live the #ResistenciaMovistar!

## Amtrak Wreck Could Have Been Prevented

**Continued from 1**

decades and forced to scrape by, cutting corners and deferring maintenance, ever under the microscope by a budget-cutting Congress more concerned with ideological purity and political expediency than with safety and security. On the busy Northeast Corridor where the recent wreck took place, Amtrak faces a backlog of drastically-needed repairs to bridges and tunnels, obsolete rail interlockings, and trains that rely at times on 1930s-era components. Repairs for the Northeast Corridor are estimated at \$4.3 billion over the next 45 years, while federal funding is expected to dwindle to \$872 million.

3) As a result of this constant pressure to reduce costs, on March 23, 2015, just six weeks prior to the wreck, Amtrak had unilaterally implemented a new scheduling arrangement for Northeast Corridor train and engine crews over the vehement objections of its operating craft unions—the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLET) and the United Transportation Union (UTU, now known as SMART-TD). The new schedule arrangements—designed to save the company \$3 million by reducing scheduled layovers—were condemned by both unions as a disaster in the making. Amtrak overturned a tried and true couplet system (trains paired out and back) for working crews on the Northeast Corridor that had been in effect, with little modification, for decades. Prior to March 23, couplets adhered to the 90-minute layover minimum and took into account other factors including difficulty of the train in question, duration of trip, number and location of stops, timeliness, etc. Now, not only has the 90-minute layover been scrapped, but crews have no guarantee of any break whatsoever. In

addition, the new arrangement allows for a different on-duty time each day of the work week, and these start times are no longer restricted to within a few hours of one another—they now can be any time of the day! (Note: the engineer of Train #188 had experienced a non-routine westbound trip earlier that day, causing delays to his train, thereby shortening up an already diminished layover time under this new scheduling arrangement).

4) Simple technology has existed for nearly a century now that can aid and assist in preventing accidents such as this one. As with the wreck at Spuyten-Duyvil, N.Y. on the Metro North railroad on Dec. 1, 2013, a simple transponder could have easily been located west of the curve that would have prevented the train from entering it at such an excess speed (in fact, such a transponder is in place on the approach to the curve in the westbound direction). This being one the tightest and most restricted curves on the corridor, it seems an appropriate location for such a life-saving device. (Note: Since the above referenced wreck, such a transponder has since been placed on the section of track leading to the 30 mile-per-hour [mph] curve where that train derailed).

5) Amtrak Train #188—operated by lone engineer Brandon Bostian—entered the permanent speed restriction at the curve, rated for 50, at over 100 mph. Whether it was fatigue, the result of a projectile that hit the train (and possibly the engineer), inattentiveness on the part of the engineer, or other factors at play, it is expected that the investigation will eventually pinpoint the cause. Nevertheless, there is the possibility that we may never know. But we do know this: had there been a second crew member in the cab of the lo-

comotive that day, it is very likely that such a second qualified crew member would have taken action to prevent the tragedy that—for whatever reason—the engineer at the controls was not able to avert. (Note: commercial airliners routinely have two qualified and certified crew members in the cockpit. Maybe trains should operate similarly and provide for the same in the cab of the locomotive).

In the past half dozen years or so we have witnessed a series of tragic train wrecks, all of which have resulted in countless injuries and loss of life. Four wrecks—Chatsworth, Calif. (Sept. 12, 2008); Lac Megantic, Quebec (July 6, 2013); Spuyten-Duyvil, N.Y. (Dec. 1, 2013); and now Frankfurt Junction, Pa. (May 12, 2015)—have all been attributed to some form of "operator error." (Note: There is one factor that all four of these incidents had in common, i.e. the employee in question was working *alone* in the cab of the locomotive or was the *lone* crew member). While operator error may in fact be the case, simply pointing the finger at the worker does little or nothing to assist in understanding why the error was made in the first place; nor does it help us to prevent similar such wrecks in the future. Since workers are human beings and as such, are prone to making mistakes (regardless of how many rules are written up, what discipline may be threatened, or how many observation cameras may be installed), we must implement safety features that take this reality into account and thereby prevent tragedies of this nature.

Railroad Workers United believes that a series of simple common-sense applications would go a long way to preventing such devastating train wrecks like the ones listed above. These include:

1) The application of Positive Train Control as soon as possible on major rail routes.

2) In the meantime, application of off-the-shelf readily available technology at critical locations where passenger trains are particularly vulnerable.

3) A minimum of two qualified employees—at least one certified locomotive engineer and one certified train conductor—on each and every train.

4) A guarantee of adequate and proper rest, together with reasonable attendance policies and provision for necessary time off work, for all train and engine employees.

5) Limiting the length and tonnage of freight trains to a reasonable and manageable level.

6) The implementation of safety programs on all railroads that focus on hazard identification and elimination, rather than simply focusing on worker behavior.

7) Strengthening of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) "whistleblower" and other laws to empower employees to report injuries, workplace hazards and safety violations without fear of company reprisal.

If we are serious about preventing future catastrophes of this nature, we must equip railroad workers with the necessary tools—including but not limited to those outlined above—to enable them to perform the job safely. Pointing fingers at this or that employee (at any level in the company, union or management) might make some folks feel better, but it does little or nothing to prevent future accidents. Railroad Workers United believes it is time we learn from these terrible tragedies and get serious about implementing the necessary measures to ensure safe railroad operations.





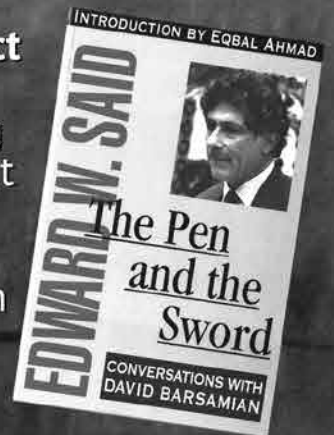
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## Higher Ed

# Class Bigotry At Washington University In St. Louis: A Resignation

By Chris Pepus

*I am a freelance writer who deals primarily with issues of class. I recently resigned from my job as an archivist at Washington University in St. Louis (the least socially-diverse top college in the United States) to protest class bias in the university's admissions policies. I believe the public would be shocked to see what I discovered. This is my open letter of resignation. It has been a difficult time since I resigned. I have been reaching out to media, and largely being ignored, and also looking for work. Please visit my blog (<http://againstclassbigotry.wordpress.com>) and help me spread the word. Also, there is a "Donate" button on the blog and I would be very grateful for any support.*

Dear Chancellor Wrighton:

I'm Chris Pepus and I work in the university's Film & Media Archive. I am sending you this open letter to resign in protest against ongoing class bias in the university's admissions policies.

Washington University (Wash. U.) has consistently ranked last in social diversity among leading colleges, measured by the percentage of students eligible for Pell Grants, a need-based federal scholarship. In January, your administration promised a new commitment to social diversity, but we both know it is a sham. It is time the people did as well, since they pay for Wash. U.'s tax exemptions.

Describing your new policy in *The New York Times*, David Leonhardt wrote that your administration "will commit to more than doubling the share of undergraduates with Pell grants, to at least 13 percent, by 2020." He was wrong. Your administration committed to ensuring that 13 percent of students in the 2020-2021 freshman class are Pell-eligible. The number of Pell recipients in preceding classes could be lower, even significantly lower, and you would still be able to say that you kept your promise.

Leonhardt also wrote, "The leaders of Washington University in St. Louis have decided that it has a distinction they no longer want: the nation's least economically diverse top college." He was too optimistic on that point as well. Currently, Wash. U. is last in *U.S. News & World Report's* ranking of economic diversity at its top 25 national universities, with only 6 percent of students receiving Pell Grants. You could meet your goal of increased Pell numbers and still be last in that ranking.

Even modest increases in Pell enrollments by Wash. U.'s nearest competitors at the bottom of the *U.S. News* list (Cal Tech at 11 percent, Notre Dame and Princeton at 12 percent) will keep the university ranked 25 out of 25. If Wash. U.'s increase in Pell recipients among pre-2020 classes is low enough, those three institutions can keep their Pell enrollments where they are and Wash. U. will still remain in last place.

Likewise, if we consider just how many Americans are financially eligible for Pell Grants, we can see how hollow your promise is. According to a recent report by the Southern Education Foundation, most U.S. public school students are officially low income, based on eligibility for anti-poverty programs. Certainly a majority, and probably a large majority, of those students would qualify for Pell Grants—if they went to college. In light of that fact, a ratio of 13 percent Pell recipients in the freshman class five years from now appears positively minuscule.

Look closer and it gets worse. Eligibility for Pell Grants has increased dramatically since the 2006-2007 academic year. The number of the program's recipients is up 73 percent nationwide. Among those with family incomes over \$60,000 per year, the number of Pell recipients has grown by nearly 900 percent.

Aided by that enormous expansion (weighted disproportionately toward middle-class students), other socially-

exclusive universities, such as Harvard, have seen their percentages of Pell students rise out of single digits, finally. But not this institution. In recent years, Wash. U. has actually been declining in terms of social diversity.

The barriers to inclusion will not be removed at Wash. U., or other leading colleges, until an aggressive policy of affirmative action based on social class is added to existing affirmative action programs. Your new "commitment" is a travesty of that essential policy.

Your administration has described the plan to increase Pell enrollment as "ambitious" and cultivated the notion that it is difficult to enroll qualified working-class people. But the case of the University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley) destroys such myths. According to the latest federal data, 36 percent of UC Berkeley's students receive Pell Grants, compared to, again, 6 percent at Washington University. UC Berkeley has managed to enroll six times the percentage of Pell recipients as Wash. U., despite having (according to contemporary federal data) an endowment of \$1.2 billion, as opposed to Wash. U.'s \$5.3 billion.

Nor can anyone say that UC Berkeley's academic reputation has suffered due to its socially-inclusive admissions policy. In the most recent installment of the prestigious *Times Higher Education* rankings, UC Berkeley is rated 8th in the world to Wash. U.'s 42nd. The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), with an even higher ratio of Pell recipients on campus (39 percent), ranks 12th.

You may well note that Wash. U. is placed ahead of UC Berkeley and UCLA in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, but that is principally because *U.S. News* assigns great weight to institutional wealth. The most salient category of the magazine's rankings is the "peer assessment score" given by administrators and faculty at other colleges. In that category, Wash. U. is rated 4 out of a possible 5, versus Berkeley's 4.7 and UCLA's 4.2.

If you and other top administrators can't figure out how to reach the degree of social diversity that UC Berkeley has achieved with an endowment valued at less than one-quarter of Wash. U.'s, perhaps you should all resign and let administrators from UC Berkeley replace you.

This institution's terribly low percentage of Pell Grant recipients is the result of systemic class bias. The university's official pronouncements make that all too clear. Wash. U. administrators have attempted to excuse low enrollment of Pell Grant recipients by resorting to doubletalk insulting to working-class people.

For instance, Provost Thorp consistently tries to justify Wash. U.'s record of social exclusion by pretending that the university had to choose between strengthening academic excellence and enrolling more working-class students. Last December, Wash. U.'s *Student Life* quoted the Provost's remarks on why the administration had failed to address the university's low Pell enrollment. "Wash. U. has made some smart strategic decisions that may have made it the place that it is," he said. "It's easy to say that this should have been done differently, but... to say we shouldn't have invested in things when we did is kind of false logic. Back in October, he offered the same excuse, with a more aggressive conclusion: "We're not going to apologize for that."

If Provost Thorp cannot bring himself to apologize for the university's derisively low number of working-class students, I question whether he is capable of apologizing for anything. At the least, his remarks show that he isn't facing the problem.

It is deceitful to claim that administrators ever had to choose between academic excellence and social inclusion. In 2012, economist Elise Gould found that low-income students who earned high scores

on 8th grade tests were less likely to attend college than rich students who scored low on the same tests. There is an enormous pool of talented students who are not being recruited by other leading institutions.

Maybe the student who would have brought new prestige to Wash. U. through, say, a great scientific discovery wound up working at Walmart because the university instead admitted a less-qualified rich person now busily engaged in coasting through life. Had you been interested in enhancing academic excellence, rather than enhancing the privileges of the rich, recruiting qualified, low-income students would have been a central element of your campaign to improve the university's reputation.

Instead, Wash. U. grants preferences to "legacies," children of alumni and especially rich, well-connected ones. Make no mistake: legacy preferences are viciously discriminatory. They allow rich applicants who have had every advantage to take rare admissions places from better qualified, working-class applicants who overcame a great deal. Such bias in favor of the rich has a corrosive effect on the entire admissions process, since it fosters an environment in which the wealthy are viewed as superior. It reinforces institutionalized class bigotry.

You know that discrimination based on social class is wrong. In fact, you have admitted as much. Last year, your administration inaugurated the Bias Report and Support System on campus. Among the categories of discrimination reportable under the system is bias based on "socio-economic status."

That was a fine idea. But it is pointless to have a policy against class bias if the admissions office is exempt. The aristocratic monstrosity of legacy preferences will persist as long as non-legacies and their families allow. It is time we stopped allowing.

That means the people must cease to subsidize class bias with tax exemptions. Washington University does not pay taxes on its donations, investment income, or purchases. Those exemptions have consequences. Among the social ills highlighted by the Ferguson crisis are chronic under-

funding of public schools, and municipalities' fiscal reliance on a racially biased system of excessive fines. If we want to begin to heal suffering communities such as Ferguson, rich individuals and corporations have to start paying their fair share in taxes. That includes wealthy, socially exclusive universities such as Wash. U.

I have learned a lot working at the Film & Media Archive, which houses materials from powerful documentaries on civil rights and social justice such as "Eyes on the Prize" and "The Great Depression." I got to help researchers learn more about such subjects as the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and labor activists who fought racism and economic oppression.

The stories contained in the archive's materials can be very inspiring. But they can also be a criticism of your life. These days, they feel like the latter to me. I am ashamed of myself for failing to send you a letter like this one before now. My working-class status and freelance writing on class issues also accuse me, despite the reasons I gave myself for staying on the job this long. ("I need the health insurance"; "The work schedule lets me write on evenings and weekends"; and "I can use vacation time for writing").

After my years at Wash. U., I no longer believe that elite private colleges can be reformed. I believe education must be public and free to students. In any case, no university as wealthy as this one should be allowed to keep its tax exemptions unless it ends legacy preferences and does at least as well in admitting Pell Grant recipients as UC Berkeley. We need that tax money for the education of the people, not just the rich.

No top American college is as far away from social diversity as Wash. U., and you are clearly happy for it to stay that way. So here is my two weeks' notice. I can no longer stand to be associated with the class bigotry that is deeply entrenched in this institution.

Sincerely,  
Chris Pepus

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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](mailto:solidarity@iww.org).

## Call For Solidarity From Our Comrades In Kobani



The currently horrible situations for people worldwide, such as the fights for freedom in Kobane or the dramatic scenery on European borders, turns down any May Day celebration. To hear about a May Day call for solidarity from Kobani is even more impressive, and we thank the comrades from Libertario Comunismo for sharing this with us:

Worker comrades! Organizations, syndicates and trade unions of workers!

With warm regards of workers from Canton of Kobani, the Canton of revolution, resistance and martyrs, on [the] first of May, the commemorating day of struggle and resistance of workers against tyranny and oppression, and exploitation of capitalism!

The revolution of Rojava was a historical departure point in workers' and oppressed people's struggle in the Middle East and all over the world, to repossess the political authority; and it was the revolution of women, youth and workers to establish a new system based on transition of power to people as the true owners of it. As well as our resistance against ISIS [Islamic State of Iraq and Syria]-terrorists and their international supporters is not only to protect our people's human life and dignity, but also is the resistance to defend the achievements of revolution and self-demonstration-system which is based on radical democracy and elimination of hierarchical organizations.

Now, through heroic battles of our comrades in "protect units of people" (YPG) and "protect units of women" (YPJ), terrorists are driven out from the city, but attacks on suburb[an] areas and blocking of the Canton's roads is still continuing. Our resistance has entered a new more difficult phase and

that is the phase of restoring social life to Kobani, under attack and economical and logistical siege, such situation in which more than 80 percent of the city's structures and vital infrastructures have been destroyed.

The history of class struggle shows that the union of the workers has no geographical boundaries, as we recognize our resistance against savage terrorism and its international sponsors, as the resistance in representation of all people throughout the world. We believe that the revolution, as disrupting the foundations of dominance and founding a new world, ensuring respect and freedom and equality for all of the people, requires practice and fierce struggle. In the same way the international solidarity of workers is the historical necessity and a material field to defend the class achievements and to struggle shoulder by shoulder against domination and oppression of capitalism.

We, the workers and association of the Canton of Kobani, commemorating workers' and oppressed people's libertarian and egalitarian struggles all over the world, and appreciating your support and solidarity with our resistance against terrorist attacks, invite our worker comrades, syndicates, trade unions and all the libertarians, to participate the practical solidarity with the revolution of Rojava and the resistance of Kobani, and invite you to join us in this historical situation to protect the achievements of the revolution!

Long live libertarian struggles of people around the world!

Long live international union of the workers of the world!

**Administration of the Kobani Canton**

## Support Migrant Workers In Europe

### Fellow Workers,

As you may have recognized in the last few weeks, the deaths on the external borders of the European Union reached a new terribly high point.

A lot of people escape increasingly from battle zones and miserable areas in the Middle East and Africa. Meanwhile the external borders have been more brutally stepped up. Against that, there are networks of resistance spreading throughout Europe. Some Wobblies in several German cities see themselves as part of the pan-European resistance and ask you to do that as well, as it is possible for you.

In several regions there are comrades who are trying to help migrating people. Most of these migrants will find themselves as low-paid workers and workers in precarious situations on the European labor market. Their fight for survival and a dignified life will be part of our efforts as Wobblies. We will warmly welcome them as some of our own.

But yet, there are a lot of migrants in danger. In case of an emergency we'd like to support them even on the difficult trip on the Mediterranean Sea. The initiatives that are willing to help in case of emergencies have requested us

to contact seamen where it is possible, and are willing to provide the number and information about "Watch The Med" (<http://watchthemed.net>), as well as discuss forms of protest against that inhuman way of letting people die through Frontex and others.

The Alarm-phone is another way to report emergencies and organize help. You can share this number with seamen: +334 86 51 71 61. Our mail is dedicated to all Fellow Workers in Spain, France, Italy, Greece, as well as other countries where there are contacts with seamen available. If you are able to translate this paper, please feel free to do that and share it with people who may be interested in helping!

You can get your questions out to Helmut, one of the people of the "NGO Research Association on flight and migration in Germany." At present, he lives in Rabat, Morocco and speaks English, French, Spanish and a little Arabic, in addition to German. Email: [info@ffm-online.org](mailto:info@ffm-online.org).

The initiative would be also very, very happy to receive expressions of solidarity or support.

To find out more information about this effort, email the Frankfurt IWW: [iww-frankfurt@systemausfall.org](mailto:iww-frankfurt@systemausfall.org).

## International News Briefs



South Korean workers demonstrate on April 18.

Photo: [revolution-news.com](http://revolution-news.com)

## Workers Organize, Win Worldwide

Compiled by John Kalwaic

### Millions Go On One-Day General Strike In Argentina

A one-day strike occurred in Argentina on April 10 as millions of workers took part in the stoppage. The unions demanded higher wages because of the country's high inflation problem; they also demanded more spending on social programs for the workers. The strike bought all of Argentina's public transportation and taxicabs to a standstill and workers at many stores and restaurants also observed the strike—causing these establishments to shut down. Most of the strikes were peaceful, although in some places police tried to break up the workers' picket lines. Some members of the government accused the unions of holding back workers who wanted to go to work. The Argentine government avoided a similar strike last year by giving workers Christmas bonuses.

With files from Al Jazeera and BBC News.

### Irish Trade Unions Block Polish Fascist Meeting

On April 10, Irish trade unions as well as other protesters successfully blocked a Polish fascist group meeting from happening at a Dublin hotel. The protest was against the holding of a debate between Polish politicians, including well-known racist candidate Marian Kowlaski of the Ruch Narodowy party, at the Academy Plaza Hotel in Dublin, Ireland. Many activists including the Irish Council of Trade Unions and community supporters came out to oppose the event including activists from Eastern Europe and around the world. After the protests the event was canceled.

With files from <http://www.ocu-world.org>.

### Massive South Korean Trade Union Demonstrations Face Repression

Labor unrest has hit South Korea as the government plans to implement labor policies that will reduce the salaries of state workers and will make it easier for employers to hire and fire. Thousands of workers demonstrated in the streets of Seoul on April 18 against the proposed changes in labor laws. Both the Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) and the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions

(KCTU) participated in the protests. Additionally, tens of thousands of workers came out for May Day and faced police repression. Police turned fire hoses on them while peaceful demonstrators were attacked as they passed the presidential Blue House. Many of the demonstrators were also upset at President Park Geun-hye for allegedly winning in a fraudulent election and the government's mishandling of last year's ferry disaster—when 304 people, most of whom were high school students, died when the ferry Sewol sank.

Workers and other protesters clashed with police, set up barricades, and attacked police buses because the police had attacked them. The FKTU and KCTU have threatened to launch a general strike if the anti-labor policies are passed.

With files from <http://revolution-news.com> and the Associated Press.

### Workers Win Back Pay In North Georgia

In April 2015 workers from two closed restaurants—Piazza and Main Street Burgers—in the North Georgia town of Dahlonega won their back wages from the establishments. Before the two restaurants closed, workers routinely had trouble cashing paychecks or getting paid for all the hours they worked. Some were not told when they would receive their final paychecks or how much they were owed. Others were told they would be paid "when Piazza sold" (which seemed questionable since the owner didn't own the buildings or property on which both restaurants were located). The owners then set up two new restaurants in the neighboring town of Big Canoe. The workers' cause gained attention when some of the workers decided to stand up to their former bosses. The issue of back wages at the restaurants went viral after the group Action publicized it. The news gained attention all over northern Georgia. The community in Dahlonega came out to rally coordinated by the Dahlonega Solidarity Network in support of the workers. The bosses eventually caved to many of the workers' demands. Although the workers had earlier appealed to the Georgia Department of Labor with no response, it took organizing to get the goods.

With files from <https://actionindahlonega.wordpress.com>.

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