

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY BULLETIN

NEWS BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY COMMISSION OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

AUGUST 2010

Greetings from the International Solidarity Commission (ISC) of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) welcomes you to our monthly international newsletter.

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep our allies around the world informed of our activities, solidarity campaigns, and relevant international labour struggles. It is our hope that this newsletter will contribute to building worker-to-worker solidarity through strengthened communications and exchanges of information.

If you would like to contribute story ideas or news for the bulletin, or wish to contact the ISC, you can email solidarity@iww.org.

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Saludos de la Comisión de Solidaridad Internacional (ISC) de los Trabajadores Industriales del Mundo (IWW) y bienvenidos a nuestro boletín internacional mensual.

El propósito de este boletín es mantener a nuestros aliados alrededor del mundo informados de nuestras actividades, campañas de solidaridad, y luchas obreras relevantes. Esperamos que este boletín contribuya a construir solidaridad entre trabajadores reforzando las comunicaciones e intercambios de información.

Para contribuir con ideas o noticias al boletín, o para contactar a la ISC por favor escribir a solidarity@iww.org. Para la versión en español, hacer clic aquí: <http://www.iww.org/es>

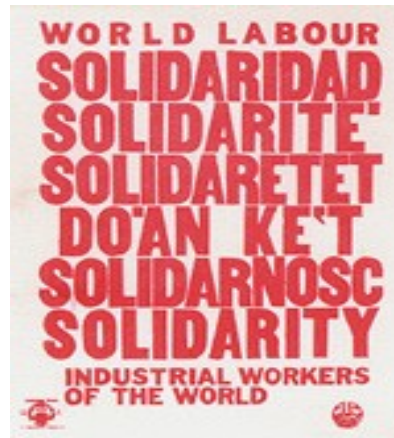
INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

IWW News

Solidarity Statements/Appeals

International Syndicalist News

IWW history and Culture



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 the 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 in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

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

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for 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.

Support international solidarity!

Assessments for \$3, \$6 are available from your delegate or IWW headquarters:

PO Box
23085, Cincinnati, OH
45223-3085, USA.



IWW NEWS

Join "Defend CSAAWU Campaign" facebook page



Cape Town wobblers are helping organize a campaign to support the Commercial, Stevedoring, Agricultural and Allied Workers' Union (CSAAWU) work in organizing farm workers in the Western Cape of South Africa. CSAAWU is a socialist union that represents a left alternative to the much larger Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), whose close associations with the ruling ANC have prevented COSATU from taking bolder stances against the continuing economic inequality in post-Apartheid South Africa.

The union is under attack. In the past farmers have tried to bribe them, when this did not work they threatened them with the law: CSAAWU just won a case lodged against them by farmers on charges of hate speech (the union said that white farmers are engaging in "apartheid-style management". The farmers said this was "hate speech" – an assertion that was thrown out of court) and now they have been served notice of cancellation of registration of a trade union. The "Defend CSAAWU Campaign" is only the start, so please encourage everyone you know who is on facebook to join.

Please follow the link and click "Join" and then invite your friends:

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?v=wall...9168575760>

Cleaners Defense Committee, London IWW and Allies unite in support of Swedish S.A.C union

On the 13th August 2010 the Cleaners Defence Committee, London IWW Branch, and other supporters demonstrated outside the offices of London Regional in Solidarity with the SAC for two hours, handing out information to the staff and passers by. The turnout was good and was supported by other groups including branches of The Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMT) Solidarity Federation, Feminist Fightback, Latin American Workers Association, London Coalition Against Poverty amongst others.



Letters of support were read out from comrades in Germany, in the FAU and German IWW, who were engaging in similar solidarity action.

London Regional has so far denied all responsibility and association with Berns, a Swedish Nightclub/company responsible for severe mistreatment of its cleaning staff, having made some cleaners work up to 22 hour shifts 6 or so days a week. The dispute between Berns and the SAC continues, though London Regional will not engage in dialogue with the IWW, CDC, or any of the individuals and groups who have phoned up with their complaints.

But the message to London Regional / Berns is loud and clear, we will never ignore the mistreatment of workers anywhere, and will stand with our brothers and sisters when they need our help. The battle is not over, and we will be back as often as need be to win this dispute. These demonstrations will grow unless the stubborn managers of Berns and London Regional agree to negotiate.

We once again thank everybody who has been supporting this campaign so far and who turned up to make the demonstration on the 13th the success that it was. We once again send our message of solidarity to the SAC, who we stand with, and wish all the best in the struggle ahead.

Squeezed Baristas Shut Down 15th and Douglas Starbucks to Protest Cutbacks

Omaha, NE- Baristas and community supporters shut down the 15th and Douglas Starbucks (SBUX) this morning demanding that management reverse all cuts to healthcare, staffing, and benefits that have been imposed during the recession. The baristas claim that executives have no justification to squeeze working families with Starbucks raking in profits of \$977.2 million in the past four fiscal quarters.

"We are being squeezed, and we can't take it any more. Since the recession began, Starbucks executives have ruthlessly gutted our standard of living. They doubled the cost of our health insurance, reduced staffing levels, cut our hours, all while demanding more work from us. Starbucks is now more than profitable again. It's time for management to give back what they took from us," said Sasha McCoy, a shift supervisor at the store.



Since the onset of the recession, Starbucks imposed a series of deep cuts on its workforce. Starting in 2008 as the economic downturn began, the coffee giant shuttered over 800 stores and slashed over 18000 jobs. The remaining skeleton crew workforce was stretched out, forced to push VIA and other promotional products while keeping the stores running with insufficient staffing levels. CEO Howard Schultz then doubled the cost of the company health insurance plan in September 2009, leaving many workers unable to afford medical treatment because of sky-high deductibles and premiums. While the cuts continue, Starbucks made a record profit of \$207.9 million in the last quarter according to company figures.

The protesting baristas are members of the Starbucks Workers Union, which is an international campaign of the Industrial Workers of the World labor union. The store action makes the 15th and Douglas location the first Starbucks in Nebraska to have a public union presence. The workers decided to move to unionize after watching their standard of living be whittled away while top executives chose to reward investors with dividends.

Samantha Cole, a Barista at the store said, "I work hard for every dollar I make in order to put food on the table for my family; Starbucks rewards workers with a poverty wage while they give their Wall Street pals dividends. I'm not doing this for myself so much as for the next generation that will grow up in this country. These are the only jobs that are left here- we need to make sure they are good jobs for working families."

While portraying itself as a 'socially-responsible' employer, Starbucks pays Nebraska baristas a poverty wage of \$7.35/hr. In addition, all retail hourly workers at Starbucks in the United States are part-time employees with no guaranteed number of work hours per week. According to Starbucks figures released to the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 40.9% of its employees (including managers) are covered by the company health care package, a lower percentage than the oft-criticized Wal-Mart, which insures 47% of its workforce.

Since the launch of the IWW campaign at Starbucks on May 17, 2004, the company has been cited multiple times for illegal union-busting by the National Labor Relations Board. The company settled numerous complaints against it and was recently found guilty by a judge in New York on more than 30 additional rights' violations. Starbucks' large anti-union operation is operated in conjunction with the Akin Gump law firm and the Edelman public relations firm.

The IWW Starbucks Workers Union is a grassroots organization of over 300 current and former employees at the world's largest coffee chain united for secure work hours and a living wage. The union has members throughout the United States and Canada fighting for systemic change at the company and remedying individual grievances with management.

Union baristas, bussers, and shift supervisors have fought successfully toward improved scheduling and staffing levels, increased wages, and workplace safety. Workers who join the union have immediate access to co-workers and members of the community who will struggle with them for a better life on the job.

SOLIDARITY STATEMENTS, MOTIONS AND APPEALS

★★★ NOTICE ★★★

Resolution in Support of Workers in Palestine-Israel

At the July general meeting the San Francisco Bay Area GMB, supported by and in consultation with the International Solidarity Commission, passed the following motion in solidarity with Palestinian workers, for inclusion on the agenda of the IWW 2010 Twin Cities Delegate Convention. Unfortunately, due to an accident of human error, the resolution was omitted from GOB#5. It has been included for discussion at General Convention.

We print the resolution as is in order to ensure all members are informed and can make an informed decision as to the resolution:

WHEREAS the IWW was founded and remains true to the fundamental principle that all workers of the world must unite against our common enemy, the employing class; and

WHEREAS workers of the world toil in different stages of their consciousness of this need; and

WHEREAS when these workers and their organizations call for international unity in their own struggles against oppressive forces arrayed to prevent their exercise of basic rights necessary for growth towards the idea of One Big Union; and

WHEREAS the IWW has an international obligation to join with them to remove these impediments to their growth; and

WHEREAS the working class of Palestine has made direct requests to the IWW through each union with which the IWW delegation to Palestine met, to join the international campaign of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions ("BDS") call for by every union federation in Palestine against their occupier Israel as an effective form of resisting its military occupation, war crimes, and apartheid policies; and

WHEREAS there can be no true and just peace as long as exploitation continues and people are victimized by systems of oppression such as capitalism, colonialism, and apartheid; and

WHEREAS the continuing occupation, war, and apartheid will only increase the prestige and power of the reactionary fundamentalist forces.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the IWW affirms its support of the BDS campaign and calls for the implementation of the following actions to actively support the campaign:

- 1) The IWW Friends of Palestine Workers Group, with the international Solidarity Commission, shall develop written material to integrate into organizer workshops concerning the BDS, the basis for it, background material, ways to pursue it at the local level (joining local campaigns, signing on to ongoing actions, etc.), ways to defend and justify it to workers and to counter criticisms (international worker solidarity, relationship to US imperialism/capitalism, comparison to South Africa Apartheid, etc.).
- 2) Develop IWW specific material that can be used to explain our position to others and include information material for distribution by literature and merchandising committees, at literature tables, workplaces, marches, and pickets.
- 3) Sponsor education days at branches at which discussions can take place about the issue. Identify and invite experienced resource individuals knowledgeable about the issue and its implementation.
- 4) Ensure that this Resolution and information on the campaign is placed appropriately on IWW websites.
- 5) Put together a list of resources (dvds, cds, films, books, etc.) that can be distributed to branches.

FURTHERMORE, the IWW shall not recognize Histadrut ("*The General Federation of Laborers in the Land of Israel*") as the legitimate representative of Israeli workers unless and until it recognizes its impediments to working class solidarity and (1) call for the dismantlement of the Apartheid Wall, (2) calls for the withdrawal of Israel from all lands occupied in 1967, (3) recognizes the right of return for Palestinians with reparations, (4) ceases its discriminatory practices towards different workers based upon Zionist distinctions, (5) implements direct election of all union delegates and officers at Histadrut Conventions, and (6) calls for the abolition of all laws that discriminate workers on the basis of religion or ethnicity.

We call upon all workers in Palestine-Israel to recognize the supremacy of their class interests over sectarian interests of religion, ethnicity, or nationalism thus making an injury to one, and make an injury to all.

SOLIDARITY STATEMENTS, MOTIONS AND APPEALS



ISC Argument in favor of Palestine Motion

"The Bay Area IWW's boycott resolution, which has been officially endorsed by the ISC, does not take a position on a Palestinian state. It is simply responding to a direct request of solidarity from Palestinian workers with whom we have a strong working relationship. All of the unions we met with in the West Bank urged the IWW to support the Boycott Divestment Sanctions (BDS) campaign when we asked about the best way to show solidarity. Israel's occupation is an economic, not a nationalist issue. It directly affects both Palestinians and Israelis. The affect on Palestinians is obvious and well documented (loss of land to settlers and the separation wall, extremely high unemployment, 700 checkpoints, frequent violent attacks, a colonized economy), but it also is a burden to Israeli (and

American) workers who are required to pay the high cost of this military occupation, and serve on the front lines in hostile territory. US workers pay approximately \$20 a year, the equivalent to 1-2 months dues, in taxes for direct military aid to Israel, and many of the Israeli's we met with privately told us they support the boycott, but cannot do so publicly for their own safety. This is a humanitarian and economic issue, and support for BDS is coalescing within the international labor movement. By endorsing the SF GMB's BDS resolution the IWW has the opportunity to be at the forefront of this burgeoning campaign."

ISC Resolution on Bangladesh

The International Solidarity Commission of the Industrial Workers of the World is deeply concerned about current repression and detention of workers and activists in Bangladesh. At the current moment, we especially highlight the situation of Kalpona Akter of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity NGO (BCWS), and demand that she be released from detention, all charges against her be dropped, and that the NGO status of the BCWS be immediately reinstated.



Responding to the government's cruel and insulting offer of merely \$43 a month minimum wage, in the country with the lowest garment wages in the world, Bangladeshi workers took to the streets for five days. The workers were met with the full force of the Bangladeshi police and security forces, in the service of the bosses.

The ISC recalls the work we have engaged with in the past with the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity [BCWS] and the National Garment Worker Federation [NGWF]. We were pleased to host her at many branches of our union in North America during a speaking tour in Spring 2010, and she stayed in many of our homes. We shared our differences, similarities, and learned a great deal from each other.

After the labor action, the BCWS has had its NGO status revoked by the Bangladeshi government, and Kalpona Akter of the BCWS, has been labeled a criminal, and accused by the state and bosses of inciting a riot. As of this writing, she has been detained in an unknown location for over 24 hours; supporters and families fear for her well-being and life, as well as that of her comrades and fellow workers.

The International Solidarity Commission expresses its full solidarity with Kalpona Akter and other unionists and workers, past, present, and future, experiencing repression from bosses with the assistance of the state. We request that the Bangladesh government, and especially its police and judicial forces, immediately release Kalpona Akter, drop all charges, and recertify the NGO status of the Bangladesh Center for Worker.



Letter in Support of NGWF Wage Increase/No Fires Campaigns

Dear brothers and sisters,

This letter is to declare the strong support of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) for the National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF) campaign to increase the minimum wage from 1,162 tk To 5,000 tk per month. We are also declaring our support of the campaign: "No More Fires - No More Gate Lock - No More Garment Worker Deaths."

These campaigns are sorely needed in the garment industry in Bangladesh. In February of 2010, 21 workers died as a result of fire at a garment factory in Bangladesh. Many of these deaths were a direct result of the front gates of the factory being locked, trapping workers on the premises as the fire raged. Sadly this is not an isolated incident. Since 1990 more than 400 garment workers have been killed as a result of factory fires. These deaths could have been prevented if there were adequate fire and safety measures in every garment factory. Therefore we support the NGWF campaign to bring attention to these preventable deaths. In addition to raising awareness the NGWF is also advocating that new safety laws and regulations be put in to place across the country. If laws such as these are implemented we believe many lives will be saved.

Similarly, we strongly support our brothers and sisters in the NGWF as they demand that the minimum wage be increased from 1,162 tk (about 24 US dollars) to 5,000 tk (bout 71 US dollars) by 27 July 2010. The current minimum wage is grossly inadequate for any person to survive in Bangladesh, especially in and around the capital city of Dhaka. Survival on these paltry wages has been particularly difficult as the price of food and essentials has rapidly increased over the last several years. As was pointed out by Amirul Hoque Amin, Bangladesh's garment workers are the lowest paid of the major garment producing nations.

The IWW also supports actions taken by, and on behalf of, the workers to meet these goals. We also share the belief that if wages are not increased and workers are not protected from early death because of fires and other industrial accidents, it is the government and the companies that share the blame for any unrest that may occur. Increasing wages to a livable level and protecting workers from fires is not too much to ask, but we believe it is too much to ask that workers keep working under these conditions. We hope that the government of Bangladesh and the garment producing companies will do the right and just thing and implement the NGWF demands.

In solidarity,

Industrial Workers of the World International Solidarity Commission



I W W Friends of Palestinian Workers Group

Members of the IWW have formed **the IWW Friends of Palestinian Workers Group** in order to foment solidarity between IWW members and Palestinian workers.

Visit the website and get involved: <http://www.iww.org/projects/isc/palestine>

INTERNATIONAL SYNDICALIST NEWS

Report back from IWA conference in León, Spain

By Brighton Solidarity Federation (<http://brightonsolfed.wordpress.com/>)



Three delegates from Brighton Solidarity Federation attended the conference mainly dealing with 'precarity', self-management and co-operatives. The conference was hosted at the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo's IX anarchist camp near León in northern Spain.

There were about 100 people at the camp and 60 participants in the conference. Ten sections were represented: CNT-F (France), FAU (Germany), Priama Akcia (Slovakia), ZSP (Poland), SolFed (Britain), SP (Portugal), USI (Italy), KRAS (Russia), NSF (Norway) and of course the CNT-E (Spain). There were also two guest organisations: MASA from Croatia and two delegates from the Peruvian newspaper La Humanidad, who however arrived several hours after closure of the conference due to immigration/visa problems.

In the first part of the conference, reports were given from each country. The SolFed delegation commented that "we were particularly impressed by the Polish ZSP, who have grown to over 50 members within 3 years, and have been involved in a range of struggles. We think we could learn a lot from them with regards to developing union functions."

The report by the Russian section KRAS brought home how bleak the situation is in much of the world, for example when they described the conditions of illegal migrants working in construction. Their lives are endangered by Nazis and police when leaving construction sites, and when organising at work they face the risk of deportation and mafia violence.

The second section was reports about specific conflicts which sections have been involved in. The CNT-F Pau local described their organising work using 'committees'. These were groups they set up outside the union in order to work with other militant workers who apparently had a deep distrust of the unions, which they initially at least extended to the CNT-F. The most inspiring action was an occupation of a state labour authority organised by the unemployed committee. This involved some mothers who were taking direct action for the first time, and who proved to be the most militant – remaining until they were removed by the police. Some of the most active members of the committees later joined the CNT-F as particular struggles subsided.

The ZSP also gave an account of their work with a Polish emigré worker, who after being placed by a temporary work agency in an unsafe shipyard job in Holland was left with a €2,000 hospital bill and out of pocket for his transport costs. He had not been provided with insurance or training, and did not even know the name of the shipyard where he had been working. Using some clever detective work involving a combination of internet research, an interview and Google Earth, the ZSP tracked down the shipyard, and organised actions in Poland and Holland together with a sympathetic Dutch group (Anarchist Group Amsterdam, AGA), which not only won him back the money but also improved conditions for future temps there.

The CNT-E report about the struggle at Ryanair highlighted the problems facing union activists. There, one CNT militant was sacked after refusing to sign a document dissociating himself from the union. While the CNT won reinstatement through the courts, this provoked a debate within the union about legalism, direct action and how to organise against powerful multinationals, which was also reflected in the subsequent discussion. Two FAU members from Kino Babylon in Berlin also gave an update on the situation there, since the court ban on the FAU's union activities was reversed.

The final section of the conference was a discussion of self-management and co-operatives, introduced by a presentation from the Italian section, USI. They set out a description of their "mutualist" strategy, to build up workers co-ops as a concrete way of building links of solidarity and mutual aid, forming an alternative to capitalism which it could "progressively replace". This idea was criticised by a piece from CNT Grenada's education union, which stressed that "Above all, we do not think that multiplying cooperatives could progressively change the capitalist system." The discussion was complicated by trilingual translations, but there was widespread scepticism towards a strategy of self-management under capitalism as opposed to class struggle along anarcho-syndicalist lines.

La Humanidad from Peru gave a presentation about the current situation and history of the workers' movement in Peru, as well as about their newspaper. From their presentation and from reading their newspaper it was clear that they lean closer to mutualism than to libertarian communism; nonetheless they have a clear orientation to the workers' movement, taking an interest in current organising by workers such as in the textile industry. They are also aware of some of the shortcomings of mutualism, which has to be assessed in the context of the limited welfare state and extended informal economy in Peru (where self-employment is a reality for many, and co-ops form a practical means towards greater income security and public services as opposed to a revolutionary strategy).

The SolFed delegation concluded that "Overall, we feel we got a lot out of the conference, we learnt a lot, and we made some good links, especially with comrades from Eastern Europe. Many delegates welcomed the exchange of experience and ideas, saying that there is a need for more, and several concrete ideas with regards to sharing skills and best practice have come out of this."



IWW CULTURE AND HISTORY

I W W S o n g s

I W W P e o p l e

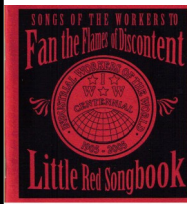
CONTACT THE ISC

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AROUND THE
WORLD ... CLASS
STRUGGLE!

We're on the Web!

<http://www.iww.org/en/projects/isc>



Paint Er' Red

Ralph H. Chaplin

Come with us, you working-men,

And join the rebel band;
Come, you discontented ones,
And give a helping hand,
We march against the parasite
To drive him from the land.
With one big Industrial Union!

Chorus:

*Hurrah! hurrah! we're going to paint 'er red!
Hurrah! hurrah! the way is clear ahead
We're gaining shop democracy and liberty
and bread
With one big Industrial Union!*

2. In factory and field and mine
We gather in our might,
We're on the job and know the way
To win the hardest fight,
For the beacon that shall guide us
Out of darkness into light,
Is one big Industrial Union!

Chorus:

3. Come on, you fellows, get in line;
We'll fill the boss with fears;
Red's the color of our flag,
It's stained with blood and tears--
We'll flout it in his ugly mug
And ring our loudest cheers
For one big Industrial Union!

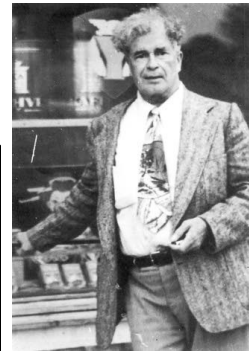
Chorus:

4. "Slaves" they call us "working plugs,"
Inferior by birth,
But when we hit their pocketbooks
We'll spoil their smiles of mirth--
We'll stop their dirty dividends
And drive them from the earth
With one big Industrial Union!

Chorus:

5. We hate their rotten system
More than any mortals do,
Our aim is not to patch it up,
But build it all anew,
And what we'll have for government,
When finally we're through,
Is one big Industrial Union!

Chorus:



Hiski Salomaa

Hiski Salomaa, born May 17, 1891 was a Finnish American folk singer and song writer.

Born in Kangasniemi, Finland, Salomaa moved to the Upper Peninsula, Michigan, in 1908 after the death of his mother. There, he made his living as a tailor. Salomaa, an active anarcho-syndicalist, joined the Industrial Workers of the World and served time in prison as a conscientious objector during the First World War.

Salomaa's songs depict Finnish immigrant life in North America and were very popular among the Finnish diaspora in North America. An interesting feature of Salomaa's is the plain use of English in his lyrics, making his songs more difficult to understand outside of a Finnish-American or Finnish-Canadian audience. Often referred to as the Finnish Woody Guthrie, Salomaa's songs paint a picture of the Finnish, working class immigrant experience.

Between 1927 - 1931 Salomaa recorded 18 songs for Columbia Records. His best known songs include Tiskarin Polkka (Dishwasher's Polka), Vapauden Kaiho (Yearning for Freedom), and Lännen lokari (Western Logger). Salomaa's recordings are considered to be an important part of Finnish recording history because during this period the Finnish recording industry was almost non-existent. In fact, between 1917 - 1925 not a single record was released in Finland.



The Industrial Workers of the World

Labor donated