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Longshoremen Wildcat Strikes Halt East Coast Shipping

By Mischa Gaus, *Labor Notes*

Longshore workers shut down the East Coast's biggest port on Sept. 28, for the first time in decades.

Members of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) brought the mammoth New York-New Jersey port complex to a halt, honoring a picket line by ILA members from Philadelphia. The Philadelphia dockers had come to the much larger New York port to protest the Del Monte fruit company's plans to go non-union in Philadelphia.

The wildcat strike was the first East Coast port work stoppage since 1977, members said.

In New York, about 3,600 ILA members stayed off the job on Sept. 28, and on the morning of Sept. 29 they defied a federal injunction ordering them back to work. Another 1,000 members in Baltimore shut down their port on the afternoon of Sept. 29.

"People are using their conscience," said John Blom, a member of ILA Local 333 in Baltimore. "If we don't stick together, we'll fall together."

The ILA did not sanction the strike and local officials urged members back to work. Shippers expected to seek damages.

When one worker in New York tried to convince dockers to cross the line, an ILA member said, they drowned him out in a chorus of "ILA, ILA."

Management tried to confuse and divide the union, claiming that some of the 12 ships reportedly waiting to be unloaded in New York would head straight for the non-union pier in Philadelphia. But that port didn't have the capacity to handle New York's cargo.

Stop Scab Fruit

The conflict arises from Del Monte's announcement that it would move its banana and pineapple importing operation to a non-ILA pier across the river from Philadelphia, controlled by Holt Logistics.

The shift could cost ILA Local 1291 in Philadelphia 200 to 300 jobs. Other non-ILA and non-union operations on

Continued on 5



Photo: Cindy Lipka-Defino

Workers picket the Global Terminal port in Jersey City, N.J. on Sept. 28 as part of a two-day long wildcat strike throughout New Jersey and New York.

Capitalism's False Solidarity With The Chilean Miners

By José Antonio Gutiérrez D.

Like millions of others, I was absolutely delighted to see the trapped miners in the San José mine in Chile getting out alive from their stressful, claustrophobic confinement which they'd been in for almost 70 days as a result of negligence on the part of the mining companies. I could only be thrilled to see this terrible story of grief and suffering come to a happy ending and see tears exchanged for bursts of laughter. But at the same time, mixed with my joy at seeing these 33 condemned men return to life, I still had a feeling that was a mixture of revulsion and anger at the show put on by the very people who had dug what could have been these men's graves. I have no wish to be a killjoy, but when the natural euphoria that has engulfed the country calms down, a great many questions will need to be asked.

The first is that although the govern-

ment is blatantly attempting to reap political credit for this miracle of the rescue of 33 men who were buried alive under tons of rock, 700 meters below the surface, the reality is that they never should have been buried in the first place! The mine had been closed for safety reasons and was reopened precisely because of the government policy that sacrifices workers' safety and their lives for the benefit of the entrepreneurial class. Moreover, at a time when both the government and the bosses were taking these men for dead, it was the tenacity of the miners themselves and their workmates who provided information and the benefit of their experience, that were responsible for keeping the search alive until they were found. The miners are alive not



Photo: anarkismo.net

situation underground. If it had been up to the government and the bosses, these miners would have been forgotten and abandoned like hundreds of other workers who every year are forgotten and abandoned when they die in accidents, the vast majority of which are preventable.

But once the cameras arrived, the indifference was immediately forgotten, replaced by an almost feverish concern; the country and its ruling classes were struck by "teletthon syndrome," all smiles for the cameras and hugs for the victims. But this is the sort of solidarity that tricks us, because it makes us forget that we live in a country where there is very, very little solidarity, a country where the "every man for himself" mentality was imposed on the inhabitants through the blood and fire of nearly four decades of rampant neoliberalism. It is fake solidarity because it is used to their own advantage—to increase their popularity ratings, for the sake of propaganda and marketing, to make political capital. Apple will give them iPods, Leonardo Farkas gives them 5 million pesos each, some have offered holidays in the Greek islands, others the chance to see Real Madrid or Manchester United play, a third-class politician (who, incidentally, is the president) poses for pictures with them. Everyone is using them quite blatantly as propaganda for their product, sports club, country or government.

I can't stop feeling a bad taste in my mouth when I see how they are exploiting the miners in such a way.

This is the extent to which the manipulation reaches, with Piñera calling on the world to remember Chile as the country that rescues and to forget about the Pinochet dictatorship—a regime from he greatly profited. Think how the world would react if German Chancellor Angela Merkel asked the world to forget about Hitler. I cannot help feeling deep disgust at the vile opportunism of it all. But I'm not surprised. For better or for worse, it is part of the plans by the ruling block to wipe out the "original sin" of our exemplary democracy, to forget the authoritarian-dictatorial "slip up" that drowned the hopes of three generations of Chileans in blood, part of the imposed collective amnesia by this country's propertied class. All this was another opportunity to flog what they have been flogging us for the past 20 years.

This is a country which lives on fiction, where the rescue becomes a form of reality show, with of course no shortage of spicy stories about lovers and other scandals to divert the hoi polloi. A reality show where the reasons for this tragedy are conveniently forgotten, where the reason these men were entombed goes unmentioned—an economic model which seeks the maximum profit for the least possible cost. It is an economic model which puts subcontractors, workers in conditions of terrible danger, in the mines and other places, making them carry out risky work which in many cases costs them their lives, while their employers amass enormous fortunes.

This is only a fictitious solidarity which exists in front of the cameras, but which disappears in the anonymous day-to-day interaction of our grey cities.

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Football Players Certainly Are Workers!

This is a response to FW X365465's letter, "NFL Players Are Not Workers: The Debate Continues," which appeared in the August/September *IW*.

Some ten years ago I worked on a construction job where one of my fellow carpenters was an extremely bad tempered guy. I remember him almost picking a fight over nothing with somebody one morning. I always avoided him, until one day when we were assigned to work together as partners. A day or two after that, I got to talking with another guy who was complaining about the excessive pay of pro football players. "No matter how much they get paid, it isn't enough," I commented, and then went on to talk about how they have to work for free for some six years (in high school and college) and with no assurance that they'll ever get a job at all. Then they have an average career of some three years, after which they have to live in pain. My partner kind of stared and looked at me. After we were alone, he said, "Hey, John, look at this." He pulled up his pants leg to show

a humungous scar running from his shin to above his knee.

He had played as a defensive back for about three years—I think it was for the Philadelphia Eagles—until he injured his knee. Then his career was shot. "I still get a lot of pain from this," he said. "Sometimes it hurts so bad that I can't sleep at night. Maybe you've noticed that I'm in a bad mood on a lot of mornings. That's why—I can't sleep from the pain."

That's what those who retire from pro-football live with or are at serious risk of living with. And let's not forget that the average player who has played enough years and lives long enough to collect a National Football League pension dies in his 50s.

As for those salaries—they last for just a few years usually. And this salary is by no means guaranteed; for every pro player who makes a salary like this, there are hundreds, probably thousands, who dedicate six or seven years of their lives to trying to make it to the pros and never do; they get hardly a cent for being battered around for those years.

Sure, like all pro athletes, most pro football players are somewhat *prima donnas* who don't think of themselves as workers. I've met quite a few carpenters (especially trim carpenters) who don't think of themselves as workers either. And remember the air traffic controllers' strike of the first Reagan years? Those workers were similar, as were airline pilots as far as their consciousnesses were concerned. And yes, pro players are used to distract and opiate masses of workers. But they are still abused—especially pro football players.

I think where they fall as far as the class they are in is somewhat mixed: On the one hand, they work for a wage (although a very high one for those who get to the pros). On the other hand, their existence is extremely individualistic in that their career is in complete competition with the careers of their fellow players. So they have dual elements within them. But let's not forget how much they are abused—to the extent that I, personally, feel a bit guilty when I watch a football game.

- John Reimann, x356641

Solidarity With Chilean Construction Workers

Fellow Workers of the IWW,

We are writing you from Chile to let you know about our organization and to establish a support and solidarity network in relation to some projects we are pushing forward.

As you may know, the state of the workers' movement in Chile is quite weak. After many years of a politics which served the interests of the bosses—first, with a dictatorship, now under democracy—a lot of the historical gains of the workers' struggles have been erased. Unionization is low and wherever it does exist, it is mostly for partnership and not struggle.

In the construction industry, in particular, we are not allowed to do collective bargaining; we have neither severance pay nor holidays. The norms and rules of health and safety are never respected, and let's not talk about pensions, because these are nonexistent. Despite the fact that we pay for the minimum income to private funds, we have irregular and unstable jobs, and therefore we never get enough money to actually receive a pension.

In spite of this bleak reality, the current time is quite important for our union, the Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Construcción (SINTEC). We are starting to work on a number of projects which we first developed as plans in 2007, when we made up our minds to get organized in the most difficult industry of all in Chile to organize—construction. It has been difficult to get our fellow workers organized, to create that identity as workers in a union, and also for them to accept a class struggle-based, autonomous and libertarian form of unionism.

In this short period of time, we have had to not only deal with the disorganization of workers in our industry, but also with the low levels of struggle in our class as a whole and with their meager capacity to respond to the bosses' at-

tacks. Despite this, SINTEC has managed to push action forward and has gained experience in struggle. Our first job organizing was at Altayo Hermanos Ltda., which we completely unionized even though it is a small company. That is 67 fellow workers, and with this strength we forced collective bargaining and a contract.

Our later push to larger companies was largely unsuccessful. Among those companies were INARCO, ARMACERO, DPS (The Metro contractors), Uriarte & Pérez cotapos, Muebles Ambitec

Later, we moved on to the mega-project Costanera Center by Salfa Corp contractors, and achieved an exemplary struggle for the construction workers, creating a committee of workers on the site, with unions from other trades.

This year things are different, because of our experience and because of the general conditions of the country. Due to the world economic crisis, the right wing in power and the earthquake, the bosses have gone forward in a huge offensive against the working class, and that has created unrest among workers who are looking at our union. At the start of the year we had two collective bargaining agreements, one with Claro Vicuña, Valenzuela S.A. in a quite important public work (Cultural Centre Gabriela Mistral), where we obtained one of the first victories for construction

workers in years. The other was in the tiles factory ATRIO SA, which also had positive results and thus strengthened our union.

We were also contacted by the workers of the Hospital of Rancagua SA project, built by Constructora Echeverría Izquierdo, COMSA, and OAS. After numerous talks with the workers, we achieved great success in unionizing them and electing the delegates. After a short while, all 400 workers at the hospital joined SINTEC. This was a big surprise because it is tough to organize

fellow workers and this happened quite quickly. This support encouraged us to go ahead and present a series of demands to the company regarding labor and economic conditions. The company said they were not going to bargain with SINTEC. We told the workers this and they decided to go on strike and occupy the building site. We stopped work and occupied the site for four days until we earned recognition and a collective bargaining agreement, which was of great importance for our fellow workers. This greatly strengthened SINTEC and the spirit of construction workers.

As a result of this struggle, we have managed to make progress in a short period of time in the south of our country, in some of the most important public work sites in Puerto Montt, Osorno, Valdivia, Temuco and Concepción, getting old unionists who were inactive involved again in organizing and creating new branches of SINTEC. All of this was done with a strategy alongside the Federación Nacional de Trabajadores de

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Wisconsin
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Lakeside Press IU 450 Job Shop: 1334 Williamson, 53703. 608-255-1800. Jerry Chernow, del., jerry@lakesidepress.org. www.lakesidepress.org
Madison Infoshop Job Shop: 1019 Williamson St. #B, 53703. 608-262-9036
Just Coffee Job Shop IU 460: 1129 E. Wilson, Madison, 53703. 608-204-9011, justcoffee.coop
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Railroad Workers IU 520: 608-358-5771. railfalcon@iww.org.
Milwaukee GMB: P.O. Box 070632, 53207. 414-481-3557.

Starbucks Campaign: 44-61 11th St. Fl. 3, Long Island City 11101 starbucksunion@yahoo.com www.starbucksunion.org
Upstate NY GMB: P.O. Box 235, Albany 12201-0235, 518-833-6853 or 518-861-5627. www.upstate-nyiww.org, secretary@upstate-ny-iww.org, Rochelle Semel, del., P.O. Box 172, Fly Creek 13337, 607-293-6489, rochelle71@peoplepc.com
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Ohio Valley GMB: P.O. Box 42233, Cincinnati 45242.
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IU 520 Railroad Workers: Ron Kaminkow, del., P.O. Box 2131, Reno, 89505. 608-358-5771. ronkaminkow@yahoo.com

In November We Remember: Vicky Starr



By Staughton Lynd
When my wife Alice and I interviewed Vicky Starr in 1969 and 1971 for a collection of oral histories called “Rank and File,” Vicky called herself “Stella Nowicki” because she didn’t want her employer at the time (the University of Chicago) to know about her radical activities in the 1930s. When we interviewed her again for a second collection more than a quarter century later, she had retired and had no problem using her real name.

Vicky Starr was the child of Eastern European immigrants. She grew up on a farm in Michigan. “We had no electricity. We had outdoor privies,” she said. Vicky ran away from home at age 17 because “there was not enough money to feed the family during the Depression.”

Vicky’s father had been a coal miner and had bought a few books about Lenin and Maxim Gorky. She recalled that when Sacco and Vanzetti were executed “the foreign-born people were in mourning for a week.” The family practiced what Vicky’s father described as a socialist idea, “No work, no eat.”

Agnes, a woman from Chicago, had come to the farm for her health. Agnes invited Vicky to go back to Chicago with her. Vicky at first lived with Agnes’ family and through them met a member of the Young Communist League named Herb March.



Photo: theragblog.blogspot.com

Vicky did housework for \$4 a week and hated it. Herb March suggested she get a job in the stockyards.

Vicky began in the “cook room” where women cut big chunks of meat into smaller pieces to make hash. She worked six-hour shifts at 37 1/2 cents an hour.

On the floor below women made hot dogs and one day a woman got her fingers caught putting meat into the chopper. Her fingers were cut off. All six floors stopped work and sat down. The company put in safety devices. But Vicky was identified as a leader and fired.

A friend was recalled to the stockyards but had another job and didn’t want to go. Using the friend’s name, Vicky got back in.

Communist leader William Z. Foster and other full-time organizers passed through Chicago and held meetings. Leaflets were written. Students from the University of Chicago, who couldn’t be fired, passed them out at the gate before work. The International Workers Order, which helped people with sickness benefits and insurance, gave union organizers access to large numbers of potential sympathizers. Vicky joined the Catholic Sodality and the Young Women’s Christian Association.

The women who Vicky worked with practiced solidarity by restricting output within agreed-upon limits. But they didn’t want to pay union dues. Again it was health and safety that opened a door. One of the women became paralyzed because of the intermittent freezing air to which the line was exposed, and died. “Within a week we organized that whole department,” Vicky said.

Women often did harder work than the men and were paid less. Within the union, staff jobs went only to men. “I would be approached by men for dates and they would ask me why I was in the union, so I would tell them that I was for socialism.” Vicky learned to play pool and bowl, and got men into the union that way.

From 1938 to 1940, the Packing-house Workers didn’t have bargaining rights. There was “tremendous ferment.” Vicky recalled:

You had this sense that people were ready to get together, to protect each other... It did happen that people were fired but when people were fired the whole department just closed down.

By the 1940s the union would bring a sound truck and thousands of people would show up for meetings in the middle of the stockyards at noontime. “The union leadership would be negotiating within a particular plant on a grievance [and if] the matter wasn’t settled by a certain time, the whole department would walk out,” Vicky recalled.

In 1945, with the union recognized and the war over, Vicky left packing. She married a linotypist from the *Chicago Tribune* and had three children. Around 1950 she went back to work as a secretary at the University of Chicago.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) decided that the “appropriate bargaining unit” was clerical workers throughout the whole university. There were 1,800 of them. More than 18 buildings had to be organized.

After other unions tried and failed, the Teamsters launched a campaign. Vicky had no use for the local union president who made \$200,000 a year. But 21 stewards were elected by secret ballot before the NLRB election and Vicky, by that time working for the Department of Education, was one of them. Eighteen of the new stewards were women.

As in the stockyards, grievances were pursued and won before union recognition. And after union recognition “the stewards became the bargaining committee,” Vicky said.

Vicky worked for another ten years after the union was recognized. She remembered going to the university hospital for medical reasons after she retired. Gregarious as always, she got into conversation with the secretaries. She told them “we helped to organize the union,” and their response was “thank you, thank you, thank you.”

Vicky introduced us to two friends and fellow spirits, Katherine Hyndman and Sylvia Woods, and the three became the protagonists of the documentary movie, “Union Maids.” Sylvia, an African-American, helped to organize a United Autoworkers (UAW) local at Bendix during World War II. Memorably, she stated in her interview in “Rank and File”:

We never had [dues] check-off. We didn’t want it. We said if you have a closed shop and check-off, every body sits on their butts and they don’t have to worry about organizing and they don’t care what happens. We never wanted it.”

In these later years Vicky Starr also separated from her husband and became an ardent proponent of women’s liberation.

Vicky says at the end of “Union Maids”:

There’s some tremendous potential in people, in labor people, in working people, and in union people... They are very democratic... There’s a tremendous militancy that’s below the surface and that will rise and come up.

Vicky Starr died in November 2009. Vicky Starr, presente.

WOMEN WORKERS’ HISTORY

Chapter 38 Mary Kenney O’Sullivan (1864-1943)

Mary Kenney didn’t need a college degree to tell working women they should organize. Employer greed and cruelty were education enough.

Her parents were Irish immigrants, a railroad worker and a cook. She left school after the fourth grade to become apprenticed to a dressmaker. When her father was killed on the job, 14-year-old Mary went to work in a bindery to support her sick mother. Her wages for a 65-hour week: \$2. When she demanded more money she was fired.

Eventually Mary moved to Chicago and found work in a bindery. She joined Ladies Federal Labor Union No. 2703 (see Chapter 32), which helped her to organize the “Woman’s Bookbinding Union.” Mary also organized shirtwaist workers: she once marched into Marshall Fields’s office, to protest the \$4.85 his factory workers received for a 60-hour work week.



American Federation of Labor President Samuel Gompers met Mary Kenney in Chicago in 1891. Impressed, he appointed her to the AFL staff as the first-ever female general organizer. In the summer of 1892 she assisted the Troy, N.Y. “collar girls” (see Chapter 37), helped the Homestead strikers (Chapter 36), and organized garment, bindery and textile workers and women printers.

Her best efforts were not good enough for the AFL Executive Council, who let her go after six months. Mary was told the AFL lacked the funds for a full-time woman organizer. She had a simple reply: If serious about organizing women, the AFL should have more, not fewer female organizers. (She married labor editor John O’Sullivan in 1894, moved to Boston and continued organizing.)

Graphic: Mike Konopacki



Labor Rights Violations Stack Up At Jimmy John’s

By the Jimmy Johns Workers Union

MINNEAPOLIS – Jimmy John’s will face a government investigation of 14 alleged violations of the National Labor Relations Act at ten Minneapolis locations. The sandwich workers’ union has filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge accusing company owners Mike and Rob Mulligan of engaging in a pattern of labor rights violations ranging from physical intimidation and threats against union members, to tightening of company policies in retaliation for union activity.

“When we formed the union, we were hoping to just be able to sit down with Mike and Rob to talk about some basic improvements—sick days, basic respect, and a pay raise above minimum wage. We are dismayed that Jimmy John’s has opted to bring in high-priced anti-union consultants and attempt to illegally union-bust rather than just come

to the table,” said Ayo Collins, a member of the union.

Franchise owners Mike and Rob Mulligan have refused to meet with their employees to discuss their issues, prompting the sandwich workers to file for a National Labor Relations Board union election, scheduled for Oct. 22. If a majority of Minneapolis Jimmy John’s workers vote in favor of the union, the Mulligans will be legally required to negotiate in good faith over the terms of a contract.

In response to the union campaign, Jimmy John’s has contracted with Labor Relations Institute, Inc., a third party anti-union consultancy firm, to mount a comprehensive attack on union supporters. With the aid of Labor Relations Institute, the Mulligans have begun a series of “captive audience meetings,” requiring their employees to watch anti-union videos in an attempt to break support for unionization. Other as-

pects of the anti-union campaign have crossed over into illegality, with reports of management threats, intimidation, and retaliation against union members surfacing across Minneapolis.

According to a 2009 report on employer responses to union organizing by noted Cornell University labor scholar Kate Bronfenbrenner, 63 percent of employers interrogate workers in mandatory one-on-one meetings about support for the union, 54 percent of employers threaten workers in such meetings, 47 percent of employers threaten to cut wages and benefits, 34 percent of employers fire workers, and 28 percent attempt to infiltrate the organizing committee. Due to these factors, only 45 percent of NLRB elections conducted from 1999-2003 resulted in a union victory.

In large part because of harsh employer opposition, union density in the food service industry hovers around



Graphic: jimmyjohnsworkers.org

a mere 1.8 percent. A union victory at Jimmy John’s could be a major breakthrough for labor in an industry where unions have struggled to gain a foothold, even as an increasing number of Americans find themselves employed in fast food establishments.

(Editor’s note: At press time, the NLRB election was not yet held. For complete updates on this and other JJWU news, visit <http://www.jimmyjohnsworkers.org>)

Ottawa Busker Appeals Conviction

By Peter Moore

When the City of Ottawa installed speakers and started broadcasting muzak in Raymond Loomer’s favorite underpass, he cut the speaker wires by law, information he could have used in his defense and that he has rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to make a living and enjoy his freedom of expression. He objected to the community service as “the slave-style practices of government” for appropriating his labor power.

Loomer’s appeal will be heard on Nov. 12, 2010 at the city courthouse.

Prior to the incident, Ottawa had introduced restrictive bylaws requiring street performers to get a license and perform in designated spots chosen by the city. But now, Ontario’s Safe Streets Act, brought in to target squeeze kids, buskers and other street people making a living on the province’s streets, has set the stage for tighter controls on informal workers.

Longshoremen Wildcat Strikes Halt East Coast Shipping

Continued from 1
The Delaware River are already dragging down conditions on the Philadelphia docks and elsewhere.

The Holt pier is advertising positions paying as little as \$8.50 an hour with few benefits, while at the ILA port in Philadelphia, pay ranges from \$17 to \$24.50 an hour for union members working break-bulk cargo, like Del Monte’s fruit.

The ILA self imposed cuts of up to \$5 million in wages to try to convince Del Monte not to leave, but the company claimed it needed the larger capacity at the Holt pier.

Wildcat to Spread?

Royce Adams, a Local 1291 member in Philadelphia, said he expects the wildcat wave to spread south to Texas and Florida ports where much of Del Monte’s fruit is offloaded. A port in Manatee, Fla. fought off a Del Monte bid to go non-union in 2003, but accepted a tiered wage and benefit structure that divides younger workers from older.

Philadelphia ILA members dumped pineapples into the Delaware River on Labor Day to protest Del Monte’s plans to undercut conditions.

The fight over job loss in Philadelphia is a warm-up for vexing issues

loomng in the ILA’s master contract, which expires in two years. Early talks may begin as soon as the beginning of next year, and Adams said the ILA action in September stem in part from widespread frustration over automation on the docks and two-tier structures throughout East Coast ports.

Just as important, Adams said, was showing dock bosses—and younger members—that ILA has some fight, especially as shippers look to exploit their ability to shift cargo when a Panama Canal expansion finishes in 2014.

“We can’t let little Del Monte set precedents,” he said. “If the little guys take you, what are the big guys going to do?”

Note: On Sept. 30, after the major shipping carriers agreed to participate in negotiations in Philadelphia over Del Monte’s use of non-union labor, the ILA announced a return to work of New York-New Jersey and Baltimore workers. It appeared that all charges against the union would be dropped.

This story appeared in its original format on Sept. 28, 2010 in Labor Notes. It was reprinted with permission from the author.



Graphic: iww.org

Boston Rallies In Solidarity With Strike In Spain

By Matt Andrews

With the support of radicals in the community, the Boston IWW organized a rally on Beacon Hill in front of the Massachusetts State House to protest budget cuts in the state and express solidarity with the militant workers movement in Europe. Speakers recognized the Spanish unions, Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT) and Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT), for going beyond mere protest and calling for a one-day general strike. The general strike is the ultimate weapon of a united working class against the abuses of capital. The speakers also addressed the fight-back in Massachusetts against budget cuts in funding for public education and elder services, as well as ballot question #3, which would cut the state sales tax from



Boston Wobblies rally on Sept. 29. Photo: Suren Mooliar

6.25 percent to 3 percent this November if approved by voters, further crippling the state budget. Many workers and tourists stopped to take flyers and listen to the speeches. The IWW banner provided a great visual on the State House steps, with the words: “We Stand in Solidarity with the General Strike in Europe. No Austerity! Capitalism is Not Working! Workers of the World Unite!”

Correction

The story, “London IWW, Labor Activists Unite In Support Of Swedish SAC Union” by X355622, which appeared on page 1 of the October *IW*, incorrectly stated that the Cleaners’ Defence Committee (CDC) is a part of the London IWW General Membership Branch. The Cleaners’ Defence Committee is not part of the IWW, it’s a separate collective that IWW members are involved. The *IW* apologizes for this error.

Capitalism’s False Solidarity With The Chilean Miners

Continued from 1

This fake solidarity is handed out like aspirin to feed the inflated image we have of ourselves. But above all it is fictitious because this solidarity between buried and buriers disappears amid a sea of inequality in a country where neither the society as a whole nor the economy holds solidarity as its guiding principle. For example, while the miners are being offered millions in contracts by all and sundry, the company is refusing to pay them for the time they spent underground. Now with the miners themselves rolling in money, they are probably not too concerned about receiving their miserable wages, but there are thousands of other less-fortunate workers who are languishing in one of the country’s Workers’ Hospitals, to the indifference of their companies, without any wages as long as they remain unable to work due to injuries they got on the job. That’s capitalism.

But let’s not forget that 439 workers died in workplace accidents in this country in 2009, and where was the solidarity for them? Where were all the efforts to save them from their mines or from all the various workplaces they died in? For them there was only the indifferent gaze of the authorities or the criminal entrepreneurial class—439 human beings

with the same abilities, the same right to live, laugh and enjoy the good things of life as the 33 miners brought back from the dead.

Beyond the happiness we all feel for the good fortune these workers have had, escaping with their lives, beyond the plastic, show business smiles, beyond all the presidential visits and hugs, beyond all the “generosity” being paraded before the cameras, I still think of the thousands of unfortunate workers who are sacrificed year after year on the altar of profit, whose fate is only met with indifference. I cannot help thinking that if those same workers had organized themselves to fight against the dangerous conditions they were (and still are) forced to work in, if they had resisted allowing themselves to be buried, they would have been treated like criminals. I cannot help thinking about the 32 Mapuche political prisoners, some under the age of 18, who were considered “terrorists” and who were left to waste away on a hunger strike which was hidden from the eyes of the national and international press, and who are being treated in a disgracefully paternalistic way by the government. I cannot help thinking of all this, despite my immense joy at seeing the miners returning to us. What a hypocritical country!

In November We Remember

Barbara Rose Johns (1935-1991)

By Richmond IWW

We've all heard the adult-chauvinist myth that youth are unaware, apathetic, and ungrateful for everything. Well, fortunately, that is not true. The only proof we need for this is the example of Barbara Rose Johns.



Photo: encyclopediavirginia.org

Attending school during the era of segregation, Johns and her classmates were forced to endure unequal schooling facilities. The buildings were frigid in the winter and packed to twice their capacity, and the roofs leaked whenever it rained. When the minority parents complained to the all-white school board, they were only able to win tar paper shacks for the extra students. However, the white students were given a new, modern school building on the other side of town.

In 1951, at the young age of 16, Johns became a leader in the African-American community of Prince Edward County, Va. On April 23, Barbara Johns organized a student strike. The principal of R.R. Moton High School received a call informing him that two students had been arrested at the bus stop. As soon as he left to assist the students, a note from "the principal" was delivered to each classroom announcing a general assembly. At this assembly, Johns encouraged

her peers to act by reminding them of the terrible conditions that existed at their school and that even if improvements could not be made in time to benefit themselves, their brothers and sisters would see the improvements. She led her peers on a march down to the county courthouse to speak out against the unfair treatment of African-American youth. They waved placards saying "Down with tar paper shacks!"

Her protest was so well organized that even the NAACP, who originally didn't want to take her case, was impressed and decided to help her. Johns' case eventually became part of Brown v. Board of Education, and it was the only part of Brown that was started by students. Many see it as the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement.

Remembering Police Brutality

By Nicholas DeFilippis

With the events against police brutality at the end of October and remembrances being published in the November IW, I would like combine the two in this article. Richmond, Va. has seen a number of police atrocities over the years and the situation is worse than the average city in some respects. This piece is meant to remember the crimes of the Richmond Police Department and their almost faceless victims.

With one of the highest incarceration rates in the region, Richmond police arrest and jail seemingly everyone. From traffic law violators to the mentally ill, from drug addicts to the homeless and other misde-meanor offenders, nobody is safe from the Richmond police. This insane policy has caused serious over-crowding in the city jail, pushing the city incarceration rate well above the national average.

In 2008, resident Joanne Jefferson was man-handled, thrown against a wall, forced to the ground, and arrested for videotaping police officers arresting people leaving bars after last call. She was charged with impeding traffic, but the charges were later dismissed.

For others, justice does not come so easily. In 2006, for example, it was reported that a Richmond police officer had shot and killed an unarmed man. That same year, a judge dismissed criminal charges against an officer who had assaulted a woman at a traffic stop.

Earlier this year, Richmond City Jail inmate Grant R. Sleeper died of heat exposure, which, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, never happened anywhere else in the United States from 2000 to 2007. Sleeper is not the only case. A great number of inmates have

died in the Richmond City Jail over the years.

Some inmates have died because Sheriff C.T. Woody cut spending on important medications. Others have died because jail guards simply ignored obvious signs that certain inmates were approaching death.

The conditions in the jail went far enough to provoke an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) investigation this year. The ACLU stated the deaths at the jail were due to "unconstitutionally harsh conditions."

Sadly, death is not the only thing prisoners must suffer in the Richmond City Jail. For example, Rastafarians who refuse to cut their hair on religious grounds are put into semi-isolation. Some of them have been in isolation for over a decade.

This November, and almost every day for that matter, Richmond Wobblies and



other activists remember the victims of local police brutality. We realize that such things are inherent within capitalist society. Due to the class nature of the government and its jails, brutality against the average person is to be expected. Richmond, however, will not sit silently as the police take away our loved ones and our rights. Our local IWW crew has discussed the idea of educating about police brutality, and our friends in Richmond Copwatch and the Wingnut Collective are watching the cops as closely as they watch us.

The author encourages people across the United States to observe their local police and bring their brutality to the attention of rights groups and other organizations, form local groups that aim to make neighborhoods safe without police intervention, and any other techniques the people find necessary.

the business community, the protection of property over people's security and well-being—if the latter commitment can even remain intelligible under such a disturbing moral stance.

However, despite the powerful support behind the business stance, it has drawn increasingly militant challenges by those who share the view from 14th and Broadway. What is now recognized as a nation-wide rebellion against domestic state terror in primarily working-class communities and overwhelmingly

to people of color, the Justice for Oscar Grant movement—which erupted spontaneously on the streets of Oakland immediately following the killing of 22-year old Oscar Grant by San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) cop Johannes Mehserle—is a driving force for radical change.

Mehserle, who was convicted of involuntary manslaughter, will receive his sentence on Nov. 5. As a sign of solidarity with the family and friends of Oscar Grant and the Justice for Oscar Grant community, the International Longshore & Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 called an organized labor rally

on Oct. 23 in Oakland and around the country to stand up against the kind of "protection" handed to Oscar Grant, demanding that the state jail its killer cops. On Aug. 5, the San Francisco Bay Area IWW unanimously adopted a resolution supporting the rally, noting that, "the IWW firmly rejects police violence and stands beside the family and of friends of Oscar Grant."

There was a planned IWW presence at 14th and Broadway and around the country on Oct. 23 and Wobblies called for action to be taken in workplaces. The duty to control working-class communities is a direct result of the state's responsibility to protect the interest of the business community and Wobblies have a long and significant history of recognizing this authoritarian marriage and its disastrous consequences. Therefore, we too have a responsibility, not to protect, but to rebel, to make it known to the business community that we will not sit idly and watch as the state slaughters to protect property and privilege.

If we are at all concerned with justice, for Oscar Grant and the countless others, and committed to curbing state violence in our communities, our immediate attention and militant action—both at work and in the streets—is an urgent calling.

Nick Theodosis is a graduate student in philosophy at San Francisco State University. He is also on the ILWU-initiated Oscar Grant Rally Organizing Committee and a Wobbly. He can be reached at nmtheo@mail.sfsu.edu.

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"The real purpose of my writing is not to get my views as an individual published, but rather to try to help encourage working people to speak for ourselves and to write about our direct workplace experiences. I believe strongly that this is a very important part in worker self-organization. Too often workers are talked down to as if we are just sheep to be led and that our only role is to be followers. I believe workers do understand our class situation and we understand industry and how to change it better than any would be leaders and that real workers' self-organization, that we control, is the only means to reach worker self-management. And to do that workers must speak for ourselves. Me, I am nothing more than a rebel Wobbly shipyard worker."

— Arthur J. Miller

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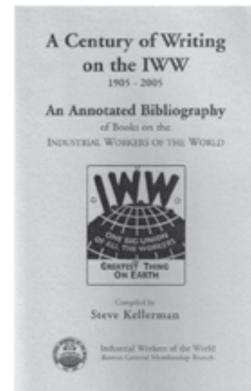
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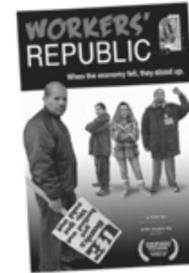
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"Workers' Republic"
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"Workers' Republic" is a 60-minute documentary that chronicles one of the most important labor victories in recent memory. The film won the JOHN MICHAELS HUMAN RIGHTS FILM AWARD at the 32nd annual Big Muddy Film Festival in Feb. 2010.

Three weeks before Christmas 2008, in the depths of the economic crisis, Chicago company Republic Windows and Doors announced the factory's closure. They informed their work force that they would not be paid for their final week or receive their accrued vacation pay. Insurance benefits were cut immediately, and the workers were denied the 60-day severance guaranteed under the federal WARN Act.

What those ordinary people did next reminded the working class it possesses a power long forgotten. In a move that harkened back to the sit-down strikes of the 1930s, they occupied the doomed factory day and night for nearly a week, declaring they would not leave until they were given what their employer owed them.

The workers won over the public to their cause and the story made headlines all over the world. "Workers' Republic" conveys the courage, the creativity, and the solidarity of those window-builders who vowed to stand up for their rights. From the opening moments to the eventual victory, and culminating in the surprise fate of the Chicago factory, the film shows radical action can be a solution to exploitation.

Filmmaker Andrew Friend has assembled the accounts of several of the main fighters in the Republic struggle, including front line workers, the organizers of their small union, and a few of the thousand people that supported them through small acts of solidarity.

In our turbulent times of economic strife, "Workers' Republic" is an anthem of future possibility and opportunity.

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Laudelino Iglesias Martinez left prison on the 9th of August 2004 after spending more than 23 years in Spanish cells. He is one of the well-known social rebels and anarchists imprisoned in Spain, participating in the revolutionary organization of prisoners who were refused amnesty by the state after the death of Franco, and continuing to struggle against isolation and against the many abuses of a brutal incarceration system. Laudelino spent many years suffering at the hands of fascist screws in the infamous FIES units but never stopped fighting.

In autumn 2005 Laude began a European tour to spread information about past and current resistance to the repressive state apparatus that is the penal system, and to encourage solidarity with the many free and strong individuals who are currently behind bars.

This is a transcript of his talk at the 1 in 12 Club in Bradford, October 6th, 2005, where he was accompanied by an activist from the Spanish prisoner support group Salhateka.

\$3.00

Davey Caught the West Bound

By San Francisco Bay Area IWW

Davey Sapinsley, a member of the San Francisco Bay Area Branch of the IWW, passed away on Sept. 1, 2010. Davey began his association with the IWW in Chicago in the mid-1970s. Over the years, Davey was involved in many activities not connected to the IWW. In 2006, he found his way back to the union and rejoined. He stated that the union's organizing work at the time drew him back. Davey was ready and willing to join our picket lines and help in most any way he could. During the General Assembly in Oakland in 2006, he helped out with food and housing. Davey was a true character who always had a story to tell. Even though he was not as involved lately, he is remembered in the Bay Area as someone who helped out when he could. Additionally, Davey was involved in the Nuclear freeze movement during the 1980s and was a regular volunteer with Food Not Bombs in the Bay Area.

14th & Broadway: A View Of Justice For Oscar Grant

By Nick Theodosis

In international affairs, the fashionable view of the state has shifted from a "duty to control" to a "responsibility to protect." Given commensurable values and under narrow conditions the position can be justified, even by those who reject the legitimacy of government authority, and even in spite of the fact that on such a view the state is failing horrendously.

Fortunately, this view does not usurp alternatives at our disposal. An

example is the view from 14th Street and Broadway in downtown Oakland, Calif. This is where, following the Johannes Mehserle verdict, a legion of Bay Area police coerced, corralled and assaulted peaceful protestors such as activists, organizers, union members, and others who were demanding justice for Oscar Grant. On this view, a view from behind enemy lines, control is never mistaken for protection.

Only far beyond such lines are we likely to value, as does both the state and

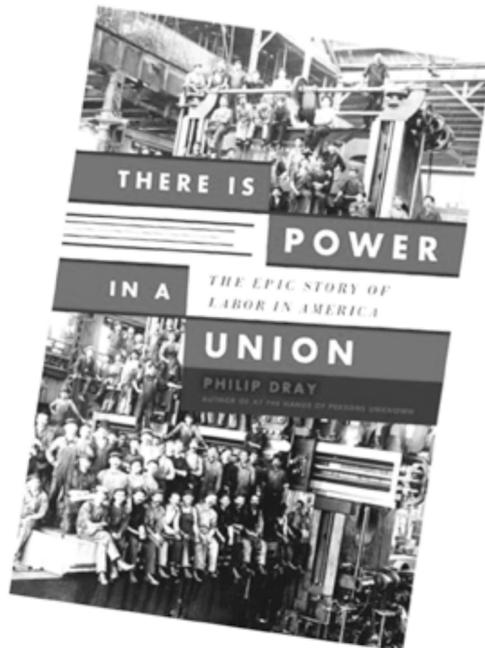
In November We Remember
Oscar Grant

In the wee hours of New Year's Day 2009, Bay Area Rapid Transit Police officer Johannes Mehserle shot and killed an unarmed, 22-year-old Oscar Grant. Grant was a father of a four-year-old girl and a union grocery store butcher.

We recognize the historical role of police to marginalize and suppress workers and people of color. As participants in the movement for justice for Oscar that emerged in the aftermath of this atrocity, we join the many thousands of voices calling for a full sentence for Officer Mehserle, and for an end to police repression of the working class and communities of color.

We also wish to recognize the many working class visionaries who have been oppressed and martyred for the great cause of the emancipation of our class.

Industrial Workers of the World
San Francisco Bay Area General Membership Branch



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There is Power in a Union The Epic Struggle of Labor in America

By Philip Dray

(Doubleday; 784 pages; \$35)

Reviewed by **John Raskin**

Fire up the barbecue. Break out the beer. It's Labor Day and time to say so long to summer. The national holiday devoted to backyard revelry began in 1882 as a day that brought factory workers and their families into the streets to flex their collective muscle and show the world the power of organized labor.

Traditional Labor Day celebrations had their day in the sun, along with May 1 - International Workers' Day - but in a nation in which citizens have long aspired to hold white-collar, not blue-collar jobs, laboring men and women have often been lost in the shuffle. Honor labor? You've got to be kidding! Workers have been trivialized and ridiculed, whether they're the Archie Bunkers of suburbia or Sarah Palin's stalking-horse, Joe Six Pack.

Philip Dray, the author of "There Is Power in a Union: The Epic Struggle of Labor in America," comes into the ring with fists flying, and he doesn't let up for a moment. If you love Howard Zinn's "A People's History of the United States," you'll probably love Dray's history, too, with its pageantry and its celebratory prose that shines a bright light of compassion and understanding on ordinary workingmen, women and children. Yes, even American children with white skins toiled 10 hours a day in factories long before corporations moved overseas and put Indian and Pakistani kids to work making shirts and sneakers.

Dispassionate historians might find Dray's narrative too often romanticized. They'd have a point. Indeed, his labor heroes tend to be "courageous," to speak "with all heart" and, when they're mowed down by the militia, the streets are awash in "carnage." Still, it's difficult if not impossible to omit colorful language from a book about American workers.

The story of unions in America is, as Dray points out, an epic struggle that seemed at times to be fought between good and evil. Nineteenth century labor activists called their initially underground organization the Knights of Labor as though they sprang from the court of King Arthur. As Dray shows, workers saw themselves engaged in an apocalyptic battle to give birth to a new world of economic justice. They could not help but speak as though they were the saviors of humanity from the perceived evils of capitalism.

Dray offers a vivid quotation from Albert Spies, for example, who said of himself and fellow Socialists, "We are the birds of the coming storm, the prophets of the revolution."

Throughout his epic tale, Dray allows the labor organizers to speak for themselves. In the eyes of earlier generations of Americans, men and women such as Spies; Emma Goldman; Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, better known as the Rebel Girl; and the Italian-born martyrs of the labor movement, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, were as familiar as Lady Gaga and Jay-Z are to audiences today.

Dray offers lyrical portraits of the leading agitators, even as he moves his narrative inexorably forward with stirring descriptions of strikes, riots, bombings and discussions of the landmark legal decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court that altered the fate of unions.

When he reaches modern times, Dray is more critical and less effusive about workers and their organizations. By the 1940s, he says, "organized labor had begun to appear less a movement of workers agitating from below than another powerful interest maneuvering for advantage."

Still, he shows that in the 1950s and 1960s, trade unions continued to battle for better working conditions, and, moving his story West to California, he writes warmly about Cesar Chavez, the United Farm Workers and their friction with the thuggish Teamsters Union. Dray connects the 20th century's labor movement to the cause of civil rights, Martin Luther King Jr. and environmentalism.

One of the great values of this beautifully written book is that it shows the centrality of labor and working-class organizations to America itself. In the last chapter, "A Time for Choosing," he brings the story into the present day and writes with real sadness about labor now, and, not without hope, about prospects for the future. "The way forward for labor," he writes insightfully, "must involve global networks."

Jonah Raskin is the author of "Field Days: A Year of Farming, Eating, and Drinking Wine in California."
(C) San Francisco Chronicle 2010



Street Sweeper Social Club (audio CD)

\$15.00

Tom Morello & Boots Riley have joined forces to form Street Sweeper Social Club. The 11-song set was produced by Tom Morello and features Boots Riley on vocals, Morello on guitar and bass, and Stanton Moore (Galactic) on drums. Tom Morello is a founding member & guitarist of the rock bands **Rage Against the Machine** and **Audioslave**. The two bands are responsible for multiple Grammy Awards & a combined 30 million albums sold worldwide. Widely celebrated for his unique voice as a master electric guitarist, Morello is recognized by Rolling Stone Magazine as one of the "100 Greatest Guitar Players of All-Time." Boots Riley is best known as the leader of The Coup, the seminal Hip-Hop group from Oakland, CA. As a producer & lyricist, Riley has crafted critically acclaimed albums for The Coup that have graced many year-end Top 10 lists. Tom Morello is an IWW Member and is part of IU 630.



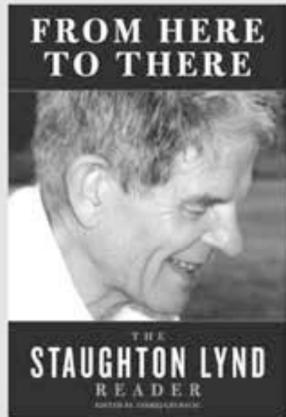
Tom Morello: The Nightwatchman One Man Revolution (audio CD)

\$15.00

Tom Morello appears as The Nightwatchman on his stark new acoustic album One Man Revolution. These 13 songs create a dark, urgent portrait of a world in turmoil. Morello, the Grammy Award-winning guitarist of **Rage Against the Machine** and **Audioslave**, pinpoints the sociopolitical struggles of the American leftist underground in this series of self-penned originals. Brendan O'Brien (Pearl Jam, Bruce Springsteen, Incubus, Rage Against the Machine) produces "One Man Revolution," which is Tom's first time singing on record. **Morello is an IWW Member of IU630.**

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OFFERINGS FROM THE I.W.W. Literature DEPARTMENT



From Here To There: The Staughton Lynd Reader Edited by Andrej Grubic

From Here To There collects unpublished talks and hard-to-find essays from legendary activist historian Staughton Lynd.

The first section of the *Reader* collects reminiscences and analyses of the 1960s. A second section offers a vision of how historians might immerse themselves in popular movements while maintaining their obligation to tell the truth. In the last section Lynd explores what nonviolence, resistance to empire as a way of life, and working class self-activity might mean in the 21st century. Together, they provide a sweeping overview of the life, and work—to date—of Staughton Lynd.

Both a definitive introduction and further exploration, it is bound to educate, enlighten, and inspire those new to his work and those who have been following it for decades.

"Staughton Lynd's work is essential reading for anyone dedicated to implementing social justice. The essays collected in this book provide unique wisdom and insights into United States history and possibilities for change, summed up in two tenets: Leading from below and Solidarity." —Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

320 PAGES, \$22.00



One Big Blend Coffee A Celebration of the I.W.W.

While you're plotting your wake-up call to the employing class, wake yourself up with coffee roasted by your fellow workers! A blend of light and dark roasted shade-grown, fair trade, organic coffee from Peru and Mexico, made by Just Coffee, an I.W.W. job shop located in Madison, Wisconsin. Just Coffee Co-op's mission is to work with small grower cooperatives in true partnership, using the language and mechanics of market economics to turn the market on its ear. We source the finest green coffee on earth, air-roast it to perfection, and to deliver the highest quality beans proving to our customers that a better model can also deliver higher quality products. We aim for total transparency, sustainable business practices, and long-term relationships with all of our partners while providing a fun and meaningful cooperative workplace for the people we work with. Oh, and we also seek to change global social and economic inequality by practicing REAL fair trade in direct opposition to gluttonous "free trade" and corporate fair trade. We recognize fair trade as one strategy for change within a larger movement for global social justice.

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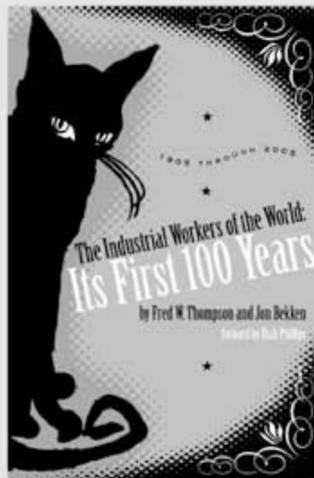
You Don't Play With Revolution by C.L.R. James

This new collection of essays by radical activist/critic C.L.R. James (perhaps best known today for his *Every Cook Can Govern*) features eight never-before-published lectures delivered in Montreal in 1967 and 1968, on subjects ranging from Shakespeare and Rousseau to Caribbean history and the Haitian Revolution.

Editor David Austin contributes a historical introduction to James' life and work. The book also includes two interviews from James' stay in Canada, selected correspondence from the period, and an appendix of essays including Marty Glatberman's "C.L.R. James: The Man and His Work."

This book is essential reading for everyone who has grappled with James' contributions to radical theory, in particular his efforts to fuse radical Marxism with an approach focused on supporting autonomous struggles by the dispossessed.

333 PAGES, \$18.95



The Industrial Workers of the World: Its First 100 Years

By Fred W. Thompson & Jon Bekken forward by Utah Phillips

The IWW: Its First 100 Years is the most comprehensive history of the union ever published. Written by two Wobblies who lived through many of the struggles they chronicle, it documents the famous struggles such as the Lawrence and Paterson strikes, the fight for decent conditions in the Pacific Northwest timber fields, the IWW's pioneering organizing among harvest hands in the 1910s and 1920s, and the war-time repression that sent thousands of IWW members to jail. But it is the only general history to give substantive attention to the IWW's successful organizing of African-American and immigrant dock workers on the Philadelphia waterfront, the international union of seamen the IWW built from 1913 through the 1930s, smaller job actions through which the IWW transformed working conditions, Wobbly successes organizing in manufacturing in the 1930s and 1940s, and the union's recent resurgence. Extensive source notes provide guidance to readers wishing to explore particular campaigns in more depth. There is no better history for the reader looking for an overview of the history of the IWW, and for an understanding of its ideas and tactics.

255 pages, \$19.95



The Wobblies DVD

This documentary from 1979 takes a look at the IWW's early days, with a combination of interviews and archival footage.

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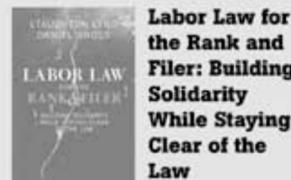
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Labor Law for the Rank and Filer: Building Solidarity While Staying Clear of the Law

By Staughton Lynd and Daniel Gross

Have you ever felt your blood boil at work but lacked the tools to fight back and win? Or have you acted together with your co-workers, made progress, but wondered what to do next? *Labor Law for the Rank and Filer* is a guerrilla legal handbook for workers in a precarious global economy. Blending cutting-edge legal strategies for winning justice at work with a theory of dramatic social change from below, Staughton Lynd and Daniel Gross deliver a practical guide for making work better while re-invigorating the labor movement. Illustrative stories of workers' struggles make the legal principles come alive.

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In November We Remember We Have Fed You All For A Thousand Years

By Nate Hawthorne

Fellow Worker Utah Phillips, gone but not forgotten, hopefully somewhere up in the sky enjoying a piece of pie, said once that we should remember our labor martyrs, like Frank Little, murdered by mine owners in Montana and Welsey Everest, lynched by anonymous cowards in Washington. Even more than that, he said, we must also remember all the people who died and got hurt on the job. We must remember our martyrs who died fighting for justice. As part of keeping alive our urgent demand for justice, we must also remember our fellow workers ground under the gears of the capitalist system while trying to earn a living.

I recently became a father, so babies, parenting, and family are on my mind a lot. Injuries take a toll on the individuals hurt. Since all of us are social beings, an injury to one is also a direct injury to many others as well, financially and emotionally. Workers compensation law in the U.S. deliberately sets the level of compensation below that of workers' wages. This means that in addition to the physical and emotional costs, institutions in our society are deliberately set up to make injuries a greater financial cost than they have to be.

There is an old IWW poem, later set to music, "We Have Fed You All For A Thousand Years." Its author is listed as "Unknown Proletarian." It accuses the capitalists, "You have taken our lives, and our babies and wives and we're told it's your legal share." The poem also states: "There is never a mine blown skyward now but we're buried alive for you. There's never a wreck drifts shoreward now but we are its ghastly crew." It urges the working class to "Go reckon our dead by the forges red and the factories where we spin."

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that there were 4,340 workers killed on the job in 2009. That's 4,340 people who had mothers; that's 4,340 people who used to be little kids, people with friends and loved ones. That's

not all. In 2008 between 50,000 to 60,000 U.S. workers died of occupational diseases. Also in 2008, approximately 4.6 million U.S. workers reported suffering nonfatal workplace injuries or occupational illnesses. These are just the reported cases—many go unreported—and these are just the ones in the U.S. The actual toll globally is much, much higher.

Fortunately, no one in my family has died on the job, at least as far as I know, with the exception of some relatives killed while serving in the military. Still, workplace injury has affected multiple generations in my family. In the 1950s, a great uncle of mine broke his back in an accident at a coal mine in West Virginia. This led my grandfather and many others in the family to move out of that state and to look for work in other industries.

In the late 1970s, my mom hurt her back lifting packages at United Postal Service (UPS). She collected workers compensation for a while before she went back to work. She wore a back brace pretty regularly for a few years after this injury. Shortly after she went back to work she became pregnant. When her manager found out, he fired her. My mom begged for her job but was told there was no place for her there while pregnant. She was convinced this was because the boss was angry at her for filing a workers' compensation claim.

In 1994, on a construction site my dad was working at, some workers were lowering a manhole cover. One of them slipped and dropped the manhole cover. The heavy cover landed on the fingertips of one man's hand. It tore all the skin and muscle off. One co-worker called an



Graphic: J. Pierce

ambulance while another tried to comfort him. The 911 dispatcher said someone should find and gather up the man's severed finger tips in case they could be sewn back on. My dad picked them up, trying not to throw up. The guy was in his late 20s and had previously been an avid guitar player.

In 1996, at a Siegel's factory a bunch of lumber fell on me, hitting me in the head and the hand. Luckily, I was wearing my hard hat so my head was okay. The lumber broke off a piece of the bone in one of my knuckles in my left hand. My mom insisted that I not file a workers' comp. claim or I would be fired, so I never filed. I was off work for six or eight weeks unpaid. Before the injury, I was a pretty good bass player. That job paid \$7.60 an hour.

A year or so ago, my 23-year-old brother was told to lift something too heavy at a welding job. He felt a strong pain in his crotch. He asked to go to the doctor. The manager argued with him back and forth for an hour. He finally insisted enough that they let him go. He had a hernia. The company doctor put him on light duty at work. He drove back to work. They told him they had no light duty and sent him home. After a week, feeling somewhat better but still hurt, he decided he needed to go back to work. He had just bought and moved into a trailer home and was worried about money. His boss said he couldn't work unless the doctor cleared him. My brother called the doctor and explained his situation, the doctor faxed a note to the plant manager's office. My brother called his boss, who said "we got that fax saying you're able to work but you don't

have a job here." He needed money so he found another job at a different factory. He works 60 hours a week at the new plant and says he doesn't have the time and energy to find a lawyer to pursue any legal action over his injuries. He made about \$9 an hour at that job.

About a week ago, my 20 year old brother got a shard of metal in his eye at a metal fabrication factory. At the emergency room, they dug into his eye to pull the shard out, gave him a prescription for Vicodin, and said that if he couldn't see out of it in a few days then he should go see a doctor. So far we don't know if his employer has workers compensation insurance or not. The boss is not cooperating. My brother is going to see about getting a lawyer. He made about \$9 an hour at that job.

I want to quote again from "We Have Fed You All." In the words of the Unknown Proletarian, "If blood be the price of your cursed wealth, Good God we have paid it in." In November, we remember.

We Have Fed You All for a Thousand Years By Unknown Proletarian, Industrial Union Bulletin, 1908

*We have fed you all for a thousand years
And you hail us still unfed
Though there's never a dollar of all your wealth
But marks the workers dead
We have yielded our best to give you rest
And you lie on crimson wool
But if blood be the price of all your wealth
Good God we have paid it full*

*There is never a mine blown skyward now
But we're buried alive for you
There's never a wreck drifts shoreward now
But we are its ghastly crew
Go reckon our dead by the forges red
And the factories where we spin
If blood be the price of your cursed wealth
Good God we have paid it in
We have fed you all for a thousand years
For that was our doom, you know
From the days when you chained us in your fields
To the strike a week ago
You have taken our lives, and our babies and wives
And we're told it's your legal share
But if blood be the price of your lawful wealth
Good God we bought it fair.*

An Injury To One Is An Injury To All

In remembrance of our 21 Fellow Workers, the men and women garment workers of Bangladesh, who so needlessly and tragically lost their lives in the fire at the Garib & Garib Sweater Factory. These Fellow Workers, producing garments for J.C. Penny and H & M, were killed due to the extreme maliciousness, negligence and cupidity of the factory bosses.



Boston General Membership Branch
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In November We Remember

In November, Wisconsin Wobs Remember Skip Porter
2/12/46-11/28/09

"Gone On To The Next Picket Line"

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

In November We Remember Lynch Mobs, Finnish Songs & Cross-Border Solidarity:

By Jon Bekken

Our annual survey of recent scholarship on the IWW focuses this year on lynch mobs (government-sponsored and otherwise), immigrants, and cross-border solidarity.

Rebecca Hill's "Men, Mobs, and Law: Anti-lynching and Labor Defense in U.S. Radical History" (Duke University Press, 2008) argues that the IWW pioneered the tradition of radical labor defense, campaigns which exposed the brutality of the capitalist state. Hill sees the process of redefining prisoners as class heroes as a key part of the project of questioning the values of the state. "Such campaigns can become challenges to

working-class activists to expand their understanding of working-class politics beyond the immediate issues of free labor in the same way that Frederick Douglass suggested that the lives of white workers and Black workers were linked" (23).

"The IWW intentionally organized masses for the defense of prisoners, masses intent not on revolution in the future but on the practical task of saving the individual worker in the here and now" (115).

However, in her view, the IWW attack on capitalist law and order "came close" to a romantic literature that saw vigilantism as "manly," even if the IWW "eventually" recognized that supposedly popular lynch mobs were often the work of thugs hired by the bosses (116).

Hill criticizes IWW press discussion of lynching and mob violence for tending to downplay the racism angle (which she sees as central) in favor of explanations based on class. The IWW insisted that cross-racial organizing offered the best strategy for victory, something she reads as a criticism of Black self-organization as traitorous to working-class solidarity (155). But this is really a misreading, drawing upon an article that argued that working class power is stronger, and helps to overcome the "false lines of color" that divide workers. Hill is on stronger ground with an unfortunate (though atypical) speech where Bill Haywood played to racist stereotypes when discussing the Colorado labor wars, "collaps[ing] the vigilante tradition with working-class direct action" (140). This is part of a larger critique of the rhetoric of legal lynching, which in Hill's view equated discrimination and repression against immigrants and radicals with the systemic violence of white supremacy. In the year that Joe Hill was murdered, she notes, at least 80 African-Americans were lynched (though the IWW press attempted to make common cause with the victims of this racist violence, publishing appeals for funds and articles about their struggles).

The IWW and other radicals supported the McNamara brothers (who apparently dynamited scab-built buildings for their American Federation of Labor [AFL] construction union) out of class solidarity. "We are all defendants in every case where a worker is to be tried and a capitalist is the plaintiff," said Haywood (139).

The IWW organized the Joe Hill defense campaign, over his objections, "on the basic principle of solidarity, saying that a movement that let its members die was no movement worth mentioning" (142). Rebecca Hill sees this campaign as a critical development in the history of labor defense campaign strategy. The IWW organized mass defense as form of class solidarity. IWW organizers in prison also organized fellow prisoners for better conditions, including a 1919

strike that united radicals and gangsters, while building a culture of solidarity that ended racist attacks on Black prisoners (145). This is an important book, which touches on a much broader range of defense campaigns from John Brown through George Jackson.

Pablo Yankelevich's "Explotadores, truhanes, agitadores y negros: Deportaciones y restricciones a estadounidenses en el México revolucionario" (*Historia Mexicana* 57, April 2008) examines the Mexican government's use of expulsions and other restrictions during the 1910s and 1920s, which targeted Wobblies and other radicals in Mexico City (many of whom were fleeing the draft and wartime repression). Similar measures were taken against African-Americans and foreign capitalists who ran afoul of the government in Tampico, where the IWW had a substantial organization and waged several strikes (not mentioned here; Normal Caulfield's "Mexican Workers and the State" remains the best English-language source for this).

Katherine Benton-Cohen's "Borderline Americans: Racial division and labor war in the Arizona borderlands" (Harvard University Press, 2009) is a history of Cochise County, Ariz. It opens with a vivid description of the Bisbee Deportation (including quotes from some of the deportees), includes two chapters on Bisbee focusing on the discrimination suffered by our Mexican fellow workers (continuing decades after the deportations), and has several other scattered references to IWW activity. The book is well-written and lively, focusing on the intersection of "race" and class along the border, bringing it up to present-day vigilante attacks against our immigrant fellow workers.

Aaron Goings writes on Finnish-speaking Wobblies in the Pacific Northwest in "Hall Syndicalism: Radical Finns and Wobbly Culture in Grays Harbor, Washington" (*Journal of Finnish Studies*, Summer 2010, 18-28). While the Finnish Wobblies of the Mesabi Range have received some attention from historians, Goings explores Finnish IWW activity in the area around Aberdeen, which remained a hotbed of IWW activity through the late 1930s. Finnish Wobblies were particularly active in the lumber mills and timber fields, and were on the front lines of the IWW timber strikes of 1912, 1917 and 1923. When a foreman threatened to replace strikers with "Finlanders," a Wobbly responded that "Finnish workers who don't pack red cards are as scarce as hens' teeth." By 1917, syndicalism was the dominant ideology among Finnish workers on the Harbor, and IWW publications and rallies were often bilingual. Hundreds of longshoremen and domestic workers belonged to the IWW through the 1930s, alongside thousands of timber workers.

Finnish Wobblies had their own brass band, which performed at demonstrations, picnics and funerals. Singers, orators and theatrical performances were common features of IWW events. Goings' focus is on the role of IWW halls—and in particular the Finnish Wobbly halls—in sustaining a culture of resistance. IWW halls served as cultural and social centers, with large auditoriums for performances and dinners, radical libraries, and space to conduct union business. Local authorities understood the importance of the halls, repeatedly demolishing them. In 1923-24, Wobblies held at least four events per week in Aberdeen, in addition to other events in outlying areas. After years of work-

ing from other organizations' halls, in November 1924, Grays Harbor Wobblies opened their own \$25,000 structure complete with auditorium, theater, offices and apartments, demonstrating that the region's Finnish-speaking Wobblies were looking ahead. As Wobbly Anti Maki put it in a poem written for the occasion: "The power of tyrants will be stricken down...When the cold chains of the slave are broken, And our victory journey has begun."

James P Leary's "Yksi Suuri Union: Field Recordings of Finnish American IWW Songs" (*Journal of Finnish Studies*, Summer 2010, 6-17) reclaims the forgotten history of Finnish-language IWW songs, including three songbooks issued between 1918 and 1925. Folklorist Alan Lomax recorded IWW songs in the 1930s, and 78 rpm recordings of several Finnish-language IWW songs (some based on the English-language songs, others original) were issued in the 1910s and beyond. The essay documents the surviving materials and includes excerpts (in Finnish and in English translation) of some of these songs. As Leary notes, this is an important corrective to the "Big Red Songbook" issued a few years ago, which included only English-language songs.

The January 2010 issue of *Academe*, the magazine of the American Association of University Professors, has an article by FW Joel Feinberg, "Singing All the Way to the Union," which looks back to the tradition of IWW songs as a means of public organizing and agitation, and suggests that contemporary labor organizers (in particular graduate employees) should "revive the proletarian publicness that was at the center of the old free speech fights." Universities

are among the few remaining spaces where people congregate in public, and where ideas and work are so clearly intertwined. (FW Feinberg was also one of the editors of the newest edition of the IWW's "Little Red Songbook").

In "The Point of Pittsburgh" (Battle of Homestead Foundation, 2008), veteran activist and labor historian Charles McColleston has produced a monumental social history of a city that has been home to some of labor's most epic battles. McColleston starts at the beginning, with the geography of the region and the indigenous inhabitants who were ultimately displaced by European colonialists. This is a history built around the stories of those who worked and lived there. Some of those workers were Wobblies, and so "The Point of Pittsburgh" offers vivid portraits of the McKees Rocks strike of 1909 which could not be sustained once the more skilled "American" workers abandoned the immigrant workers who formed the core of the IWW's support. A few years later, the city's immigrant cigar makers turned to the IWW in the 1913 Stogie Strike, while Wobblies were also active in a free speech fight outside the Westinghouse Electric factory, where organizers fought for the right to speak about conditions—ultimately leading to a strike by thousands of members of the new Allegheny Congenial Industrial Union. The bosses proclaimed the affair "an IWW effort, thinly disguised" and refused to negotiate; ultimately workers returned to improved conditions, but many were blacklisted.

The "The Point of Pittsburgh" addresses strikes and organizing, but also the conditions of daily life and work. McColleston takes his story through

In November We Remember Our Annual Survey Of Historical Writing On The IWW

1960, when "Pittsburgh rested with pride on a unique history of production and struggle that helped shape the course of the nation and the world" (416). In the years that followed, of course, the steel industry pulled out of Pittsburgh in search of more pliant workers, and the region has never recovered. I know that McColleston has things to say about this process, and about the rank-and-file resistance that was ultimately unable to overcome the enormous odds, but my only criticism of this important book is that it stops too soon.

John Enyeart's "The Quest for 'Just and Pure Law': Rocky Mountain Workers and American Social Democracy" (Stanford University Press, 2009) titles its chapter on the IWW "Sabotage, 'Jack-ass Tactics' Indeed." Enyeart contrasts socialists to syndicalists, who Enyeart contends believed socialism "could emerge only after the violent destruction of the wage system" (171). Most workers preferred political action, Enyeart claims, and were put off by the IWW policy of "violence, even if only used rhetorically" (178). The AFL policy of closed shop contracts and labels yielded practical results, unlike the IWW's revolutionary policy. He claims the IWW rebuffed solidarity from the Socialist Party (SP), but provides no evidence. The author's orientation is perhaps best exposed by his observation that the Utah AFL backed SP candidates in many elections but supported the execution of Joe Hill—revealing the gulf between "progressive unionists" and the IWW.

The Western Federation of Miners' (WFM) withdrawal from the IWW is addressed in Eric Clements' "Pragmatic Revolutionaries? Tactics, Ideologies and the Western Federation of Miners in the Progressive Era" (*Western Historical Quarterly* 40(4), Winter 2009). While most historians claim that the WFM was captured by moderates in the wake of Big Bill Haywood's frame-up trial, Clements examines the transcript of the Federation's 1907 Convention and finds that on nearly every issue aside from the question of IWW affiliation, delegates to the 1907 Convention repudiated the moderates. They repudiated all existing time contracts by an overwhelming majority and replaced their moderate Preamble with one proclaiming that workers' emancipation could be attained only through industrial unionism "and the concerted political action of all wage workers." The committee on the IWW recommended side-stepping the split

between the tiny group led by ousted IWW President Charles Sherman and the majority, "and simply recognize the Industrial Workers of the World as a whole" while working to re-establish unity. The minority report called for recognizing Wm. Trautmann and the other officers elected by the IWW's 1906 Convention. Both reports were rejected, and the resolution that was ultimately adopted called on the WFM to propose a unity convention to re-launch the IWW. Based upon his examination of delegates' voting records, Clements concludes that "the Federation did not abandon the IWW because it had moderated; it eventually moderated partly because it had abandoned the IWW." Even in 1908, when the WFM officially severed its connection to the IWW, it adopted a resolution "reaffirm[ing] our allegiance to the principles of industrial unionism"—and WFM officials continued to attack craft unionism even after rejoining the American Federation of Labor.

In the aftermath of the WFM's defection, the IWW mounted major organizing campaigns on the WFM's home turf, and the WFM was reduced to a shell of its former self by the end of World War I. Clements sees this as a conflict between pragmatic unionism and revolutionary aspirations, in which WFM leaders could no longer stomach frontal assaults against the power of industry and the state. For him, this reflects a wider dilemma—the Federation, and by extension the IWW, could be a revolutionary organization or a union, but not both.

Kate Rousmaniere's "The Short, Radical Life of Pearl McGill" (*Labor* 6(3), Fall 2009, 9-19) re-covers a forgotten IWW organizer, even if the book does commit the unforgivable mistake of claiming the "I" in IWW stands for "International." Pearl McGill was killed in 1924 by her ex-husband, and contemporary newspapers reported she had been Big Bill Haywood's stenographer. She wasn't; rather, McGill was a 17-year-old Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) activist who participated in the Lawrence strike, was booted from the WTUL as a result, worked to organize garment workers into the IWW in the wake of that victory, and spoke before audiences across New England. But IWW activity in the garment industry was undermined by the Paterson defeat, and McGill returned to Iowa where she lived out her final decade in obscurity.

The Spring 2010 issue of *International Labor and Working Class His-*

tory (77:1) has a symposium on Frank Tannenbaum, who was jailed in 1914 for organizing a series of church occupations by jobless men. Three articles offer an overview of his career, and examine his writings on the labor movement (Tannenbaum became a leading labor liberal after leaving the IWW, as well as his writings on Mexico. One author (or maybe an editor) gets our name wrong, and the IWW figures only as a voice for social recognition for immigrant and (supposedly) unskilled workers. Even "pure and simple" trade unionism was intrinsically radical in the U.S. context, Michael Merrill concludes. Tannenbaum deserves to be better known. This symposium performs a useful service in reminding us of that fact, even if it adds little to our understanding of his work and ideas.

Eric Chester revisits IWW membership figures in "The Rise and Fall of the IWW As Viewed Through Its Membership Figures" (*Anarcho-Syndicalist Review* 55, Fall 2010), suggesting that the IWW was growing much more rapidly than many historians have recognized when the federal government unleashed its campaign of repression during World War I, and that the resurgence of the early 1920s is exaggerated in our official history. He provides a useful summary of the available data on IWW membership, acknowledging its limitations, and I think makes a strong case for his argument that the IWW in 1917 was significantly stronger than is commonly recognized. I am less convinced by his argument about the 1920s. It is clear from reading IWW newspapers and looking at the many organizing campaigns and strikes that were underway that the union was experiencing a very real resurgence in 1923 despite continued criminal syndicalism repression, during a period when the AFL was in retreat. Wobblies of the time had good reason to be optimistic, and to see the Emergency Program split as a catastrophe that hit the union at the worst possible moment. The same issue of *ASR* includes a section on workers' culture that discusses our songbook, "Solidarity Forever," and "The Internationale."

Jeffrey Johnson's "They Are All Red Out Here": Socialist Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1895-1925" (University of Oklahoma Press, 2008) focuses on electoralism, and doesn't have much new information. While the Socialists quickly withdrew from the IWW, many supported the IWW's free speech battles. The criminal syndicalism and wartime persecutions affected both organizations,

and many socialists moved closer to the union in the struggle against the repression.

Kenyon Zimmer's "Premature Anti-Communists? American Anarchism, the Russian Revolution, and Left-Wing Libertarian Anti-Communism, 1917-1939" (*Labor* 6(2), Summer 2009, 45-71) does not focus on the IWW but does note the role of Russian workers in the IWW. In 1917, the IWW dispatched type from its defunct Russian-language paper to Vladivostok, Russia, to start an IWW paper there. But Wobblies and other radicals quickly became critical as Bolshevik power became entrenched and by 1922, the IWW was firmly in the anti-Bolshevik camp. The Communist Party (CP) tried to pull the IWW into its orbit throughout the early 1920s. IWW editor Vern Smith was a secret Communist during the

1924 split, using his control of *Industrial Solidarity* to try to steer the IWW toward the CP and exacerbating the Emergency Program split. (As Zimmer notes, the CP was tiny, with only 99 members voting in its 1929 referendum. But the split decimated the real IWW, demoralizing many members and undercutting promising organizing campaigns).

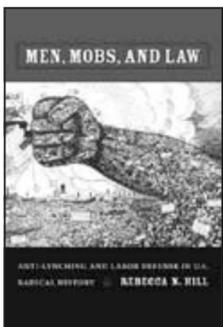
AK Press has also brought out a new edition of Nunzio Pernicone's "Carlo Tresca: Portrait of a Rebel," originally published by Macmillan in 2005. While Tresca was only relatively briefly affiliated with the IWW, he was a labor agitator and editor of anarchist and labor newspapers including *Il Proletario* and *Il Martello*. Lively, well documented, and written by the foremost scholar of Italian-American radicalism, it is hard to conceive of there ever being a better book on the subject.

Fred Thompson began this review of scholarship on the IWW in the 1970s; I revived it several years ago in recognition of the fact that our union's history (and occasionally our contemporary efforts) continues to attract considerable attention. Some of this work can inform our current organizing; other "scholarship" needs to be exposed to warn the unwary.

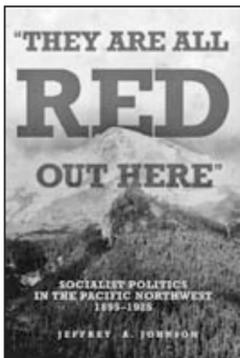
This will be my last column in this series, at least for a while. I have decided to refocus my efforts in the IWW toward re-establishing a culture of accountability and respect for basic democratic rights without which the IWW cannot be true to its legacy, nor hope to realize its goals as an instrument for the emancipation of our class and the establishment of a truly democratic society.



Graphic: us.macmillan.com



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— J. Russell , Victoria BC

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IN NOVEMBER WE REMEMBER

SOLIDARITY

Fred Hanson, a maritime worker, criss-crossed the U.S. in the '80s urging old-time Wobblies to pay dues and support the next generation of organizers.

NYC-GMB
WWW.WOBBLYCITY.ORG

When El Coyote howls
and Colorado prairie dogs bark,
we remember our good friend,
Wobbly poet and artist
Carlos Cortez.

Gary and Carol Cox
Denver, Colorado

Wobbly Arts

Wobbly Folk Singer Faith Petric Turns 95

By Harry Siitonen

Sept. 11 is a historic day in more ways than one. In a much more positive sense than the notorious 9-11-2001, a large throng of more than 400 musicians and admirers came to celebrate the 95th birthday of beloved IWW folk singer Faith Petric at the Freight and Salvage night club in Berkeley, Calif. this past Sept. 11. Musicians jammed and people applauded and cheered our grand woman of folk and rebel song. She herself sang and plucked her guitar for six numbers that night, besides blowing out the candles of her surprise birthday cake.

Faith's actual birthday was two days later as she was born on Sept. 13, 1915 in a log cabin in Orofino, Idaho.

On Sept. 25, Fellow Worker Petric jammed with two other old-time folkies George Mann and Eleanor Walden at the Berkeley Unitarian Fellowship Hall—an event I was able to attend. I had a conversation with her at intermission and Faith herself wondered how she had made it this far in life. It was undeniably because of her lifelong fighting spirit in singing and acting for social justice.

On Sept. 28, a feature article by Meredith May appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in the newspaper's print and online *SFGate* editions, beautifully sketching Faith's particulars and significance in the world of folk and protest music.

I was unable to interview Faith for this article because as soon as the show was over, she was on her way to Ireland to see her daughter, and, I assume, to appear in concert. But there is plenty of material available about her life.

Her Father: A Singing Preacher

Faith Petric was the youngest of four children born to an itinerant Methodist preacher and his wife. They lived a hard-scrabbled existence as her father was alternately a school teacher, a carpenter, a farmer and an inventor, besides his ministerial duties. Faith learned to sing early at age 3, immersed in hymns that her dad would play on his pipe organ. Her parents divorced when Faith was 13 and she ended up in boarding school. She graduated from Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash., working at 9-to-5

jobs. In the 1920s, she fell in love with cowboy songs, which she sang with relish. The Spanish Civil War turned her on to political protest songs and into songs of the working class.

Finally, after putting her daughter through college, she quit her State of California job and began a full-time singing career at age 55 in 1970. She joined a bus tour of folk music friends to travel the country as the Portable Folk Festival. Her life became a whirlwind of gigs in all kinds of venues, singing on workers' picket lines, marching for civil rights in Selma, and at anti-war demos. She sang a lot about the struggles of women and children striving for a place under the sun.

Faith helped found the Freedom Song Network in the San Francisco Bay Area which could be seen and heard at all kinds of movement demonstrations and struggles. She still writes a column for *Sing Out!* magazine.

One of her most enduring accomplishments is the San Francisco Folk Music Club, which has been meeting and jamming for decades at her home in the hills above the Haight-Ashbury every other Friday night. People from near and far make it their Mecca with the warm, smiling and generous hostess. The first time I met Faith was some time in the mid-1970s, when one Friday night a music-loving date and I converged on the scene for the evening. I remember some of the guests making themselves at home in her living room were from the European music scene. I had been in the IWW since 1969, but had not heard of her until that night and didn't realize until much later that she was a Fellow Worker. I'm not sure when she lined up with the Wobs, but it was probably in the early 1970s.

Knows 'Em All

There isn't anybody in the labor and folk music arena that she doesn't know, whether it's Pete Seeger or the late Utah Phillips, another of our own. She has sung in concert and has recorded with Utah, who was always a great admirer of Faith's. Once he said: "Faith doesn't make up songs, she harvests them... these outrageous and wonderful songs, culled from a bevy of extraordinary

In November, I'm proud to honor:



Our own Wobbly folk and labor singer
FAITH PETRIC
of San Francisco
In recognition of
her 95th birthday
on Sept. 13, 2010

Fellow Worker Petric is
still going strong!

— Harry Siitonen, SFBAGMB

minds, represent those wild, satirical, quirky, offbeat and endearing traits that characterize the lady herself."

You see, Faith doesn't write many songs, but she sings gems others have written from all genres of the folk experience. She's been called the "Fort Knox of Folk Music" because she'd memorized the lyrics of thousands of them. When she lovingly renders them on stage or in recording she makes them her own and her fans love them and Faith herself for the genuine honesty in her deliverance. Now, in her 90s, her memory has slipped a little so she does look over the song sheets a bit before she sings her pieces. I'm sure most of the speeches we've heard in our time in the working-class movement are mostly forgettable. But songs are different in the hands of a dedicated vocalist like Faith: "If you learn a song, it stays with you. You don't remember a pamphlet" she observes.

One Enchanted Evening

One of my most memorable evenings in our union was during the 1991 IWW Convention held in San Francisco. A musician himself, Jess Grant—who was then our General Secretary-Treasurer—organized a public concert of Wobbly singers on the Saturday night of Labor

Day weekend at a community church off of 24th Street in Noe Valley. All the folk singers stood on the stage with their instruments—our own luminaries like Utah Phillips, Faith Petric, Daryl Cheney, the late Judi Bari, Jess Grant, and another Fellow Worker who was a Bay fisherman hailing from Cornwall, U.K., who unfortunately drowned in an accident in the Bay a few years later. There may have been others, but that's who I remember.

The house was packed and the crowd went through the roof when our charged-up artists jammed and laughed and cavorted. They loved doing it and we loved being there, rooting them on. That was Wobbly and working-class culture at its finest!

I'm glad that Faith is still with us, and is as committed as she was on day one. She'll be singing and agitating 'til she drops. And she's no has-been, as she told Meredith May of the *Chronicle*: "Just because you're old doesn't mean your creativity goes away."

So if you ever get a chance to hear Faith Petric, by all means go, or pick up one of her CDs. 'Cuz you ain't heard nothin' if you ain't heard Faith singin': "Ain't done nothing" if you ain't been called a Red."

Red November, Black November

By Ralph Chaplin

Red November, black November, bleak November, black & red; Hallowed month of labor's martyrs, labor's heroes, labor's dead. Labor's hope and wrath and sorrow, red the promise, black the threat. Who are we to not remember? Who are we to dare forget?

Red & black the colors blended, black & red the promise made, Red until the fight is ended, black until the debt is paid. August Spies and Albert Parsons, with Joe Hill and all the rest. Who are we to not remember? Who are we to dare forget?

This November, Your General Defense Committee REMEMBERS...

The Sedition Act Palmer Raids of 1917 and the mass deportation of immigrant IWW members and arrest of thousands of our members under criminal syndicalism laws in the 1920s.

TODAY, U.S. Attorney General Holder is using the pretense of the war on terrorism and homeland security to violate the civil liberties of anti war and environmental activists. Members of our union in Minneapolis, Chicago and Pittsburgh, maybe other places, are within the scope of these investigations. DOCUMENT EVERYTHING, send personal experiences and news clippings to Kenneth Miller, 708 N Taylor Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15212. STAND UP with people who are being targeted in your community.

2010 General Defense Committee – Steering Committee
IWW General Executive Board Chair, Koala Largess
Central Secretary Treasurer, Tom Kappas
Marie Mason, Ant Ice, Kenneth Miller

Join the General Defense Committee TODAY! For a one year membership, send \$25 to P. O. Box 317741, Cincinnati, OH 45231. Members! Don't forget to VOTE for the 2011 Central Secretary Treasurer and Steering Committee! Get your ballots in!



Wobbly Arts

Interview With IWW Musician Jack Herranen

By Vermont IWW

Wobz: Tell us about your great-grandfather Jack Nisula, his involvement with the Wobbly T-Bone Slim, and their influence on your art?

Jack Herranen: Jacob "Jack" Nisula was my great-grandfather on my father's side. He came through Ellis Island and was radicalized in the great labor struggles of the late 1800s/early 1900s. He had first been in Montana working in a silver mine, which was close to indentured servitude. He eventually made his way back to northern Ohio, somehow; Ashtabula to be exact. This is where Matt Valentine Huhta, aka T-Bone Slim, was also based out of. Jack delivered produce on the waterfront and agitated and engaged with the radial intellectuals who went on to found the Work People's College in Minnesota. I'm certain that my great-grandfather and T-Bone were running buddies. I carry Jack Nisula's pocket watch with me because it helps to keep my blood level and memory stirred up. I really appreciate T-Bone's skill as a wordsmith, and I am deeply inspired by the radical intellectual traditions that were not separated from or pitted against workers' struggles. It was only after I found out about my ancestral roots (ones that were tangled up in the same fertile soil that some of the revolutionary artist Wobs came out of) that I knew, on a blood level, what it meant when the "Little Red Song Book" was literally dropped in my lap one evening while sitting at a friend's kitchen table in Asheville, N.C. I've been following bread crumb trails of art and culture, resistance and regeneration, memory and history.

Wobz: Can you speak about your partner Valentina Campos, her paintings, and Bolivia?

JH: My partner Valentina Campos is one of my greatest inspirations. She is a Bolivian artist, radical campesina and deep social thinker. She is also a mother, as we have two little boys named Camay and Samiri, with deep, unshakeable principles. Her paintings are all rooted in women, spirituality, and agricultural biodiversity. She also has old gypsy roots that run back to Romania and Andalusia in southern Spain. Actually, one of my other great inspirations is her anarchist grandfather Roberto Campos. Valentina is also a survivor of *La Guerra Sucia*; the Dirty Wars that violently racked all of Latin America and lasted well on towards the end of the 1980s. Her parents were revolutionaries aligned with

Che Guevara's political trajectory, thus she knew, intimately, the life of border crossings, exile, political state-sponsored violence, etc... Her ability to carry beauty upon her shoulders while wading through such chaos and uncertainty is the core part of how and why she inspires me. One of my favorite poets, Kenneth Patchen, wrote: "Gentle and giving—the rest is nonsense and treason." My life with Valentina and our boys has made that phrase resonate even more with me.

Bolivia is harder and harder for me to talk about. This is where the agrarian anarchist in me really comes out. I don't hold much faith in the nation-state of Bolivia. Don't get me wrong, I have very close ties with some of the grassroots workers and radicals connected with *los Fabriles de Cochabamba* (Cochabamba Factory Workers Federation), and there are urban struggles that I support. Even in that setting though, workers and organizers are informed and guided by the spirits, the cosmovision, of the Andes, more so than by any type of patriotic allegiance to the State. In any workers' assembly or conference or what have you, there is always a genuine acknowledgement of the spirit of the place, and *La Pachamama* (Mother Earth). Most everyone has agrarian roots and a sense of commitment to their community.

That is what continually inspires me and renews my radical hope in a different type of revolutionary movement in the Andes. The government of Evo Morales is actually taking things back a few steps in regards to this deeper place-based revolutionary trajectory, or what in Aymara and Quechua is referred to as *Pachakuti*: a radical resetting of the scales of history and power. There of course was an immense amount of radical hope in his first few years as president but that is no longer the case. It is all very complicated and I'll be the first to say that incredibly important shifts have taken place in Bolivia over the last dozen years. Evo has been, in a certain sense, a catalyst for some of these shifts. But overall, his administration co-opted, divided and polarized the social movements in Bolivia. Most anyone, be it an urban worker, indigenous *campesino* leader, radical student or artist, will tell you that nowadays. I love the region though and have strong commitments and deep roots there now. Where we live in particular, outside the city of Cochabamba, in the foothills of a side branch of the Andes called La Cordillera Cochabamba, I feel a lot of connection and kinship that stirs up the southern Appalachian in me. When back stateside I often lovingly refer to our *campesino*



Jack Herranen performing in Knoxville, T.N. in October.

Photo: Bill Foster

neighbors as Andean hillbillies—big hearted folks who have taken it hard on the chin historically and keep fighting, loving, farming, drinking and making music. That is where I've come to fully accept and embrace the farmer, the *campesino*, within me.

Wobz: How did you write (a little context please), and what were you reaching for in writing "*Desde Appalachia Hasta Potosi*" (From Appalachia To Potosi)?

JH: Potosi, as you may or may not entirely know, is the site of what once were the largest silver mines in this hemisphere; thus, the site of literally overwhelming atrocities—mass-scale deaths from forced labor. Millions died in the mines of Potosi. It is a truly haunted city. There is also still a feeling of pride and dignity there as well. The department of Potosi as a whole is a highly indigenous part of Bolivia, and historically the miners of Potosi have been the backbone of uprisings against the State. They are especially seen as being the authors and agents of the Bolivian Revolution of 1952. To this day when the miners are on board in a protest, it changes the whole dynamic.

I first travelled to the city of Potosi as a guest of one of Bolivia's most well-known and loved folksingers, Gerardo Arias Paz, a Potosino himself, of the group Savia Andina. I stayed in his family home right in the city. His younger brother walked me around the city on sort of a cultural/political people's history route. He showed me the small adobe *casita* where Eduardo Galeano had written a segment of his pivotal book "*The Open Veins of Latin America*." At that point my mind sort of took flight back to Appalachia and the history of struggle and injustices back here. I wrote the chorus first, in Spanish: "*Todo de la historia/ es un avena abierta/ abajo de la tierra/gritando por la justicia...junto rescatamos memoria y nuestro legado de rebeldia/ desde Appalachia hasta Potosi*" ("All of history is an open vein, in the ground, cryin' out for justice/ Together we rescue memory and our legacy of rebellion, from Appalachia to Potosi"). The verses cover such serious and historically painful terrain that I proceeded with the utmost caution, and took several years to write the song. Some experiences had to be lived before I could finish it, some handholds on "people's history" in *Las Americas* had to be found. I've marched on a few occasions with the social movements in Bolivia and in a few moments found myself rubbing elbows with the block of miners, chewed the sacred coca leaves with them, met their stares with a humble gaze of respect and dignity. This was one of the experiences that started breaking down the identity of the *gringo* (white man) within me. One can only be truly, genuinely present in such a situation as a brother, a comrade. On the topic of race, I now find that I think, carry myself and

Wobz: Finally, fill us in on what's happening with the Ninth Ward Conspiracy, and the Don West effort you mentioned? Who is Don West?

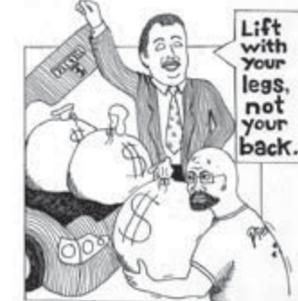
JH: The Ninth Ward Conspiracy continues to ebb and flow. We carry ourselves as a collective and have a commitment to come together at least once a year to record and play a few gigs. Among the original members there are now close to a dozen kids, two members who are university professors and two members who make up the very hard working band, Truckstop Honeymoon. We have three recordings under our belt, all of which we're working on making more available to the public. We are still aiming to record a second volume of Wobbly songs, this time revolving more around the works of T-Bone Slim, as the first focused more on Joe Hill.

The Don West project is incubating and is generating a lot of excitement as the time nears to get to work in the recording studio. Briefly, Don West was a fiery radical European-American hillbilly from the north Georgia mountains, who wrote very lyrical working-class poetry from the 1930s into the 1980s. He was also a militant labor organizer, co-founder of The Highlander Center, a teacher, preacher, farmer, and fierce anti-racist; transcending that idea really and becoming a "race traitor." He was burned out of Georgia by the Klan and hounded for decades by the United States for his "un-American activities." In many ways he was sort of a kindred soul brother to Langston Hughes. With a different circle of musicians in the south (primarily from around eastern Tennessee/southern Appalachia) we'll record about 14 of his poems that I've put to music. Woven into this project is sort of an ongoing process of studying "people's history" in the region, mutual political education, and in general carving out a space for reflecting upon and confronting the frightening new manifestations of racism and classism. It is the most important project that I've ever worked on. It is guiding me now. I'm curious to see where it will lead in the coming months.

In November, We Remember...

The many IWWs and other working class people who died from lack of access to health care—their health conditions often caused by unsafe working conditions.

Organize to get the goods!



Graphic: J. Pierce

Pittsburgh General Membership Branch of the IWW, Chartered May Day 2002

In November We Remember

BLOODY SUNDAY

Winnipeg General Strike, June 21 1919

MIKE SOLOKOWSKI

STEVE SCHEZERBANOWICZ

KILLED FOR STANDING UNITED FOR WORKERS RIGHTS

Winnipeg IWW General Membership Branch
www.winnipegwobbly.blogspot.com

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.

By Matt Antosh

In November We Remember: 101 Trade Unionists Killed

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) Annual Survey of Trade Union Rights has documented a dramatic increase in the number of trade unionists murdered in 2009, with 101 killings—an increase of 30 percent from the previous year.

Of 101 murdered, 48 were killed in Colombia, 16 in Guatemala, 12 in Honduras, six in Mexico, six in Bangladesh, four in Brazil, three in the Dominican Republic, three in the Philippines, one in India, one in Iraq and one in Nigeria. Twenty-two of the Colombian trade unionists who were killed were senior trade union leaders and five were women, as the onslaught of previous years continued. The rise in violence in Guatemala and Honduras also followed a trend developing in recent years.

The full survey can be found here: <http://survey.ituc-csi.org/+Whole-World-.html?lang=en>

ISC Statement in Support of Palestine Resolution

The International Solidarity Commission strongly urges that you vote YES on the resolution for the IWW to join the international movement of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) on Israel, and Israel's state-sponsored "union" Histadrut. This resolution directly supports our Palestinian fellow workers, with whom the ISC has been building relationships for over three years. When last year's IWW delegation to the West Bank and Israel asked workers there how we could best show our solidarity, the unanimous answer from every union and worker organization we met was for the IWW to sign onto the BDS call. Every worker who pays taxes in the U.S., Canada, Britain, Germany, and elsewhere supports this occupation via their government's military "aid" to Israel. Voting "YES" is a direct way to demonstrate solidarity with Palestinian workers and a manifest example of the core Wobbly principle "An Injury to One is an Injury to All."

For a detailed account of the delegation, and to see photos visit <http://iwwinpalestine.blogspot.com>. For information about Histadrut and their racist history and policies visit <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article10379.shtml>.

Topy Top mass sacking sparks Zara protests call

The publication *Periodico Humanidad* has published a callout through the International Workers Association for actions to be taken at the outlets of transnational fashion chain Zara, one of Topy Top's biggest clients, on Oct. 9.

Peruvian textile workers say they are routinely bullied and "brutally ha-

ressed" by their employers and that legal systems favoring the bosses have led to their working day reaching more than 12 hours in some cases. Powerful groups in the sector, such as the Flores family who own Topy Top, have been accused of systematically undermining workers' rights.

Solidarity with Chilean Construction Workers - A call for a delegation to Chile

In October and November, and with the great help of *Industrial Worker* Editor Diane Krauthamer, the IWW has been in correspondence with a union for construction workers in Chile, the Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Construcción (SINTEC).

SINTEC first organized in 2007, and is working on organizing the most difficult industry of all in Chile to get organized, where collective bargaining is not allowed, the norms and rules of health and safety are never respected and pensions are nonexistent. All this while trying to develop a class struggle-based, autonomous and libertarian form of unionism.

"The state of the workers' movement in Chile is quite weak," writes Jorge Hernández, SINTEC president. "After many years of a politics which served the interests of the bosses—first, with a dictatorship, now under democracy—a lot of the historical gains of the workers' struggles have been erased. Unionization is low and wherever it does exist, it is mostly for partnership and not struggle."

SINTEC is asking for donations of solidarity to help them fund their continuing organizing campaigns. The ISC hopes to have an online donation button up on the IWW website within the month; until then, Fellow Workers wanting to donate should email solidarity@iww.org.

As well, SINTEC has invited the IWW to attend a national conference in January 2011. Any Fellow Workers who have the ability to travel and want to be a part of a delegation to Chile should write to us at the aforementioned address as soon as possible.

ISC Liaisons to the World

Of course, we are always looking for a little extra help on the ISC. So, we ask branches and interested individuals to volunteer to be ISC liaisons in order to develop branch-level and worker-to-worker international solidarity.

Every month, ISC liaisons will get an update and an action to bring to the branch level. We would like to invite every branch to select an ISC liaison to help spread the word about the solidarity activities in other parts of the world and to help develop our campaigns. We ask all Fellow Workers to please continue sharing your international contacts and expertise. The ISC can be reached at solidarity@iww.org.

A Report From The General Strike In Spain

From barcelona.cnt.es

The day of action during the general strike of Sept. 29 showed the working class's complete rejection of the government's labor reform and the consequent cutting of their rights.

During the morning, members of the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo - Asociación Internacional de los Trabajadores (CNT-AIT) formed various information pickets outside some workplaces with which it has open conflicts, with the purpose of enforcing the right to strike; and to inform workers of the scope of the labor reform and the purpose of the general strike.

In the afternoon, CNT-AIT called a demonstration at Plaça Universitat, which was attended by various trade unions and a lot of working people, with student parades. About 3,000 people marched through the streets of Barcelona with the aim of addressing the government in Pla del Palau, where a rally was planned. The rally went through Plaça Catalunya to protest against the brutal eviction policies at the headquarters of Banesto, a bank that had done some evictions just hours earlier.

Despite the threatening deployment

of police on the streets of the city, the demonstration passed peacefully, shouting slogans against the labor reform, the government, and the complicit attitude of major trade unions. While the demonstration proceeded down Via Laietana without incident, a national police van, with no lights or sirens, burst into the event at full speed, at the risk of running over several demonstrators. Given this apparent action of provocation by the state security forces, CNT-AIT decided to immediately call off the rally to ensure the safety of the participants.

CNT-AIT expresses deep outrage at this blatantly repressive maneuver, which in any case does not tarnish the great display of support for the general strike day.

We strongly condemn the police action, which clearly seeks to stop through force and intimidation the massive mobilization of workers who do not identify with the main trade unions, and sees CNT-AIT as a coherent alternative to counter the employer-government offensive, which seeks to cancel the rights achieved through years of struggle.



Photo: Alicia García

Battle Lines Drawn In U.K. Class War!

By Jon Timbrell

Around 9,000 trade unionists and community activists descended on the Conservative Party Conference in Birmingham, U.K. on Sunday, Oct. 3. The Conservatives form the larger part of the right-wing political coalition that has recently assumed power in the U.K. Since the coalition's term began, their focus has been on a series of crippling job and service cuts that are set to rip the heart out of many of the most deprived areas in the U.K. With policies ranging from the cancellation of child benefits and pensions, privatization of the National Health Service (NHS) and postal service, and the wholesale sell off of the education system, the current government is set to follow in the footsteps of their ideological predecessor, Margaret Thatcher, whose policies of cuts to public services and the dismantling and privatization of many key industries resulted in job losses and poverty on a massive scale.

Marchers were angered by the decision of the police to re-route the march away from the conference centre, despite having previously agreed to allow the march to flow past the Conservative meeting. In spite of this, the march was a noisy and high-spirited protest, which was kept lively with some rousing speeches from trade union and community activists and constant chanting. Amongst groups visibly represented on the day was a 50-strong Wobbly contingent, mainly consisting of Fellow Workers from the West Midlands General Membership Branch (whose banner provided a rallying point for the group), but bolstered by contingents from Bristol, Reading and elsewhere. Leaflets handed out, which made the argument for direct action, solidarity and industrial unionism, were well-received by other marchers.

Also present were large contingents from the Postal Union of the Communication Workers Union and the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT), representing rail workers and dozens of other public and private sector unions who brought the march to life with hundreds of branch banners. The march was joined by a 200-strong anarchist contingent, who



British Isles Wobblies march on Oct. 3. Photo: Jon Timbrell

found themselves the victims of excessive and unwarranted police brutality towards the end of the march—possibly an attempt by the police to justify the hundreds of thousands spent on the security operation. The anarchists were given a great show of solidarity from other activists, who refused to continue marching until the police agreed to release the anarchist bloc. Despite not getting close to the conference centre, the march was a visible start to what promises to be a massive campaign of protests, strikes and civil disobedience to beat back the Conservative cuts.

In the lead-up to the march, the U.K. and the rest of Europe have experienced a rising tide of working-class action against job and service cuts and austerity measures. French workers held three general strikes in September, each growing in size, with 3 million workers protesting in Paris during the last week of the month. There have been further general strikes in Greece, Spain and Portugal, with thousands marching in Germany and Brussels. In Britain, local protests and meetings involving thousands of people have been appearing all over the country as working-class people gear up to defend the jobs and services that they rely on. It is well known that we only call it class war when we fight back, and there is now no mistaking the fact that we have no option but to fight back. The pro-rich Conservative-led coalition have unleashed a vicious assault on the living and working conditions of ordinary people. They are expecting working-class people to pick up the bill for the years of excess, greed and financial mismanagement, and more and more, people are realizing that they have no choice but to fight back.

Assessment Stamp for Friends of the Palestinian Workers Group
Benefit stamp designed by underground cartoonist Spain Rodriguez.

Send \$5 and a SASE to sparrow at IWW San Francisco, 2022 Blake Street, Berkeley, CA 94704.

