



# DIRECT ACTION

Bulletin of the Australian Regional Organising  
Committee of the Industrial Workers of the World.  
Summer 2009 - 2010

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## Quickies

AUSTRALIA POST has been found in court to have underpaid a postie. Greg Cartaar was one of the new breed of postie pretty well forced to work under a contract system. There are some who still think that getting a contract puts you on easy street. The Industrial Court of NSW found otherwise and has ordered Australia Post to pay \$72,450 on the grounds that the contract was unfair and had resulted in the humble parcel pusher being underpaid.

Sad indeed that the worker has to result to the courts for justice rather than being able to rely on the solidarity and direct action of his workmates. Mr Cartaar said yesterday the post contracting system was "the biggest sham". He had found himself forced to work 44 hours a week - 13 hours more than Australia Post had allowed under his contract - to get through his mail runs.

"This is Australia Post - a government body. You'd think they would not be exploiting workers," he said revealing an ignorance that, alas, is all too common in the working class these days..

Justice Kavanagh (wonder what sort of contract he's on?) found that if Mr Cartaar had been paid an hourly rate that

was similar to an employee he should have earned \$130,240 over three years, but instead earned \$66,790, leaving a shortfall of \$63,450.

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The IWW is not too small-minded to pay compliments to our all deserving them. We are as wide and generous as the working class itself. Even to odious, slimy, tools of the class enemy, when they are in the right, we do not avoid giving our tithe of praise. Therefore we warmly welcome the recognition that came to the "Forgotten Australians" from Bullshit Castle, Camberra the other day. It is about time that the horrendous conditions of the working class child migrants, abused physically, sexually, mentally and spiritually in the institutions supposedly looking after them, were acknowledged - and compensation given. Even better than Prime Monster K.Rudd's chronicle of woe was the highly moving and sensitive speech from the one-time leader of the opposition Mr Turnbull. He was not the only one to wipe a tear away at the damage done to so many little kids over such a long period. In fact, speech was so good it almost made us forget those kids left to rot behind the razer wire of Baxter and other Australian concentration camps.

# More Quikies

## At last

THE union representing Australia Post workers is considering a proposal to deliver all mail over the Christmas period irrespective of whether the postage has been paid.

The novel form of industrial action rests on a ballot this week of Australia Post workers. Ed Husic, the national president of the Communications Electrical and Plumbing Union, said consumers across Australia could potentially look forward to sending their Christmas mail for free if postal workers voted to take action.

"Among the actions postal workers are voting on are periodic bans on checking that letters and cards are stamped," Mr Husic said. "Bans would mean that unstamped mail is not returned to the sender, but goes through free of charge."

About 18,000 postal workers are this week voting on whether to take industrial action. "Our members know Christmas is a special time and we want to limit public inconvenience, while sending a message to management," Mr Husic said. That message, he said, was to "stop acting like Scrooge with our conditions and entitlements".

From - <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/industry-sectors/union-may-let-christmas-mail-go-for-free/story-e6frg97o-1225805511352>

## Union accused of stinky tactics but it's the system that's on the nose

FAECES was smeared on signs, locks and chains during a union-organised blockade at a gas plant near Orbost, it has been alleged, and stones were thrown at non-union labour.

The claims, part of an Australian Building and Construction Commission (what still going after a "Labor" party has been running the show all this time? What a surprise!) case against four unions, followed pickets last year and this year in a dispute over non-union labour. The Commission is continuing to protect the right to scab by seeking tens of thousands of dollars in fines in its Federal Court case against the four blue-collar unions and organisers for breaches of building laws at the Worley Parsons site. It alleged that use of non-union labour during the upgrade of the gas plant, near Orbost, resulted in strikes, abuse and throwing of stones at non-union employees as well as the setting up of a camp outside the gates, on which the locks were glued and smeared with faeces.

Unions are yet to respond to the claims, but some of those involved in the dispute said it was the first they had heard of the claims.

from - <http://www.theage.com.au/national/union-accused-of-stinky-tactics-20091201-k3vu.html>

# ABOUT TIME



"Whether you work by the piece or work by the day, decreasing the hours increases the pay." - Mary Steward, wife of Ira Steward the eight-hour day pioneer.

"Further steps toward a reformation of society can never be carried out with any hope of success, unless the hours of labour be limited, and the prescribed limit strictly enforced." - R.J. Saunders, English Factory Inspector, 1848.

"So long as there is one man who seeks employment and cannot obtain it, the hours of labor are too long." - Samuel Gompers, first president of the American Federation of Labor.

"The limitation of the working-day is a preliminary condition without which all further attempts at improvement and emancipation must prove abortive..."

- Resolution adopted by the First Congress of the International Workingmen's Association, drafted by Karl Marx.

"A nation is really rich if the working day is 6 hours rather than twelve. Wealth is disposable time, and nothing more." - Charles Wentworth Dilke.



Every day is the last day.

I have waited for tomorrow

And it has never come.

... Carl Sandburg

"The ideal working day of the future cannot be eight hours, for it must be essentially a progressive ideal." - Sydney J. Chapman

## A Prophecy:

In Copenhagen they will fail  
(Come the wind, wild weather and hail)  
Workers we must get involved  
(Come malaria, dengue and pox)  
The climate crisis will be solved  
This is the gist and core of my grievance  
(Come the fires and drought and all)  
By Widespread and Sustained civil disobedience  
Or it will not be solved at all.

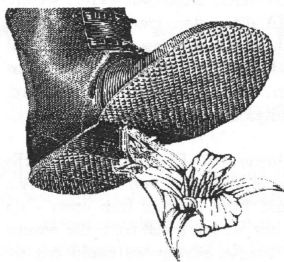
## GLORY

"There's nary a mention of how many Iraqis are dead (between 100,000 and 1.2 million, depending on who's counting), how many maimed (not known), how many displaced (4 million - give or take), and how many tortured with Saddam-like methods in Abu Ghraib and elsewhere (not known)."

and then there is Afghanistan ...



CLASS  
SOCIETY?



You know  
it sucks!



# PSYCHOLOGY – YOUR DAILY DOSE OF MORAL FIBRE

by F.W. Jennifer Armstrong

These days, we are not prepared for life by the kind of culture which has any sort of psychological orientation. Even my upbringing in right wing Rhodesia was kinder to the proletariat --- which is to say, my education had more of an emphasis on psychological knowledge and psychological affirmation of others, compared to what is generally given in the educational systems today.

Why should we even care about psychology? What does it mean to us anyway?

Worker – it is your life and bread, your living or your death that is at stake.

The way I came to be a revolutionary was not through the ideological muttering or rhetorical flourishes of those of the left, who would attempt to persuade others with their words. I did not one day conclude that I would embrace a certain ideology over all others, until death do us part. My need to engage in revolutionary activity has to do with pure psychology. I have learned what makes me function effectively in this world. I have learned what kinds of factors and influences make me feel ineffective. I do what I

can to reinforce my feelings of effectiveness. I avoid the situations that destroy my self confidence and undermine my ability to act. I embrace the reality of myself as a psychological creature.

When I speak about psychology, I am talking about your right to make decisions for yourself on the basis of self-knowledge. What kind of work is right for you? What kind of work is simply soul destroying, and must be refused at all costs?

We have been taught by our system of education to be humble, all too humble, when approaching this matter. We have been taught to ask for very little – only not to be kicked too often, at least not more often than the next dog ... er, human being. All in all we lack character. Perhaps I have forgotten to mention it? Psychology is the basis for self-knowledge. Without self-knowledge, we cannot have character. Or, as those of the Australian Army like to put it: We are without “moral fibre.”

So, now we see how all these things I have been talking about are interlinked. Without moral fibre, we are unable to

choose which situations we want to work with. Without moral fibre, we lack character. Having character is the same as moral fibre. Without psychological self-knowledge, we can have no character. Without self-knowledge, we can have no moral fibre.

As I said to begin with, the educational system of Rhodesia, for all its faults and racial limitations, gave me the power of control over my self, because I was instructed in the art of thinking of myself as a psychological being, living alongside others who acted towards themselves and others on the basis of their moral fibre. Bells of alarm would ring in my head when, later in life and long out of school, I came upon people acting out of a feeling of necessity, rather than choice. Such people had been put in a very bad situation with regard to life and their acquiescence to the impossible nature of their situation meant something even worse. People who accepted the dehumanising situations imposed on them had been given no ways of thinking by the mentors in their school systems that they could have turned into moral fibre. They were lacking in the fundamental quality of self-knowledge, which would have forced them to speak up for themselves.

Think about how the rules and regulations of bourgeois tutelage – as system of complying with the bosses – undermine your character. You are told not to see many things that you do, in fact, see. You are warned not to consider what kinds of workplace situations would be damaging to your health and well-being, as compared to which would be supportive of those things. You are taught, in fact, to act without discrimination concerning the kinds of situations you put yourself in, and even what the outcomes mean to you. “Don’t think about that,” you are told. Instead, “Concentrate on proving your compliance with the system through a lack of adequate psychological discrimination and self-knowledge. Accept any sort of job. Don’t consider what it means to you. Only consider that there can’t be any questionable gaps within your resume.” The psychologically adept person immediately asks “why not?” The psychologically knowledgeable boss replies at once: “A gap means non-compliance with the will of bosses.”

Only the boss does not reply like that of course. It is not in the interest of a boss to school you in the meaning of the system that has been imposed on you. A psychological perspective isn’t meant for you, but for others.

Which brings me to my other point:  
You are not meant to have the moral fibre that would enable you to resist a situation that is not in accordance with your will. If you don't know why you are complying with the bosses, except for out of fear, if you don't know what a human being is, and how it differs from a dog, if you accept what the

educational system tells you, without deeper psychological reflection, then you have been deprived of your fundamental human essence. The one aspect to your existence that should have been of the utmost importance has been taken from you. Without psychology, you can have no humanity.



# Ten Things You Need to Know to Live on the Streets

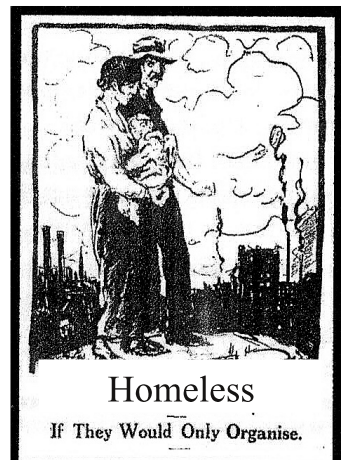
Well maybe we are coming out of the subprime mortgage crises better than we expected. Maybe Australia will weather the storm better than the millions of Americans where homelessness is becoming a fact of life for many hard working families. On the other hand ...

From the Industrial Workers of the World point of view the best thing to do is to get organised as a class and start running things ourselves and use our resources to produce real things for real human needs rather than bundles of toxic assets and the like. The reason being to stop that cycle of greed, fear and basic stupidity currently running this, our world, and these our lives, and holding both ransom to its inevitable bubbles and fluctuations. Assuming sadly that most of our class are too indoctrinated, distracted or domesticated to take this advice any time soon we therefore offer the following less practical tips to get you through any approaching economic downturn: As it is, on Census night 2006 there were 105,000 Australians homeless on any given night and I do not think the situation has improved dramatically since then.

1 Be prepared to be blamed for your circumstances, no matter how much they may be beyond your control. Think of ways to disabuse the public of common misconceptions. Don't internalise cruelty or condescension. Might have to let go of your pride a tad - but hold on to your dignity.

2 There is no longer any private space to which you may retreat. You are on display 24/7. Learn to travel lightly. Store valuables in a safe place, only carrying around what you really need ID and documents for accessing services, a pen, etc. You can check e-mail and read at the library.

3 Learn the best bathroom options, where you won't be rushed, turned away or harassed. Find restrooms where it's clean enough to put your



stuff down, the stalls are big enough to change in and there's hot water so you can wash up. Don't be shy. Check out universities, colleges, office blocks – anywhere where you can walk in (act like you work/study there) smelly and saunter out clean and fresh.

4 It's difficult to have much control over when, where and what you eat, so learn soup kitchen schedules and menus. Carry with you nuts, peanut butter or other foods high in protein.

5 Food and clothing are easier to find than a safe place to sleep--the first truth of homelessness is sleep deprivation. Always have a blanket. Whenever possible, sleep in groups with staggered schedules, so you can look out for one another, prioritising children's needs over those of adults.

## 6 Know your rights!

7 Learn police patterns and practices. Be polite and calm to cops, even when they don't give the same respect. Support initiatives demanding independent police accountability. Link with groups from overlapping populations of non-homeless and homeless people (i.e., indigenous, civil libertarians) that are fighting police brutality and building nonpolice safety. Organize your own CopWatch--and

photograph, videotape and publicise instances of police abuse

8 It is OK to solicit aid (panhandling) from the public. You will cringe at first but quickly get used to it. To succeed, be creative, funny, engaging ("I didn't get a bailout!"). Find good, high-traffic spots where the police won't bother you.

9 Housing is a human right! Squat if you can. . Learn about campaigns against homelessness in other nations, including the United Workers in Baltimore, the Coalition on Homelessness in San Francisco, the Nashville Homeless Power Project, the Landless Workers' Movement in Brazil and the Anti-Eviction Campaign in South Africa.

10 Don't go it alone! Work hard at building up and maintaining an informal network of trust and mutual aid. Start your own organisation, with homeless people themselves shaping the fight for a better life and world. Accept help from anyone but controp from no-one.

(Loosely based on an article CONCEIVED by WALTER MOSLEY with research by Rae Gomes that appeared in the August 3, 2009 edition of The Nation)

# Couple of more than usually expensive decisions from the ROC

The Regional Organising Committee (aka ROC) voted to fund two projects which are coming out of our Perthian Wobblies' efforts. FW Grenfell and his mate will be travelling to Copenhagen to make a film of events there during the talks between our rulers this December. Think of our FW in the streets when you read and see all the news that the bosses see fit to print and broadcast about the demonstrations, protests and other actions around that event. FW Grenfell and his media partner will be interviewing participants and asking them relevant questions about how participants think climate change can best be dealt with. (Your scribe thinks that it can't be dealt with using the marketplace for commodities e.g. capitalists hiring wage-slaves to make windmills for capitalist profit and so on.) According to FW Grenfell, the IWW is the ONLY organisation thus far to help out with the funding which is needed to get the project off the ground. Any organisation which

gives \$500 (as your ROC has voted to give) to FW Grenfell's film project will get their names up in lights in the movie. Hey, score one for our side. Plus, we'll get a free copy of the movie to show and perhaps sell copies to other workers via IWW Lit.

The other project is our revolutionary music cd. The ROC has voted \$250 to fund our fine and dandy little musical blast. FW Wilson and FW Gremlin are working hard on this one and it was decided at the meeting to shoot for a May 1st launch, complete with a party at a the Criterion Pub, where we'll be having the cd played! We'll have to get the cd burnt and the cover art done before the end of March in order to advertise its existence in the "Industrial Worker" May issue. The hard part, the music, is done. But, if you have any additions, there may still be room to put it on this flash, Wobbly cd first!



## FW PAT MACKIE DIES

The IWW is saddened to hear of the passing of FW Pat Mackie, age 95.

Mackie's life of activism began when as a young stowaway on a boat from New Zealand, he challenged the captain as to the lawfulness of his uncomfortable accommodation. Working in blue collar jobs around the globe, he became a member of the Industrial Workers of the World and the United States Seafarers Unions. For 15 years, as a seaman, he travelled the world.

Mackie got object lessons in how the workers could control workplace situations. He became engaged in union activities and was a "captain of picket captains" in a lengthy New York waterfront strike in 1948, in which police used horses specially trained to rear up and kick at picketers and gangsters, acting on behalf of the agents provocateur who were infiltrating union lines.

He is most remembered for leading the Mount Isa strike of 1964/5 that polarised the town and almost bankrupted Mount Isa Mining. It was different to the normal union controlled 24 hour show of strength. The Mount Isa miners took on one of the world's biggest mining corporations, the American Mining and Smelting Corporation

(ASARCO) and won. The dispute was a spontaneous uprising of not only the miners but their wives and many of the people who lived in Mount Isa. They won the dispute despite the outright hostility of ASARCO, the Australian Workers Union, the Queensland Government and the mass media.

The Mount Isa dispute was in Pat Mackie's own words "a living lesson in the constructive social potentialities of rank and file working people". "It was a triumph of the human spirit".

During the strike he met Elizabeth Vassilieff and struck up a long-term relationship. Vassilieff was to write of him that he "sees his own needs very simply, voices them fearlessly and became a phenomenally effective workers' spokesman and trade union organiser, a power to be reckoned with in the industrial world. His strength lies in his formidable combination of his magnetic personality with high abilities in three functions of leadership: in clearly analysing the workers' situations; in democratising their organisation; and in brilliant powers of oratory, enabling him to unite the rank and file and fire them with unshakable loyalty."



# MANDINGO

REVIEW BY "Y"

In this film, the masterful James Mason plays the plantation patriarch, a Big Daddy you wouldn't want to be owned by. This is undoubtedly THE BEST Film made about the era of slavery in the USA. It puts the sanitised, romantic "Gone With the Wind" to shame. "Mandingo" will make you uncomfortable even in your most comfortable seat. "Mandingo" is a mirror. See your reflection; it will scare the living bejeezub out of you.

This is a film about power. Racism is about power. When some people have absolute power over other people, they become sadistic and sometimes, the objects of their sadism become masochistic. Absolute power is always justified with ideological rationalisations become dogma, in this case the the dogma that black skin makes a person less than human. Power corrupts the individual's sense of morality. With power over others, one becomes more or less immoral, hardened to a subordinate's suffering. Self-esteem is generated by putting down the one perceived to be inferior and slaves were considered less than human, a notch or two down on the food chain. Slaves were treated as objects of power, like the organic results of animal husbandry, like the commodities you purchase and eat: cattle, pigs or sheep. Thus, having sex with a slave for a 'white' male owner was like breeding new animals for sale with a view to profit. 'White' females, of course, were not allowed to engage in this sort of animal husbandry with slaves. The patriarchal whisper one hears in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" becomes a murderous roar in "Mandingo".

In "Mandingo" we see the realities of absolute power's effect on the social psychology of a society. Even after more than a century of time, American society, especially the South is still scarred by the psychological damage which simmers under the surface of smiles, whiskey fueled tears and freshly mown lawns.

"Mandingo" is a must see. It's better than "Glory", although "Glory" would be an appropriate second on a double feature bill with "Mandingo". "Mandingo" is even better than "Burn" and much better than "Roots". The acting is superb. The screenplay is magnificent. The cinematography is choice. Yes, this movie is violent; but slavery was a daily violence on the lives of those who suffered it. Face it. Yes, there is sex in this movie: squirm in your seat as you feel a touch of titillation. Yes, there is abuse on all levels from pedophilia to outright murder. But the abusers aren't comic book level bad guys; they aren't Jokers on the set of "Batman". They are the ruling class of the Old South. Sometimes their humanity shows through. Sometimes bad guys are ever so well ensconced in the the rituals of polite society that they come across as the upholders of civilised behaviour. That they are also enmeshed in a daily life organised around the exploitation of those who produce their wealth speaks volumes about the quality of their humanity and our own social relations of power today.

Get "Mandingo" however you can. Show it to your friends. Discuss it after you see it. Get ready for the movie experience of a lifetime. Forget about "Basterds"; forget the demented, ultra-violent comic fantasies of Quentin Tarantino. Forget about the sanitized films of the Antebellum Age. See "Mandingo". See the hard truth about chattel slavery and then do some reflection about how power over others functions to generate a generalised state of dominance and submission in the social relations of the here and now, wherever you live on this planet.

# Tetley's Tea Makes You Wee

"At Tetley we want you to enjoy your pregnancy without it being stressful. That's why we've put together some tips on caffeine and pregnancy..."

On November 19, local government officials began distributing to workers and their families on the Nowera Nuddy tea estate in West Bengal coupons for emergency rations which are normally reserved only for those officially designated as below the poverty line or victims of natural disasters. The desperate situation on the estate contrasts sharply with Tetley's commitments to refrain from harsh or inhumane treatment set out in the Ethical Tea Partnership standard. Hunger on the estate is the result of a policy of collective punishment. Nowera Nuddy is majority owned by Tata, the transnational Indian conglomerate whose wholly-owned subsidiary Tetley makes the world

famous Tetley Teas. The workers have been denied wages and rations for all but two days' work since early August. Management has closed the estate in retaliation for a worker protest in August against the punishing treatment of an 8-months' pregnant worker who was denied maternity leave, forced to pluck tea, and then denied adequate medical treatment. Workers want the estate reopened and their wages paid, but reject the suspension of 8 workers who have been singled out for protesting vile abuses.

"But why limit yourself? If you don't want to count your cups both Tetley Decaf and Tetley Redbush are delicious alternatives with bags of taste and none of the caffeine."

Not buying unethically produced products sends a strong market signal. Still taking them home without buying them a stronger one.

**Why limit yourself indeed!**



# Yet More Quickies

Let's here it for Direct Action. One of the best examples these days is given by the boat people. Everybody knows that if these people were content to wait in their camps in Sri Lanka or wherever they would have received no attention from anyone. If only they had been patient and waited for the opportunity to access the proper channels! If only. Then while they continued to be persecuted, raped, beaten and "go missing". Then high and mighty in the Australian government would have been careful to maintain good relations with the governments that were doing the dirty, would avoid megaphone diplomacy and would have been mindful of our not-insignificant trading opportunities until Hell froze over.

Oh those evil people traffickers! From the way our pollies talk one would think that they are going around the camps handing out coloured brochures trying to whip up business. The thing is that they, an no-one else, are providing a service to the miserable denizens of despair. These people know the risks, and bloody horrible risks they are too, involved in crossing the foamy brine to Autralia's welcoming shores where they hope to walk tall in the land of the free and easy. It is just that they judge the risks of remaining where they are to be greater. From what I hear they are almost certainly correct.

Of course, if it was a member of the parasite class trying to resettle here with, say, a few million he had screwed out of the workers back home, then he would

have no such difficulties. The red carpet would practically be unrolled at his feet.

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## **Easy way to keep you membership up to date.**

For those of you wishing to pay your dues directly, you can deposit into our bank account Commonfilth Bank (aka Commonwealth Bank).

The account is named The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW is sufficient)

The BSB is: 063224

and the account number 10047639.

Just to make double sure can you please notify the ROC with the date and amount your deposit and what level of dues you are paying - especially if there has been a change since last time. (just send a short sharp email to [entropy4@gmail.com](mailto:entropy4@gmail.com)) and we will correlate it with the bank statements. If paying on line or at the bank please put your name or some other method of identification (such as membership number) in the subject box. At the bank, you'll need to ask the teller to do this.

Your records will be updated and your dues stamps will be sent out in a few days.



Don't complain  
that the bosses are laying waste  
the earth  
it's us that do it  
every day  
for not enough pay  
we are the ones

Don't complain  
that the CO2 is rising  
we mine the coal; we shift it  
work the power stations  
without any say  
we work them anyway  
us.

Don't complain  
that capitalism reduces all to a  
drab, grey death  
'cause we do that too

hour after hour  
to get the wherewithal  
keep together body and soul  
its us.

Don't complain  
of the wars and deaths and  
fighting  
you never see bosses or  
politicians  
were the shells are falling  
yep we do that too  
we are the ones.

Don't complain because,  
- to change the world  
all we need  
is to stop what we do  
(all at once mind, all at once!)  
take a good look around,  
and  
bloody well start doing  
something else.

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