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Wobblies rally in downtown Oakland on Sept. 10 for the nationwide prison strike. See full story on page 6.

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IWW Branches & Local/Regional Contacts

Asia

Taiwan

Taiwan IWW: c/o David Temple, 4 Floor, No. 3, Ln. 67, Shuijing St., Beitun Dist., Taichung City 40641 Taiwan. 098-937-7029. taiWanGMB@hotmail.com

Australia New South Wales

Sydney GMB: IWW-Sydney-gmb@iww.org.au.

Queensland

Brisbane GMB: P.O. Box 5842, West End, Qld 4101. Asger, del., happyanarchy@riseup.net.

Victoria

Melbourne GMB: P.O. Box 145, Moreland, VIC 3058. melbourne-wobblies@gmail.com.

Canada

IWW Canadian Regional Organizing Committee (CANROC): c/o Toronto GMB, P.O. Box 45 Toronto P, Toronto ON, M5S 2S6. iww@iww.ca

Alberta

Edmonton GMB: P.O. Box 4197, T6E 4T2. edmontongmb@iww.org, edmonton.iww.ca.

British Columbia

Vancouver GMB: IWW Vancouver, c/o Spartacus Books, 3378 Findlay Street, V5N 4E7. contact@vancouveriww.com, www.vancouveriww.com

Vancouver Island GMB: Box 297 St. A, Nanaimo BC, V9R 5K9. iwwvi@telus.net.

Manitoba

Winnipeg GMB: IWW, c/o WORC, P.O. Box 1, R3C 2G1. 204-299-5042, winnipeg@iww@hotmail.com

New Brunswick

Fredericton: frederictoniww.wordpress.com

Ontario

Ottawa-Outaouais GMB & GDC Local 6: 1106 Wellington St., P.O. Box 36042, Ottawa, K1Y 4V3. ott-out@iww.org, gdc6@ottawaiww.org
Ottawa Panhandlers Union: Raymond Loomer, interim delegate, raymond747@hotmail.com

Peterborough: c/o PCAP, 393 Water St. #17, K9H 3L7, 705-749-9694.
Sean Carleton, del., 705-775-0663, seancarleton@iww.org

Toronto GMB: P.O. Box 45, Toronto P, M5S 2S6. 647-741-4998. toronto@iww.org, www.torontoiww.org
Windsor GMB: c/o WWAC, 328 Pelissier St., N9A 4K7. 519-564-8036. windsor@iww@gmail.com. http://windsor.iww.wordpress.com

Québec
Montreal GMB: cp 60124, Montréal, QC, H2J 4E1. 514-268-3394. iww_quebec@riseup.net

Europe

European Regional Administration (ERA): P.O. Box 7593, Glasgow, G42 2EX. www.iww.org.uk. 0800 998 9149

ERA Organisation Contacts

Access Facilitator: Sue Fortune, access@iww.org.uk

Central England Organiser: Russ Spring, central@iww.org.uk

Communications Department, Chair - Xav Bear, communications@iww.org.uk

Cymru/Wales Organiser: Peter Davies, cymru@iww.org.uk

East of Scotland Organiser: Carol Ince, eastscotland@iww.org.uk

Legal Officer: Guy Mitchel, Legal@iww.org.uk

London Regional Organiser: Tawanda Nyabango

Membership Administrator: Philip LeMarque, membership@iww.org.uk

Merchandise Committee: merchandise@iww.org.uk

Northern Regional Organiser: Sam Frowien, north@iww.org.uk

Organising Department: Chair - Tawanda Nyabango, organising@iww.org.uk

Research and Survey Department: research@iww.org.uk

Secretary: Dave Pike, secretary@iww.org.uk

Southern England Organiser: Nikki Dancy, south@iww.org.uk

Tech Committee: tech@iww.org.uk
Training Department: Chair - Chris Wellbrook, training@iww.org.uk
Treasurer: Jed Forward, treasurer@iww.org.uk

West of Scotland Organiser: Rona McAlpine, westscotland@iww.org.uk

Women's Officer: Jen Fox, women@iww.org.uk

ERA Branches

Clydeside GMB: clydeside@iww.org.uk

Cymru/Wales GMB: caerdydd@iww.org.uk

Edinburgh GMB: edinburgh@iww.org.uk

Tyne & Wear GMB: tyneandwear@iww.org.uk

Bradford GMB: bradford@iww.org.uk

Leeds GMB: IWW, Ebor Court, Cooper Gate, Leeds. leeds@iww.org.uk

Manchester GMB: manchester@iww.org.uk

Sheffield GMB: IWW Office, SYAC, 120 Wicker, Sheffield S3 8JD (0114 223 2100). sheffield@iww.org.uk

Norwich Bar and Hospitality Workers IUB 640: norwich-bhu@iww.org.uk

Nottingham GMB: notts@iww.org.uk

West Midlands GMB: IWW, Bike Foundry, 1539 Pershore Rd, Birmingham B30 2JH (0121 459 7276). westmids@iww.org.uk

Bristol GMB: bristol@iww.org.uk

Reading GMB: reading@iww.org.uk

London GMB: london@iww.org.uk

Belgium

Belgium IWW: belgium@iww.org

German Language Area

IWW German Language Area Regional Organizing Committee (GLAMROC): glamroc@wobblies.org, www.wobblies.org

Austria (Vienna): iwwaustria@gmail.com, wien@wobblies.at. http://wobblies.org. www.facebook.com/pages/IWW-Wien/381153168710911

Berlin: Offenes Treffen jeden 2. Montag im Monat in Cafe Commune, Reichenberger Str. 157, 10999 Berlin, 18 Uhr. (U-Bahnhof Kottbusser Tor). Postadresse: IWW Berlin, c/o Rotes Antiquariat, Rungestr. 20, 10179 Berlin, Germany. berlin@wobblies.org

Bremen: kontakt@iww-bremen.org, www.iww-bremen.org

Cologne/Koeln GMB: c/o Allerweltschuss, Koernerstr. 77-79, 50823 Koeln, Germany. cologne1@wobblies.org. www.iwwcologne.wordpress.com

Frankfurt a.M. GMB: Frankfurt@wobblies.org. http://Frankfurt.Wobblies.org

Hamburg-Waterkant: hamburg@wobblies.org

Kassel: Rothe Ecke, Naumburger Str. 20a, 34127 Kassel, kontakt@wobblies-kassel.de. www.wobblies-kassel.de

Leipzig: leipzig@wobblies.org

Munich: iww.muenchen@gmx.de

Rostock: iww-rostock@systemausfall.org, iwwrostock.blogspot.eu

Switzerland: wobbly@gmx.net

Greece

Greece IWW: iwwgreece@yahoo.gr

Iceland: Heimssamband Reykafólks / IWW Iceland, Reykjavíkuraðakademíunni 516, Hringbraut 121, 107 Reykjavík

Lithuania: lithuania.iww@gmail.com

Netherlands: iww.ned@gmail.com

Norway IWW: 004793656014. post@iwwnorge.org. http://www.iwwnorge.org, www.facebook.com/iwwnorge. Twitter: @IWWnorge

United States

Alabama

Mobile: Jimmy Broadhead, del., P.O. Box 160073, 36616. tr0g@riseup.net

Tuscaloosa: Gerald Lunn, 205-245-4622. gerald@iww.org

Alaska

Fairbanks GMB: P. O. Box 80101, 99708. Chris White, del., 907-457-2543, cwhite@alaskan.com. Facebook: IWW Fairbanks

Arkansas

Northwest Arkansas IWW: P.O. Box 4062, Fayetteville, 72702-4062. iww.nwa@gmail.com

California

Los Angeles GMB: P.O. Box 74344, 90004. 323-374-3499. iwwgmb@iww.org

Sacramento IWW: 916-672-8881, sacramento@iww.org

San Diego IWW: 619-630-5537, sd@iww.org

San Francisco Bay Area GMB: P.O. Box 11412, Berkeley, 94712. 510-845-0540. bayarea@iww.org

San Jose: SouthBayIWW@gmail.com, www.facebook.com/SJSVIWW

Colorado

Denver GMB: IWW, P.O. Box 12451, Denver, 80212. 814-758-7761. denver@iww.org

Connecticut

Connecticut: John W., del., 914-258-0941. JohnW813@yahoo.com

DC

Washington DC GMB: P.O. Box 1303, 202-630-9620. dc.iww.gmb@gmail.com. www.dciww.org, www.facebook.com/dciww

Florida

Gainesville GMB: c/o Civic Media Center, 433 S. Main St., 32601. gainesvilleiww@gmail.com, www.gainesvilleiww.org

Hobe Sound: P. Shultz, 8274 SE Pine Circle, 33455-6608. 772-545-9591, okiedogg2002@yahoo.com

Orlando: Joey Leach, del., 978-424-8758. orlando@iww.org. Facebook: OrlandoIWW

South Florida GMB: P.O. Box 370457, 33137. 305-894-6515. miami@iww.org. http://www.miami.wordpress.com. Facebook: Miami IWW

Tallahassee: www.facebook.com/iwwTallahassee

Georgia

Atlanta GMB: P.O. Box 5390, 31107. 678-964-5169, contact@atiww.org, www.atiww.org

Idaho

Boise: Ritchie Eppink, del., P.O. Box 453, 83701. 208-371-9752, eppink@iww.org

Illinois

Chicago: Christopher Preciado, del., 470-326-6531. X363823@gmail.com

Indiana

Michiana GMB: Brad Laird, del., 574-245-0605, megarid@yahoo.com

Iowa

Eastern Iowa IWW: 319-333-2476. EasternIowaIWW@gmail.com

Kansas

Wichita: Richard Stephenson, del., 620-481-1442. barfolumu@gmail.com

Kentucky

Kentucky GMB: Mick Parsons, Secretary Treasurer, padamick.iww@gmail.com. 502-658-0299

Louisiana

Louisiana IWW: John Mark Crowder, del, wogodm1@yahoo.com. https://www.facebook.com/groups/iwwof-louisiana/

Maine

Maine IWW: 207-619-0842. maine@iww.org, www.southernmaineiww.org

Maryland

Baltimore GMB: P.O. Box 33350, 21218. baltimoreiww@gmail.com

Massachusetts

Boston Area GMB: P.O. Box 391724, Cambridge, 02139. 617-863-7920, iww.boston@riseup.net, www.IWWBoston.org

Western Mass. Public Service IU 650 Branch: IWW, P.O. Box 1581, Northampton, 01061

Michigan

Detroit GMB: P.O. Box 32236, 48232. 313-437-3404, detroit@iww.org

Grand Rapids GMB: P.O. Box 6629, 49516. 616-881-5263. griww@iww.org

Central Michigan: 5007 W. Columbia Rd., Mason 48854. 517-676-9446, happyhippie66@hotmail.com

Minnesota

Duluth IWW: P.O. Box 3232, 55803. iwwduluth@riseup.net

Twin Cities GMB: 2 E. Franklin Ave Suite. 1, Minneapolis, 55406. twincities@iww.org

Missouri

Greater Kansas City IWW: P.O. Box 414304, Kansas City 64141. 816-866-3808. greaterkciww@gmail.com

St. Louis IWW: P.O. Box 63142, 63163. Secretary: stl.iww.secretary@gmail.com. Treasurer: stl.iww.treasurer@gmail.com

Montana

Construction Workers IU 330: Dennis Georg, del., 406-490-3869, tramp233@hotmail.com

Missoula IWW: Charles Copeland, del., 406-529-6404. ccopelandfmz@gmail.com

Two Rivers IWW: Jim Del Duca, del., 106 Paisley Court, Apt. 1, Bozeman 59715. 406-599-2463. delduca@gmail.com

Nebraska

Nebraska GMB: P.O. Box 27811, Ralston, 68127. nebraskagmb@iww.org. www.nebraskaiww.org

Nevada

Reno GMB: P.O. Box 12173, 89510. Paul Lenart, del., 775-513-7523, hekmatista@yahoo.com

IU 520 Railroad Workers: Ron Kaminkov, del., P.O. Box 2131, Reno, 89505. 608-358-5771. ronkaminkov@yahoo.com

New Jersey

Central New Jersey GMB: P.O. Box 10021, New Brunswick, 08906. 732-692-3491. info@newjerseyiww.org. Bob Ratynski, del., 908-285-5426. www.newjerseyiww.org

New Mexico

Albuquerque GMB: abq@iww.org

New York

New York City GMB: 45-02 23rd Street, Suite #2, Long Island City, 11101. iww-nyc@iww.org. www.wobblycity.org

Syracuse IWW: syracuse@iww.org

Upstate NY GMB: P.O. Box 77, Altamont, 12009. 518-861-5627. ggwob56@yahoo.com

Utica IWW: Brendan Maslauskas Dunn, del., 315-240-3149.

Ohio

Northeast Ohio GMB: P.O. Box 1096, Cleveland, 44114. 440-941-0999

Ohio Valley GMB: P.O. Box 6042, Cincinnati 45206. 513-510-1486, ohiovalleyiww@gmail.com

Sweet Patches Screenprinting: sweetptchs@aol.com

Oklahoma

Oklahoma IWW: 539-664-6769. iwwoklahoma@gmail.com

Oregon

Lane GMB: Ed Gunderson, del., 541-743-5681. x355153@iww.org, www.iwwlane.org

Portland GMB: 2249 E Burnside St., 97214. 503-231-5488, portland.iww@gmail.com, portlandiww.org

Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh GMB: P.O. Box 5912, 15210. 412-438-3499, bst@pghiiww.org

Rhode Island

Providence GMB: P.O. Box 23067, 02903. 401-484-8523. providence@iww.org

Tennessee

Clarksville: Jonathan Beasley, del., 218 S 3rd St. Apt. 7-6, 37040. 931-220-9665.

Trenton: Jeremy Butler, del., 221 Milan Hwy, 38382. 731-613-3067, butler429@yahoo.com

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Post Office Box 180195
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773.728.0996 • ghq@iww.org
www.iww.org

IWW GENERAL SECRETARY-TREASURER:
Randall L. Jamrok

IWW GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD:
Michael MoonDog Garcia, Adam K. Jones,
DJ Alperovitz, Brandon Sowers,
shugE Mississippi

INDUSTRIAL WORKER EDITOR & DESIGNER:
Diane Krauthamer
iw@iww.org

ASSISTANT AD DESIGNER:
Rick Vodicka

PROOFREADERS:
Roberta McNair, Blaise Farina, Bill O'Connor,
Neil Parthun, Chris Heffner, Dave Johnson

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Letter from the *Industrial Worker* Editor

Fellow Workers,

After eight wonderful years, this is my last issue editing the *Industrial Worker* (*IW*). While I do plan to continue working on this publication on a voluntary basis, I am stepping down from my position as *IW* Editor at the end of 2016. Another fellow worker (yet to be elected) will be taking my place.

When I started this job at the beginning of 2009, I did not have much experience with the IWW. At that time, I was living in New York City, helping with branch support of the local Starbucks Workers Union and the various campaigns to organize food warehouse workers in Brooklyn and Queens. My knowledge of and experience with Wobblies worldwide was fairly limited.

Since becoming *IW* Editor, I have had the pleasure of exchanging stories with hundreds of comrades the world over—people working in various industries, in different capacities, for many labor-oriented causes. Even if our communication was through a few email exchanges, it was exhilarating for me to learn about the various projects, campaigns, events, organizing victories and experiences, opinions, and ideas of each person. Despite the occasional setback and occasional burnout, I found that my drive to continue my work on the *IW*—and my active involvement with the union—flourished. My involvement with the IWW continues to be inspired by the countless fellow workers who keep the momentum of our union alive. I would have dropped out long ago if it weren't for all of you.



Photo: The Babadook

Industrial Worker Editor Diane Krauthamer with the latest issues.

Although my work on the paper is nearly finished (for now), my work in the union is far from finished. My top priority is building and strengthening the IWW. Over the years, I have come to realize that any attempt to do this is futile unless we fight against all forms of discrimination in the process. This is imperative to our strength and growth. As some of you may recall from years past, through my editorial work I have encouraged open debate on these issues. Personally, I believe

that the top impediment to the IWW's growth has been sexism, and I do not believe that acting like this problem does not exist will resolve it. The *IW* is the official publication of the IWW, and as such, I believe it should be the mission of this publication to continue fostering dialogue which can help us work through these complex issues.

I have chosen to include these discussions on the pages of the *Industrial Worker* for this very reason. If we are honest about who we are, we have to be honest about how we can improve. Potential members will see that and will want to join an organization that acknowledges its problems and works to resolve them. Former members may even return to the organization if they see that we are openly fighting against an internal patriarchal culture. Current members may get upset about one person's opinions, but they can respond and have their opinions published as well, and that is what makes the dialogue effective. The bosses who read the *IW*, on the other hand, will not know what to do in the face of such a strong organization.

As I pass the torch on to the next *IW* Editor, I will encourage that person to incorporate a similar editorial mission in their work on the paper as I have in mine. In the meantime, I will continue building a stronger, more inclusive union as well. My goal remains the same regardless of what position I am in.

I hope my work on the *Industrial Worker* has inspired you. Your work certainly has inspired me.

In Solidarity,

Diane Krauthamer

Industrial Worker Editor

The following is from the IWW General Executive Board (GEB):

Patrick O'Meara and Sean Fennesso were previously associated with the Boston IWW. They are no longer members, and are ineligible to rejoin, due to a history of sexually assaulting another IWW member.

Remembering Kayla Mueller



Kayla Mueller in India

Who would not let the Syrian Government's massacres of Syrian people be normal

Remembered by Raymond S. Solomon

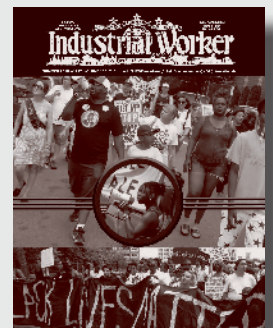
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#WobCon16



Photo: Bay Area IWW

IWW delegates, officers and members gather in front of the Niebyl-Proctor Marxist Library in Oakland, California on the weekend of Sept. 3-4, 2016, for the IWW General Convention.

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Some clarifications on Lucy & Albert Parsons

Fellow Workers:

In his review of Peter Linebaugh's book, "The Incomplete, True, Authentic and Wonderful History of May Day" (Spring 2016 *Industrial Worker*, page 18), Staughton Lynd mentions that Albert Parsons fought for the Confederacy during



Albert Parsons (left) and Lucy Parsons (right).

Photos: wikimedia.org

the American Civil War. But after the Civil War, Albert Parsons became a Radical Republican and a supporter of Radical Reconstruction (1867 to 1877), which aimed at giving African Americans full equality and voting rights. Although African-American people now have voting rights, there is an attack on their rights via voter identification and other means, like restricting voting times. Albert Parsons married the wonderful Lucy Parsons. She was formerly an enslaved person. Her exact ancestry is disputed—whether she was African American, American Indian, or Mexican, this type of racially-mixed marriage in Texas was unacceptable to many people at that time and place. They could have been killed for that, so they moved to Chicago. Whether as a Radical Republican, socialist, or as an anarchist, Albert Parsons, along with Lucy Parsons, was a fighter for social justice, especially the rights of workers. He was also a strong advocate for American-Indian social justice. Albert Parsons had been raised by an enslaved woman known to him as Aunt Esther. This helped to create a natural empathy for African Americans.

Anarchists were among the few people in the Old West to stick up for American Indians. Similarly, both anarchists and Wobblies were among the few activists for Mexicans and the Mexican Revolutionary movement.

Miriam Rosenberg Roček (a.k.a. "Steampunk Emma Goldman") wrote a very informative article about Lucy Parsons, which was published in *Free Voices*, entitled "Lucy Parsons: So Badass It Took 89 Years and a Fire to Stop Her." Lucy Parsons was at the founding meeting of the Industrial Workers of the World in 1905. Like her husband, she was an anarchist. She became a communist. Albert Parsons had written about treatment of American Indians, saying that it was the capitalist ethic of "mine and yours" that led to stealing their land. Otherwise, he wrote, white people and Indians would live in brotherhood. The years 1865 to 1900 saw both (1) completion of the conquest of the West (i.e. forcing American Indians off their land and confining them to reservations), and (2) very great violence against labor. You can read about this in "Haymarket Scrapbook," edited by Dave Roediger and Franklin Rosemont and published by Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company. Also, if you can, see the movie "Viva Zapata!" written by John Steinbeck.

Albert Parsons was descended from people on the Mayflower. Therefore, we can call him The Mayflower Anarchist.

Viva Zapata,

Raymond S. Solomon



Got something to say?

Send your letters, stories, reviews, and other items of interest to the *Industrial Worker* at iw@iww.org.

Incarcerated workers strike across the United States on September 9th: Report from the prison strike's first month

By FW Mike L., *The Incarcerated Worker*

"Prisoners are now realizing that by withholding their labor they have the power to shut down prisons and get the authorities, at the very least, to reevaluate the prison slave labor system. In essence, they are realizing that striking is a necessary stepping stone in changing the prison system and the dynamics of prison slave labor." — Phillip Ruiz, former incarcerated worker and member of the IWW Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee (IWOC), in "Why Prison Strikes Are Necessary: An Ex-Prisoner's Experience."

On the night before Sept. 9, 2016—the 45th anniversary of the Attica Prison uprising and the date set for a national prisoner labor strike—a riot erupted at Holmes Correctional Institution in Florida. More than 400 incarcerated workers rose up in rebellion, barricades were built, cameras were broken, fires were set, and all hell broke loose. Rapid response teams were called in from five different county prisons to put down the rebellion. No matter what, the seal had been broken at that point and the spirit of Attica was now in the air! The flames from this rebellion in Florida would light the torch for what would become the largest prisoner strike in U.S. history.

By the next morning, Free Alabama Movement (FAM), one of the main organizing groups for the strike and a building force for IWOC, sent out an immediate press release for the national strike. FAM also reported a full shut-down of Holman Correctional Institution, one of the most infamous prisons in Alabama and a key organizing site of FAM. A FAM committee from Holman reported: "Sept. 9, all prisoners at Holman Prison refused to report to their prison jobs without incident. With the rising of the sun came an eerie silence as the men at Holman laid on their racks reading or sleeping. Officers are performing all tasks."

The Carolinas flamed up with strike activity. North Carolina reported people refusing to go to work, but no major lockdown. South Carolina strikers released a list of demands drafted by Jailhouse Lawyers Speak, an allied group of IWOC. "End of prison slavery" was one of the core



Wobblies and supporters march through Oakland, protesting against prison industrial complex profiteers.

demands of the list released. South Carolina continues to grow as a major powerhouse of the strike. The Virginia branch of IWOC reported that the Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women joined the strike, and a women's prison in California went on hunger strike in solidarity. The infamous Merced County Jail in California also joined in the national strike via mass hunger strike. Political prisoner Chelsea Manning was on strike for her rights to gender reassignment surgery and inmates at Guantanamo Bay were also on strike, but both of these strikes may not be directly related to the national strike. However, Manning did win her rights to surgery.

Meanwhile, demonstrations all over the United States erupted. Nearly every major city had a noise demo outside of a jail or another site related to the prison industrial complex. One of the most charismatic demonstrations came from Oakland, Calif. Oakland had a demonstration with more than 300 people, and as the tension escalated, major damages were hit against prison profiteers such as Bank of America, which was torched. Comrades throughout the globe came out in support of the strike. Supporters in Spain, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, Serbia and other locales held banner drops and demonstrations outside of U.S. embassies. Greek comrades had a demonstration outside of a women's

penitentiary, and cell blocks of radical Greek incarcerated workers from Korydallos sent a salute to the strike. On Oct. 1, the same blocks joined in the strike in solidarity by refusing work and kicking all the guards out of the blocks.

Back in the United States on Sept. 11, the strike expanded to other states, including a large uprising at one of the major detention centers in Michigan called the Kinross Correctional Facility. Approximately 400 incarcerated workers refused to work and started a protest march. The situation escalated into fires being set, barricades built, and several rapid response teams being brought in from other prisons throughout the state to end the rebellion. According to media sources, 1,200 incarcerated workers participated in the rebellion, and 150 of them were transferred as targeted agitators of the strike.

As the strike continued throughout the first month, several states such as Washington, Nebraska, Texas and others were reported to have strike activity. IWOC members on the outside called prisons to find out which ones were on lockdown and conducted other extensive research to accumulate the actual impact of the strike. Our initial research estimated approximately 27 different prisons with more than 27,000 prisoners affected by the strike, but this number later increased to be an estimate near 47,000 prisoners and 49 different facilities affected.



Graphic: IWOC

The strike at Holman in Alabama escalated when the prison guards went on strike. By the first week of October, no guards were on duty. The warden was left with the task of pulling out the food cart to the striking incarcerated workers. This is the first time in Alabama's history that prison guards have gone on strike, according to news site "It's Going Down," and it's even more stunning under the pretense of a national prisoner strike. South Carolina incarcerated workers continued their strike, earning their place as one of the longest work stoppages held by prisoners in the national strike, according to IWOC. Jailhouse Lawyers Speak members of the strike began sending out live Tweets from South Carolina prisons, giving updates on the strike. One of the most inspiring Tweets was a repost of incarcerated workers fighting back against guards who tried to break the strike with violence, as seen here:



On that note, it is of grave importance to shed light on the repression that these brave incarcerated workers faced. These brave souls risked life and death to bring this struggle to the ends of the Earth! One of the first instances of repression was when political prisoner, Lucasville Uprising veteran, and IWW incarcerated worker organizer Imam Hasan was sent to the hole and faced interrogation by both Ohio state authorities and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in regards to the strike. He faced Islamophobic accusations by the Ohio State Penitentiary that he encouraged a suicide bomb attack on Sept. 9. Imam Hasan and his Muslim brothers went on hunger strike when the prison authorities threatened to cut off their rights. He was later faced with more threats by the prison authorities for his communication with media outlets such as National Public Radio (NPR), in promotion of the prisoners' strike. Outside support of IWOC did play an important role in minimizing the repression. Prisoners from South Carolina to Alabama and beyond gave thanks for the phone zaps and call-ins. These efforts made sure prisoners could eat and shower, and they

even got some incarcerated worker organizers such as Michael Kimble, a gay anarchist supporter of FAM, released from solitary confinement. Though these may feel like liberal tactics, they are of utmost importance; they are like laying down covering fire for our incarcerated comrades in the trenches. We must keep in mind that in Waupun Correctional Institution in Wisconsin, an ongoing hunger strike called the "Dying to Live" strike, which was led by brave incarcerated workers like Caesar DeLeon, has been going on since June. These prisoners are facing intensive retaliation, including forced feedings.

So finally, it looks like the One Big Union is making a comeback by organizing not just wage slaves, but workers who are literally slaves by the U.S. Constitution. This strike has made history and its revolutionary momentum is still burning, but there is still a lot of work that needs to be done. We may not have dismantled the prison industrial complex or abolished prison slavery entirely, but the striking incarcerated workers along with the help of our union have accelerated us past a point of no return in the fight for abolition!



Remembering **Berta Cáceres**

Honduras Indian Activists, Environmental Activists

Opponent of Junta

Murdered March 3, 2016

*Remembered by
Raymond S. Solomon*

Clydeside IWW Branch

westscotland@iww.org.uk

In November We Remember

Michael McLaughlin
(Donegal/Glasgow)

Dave Paterson
(Renfrew/Stonehaven)

& John Dickens
(Stonehaven)

The Glasgow Singers Strikers,
105 years ago

**The Anti-Parliamentarians &
syndicalists of the past**

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NYC diner workers organize with the IWW

By Marianne LeNabat

An exciting new IWW campaign has launched in New York City. Workers at Ellen's Stardust Diner in Times Square went public in late August 2016. Calling themselves Stardust Family United, these workers have come together to fight back against unsafe working conditions, arbitrary firings, and harassment on the job.

The restaurant is a popular tourist destination in the heart of the Broadway area, with lines of customers that often wrap around the block. The servers sing show tunes, pop songs, and jazz standards while serving diner-style food. Most are performers who take time off to work on Broadway shows, and use the restaurant to help pay the bills in between performing gigs. For this reason, a lot of the staff have worked there for years and know one another professionally outside of work.

Earlier this year, the owner of Ellen's Stardust Diner brought in a new management company to run the restaurant. This new management immediately started making changes that made life worse for all workers in the restaurant. For example, they stopped letting wait staff return to the diner after time away for a performing gig. Management began understaffing the restaurant, and refused to replace dangerous equipment (such as a burger grill in the kitchen that gave off electric shocks and an unstable platform servers stood on to sing). Perhaps worst of all, management constantly fired workers on a whim, for the tiniest of infractions. A server was fired for having a table of customers walk out without paying. A busser was fired for picking up a glass the "wrong" way from an empty table. These constant firings (about one or two per week) terrorized workers.

Fed up with these conditions, workers at Stardust reached out to a number of unions in the New York City area for help. The only union who expressed an interest in working

with them was the IWW. Over the next few months, the NYC General Membership Branch (GMB) ran organizer trainings for the rapidly-forming committee. Members of the NYC GMB also began strategizing with workers at the diner about using direct action to get their demands met.

One such action was a march on the boss in late August. Management had taken away the tip bucket that wait staff circulated among patrons in between songs. This was a significant source of revenue for servers, and taking it away appeared to just be about bullying the staff. Servers reacted with a beautifully creative march on the boss. After singing "My Shot" from the musical "Hamilton" to rev themselves up, and getting patrons in the restaurant to raise their ketchup bottles in the air in solidarity, four servers marched up to the manager on the floor and demanded their tip bucket be returned within 24 hours. They won their demand within five hours.

Workers went public a few days later with a coordinated media campaign. A long feature article appeared in the *New York Times*, with subsequent articles in publications such as *Broadway World*, *Playbill*, *Gothamist*, *Eater*, and *Jezebel*, among others. Following this, workers received an outpouring of support from their friends and colleagues in the entertainment world, with messages recorded and disseminated through social media, such as Facebook.

Ellen's Stardust Diner owner Ken Sturm hit back hard with an intense union-busting campaign. He hired an aggressive anti-union lawyer, Brent Yessin, who lobbied around the country for right-to-work legislation. Captive audience meetings and one-on-one meetings were held with staff from both "back of house" (the kitchen) and "front of house" (the dining area). Workers in the kitchen were offered a raise, but threatened with termination if they joined the union. Anti-union literature, some



Photo: Stardust Family United

Ellen's Stardust Diner workers rally in Times Square on Oct. 8.

of it bordering on ridiculous (like a flyer that asked "Did you know Joe Hill was a murderer?"), was put up around the restaurant. Despite commenting in the press that he would sit down with the newly-formed union, the owner ignored the union's requests for a meeting. Workers held a banner demo outside the restaurant.

About ten days after the union went public, the boss began (or resumed) firing front-of-house staff, clearly trying to get rid of the organizing committee. In four days, 13 people were fired. After a week, the number had grown to 15. Workers had begun holding daily demonstrations outside of the restaurant, singing union songs and holding signs demanding justice, in full view of management and patrons inside. Wobbly supporters passed out informational leaflets to potential customers, and many refused to go inside. When diner workers were fired mid-shift, they would be welcomed into the arms of their demonstrating comrades and marked with a number on their shoulder (e.g. "9" for ninth fired worker) to commemorate their firing. The extremely punitive and disgusting actions on the part of the boss only strengthened the resolve of the campaign.

Stardust Family United also hired a Wobbly-sympathetic lawyer, who is helping the union use the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) process: filing unfair labor practice (ULP) complaints against the employer, quashing an election the boss had cynically called for to try to discredit the organizing effort, and working on an injunction against further firings.

Although this has been a very hard-fought campaign, morale remains high, and organizing continues. Dozens of members have taken out red cards. The IWW has made inroads into a new community in NYC: performing artists. As the Stardust Family has continued to expose the boss's illegal and punitive union-busting campaign, the media has continued to report on the story and public sympathy remains high. New employees hired by the diner's management to undermine the union have taken an interest in the campaign. Demonstrations continue. New tactics are rolled out, such as a phone zap and a "sip-in," where friends of the workers packed the restaurant during the busy Saturday dinner hour, ordered nothing, and then demanded managers negotiate with the union.

The struggle continues.

Farmworkers win landslide union election

By x331980

The Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJ) farmworkers union won a stunning election victory over Sakuma Brothers Farms, Inc. in Burlington, Wash. In a unionization vote taken on Sept. 12, 2016, farmworkers voted 195-to-58 in favor of the independent FUJ union. The farmworkers are largely Mixtec or Triqui indigenous workers, originally from Mexico. This is the first time that indigenous farmworkers anywhere in the United States have won a union election.

Workers joined the union in droves prior to the election, rather than simply signing authorization cards, and many if not most of those who voted carried union cards. “This is a historic moment,” said Maru Mora Villalpando, spokeswoman for FUJ. “This isn’t just for Familias; this is for all farmworkers.”

The union will represent piece-rate berry pickers employed by Sakuma, a corporate farm based in Burlington. Contract negotiations are expected to begin soon. FUJ has demanded a contract guaranteeing a \$15-per-hour minimum wage and sick leave.

FUJ and its many supporters began marching and picketing in the summer of 2013, when discontent over sexual and racial harassment, deplorable living conditions, low piece-rate wages, and dehumanizing working conditions boiled over. In 2013 a boss at the corporate farm said, “There is nothing to negotiate,” and contended that the union campaign was being driven by “outside agitators.”

As organizing gained momentum, the bosses fired union supporters and outspoken workers, and brought in seasonal “guest workers” from



Familias Unidas por la Justicia's post-election celebration.

Photo: FUJ

Mexico. Since then, the union and its members have won several lawsuits, including one that ordered Sakuma to remove intimidating security guards, which had cast a “chilling effect” over the camps and fields, according to the lawsuit.

An effective boycott campaign targeted Driscoll’s berries and Häagen-Dazs berry ice creams—two of Sakuma’s principal customers. Boycott committees, often spearheaded by IWW members and branches, spread the boycott all over the United States, as well as into Canada and Europe.

A humorous highlight of the vote tallying occurred when a Sakuma representative reportedly objected to the presence of several FUJ members, despite an agreement allowing that. The vote counters responded by taking the ballots out into a parking lot and counting them on a tailgate, so all and sundry could observe the process.

Kerstin Lindgren from the Fair World Project served as a mediator during the negotiations that led to the vote. “It’s absolutely precedent setting,” Lindgren said of the vote. “[The process] is a fantastic model for other farmworkers.”

Letter of congratulations to Familias Unidas por la Justicia from the Industrial Workers of the World General Administration

Fellow workers of Familias Unidas por la Justicia,

The General Administration of the Industrial Workers of the World congratulates you on your historic union election victory. Familias Unidas por la Justicia never gave up the struggle for better working conditions and union recognition, regardless of the shameful lies and union-busting efforts of the bosses. Your union is a true rank-and-file effort, organized by the women and men who work in the fields. Campesinos are among the most exploited and unappreciated workers in the world. You have shown that farm workers can stand together and win.

FUJ’s struggle for union recognition at Sakuma Brothers Farms, Inc. is inspirational. In the finest tradition of direct action on the job your union used quick, short strikes to win demands and pressure the corporation for workers’ rights. You and your supporters organized an effective boycott

campaign against Driscoll’s berries. IWW members everywhere proudly helped spread the boycott in solidarity. Our members walked the picket lines and joined your marches. Now we celebrate with you, and stand by you as you negotiate your first union contract.

The IWW stands for revolutionary unionism and a world without bosses where the workers own and control the workplace. We advocate One Big Union of all workers, in order to be strong and united in the struggle against capitalism and the exploitation that is inherent in that economic system. The IWW’s Agricultural Workers Organization and Industrial Union 110 are proud parts of our history, winning many fights across America using methods such as yours.

In solidarity,

The General Administration of the Industrial Workers of the World

2016: A year of **wildcat strikes** around the globe

By **John Kalwaic**

Throughout 2016, workers from all over the world instigated wildcat strikes. The definition of a wildcat strike may differ depending on the country, but it is often defined as either a strike without permission of the union, a strike by workers not affiliated with a union, an illegal strike, or even a strike that is called by the members and not the union leadership. Sometimes wildcats are illegal, and they are often frowned upon by the mainstream media and even the labor media. Wildcats can sometimes occur when the leadership does not want to support the workers or when the union has its hand tied by contractual obligations. 2016 was a particularly big year for “the wildcat,” and what follows are just a sample of some of these strikes.



Adopted kitten with patch, inspired by the Sabo Cat.

Photo: Kac Kalwaic

Wildcat Strike Leads to Victory for Disabled Postal Worker in England

Postal worker Andrew Mootoo, who had been fired from the Bridgwater Royal Mail Office in England, was reinstated on Feb. 15, 2016. Mootoo was a member of Communication Workers Union (CWU). Mootoo, who was already deaf, was terminated in 2015 after he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. He received sick pay temporarily and then his pay was stopped.

On Nov. 11, 2015, postal workers from the

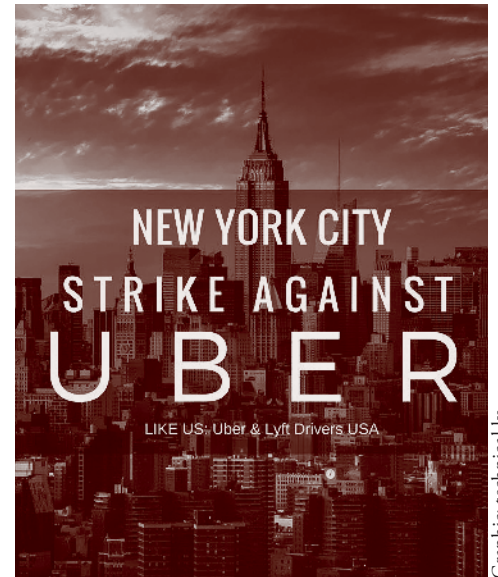
Royal Mail Office participated in a 24-hour unofficial walkout for their fellow worker. The walkout was technically illegal and some labor representatives from the CWU were under threat for the walkout. However, on Feb. 15, the wildcat paid off. The day after his reinstatement was confirmed, a gate meeting was held, with Mootoo and his wife present, to celebrate a remarkable victory for the CWU. After the gate meeting, the British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter for Mootoo, said she had never experienced anything like it; the speeches had given her goose bumps!

Longshore Dock Workers Walk Out on Strike in New Jersey and New York City

On Jan. 29, 2016, more than 1,000 longshore dock workers walked out in an unprecedented wildcat strike. The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), which represents these dock workers on the East Coast, is the more conservative of the two major longshore unions in North America, so an action of this nature is unusual. The wildcat strike took place at six ports in the New York City area, which caught both the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the ILA union leadership by surprise. The New York Shipping Association, which organizes contracts with the ILA at the ports, was also caught off guard by the wildcat; they did not even know the reason for the strike. ILA spokesman Jim McNamara said that the wildcat was an entirely member-driven action. The reason was then explained that the Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor—a bi-state agency that investigates and combats crime on the waterfront—was imposing new rules and regulations on the workers including drug tests, which were not in the ILA contract with the New York Shipping Association. In response to the walkout, the Port Authority told truckers not to come into the port. The one-day walkout caused the shipping industry hundreds of thousands of dollars in a few short hours.

Uber Drivers Wildcat in New York City

On Feb. 1, 2016, hundreds of Uber drivers went on a wildcat strike—a 24-hour work stoppage—with no union representing them. The drivers were protesting the fact that Uber had reduced fares by 15 percent—a cost that the drivers alone



Promo graphic for the Uber strike on Feb. 1.

would have to absorb. The drivers picketed around Uber's New York City headquarters, chanting and hold signs with slogans such as “Uber is Wal-Mart on wheels.”

Uber claimed that the fare decrease would spur demand. But many drivers said that with the change, it takes them longer to make the same amount of money. Uber classifies its drivers as “independent contractors,” not as employees. This practice has been done explicitly to side-step unionization. The drivers, however, were able to conduct this wildcat strike without a union.

Eight months later, in September 2016, approximately 14,000 Uber and Lyft drivers signed union cards with Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1181-1061. This is the largest chapter of the ATU, representing more than 14,000 transit workers throughout New York City, Westchester, and Long Island.

Detroit Teachers “Sickout,” Students Walk Out

A series of “sickouts” occurred throughout schools in Detroit from Jan. 11 to 13, 2016. One anonymous teacher was quoted in “FOX 2 Detroit” as saying, “Teachers have not been silent about these issues. These are things that we’ve been saying for years and years. We’ve been identifying the problem; we’ve been trying to call attention to it. It has not had results. The laws are not in our

favor. The emergency manager has not been receptive to us; the governor has not been receptive to us. We had to cause an interruption.”

On Jan. 25, students at Communication Media Arts High School and Renaissance High School in Detroit staged a walkout to support their teachers and gain attention for their unsanitary schools. Though many students had been threatened with suspension if they took this action, the threats did not stop them.

Various courts in Detroit tried to give injunctions against the teachers for their sickouts but the injunctions were overruled. On Feb. 29, Darnell Earley, emergency manager of the Detroit Public Schools, agreed to step down. Education activists cheered when they heard the news of Earley's resignation.

Air Traffic Controllers, Transport and Public Sector Workers Strike Against Austerity in Belgium

On April 12, 2016, air traffic controllers at Brussels Airport went on a wildcat strike against pension cuts. The issues of the strike, including pensions and staffing, had been brewing for months before the wildcat, but the action took management by surprise. According to authorities, it could not have come at a worse time. There were two suicide bombings at the airport on March 22, so there had already been a decline in flights and security measures were heightened. The wildcat strike cost Belgian carrier Brussels Airlines approximately 50 of its flights to and from the main international airport.

In May 2016, Belgium was hit by another wildcat strike of transport and public sector workers against austerity and pension cuts. This brought the country's trains to a halt in the French-speaking Wallonia region, among other disruptions.

Guest Workers, Locals Hold Wildcat Strikes in Saudi Arabia

Approximately 50,000 sacked workers went on a rampage in the Mecca Region of Saudi Arabia and set buses on fire on the evening of April 30, 2016, according to the website “Middle East Eye.” These foreign guest workers worked for the Saudi Binladin Group, a multinational construction conglomerate founded by Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden (the father of former al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden). The workers were angry that they were not only laid off but also had not been paid in several months.

According to *al-Watan*, a daily Saudi newspaper, the Saudi kingdom has been hard hit by lowering oil prices, and many employees, especially foreign employees, had been laid off. The Binladin



70 Walmart workers in Nanchang, China, strike on July 1 against an unpopular new flexible scheduling system.

Group stated that the sacked workers were given free exit visas from Saudi Arabia, but many refused to leave because of their unpaid wages.

In Saudi Arabia, unions are illegal; even state-controlled unions are non-existent. Workers have no choice but to take militant actions, so all strikes are, by definition, wildcat strikes. Saudi Arabia, as do many other Gulf countries, has a massive foreign guest worker work force—mainly from South Asia. These workers have very few rights. Labor protests are rare in Saudi Arabia, but like many Gulf countries, when protests do occur, workers take direct action. Sometimes native Saudi citizens and foreign workers join together.

On Sept. 21, hospital staff participated in a strike at the prestigious private Saad Specialist Hospital in the eastern city of Khobar. The staff, who had not been paid in nearly four months, reached their breaking point.

“Surgeons, management, doctors, nurses, admin—Westerners, Asians, and Saudis are all taking action together. It's actually remarkable if you consider taking photos without someone's permission in Saudi carries a prison sentence and public shows of dissatisfaction carry a public beating and jail,” a Jordanian nurse was quoted as saying in “Middle East Eye.”

During the strike, hospital employees' children staged a sit-in at the entrance while holding signs that said they were not able to eat or go to school because their parents were not being paid.

Walmart Employees Stage Walkout in China

In July 2016, 70 workers walked out of a Walmart China store in the southeastern city of Nanchang. These workers were protesting the company's efforts to create more “flexible” work schedules for its employees. The day before the walkout, employees leafleted inside a store in the southern city of Shenzhen to inform their

co-workers about the scheduling system and their rights under labor law. The strikes then spread to other stores in the country throughout the month of July. Walmart came to China in 1996 and now has 443 outlets across the country.

Female Workers Walk Out for Equal Pay at Samsung in South Korea

On Aug. 9, 2016, nearly 30,000 female employees of Samsung's headquarters in Seoul staged the largest walkout that the company and the country have ever seen. The workers came into the main headquarters of the company, threw down their employee badges in the lobby and chanted, “Together we are one, without us nothing!” These workers have endured decades of wage discrimination and unequal treatment.

According to <http://www.medium.com>, “South Korean women suffer the worst wage gap among all OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] countries; currently at a staggering 40 percent. The figure is 2.5 times higher than the OECD average of 15.8 percent and considerably larger than the United States' gap of 18 percent.”

The striking workers said they would not return until all female employees' salaries are matched with their male counterparts and three female members are added to the company's board of directors (currently there are none). Additionally, they have said that they will not return to work until equal pay legislation is passed.

With files from Bridgwater Press, In These Times, International Business Times, Bloomberg, <http://www.fox2detroit.com>, BuzzFeed, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk>, <http://www.timesofmalta.com>, With files from <http://www.middleeasteye.net>, Labor Notes and <http://www.medium.com>.

Farewell, Rochelle Semel

You will always be an inspiration to us all

By Greg Giorgio

When Rochelle Semel read the preamble to the IWW Constitution 40 years ago, she recalled with some pride and her wonderful wide-eyed wonder expression, “I knew I had to join this union.” And in typical Rochelle fashion, she hid herself to Chicago to get her red card. Kathy Taylor, the IWW General Secretary-Treasurer (GST) at the time, signed her up on Nov. 26, 1975 and she remained in continuous good standing until her death on Aug. 27, 2016. Her passing comes on the heels of the loss of Fellow Worker Paul Poulos, her partner of nearly four decades, this past April 3.

Those who knew this feisty, artistic, loving, auto-didactic, anti-authoritarian also knew she lived for the IWW. Rochelle was one of the most non-doctrinaire labor advocates you are likely to meet. Her fundamental “a boss is a boss” attitude meant you were either on the good guy’s side or you were “one of them,” as she liked to call the ruling class types. Her working-class roots and her share of bumps in the road made her a natural Wobbly. “I think you’re born one,” she told me about 20 years ago.

Rochelle was raised in the Jewish working-class diaspora of the Bronx in the early 20th century. She heard plenty of Yiddish spoken by her family and neighbors. Her father was a paper cutter, a reader, connected to the socialist movement and trades. Her mother was more grounded to the home and family. They sent her to socialist summer camps upstate. Her first husband came out of those summers away. Rochelle married at the age of 17 and had her first child at the age of 18. Her second husband gave up on the marriage when Rochelle joined the IWW!

She and Fellow Worker Paul Poulos never had a piece of paper



Fellow Worker Rochelle Semel and cat, year unknown.

but bonded for their lives, in great part, through the IWW.

Fellow Worker Rochelle held many jobs early in life and worked hard to support herself, her two children and her first two spouses while they pursued artistic and educational opportunities. Cashier, retail clerk, office worker, temp, Rochelle landed her career job at the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations office in New York City. She rose quickly, agitated and organized for better conditions and made a lasting impression with her co-workers. After more than two decades of service, Rochelle retired in

1988. She continued to teach and direct the United Association for Labor Education (UALE) Union Women’s Summer School at Cornell for another 25 years. Hundreds of women became better advocates and activists via Rochelle’s public speaking curricula.

Rochelle saw the IWW as a natural extension of her work as a union educator. She was the driving force of the formation of the New York City IWW General Membership Branch (GMB) in the early 1980s after years of inactivity there. This, in turn, fostered the growth of activity elsewhere in New York state and the

region. The Upstate New York GMB of the IWW was where Rochelle and Paul hung their Wobbly hats over most of the last quarter century.

Rochelle embodied the notion that you learn by doing. She tirelessly served as a delegate and kept meticulously-organized records. She served on the IWW General Executive Board (GEB) a number of times—as GEB Chair when called to do so. She was the treasurer of the Upstate New York GMB when she passed on. Generous to a fault with her time and her counsel to fellow workers, she was a resource that will be impossible to replace. If you were a new, younger Wob, Rochelle was your best friend. She opened her heart and bank account wide for the IWW.

The voracious reader, painter, movie buff and caterer, caterer to IWW gatherings, made her home a refuge and a resting place. The Wobbly picnics at her home—called “The Wobble Inn” in Fly Creek, N.Y.—were legendary. The faithful correspondent to many is sorely missed.

Firm in her convictions, unwavering by others when she knew her stuff on an issue, Rochelle often played a vital role in union affairs. She was also a part of a very small number of Wobblies still alive who had real connection to “first generation” Wobs like Fred Thompson and Irv Hanson.

Rochelle is survived by her daughter, Lani Miller, son Danny Miller and his wife Amelia, sister-in-law Rhea, also several nieces and nephews. Services for family and close friends took place on Aug. 30 in Cooperstown, N.Y. A future memorial in the New York City area is in the works.

“I decided a long time ago,” she liked to recall, “to just say ‘Yes!’” to life’s opportunities. We are so glad she said “Yes!” to the IWW.

Photo: cooperstownfuneralhome.com

November 5th to mark **100th anniversary** of the **Everett Massacre** in Washington

By the Whatcom-Skagit GMB

All Wobblies and friends are urged to gather in Everett, Wash. at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 5, 2016, to commemorate the massacre of our members at that time and date in 1916. “Completing the Voyage” honors the 12 murdered and 27 injured Wobblies aboard the steamer Verona shot down by the sheriff and his drunken goons at 2 p.m. Three-hundred Wobblies were attempting to return to the northwest Washington State city to carry on with their free speech fight.

As important as the centennial memorial is, the real goal is to let workers in the Everett area know that the IWW is still here. The Whatcom-Skagit and Seattle General Membership Branches (GMBs) are planning two “Introduction to the IWW” presentations in Everett later in November; the town is ripe for reestablishing the IWW.

The rally point is the west end of Hewitt Av-



Graphic: IWW

enue, only 200 yards from the site of the murders. Fellow workers will lay wreaths and have a short ceremony then walk seven blocks to “Speakers Corner” at the corner of Hewitt and Wetmore.

Prior to the massacre, IWW members were thrown in jail for assembling here to recite, among other things, the “subversive” Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights. We will soapbox about the modern IWW on the busy downtown street corner and sing, too. The commemoration will end with a caravan traveling 25 miles south to Seattle’s Mount Pleasant Cemetery, where we will visit the gravesite of three of the 1916 victims: Fellow Workers Felix Baran, James Looney and Hugo Gerlot.

Everett will receive a lot of publicity from the IWW prior to our event. There may be quite a bit of local media attention as well, and we need every Wob who can to come to Everett. For more information, contact the Whatcom-Skagit GMB: iwwbellingham@gmail.com. Traveling Wobs are urged to make memorial wreaths or large bouquets. Branches should bring their banners.

This November **I Remember** Szmul Zygielbojm

By Raymond Solomon

In 1943, Szmul Zygielbojm, a member of The General Jewish Labour Bund in Poland, acted on behalf of his brothers and sisters in during the Holocaust.

Szmul Zygielbojm was living in exile in London during World War II. He committed suicide to protest the Nazis’ murder of the Jews in Poland and the inaction of the western governments to save the Jews. He said:

I cannot continue to live and to be silent while the remnants of Polish Jewry, whose representative I am, are being murdered. My comrades in the Warsaw ghetto fell with arms in their hands in the last heroic battle. I was not permitted to fall like them, together with them, but I belong with them, to their mass grave.

By my death, I wish to give expression to my most profound protest against the inaction in which the world watches and permits the destruction of the Jewish people.

This was recorded, among other places, in “While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy” by Arthur D. Morse.

Zygielbojm physically fought against the German invasion of Poland in 1939; in Morse’s words, he fought “heroically.” In exile in Britain, Zygielbojm was a member of the National Council of Poland—Poland’s government in exile during World War II.



Leader of Jewish Polish socialist workers BUND, who committed suicide in 1943 to bring attention to the genocide being committed against Polish Jewry

Remembered by Raymond S. Solomon

How **corruption** destroyed the American labor movement

Fitch, Robert. **Solidarity for Sale: How Corruption Destroyed the Labor Movement and Undermined America's Promise.** New York: PublicAffairs Books, 2006. Hardcover, 432 pages, \$7.88.

Reviewed by Brandon Oliver

"In 1997, a Bureau of Labor Standards reports revealed that New York City, where UNITE [now UNITE HERE] had its headquarters, had the worst sweatshop problem in the nation. About two-thirds of the garment shops in the city were sweatshops, in violation of wage and hour or safety standards. The stunning finding, though, was that three-quarters of the union shops were sweatshops. The results seemed to conflict with the common wisdom that 'a bad union is better than no union.' One day during the Christmas season, the union-led activists in a lower Broadway demonstration protested sweatshops in Mexico while dozens of UNITE workers were demonstrating literally across the street against the union's failure to enforce their contract in a particularly revolting sweatshop at 446 Broadway." — Robert Fitch, "Solidarity for Sale" (page 22-23)

UNITE HERE, one of the favorite unions of American progressives, a staunch fighter against third-world sweatshop manufacturing, has refused for decades to enforce what remain of its contracts in New York. They've been selling non-enforcement to the garment bosses for so long that it would be almost dishonest to switch that up. This is just one example among many that Robert Fitch provides of how corruption has rotted away the American labor movement from within.

For most of us, corruption just means bad officials taking bribes. Fitch takes the view of Classical and Enlightenment thinkers that corruption's menace to the Republic "came not from official chicanery but from citizens giving up their autonomy, trading their rights and duties for the dole or for special status as members of Caesar's entourage." Rooting out corruption will take more than just replacing bad officials: "The U.S. labor movement relies on its own internal system for producing corruption. Some fraction of the membership is involved just as much as the leadership. That's why it has lasted so long," writes Fitch.

Corruption was built into the very structure of the American Federation of Labor (AFL)—according to Fitch—by fighting for exclusive, territorial

control over specific jobs for privileged ethnic groups. The AFL began in 1886 as a split from the Knights of Labor by craft unions opposed to forming a class union, in which powerful skilled workers would lead the fight for all workers. The craft unions had a strong preference for exclusive contracts covering only their members, turning themselves into what William "Big Bill" Haywood called "job trusts." This is also the origin of the hiring hall system, in which local union officers were able to provide steady work to their supporters, while dissidents, women, and members of racial minorities were left to starve on the benches.

American unions, according to Fitch, have a "feudom syndrome—a kind of protection system based on exclusive jurisdictions, exclusive bargaining, and job control. Those who control the jobs become the bosses; those who want the jobs become their clients." These labor fiefdoms form a political structure closer to feudalism than to democracy—much less the "producer republicanism" of the Knights, or any vision of a cooperative commonwealth. (I believe Fitch was the first to describe American labor as a feudal system, although Fellow Worker Ben Egerman made a similar point in 2014).

This is different from Europe, where union membership is voluntary and unions negotiate nationwide contracts that cover all workers in an industry. The North American "Neanderthals" of craft unionism somehow beat out the "Homo sapiens" of class unionism, making them much more susceptible to mafia domination than even their Italian counterparts.

I agree with Fitch that dues checkoff and monopoly unionism are how zombie unions keep the artificial life flowing. However, just as Staughton Lynd often does, Fitch praises the union system in Europe, missing that this system has its own ways to maintain union funding independently from the membership. Most European countries hold periodic elections for union representatives on works councils (which Fitch also supports as a model). Governments subsidize unions based on their vote shares—guaranteeing them a steady income and ensuring an independent bureaucracy, albeit perhaps a more "honest" bureaucracy.

The barren marriage of labor to the Democratic Party

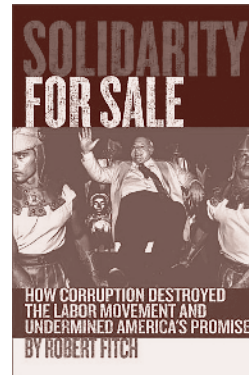
In 2016, we witnessed a spectacle where most leaders of "progressive" unions gave massive support to Hillary Clinton—who opposes a \$15 minimum wage and single-payer health care—over Bernie Sanders, who supports them. American unions contribute far more to the Democratic Party than European unions do to their socialist parties, with very little result in pulling the Democrats to the left. But maybe that's the point.

In "Prisoners of the American Dream" (1986), Mike Davis argued that labor had a "barren marriage" to the Democratic Party, never having birthed a social democratic party. Fitch responds that it is barren "only by the standards of modern Western-style marriage... It's more of an old-style patriarchal marriage. Union leaders are like traditional brides who must bring a dowry... When it comes to party affairs, the trade union role is in the kitchen." Both sides know this relationship would be shameful if acknowledged, "making for frequent furtiveness, pretension, and hypocrisy." In fact, union donations are made to buy influence for the specific union or its leaders, often at the expense of other unions. In many cases, donations act as a "get out of jail free" card, paid for by the membership's dues.

"How Bottom-Up Reform Hit Bottom"

Is it possible to reform a system of corrupt unions from within? Fitch looks at the two "best" examples of union reform: Teamsters for a Democratic Union's (TDU) attempt to reform from below, and former Service Employees International Union (SEIU) President Andy Stern's reforms from above.

As the 1960s student movement wound down, some campus-based radicals got factory jobs to bring their ideas to workers, eventually forming groups such as TDU. TDU eventually dropped their radical background, but had some success as opposition caucuses in some parts of the Teamsters. Their biggest success was in 1986, when their slate swept Local 138 in New York. When the Teamsters had their first secret-ballot



Graphic: goodreads.com

election for president in 1991, TDU had better recognition (and approval) than any of the actual candidates. They backed Ron Carey, who won, and TDU became junior partners in his administration.

Yet, in the early 1990s, Local 138 was raided into oblivion by nearby mob-dominated locals who undercut its wages. Neither Carey nor TDU—which had become completely dependent on his patronage—said or did anything to stop it. Carey was eventually expelled from the Teamsters after financing his reelection campaign by laundering money through the Democratic Party—with TDU defending him the whole time.

As Fitch concludes:

“Call it the Roach Motel syndrome. The leftists go in but they don’t come out. They enter as revolutionaries determined to create a social movement. Those who survive the ordeal of industrialization become plain and simple union reformers. But eventually, if they build a base or move up in the hierarchy, it’s because they’ve adjusted pretty thoroughly to the demands of a corrupt patron-client system.”

The “Dead Souls” of Andy Stern

Nikolai Gogol’s novel “Dead Souls” is a classic satire of 19th century Russian society. Chichikov, the main character, travels the country buying up the titles to serfs who have died since the last census. The landlords will owe less taxes, and Chichikov can mortgage the dead serfs into huge bank loans.

Andy Stern’s strategy for union growth, according to Fitch, is straight out of Gogol. Stern puts the “business” in business unionism, running SEIU like a corporation fighting for market share. To Stern’s credit, he wiped the once-pervasive mafia out of SEIU. A business union doesn’t have

room for the mafia, just as it doesn’t have room for democracy.

While most unions shrink, SEIU is considered “the fastest growing union in America” (just Google it). But the “growth” hasn’t come from convincing workers to join a union in order to fight bosses. It has come from (1) raiding other unions or pressuring them into mergers, and (2) convincing politicians to reclassify welfare recipients as workers so that the union can “represent” them and take that sweet, sweet dues checkoff.

Fitch shows case after case of this. In one example, SEIU Local 880 received a dues checkoff agreement for 37,000 Illinois home care workers in 1990, but only got bargaining rights in 2003 after contributing \$800,000 to elect Rod Blagojevich governor. That means that SEIU forced 37,000 poverty-level workers to pay dues for 13 years before the union ever actually “represented” the workers.

Of course, there are some important differences between Chichikov and Stern: “Stern’s home health care members are alive, not dead. And Stern had to pay a lot more to the politicians than the nominal sum Chichikov gives to the landlords,” Fitch writes.

Conclusion

American exceptionalism—the idea that America (or American labor) is unique in important ways—has a long and complicated history. Sometimes it obscures more than it reveals. But Fitch makes a strong case that the corruption of American labor is unique and goes far beyond the vanilla reformism of European unions. He points to some of the very specific structural causes for it in the DNA of American unions, and makes a strong case that those unions can’t be reformed. Instead, he says, we need a whole new

labor movement that avoids dues checkoff and monopolistic unionism.

Fitch does lay out a two-prong strategy for reviving the American labor movement. He is doubtful whether any reform can happen within the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), but he suggests some measures that could be fought for in union locals, such as term limits, cutting the number of officials, and making leadership a sacrifice.

He also sketches out a strategy for a new kind of labor movement built by the hundreds of millions of workers outside of the AFL-CIO, because “the point is not to fight for each tiny island, but to harvest the sea.” Some of his proposals align perfectly with the IWW’s vision: abolish exclusive jurisdiction, make union membership and dues voluntary, and throw exclusive bargaining clauses out of union contracts. He goes into more detail on these and other measures. I would strongly encourage IWW members to read and engage with it.

A more comprehensive vision for a revived American workers’ movement lies in Stanley Aronowitz’ “Death and Life of American Labor” (2014). That’s where we’ll conclude this series.

Note: This is the third part of a series called “Books for a Renewed American Worker’s Movement.” The first part of this review series appeared in the July/August 2015 Industrial Worker (“Books For A Renewed American Workers’ Movement: New IWW Review Series Explores ‘The Blue Eagle At Work,’” page 6-7). The second part appeared in the Fall 2015 Industrial Worker (“Is Anything Too Good for the Working Class?” [review of “Out of the Jungle: Jimmy Hoffa and the remaking of the American Working Class”], page 16).

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Labor must stand united against the Dakota Access Pipeline

By Shallah Baso

On Sept. 15, 2016, the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) announced their support for the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. This hardly came as a surprise to me, but it definitely didn't lift my spirits about the present state of organized labor in the United States. At a time when solidarity and support are needed for one of the most vibrant and powerful indigenous liberation movements of the decade, the AFL-CIO asked itself, "Which side are you on?" and spoke its answer plainly: with business and its owners.

Any organization committed to an egalitarian society (or the general survival of the human species, for that matter) would oppose the construction and condemn the pipeline company's attacks on indigenous protesters. Any genuine and strong workers' organization should call on the construction workers to withhold their labor, offer legal support to those who do, and provide what supporting resources it can offer to those who resist scabs and legal assistance to jailed protesters.

But the AFL-CIO is not a genuine workers' organization, nor has it ever committed itself to egalitarianism. It has a long history of excluding workers from its unions—people of color, women, communists, unskilled laborers, and immigrants—only removing these barriers when the culture surrounding and internal to it faced sufficient challenge from workers and the courts. In recent times, the AFL-CIO supported construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline, another environmental catastrophe that would cut through not only swathes of indigenous land, but also provide very few long-term jobs for construction workers.

The AFL-CIO's behavior seems to be driven by a political orientation toward securing better day-to-day working conditions for its already-existing union members, without regard for a broader and long-term liberatory social vision. This "social blindness," the kind that Helen Keller railed against when speaking about the industrial ruling class and the media it owns, is the only way someone can tell American Indians that refusing to allow a pipeline to be built literally over their ancestors' graves is "hold[ing] union members' livelihoods and their families' financial security hostage to endless delay" (to borrow the words from AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka's statement regarding the Dakota Access Pipeline).

When the AFL-CIO does release documents



Wobblies stand with Standing Rock at the IWW General Convention in September.

Photo: Donna Page

detailing a strategy or a vision, they read like Democratic Party talking points. The AFL-CIO has attached itself to and merged with the center of the Democratic Party, becoming an appendage of ever-rightward-shifting parliamentary politics, hoping that electoral action in the form of legislation (eliminating the Taft-Hartley Act, securing anti-discrimination protections for joining a union) will somehow stop or alleviate unions' declining membership and create a labor rebirth. The AFL-CIO seems to believe that politicians like Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton will fight neoliberal cuts to public services and attacks on union rights, when their "opposition" mainly consists of an alternative public relations strategy for pursuing the policies that best serve business owners. This is more than a failed strategy for workers: it's a reactionary one that abandons the workplace as a site of struggle and appeals to a more benevolent-sounding wing of the capitalist state.

In fact, the AFL-CIO is acting for the right wing beyond Obama here. Thanks to the pressure placed on the federal government to react to the indigenous coalition's direct actions, the Obama administration has halted all construction on federal land (pending a review of environmental impacts), invited native leaders to formal talks to have a voice in modifying existing laws, and called on the pipeline company to pause construction. Meanwhile, Trumka is calling on the federal government to reverse that decision, and "allow construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline to continue."

In other words, the labor establishment wants to reject the state's management strategy for public

dissent, and instead opt for a more naked form of exploitation of dispossessed people and their environment. This is not "pushing politicians" to adopt policies more beneficial to workers; it's abandoning any meaningful commitment to the idea that "an injury to one is an injury to all" and doing the work of business owners for them. As my friend Nick Walter helpfully commented, "This is because at the end of the day the mainstream unions really do believe that the source of wealth is business and commerce rather than the labor of working people."

The North American working class, particularly the embattled indigenous resistance in North Dakota, deserves better than the bureaucratic and conservative AFL-CIO. It deserves a labor movement inclusive of all workers and exclusive of capitalists and their state's security forces—one led by the workers themselves and willing to fight for day-to-day changes on the job and to build long-term revolutionary changes in society at large. It deserves a class unionism across all ethnic, racial, gendered, and national lines, ultimately seeking to abolish class society itself.

The IWW joins with prominent labor organizations (such as National Nurses United, Communication Workers of America, Amalgamated Transit Union, United Electrical Workers, and others) in supporting the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's efforts to oppose the pipeline. As rank-and-file workers, we must reject any union's or federation's call to collude with the interests of business and act against dispossessed indigenous people.

NO MORE POLITICAL PRISONERS

By x363930

After 40 years in prison, this year may be the last best chance for bringing home American Indian activist and political prisoner Leonard Peltier. People across the country and around the world are calling on President Obama to grant Peltier executive clemency before leaving the White House in January.

Who is Leonard Peltier?

Leonard Peltier is an Anishinabe-Lakota Native American activist who is serving two consecutive life sentences. When arrested, he was a leading member of the American Indian Movement (AIM)—a movement that fought for the liberation of indigenous people and land. In June 1975, two Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents were killed in a shootout involving AIM members on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

Since then, the International Leonard Peltier Defense Committee (ILPDC) reports, “prosecutors and federal agents have manufactured evidence against Peltier (including the so-called ‘murder weapon’); hid proof of his innocence; presented false testimony obtained through torturous interrogation techniques; ignored court orders; and lied to the jury. People are commonly set free due to a single constitutional violation, but Peltier—innocent and faced with a staggering number of constitutional violations—has yet to receive equal justice.”

Peltier has spent more than 40 years in prison for a crime he did not commit.

Who supports Leonard Peltier?

On account of the irregularities in his case, numerous organizations and celebrities have come out in support of Leonard Peltier. The National Congress of American Indians (which represents more than 500 Indian nations in the United States), Amnesty International, the National Lawyers Guild and the Center for



Photo: x363930

Artist Gregg Deal, a Pyramid Paiute Indian, created the eye-catching mural of American Indian Movement (AIM) leader Leonard Peltier in April 2016 at the Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice, home to the International Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, New Mexico.

Constitutional Rights have all advocated on his behalf. In the realm of organized labor, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers has also written a statement of support. These groups are joined by numerous actors, musicians, dignitaries and politicians in calling for justice for Leonard Peltier.

Why is Peltier still in prison?

In spite of this organized support, Peltier is still stuck in the system. The U.S. Parole Commission has repeatedly denied Peltier parole since he became eligible in 1986, including most recently in 2009.

According to Amnesty International, the Commission has denied this “on the grounds that Leonard did not accept criminal responsibility for the murders of the two FBI agents. This is despite the fact that, after one such hearing, the Commission acknowledged that, ‘the prosecution has conceded the lack of any direct evidence that you personally participated in the executions of two FBI agents.’”

Peltier will not receive another full parole hearing until 2024, if he survives. The ILPDC maintains that, “...according to 1977 standards, he has served the equivalent of over five life sentences.”

Additionally, the ILPDC notes that the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) has failed to take into ac-

count Peltier’s year in prison prior to his conviction in 1977, as well as 20 years of good-time credit earned and counting. Instead, the BOP has consistently stated that Peltier’s presumptive release date is Oct. 11, 2040.

Behind all this, the No Parole for Peltier Association (NPPA) and the FBI, which led the Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) to disrupt national liberation organizations like AIM, hold undue sway on the legal system, stridently opposing any semblance of justice for Peltier.

Now is the time

Leonard Peltier is more than 70 years old and his health is deteriorating. He has suffered a stroke which left him partially blind in one eye. For many years, he had a seriously debilitating jaw condition which left him unable to chew properly and caused constant pain and headaches. The prison medical facilities could not properly treat this condition. In fact, two prison surgeries only worsened Leonard Peltier’s condition. A physician from the Mayo Clinic offered to repair Peltier’s jaw, free of charge, but was turned down again and again by prison authorities until the United Nations sharply rebuked the United States for subjecting Peltier to inhumane conditions. Surgery was performed and Peltier’s condition improved somewhat.

Subsequent surgeries are required, however, to fully address his condition. To date, such treatment has not been approved by prison officials. In recent years, Peltier has again begun to experience severe discomfort related to his jaw, teeth and gums. Today, Peltier suffers from bone spurs in his feet and is affected by an abdominal aortic aneurysm, diabetes, high blood pressure, a heart condition, and other emerging health issues. According to an affiliate of Physicians for Human Rights, he risks blindness, kidney failure, and stroke given his inadequate diet, living conditions, and health care.

What can Wobblies do?

Last year on the Day of Mourning (Thanksgiving), Peltier wrote, “In 2008, when asked about my case, then Senator Barack Obama supposedly said, ‘Show me the support.’” Since that time, Obama has visited the Robben Island cell once occupied by Nelson Mandela. But like the Clinton and Bush administrations before, this White House has maintained silence about Peltier. While numerous people and organizations have been standing up for Leonard Peltier for decades, still more must be done to counter the odious FBI and apply positive pressure for this warrior’s release. It is too late for our General Convention to issue a solidarity statement this year from the union as a whole, but General Membership Branches and individual members can and should call, write and message the White House. Find out more about Leonard Peltier and his case at <http://www.whoisleonardpeltier.info>. With this information, your branch can organize a fundraiser, a film screening (of films such as “Incident at Oglala” or “Warrior: The Life of Leonard Peltier; which gives context on the corporate mining land grabs in South Dakota at the time and strongly parallels the situation at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota today), or a letter-writing event.

BUILDING THE IWW PROGRAM:

Stepping stones to our democratic future

By FW Jimi Del Duca

Has someone asked you to explain the IWW program to them? How did that work out? Maybe you had better luck than me, because I could not explain it the first several times I was asked to do so. I must have come across as a half-baked revolutionary, and made the One Big Union appear pretty flakey too, if a loyal and enthusiastic member like me could not describe what it is we are working so diligently to create. I felt foolish and ignorant, which was great, because I had to look at my own lack of understanding, and get educated myself. Later, after I had done my homework and gotten a firm grasp of industrial democracy and our IWW strategy, I could explain our intentions and actions with confidence. That not only made me feel really good about my new ability to describe our revolution, but the person I was talking with clearly took our organization seriously. So, just in case you are a reader who likes to take a shortcut around my learning curve, I am going to share what I see as the stepping stones to our democratic future.

How do you explain industrial democracy to someone who has never heard the term? It sounds weird to most people. Democracy is usually vaguely understood. Everybody votes on stuff and the majority decides what to do. The IWW is a democratic labor organization. We members vote our will, come to agreements, and move forward together. But what about industrial? What is industry? I understand industry, in general, as every business enterprise. A particular industry, for example, is selling fast food. All the fast-food businesses, looked at together, form the fast-food industry. People earn their livings by working in industries. Capitalists and bosses get rich by being parasites on the workers in every industry, taking a large share of whatever the workers produce, and also claiming ownership of the business enterprise, which the employees create through their work. This is the exploitation of the working class. The bosses use governments, police, prisons, and the army to maintain control of industry and the working class. The bosses use warfare and colonization in their ego-driven competition with each other. No individual, no community or group, and no place on earth is safe to simply live in peace. This is the way the world runs today. So far, so good?

Industrial democracy is different. Industrial democracy is created and controlled by the working class—the majority of the people on our

planet. Working-class people, in the vast majority, simply want to live in peace and prosperity. They want to work a reasonable amount, and then enjoy life with their family and friends, which are the reachable fruits of industrial democracy. Industrial democracy is sustainable, socially just, and relies on peaceful productivity and negotiated cooperation. This in turn creates and sustains a prosperous and truly healthy human society. What this looks like, on a small scale, is when a business enterprise is democratically controlled by the people who work in the business. The workers carry the responsibility, make the decisions, do the work, learn from their mistakes, and reap the rewards. There are no bosses, only fellow workers.

Lots of worker-controlled enterprises already exist: from small ones, such as your local co-ops, to very large enterprises like the Mondragon Corporation in Spain. What the IWW intends is for there to be millions of worker-controlled enterprises! To take control of your workplace takes organization and effort. The foundation is an IWW industrial union for your industry. Building an industrial union starts with organizing yourself by joining the IWW. When enough of your co-workers also join, you all can form a job shop to work for immediate changes in your workplace. But one unionized workplace among many is not very strong. Strength and power come when enough job shops in an industry affiliate. It is then that they have the means to charter an IWW industrial union and develop their power. When there is a strong industrial union in place then the workers can actually shut down the industry if they choose, and can leverage their power for major concessions from employers. Industry-wide strikes are very powerful, but that still leaves bosses in control of ownership. We Wobblies will not be satisfied until the boss hands over the keys to the business after some sort of transfer of ownership agreement is reached. That is the prize to keep our eyes on: transfer of ownership. Until that moment arrives for the full majority of workers, the industry is still not under worker control. When enough industries are under the control of industrial unions (or are already under some other form of worker control) we will then be in a position to implement the general

strike. This will be when the industrial unions are all confident of their power and strike together to take worker control of a regional economy—not striking just to get better wages or benefits, but real ownership. This is what is meant when you see our Wobbly literature saying “Working for the General Strike.”

People wonder what strikes really are, as most have never witnessed one or even seen a picket line. The workers at a business simply not working is the usual basic understanding. But I think it is important to explain with a little more depth. A successful strike is like a boxing one-two punch.

It takes both hands to knock out the boss. The workers refusing to work is the first blow, the right hand, and for that to be effective it requires strong solidarity with co-workers so that everybody refuses to work until demands are met. But what if the boss hires strikebreakers? This is where the left hand has to land the winning blow, and the left hand is community support. If no customers (the community) will cross the picket line the business will not have any revenue, and paying strikebreakers will be pointless. So for a strike to win decisively, and for the workers to be in solid control, we have to educate the community too and win their support. When there is full community support in industrial democracy, everything we hope for will be possible.

Industrial democracy can be scaled up incrementally, and infinitely, to transform the way human society functions. This is the goal of the IWW—complete democratic control of the world economy by the working class. This is our revolution. It is a peaceful revolution. Violence and chaos are always taken advantage of by sociopaths to seize control for themselves, thus exchanging one group of dictators for another, or one system of injustice for another. Our revolution is different. Our revolution is constructive, orderly, and systematic. It is a step-by-step process that begins with the individual worker, expands to our places of work, grows to control individual businesses and eventually entire industries, and only concludes with securing a just and safe world.

In conversations with prospective members, by the time we get to this part people usually say that they are sympathetic, but cannot clearly visualize



how we intend to achieve our goal. Even though I have already explained once, these are entirely new ideas to most people, and I need to repeat the information and break it down into understandable chunks. The words are new and the ideas are new. It takes repetition for them to sink in. There is a lot of unfamiliar information for a mind to comprehend. This is education and the Wobbly is the educator. Be patient and thorough. Take as much time as is needed to really share our ideas. That person you are talking with is the next organizer at their workplace and in their circle of friends. As the old adage says, "The way to eat a big fish is one bite at a time."

Sometimes people are visual learners and a chart or list will help them. The list that follows is for them. The steps are arranged from embracing democracy in ourselves to a democratically-controlled planet. The steps are logical, and it should also be clear that no steps can be jumped over. Revolutionary progress is very much like a chain; every link must be strong and in place to support those which came before and those yet to come. Here are the steps to revolutionary progress:

1. **IWW Membership:** Join the revolutionary struggle for industrial democracy. Understand and internalize the values of democracy within yourself.

2. **IWW Job Shops:** IWW members in a particular business (you and your co-workers) working for immediate goals in their employment as well as wider IWW membership in their industry.

3. **General Membership Branches:** Supporting IWW organizing in local businesses and helping new job shops.

4. **IWW Industrial Organizing Committees:** Organizing workers in all the industries by creating strong industrial unions.

5. **IWW Regional Organizing Committees:** Coordinating all the IWW industrial unions and organizing committees in a geographic region.

6. **Democratically-Controlled Regions** (sustainable, socially just, prosperity): We are planning for IWW regional administrations to coordinate between regions.

7. **Democratically-Controlled Planet** (peace, sustainability, socially just, prosperity for all).

We Wobblies have a workable plan. We have a coherent and logical strategy and we have strong

tactics. We have more than a century of experience. To my knowledge there is no better approach to economic and social justice than ours. To achieve our goal will probably require generations more of effort. That kind of long game is not the usual approach in today's world of quick gratification. The many challenges we face, however, including global ecological destruction and endless social strife at the hands of capitalism, are not going away. The bosses have given us generations (perhaps millennia) worth of problems to fix and to leave the task to our children is to gift them with only the promise of future suffering. The best time to change the course of history and alter what the future will be like is right now, this very moment. That is why I am working for IWW goals. That is why I want to communicate who we are as effectively as I possibly can. When millions of us work together the future can be what we workers want it to be. If we do not act and invest effort today, we can be 100 percent certain of failure, for ourselves and our children, tomorrow.

Educate, Organize, Emancipate! For the One Big Union.

Remembering Wovoka

a.k.a. Jack Wilson
(1856 - 1932)

Founder of
Ghost Dance Religion.



Remembered with Ghost Dancer Religion
Indians massacred 1890.

*Remembered by
Raymond S. Solomon*



Spirit of Revolt Archive, Glasgow
<http://spiritofrevolt.info/collection/>

In November We Remember

Ethel McDonald

William McDougall

Robert Lynn & many others here:

http://radicalglasgow.me.uk/strugglepedia/index.php?title=Main_Page



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**In November, the *Industrial Worker* Remembers
Fellow Workers
Rochelle Semel & Paul Poulos**



The power and grace that Rochelle and Paul gave to the IWW over the span of 40 plus years will never be forgotten.

"We were the loudest in the fight for fair wages and enough hours. We were the first to go on strike. We were the first to do a sit down. We will be the last to shut our mouths"

Evelin Cruz



1971-2016

With Solidarity and Love, Los Angeles - Ricardo Flores Magon GMB

To learn more about Evelin, please visit
<http://www.united4respect.org/evelin>