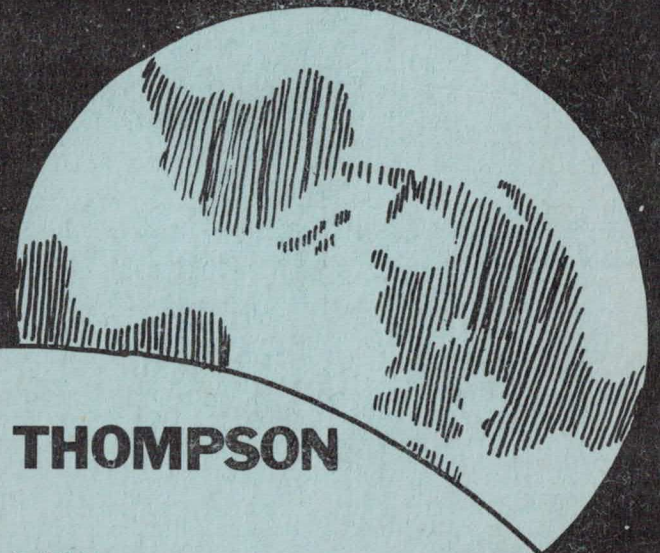


# **WORLD LABOR NEEDS A UNION**



**by FRED THOMPSON**

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# WORLD LABOR NEEDS



## A UNION

by FRED THOMPSON

Speedier shipping, ingenious packaging and loading, temperature control, the elaboration of business concerns into multinational corporations, the growth of industry where ten years ago there was only desert or jungle--all these play us hired hands against each other in strange markets that we have never seen as surely as though we had come there from many lands to jostle each other as we stood in line to seek a job.

From what countries did the materials come that you handled at work today? From what lands the items that you used at home? Were some assembled from components made in many lands? To what lands will the goods you worked on today travel? In what countries did the customer for which you worked have branch operations?

Have you been harmed by the low wage to which some distant man or woman has been driven? Or was it your high productivity that compelled him to accept so low a wage so that he too could have a job? Today did you compete against some lad in a country with which your government bans trade--a lad who worked all the cheaper to permit his product to underbid yours in some third country to which your employer would otherwise have sold your product? Can tariff barriers prevent such competition? Or is it simply that since you and they are in the same market, you need to develop some understanding with each other so that you can avoid being used against each other--even as the men across a bench from each other did when they started their first local union?

Our forefathers built unions to hinder their employers from using them to drive down each other's wage or to speed each other up. Unionism grew as the market for men and goods grew, but on different patterns in different countries. In USA the movement started as local groups of those living by the same craft; from 1827 on, it developed area councils for mutual assistance between local craft bodies; from the 1850's on, it followed railroad expansion by building nationwide craft unions, which later allied at their summit levels to form the American Federation of Labor. In contrast, in France, the national labor movement developed from the local federations that linked the local craft bodies. In 1890 the German Metal Workers and the American coal miners built industrial unions, and since then it has become increasingly customary in many countries for one union to cover an entire industry within the national boundaries. In most countries the national labor movement (often movements) is an unplanned conglomerate of many dif-

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ferent plans of organization, and very incompletely integrated. At times these growths have been embellished with rather powerless international bodies, sometimes restricted to one trade or industry, sometimes general in scope, but definitely not built to practice unionism on an international scale.

We also have competed face to face. First roads and ships and railroads, now autos and planes have made it easier for us to run after distant jobs until today no young man can anticipate on what continent his grandchildren will be born. Nation no longer means those with a common language and culture, but those who pay tribute with their lives and their production to the same military-industrial complex. Nations are aggregates of under-men kept in mutual fear of each other, and thus supporting their military-industrial complex, in anticipation that they may take each other's job or each other's life. The union movements throughout the world have been molded in this obsolete system of national states and taken its shape, and thereby have been rendered ill-fitted for the task at hand.

Like all our arrangements, union structure and function have lagged behind the changing circumstances to which they have been adjustments. Despite this lag, up to their national boundary lines, there has been eventual response to the economic developments within the industrial nations. Beyond the national boundary lines the union movements have only groped toward union solidarity and have set up no global union practices in this global economy. But the advancing Seventies is the decade of the world market, when most multinational corporations have incomes bigger than the gross national product of most nations. It is a decade starting off with threat of a world depression, with the foreign plants owned by United States industries producing over \$120 billion worth per year, with examination of the cores men drilled on the moon, with satellites showing us on TV events the other side of the earth as fast as they happen, with intercontinental missiles ready at the touch of a button to devastate the earth, with China the new member of the society of overkill. By lag the system of national states has continued into a technology that has made it suicidal to continue the old order of things.

In this perilous situation the managers of the steel companies from USA, the European Coal and Steel Community and Japan, a quarter century after the last war between the new partners, met early in 1969 to divide the world market, and arrange that in 1969, USA should import 14 millions tons of steel with 5,700,000 tons to come from Japan. This was a typical arrangement

of modern business. There are joint studies of trade patterns in electrical equipment by American and Japanese unions; Reuther proposes seeking common expiration dates for contracts in the automotive field as a precondition for worldwide union action among auto workers; there are numerous resolutions of alarm at loss of markets and less frequent resolutions extending strike assistance to those who have been working for a pittance, and futile resolutions protesting the arrest of active unionists in other lands--but no such businesslike response to the facts of a world economy by those on whose daily work all power structures rest--or crumble.

In this world market, unwittingly and crossing no picket line, we can break each other's strikes. An understanding not to scab on each other is a firm basis for an understanding not to massacre each other either. We are not likely to achieve the one without the other.

## II A Bit of History

For years union men have known that they needed world brotherhood. In 1864 British unionists gathered brothers from the continent and founded the International Working Men's Association, often called the First International. For eight years it developed mutual assistance, for example, giving financial aid to Chinese workers who had struck a railroad construction job in California. In 1871 following defeat in the Franco-Prussian war, the workers of Paris refused to surrender their guns and the British press ran atrocity lies about how the workers were running the city. Marx, secretary of the International, wrote in defense of the Paris workers and soon the British unionists, whose prime concern at the time was to win legal recognition from the government in order to protect their union funds, withdrew their support. The Franco-Prussian war ended with an alliance of the warring rulers crushing the Paris workers, shooting nearly a tenth of them and deporting thousands. The workers' international, with British support lost, was soon killed by internal dissension.

In 1889 a vigorous French labor movement, rising from this bloody repression of 1871, observed the centenary of the great French Revolution with a conference to start a new international of union and socialist bodies. Its most enduring consequence is the May First holiday observed by labor almost everywhere except the USA, Canada and Australia, a holiday established on the 1889 proposal of Samuel Gompers for a yearly May Day

festival to urge the 8-hour day. This Second International fell apart in 1914 at the start of the First World War. There had been some talk and hopes of calling a general strike in all affected countries to prevent the war, but party heads said unions must call any strike and union heads said that stopping a war was a job for party heads, and meanwhile governments managed to keep labor leaders in both France and Germany from knowing how willing their counterparts were to take some such action if only they had some assurance it would be mutual. So, cast in the mold of the system of national states, and lacking a supranational communications system, the international labor movement was unable to stop its members from shooting each other.

Prior to 1914, labor leaders were normally in opposition to their governments. But during that war, governments found it convenient to absorb the labor leaders and give them posts of honor, and union memberships grew. Since then the previously traditional labor opposition to government foreign policy has become only intermittent, and the 1914 facade of international labor unity has never been fully restored. The International Federation of Trade Unions that had been founded in 1913 was rebuilt in 1919 in Amsterdam and felt it had to spend much of its efforts in disputes with the Red International of Labor Unions that was built in 1921 to project the Bolshevik revolution worldwide. Neither of these internationals was set up to practice unionism on an international scale. In 1926 the British miners struck against a wage cut. They were backed up by a 10-day general strike of most British unionists, and then by an embargo by European transport workers to stop coal shipments from breaking their strike; but still coal came from the Ruhr through poorly organized Rotterdam and even more from the United States and defeated this valiant thrust toward the practice of unionism across boundary lines. Depression followed and the expansion of fascism, with some belated efforts at united resistance to it, but no concerted action on proposals to refuse as union men to transport to the fascist powers the materials with which to oppress their own people or to subjugate their neighbors. We needed jobs.

During World War II, unions became even more enmeshed with government. The war ended in victory for the alliance of Russia and the west with strong communist influence in the resistance movements in the areas that had been overrun by the central fascist axis. The World Federation of Trade Unions founded in 1945 included both communist and anti-communist labor leaders (and from USA the CIO but not the AFL). It held together for three years. When the wartime alliance between their

governments gave way to the Cold War, the labor leaders fell apart too. British and US labor leaders started a pull-out from the WFTU and set up the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the ICFTU.

The two internationals have contended in all countries where they have entry to ally labor on one side or the other of the Cold War. For a long time, AFL operations in South America have been widely recognized as more anti-communist than anti-employer, and in recent years there has been disclosure of the use of various American unions by the CIA for its irresponsible Cold War crusades. WFTU affiliates, in a sort of mirror image, urge strikes where this may serve Moscow policy but discourage them where Moscow tries to propitiate the local government. In the developing countries this has left the serious business of unionism up to bodies independent of both WFTU and ICFTU; in South America this has left unionism largely to the Catholic labor movement, CLASC.

The Catholic labor center was founded as the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, but in 1968 it changed its name to World Confederation of Labor. In that year, it had six million members paying dues, with 834,000 of them in Belgium, 600,000 of them in France where it is bigger than the ICFTU affiliate, 426,000 in the Netherlands, 750,000 in Vietnam, and a large following as indicated by the arrest of over a thousand of its activists in 1969 in South America among workers so poor most were not asked to pay dues. The WFTU in 1968 gave its membership as 130 million, over a hundred million being in the Soviet economies, and including the major labor movements of both France and Italy, and various developing nations. The ICFTU's 60 million came largely from the NATO nations: 14.3 million from USA, 8.8 million from Britain, 6.5 million from West Germany, 2.4 million in Italy, 2.7 million in the Indonesian Islamic Trade Union Federation, 1.5 million each in Austria and Sweden, and somewhat over a million each in Canada, Mexico and India.

Altogether these union bodies have an imposing display of union offices, extensive research facilities, and publications in hundreds of languages. Collectively they include a wide range of social and economic views that if used as rational tools give the world labor movement an incalculable advantage, but that if used as dogma assure endless bickering and disaster. Somewhere in them is direct familiarity with most of the work done throughout the world and with the varying condition of the workers who do it.

There is a growing awareness that we need to practice unionism across boundary lines and that unless we assert our independence from government we are not free to do so. In the WFTU there was criticism of the Russian government for invading Czechoslovakia, an action denounced by various communist labor leaders, especially from Italy and France. Maoism and the projection of Chinese communism has resulted in splitting some communist parties, as in India, and while this is reflected in their trade union activities, there is so far no Maoist international labor set-up, and here it appears chiefly in some youth groups. In ICFTU there has been a growing resistance to being maneuvered through its largest affiliate for US Cold War purposes; in the AFL-CIO there was disgust over revelations about subservience to CIA, a break-way of Auto Workers over foreign policy, and a growing number of union heads declaring for an end to the war in Vietnam. The Catholic World Confederation of Labor in 1969 declared for cooperation with all labor bodies, communist or anti-communist especially in eastern Europe.

Less noted but of positive consequence is an inevitable change in the world labor force: it consists ever more of workers who matured sometime since 1955 and who share the sense manifest in their generation as in no generation before it that worldwide they face a common future. Half the world is under 25, but the labor movement they inherit was built for action in the system of national markets that once provided a basis for the system of national states. In union structures, and in the various legal frameworks within which unions operate, and in the traditions that shape the thinking and emotional responses of union gatherings, there is a built-in resistance to adjustment to the facts of life of the 1970's.

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### III World Business

Ever faster the world market is replacing lesser markets. The process was already underway when the Phoenicians got tin from Britain. Since then every exploratory voyage has given the trader new products to bring home, new markets in which for a time he could be in control. It has created empires and anti-imperialism. For a time it made a few square miles of the earth's surface into the workshops for the rest of mankind. This unstable condition necessarily levels out toward equilibrium. If the trader came up against tariff or other barriers, he built his factory behind them and added the exploita-

tion of native labor to his previous trading profit. If the factory in the colonial area did not get built under the imperialists, it got built after independence as a proud answer to the imperialists--and the worker's way of life tended to remain about the same whichever way it happened. If the trader's home nation erects the barrier, he will find a way: Wilson & Co., the American meat packers, get around an American ban on fresh meat from Argentina by cooking TV dinners there and shipping them frozen to USA. The work tends to get done where it yields the most profit to those who decide what gets done, and today great multinational corporations reach that decision by running the entire range of global opportunities through their computers.

The system of national unionism is no more suitable to cope with this situation than an electrical fan is to fry an egg.

In our own day, growth toward a world economy keeps neck and neck with an accelerating technological development, its way greased by the investment of great surpluses that workers have produced over their own keep and in excess of the growth of industry and the expenses of the elite in the investing country--a process that goes on whether the investing country flies a red flag or one with stars and stripes. In 1967, the US investment abroad was estimated at eight times what it was in 1945. The Statistical Abstract for the United States gives the 1966 total for private US assets and investments abroad as \$80,942,000,000 on which it brought in an income of over \$6 billion. Japanese and European capitalists own an almost equal amount outside their own countries. In 1930 foreign investment in USA was only two billion; by 1966 it had reached nine billion. On any stock market anywhere in the world anyone with any acceptable currency can buy almost any stock in any major company operating in any country. We move toward a situation where a worldwide class of hired hands, of varying status and skills, works for a worldwide employing class, but with little promise of peace.

A conservative estimate given in Senior Scholastic, March 14, 1968, indicated that US industrial giants controlled 80% of western Europe's computer industry, 90% of its microcircuit industry, 40% of its auto production, and that in Britain these American giants owned over half of the more modern industries, and somewhat less in West Germany but with American holdings there strategically concentrated in oil, chemicals, autos and electrical equipment. Nor does agriculture escape from Dole Pineapple and United Fruit, or the Kleburgs of Texas who own 970,000 acres here from which they draw \$5 million livestock income, but ten times that acreage in Austral-

ia, and 513,000 acres in South America, 7,000 in Africa, netting them \$4 million from livestock operations abroad to eke out the \$20 million they draw from oil. "Of the 500 largest companies in the world," said International Affairs, April 1968, "306 are American and 74 are European." Said Fortune Magazine in September 1968: "In Europe nationalism is little more than a ritualistic slogan...Spurred on by the American omnipresence European bankers are merging internally, consorting externally, and migrating internationally to get a piece of the action."

This American "omnipresence" is being challenged. Chile makes Anaconda sell it back its copper mines. When the International Chamber of Commerce met in Istanbul June, 1969, the main issue was the multinational corporation and the chief dispute whether American business should have complete control of its branch operations or should let local capitalists in on joint ventures. Injections of capital and new management techniques have produced results far from uniform. Productivity has increased faster in Italy than in the rest of Europe or USA, and it has increased still faster in Japan. In USA and most of Western Europe productivity increased 30% over 1958 by 1963 and 70% by 1968; in Italy, 60% over 1958 by 1963 and 130% by 1968; in Japan 90% over 1958 by 1963 and 290% over 1958 by 1968. Japan is today the world's third economic power. It leads in the production of radios and motorcycles and ships, building half the world's shipping; it is second in autos and third in steel.

Italian productivity has not made for workingclass prosperity; Italian workers produce household appliances for export to the rest of the European Economic Community that they themselves cannot afford for their level of consumption remains the lowest of any of the member nations. Through the years 1960 to 1966 unemployment in Italy averaged 3.6%, compared with 0.4% in West Germany, 1.1% in Japan, 1.5% in Sweden, 2.3% in France, 2.4% in Britain, and 5.1% in both USA and Canada. In the less developed part of the world during this period of relative prosperity for the industrialized nations (when workers from the Nile were brought to the Ruhr to fill temporary labor shortages) unemployment and underemployment were massing up. ILO Director Morse estimates that 1960-1980 Asia will add 290 million to the number of job seekers, most of them unabsorbed by industry, and left in an agriculture that is already saturated with partly-employed labor. This gives little reason to mechanize agriculture and adopt the methods that in USA, 1944-1964, enabled agriculture to produce 33% more with 60% fewer manhours, an increase of 233% in productivity.

America also exports its managerial techniques. So does Russia which also makes large government investments abroad. The International Labor Organization, a UN appendage consisting of representatives of government, unions and employers, sponsors "high level management seminars for US and Soviet experts," reported Business Week, June 14, 1969. The same publication a week earlier had reported how managers of American operations in Europe often switch to European companies involved in technologies with which they are entirely unacquainted, but taking with them American management techniques considered transferable to all technologies. Thus workers the world over in free enterprise, Soviet and mixed economies, alike in the developed and the developing nations, face an ever more similar sort of management.

Computers have become indispensable tools to corporate management, as the multinational corporation and especially the conglomerate have taken the place of their smaller ancestors. It used to be that companies combined either horizontally, uniting plants of a like nature to limit competition, or vertically to unite a plant with a supplier of the materials it used. The conglomerate seems helter-skelter but as such publications as Fortune have explained, it results from the use of computers to reach rapid answers on a large range of options regarding tax problems, currency regulations and other managerial questions that have little to do with how best to produce a pump or a pair of socks. The multinational corporation has managerial choices closed to its nation-bound competitors. It can fill orders from plants in whatever areas the currency situation or production costs or political considerations may make most advantageous; it can pay bills from one country for debts it incurred in still another; it can circumvent restrictions on the export of funds by an approved export of goods, at times to their own foreign subsidiaries at prices that hide the transaction. For the future we face a computer-playing standardized interchangeable management of multinational conglomerates that uses war or unemployment as simply part of the tools of its trade; that profits about as well if it has its gadgets made in country A or country B; that feeds into its computers data on its assets and options the world over, on tax and currency situations, on shipping methods and wage rates and production facilities, on birthrates and weather and whatnot, and comes up with answers that determine what we, the hired hands, the world over will be allowed to do.

We cannot be men and women and let our children's health and bread and fate be determined in this manner. To our age-old union reasons, modern technology, as the ecologists point out, have added new and even more pres-

sing reasons why we must oppose and supplant management, whether corporate or political. What management has done to the wealth we have made and to us is bad, but what it is doing to the air and the water and the entire biosphere threatens life on earth with even greater certainty than the horrors of chemical, germ and nuclear warfare. Business management has to decide on the basis of maximum profits. Political management has to decide on the basis of what maximizes and assures retention of power. Neither can be tolerated in a technology that imposes on us the need to reach decisions based on what is good for man and his fellow creatures. A third pattern of decision-making remains: the direction of worldwide industry by those who work in it. Democratic unionism and modern communication techniques make this possible.

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#### IV Some Strikes Are Hard To Win

In the summer of 1967, the American copper miners, 37,000 strong, struck their employers, most of whom owned mines in other countries. It was the first time that all the copper miners in the United States were in one and the same union, a very obvious advantage yet they had to strike for ten months to win a compromise settlement.

Copper is a world commodity. Its price per pound warrants shipping it long distances. Companies and governments had strategic stockpiles. Production continued outside the United States except it happened that civil war in Katanga checked production there. Late in the strike, American longshoremen offered scattered resistance to imports of copper. Even so, it took a ten month strike in USA to reduce the world copper supply enough to create the pressures to win a settlement.

Should unions of copper miners in the various countries arrange to coordinate their efforts and practice industrial unionism on a global scale? They could have shorter strikes if they struck together instead of in series. In that strategy the main lever is the reduction of the supply of copper in the world market--and this mechanism asks just one question: how much copper, not its source, or the wage rate paid at its source, or the national aspirations or political philosophy expressed there, only how much copper.

Like industrial unionists in other fields they might debate whether this was the best strategy and wonder whether they might work it as the auto workers do who usually prefer to play off one company against another. They might allow continued operations in one country or another if for the duration of the dispute the copper production was kept off the world market and used for internal economic development or stockpiling on the basis of retroactive application of the bargain reached in world negotiations. A basic consideration in any union is how to get maximum results at minimum cost to its members. Worldwide industrial unionism does not necessarily make every strike worldwide; it does require sufficient worldwide communication among those in the industry, sufficient solidarity, and sufficient independence from national power structures to reason out in each instance and pursue the strategy likely to serve its members best.

Because we lack such worldwide unionism, workers often try to isolate their local market. The longshoremen who refused to unload copper imports in that ten-month strike were trying that. It was a generous gesture of solidarity and it helped win the strike but not so enduringly as world unionism would have. If an increase in labor costs in one country can be put across by blocking imports, its share of the world market can be expected to shrink; but no such consequence follows from a worldwide effort to raise living standards for all engaged in the industry.

It works out the same whether the effort to isolate the local market is by tariffs, boycotts or other means. As this statement is being drafted (Aug. 2, 1969) in Chicago the Amalgamated Clothing Workers have set up picket lines outside major stores to ask the public not to buy suits made in Hong Kong. Other needle trade unions are similarly hit. "Imports of women's and children's garments rose from \$55 million in 1954 to \$284 million in 1964...On a visit to Hong Kong, Dubinsky visited efficient garment factories in which employees worked a 70-hour week for weekly earnings of seven dollars." Electronic workers protest that this side the Rio Grande the minimum wage in their industry is low enough, \$1.60, but across the river in tax-free American plants whose production must all return to this country, the minimum wage is 29 cents an hour.

The work done for such pitiful wages no longer uses primitive methods. It used to be that such wage scales made mechanization uneconomic, but mechanization tends to win out anyway for such reasons as uniformity, continuous operation, or faster returns on investment. Where a multinational company sets up some new operation it is



likely to use the newest techniques, not yet adopted in its home plant, even though the wages are insignificant. The January issue of National Geographic, for example, pictures such industry on Taiwan, or the March issue, the industries of South Korea where lumber from Borneo or the Philippines is made into plywood for export to USA or girls operate ultramodern doublehead sewing machines to turn the hair brought in from India and Indonesia into wigs for American women, and earn \$33 a month, while workers' shacks "clutter the hillsides" past the new skyscrapers of Pusan.

The labor movement needs to be concerned with the great difference in the chances of workers in various industries and areas to enjoy life. These differences limit its bargaining power as well as challenge its claim to be a labor movement--for can it be a labor movement and yet unconcerned? Whenever job opportunities diminish, there is more clamor to keep out foreign products by legislation or boycotts or any means. The nature of the facts permits only two basically different standpoints--the inside view and the outside view. The traditional view is the inside view, how we in one nation can keep out all strangers and their products that compete with ours but peddle them some of ours for materials we cannot grow here. The outside view is the modern one of the astronaut contemplating the human lot as he circles the earth, or the union organizer walking around a factory he plans to organize and wondering how he is to get these workers to see that they can gain more by acting jointly than each for himself. Experience has shown that strategies based on the inside view are self-defeating. The organizer strategy based on the outside view is to attack these wage differentials around the world as we have had to attack them in each national economy.

Inside the USA, workers in better paying plants have donated money to their fellow workers in poorer paying plants so they could strike and still keep on eating; unions engaged in nationwide bargaining have arranged for step-by-step elimination of area differentials. Usually unions have limited demands to a level that still permitted the victorious workers to have jobs, but if a plant can operate only on starvation wages, then to raise living standards unionism must shut it down and the workers get better jobs elsewhere. Widening employment opportunities is part of the strategy. The entire perspective of unionism needs to shift from the old inside view to the modern outside global view. It involves research on impact of wage boosts on regional wage structures, the new service industries that arise where workers have some money to spend, and much else; but even though the millions of organized workers in the

world cannot make it safe to promote unions in Spain, Brazil or Taiwan, they do have very extensive research facilities and can even buy their own computers. It is a collective undertaking that, unless we are blind, leads us on past these necessary wage and work adjustments to a new set of union-made social and economic arrangements.

There is need for coordination of union research, union decision-making and union action on a global scale. Does this imply global centralization of power? It would surely be most unwieldy. Coordination does not require centralization. Our hierarchic society retains a centralized pattern of decision-making appropriate to the days when information arrived by couriers on horseback, so that in its pyramid of power, the information moved up and the directives move down. With modern communication techniques the labor movement can achieve coordination on the basis of rational response to information shared by those who have congruent interests. Collective union research efforts can build within the present social order the basis for the communication patterns of a future society of free men.

Unions often find it hard to put pressure on those who deny their demands and find instead that they are pinching a public of "innocent bystanders" including fellow unionists. This has made it much easier to pass laws restricting what unions can do. A more flexible labor movement combining both more local autonomy and more options for joint action, could probably exert pressure more adroitly. A union movement seen as shortsighted and greedy by this injured "public" is at a great disadvantage. A well-publicised adoption by the labor movement of this global outside view would give it moral ascendancy over the employers. Otherwise adhering to a policy of economic pressures that fail to work as they used to, a frustrated labor movement is likely to veer toward the nuisance type strike whose aim is to induce political authority to decree a settlement for them. Freedom does not lie in that direction.

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## V To Live Better -- Decide What Gets Done

In USA from August 1965 to July 1968 the average pay for all workers rose from \$96 per week to \$109 in

money, but rising living costs cut that pay boost down to the trifling increase in real wages of only twenty-five cents a week. Factory workers whose average pay rose from \$108 to \$122 actually lost a dollar a week in buying power, but construction workers by jumping their \$139 weekly pay to \$168 got a real boost of five dollars. Everywhere workers have been finding pay boosts far too illusory. Here for the calendar year 1968 the average wage boost was 5.1% (6.5% if fringe benefits are included) eaten into by a 4.8% rise in the cost of living. The French upsurge gained workers there somewhat more; even after a price rise of 5.3% they came out with a remaining 7.7% increase in purchasing power.

For some time the general level of consumption in the industrialized nations has been rising, but from more breadwinners per household unit. If there has been any gain in real wages per hour of work since World War II it has been trifling compared to the new levels of production that modern science makes possible.

Look behind the numbers and money system to what a wage demand means in real terms. Workers ask for more pay in the hope they can buy additional goods and services. If the goods and services of the sort they want are already being used up at the old wage level, then they can add to them with their wage boost only if either previously unemployed workers and unused resources are used to produce them, or workers and resources are switched from producing something that workers don't want to producing something they do want. If neither of these happen, they just get more green paper and no increase in real wages. In real terms a wage demand is a demand either to put unemployed men and resources to work or to re-allocate men and resources. Unless there is more than ordinary unemployment, a wage demand boils down to a demand that some of us be set to doing something different.

It used to be that if workers got a pay increase, some employer would figure he could gain by starting the production of the things he expected them to buy with their increase. Lately that doesn't seem to be happening. In part this is because modern technical and business procedures actually delay such a response; from the time a businessman hatches an idea to produce some consumer item it takes two or three years before his product will hit the market. Today there is very little uncontrolled economic activity. A vast part of the world's work is actually planned as in the soviet economies, or accommodated to overall state plans as in Sweden. In the "free enterprise" areas there are large government contracts and material priorities, near-monopolies and plain understandings among businessmen. None of these

arrangements are designed to re-allocate resources so as to reduce real profits and raise real wages. Consequently if we want to bargain a real increase for ourselves, we need to bargain into existence the goods we want to buy with our increase, or we wind up with more paper and higher prices.

The basic function of the labor movement is to raise living standards. To perform that function here or abroad in a substantially controlled world economy it has to undertake this novel and as yet untried sort of bargaining. Workers in all lands include imports among the things they want to add to their standard of living. We need to bargain worldwide about the work we will do worldwide. To some the idea may not seem so strange. In the soviet type economy bargaining about a higher standard of living is obviously bargaining about resource use and the rate of growth of consumer-goods industries. In many deliberately undeveloped colonial areas the social struggle has often been over a demand that some of the land be shifted from use for the export crop to use for locally needed food. But the facts of life in the seventies require worldwide bargaining in free enterprise, socialist, communist, fascist or other economies about what work gets done and where it gets done and under what conditions it gets done and where the product moves. With whom shall we bargain, and how?

There are about 250,000,000 union members in the world, 6 or 7 percent of the world's population, and our hope has to lie with them. They now have or can provide the facilities for undertaking the research needed to convert their wage demands into terms of re-allocation of men and resources. This is not a statistical Big Brother proposition for it involves the individual hopes and preferences of each worker and his family. If attention in this analysis has focused on the research work of unions it is because the labor movement is primarily a means through which workers achieve collective understandings, and today this is done largely through research. But having formulated these demands, with whom shall we bargain? We can approach an answer to that question only by viewing the new unionism not as some event to be launched on some specific date, but as a process extending from our present awareness of union inadequacy through all actions based thereon, and through all resultant structures, practices and institutions to the outcome of worldwide industry run at the direction of those engaged in it. In the development of nationwide bargaining the process of development itself normally created the two bargaining entities. Cannot a quarter billion unionists by their collective effort conjure up from those currently deciding what gets done and where it gets done, a competent committee to bargain

with about a higher standard of living for us all? If we cannot, then why not among ourselves decide what gets made and where it moves? After all, we make it and we move it.

Habitually we view the power of our social opposition with great awe. Their power is great, but it is derived from a pyramidal pattern of communication channels that feeds information up and directives down, and from an assent that comes from fear of disorder and the uncertain. The new unionism for its basic operations needs to build a more efficient and egalitarian pattern of communication channels; and while the old order is rife with uncertainty and the threat of disaster, the new unionism is enabling a quarter billion unionists to reach a collective understanding about how in the most certain and orderly way to make the best use of the earth's resources. The development of a world labor movement able to make optimum use of its own daily work is of itself a tremendous transfer of power, and a general annihilation of all the old justifications for the oppression of man by man. But to a labor movement unable to make well planned use of its daily work, no transfer of power can be made by any means whatever.

Unions need to take stock of the resources of this entire earth, of the needs of all the people on earth and start figuring how these resources can be used to meet these needs. That is the one part of the world's work we have not been doing. It is a part we are not likely to be hired to do by an employing class. We will have to hire ourselves to do it. This is a critical step in the transformation of man's lot from unawareness of the consequences of his actions to a knowing choice among his options. It is best taken with compass in hand and awareness of its long range consequences. None of the nonsense in the politics of the world has stopped arithmetic from being the same in Chicago and Moscow, and in Paris and Peking. We can undertake such a collective research chore and come up with a workable program under which workers could arrange to keep on working knowing what to produce and where to send it if either general breakdown of present arrangements or general assent in the labor program made it feasible. Creating such a flow sheet and keeping it up to date would press employers in interim bargaining to come up with better offers that they now say they can afford. It is surely a much more sane approach than trying to boycott each other's products in any global recession.

One doesn't have to wait for a new world order to arrange for copper miners to back each other up in a strike, or tin miners to move from the bottom of the social heap, or marine transport workers to start limiting

how long an oil tanker can be with safety, or take other steps that require supranational labor action. Accompanying the growth of a willingness to undertake the sort of collective endeavor outlined here, we can reasonably hope world labor to create pressures to free the thousands of unionists now in jail for advocating unionism. The pressures to create this new unionism come from those who are not satisfied with the world as it is, or with the present relation of themselves to their work and their fellow workers. For this reason we can expect the development of the new unionism to be one of internal changes in the labor movements as well as external links; turning unions from social agencies called "it" or "they" by its members to autonomous agencies spoken of as "us". The good world of tomorrow can only be the elaboration of the means used to bring it about. Developing these means is not merely the goal of the new unionism; it is the new unionism.

# What Is The IWW?

It is a fighting labor union which believes that the interests of labor can be fully served only when working people are united as a class. It wants to see all on the same job united, all in the same industry in one union, all who work for wages in ONE BIG UNION.

The IWW differs sharply from the position of other unions that the problems of the working class can be solved by begging crumbs from employers or praying to politicians for favors. While it fights for better conditions today, the IWW insists that working people are entitled to everything they produce, instead of a meager share.

There will be insecurity and hunger among those who toil as long as there is an employing class which benefits from low wages and evil working conditions. The IWW holds that there can be no solution to industrial warfare, no end to injustice and want, until the profit system is abolished.

In striving to unite labor as a class in one big union, the IWW also seeks to build the structure of a new and better social order within the shell of an old system which fails to provide for the needs of all.

## who belongs now?

Some of the best and most capable union men are already members of the IWW. They are veterans of many a bitter struggle for improved wages and conditions; rebels against an unjust social order who freely offer their hearts and brains to make labor's bright dream of a better world come true. They are men whom one is proud to know; men who will fight, whatever the odds, and fight on until the battle is won.

Some of the best are not enough. The IWW needs them all. And, equally, all who are struggling for the better world that we can have will find they need the IWW.

## who may join?

Any wage earner\* may carry an IWW card. No worker is barred because of race, religion, nationality, or sex.

It is *NOT*, however, an organization for scissorbills, for cowards, for those who substitute words for action. It does not want men who are content to unquestioningly follow leaders.

The IWW is a union devised for men, for the best and most intelligent---and growing numbers of such workers are securing IWW cards. They want to help build the union which will rebuild the world.

The IWW needs them, and they need the IWW.

\*No unemployed or retired worker, no working class student, apprentice, or housewife shall be excluded from membership on the grounds that he or she is not currently receiving wages.

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD  
2422 N.Halsted, Chicago Ill.60614

- I want further information about joining the IWW.
- I am unemployed right now.
- The job I work on is *NOT* organized.
- My job is organized under.....  
but I wish to join the IWW as an individual member.

Name: .....

Address: .....

City: .....State: .....Zip: .....

# Preamble

## of the Industrial Workers of the World

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

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

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

