

*The*  
**ONE BIG UNION**  
*Monthly*

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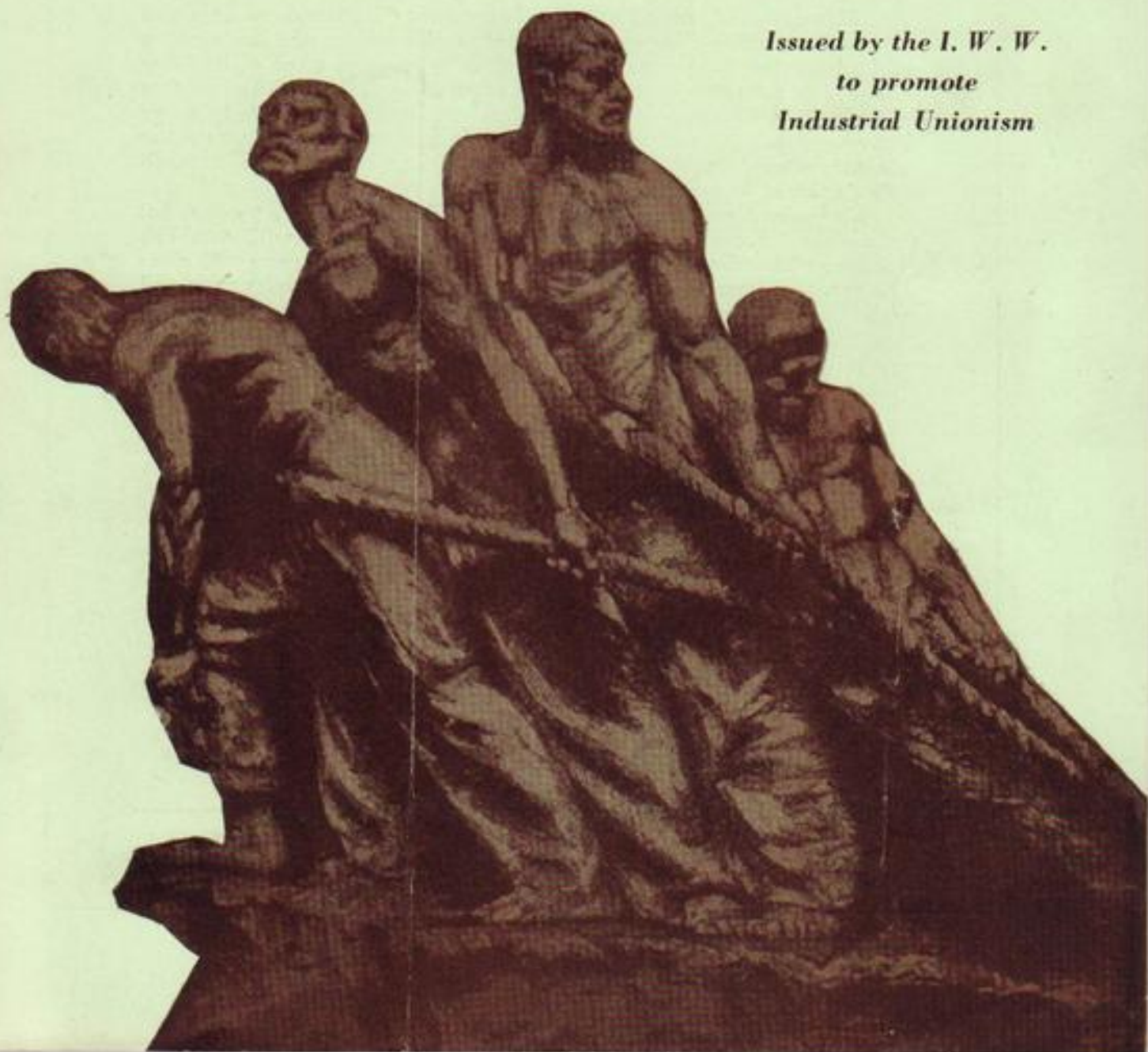
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*Issued by the I. W. W.  
to promote  
Industrial Unionism*



## What Is The Working Class?

Unorganized, acting only to carry out the will of others, it has been nothing—a plaything at best for politicians—a cow to be milked—the last interest ever to be considered.

Yet, it has done all the work of the world—laid the railroads, built the homes and factories, manned the ships, dug the ore, grown the food, girdled the globe with copper cables, kept life humming.

The working class does all the sane things necessary for the continuous life of society. It is society. The “ladies and gentlemen” who are not of the working class are a useless excrescence on the body social.

This so-called upper strata that masquerades as “society” is not only a useless growth, but a viciously malignant one. The insane acts of war and waste and destruction committed by the working class are done to carry out the will of this parasitic growth. This parasitic growth must be cut off, or it will destroy society.

Misorganized, acting only for a section of its members here and there, the working class can at best only make society and itself aware of its importance, by ceasing for a while to perform some of its functions. Our men and women go back after their strikes, with some few gains won, with some new sense of power and self-respect, to carry out once more the will of those who rule and rob us, who waste the great heritage of our natural resources, who plot to set us at each other's throat in some great world war.

Organized as One Big Union of the Working Class, we can act as a class for ourselves, carry out our own organized will, establish our own planned economy of abundance, and by making our own class the great constructive force in the world, banish fear and worry and want forever from the life of man.

“It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism.”

Are you with us?

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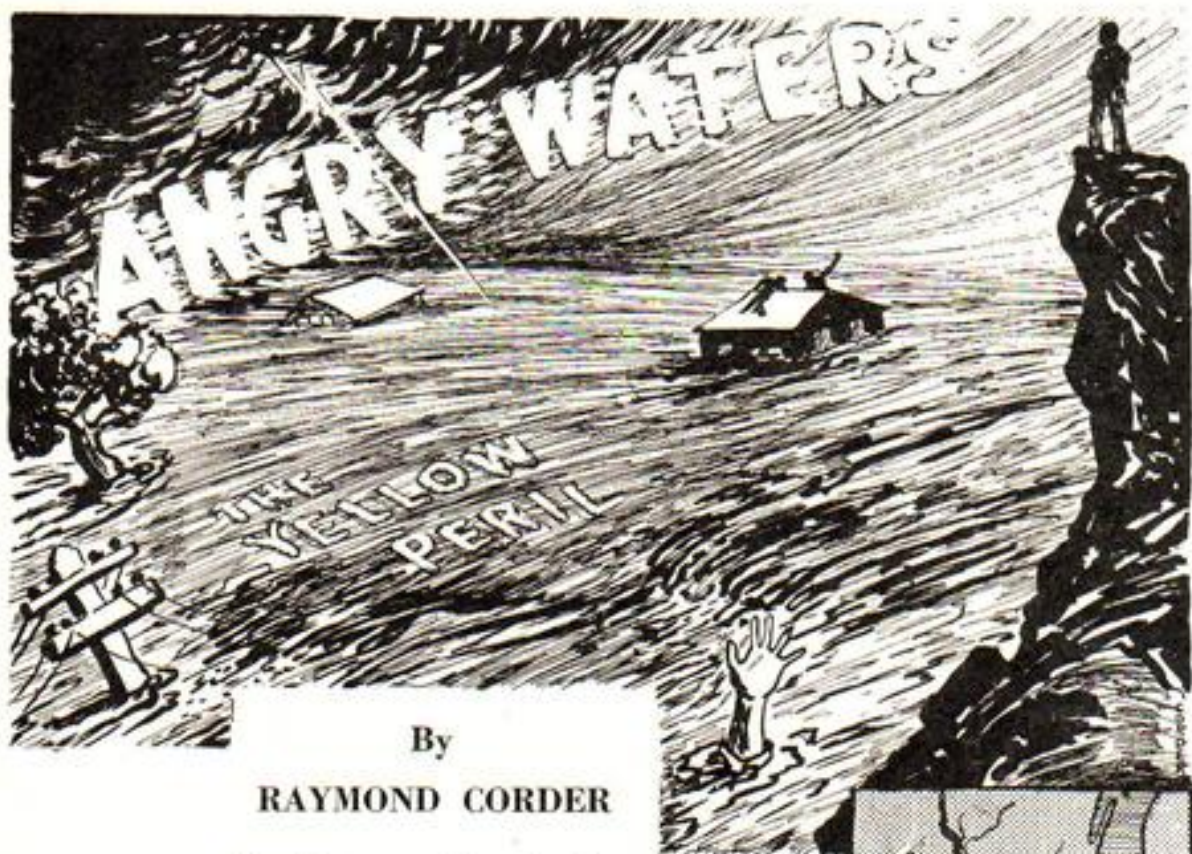
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By  
**RAYMOND CORDER**

*How the war and waste inherent in capitalism with dust storm and raging flood threaten the heritage that we are to pass on to the coming generation—and how only revolutionary industrial unionism can save this heritage and establish an earthy paradise where otherwise another Gobi Desert will spread its arid waters.*



Where Angry Waters Roll

Ten thousand million dollars were squandered by the capitalist class to make the world safe for democracy. This huge sum, however, does not begin to cover the actual cost of the war. The gross price we workers are paying, and will continue to pay for the bloody saturnalia, if measured in dollars, would be of such mammoth proportions as to baffle the imagination, unless computed in mathematical formulae, comparable to the light year system of astronomy. We are paying even unto and beyond our grandchildren for far more than the mere destruction, terrible thought it was, of a few billions of dollars worth of chemicals, armaments and young manhood. The staggering price is not measurable in dollars. We, in our old age, as well as unborn workers of tomorrow will pay in terms of red eyed hunger and gaunt famine, while grubbing without hope for something to eat among the barren boulders and shifting sand dunes of an arid desert, unless we quickly organize as

a class to abolish the present feudalistic ownership and control of land and industry, and declare another war—a war upon the yellow peril . . . the peril of whirling, stiffling dust, and of raging, murky waters that annually go surging down to the seas.

Down by the river, anxious-eyed mothers tread the rough floors of lowland shacks, getting together a few belongings, preparatory to a quick exodus with their broods to higher ground and safety. Their menfolk are out where angry, yellow

waters rush down the river. Angry waters, seeking to escape from the prison of the river's course bite into restraining levees. To the men, feverishly battling the turbulent tide, has come the news that up the river, the levees have broken and that whole cities and thousands of acres of country-side, are deep under water, with death riding the flood. With pick and shovel and bags of sand, they fight the tenacious waters, plugging sand boils, and rivulets that break across and spill over the boggy dike. Free wage slaves, chain-gang prisoners, tenant farmers, black and white, all of them, have forgotten their antipathies against one another, the prejudices engendered by an unbalanced economic system. In common democracy, they battle shoulder to shoulder against a common enemy. The flood is a recurring, annual tragedy to them. Grim-lipped, they battle to save the little they own: small houses upon which many painfully made instalments have been deposited to the enrichment of unscrupulous real estate interests, grubby crops that must be shared with the landlord whose home is safely perched on a hill, or merely a few sticks of furniture in rented, lowland shacks.

At last the river wins! A section of the soggy levee has crumbled and the swollen waters go hissing through the break. With dogged persistence, but with despair in their hearts, the valiant battlers try to stop the flow. But in vain! For even as they work, a huge segment of the levee begins to crumble, and the victorious river, with a rushing roar, surges out over the lowlands of the city and countryside. Streets become raging rivers as the rising flood sweeps through sections given over to factories and working class homes. It is a sight for the gods, and the rich who live upon the highlands. It is an awe-inspiring spectacle for the wellfed and the fashionably attired, and an occasion for sporting the latest styles in colored gum boots and smart jackets. But to the workers whose meagre belongings have been swept away, and who are packed together like sardines in crude shelters beyond the reach of the cold and muddy tide, it is neither amusing nor majestic. It is a sad time of suffering and despair as the murky flood swirls down street after street, reaches the eaves of house after house, and engulfs town after town.

Among hundreds of photographs of flood scenes that the reader may have seen reproduced in the newspapers, how many pictures have there been of baronial estates under water? The Barons of Land and Industry are not flood sufferers. It is the working class who are driven from their homes, who are herded in concentration shelters, who suffer cold and hunger, and the loss of their loved ones, who sicken and die of typhoid and dysentery. It is they who are paying for the wanton

destruction of their rich heritage at the hands of predatory capitalism.

Like a sore thumb, the evidence sticks out demanding examination. Let us look it over.

The havoc caused by modern warfare is not limited to battle field and trench, nor to the nation or district under martial conquest. Its ravaging effects, violating and upsetting nature's fine balance, reach around the world, in the wide stretched hand of capitalism, to peaceful areas thousands of miles away from the theatre of carnage. Many people do not know, or it has not occurred to them, that the world war was the culminating folly of a series of abuses that finally brought on the recent, severe droughts, dust storms and floods, nor, paradoxical as it may seem, that droughts and dust storms arise from the same cause as do floods.

While the armies of the world were frenziedly spewing death at one another on the fields of France, the demon of war sneaked through the bountiful fields and forests of our land, sowing seeds of famine and death and laying a foundation, which if not checked, will result in another Gobi Desert over the whole area of the Mississippi Drainage Basin.

When this country was taken from the Indians, the entire East and most of the West was covered with trees and undergrowth in the forests, and with grasses on the plains. Wild life was abundant, and destructive insects were held in check by the birds. The winds blew as hard then as now, and it rained even harder, but little damage was done. Nature was in balance and provided bountifully for the aboriginal inhabitants. The rivers ran clear most of the year, but when they did spread from their courses, it was slowly and with no great violence. The soil was protected against erosion from wind and water and the streams ran through valleys protected by grasses and forest covered slopes, from which the rains ran off slowly, or sank into absorptive soil. The water which was absorbed, formed into subterranean pools, and, seeping gradually through faults and fissures, issued forth as cool springs, where man and beast came to slack their thirst.

Gradually, with the full settlement of the original colonies, seeking to escape the iron heel of exploitation by the historically lauded but tyrannical "Fathers of Our Country", pioneer workers began to trek westward. Capitalism followed the blazed trail of these original pioneers. After the settlement of the rich midwestern plains, unscrupulous railway and land financiers, conniving with corrupt political administrators, managed huge mineral and lumber-land steals. Mineral resources were wasted, and the forest cover was stripped from the hills, willy-nilly, for exportation beyond the seas. John Farmer, eternally the ally and al-

ways the goat of bankers and grain pit gamblers, knowing nothing about soil conservation and caring less, plowed under the sod of plain and hillside, with no thought of the morrow. Thus was started the present planless and helter-skelter mode of agricultural exploitation.

Nature is not to blame for floods that have devastated the East or the dust clouds that have choked and laid waste the West. These are consequences of the ruthless misuse of the land. It was known before the war that sooner or later conservation measures would have to be undertaken. Noteworthy in this respect was the creation of National Forestry, under the administration of Theodore Roosevelt. Otherwise, except for isolated experiments in conservation by the U. S. Department of Agriculture operating on niggardly appropriations, very little attention was given the subject. Both politicians and finance capitalists, by their very natures, were too busy playing the game of profit-lifting. The farmers, single mindedly, were trying to reach middle class affluence and respectability; and the men of science, except a negligible few who were as voices crying in the wilderness, were prostituting themselves to the capitalists, seeking new methods for the enrichment of their masters. The working class, just beginning to organize, were fighting for the eight-

hour day and union recognition, and the Haymarket Martyrs had been given to the noose in Chicago. Thus the soil was ignored and retribution was piled up against the future.

At this time, there seemed to be no pressing need for action against unplanned and irresponsible exploitation of the terrestrial domain. No

major dust storms had occurred, and until 1916, when the Mississippi River rose at Memphis to an all high stage of 43.4 ft., no really alarming floods had come to shake the master class and their political henchmen into the realization of imminent disaster. At most, it was a momentary distraction, and they returned with feverish eyes to their ticker tapes. Soil conservation, like free hospitalization, slum clearance, and other socially necessary projects, pays no immediate cash dividends. Therefore it is not only of no interest to profit mongers, but decidedly annoying in that such things cost money which would have to be obtained, under the present system, by taxation of property. Levees

had been thrown up as a method to attack floods at their points of greatest strength, the river's edge; in a few places, flood ways had been created; but essential as these and similar engineering projects are for flood control, they do not reach the cause.

Army engineers, in charge of evacuation of



lowlands during this winter's flood, have suggested complete evacuation of the alluvial plains of the Mississippi and its tributaries, that dykes and levees be strengthened and that they and the potential flood areas be forested and be made into national parks. Tut!—tut!—it doesn't take a West Point training to figure out such a simple, though meritorious idea. The big job would be to put it across, against the insurmountable opposition of powerful real estate and rental interests. The working class who can least afford to be left prey to flood hazards, must, under the Capitalist System, live and work down by the river on cheaper but flood-threatened land. Rents, from houses in these zones of danger, is velvet for the landlords and industrial lords who have appropriated the higher and more desirable ground. They would not submit to such a slum-clearance and reforestation program unless bought out at a price unreasonably out of proportion to the value of the properties. And then again, huge profits are derived from the creation of subdivisions and the sales of building lots. Foolish workers, thinking they have jobs, from-now-on, and are all set for life, mortgage themselves to the ears for cheese-box bungalows that one day will float down the river.

The idea of turning the potential flood areas back to the wild, turning them into national parks, or forests, and wild life sanctuaries, would be very



*No palaces were washed away, but the home into which many a worker had built his hopes, went drifting with the flood.*

desirable. But even if this were done, the real menace, of which the flood is but a symptom, would not be laid. Army engineers, on February 11th of this year, laid before the House Flood Control Committee in Washington, data and estimates for flood control projects, designed to cover a ten-year period, consisting of recommendations for flood control reservoirs on the big rivers' tributaries, floodways, and dykes to protect centres of population. A third of the amount would go to protect river cities against inundation. The estimated cost was placed at one and one half billion dollars. It is notable that the cause of floods will not be tackled except for the construction of retardation reservoirs, which solves nothing, as they would, in time, become filled with silt, or, in other words, the precious topsoil. Army engineers seem utterly unable to comprehend the difference between cause and effect. The cause is soil erosion; floods are the effect.

Floods are born in the little creeks and brooks, far up on the slopes of hills and mountains and far into the hinterlands of the plains country. They result from stripping away the natural cover of the top soil. This cover would have to be replaced and would cost many more billions of dollars than estimated by the army engineers, a bill which the capitalist class will not pay and which the working class cannot pay.

The damage done by the war was insidious, working like a slow poison, which, when once taken, creeps through the system, undermining the vital organs and destroying tissues, until death steps in to end it all—or like locusts, which, after their eggs have lain in the ground for years, suddenly arise in devastating swarms, to plague and lay waste vast areas of crop lands.

The World War began in 1914 and lasted until the fall of 1918. There were 37 million men under arms in Europe. Who were left to break the soil and harvest crops? Mostly women and children, and they could not till the soil. Fifty million acres of land were dropped from cultivation in Europe. Food became scarce and prices rose to unheard-of levels. Here in the United States, John Farmer chuckled in his whiskers and hastened to get in on the easy pickings, by supplying a large part of the deficiency. The bankers and grain gamblers, sure of the lion's share of the spoils, slapped him on the back and told him what a great fellow he was. It was a gleeful time for profiteers. Marginal and sub-marginal lands, heretofore considered worthless for cultivation, hillsides, briar-patches and even swamps, but nevertheless, the last of the remaining bulwark against drought and flood, were plowed under and planted with wheat, corn and cotton. "Food Will Win the War!" was the slogan of the day, and here at home we ate war bread, that tasted like sawdust loaves baked by the devil,

while millions of tons of foodstuffs were being shipped to the warring nations.

Jawn sweated hell out of his hired hands, for as little as he could get away with, except along the 1000 mile picket line established by Agricultural Workers Organization, No. 400 of the I.W.W. Here, he was made to kick in with a little of his war profits in the form of higher pay and shorter hours. He didn't like such a state of affairs, so as he rolled in wealth and a new Buick he had his representatives in states' assemblies pass criminal syndicalism laws against the gosh-dinged, pesky wobblies.

When the Armistice was signed, the demobilized peasantry of Europe went back to the land and resumed production for their domestic markets. By 1920 John Farmer no longer had a lucrative dumping ground for surplus farm products. He went ahead, however, and had his wage slaves produce another bumper crop, with the result that during the minor depression of 1921, huge quantities of foodstuffs were left unharvested or were dumped into the rivers. The unemployed could not buy this food that they themselves had socially produced, so as usual it was destroyed.

The land that had been plowed up because of the war, more than fifty million acres, and sorely needed as grass and brush land margins of safety against droughts, was no longer of any commercial value, and with its protective cover destroyed was left to the mercy of wind and water. John Farmer, perennial raider of state and national treasuries, and ruthless exploiter of the lowest of all low paid labor, together with his cronies, the bankers and gamblers, has ravished and despoiled the public domain that has been turned over to his private use by our capitalist economy.

These submarginal lands had once held moisture, when they were under grass and brush, or remained undrained swamps. The topsoil, left as it was, dried up and was eventually blown away. New Yorkers awoke to the startled realization one day last summer that the peculiar yellow pall that enveloped the city was the topsoil of Kansas and Iowa, being blown into the Atlantic Ocean. As an illustration of how deserts are made, we will quote from an article from the Conservation Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture: ". . . Pour water in a cellar door. It dashes off immediately. Spread a rug or mat on the same inclined surface and most of the water is held back and absorbed. Some of it may run off, but it runs in a trickle, not a flood. Apply the simile to millions of acres of sloping land, bared of its rug of vegetation and shorn of its absorptive mat of topsoil. Multiply the run-off from the cellar door into billions of gallons of water rushing across denuded hillsides into streams that have limitations upon their capacity for carrying water.



*Are these flood refugees to be the fore-runners of "gaunt and miserable victims of a predatory system" which has left them only an arid waste where once the fertile prairies rolled—or will they avert this horror by manfully building a One Big Union of Labor to take hold of our resources and use them intelligently?*

The cause of floods is clear." Yes, and the cause of deserts. The Nile and the Euphrates were rivers like that. And the deserts of Egypt and Mesopotamia were once fertile and bountiful. Legends from ancient history and the Bible tell of plagues of locusts that once swarmed over the land of the Pharaohs—and dust storms.

As has been stated, droughts and dust storms are of the same parentage. Let us use again the analogy of the cellar door. With the rug on the door, part of the water which had been held back, is absorbed as water vapor by the heat of the sun, and eventually precipitated again on the soil. This process would have been repeated ad infinitum, if Nature had not been artificially thrown off balance. Otherwise, the sun blazes down upon a waterless area which soon becomes dry and cracked. The topsoil, partly vegetable in character by the slow process of centuries and therefore irreplaceable by man, becomes dry powder and

the winds lift it and carry most of it away. Finally, because of shifts in air currents, water vapor drawn from the tropics, or the oceans, is precipitated in torrents on the parched land. As on the cellar door, with no protecting rug to hold it back, the water goes roaring over the hillsides, down to the valleys, gouging out deep gulleys, uprooting the few surviving trees and other vegetation, and carrying, in the form of silt, the last of the food essential to plant life, the top soil. Here, at last, is a desert in fact, fit only to support cactus, coyotes, and rangy jack rabbits.

#### Back to the Sea

Capitalist apologists will scare up any excuse they can lay hands to in order to whitewash their masters and deflect the blame for the plight of the land from the system of private exploitation. The sum total of their bleatings is so much hogwash. On the other hand a school of pessimists, blaming it all on nature with man as her inadvertent helper, sees no hope for posterity. It has not been proven, they contend, that the continent of North America is capable of sustaining a permanent civilization. There is evidence that the continent can exist only by turning it back to the original state in which the white race found it. Further reasoning supports the theory that in cutting down the forests, engaging in unsuitable farming methods and other acts of careless greed, men have helped natural evolution in its destined course.

To quote J. Franklyn in the New York Post of Feb. 9, 1937, "—What we have done is not, as many imagine, a crime against nature. We are simply speeding up nature's solution for North America, which is, quite simply, to wash it all into the ocean. Until we came along, nature's chief agent in this sizable job was the Mississippi River system. Men have simply short circuited a flock of centuries and hastened the day of the inevitable desert. Before the Mississippi Valley meets the fate which has overtaken Mesopotamia and North Africa, nature will cease to require the services of as many men as are now engaged in aiding the destruction of this continent. The time is in historical sight when our people will bunch like barnacles along the coasts and derive their living from the salt water of the deep blue sea."

We would concede the point, here, had we no faith in the inherent intelligence of the working class. If we of the I.W.W. had no faith in the workers, we would close up shop and quit trying to organize them. But, it is our conviction that we can and will organize them in Revolutionary Industrial Unions, not only to fight now for more pay and shorter hours, but to take over the industries and the land when capitalism is finally compelled to abdicate.

It is then that the real cause of floods will be tackled and nature can and will be harnessed and made to cease playing her pranks upon us. Socialized and controlled agriculture and animal grazing and scientific engineering methods for the retention of moisture where it is most needed will undo the "short circuit". There should be no need to cluster along the seashores. There is a remote possibility that another Ice Age may descend upon us within the next million years or so, but that is too far off to worry anyone except an incorrigible pessimist. The menace of soil erosion is something to worry about now.

"What have we to do with all this?" some thoughtless worker will ask. "We don't own the disappearing soil, nor the bug-ridden shacks that are swept down the yellow tide." Such an attitude reminds us of the story of the seaman, who when called upon to help man the pumps to keep the ship from sinking, replied, "I don't own the damned ship, let her sink!"

Here is class consciousness perhaps, but without social vision. It is not sufficient merely to be class conscious. The conservative labor movement is full of class conscious workers who go on sit-down strikes and battle valiantly against their common enemy, the master class. It is necessary to have a breadth of vision that takes in not only what is immediately apparent and of today, but also what is to be. This is the distinguishing mark of revolutionary class consciousness. It develops a patriotism that transcends the pay-triotism of the master class and their lickspittle lackies.

It is hard for the average worker to visualize the future. His subservience to bourgeois leadership and capitalist domination, and the pressure of immediate need, blunts both imagination and perception, to the extent that despite the evidence, any picture of what lies just ahead is completely obscured. It is not sufficient merely to line him up in the union; it is necessary to awaken in him the social vision that is lying dormant in his sub-consciousness. Then he will appreciate the social superiority of the watchword of the I. W. W.: "Abolition of the Wage System", as compared with the motto of the A.F. of L.: "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work."

Members of the I.W.W. know that it is the working class who suffer the most, weakened as they are by low pay, unemployment and bad working and living conditions, from the depredations of wind and water. As the years roll by and floods and dust storms increase in violence, our sufferings will increase apace. In our understanding and transcendent patriotism we know that it is our land; the land of our descendants, which is being ruined by planless and unscrupulous private exploitation. Though we hold title to not an inch



of it now, someday we shall own it all in common, and we don't want to appropriate a desert. We know our heritage is being wasted for the pleasure and profit of the few, and will, unless we prevent it, become another Gobi Desert, across which dusty winds will blow from the Alleghenies to the Rockies. Even now, under the present Rooseveltian planned economy of scarcity, there is not enough to eat, but on such a tomorrow as has been depicted, the workers will be reduced to the status of coolies, roaming, gaunt, and miserable victims of a predatory system which has outraged and violated Nature beyond endurance. Let us get to work and organize.

Basic and mass production industries are fully socialized in this country, except for ownership and management, and are ready to be taken over by the workers. Socialization came about through inexorable evolution in spite of private ownership, and the capitalists could not undo it if they tried. It is their Frankenstein. Evolution of socialized ownership of land lagged behind that of mechanized industry, but due to soil depletion, droughts, top heavy debt loads, and, in this depression, to mortgage foreclosures, the pace of land socialization has been accelerated since 1920. Ownership of land is being centered in the hands of banks and insurance companies, which fits neatly into the scheme and framework of the I.W.W. John Farmer, puzzled and wailing for government help, is falling from his high estate as a member of the property-owning and labor-exploiting middle class and is fast being reduced to the status of tenant and day laborer. In spite of Roosevelt who tries to do a King Kanute against the tides of evolution, this depression will not end in another wave of "prosperity". John Farmer, the individualist, like the bankers and industrialists is doomed to be swept aside to make way for the historic era of socialization.

The founders of the I.W.W. knew this when they framed the preamble. It is a masterpiece of reasoning, based on the ability to see far into the future—a working document of today and a prophecy of the new social order. It gave rise to the Industrial Chart of the I.W.W. Showing the structure of the I.W.W. built on a firm, scientific ground-work, many steps ahead of socialized capitalist industry. It is a plan for the day, now almost at hand, when the organized workers will take charge of the industries and the land, and will operate them in the interest of the whole instead of the interest of stockholders and high salaried executives. Emancipated workers, Fellow Worker John Farmer among them, through their Industrial Departments, will tackle the problem of production and distribution; and flood control will be taken up at the source of the flood evil, the

point of cause. War will be declared against soil erosion as the true cause of the Yellow Peril.

Let us engage in fancies for awhile and visualize what the Industrial Unions, through their centralized departmental connections, will do about the disease of the soil, in the Industrial Democracy of tomorrow. Practical people look askance upon dreamers, but we are going to dream of the highly practical, of doing the things which the I.W.W. was organized to do.

Let us envision a great agricultural section, above which we are flying in an airplane. The most desirable and productive soil has been planted with corn, or golden wheat. From high in the air, it is likely, the land would look like a giant checker board of green and gold. The gold would be waving wheat, and the green, nothing more than plots of moisture retaining mats of grass and shrubbery. Where the land is inclined, or rolling, the plots would be laid out in leveled terraces. At intervals there would be forested plots, that would serve as wind breaks. In addition they would help in the retention of moisture, and at the same time would be arboreal harbors for wild birds, natural enemies of destructive insects. Brooks, carrying excess runoff of rain water, their channels sufficiently wide and with well dyked banks, would flow through the land on their way to the river. Here and there, gleaming silvery in the sun, haunts of bass and pickerel, are lakes, whose beds were former plowed land, and whose shores are lined with trees. Zooming on overhead, we see, in the distance, a small city of beautiful homes, and workshops for the maintenance and repair of modern farm machinery. Here is the headquarters of the Industrial District Council of Agricultural Workers Industrial Union, No. 110.

We pass over and beyond the town. What is this we see below us? Ah! Animated pork chops and hams, happily wallowing and rooting in the dirt. We fly over an expanse of green that reaches to the horizon. It is a plain of rich buffalo grass, upon which thousands of head of sheep and cattle are grazing. Their number per square mile of grazing land has been scientifically determined, and they are sleek and happy. It is their destiny to furnish an abundance of chops and T-bone steaks to the teeming Industrial Workers of the cities and non-grazing areas.

Hazy in the purple distance are tree clad hills, the foot hills of lofty mountains beyond. Soon we are over them and pass above another small city. It is the regional headquarters of Lumber Workers Industrial Union, No. 120 and perhaps, also, of I.U. No. 140, whose members engage in furnishing seedlings for reforestation and the distribution of floral products.

Passing beyond the foothills we come over the mountains. Here and there are giant dams, some

of them under construction, some of them completed and holding back millions of gallons of melted snow and ice from peaks and glaciers high above timber line. We fly above a modern camp, or perhaps it is a city of palace trailers. Here is the temporary domain of General Construction Workers Union No. 310.

It is a beautiful picture we have envisioned, and it is a picture that must be completed before the flood menace is solved. It is a social pattern that only industrial organization can handle. The craft unions, if forced to take over the industries, would be hopelessly handicapped at the start, because of their jurisdictional and craft separation structures.

We have envisioned the evolution of the I.W.W. from a Revolutionary Industrial Union, into a

Workers Regime, an Industrial Democracy, the new society that has evolved from within the shell of the old. This is worth fighting for, despite all ostracism, blacklists, police clubs, bullpens and dungeons—and it is the only sure cure, so far advanced, for the elimination of floods and dust storms. When this picture is completed, flood waters will be back in their natural environment, guaranteeing to the sun his chance to gather moisture for normal cloud making and precipitation. Nature again will be in balance; an abundance of the good things of life will be her reward to an emancipated working class; and severe droughts and floods will be subjects only for historical study.

"By organizing Industrially, we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old."



# Hot Stuff

By IXION

**'Twas only an Irish longshoreman's dream—  
but they played horseshoes and won anyway.**

The scabs were lining up along the dock to unload a ship under guard. The bulls were there and the yellow-legs were coming. Striking Patrick McGinthy was there, too—and ready for 'em, so he said to himself as he squared his shoulders, belligerently threw out his chest and took a two-fisted heave at his belt, with emphasis on "ready." He, Pat McGinthy, would show 'em how a single man with brains and guts could stop the whole works if properly implemented. "Properly implemented" was a six-bit combination word he had learned from the Great Engineer, you know, 'Erbert 'Oover, the former English President of the United States.

Properly implemented? Patty was that if anybody was. Around his waist under his clothing was strapped the thing that could fix 'em, and would at Pat's command stop all this nonsense of workingmen scabbing working men off the Earth.

Implemented was the good word, all right. It was a machine that Pat had under his clothing, of wonderful construction. Pat's own invention it was, if invention it can be called to so improve an already existing machine that it was a thousand times more powerful and a thousand times more perfectly under control. And that was just what Pat had done to what the medical profession was pleased to call a fever machine. Made in secrecy by Pat himself, only he knew of its existence.

And here he was—if the bulls only knew of its existence, they would be quaking in their boots, mused Pat. Master of the situation? He'd show 'em damned soon that he was.

By slow unobstructive maneuvering he got himself into a position from which he commanded an unobstructed view up and down the dock. Now for a try-out—but on what? Hah! the ship. Indeed, what could be more fitting than it, the largest and most obvious object in sight, less than a block distant.

Pat put his fingers into the watch pocket of his jeans and brought forth a small piece of rubber tubing attached to the end of an electric wire. It looked something like the funnel-shaped thing one sees at the end of a doctor's stethoscope. He shielded it within his hand as he brought it out, and fingered it while he mused on his own cleverness in bringing it out through there: no bull could at a distance tell whether he was merely playing with his watch or what. Not that it mattered because he could fix any bull any time and in a jiffy.

Pretty clever that and all of it; because by hooking his left hand kind of careless like in his belt, where he had had the good sense to place the control buttons, he could send out and cut off the powerful heat inducing electric waves.

Now for the dirty work. On went the current. And sure, said Pat to himself, the results are pleasing and far exceeding even my very fondest hopes. The very instant the rays hit it, the ship was gone with nothing but the smell of burnt paint to remind one that it had been there. The water in the bay was boiling. A couple of scabs trucking gear up a gangplank fell into the boiling water and died instantly.

A fine sight for sore eyes, said Pat to himself. Now if only the Irish had had a machine like this one in the battle of the Boiling Water, Ireland's history would be different to this day. It was a fine sight for sore eyes sure enough.

The scabs and bulls on the dock hadn't even noticed it yet. It all happened too quick for 'em.

Pat burst out in a big merry laugh. The big fat bull nearest him, thinking he was the object of mirth and resenting it, started for Pat in an angry mood, club in hand. Still laughing, Pat touched the "easy button." He wanted to have a bit of fun with the copper before fixing him for good. So he pointed the little tube at the fat bull's belt buckle. Again the results were surprising. The minute the rays hit him, the bull dropped his club and started yelling blue murder, the while clawing at the belt buckle to keep it from scorching his belly button. Laughing, Pat shut off the current and watched the bull do a two hundred and fifty pound light fantastic. As the bull's hip pockets came into view there were some more great results when Pat turned the rays on again. In one pocket was a gun, in the other handcuffs. Grand sight that. Cartridges exploded by the heat, sent their bullets plowing downward through the bull's sedentarily exercised and overdeveloped rear midship section before the gun and handcuffs got hot enough to burn their way through leather holsters and cloth and fall to the ground. The bull's belt load of tear gas bombs and spare cartridges were popping all over the outside of the up-and-down-stepping, blinded, screaming hunk of blubber.

Pat laughed so hard, the tears were rolling down his cheeks. Through the mist of the tears of joy Pat spied some of the scabs laughing also—they saw the show but didn't know what had

caused the actor to perform, or they might not have stayed to laugh. To see the scabs laughing, was too much for Patty McGinthy. It is one thing to provide amusement for honest folks such as striking longshoremen, their sympathisers and the like—but scabs! Whurra!! The little tube was quickly pointed at them, and this time the high pressure was on.

Most of the scabs were leaning on their empty trucks which instantly became so hot that they burned their way through the dock flooring and fell into the bay dragging the scabs with them. A couple were sitting on a big cast steel hawser bit—down they went bit and all into the drink.

Said Pat to himself: Never a finer bunch of scabs have I seen than the ones now floating in the bay, and may they boil and drown both, and may the only scabbing the likes of them ever do, be for old Dave Jones.

Bulls and scabs were drifting on the boiling tide of the bay. Again Pat's mind wandered back to old Ireland and what Ireland's history might have been had Brian Boru had a machine like he, Patrick McGinthey, had.

A truckload of militia men was just entering the dock. Pat eyed them with cocksure triumphant hatred in his eyes. They'd be easy. Pat pushed the "easy button" and gave them a cursory spray. The first thing to go was the gas tank, in a nice flashy burst. Next went the tires. Of course, being soldiers, a little thing like a big truck blowing up under them didn't stop that bunch. After picking themselves up from various parts of the scenery they started to get together their war paraphernalia. Down the empty dock they came dragging tripods, machine guns, riot guns, cartridge cases and what not.

Damn the counter hopping yellow legs! Don't they know when they are well off? Can't they take a warning and go home instead of staying here helping to starve and club and shoot other working men out of their houses and homes? Well, if they can't, they just can't, that's all. I'll have to fix them proper too, said Pat to himself.

Well in the lead of the rest came a militia man hugging a machine gun to his bosom. Pat gave him the ray. All a sudden he gave out an awful yelp and let go of the machine gun. The almost melting gun fell right across his toes and instantly

burned them off back to the instep. Such a lot of yelling until the ambulance came and picked him up, you never heard in your life.

That's one of 'em put out for good without killing him, mused Pat. Why the hell didn't he stay out of the militia? If he had, this would never have happened to him anyway. He's out of the yellow legs for good now though, and it is somewhat doubtful if he'll ever make a good counter jumper again—a man can't very well be on his toes when he ain't got any.

Damn them guys, can't they take a hint a tall? Still coming on, adragging their stuff. And they got some awful bad stuff there for a poor striker. Well, two warnings is all they might get. They've had their chance. If they won't take a hint, they won't. So here goes. On went the ray full blast. Up went handgrenades, poison gas containers, machine and riot gun cartridges by the thousands, big brass shells for field pieces, and yellow legs in one big noisy stinking mess.

Not a militia man left! Not a bit of war material left! Fine work, Pat McGinthy fine work, mused Pat as he surveyed the damage and mentally patted himself on the back, you sure fixed that bunch. But phew! how that poison gas does stink phew! phew!!!

Just then Pat woke up and stared around him bewilderedly. The evil small came from under the old piece of tarpaulin he had thrown over himself to ward off the chill ocean breeze when he flattened out on the plank back of the signboard to take a little snooze while on picket duty. As he took in the situation, and his mind cleared of the dream trance, Pat mumbled to himself, "All is sure quiet on the western front."

The other pickets were playing horseshoes. The clink, clink of the shoes hitting against the pegs reached his ears. Pat threw the tarpaulin back. Phew! the old gut is still rumbling. Beans for breakfast is sure an awful thing. Sitting up, he stretched himself and started to feel his pockets for a smoke. The smoke lit, he eyed the horseshoe players for a while.

The players eyed him back between throws. "Have a good snooze, Pat?" shouted one of them.

"To be sure," said Pat, a bit disgusted with reality, "move over there one you guys and let a man of action get into the game."



# French Labor

By JOSEPH WAGNER, of the I.W.W. Committee on World Relations

**What prospect is there of French labor insisting on intervention in Spain?**

**What was the driving force back of last year's sit-down strikes?**

**Why has a country with such a militant working class adopted compulsory arbitration?**

**A recognized authority on European labor movements deals with these important questions.**

The latter part of May, 1936, the world was startled by an epidemic of strikes in all industries all over France. Unexpectedly and spontaneously millions of workers had revolted against unbearable conditions which had been continually and gradually worsening ever since the World War, undermining and demoralizing the spirit of that once proud, militant, and revolutionary French proletariat.

The amazement of the world was due not so much to the suddenness and the extent of the strikes, as to the new methods adopted and employed by the strikers. "Striking on the job" was put into effect on an unprecedentedly large scale and with telling effect.

The workers came to the decision that the means of production were no longer to be considered as the exclusive property of the masters, but that they by right belonged as much, or even more, to the workers whose lives and well being depended on these instruments of production and distribution; for, without the workers industry could not exist, and, without access to industry, the working class would perish. So the strikers had decided that in that fight, instead of abandoning the struck factories, shops, mines, railroads, department stores, etc., they were going to remain in them, and make themselves at home in them until the termination of the conflict. "La Greve sur le Tas" (striking on the job) was maintained throughout their extensive struggle.

To be sure, the "new" method employed by the French strikers, was not altogether new. The I.W.W. has propagated and practiced the principle of "striking on the job" ever since it was first organized. The French syndicalists themselves practised it occasionally even before the birth of the I.W.W. And in America, too, the WPA workers have been indulging in it sporadically for the last few years. But it was the strikes of May-June,

1936, in France, that definitely fixed the "sit-down strike" as a regular weapon in the armory of the working class.

By this departure from the ordinary, the strikes in France became first page news for the capitalist



*A group of victorious sailors celebrating on the docks of Marseilles after their sit-down strike had won them the 40-hour week with an increase in wages in June of last year.*

press of the world. Well known correspondents wrote the strikes up as "foreign news", and the Brass Check press thus unwittingly spread the idea among workers of all lands. The idea was taken up everywhere, even in these United States as we just witnessed in the General Motors strike. This weapon has no legal standing as yet; on the contrary, politicians and jurists seem to be unanimous in outlawing it as a breach of the sacrosanct right of capitalist property. Even the French Popular Front composed of communist, socialist, and radical bourgeois parties, and its government headed by comrade Leon Blum, have declared "sitting strikes" illegal, to be resisted by all the forces of the government.

But, what of it? Have not peaceful strikes and picketing been considered illegal for centuries? They came to be tolerated only when and where the workers were able to muster sufficient force to assert their "rights".

Was the strike a success? The answer depends on who answers it. The strikes did not aim at revolutionary objectives, they were an explosion of the discontent of the masses. The demands have all been granted and these exceeded by far the expectations of the leaders of the labor unions, who, by the way, had no responsibility in starting these strikes. Briefly the gains were:

- 1.—Collective bargaining and collective contract;
- 2.—Right of electing shop and job delegates to represent the workers on the job and to adjust grievances and disputes with their employers; the employers not to fire delegates on account of their job delegate activities and the delegates to receive their regular wages for time spent negotiating with the employers or their agents;
- 3.—The 40-hour work week;
- 4.—Vacations with full pay;
- 5.—Increase in wages from 7 per cent to 15 per cent, the lowest paid workers to receive the largest increase.

To American members of the I.W.W. these attainments will not appear very imposing and certainly not revolutionary; old-time French syndicalists appreciate these gains in the same way as the Wobblies would. Furthermore they contend that the enforcement of these gains will depend entirely on the strength of organization and the pressure workers will be able to exert, that otherwise the gains will be lost or forgotten. That these fears are justified will appear later in this article.

These same revolutionary unionists, however, unanimously agree that the strikes were a great victory for the working class, quite apart from the gains enumerated above. The working class of France has re-discovered itself, it has regained its former self-reliance and besides it forged for itself

a new, efficient weapon, which it will never relinquish, and therefore it is ready to go places. Not since 1906, when after two years preparation the eight-hour day was won by great struggles, including several general strikes, have the masses of the French workers manifested such militancy.

It should be understood that the strikes of last year were not planned, or called by the unions through their regular channels. Most of the leaders of the unions were at the time engrossed with the political schemes of the Popular Front which had just won out in the elections and was busy forming its own government. Strikes of any magnitude would have embarrassed their political business. Small strikes broke out spontaneously in different parts of the country, and the time being ripe for it—the workers' dissatisfaction having reached its climax—these small strikes spread. The movement got beyond the control of the union leaders—since the bulk of the striking workers were not members of the unions—and it became general. The masses not only took possession of the industrial establishments of France, but of the unions as well. They flocked into the unions so fast that in a few months the membership of the General Confederation of Labor increased from one million to five million members.

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The reason why the masses had kept away from the unions is a long story and we can give only a few brief details. Up to the World War, the French Confederation of Labor (C.G.T.) was the outstanding revolutionary working class organization of the world. It was one of the sources of inspiration for the founders of the I.W.W. It was also actively anti-militarist. It commanded the respect and loyalty of the great majority of workers of France whether union members or not. It was a power of the first magnitude in France.

On the eve of the World War the C.G.T. proposed to the German Trade Unions that a general strike be called in France and Germany to prevent mobilization and war. The proposal was coldly turned down. "When the Fatherland is at war, the German worker is a German first of all" was the answer. As a reaction to this many of the influential leaders of the C.G.T. became favorable to defending their country against invasion and from then on they filled somewhat the same role for the French government that the A.F.L. did for the Wilson administration. The best militants, those who remained true to their anti-war principles were jailed or sent to the front line trenches to be murdered. By the tactics of class collaboration and with the aid of the government the C.G.T. grew numerically, but its principles got diluted and its morale weakened, losing its former militant, revolutionary character. The leaders thereafter no

longer relied on the organized strength and combativeness of the membership, but rather on bickering with politicians, with the government and with the Labour Bureau of the League of Nations.

After the war, communism too, appeared, creating the usual confusion in the ranks, and after a couple of years of bitter internal struggle the C.G.T. split into two separate confederations (C.G.T. and C.G.T.U.), the latter affiliated with the Red International following the well known zig-zag lines laid down by Moscow. The other (affiliated with the I.F.T.U.) became more and more reformistic and closer to the socialist and radical bourgeois political parties and cliques.

For sixteen years the main activity of the two confederations consisted of fighting each other. Strikes under the reformist C.G.T. were generally disrupted by communists, injecting their senseless slogans such as, "Hands of China" etc. and bitterly attacking the people in charge of strikes, thus creating distrust and defeatism in the midst of strikes. After a strike would be lost or ended with doubtful success, as the result, at least in part, of such meddling, the communists would use that as fresh arguments of the treachery of the "social-fascist" leaders.

On the other hand, the communists kept on calling "political general strikes" in rapid succession until their movement became an object of contempt and ridicule with the great mass of workers. The labor world was thus kept constantly irritated and disgusted with these senseless fights and meaningless strikes. That is why workers, in ever increasing numbers, were dropping away from the unions and their activities.

On account of the fight between the two federations, several large industrial union federations pulled out of them and remained autonomous. Besides, the anarcho-syndicalists, feeling at home in neither of the above groupings, formed their own Confederation, the C. G. T. S. R. (Revolutionary Syndicalist General Confederation of Labor) and affiliated with the I.W.M.A.

The membership of the two confederations dwindled and their influence on the working class approached the vanishing point. The employing class thus got a free hand to deal as it liked with its slaves, and used this unscrupulously over the weakened proletariat.

The French workers are akin in mental make-up to Spanish workers; as a rule they are class-conscious and have a high sense of class solidarity. They finally grew tired of their miserable conditions; tired of waiting for the two confederations to be done with their mutually exterminating struggle and to again take the lead, as formerly, in their struggle against the masters. They began to bring pressure from the outside on the



*A follower of fascist Colonel de la Rocque gets it on the chin as a fascist menace is routed by Popular Front supporters in a fight that swept a purportedly radical government into office.*

unions to quit their foolishness and create a united labor movement. Invited to meetings, non-members were able to exert this pressure. So strong became the pressure that in spite of past bitter struggles, a Unity Convention was held in January, 1936, and the two confederations and the autonomous federations merged into a single body and affiliated with the I.F.T.U. The anarcho-syndicalist C.G.T.S.R. remained out of the merger.

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With unity accomplished it appeared that a new era would begin for French labor. But another difficulty got in the way. Due to the danger of a fascist coup, an agreement was established between the socialist and communist parties, to drive back the fascist attacks. Later this was enlarged to take in the left-liberal bourgeois parties and establish what is known as the Popular Front. Just before the strikes we are considering, the Popular Front won a majority in the French parliament and proceeded to form a government with the Socialist leader, Leon Blum, as the chief.

Even before the new government could begin to function the "sitdown" strikes broke out. Most of the important officials of the C.G.T. are members of either the Socialist or Communist parties

and as they were busy with political scheming and log-rolling, an extensive strike movement was very inconvenient and greatly embarrassed them.

The workers, however, sensed that that was precisely the opportune time to strike. The Popular Front government, just come into power, could have hardly afforded to use the army of the Garde Mobile against the strikers. They were right. Instead, the government stepped in offering its good offices for mediating peace "among all classes," as Blum said. The socialist and communist officials of the unions got busy inside the unions to dampen the spirit of the workers and to persuade them against "unreasonable" demands and to lessen the effects of the strikes. With the aid of the government, compromises were effected, and some temporary agreements drawn up. Details were to be settled later by negotiation and arbitration.

Here is where trouble starts anew. *Arbitration* has been in bad repute with the French workers for as far back as we can remember. Traditional direct actionists, they are suspicious even of voluntary arbitration. In the settlement of last year's strike it was tried and it did not work. It appears that the workers accepting it always get the short end. Consequently, sit-down strikes broke out afresh in places where disputes were thought of as settled. The socialist Minister of Interior, Salengro, lost his patience and threatened to throw the striking comrades out of the factories by military force.

Voluntary arbitration systems not filling the bill, the socialist-communist government passed a compulsory arbitration law. As with all laws pertaining to labor relations, this, too, is vague. In effect it says, that if an agreement cannot be reached between the workers and employers, and they cannot agree as to a supreme arbiter, the government shall appoint the arbitrator, and the finding of that gentleman shall be binding on both parties to the dispute. Blum blames the necessity for this law on the stubbornness of the employers and wants the workers to think that the law is passed as a favor to them. He also hints that as long as he is the government chief, the arbiter will be a member of the C.G.T. But how about when the

communist-socialist government of Blum will be followed by a reactionary government? What kind of arbiters will a conservative government appoint to render binding awards in labor disputes? There is plenty of dissatisfaction and turmoil around this business, and plenty of opposition. Blum will find that the French workers are just as unyielding in the matter as the employers.

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There is also a great deal of dissatisfaction with the way the government is acting towards the Spanish fight against the fascist invasion. In spite of the merger of the different groups of unions into one, the old fight is continuing just as bitterly as ever before. The masses were able to exert pressure on the two confederations from the outside. They got inside but there they find the fight unequal with the politicians entrenched in strategic functions of the unions. The mass pays its dues but its wishes are defeated by the well oiled machine.

And here we revert to the affiliate of the I.W.M.A., the anarcho-syndicalist C.G.T.S.R. For years past it was a small organization composed mostly of dogmatic anarchists. Before the Unity Convention, syndicalists of different schools could find place for themselves in the two confederations and in the autonomous unions. If dissatisfied with the one, he could transfer his allegiance to the other group and not have to join with the sectarian anarcho-syndicalists. But since unity was accomplished, the same political clique is ruling the entire outfit. Therefore, it is expected that hereafter large numbers of dissatisfied C.G.T. members will flock to the C.G.T.S.R. whose prestige increased greatly among the French workers on account of its close connection with the C.N.T. of Spain. With new elements entering it, it will soon lose its exclusively anarchist characteristic, and there is a good chance that it will eventually play the same role in France as the C.N.T. in Spain, with the C.G.T. in the role of the U.G.T. for the great body of the French working class will not long allow politicians to rule their economic organization, nor lead it into the rut of parliamentary politics.





# On Labor's Back

By TOIVO HALONEN

**Will labor permit Largo Caballero and John L. Lewis to develop their careers in the manner of Mussolini and McDonald?**

**Or will labor be able to adopt the policy of Louis Blanqui (who when asked if he was out to overthrow a cabinet of dubious "progressives," said: "No, we want only to lock the door after them!")**

Quite a number of men using labor unions as stepping stones, have raised themselves to positions of prominence in their own country, and to world-wide renown. The careers of many of them deserve painstaking study because in their success stories may, perhaps, be found the answer to the vital question:

Can the workers depend on leaders?

Turning to Spain, we find Francisco Largo Caballero, premier of the loyalist government, who was born in 1870 in the miserable surroundings of the Spanish peasant. Later he ran away to Madrid, where he earned his living as a common pick and shovel laborer. A union of Building Workers was organized in 1890 with Largo, then a youth of 20, as one of the organizers. It was then that he learned to read and write.

He became a sincere but bureaucratic labor leader. He entered the general strike of 1917 whole-heartedly and was sentenced to jail for life. Because of his popularity, he was soon set free and made a member of the Council of State by Dictator De Rivera.

In the 1931 Spanish Revolution, when King Alfonso left Spain Caballero became the Minister of Labor. It was while in these official positions that he used his influence and power in clamping down on the telephone and port strikes, both of which were initiated by the syndicalists.

At the age of 62 Largo Caballero began reading Marx and Lenin. In the revolt of the workers of Asturias, October 1934, he was arrested and charged with plotting to overthrow the government. Again he was freed, and failing to note that workers are always weakened by any alliance with capitalist elements, he initiated a Peoples' Front.

In February, 1936, the Popular Front came into power, with Francisco Largo Caballero as pre-

mier. He has "arrived," but so has General Franco and his fascists. The outcome is still unsettled.

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In England there is Ramsay McDonald, who became anti-labor Prime Minister of England from 1929 to 1935. Born October 12, 1866, he learned his Socialist ideas in London, where he lived very precariously by writing for the local newspapers.

Wearing a conspicuous red tie, McDonald spoke on the street corners of London and took part in many radical debates. He was secretary of the Labour Party from 1900 to 1912, and served in the House of Commons in 1906.

McDonald's star rose rapidly after this, and he was successively chairman of the Independent Labour Party 1906-09, leader of the Labour Party 1911-14. He also was for some time editor of the "Socialist Library" and the "Socialist Review."

During the world war he was far-sighted enough to build up a future reputation as a pacifist, at the cost of a temporary handicap in his political career. Thus in 1922 he became the Labour Party Leader of His Majesty's Opposition, and for a brief while, in 1923-4, was thus shoved up to become Prime Minister. The 1926 General Strike provided a further opportunity to establish his concern for respectability as greater than any solicitude for the working class. Again in 1929 with the victory of the Labour Party at the polls, he became Prime Minister once more. Under his leadership doles were cut, the wages of government employes were cut, and his concern for the workers in British colonies was shown by the shooting down of strikers in India. After August of 1931, though he had lost his labor party support, he continued in office just the same as Prime Minister and Lord of the Treasury. Labor had carried him so far that he could be a politician

in the highest office in the land, even without the support of the workers who had put him there.

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Mussolini, one of the bulwarks of Fascism today, once was a Socialist. Born in 1883 of radical parents, he received a good education. After attending 6 years of Normal school, he went to Switzerland where he became a radical and was expelled from two cantons. Mussolini returned to Italy to serve in the army.

In 1913 he became the editor of the "Avanti," the daily Socialist paper published in Milan. During 1914, at the beginning of the World War, Mussolini was boosting war. For this reason he was expelled from the Socialists. In the same year he created his Fascisti.

In the following years up to 1919, the Socialists gained control of the Italian legislature. There were great railway, telephone and telegraph strikes called by the Syndicalists. Mussolini and his Fascists fought against these strikes and did all in their power to scab and break the strikes. This, of course, put him in high favor with the Italian capitalists.

It should be noted that in 1920 the railway workers refused to move trains carrying soldiers, policemen, and sometimes even the clergy were not allowed to ride the trains. In September of that year the Italian metal workers began occupying factories.

An outgrowth of these strikes was a bloody riot of Fascists in Bologna. In 1921 Mussolini entered the Italian legislative chambers, and in October, 1922, after his blackshirts marched on Rome, King Victor Emanuel III told him to form a ministry. He did so, and made himself Premier of the Council and officer on interior and foreign affairs.

Thus Mussolini received his education in the radical movements of Italy, turned renegade, and within 10 years became the Fascist dictator of Italy.

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In America John L. Lewis enjoys a high degree of prominence, because of his control over the United Mine Workers of America, and more recently over the Committee on Industrial Organization. He first appeared on the mining scene in Panama, Illinois. Here he first gained notoriety when the treasury of the local union was robbed and Lewis was blamed for it.

To get rid of Lewis, John H. Walker, president of District 12, U.M.W.A., told Sam Gompers to give Lewis a job. So he was given a job organizing steel workers, in which he was quite successful. John L. was then taken off the A. F. of L. payroll and given a job as business manager of the U.M.W.A. Journal.

During the World War, White, then president of the U.M.W.A., left for Europe on a commission for the government. Lewis became vice-president and successfully connived to become president of the United Mine Workers in 1917.

The sell-outs of labor by Lewis are numerous. In the coal miners' strike of 1920, the famous Dougherty Injunction was used against the miners, and Lewis piously proclaimed that the union could not fight the government injunction. His greatest betrayal was in 1922 when 600,000 workers were out, and things looked bad for the U.M.W.A.; 50,000 unorganized miners in Western Pennsylvania came out and turned the tide in favor of the union.

John L. Lewis then signed National and District agreements, making no provisions for the loyal miners outside the U.M.W.A. These miners continued to strike for several months without aid and were finally starved and beaten into submission.

During the life of the NRA, Lewis became labor advisor for F. D. R. Sensing the New Deal's need for well-controlled unions of mass production workers, he pretended to fight for Industrial Unionism in the A. F. of L. conventions at San Francisco and Atlantic City. Out of this grew the C.I.O.

The workers of the U.M.W.A. have brought Lewis quite a way from the life of a coal miner. His \$12,000 yearly salary attests to that fact. It isn't every miner that has a Cadillac V-12 and a chauffeur to boot!

But John is not yet content, and who knows to what extent he will use the U.M.W.A. and the C.I.O. to satisfy his ego.

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In the case of Caballero, Mussolini, and McDonald, we find that the capitalists greeted their rise with open arms because they exerted a great power over the masses of workers whom capitalists must hold in submission to retain their own power.

Our conclusion may not be entirely justified, but there is some evidence to indicate that not a few of the successful labor leaders, and those still aspiring to attain success, deliberately set out to gain the confidence of working people in order that they may appear before the capitalist rulers with something in their hands that they may offer in trade for a position of power and glory.

We hesitate to believe that John L. Lewis will succeed in reaching the top, but who can doubt that what he has in mind is the control of the workers in the mass production industries, so that he may have something with which to bargain with the barons of American industry, for the greater glory of John L. Lewis.

# Women in the Labor Movement

By S. H. A.



That the fighting spirit of Mother Jones, best man in many a coal miners' battle, persists in the women of today, is shown by the women's brigade in Flint (shown above) and on many a picket line as well as in the trenches around Madrid.

One of the girls now studying at Work Peoples College to prepare herself for greater usefulness to the labor movement, asks why in the face of the facts the old prejudice about "keeping women in their places" should persist in labor organizations.

Though from time immemorial every influence has been at work to keep women "in their place," humble and saying little as to what was to be done in this world, women today in the labor movement are showing the same courage as the pioneer women who fought Indians, planted corn and built houses. They are doing this not merely as home builders, but as builders of a new society.

Women have been forced to take their places in the factories, mills, offices, and consequently in the labor movement. When production moved from the home into the factory, women followed

the economic trend. Woman's place in the labor movement is steadily growing as her place in society as an individual is beginning to be more clearly recognized.

It is not merely in Spain where women shoulder guns at the sides of their husbands to fight back the fascist invaders, but in all phases of the struggle of labor against capital that women come heroically to the front. The history of labor is filled with instances of the courageous part that women have played, alike in such armed struggles as the Paris Commune, the revolutionary move-

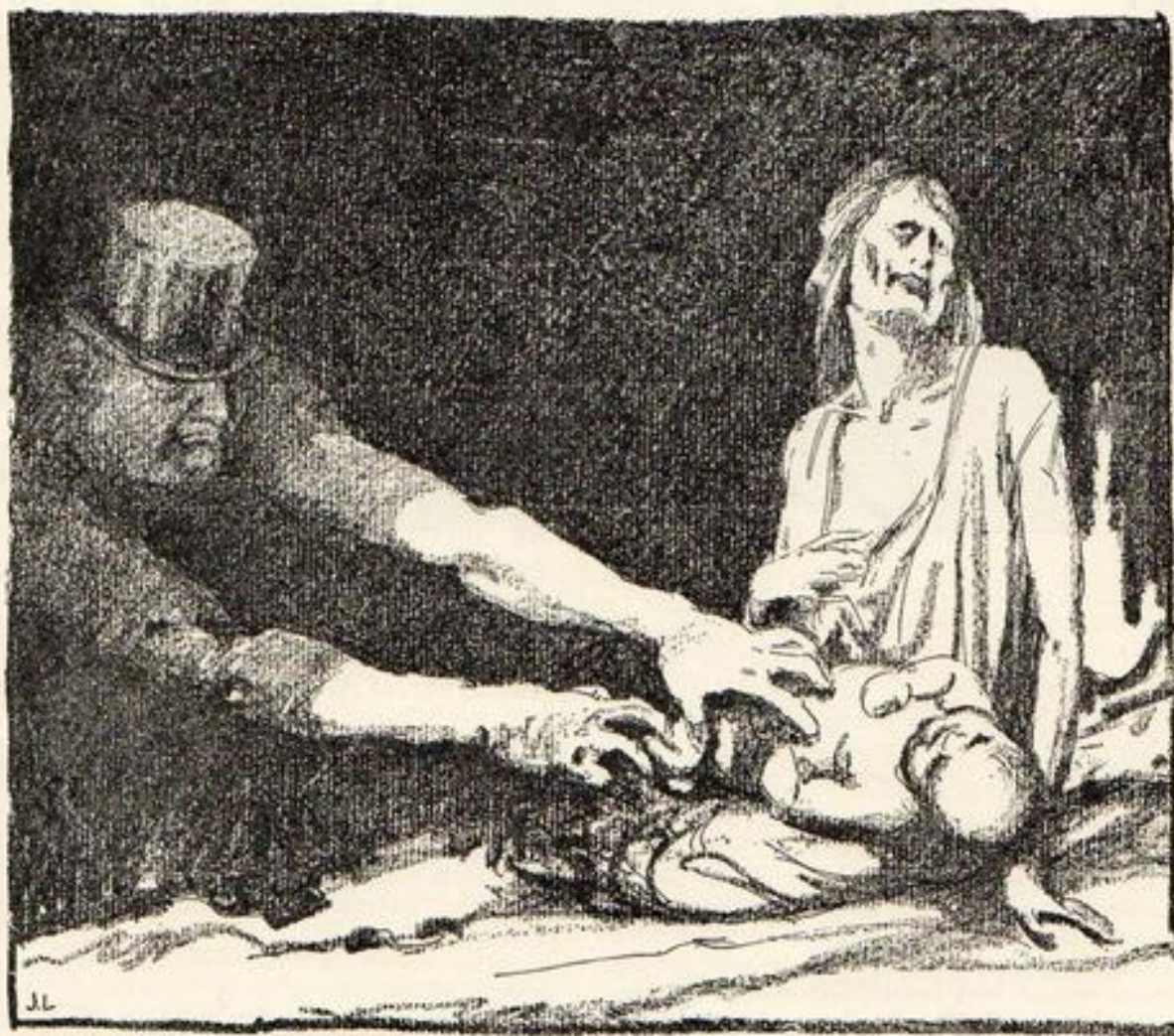
ments in Russia, Finland, Austria, Germany and Hungary of 1904-5 and during and after the World War, and in the great strikes of America—Cripple Creek and Homestead, Pullman, Ludlow, and the 1919 steel strike. Here are a few significant instances from recent years.

The Longwear Manufacturing Company of Philadelphia hired 45 high school girls for \$6 per week. Later the company tried to cut even this wage, but it received a rather shocking surprise when the girls went out on strike and the whole factory went out with them. These vicious sweatshop owners were under contract to supply army underwear, so after a three-hour tie-up, they gave in. They agreed to the abolition of piece work, a minimum wage of \$10 per week, recognition of workers' shop committees, and no dis-

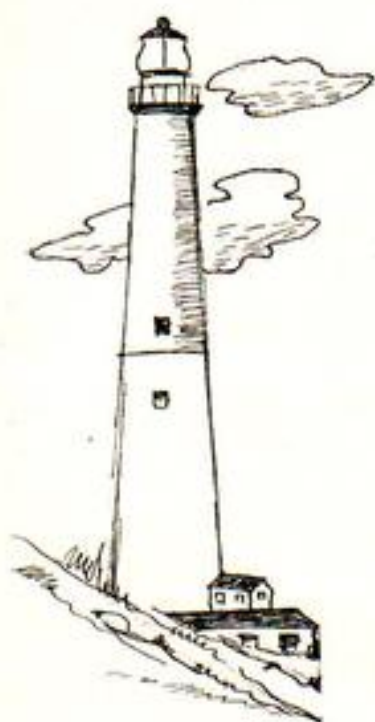
crimination. The needle women asked for an increase in wages from the \$6.00 they were getting to \$22.50. The workers who had been on strike offered to go out again if need be, but it wasn't necessary. The company had learned its lesson and granted the increase. Direct action had paid.

In 1933, 1500 miners and their families marched at Taylorville, Ill., in the funeral cortage of Mrs. Emma Cumerlatto, who was shot by special deputies while picketing. Ten state police acted as an unwelcome escort. During the strike among the Progressive Miners who were arrested on the charge of murdering Rodems, a Peabody gunthug, were four women, one of whom was a seventeen year old girl. These women were doing their

(Continued on page 25)



Women are learning that if their children are not to be strangled by the greed of a system that puts profit before all things, and are not to survive only to become cannon-fodder for the munitions trust, they, too, must join the battle against the exploitation of their class.



# Murmansk

By A. Yourniek

Last month this seaman described how taking ship to Russia shortly after the March, 1917, revolution, the spirit of revolt ashore led to the formation of a ship's committee aboard their own vessel. As the result of a dispute to make the captain put on enough food for the return trip to America, the American consul at Archangel brought pressure to have him as a ring leader, left ashore with "the rest of these people who are stirring up this revolution business", as the old man put it.

This month he continues his vivid narrative of revolution and counter-revolution on the fringes of the Arctic.

Jack and I and two others came ashore in the Land of the Revolution to start a new chapter in our lives. Some of the crew helped us get our baggage ashore and up to the railroad station. The train was making only two trips a day between Economy and Archangel. In the station there were a few workers and some soldiers on leave going home. The train was long overdue, and everyone was besieging the station master. Late in the afternoon we were told that there would be no train that day. Something had gone awry with the engine. The ground was covered with new snow, and it was ten miles to Archangel. We could put the night in at the station or walk. So we checked our baggage with the station master and took the road.

The wind bore dead against us. Half way over my chin and nose began to freeze. I wasn't aware of it, but Jack made me understand with signs about it. I rubbed snow on the frozen parts and brought them to life again. From then on I watched Jack's exposed parts and he, mine.

It was dusk when we reached Archangel. We registered at the Local Seaman's Home and took in the night life of the city. Next morning we registered at the proper bureau and were issued the usual food cards. At the American consul's we got what pay we still had coming to us.

We dawdled around town for a couple of days more, and took in a soviet meeting where the election of local officers was taking place. Then

Jack and I shipped on the *Sawaty*, a small Russian passenger ship, erstwhile plying in White Sea ports and the Solvietsky Islands. Now she had been taken over by the customs authorities and was to lie over for the winter in Murmansk.

Though situated on the Arctic Ocean, Murmansk is an open port the year around. It was made into a port only during the war to avoid delays in shipping ammunition when the harbor of Archangel was frozen over.

After a few days Jack got it into his head to quit. He wanted to give his job to another sailor who couldn't talk Russian and who consequently found it pretty tough to get by. Jack got off but the other fellow didn't get the job anyway. With Jack's departure I felt alone. I hated to lose him as a partner, but I couldn't speak the language either, so I stayed.

We took on some stores and bunkers and left with the aid of a couple of ice breakers. It was the last clean up and ships that weren't ready for departure would have to winter it there. Toward evening we reached the open sea. The White Sea was free from ice though it freezes over in January.

All the way down to Murmansk we had easy weather. The days were getting very short. On our arrival I was called to get ready for my watch on deck. It was about eleven in the morning, and still dark. At first I believed that somebody had made a mistake, but I soon found out that in De-

They could return to the Askold if they wished. cember and January there are only a couple of hours of twilight and the rest of the day that part of the world is flung in darkness.

We lay out in the stream for a couple of days until a berth along side the dock could be found, and then the Sawaty was securely moored for the winter. We held a crew meeting and decided to let some of the men go home for a vacation, and that when they returned the others would go. But the first group stayed home awaiting the spring.

Time passed slowly on board. Nothing could be done in the line of the ship's work. There was hardly any place to go in town. The one movie show was in the Seamen's Club, where dances were also held occasionally.



I was picking up Russian fast. Against my wishes I was eventually installed as chairman of the ship's committee. Though the revolution was astir all over the country, most of the crew weren't concerned very much about it. Probably our comparative isolation on this ship tied up in an out of the way town had much to do with this indifference.

One Sunday, though, the news was brought aboard that Admiral Ketlinsky had been shot that afternoon. He was commander on the cruiser Askold. It appears that the shooting was done while the Admiral was leaving a sailor's meeting where he was called to hear the report of demobilization by two delegates from Petrograd. None had seen the deed done, and no one had the slightest idea of how it could have happened. Most of us had never heard of Ketlinsky; the chief engineer, though, seemed to know everything about him. He told us how good a man this admiral had been. He was a liberal and a good patriot even while serving the Tzar. He had served the Kerensky government faithfully and when the Bolsheviki took power he declared himself ready to serve the new Russia. He may have been sincere. At least he was liked by the Bolsheviki and had won the respect of all the Allies. Through his efforts the S. S. Dora was at that time just a few hundred miles from Murmansk laden with foodstuffs secured from America, but now that he had been killed the ship was recalled, and a whole nation was to suffer because of the mad act of some fanatic.

Next morning the local paper announced the tragic assassination of the admiral, and called for the apprehension of the guilty so that justice might take its course. Mass meetings were held where local officials condemned such acts of individual terror. Resolutions were passed to leave no stone unturned. There was much agitation about it for a while, but nothing came of it.

\* \* \*

Later, in the Russian navy, I learned more about Ketlinsky and his ship the Askold. She was built in Germany, and was new when the Russo-Japanese war broke out. Her five funnels gave her a formidable appearance. She was armed with 12 six inch guns and others of lesser calibre. She could then make 32 knots per hour and was regarded as the world's fastest cruiser. During the blockade of Port Arthur she broke through the cordon of Japanese men-of-war all by her lonesome, steaming full ahead and firing all her guns in all directions.

During the World War she was used against the Turks at the Dardanelles. Working in between the two forts during the night she destroyed the cables between them, while the Turks looked on helplessly, for they could not fire on the cruiser for fear of hitting their own fort. So the mission was accomplished without mishap to the Askold.

With the failure of the English military operations at the Dardanelles, the cruiser was sent to France. During her stay there Russian revolutionary exiles of various shades established committees to imbue the crew with their particular revolutionary doctrines. These activities were soon scented by the higher-ups. Wholesale arrests were made. Four of those apprehended were sentenced to be shot, and the rest, some 150, were exiled to Siberia.

It was through this affair that Ketlinsky became commander of the Askold. A special commission headed by him was sent to France to investigate the matter. All he did, however, was to whitewash the commander and the officers and take the command of the cruiser over himself.

After a short stay in France, the Askold left for Glasgow. On her way the crew got rid of one of the stool-pigeons. The helpless lump of bones and flesh was pitched on the seething fire. Soon after the ashes of the pit and the box were blown to destroy all traces of the fink's disappearance long before it was found out that he was missing. Upon the cruiser's arrival in Scotland, another fink, sick with terror, was paid off, a thing very rare in the navies, particularly in wartime.

The cruiser arrived in Russia during the March revolution. The sentences of the original crew were set aside, and the men in exile were free.

A few who came back were received by Ketslinsky himself, who made a speech of welcome. When he finished, someone asked why he, as a liberal, didn't do anything about the death sentences imposed on the four sailors. He replied that he was sorry, but at that time couldn't do anything about it, but of course, had he been a member of the court, things would have been different. The men had their own opinion about the Admiral. To them he was just another untrustworthy liberal. He was killed by a friend of one of the four executed men.

\* \* \*

To the sailors the assassination of Ketslinsky was just a case of one admiral less. They were confronted with a more immediate problem. Orders came from Moscow for the sailors' demobilization. Shortly after sailors began to leave the God-forsaken shores of Murmansk where winter lasts nine months, and no green thing lives except the hardy forest timber. The daily sight of nothing but trees and mountains and water and snow in an utter darkness relieved only by the dim Northern light gets on one's nerves, and the soldiers and sailors were eager to leave.

One day a group of English deportees—all women and children—arrived in Murmansk. They were total strangers in Russia, wholly unacquainted with the language, deported because they were married to men who had once been working in England. They were treated by the Allies with great hostility.

I remember especially one woman with a child of about four years in her arms. Like the others, she had been born in England and her husband had been working there before the revolution. He had come to Russia in March with the intent of sending for the child and woman sometime later. She hadn't heard from him in six months but was sure he had gone to his birthplace, Odessa. That city had now been cut off from Moscow by the White Guards and the Germans. I warned her that she would never reach her destination. But the woman was beside herself. She had lost all her belongings. She had left them either on the ship or on the flat car where the heaviest baggage is piled, or perhaps they had been stolen by the longshoremen. She and the child were left with nothing but the few scant things they had on. Her screams attracted the attention of a British officer who was in charge of the immigrants. His name was Leonard and he spoke Russian well. He came up and gruffly told her that it was her fault, to fall in with the rest and go to the station. When she insisted upon still looking for her things, he motioned to a soldier who pushed her in the line. I watched her as she

moved on in the queue with the chilled child clinging close to her.

About that time I and five others of the crew decided to quit the Sawaty and join the Russian navy. The First of May we came over to report for duty on the cruiser Askold.

It was Labor's holiday and we too took part in the celebration. At one point the parade stopped and we were addressed by a sailor from the Askold who talked about the International and other things, but it had snowed, and the ground was slushy, and hard for a foothold, so we were glad when the afternoon came, and we were treated to a good dinner at the Sailor's Club. In the evening we piled in a tugboat which took us to the cruiser.



Time on the Askold was passed pleasantly enough. There was a lot of fun for us in the usual daily military training because it was something new. We'd exert ourselves trying to outdo each other, and evening would find us pretty well tired out. But after the usual steambath, which the Russians had installed even on their ships, we'd feel all right again.

\* \* \*

After three weeks some of the boys who had gone on an expedition to Petchinga reported that there was a large British cruiser the Cochrane there. She was armed with nine inch guns, and had orders to use them against the Finns and Germans if they came too close. When our men had landed in Petchinga they walked up to a nearby monastery about which the Finns were supposed to be concentrating. This monastery was one of the largest in the far north, though there was one larger on the Solvietsky Islands, now used by the Soviet government as a prison camp. There they met some fifty Red Guards and border patrols, and went with them to various lookout posts on the front. They didn't have to wait long. After a couple of days the news came to the camp that the Finns were coming. Immediately they were sent after them. The Cochrane was notified, and when the Finns came close, she fired a few shots. The Finns didn't expect anything like that, and took it on the run with our men after them. It turned out to be a foot race, but it seems the Finns were the best runners. They

flung guns and supplies away, which our men gathered up. When the rumpus was over our men had captured ten prisoners, one of whom was a German officer, whom the British took aboard the cruiser.

The Finn attackers had been led by a monk. The monks had feared the confiscation of their property, and had sent him to Finland to get aid to hold their property against the revolutionary government. He came back with a force adequate to take it had it not been for the preparations made by the Reds during his absence. After this skirmish the Finns never came back again.

With the latter part of May, the valley snow commenced to thaw. Military operations were hindered. The Allies in Murmansk were landing more soldiers daily. Our forces were enlarged and ordered back to the ship, where we started practicing now with heavier guns. We got a new commander also, Ziloff. Officers wore no marks except a plain uniform and cap, but we did call him commander.

There was a small Russian steamer plying between Murmansk and the Vardo Islands, which belong to Norway. At that time she was the only Russian ship still on foreign trade. One Sunday the Coast Guard stations received an urgent call. This ship had sighted a submarine. There was a shore battery where she had anchored, but nobody could handle the guns. Murmansk was some distance away, and the best that could be done was to send a pair of trawlers. But they could knock out only 10 to 11 knots per hour, and a few hours would be required to reach the hounded ship. Meanwhile the submarine came in and sank the ship where she was lying at anchor. By the time the trawlers got there the submarine had gone leaving its wrecked victims behind. It would be useless for the trawlers to go prowling the Arctic Ocean for the submarine. They salvaged what cargo they could, took the dead aboard, and those who were still alive, and steamed back to Murmansk. Seven were dead, others had broken arms and legs, and still other had minor injuries.

It was a sad day for Murmansk when the trawlers returned with their dead. Everybody, including us sailors, turned out for the funeral. The priest conducted the service at the foot of the hill. When he had finished we carried them to the top of the hill and buried them.

All kinds of rumors circulated regarding the submarine incident. The official report was that it was a German submarine. But Germany was supposed to be at peace with Russia, and the sinking of the only Russian vessel on the foreign trade would be of no benefit to Germany and a loss to Russia. The unofficial explanation was that the submarine was British.

Next Sunday evening when some of our men had gone ashore to take in a motion picture at the Sailor's Club, they were accosted by a representative from headquarters who informed them that a seditious meeting was taking place, and urged all sailors present to report for duty at once. The men rushed back to the ship, took rifles and hand grenades, and with all those who were off duty, we hurried ashore. By the time we arrived the main speakers had already been arrested, and when the crowd had a good look at us coming, they dispersed quietly. The arrested ones were railroad engineers, and they were sent later on to central Russia.

We were told that these men were openly calling for a Constitutional Assembly such as the one that the Bolsheviks had dispersed at Petrograd in January. The same workers who had marched in mud and cold on the First of May, applauding the names of Lenin and Trotsky, and shouting "Long Live the World Revolution!" were now, only six weeks later, boosting for a Constitutional Assembly. No doubt the British were gleeful about it.

The drive for the division of the Russian people was on. Sailors patrolled the town for a couple of nights, but nothing happened. The shore patrol was quit as no sign of disturbance could be detected.

News of the sinking of the little ship had got to Moscow, and orders were given that the destroyers take provisions aboard at once. There were several of these boats moored to their dock with no crews. Three were immediately commissioned, and sailors from our ship and from the battleship Chesma took them over until the regular crew would come aboard.

One day all of us were ordered to a mass meeting ashore. The speaker was General Poole. Talking in English, he said:

"I have the honor of coming before you as the representative of the Allied high commander. All of you know the unfortunate situation of your country. We haven't forgotten what you people did for us in 1914. It was the activity of your army that compelled the Germans to withdraw large forces from the Western front, which gave us a breathing spell and virtually saved Paris from the Huns. Your country is now prostrate and helpless, and we take it that it's our turn to repay you . . .

"We must first organize an Anglo-Russian division, for the opening of the Riga front. The men in that division will be paid in English money. All equipment will be furnished by us."

The men were dumfounded by Poole's speech. They had been promised peace, but now all sorts of schemes were drawn up behind the lines to hurl them back into the war on the side of the Allies.



According to the peace treaty with Germany no foreign troops were to be permitted to remain on Russian territory. In Murmansk alone there were about 5,000 Allied soldiers and three battle cruisers rode at anchor in the bay. Germany was demanding that Russia live up to its agreement. But the Russian forces were too small to drive the Allies out, and they weren't inclined to do so anyway.

It was a double-dealing, two-faced policy. One telegram from Moscow would publicly demand the withdrawn of the Allied troops, and another at the same time request their close co-operation.

Next Sunday morning our ship's committee was invited to a meeting ashore, where the matter of breaking with the central government in Moscow would be taken up. Things were coming to a head. When the committee returned and gave its report to the crew, the chief engineer offered a resolution against breaking with Moscow. With this resolution our delegates went ashore and presented their instructions to the delegates of the other ships, and the workers delegates.

A mass meeting for all the people of Murmansk was called to be held at the house of the Soviets. It was opened by Youryev who favored breaking with Moscow. He stressed the weak military position of our ships and our shore defenses. He pointed to the Finn and German danger that constantly menaced the workers' homes. General Poole made much the same speech as he had before, but he now added promises to the civilian population that fishing boats and nets and other things would be given them. Next was a Frenchman who talked on how France loved Russia for the help they had given, but said not a word about the thousands of Russian soldiers dying in the African jungles for refusing to fight any longer. An American Martin spoke too in the name of the American consul at Archangel. Stankevite, the local militia commissar took the floor in favor of the Allied proposals. When Youryev put the question it carried with a large majority. Only the sailors of the Askold voted against it.

At that same time in Kem the Allies were putting three revolutionists, members of the Soviets, against the wall to be shot by Serbian soldiers under British officers. But of course we in Murmansk knew nothing about that or that all the towns along the Murmansk railway had been taken by Allied troops without any opposition. The same way as they took the towns around Murmansk, they tried to take Kem too. But there they met opposition from the local soviets which were made up of Bolsheviks.

We got back on the Askold longing for reinforcements from Petrograd.

(To be continued next month).

## Women in the Labor Movement

(Continued from page 20)

share to win the strike in which their menfolk were engaged.

In Pittsburg, California, fishermen went on strike against the fish barons. Women did their duty on the picket line. The companies offered to buy fish direct from the strikers; women went to the cannery to investigate and found that the price offered was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents, on the grounds that the fish had been standing. The women began throwing stones at the fish barons and at the cannery windows. They were told to go home and behave themselves, but this only brought on a new assault of stones. The fish was paid for at 5 cents, and the strike was over.

During the iron miners strike of 1916 in Minnesota, women were on the picket lines with the men. Many were beaten and brutally treated.

Gunmen entered the home of Pete Masonovich to arrest the men gathered there. The group resisted the arrest and the gunmen knocked over Mrs. Masonovich and opened fire at the men. One gunman killed his fellow gunman, but the workers were blamed for it. Mrs. Masonovich and thirteen men were arrested. Her husband and three other strikers, Nickich, Cernogorovich, and Orlandich, were convicted and sentenced to one to six years. Mrs. Masonovich, it appears, was the first woman ever tried for murder in connection with a labor case.

During this Iron Range strike there were many women who were beaten and who spent time in jail and refused to be bailed out. One woman in Gilbert, Minn., was beaten and afterwards kept in jail without medical aid. She was pregnant, and as a result of the brutal treatment, she died.

Women of the working class are the same the world over. In Spain today they are proving their mettle. They are out in the trenches beside their husbands, brothers and sweethearts, valiantly aiding their men in the battle against fascist forces, that Spain may be free for future generations.

Women in America will do the same if need arises. They have shown this by many a heroic battle on the picket line. They cannot sit back and wait for peace while the lives of their beloved ones are in danger.

Let women do their share in the labor movement. All too often they have to fight the same prejudice about "keeping women in their place" in the unions as they have had to fight in other phases of life these many years. Educate workingclass women and they will set out gladly on the road to emancipation. In the growing ranks of women workers the I.W.W. will find new sources of energy and of intelligent enthusiasm for its mighty program of world reconstruction.

## *The Hobo*

By L. P. EMERSON

The sun hung low o'er the mountains  
Tinting each rugged crest,  
And painting in golden glory  
The bending skies of the West;  
When dark, like a speck on the landscape,  
With his blankets across his back  
Came a worn and weary hobo  
Down the dusty railroad track.

By the curve of the road at nightfall  
Where the stars above glimmer and peep,  
Through a curtain of leaves and grasses,  
He laid him down to sleep;  
And he thought as the song of the night bird  
Soothed his tired and troubled mind,  
There's room in this world and plenty  
For all except me and my kind.

He slept and lived in dreamland  
Where love spread her splendid wings,  
And bore him from old surroundings  
To a better scheme of things.  
He dwelt in a rosy cottage  
With flowers blooming 'round the door  
Where all was wealth and gladness . . .  
There were no tramps, no poor.

A sweetheart wife beside him  
Made him of all men blest,  
While the wee curly head of their darling  
Nestled close to his manly breast;  
And there were great things to be doing . . .  
The best that was in him he gave  
To a world with no soldiers, no shackles,  
No prisons, no master or slave.

O, woe! to a world whose workers  
Are cast like chaff to the wind  
When the lords cannot use them for profit  
Must go seeking, but cannot find.  
O! cursed be the system forever  
That robs human life of a home,  
And sends young and old to the highway  
In quest of a living to roam.

But why will you die, ye toilers?  
You have the power and the might  
To wrest from the cravens who hold them  
Your bread, your freedom, your right.  
O rise, in your infinite numbers,  
Unite on the sea and the land,  
Let tyrants implore you for mercy,  
Take the reins of the world in your hand.

# Who Is It That Gets the Relief?

By EVERT ANDERSON

**A WPA worker wonders, if it weren't for the graft, wouldn't it be cheaper for the government to send us a check each month with instructions not to work for anybody?**

"The sooner we get this job done the better it will be for all of us", said one well fed Village Babbit to another equally obese.

The two of them were discussing the forthcoming blessings of two roads now under construction under WPA management—the Wolf Creek road and the Wilson River—both in Oregon. The writer has worked on both of these but is now temporarily laid up to boost the hospital business, due to an accident which was beyond the control of the lord as well as your reporter.

"Yeah, what we need on these roads is more machinery and somebody with a little git-up-and-git to make them lazy bums work instead of leaning on their shovels all day long." "You bet", said Babbit No. 2 "Now when I was a young—"

By this time I had finished my frugal repast consisting of a cheese sandwich — Tillamook Cheese — and a bum cup of coffee; whereupon I, seeking the fresh air without, left the Babbit conversation to a more appreciative audience.



However, it is the nature of "relief work" that I wish to comment on now. How does it relieve? A common laborer gets \$55.00 per month to support himself and family. A jackhammer man \$65.00; a faller \$85.00. Even at the rate of \$85.00 per month, a family man has to scrape to make both ends meet. He and his family have to eat poor food, wear poor clothes, live in a poor house in a poor district, breathing poor air. Finally when the bread winner passes on—the way of all flesh, rich or poor—he is tucked into a poor casket, and his poor survivors hear a poor

preacher make a poor sermon—something on the order of "rich and poor must dwell together in harmony"—case No. 810372901 is closed.

Sometime ago I read some figures on how much money it takes to keep alive. I have forgotten the exact amount. But when I tell you that I am mathematically dead from having received too little of too much, you will forgive me for this weakness of memory. This is my budget for 1936: Received in wages from the WPA: \$344.04. From other sources \$160.00. Total income for 1936—\$504.04. Had I worked the whole year at the rate of \$55.00 per month, it would have given me \$660.00. Agreed that \$55.00 per month is the lowest hand out we can possibly give ourselves and still percolate, it can be seen that I was at the end of the year \$155.96 below the percolating level. This is how I was relieved in 1936.

"ONLY GOD CAN MAKE A TREE." Yeah, but we sure can knock 'em over quickly enough. The Wilson River and the Wolf Creek roads will be short cuts to the sea from Portland. They are chartered through heavy timber. Big, tall, straight firs such as only grow here on the coast. Thousands of acres of timber land are destroyed yearly by forest fires, but we must aid in the destruction even on the WPA. To do otherwise would interfere with the sacred rights of business. And so we go to work with saws, axes, dynamite, peavies. We pile up the brush and the good timber together, pour some oil on it, strike a match to it—fire! As the fire rapidly consumes the logs and brush, the foreman glows in satisfaction: "It will damned near all be burned up before night."

In Portland fuel companies are taking advantage of the present cold spell—and influenza—to sell inferior wood at exorbitant prices. We could easily have made wood out of the logs we burned and supplied the needy with fuel free of charge.

but that would interfere with private business. While our good timber is thus going up in smoke people in other parts of "this great country of ours" are burning twigs, straw; yes and some are drying cow manure for fuel.

Much of the timber that we deliberately destroy would make excellent houses for those who live in "tumble down shacks" along Tobacco Road. But it would "interfere with private business" were we to give to each other what we need free of charge. Private business demands destruction. It's been doing it so long that occasionally members of our class help to hang a guy that advocates the opposite because it is argued that "what was good enough for father is good enough for me."

"The more oil and gas you waste around here the better they like it", said one of the initiated WPA slaves, as he seemed to enjoy pouring as much oil and gas on the ground as into the engine. Of course, the oil companies will like it very much. They are in business for the money and do not care whether oil is used for anybody's good or not.

Crews are hauled to jobs over fifty miles from Portland in huge uncomfortable busses. Camps could easily be built, but that would "interfere with private business." It would be cheaper by far, and the money would certainly last a lot longer if the government sent us a check of \$55.00 every month with instructions not to work for anybody. But— there is no end to BUTS— that would "break down the morale of our free-born American wage earners", according to the best Babbit authorities on this subject.

Who the hell is on relief anyway? Answer: The oil companies are on relief; the politicians are on relief; equipment companies are on relief; Babbits and braintrusts are on relief. The half-starved unemployed in whose name huge sums of money are being appropriated is only the sucker in the game.

Next fall the short cut to the sea will be open for traffic. This will mean that less gas will be consumed since the distance is shortened. Less

tires worn—for the same reason. Less wear and tear of the old tin can.



This in turn will mean less business in oil, tires, gas, tin cans. Again it will mean less employment for those engaged in oil, tires, tin cans etc. Catch on? There is the vicious cycle of private business. Yet, and still I want to see the road built.

What's the nature of direct relief? This is it: The capitalists give us a handout in the manner that a stick-up artist returns to his victim enough for car fare after having thoroughly RELIEVED him of all valuables including his watch and jack-knife. Relief Work is the same thing only you have to work for it. Now let's give the scissorbill the floor: "Well, somebody is gotta be the head of things."

The scissorbill has given me one good reason for which I want to see a short cut to the sea. Any worker who has convinced himself that he has neither the intelligence nor the courage to organize for a fight against the bunch of organized gangsters who now control the land in the interest of "private business" had better use the short cut to the sea, jump in, and join the fishes and the slime from whence first came our life-bearing ancestors. But we will and shall organize because we must.

While we are at it, we may as well organize for something more than a mere hand out. Let us organize industrially, not only for the every day struggle to keep the capitalist from robbing us too much, but also to carry on production and serve each other after we shall have completely stopped this destruction by the robbing class in the name of "private business".

"The sooner we get this job done the better it will be for all of us."





## Can Capitalism House Its Workers?

*An analysis of New York's slum clearance program showing that the profit motive condemns millions to squalor.*

**By PEO MONOLDI**

*General Organization Committee, Construction Workers' Industrial Union No. 310-330 of the I.W.W.*

**This crowded street is playground, laundry, dry-room, library and den for thousands of New York City's proletariat.**

Once more housing and slum clearance are drawing great attention in the New York Metropolitan. The great shortage of homes and the unrest among the millions of slum dwellers are forcing the powers that be to take notice of the unbearable living conditions that the working class must put up with. But instead of starting to tear down the nearly 100,000 vermin infested and dilapidated slum tenements in the great city, they are giving up more investigating committees and framing more long and short term public-housing programs.

A law is now in force in the state of New York which sets minimum standards of sanitation and fire protection for tenement houses and which, if enforced, would not mean the tearing down of these dismal unsanitary firetraps but simply a face-lifting process, such as installing a toilet for each apartment, fire escapes and semi-fire proofing of halls and stairways.

These small repairs and improvements however do not succeed in destroying the accumulation of filth and vermin within the walls and partitions of these buildings. A person not accustomed to the stench this creates would easily require the use of a gas mask to enter these rat-infested traps.

As even these minor changes would cost an average of \$3,500.00 for a five story tenement, the bankers and realtors are refusing to comply with these laws and threaten to issue eviction notices to 300,000 families living in 40,000 or more of these buildings, rather than to supply their minimum needs. A sitdown strike of these slum dwellers has already taken place. Unable to pay the high rent demanded in other buildings, and not willing to stay out on the street, they are ready to fight even to hold what little they have.

While the great city is modernizing itself in every direction with subways, new bridges, new highways, new skyscrapers with every modern equipment, just around the corner old-law tenements with their dark rooms and unwholesome dangerous construction still stand. Built in the decade following the Civil War, to meet the rising tide of immigration, today the increasing deterioration of these tenements endangers the life and health of the workers.

In 1937 in the so-called greatest city in the world over 387,000 families are living without central heat in their homes, over 244,000 families have no hot water in their homes; over 235,000 families must do without tub or shower, and over 189,



*Don't blame the woman overmuch—this sort of home is the product of a system far more slovenly and wasteful than she. This sort of home—typical of thousands more in our great metropolis—soon trains its tenants to keep house in the style to which the neighbors are accustomed.*

families lack private indoor water closets. Of the 1,750,000 families, over 500,000 live in tenements that were built previous to 1900 and most of them built in the sixties and seventies are with a series of dark windowless rooms, "dumbbell" tenements covering 90 per cent of the lot and providing slits from 2 to 4 feet wide and some 40 feet long between buildings as the sole source of light and air for rooms that do not face the street or yard. This is only a conservative estimate of the actual conditions existing among over 2,000,000 New York cliff dwellers.

What has or is being done to alleviate the housing conditions of these workers? Of course there has been much talk and many commissions have been appointed in the past hundred years or more, and many laws have been passed for the betterment of housing but even with all the talking, newspaper headline commissions and laws, conditions are getting worse instead of better and today we have over seventeen square miles of slums scattered in every borough of greater New York.

During the boom days of the twenties a law was

passed for state supervision and providing assistance for large scale private limited dividend operations. Several large apartment buildings were constructed under this new law, which allowed the builder tax exemption for a period of years. The buildings of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers at Mosholu Parkway were erected in this way. These apartments were let out and sold at an initial cost of \$500.00 per room and a \$11.50 per room per month thereafter. Only the most prosperous workers could afford to benefit by this type of project. This still applies even though rents have been reduced to \$9.50 per room per month in this building.

But with the ending of the so-called prosperity days even the construction of these buildings came to an end. To make matters worse for the increasing numbers of workers who required housing accomodation hundreds of buildings have been torn down, not for the purpose of rebuilding modern homes in their places but to construct such enterprises as the Tri-Borough Bridge, Rockefeller Center, Railroad terminals, etc., with

the result that the occupant either had to double up with other families or go into smaller quarters if they could be found. As though this was not bad enough nearly 3,000 buildings on the verge of collapse have been boarded up and considered too dangerous for people to live in. As yet no attempts have been made to tear them down and replace them with habitable homes.

With the advent of the New Deal with its P. W. A., C. W. A., and W. P. A., a new hope seemed to appear to alleviate the housing misery. After the first ballyhoo an announcement came that a loan had been made by the P. W. A. for a slum clearing project which would house 1600 families. To the disgust of even the bourgeois the deal turned out to be nothing more or less than the payment of a political debt.

The project was to be out in the Bronx, a location entirely unsuited to the transportation needs of the average worker. The rents were to be \$11.50 per room per month. There was such protest from all sources interested in slum clearance that the loan was withdrawn. However, politics being more powerful than these protests, the loan was once more granted and the Hillside outfit went ahead with its building operation.

But at long last the slum district has finally been reached by the P. W. A. One project is now completed in the east side of Manhattan. Another is under construction in Harlem which will house 570 colored families and another is under way in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn which

covers 12 blocks and will house 1,600 families when completed. The first was constructed by relief workers but the next two are being done by contractors. These apartments will be modern and will rent at \$6.00 per room or over but how many of the slum workers will be able to live in these buildings is a question as those applying for the apartments must have a job, a bank account and must prove that they have a steady income. This means that nearly half a million wage workers on relief who need these buildings will not qualify as tenants and must keep on living as they do. The municipality will not take chances with workers who cannot guarantee the continuous payment of their rent.

Much repair and alteration work is going on in the old buildings but as this is being done up goes the rent and workers must move to other buildings which will be the same as the ones they have just left.

Housing or Slum clearance, like every other industry, is based on profit. Whenever there are profits to be made there will be finances to invest.

Much noise is being made today as in the past that the reason financiers refuse to build is because labor is too high. I have before me the cost of Knickerbocker Village, a large apartment house, which cost \$6,216,899 to build. Of this, they claim that \$2,019,838 went to labor for the actual construction of the building. Anyone not

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*The PWA workers who put up these apartments at 153rd Street and the Harlem river, designed for low income groups to solve New York City's housing problem, will not live in them—for prospective tenants must show a bank account and have a job.*

# Has a Substitute for the I. W. W. Been Found?

By  
TOR CEDERVALL

Or is the trend toward Fascism expressing itself in the employer cultivation of a One Big Union without class-consciousness, and no rank-and-file control, as a necessary element of the "corporative state"?

It is about time that someone wrote another "One Hundred Million Guinea Pigs". In place of horrifying details of sandpaper on your toothbrush, this book should deal with the one hundred million workingclass guinea pigs who in America, past and present, have been dished out an infinite variety of adulterated remedies to keep them sick but satisfied,—all substitutes for the real thing.

The material to select from is wide and varied, for in no realm of human relations are there to be found more substitutes, fake claims, and harmful products than in the field of sociology. For every measure that could possibly aid in the thorough housecleaning of our society, a spurious substitute is offered and pushed before the public. The phenomenon of Fascism alone affords a vast field for fertile study, for Fascism is the grand devil of them all in the black art of adulterated substitution. Its sample wares include such choice items as "national socialism" for socialism, "labor front" for independent labor unionism, race or national struggle for class struggle, to mention a few of the more important ones.

However, since we only suggested the book and are not writing it, let us confine ourselves to one instance in current America that might provide a significant chapter for the proposed volume. We have reference to the current attempt to substitute the C.I.O. for an industrial union movement long championed by the I.W.W.

The C.I.O. emerged upon the scene a little more than a year ago. Why? Back in the "horse and buggy" days the mighty onsurge of solidarity on the part of the workers through the Knights of Labor was stopped by the appearance of the A. F. of L. "The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children." Is the C.I.O., the child of the A. F. of L., coming to the fore to run bona fide industrial unionism into the ground?

The employers' art of spurious substitution in the labor commodity market was at first exercised entirely on their own initiative in America by those pariahs of the people, the John D. Rockefellers, as an outgrowth of the terrible and magnificent strike of the Colorado coal miners in 1913-14. The Rockefellers, after witnessing fifteen months of

heroic struggle on the part of the miners that even wholesale murder of their women and children at Ludlow could not stifle, brought in W. L. Mackenzie King, later premier of Canada, to form the first "company union" in the United States, the Rockefeller Industrial Representation Plan. In subsequent years the "company union" has served with varying success as a substitute for labor unionism in countless industrial establishments of America.

However, since the gaping dent put into Capitalism by the "crash" of '29, a general awakening of the American working class has occurred. After an interim of stunned stumbling, the workers commenced to organize in earnest.

The unemployed, no longer pleading recipients of charity, organized and clamored for more bread and shelter. Several plants in the mass production industries went out on unorganized but bitterly contested strikes, notably the Briggs body plants in Detroit. The craft-bound A. F. of L. witnessed a large influx of members into its unworkable federal unions. The I.W.W. made some serious inroads into the automobile industry during and immediately following the Briggs strike. The latter organization also conducted a large agricultural strike for higher wages in the martial law-patrolled Yakima Valley of Washington, as well as conducting a construction workers' strike at Boulder Dam, a seamen's strike on the Gulf, building strikes in Philadelphia, etc. In addition, several independent unions of a bona fide working class nature were springing up everywhere, such as the M.E.S.A., the Wisconsin Industrial Union, the Union of All Workers in Minnesota, and others.

Against such an arousing working class the employers were beginning to find the camouflage of "company unionism" rather thin.

With the introduction of the NRA, the Government started playing around with the A.F. of L., but found that the rock-ribbed craft structure of the A. F. of L. was so utterly outmoded as to be unfit for the Judas role of old. The piratical prerogatives of the international craft unions upon the federal locals were causing the new recruits to go through the A. F. of L. like a green light. The distressing spectacle of the lumber workers in



the West deserting the safe haven of the A. F. of L. for the industrial unionism of the I.W.W., clearly proved the impotence of even "doctored" craft unionism to embrace the aroused workers of America and run them into the "safe and sane" channels of the A. F. of L. Such experiences early led Generalissimo Johnson of the NRA to declare for industrial unionism. Today this blustering strike-buster is the blatant advocate of the C.I.O., much to the distress and protestation of weary Willy Green. Shocked and offended Mr. Green may not be able to understand why the good General is taking such an attitude, but the General does.

The laissez faire capitalism of old is day by day being pushed into the background. The day of unrestricted "individual enterprise" is fast disappearing. Through governmental pressure the days of suicidal, unplanned production with its disastrous "booms" and "over-production" (as well as rather amateurish handling of labor problems) are diminishing. More and more, despite temporary setbacks, "monopoly", "regulations", "standards", are being introduced into American economic life. A very real "One Big Union" of capital is being evolved in this country in an effort to "stabilize" capitalism and secure to the present beneficiaries of capitalism their powers and privileges at the expense of the working class as heretofore. The capitalist system in America is steadily tending towards one gigantic corporation to displace the present big and little corporations.

With the "corporate" trend of capitalism, and its sometimes startling changes in governmental and business procedure from the days of "laissez faire", it readily can be seen that an industrial union movement growing out from this can be merely a corresponding change in the form of "company unionism". For the individual "representation plan" of the individual corporation must be substituted a nation-wide "representation plan" to serve the interests of the newly evolving "corporate state". A One Big Company Union of labor to match the new One Big Corporation of capital!

Is the C.I.O. being groomed as this "One Big Company Union"?

That the C.I.O. may be bitterly fought by some employers does not in the least contradict this question. These employers are still confident that they can go on in the old laissez faire way. They are yet opposed to merging into the "One Big Corporation of Capital". But, eventually they will see the arrangement as of benefit to them and as their lone salvation, much as an individual worker in a factory being organized by the I.W.W. may at first resist attempts to organize him, only finally to see the point. These employers are conservatives of the old school. Their ranks will continue to diminish, much as their political expres-

sion, the Republican Party, is rapidly decaying and is even now practically moribund as far as national politics is concerned.

Another element accounting for the misleading antagonism of some employers to the C.I.O. may well be the ambition of some of the leaders of this latter movement. Capitalism is not in a precisely enviable position at present. It is endangered on the one hand by the stupidity of some of its sections and on the other by the threat of genuine organization on the part of the working class. In order to get personal considerations, would ambitious "labor leaders" be averse to holding the working class for ransom? As it were, blackmailing the capitalist class into assuring them worthy rewards in power and privilege? After all, both Mussolini and Hitler were pretty blustering and did not strike a bargain until they were assured of their prerogatives.

For these reasons, and because the substitute must be plausible, the C.I.O. certainly will not fall into the unimaginative routine of a "company union" or a fascist "labor front" until a full-fledged bargain is struck. Furthermore, rank and file impetuosity will provide from time to time certain flare and color to the whole procedure. However, this rank and file activity will become increasingly rare as Mr. Lewis and his lieutenants come to understandings with the various industrial concerns.

Already the chief outcome of the General Motors strike\* is the agreement on the part of the union to outlaw any job action until all avenues of negotiation have been exhausted, meaning conferences between Lewis and the management. When the time comes that Mr. Lewis wins the checkoff and the right to bargain for all the workers in a company's employ, the rank and file will be caught between the two mill-stones of Mr. Lewis and the employer. The worker, individually and collectively, will find himself helpless in fighting both the employer and the union. A double chain will be around his neck.

Universally organized into the C.I.O., will the American worker find himself bound hand and foot to the system that exploits him? Freedom a myth, will he be an industrial serf forever in his place and receiving such fruits of labor as his masters may in their benevolence choose to bestow upon him?

The socio-economic basis of fascism is the cor-

\*NOTE: The conduct and the settlement of the General Motors Strike indicates that the General Motors Corporation represents an employer group that is taking a watchful "on the fence" attitude to the "corporate" tendencies of American capitalism. Despite the heroic determination of the gallant Flint sit-downers, the small percentage of union organization in the G. M. plants would not have prevented the company from engaging in physical efforts to break the strike unless a question of broad social policy were not in the background of the affair. In an ordinary economic struggle the organization of the strikers was much too weak to seriously intimidate the Company, particularly with the support of the Flint Alliance and the old-line A. F. of L. on the side of the corporation.—T. C.

porate or totalitarian state—one hundred per cent organized industry and parallel industrial organization of the workers. Industrial unionism lends itself very easily to the corporate plans of fascism. Mussolini, the founder of fascism, was guided in his formulation of the fascist state by his experience with the wide-spread "syndicalism" of Italy. He discovered that industrial unionism can be turned upon its head and become industrial bondage.

An industrial union movement can be an instrument of social advancement and happiness for mankind and a bulwark against fascism only if it

is thoroughly saturated with a rank and file spirit and adhere in form and practice to democratic control. What is more, it must be based four-square on the principle of irreconcilable economic antagonism between the employing class and the working class, for only class-consciousness can counteract the totalitarian appeal of fascism. How does the C.I.O. measure up to any of these requirements? Is it a suitable substitute for the I. W. W.?

Will the members of the American working class offer themselves as "One Hundred Million Guinea Pigs"?



## Can Capitalism House Its Workers?

(Continued from page 31)

acquainted with actual building costs would take this estimate for granted. However of these \$2,000,000 there is much that went for profit as to sub-contractors such as the plumber contractor, the electrical contractor, the plaster, the lather, the sheet metal contractor, and so on. All of these contractors or sub-contractors received a cut of these \$2,000,000. Of the other millions the General Contractor received \$1,560,882 dollars for drawing plans and other engineering required as preparation and for supervising the construction of the building. \$2,636,176 went for material. But even with the material a large amount goes to the non-worker as profits, to the material dealers, in transportation, and to the manufacturers of lumber, bricks, lime, cement, steel, copper and an endless chain of profit takers. If the true facts could be obtained of those who received this 6 million, without a doubt they would show that not more than half this amount actually went to labor.

Of course the pressure is getting stronger each day for more and better housing. All kinds of schemes are brought forth, such as subsidy to the builders, or that the municipality, state or federal government do the building; but none of these schemes is going to do away with the slums or produce enough houses for the workers.

England, Germany, Austria, and other nations have had so-called slum clearing projects for years and each country did build a house here and there but all have failed so far as providing livable accommodations for the working class is concerned. Such projects will be a failure so long as the profit system is allowed to continue.

Capitalism cannot supply the needed homes for the comfort of the workers. All their schemes and all their planning is based not upon the needs of these workers but upon finding methods that will furnish the necessary profits for their undertakings. The state of New York in the past few years has paid a subsidy to the extent of \$190,000,000 in the form of tax exemption but all that has been accomplished is the erection of a few buildings whose rentals are beyond the means of the mass of workers desperately in need of homes.

The only way that we will be able to destroy the 250,000 windowless rooms that were built previous to 1879 and the many thousands of others that are still standing, is by the unified efforts of all the workers organized to remove the prevailing system and to institute one that will have as its chief motive not profits, but to supply the needs of the workers—a system that will cater to the health, comfort, security and enjoyment of the working class.



## I. W. W. PREAMBLE

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of 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.

