

DEPRESSION HITS ROBINSON CRUSOE'S ISLAND

"Friday," said Robinson Crusoe, "I'm sorry, I fear I must lay you off."  
"What do you mean, Master?"

"Why, you know there's a big surplus of last year's crop. I don't need you to plant another this year. I've got enough goatskin coats to last me a lifetime. My house needs no repairs. I can gather turtle eggs myself. There's an overproduction. When I need you I will send for you. You needn't wait around here."

"That's all right, Master, I'll plant my own crop, build up my own hut and gather all the eggs and nuts I want myself. I'll get along fine."

"Where will you do all this, Friday?"

"Here on this island."

"This island belongs to me, you know. I can't allow you to do that. When you can't pay me anything I need I might as well not own it."

"Then I'll build a canoe and fish in the ocean. You don't own that."

"That's all right, provided you don't use any of my trees for your canoe, or build it on my land, or use my beach for a landing place, and do your fishing far enough away so you don't interfere with my off-shore rights."

"I never thought of that, Master. I can do without a boat, though. I can swim over to that rock and fish there and gather sea-gull eggs."

"No you won't, Friday. The rock is mine. I own the off-shore rights."

"What shall I do, Master?"

"That's your problem, Friday. You're a free man, and you know about freedom being maintained here."

"I'll guess I'll starve, Master. May I stay here until I do? Or shall I swim beyond your 12-mile limit and drown or starve there?"

"I've thought of something, Friday. I don't like to carry my rubbish down to the shore each day. You may stay and do that. Then whatever is left of it, after my dog and cat have fed, you may eat. You're in luck."

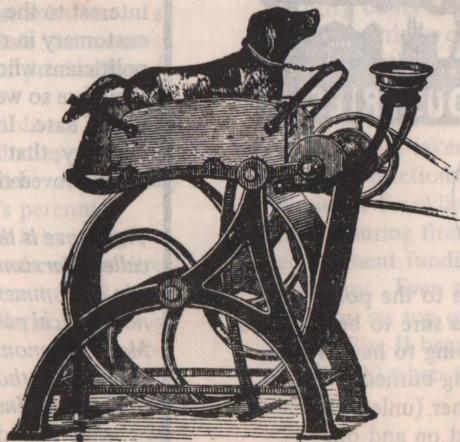
"Thank you, Master. That is true charity."

"One more thing, Friday. This island is over-populated. Fifty percent of the people are unemployed. We are undergoing a severe depression, and there is no way that I can see to end it. No one but a charlatan would say that he could. So keep a lookout and let no one land here to live. And if any ship comes don't let them land any goods of any kind. You must be protected against foreign labour. Conditions are fundamentally sound, though. And prosperity is just around the corner."

Mary Atterbury.

ADVICE TO HOME WORKERS

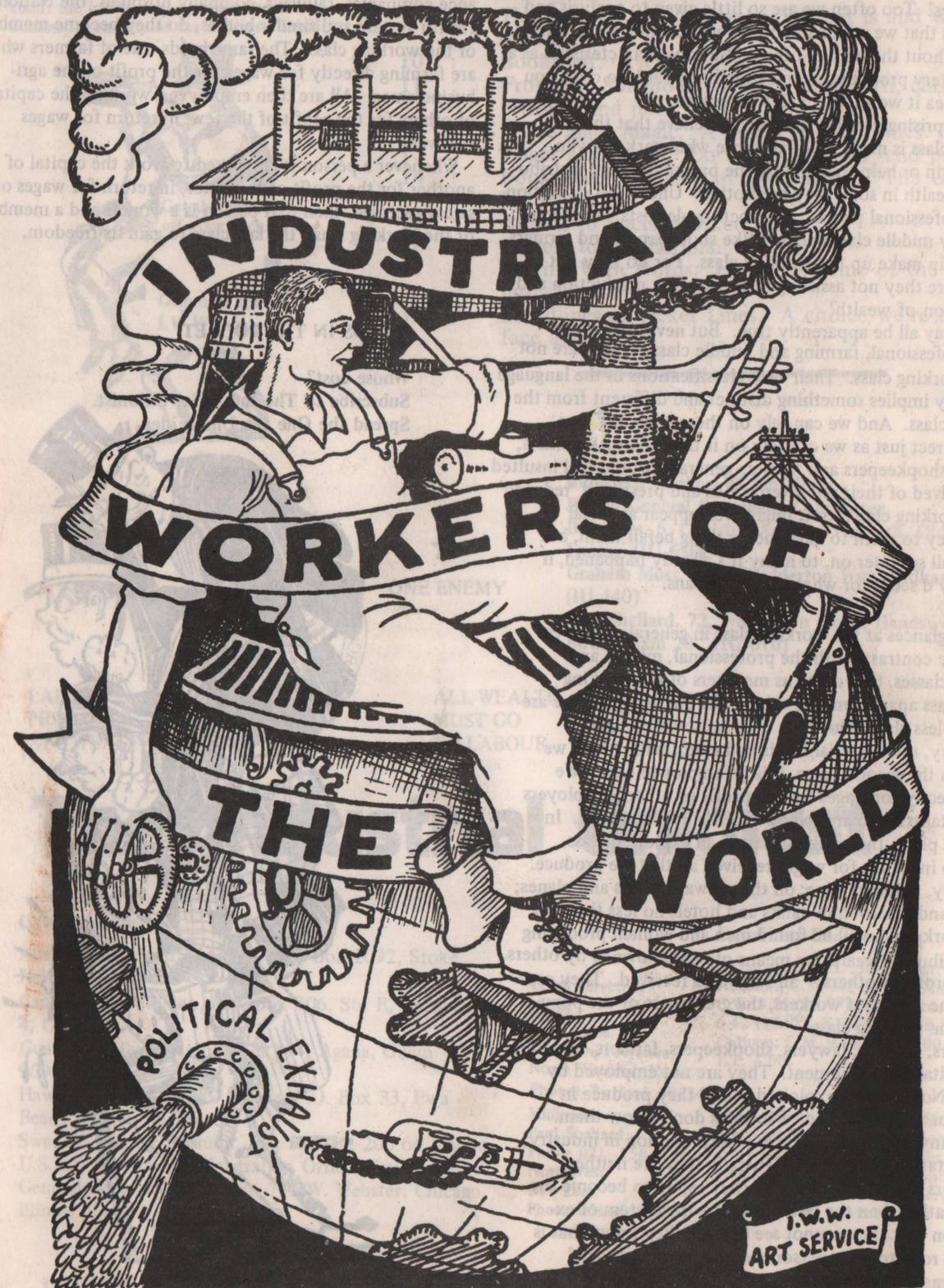
Although animals have long been used for employment purposes, such as to draw carriages and the plough, their use has long gone out of general fashion in industrial countries. Yet animal motors can be used to profit in many enterprises, thus obviating the uneconomic use of them as pets, and turning them to utilisation in the national effort. The humanitarian objections that muscular suffering may be inflicted on an animal which is continually mounting a wheel or some such contrivance neglect the fact



that, to considerable profit, humans are often used in precisely such mechanical contrivances. The use of animals means, too, that the employer is not subjected to strikes and other outmoded devices of impeding output out of pure greed. The sewing machine shown here, worked by a dog, is a model of ingenuity and the dog is obliged to keep on walking, thus turning the treadmill, and can produce as much effort as a qualified woman. There is only one drawback: after a few hours of it, he bites.

The INDUSTRIAL UNIONIST

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# Who's Working Class?

## What Makes The Working Class?

This is a question most asked by those who should find it easiest to answer; namely, the members of the working class themselves! Too often we are so little given to analysis and reflection that we are unable to recognise and classify ourselves without the help of others. But our characteristics as a class are very pronounced and straightforward, so once you get the idea it won't be quickly forgotten.

Not surprisingly, we're inclined to believe that the working class is made up of all those who work, or who take part in or help to maintain the production and distribution of wealth in some way or another. Under this definition, many professional people, like doctors, dentists, lawyers, etc., and many middle class persons, like shopkeepers and farmers, would help make up the working class. For do they not work? Are they not assisting in the modern production and distribution of wealth?

That may all be apparently true. But nevertheless, all these professional, farming and middle class persons are not of the working class. Their very classifications in the language of the day implies something distinct and different from the working class. And we can rely on these classifications being correct just as we can rely on it that doctors, dentists, lawyers, shopkeepers and farmers generally would feel insulted and deprived of their self given status and prestige if 'reduced' to the working class; for it might well appear as social degeneracy to them to have such a thing befall them, but as we shall see later on, to many it's already happened, if only they'd see it for what it really means.

A few glances at the working class in general will reveal economic contrasts with the professional, middle and farming classes, that make us members of the working class a class apart from the others. In the first place we are a capital-less class. Our class does not own the land, machinery, raw material, funds and credit with which we work. In the second place, it is an employed class. We work directly for wages for the profit of others, employers and capitalists who are the owners of the machinery. In the third place, the working class is an exploited class, giving up in return for wages received all that we produce. In factory, mill and mine; on the railways, ships and planes; on land and sea, even in banks and hotels no less than any other workplace, will be found men and women producing and distributing wealth by means of capital owned by others. For the profit of others - all for wages received. They constitute the armies of workers, the great mass of the population, the working class.

Doctors, dentists, lawyers, shopkeepers, farmers, own their own capital and equipment. They are not employed by others. Nor are they exploited for all they produce in return for wages received. Factories don't know them. Nor do any of the other places of exploitation in industry, transportation or finance. Generally they are neither employers nor employees. But they aspire to become the former rather than the latter as under the system of exploitation that they cannot see beyond they know that is the only road to their personal enrichment and social advancement.

It is only when doctors, dentists, lawyers, etc., are employed at salaries and commissions for the profit of insurance companies, railways, company hospitals, the National Health system and similar bodies, do they become members of the working class. The same holds true of farmers who are farming directly for wages for the profit of the agri-businessmen. All are then employees, working the capital of others for the profit of the few, in return for wages received.

Whenever a person is employed to work the capital of another for the profit of the latter, in return for wages or salary received, then that person is a worker and a member of the working class, the last class to gain its freedom.

\* \* \*

## HANDS IN THE POCKET.

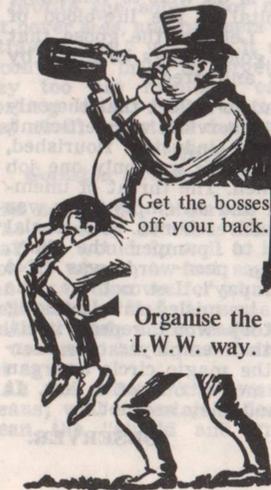
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# Letters to the Editor

EVENING CHRONICLE. OLDHAM. TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 1975.

## Those who work

CONFRONTATION, money on the table, lines of demarcation, shop-floor level, we the workers, this moment of time... old words reassembled into new meanings. How often do we hear "The workers demand this" or "The workers demand that"? To whom do the words "The workers" refer? Are they the men or women who sell only their labour (which they can withdraw at any time), or are they the men who put in money, labour and know how? I would think that both can lay just claim, both groups are workers.

Any company of people who supply capital to provide employment should expect a decent return, i.e., a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. However, this does not seem to be the case. The sad truth is that we have a tired horse being pulled by a more tired

cart. A horse made tired by strikes, stoppages, unreasonable wage demands, half a day's work for a day and half's pay, etc.

This situation cannot be allowed to continue. It can only lead to mass unemployment. Most firms are started by men with guts, confidence, brains, and above all capital. Men whose work doesn't finish by the bell at 5 p.m. but who burn the midnight oil, seeking out new orders, methods of improving output, attempting to make their firms more efficient to compete in the cut-throat jungle of industry.

Yet the carrion cry of "A share in the profits" can be heard, led by the Billy Bunters of the shop floor who, it seems, are hungry when their bellies are full. I often wonder if these would-be profit

sharers would be as eager to share the losses—I doubt it very much. It is as well to remember that capital is the life-blood of industry. Let not the goose that lays the golden eggs be killed by stupidity and greed.

It is sad to reflect that the only time public services were efficient, and private industry flourished, was when there was only one job for two men. The threat of unemployment and an empty belly was the incentive bonus. No social security to pamper the lazy. When the pass-word was "No work no pay". Let not we, the workers, be misled into thinking that history won't repeat itself, or that their employers are members of the magic circle and can produce money out of a hat. It can — and they are not.

OBSERVER.

There are many problems in trying to use the capitalist press to our own advantage. In replying to a letter such as that from 'Observer' where there are so many malignant half truths and unsubstantiated statements, its difficult to pick out a few key items to refute. To deal with each one would be to invite the editor to use the scissors on it, and once that starts you can never tell if the letter has been cut due to length or bias, for there is not an editor of a bosses paper in the world who agrees with the IWW that editors too are wage slaves and as such have more in common with the papers printers that with the advertisers.

With these problems in mind, the original letter we intended sending to the local paper was cut in two, leaving one part about the length of 'Observer's' piece, and pulling out the remaining short paragraph to stand on its own. And from the criticism that has been received on the shorter letter, we could almost wish we'd picked on a different paragraph to be spotlighted in such a fashion.

Much of the misunderstanding about what we are saying stems from the apparent lack of use of the phrase "men of straw" in the North West. Men of straw are front men, set up deliberately, to be knocked over by those who think they are in fact knocking over the real thing. And this is exactly what foremen, chargehands and managers are. They are men of straw set up by the real bosses, the capitalists, to take the knocks for the bosses dirty work. The IWW recognises that these straw bosses are a part of the working class. They work for wages, using their skill to make profit for the few who sit at the back holding the real power, economic power, and using that power, to a greater or lesser extent, to give the orders.

At the birth of the industrial revolution, it was individual artisans banding together who were able to invent, develop and build machinery, as we touch upon in the article on education elsewhere in this issue. But where one or two skilled workers could join together to build a spinning jenny, mass production of the mule was another matter. The artisans and other early engineers had either to find a source of capital and become bosses, maybe working alongside their employees for a while, but bosses nevertheless, or be the wage slave for some other artisan who had been more 'successful'. Whether gradually or quickly, the working boss, like George Stevenson, became the figure we know of today, far removed not just from the shop floor, or the factory, but also from the industry, with the power of capital invested through banks and stock exchanges. As the original order giver became removed from the job, so someone took the place. With the onward sweep of the machine process, so the new grades of hired hands became necessary to the boss; under managers and over managers, floor managers and department managers, chargehands and foremen.

The IWW has always recognised that all the different types of managers are a part of the same economic class as the shop floor workers. We do not have special sections for them in our Industrial Unions, and we understand that to start such sections would be a betrayal of our class interests. As to letting them join the IWW at this moment, that is another question. We could welcome them only on the same terms as any other worker joins the IWW. As long as their viewpoint is the same as the employers, which is likely to be the case if they want to hold their jobs, then in discussion of questions relating to the job they would be putting forward and arguing the employer's side, thus preventing the advancement of the interests of the majority of the workforce, proving themselves a hindrance. While it is always the employer who

# THOSE WHO WORK

OLDHAM, FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 1975.

JUST what has "Observer" been observing? I've yet to see any employer who gives a day and a half's pay for half a day's work, but I've seen plenty who gave their men of straw — foremen, chargehands, managers, etc. — a full day's pay for a full day off. Certainly no "social security to pamper the lazy" — it comes out of profits the shop floor makes but never sees, and pampers these "straw bosses," who lap it up as a convenient bribe to forget that they too are members of the working class. Now what was that about industrial democracy?

BOB LEES,  
Coniston Avenue, Werneth.

THE next time "Observer" reads "The workers demand this... or that" he would do well to have a look at who is, in fact saying it, and try to discover for what ends. He'll usually find its some politician or trade union leader trying to use us to his or her own ends yet again.

As to what "the workers" means; well it certainly does not mean the "stupid and greedy"

investors of capital sitting up all night in their offices trying to work out new ways of making profit out of the working class, as "Observer" so graphically describes. Instead, to have any real meaning, it has to be defined by our relationship to the means of production. Under capitalist ownership, be it private capital or taxpayers' capital invested by the state, there can be no such thing as "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay", which on examination can be seen as nothing more than a slogan intended to confuse workers to the employers advantage.

As "Observer" points out, the only time when private or public industry flourished was when we were kept at work by fear of starvation. Those days are long gone, but the price we have had to pay, and will continue to pay until a saner social order is established, is high, and not just in terms of financial taxation. The need for the establishment of a saner social order becomes daily more clear as capital tries to recreate scenes of the 1930s

with the short working week and pay packet, mass redundancies, and inflation. Always the employers wish to solve their problems at our expense.

"Observer" writes of capital as the goose that lays the golden egg. There might be gold to be made out of starvation, unemployment and war (the employers' usual solution to their crisis), but always at the expense of the most numerous of the two classes in the world, the working class. A bird that lays such rotten eggs as these should have followed the dodo to extinction long ago.

Certainly all must agree with "Observer" in that we cannot expect employers to produce money out of a hat, especially since they do not produce the world's wealth in any way or from anywhere. Labour produces all wealth, and the real golden eggs cannot be laid until labour gets all of the wealth that it produces.

INDUSTRIAL WORKER.

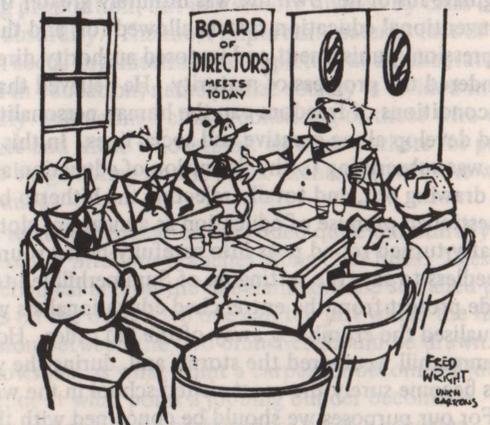
is the real enemy, as long as the different types of managers back them up, then they too must be shown up for the role they are playing in class society.

It is always worth remembering an origin of the role of shop steward. Rather than being a dues collector or another finger of the boss to keep things running to the bosses advantage, as too many stewards have become, the shop steward was supposed to be one of the workers from a shop floor that was training itself for the day when the general lockout of the master class came, so as to ensure that we would all have an equal say in running industry with the minimum amount of trouble caused to ourselves. In effect, the shop steward of today was to be in many ways the manager of tomorrow. The main and never to be forgotten difference being that the steward was always to be elected, holding the post by the abilities recognised by the rest of the shop, and subject to recall literally at a moments notice. The virtually moribund Trade Councils were supposed to be the co-ordination point for an areas industry. One 'training run' can be seen in the British General Strike, or earlier on Clydeside; but Trade Unionism failed us, as indeed it was bound to do. In the IWW we maintain the original point and purpose of these functions, but on an industrial instead of trade basis. But we call shop stewards, job delegates, (since the responsibility they carry is delegated to them by the workers on the job), and rather than Trade Councils we aim at District Industrial Councils made up of delegates from all the Industrial Unions of the district. This is building the new society in the shell of the old, something alien to the concept of Trade Unionism, which aims at working hand in glove with capitalist society, albeit with a shift here and a shuffle there to make things run more smoothly for the Trade Union bureaucracy.

But it is in the very nature of the profit system that a large part of the worlds working class cannot get a good life. And this is what the foremen, chargehands and managers accept, implicitly or explicitly, to the detriment of the majority of their own class.

Members of the IWW, individually and collectively, hold to the idea that we must rise as a class, rather than aspire to rising out of it. Clearly any worker who accepts a managerial job offer from the employers cannot hold to this view, and on accepting such a position whilst a member of the IWW would either have to give the authority vested in that position over to the branch, or else quit the union and be treated as an agent of the boss in all that that means. When a line is drawn as clearly as the IWW draws it, there are only two sides, with no place for fence straddlers.

Frank Carter.



"We're not seeing ourselves as the workers see us..."

# Educational Democracy

## An analogue of workers' management

In the IWW we are concerned with industrial democracy, the management of the means of production and distribution by those who do the work. An argument that has been levelled against us is that either workers are not interested in self-management or we are, in some curious way, congenitally unable to regulate ourselves without direction from above. This stand is generally backed up by an exhortation to look at history and see the absence of workers' management in practice, which is somewhat facile since, in a capitalist world, market pressures must force any attempt at complete self-management by an isolated group of workers to the wall. Under capitalism all cards are stacked against such ventures, as UCS, and others, have shown us today.

However, attempts at self-regulation are not confined to the industrial community. There exist and have existed for some years a number of schools whose pioneering work in the field of shared responsibility have all too often gone ignored as examples of attempts at real functioning democracy. If a factory run for and by its workers is an example of a community controlled by individuals with no previous experience of management, then a school must be the same to a greater degree. I see in these schools a direct and meaningful analogue to the whole question of workers' management, and in presenting some samples from self-regulating schools I am hoping to demonstrate the viability of the self-regulated job.

The great name in libertarian education is, of course, A.S. Neill, and the substantiation of his straightforward, matter-of-fact philosophy is to be seen in the school he founded, Summerhill. It's amusing to read, in erudite educational columns, of that "educational experiment". The school has now been in existence since the early 1920's and, despite Neill's recent death, it continues to prove that the experiment is long over, and the formula really works.

Basically, Neill stated that the child's ability to order and regulate his or her own life was infinitely greater than the conventional education system allowed for, and that repression, punishment and imposed authority directly hindered the progress of maturity. He believed that only in conditions of freedom can the human personality evolve and develop along creative and social lines. In this concept he was subscribing to the definition of education as a process of drawing out, and totally rejecting the hitherto barely questioned premise of education as a means of slotting neatly-turned round pegs into carefully-bored round holes. Needless to say, the setting up of Summerhill led to nationwide protest from the entrenched educationalists who visualised the crumbling away of the old order. However, Summerhill weathered the storms and, during the years has become surely the most visited school in the world.

For our purposes we should be concerned with the mechanism of the school, how it puts into practice beliefs which we hold in connection with industry. And herein lies the substance of the analogue.

During Neill's lifetime he was the headmaster of the school and therefore occupied the position of nominal authority. In actual fact this meant that more often than not he was the carrier of the can and the bearer of the brunt rather than the stern patrician of traditional image. Inside the school Neill's actual authority was seldom in evidence in the day to day running of the community; he abdicated authority to the weekly School Meeting which he would attend as an individual among individuals. Within this Meeting he had no more power of decision or direction than anyone else, and his vote was worth no more or less than the vote of the youngest child in the school. The School Meeting at Summerhill is the medium through which all decisions, great and small, are passed; it doubles as legislature and court, and in its informality the functioning of the community is embodied. Lessons at the school are voluntary, and submission to academic pressure is entirely the decision of the pupil. A teacher may recommend that the pupil follow a particular course of study, but the teacher is in no way empowered to enforce that recommendation. The role of the teacher is a curious one at Summerhill, for all the customary trappings of authority are absent, and a teacher stands or falls according to the ability to present oneself as an individual worthy of respect. Relationships between pupils and teachers have a reality and substance free of the restraints and constraints of the conventional school. Teacher and pupil meet in two basic roles: as adult and child, each with something to offer the other, and as joint bearers of responsibility for the successful and happy running of a productive and vibrant community. Such a situation carries with it tensions and problems, conflicts and divergences of interest; but at least the con-

*je participe  
tu participes  
il participe  
nous participons  
vous participez  
ils profitent*



frontations are real and arise from a daily process of making the community work for the common good, and are not the result of a system deliberately constructed so as to be divisive and repressive.

Summerhill is not alone in its approach to education. For many years there have been schools in the independent sector catering for parents who wish their children to have access to an alternative system and now, though only in a small way, such an education is no longer the prerogative of the bosses followers. The movement for such free schools is well under way in this as well as other countries. In London alone there are at least three such schools, operating on a shoestring but offering a positive alternative to what the State system has to offer.

The school in which I work, in North London, has been in existence for 75 years and has had a school council consisting of teachers and pupils and chaired and staffed entirely by pupils for at least half that time. The school offers the usual facilities for taking GCE subjects and exams and — for what its worth — has a high success rate. But for me its significance and attraction is its emphasis on shared responsibility and freedom; its deep concern to reassess and re-evaluate its philosophy. The school is an imperfect establishment making pragmatic compromises in the face of social pressures, but it still operates along lines considered unthinkable by many state schools, and even in its diluted format helps prove the efficacy of the ideas of self-management.

It is not in the interest of the state system of education to realign itself along such models: a basic function of the system would be undermined and rendered useless if the schools were opened up to vertical organisation. Pupils would begin to question their presence at school; they would begin to reconsider their role in the great network. Teachers might be forced to emerge from the sanctuary of the

staffroom and actually participate in the life of the school community. And, most horrifying of all, their authority might find itself redefined out of existence and the great balloon might be deflated. No, within the present requirements of a capitalist society, education must remain the simple process by which the individual is rendered suitable for an allotted place in the pyramid. To my mind the task facing a new teacher entering a school should not be to sink comfortably down into that force-field known as "respect", which protects one from the need to form relationships with those one teaches, but to seek to subvert the system which robs the teacher of individuality too, and join forces with the pupils in turning that school into a real place of learning. A school is as excellent a place as any in which to put into practice the IWW adage of building the new society within the shell of the old.

And similarly, it is clearly not in the interests of the bosses of schools or other workplaces to encourage real industrial democracy, because an inch given must lead to a mile demanded. The simple workability of vertical control has been amply proven within the education system, and so the analogue is direct and accurate. Despite the qualitative differences between a school and any other place of work, the parallels are self-evident. And as a training ground for industrial democracy, where better than the self-regulated school? If we are to avoid social disintegration beneath the manifold pressures suffocating us now, then we must cast off that facile assumption beneath much of the present control structures, that knowledge equals wisdom, and that our corporate fate is safe in the hands of the experts. We can all be experts in the management of society if we prepare ourselves to take the reins.

Dick Jones.

## The Purpose of Education

Education, in a practical and applied sense, may be defined as that training which enables us to understand and adapt ourselves to material reality. When we say 'material' we remove the question beyond the field of philosophy. The primary concern of the average human is to make a living — to survive — and that is a purely material problem. It deals only with the material factors of health, education and access to the material means of life unrestricted by man-made laws and inhibitions. If all men and women had an equal opportunity to make a living, education might be reduced to a simple and uniform course of instruction; but where equal access to the means of life is denied, the uniformity of school and college courses leading to uniform "degrees" makes the usual education no education at all. Most of our education today is mere mental gymnastics. It is designed not to fit one to make a living, but to adapt us to the social order and teach respect for the class division of society into masters and wage slaves.

If education is to prepare one to perform the duties of life, as the dictionary says, it is apparent that it should be specialised to suit the needs of the individual. It is assumed by our educators that all members of society have certain duties in common, such as duties to the State, a common moral code and the amenities of social intercourse. If all the members of society were of approximately equal economic condition, the assumption might be accepted as a practical working proposition; but in a society divided by class lines, it is an absurdity. The most important material fact of modern social organisation is completely and deliberately ignored in education; namely, that society is divided into two fairly well defined classes consisting of those who work for wages and those who exploit us wage workers for profit and live by gambling on the stock exchanges with the wealth we produce.

Even technical education is divided quite unnaturally and unnecessarily into two branches along class lines. These are the mechanical arts on the one hand and the so-called professions on the other. No one can tell just where the line of division between the two branches should be drawn. No one knows just as what point a carpenter becomes a jobbing builder, or at what point a jobbing builder becomes a building engineer or an architect; or when a reporter becomes a 'journalist' or a 'correspondent'. Obviously, the line of division lies outside of the technical factors involved

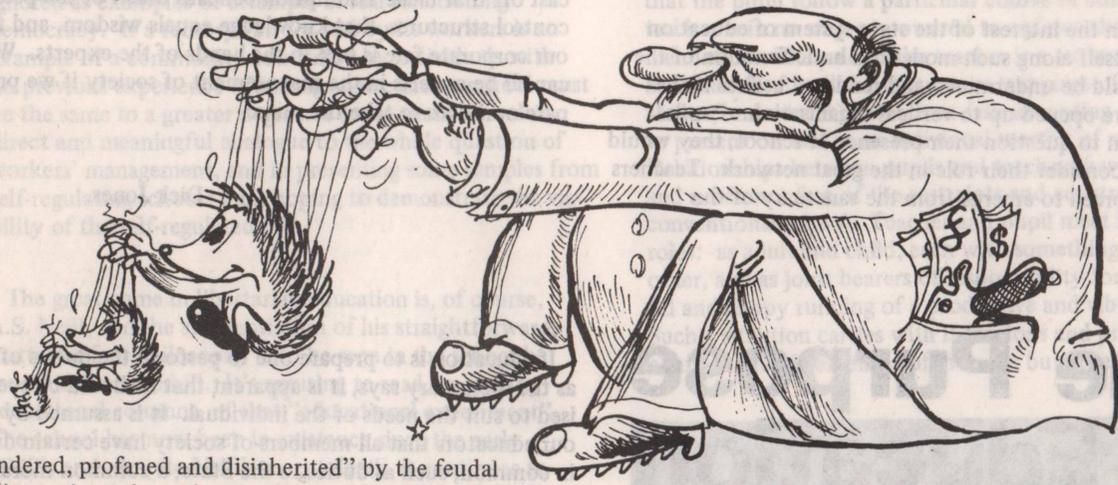
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and concerns itself with something else. Roughly, it seems to depend on whether you are going to use the technical knowledge gained to study to do useful and practical things — to produce wealth — or whether you are going to use it in the exploitation of those who do the useful things. Or it depends on whether you are going to be a wage worker, get a job and draw wages; or whether you are going to exploit or direct the exploitation of wage workers; in which latter case you draw a 'salary' or fees or profits, and hold a 'position'. These distinctions have arisen with the advance of bourgeois society. In the earlier stages of capitalism, and before, no such division existed. James Watt never took a formal scientific course leading to a professional degree; the inventors who revolutionised modern society such as Stephenson, Arkwright, Eli Whitney, Elias Howe, Samuel Morse, Robert Fulton and others were just workers; they had no degrees and were not 'professors'.

The class lines were still in a state of flux and had not become as sharply drawn as they are today. The necessity of educating these inventors in the mental attitudes of the ruling class had not yet fully developed.

These distinctions of class grew out of the economic division of the people into masters and wage slaves as capitalism developed from the close of the eighteenth century onward. The pioneers of capitalism were revolutionists — an oppressed class. They were not distinguished or distinguishable in their earlier origins from the masses of peasants, artisans and labourers who were victimised, robbed,

But, as H.M. Hyndman said, "events move faster than minds". The rise to power of this trading and exploiting class after the revolutionary destruction of the power of the feudal aristocracy, quickly developed the same class divisions and class contradictions that had formerly characterised feudal society. The trading class, formerly repressed, became the dominant class. It soon acquired class consciousness and awareness of the property distinctions that separated it by an immeasurable gulf from the wage workers who created the commodities in which it dealt. But the ideas and ideologies of its origins persisted in its educational system and education was founded upon the fallacy that bourgeois society had established its ideal — equality of opportunity. It persists in that absurd assumption today, when the integration of its capital, the concentration of wealth into fewer and fewer hands, with the spread of its dominion across the world, have absorbed the formerly undeveloped resources of the earth and left the newer born generations nothing but the opportunity to become wage slaves. We new arrivals upon the world scene constitute a distinct class in society. They are the disinherited millions, ever increasing in relative and absolute numbers, who are born without wealth and educated into a social universe in which they have neither property nor the means of acquiring property. They constitute the worlds working class — we masses who have nothing to deal in but our labour power which we must sell to the owning and employing class for the right to live. To impose upon us an impractical bourgeois education in which the idea



"plundered, profaned and disinherited" by the feudal nobility against whom they made common revolutionary warfare.

Our early bourgeois idealists thought they were establishing a 'natural' society to succeed the social organisation founded upon the artificialities of special privilege, birth and aristocratic rank. They asserted with perfectly naive sincerity that "all men are created equal"; that is, equal in the opportunity to engage in trade or business and by cleverness and artfulness, to get the best end of a business deal. It was the philosophy of glorified street market selling, and its god was a push-cart peddler exalted to the n-th degree of success. It was quite natural in an age when vast new continents were open to adventures for exploitation and when the individual trader was free to pit his wits against every other individual trader on a fairly even basis, unhampered by the gigantic combinations and mergers of the modern world. It then seemed needful only to rid the world of the feudal laws in restraint of trade to free the world and establish a democracy of opportunity in which only the naturally inferior would fail.

of growing rich by getting into trade and business prevails, when we will never have that opportunity, and when the State itself is devoted to the job of barring us from such an opportunity and fixing our status as wage slaves eternally, is an obvious absurdity. And yet that is just what the education system does.

Yet the true purpose of education is to teach one to understand reality and to adapt oneself to it in the struggle for existence. Reality and the means of survival are one thing to a worker and quite another to an exploiter of labour; to one who has to make a living with hands and skill and to another whose purpose in life and means of life is the deception of those who labour. The one is a creator; the other is a beast of prey. They have nothing in common, not even a common morality. To instruct us workers in the righteousness of the methods and morality of a system that despoils us and denies us access to the means of life is to defeat the primary object of education. It is to discipline us as victims of a condition that not only does not adapt us to the realities of life, but aims to make us oblivious to the realities about us which work to our own destruction.

Working Class Education

Workers' education is, of necessity, an education in class consciousness. It is so because the economic structure in which we are born and without adaption to which we cannot survive, is owned and controlled by a distinct class — the capitalist class. If the truth is taught to the working class it must reveal to us the character of the function we perform in the economic structure. It must show us how the economic structure works in all its parts. It must analyse the working of a pitiless machine and reduce to exact measurements that which we, as sellers of labour power, receive as our inevitable lot. And what the other class — the owners of the structure — receive. If it does not reveal this, it fails to educate at all. It miseducates and deceives. It creates a false concept of the world and of social relationships. It prepares us for helpless exploitation and victimisation. If the facts of society are taught to us we must become class conscious.

The necessity of class education is imposed upon the working class by the facts of industry. That striving toward life — which is inherent in every living cell of life, makes it necessary for us to educate ourselves in matters that are dangerous to our health, detrimental to our lives and restrictive of our chances of survival. The capitalist system, or any system in which one class lives at the expense of and by the deliberate exploitation of another, is opposed to our chances of survival. Our lives are lived at a hazard by the imposition of adverse working and living conditions. Our meagre share in the social division of the wealth produced by our labour is insufficient to sustain the life of the worlds working class. The hazard of existence is increased by our function in the economic structure as workers while that of the employing class is reduced at our expense. Life insurance and health statistics prove this to be a fact — a reality. To neglect instruction in such vital facts is to miseducate. And to fail to attribute the facts to their cause — a class system in society — is to lie by suppression of the truth. That is why education in class consciousness is necessary.

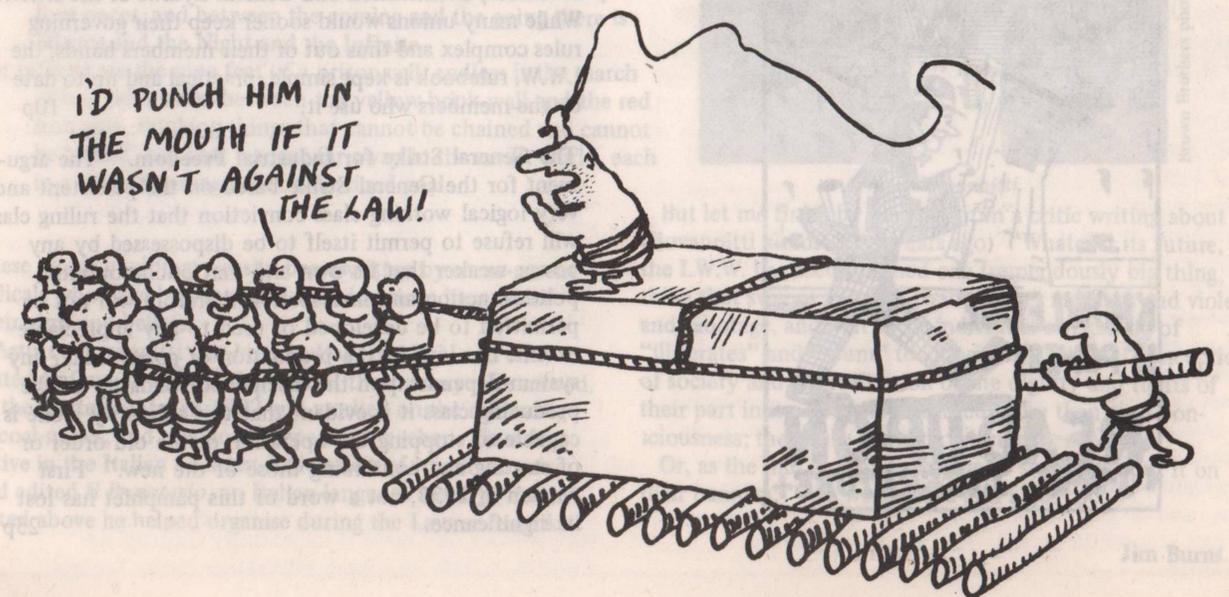
Class systems are not eternal. They are an incident in the history of the human family. Class division is at war with the forces that make for the survival of the human race. That is why every class system in society has ultimately been overthrown by a revolutionary change. That is why the growth of the economic structure has revealed a

constant tendency to widen the scope of the ruling class and to embrace an ever widening number of people. Modern history is a comparatively brief span of years compared to the biological ages. It is a period of some few thousand years as contrasted with the millions of years in which the human race was developing from the first traces of human kind. It emerges at its dawn from a stage of primitive communism in which the individual was free. It begins the building of a social economic structure. It gains security of existence by sacrificing individual liberty. But continually throughout the comparatively brief period in which the economic structure has been in process of evolution, the biological forces have been at war with the class forms. Revolution after revolution has broadened the ruling class lines and admitted an increasing number to opportunity. The slave owning patrician gave way before a more numerous class — the feudal nobility; the feudal nobility was in turn overthrown by a more numerous class — the bourgeoisie; now the increasing numbers of the working class are challenging them for control of the economic structure. Class lines have a tendency to broaden and disappear in a final classless society in which the workers will be the only class, with ownership and control of the means of life in our hands. This is the final solution of social problems — true democracy.

The Passing of Class Systems.

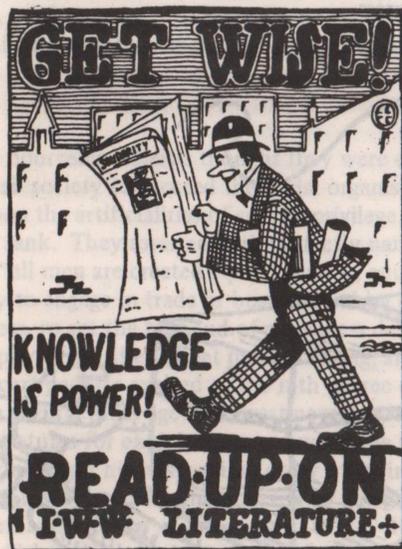
The necessity that gave rise to classes in society has passed. The social economic structure is fairly complete. Its capacity to produce wealth has increased to a point where it is more than ample to provide sustenance for all who will work. We are able to use the social machinery without coercion and are able to understand the disciplines of machinery well enough to be able to change the imposed disciplines of the employers. The only chaotic survivals are the ruling class and their parasitic existence.

Workers' education comprehends this outline. Its purpose is to teach the facts of industry instead of the slave morality of the employing class. Its technical training is to develop techniques for the co-ordination of the productive forces in production for use and not for the maintenance of a useless class of capitalist parasites. It is to render education a vital, living, needful thing that makes for human survival instead of suppression. It is to develop the spirit of freedom and democracy without which we can make little more progress.



The Industrial Workers of the World is engaged in this task because it is one of the necessary functions of working class progress. It is, like every progressive force in society, opposed by the class antagonisms of an outworn system of ruling class education in 'social control'. It is devoted to realism and scientific truth. It is opposed to class fictions and illusions. It is purely materialistic. Its purpose is to strip the social structure of all its traditional myths and lay its structure and its workings bare. It is to train the working class mind and hand to freedom from ruling class control and exploitation — to enable the working class to master the world and control it in the interests of the human race. It is to enable us to "build the structure of the new society within the shell of the old."

To accomplish this it carries on its work of education by the means that lie to hand, through papers, pamphlets and discussions. But more potent still is the education that can be carried out at the point of production, on the job. The I.W.W. interprets the phenomena of the class struggle as they develop in the form of strikes and disputes. It traces their origins. It instructs the working class in the nature of organisation and its purposes. It shows us how to adapt organisation to the changing economic structure, to the end of building up power in our hands. It can develop the means of working class control over the world through job committees, district councils, referendums and conventions, striving toward realistic co-ordination of all working class forces in the struggle for power. It is plastic, expansive, free, democratic, progressive, preparing to take over the means of production and distribution in the interest of the human race and so to banish exploitation and slavery of mind and body forever from the human scene.



# Bookshelf

All prices are for single copies and include postage and packing. Bulk rates on request.



**The Centralia Conspiracy**, by Ralph Chaplin. The killing of Wesley Everest in Centralia, Washington on November 11, 1919, is perhaps the most grisly murder in the annals of the labour movement. The conviction on murder charges of seven of his fellow I.W.W. members for defending their union hall from attack is one of the most outrageous legal frame-ups ever perpetrated. 80p

**Preamble, Constitution and General Bylaws of the I.W.W.** While many unions would sooner keep their governing rules complex and thus out of their members hands, the I.W.W. rulebook is kept simple, practical and up to date by the members who use it. 10p

**The General Strike for Industrial Freedom.** "The argument for the General Strike based on the persistent and very logical working class conviction that the ruling class will refuse to permit itself to be dispossessed by any power weaker than its own and that public opinion, political action and insurrection therefore will not be permitted to be developed or used to any appreciable extent. As long as the production of goods under any system depends upon the disciplined solidarity of the producing class it is evident that this solidarity alone is capable of stopping the operation of the old order or of starting and continuing those of the new." First written in 1933, not a word of this pamphlet has lost its significance. 25p

# Arturo Giovannitti

Let us drink a new toast to the dear Woollen trust,  
To the legions of "Country and God,"  
To the great Christian cause and the wise, noble laws,  
And to all who cry out for our blood;  
Let us drink to the health of the old Commonwealth,  
To the Bible and code in one breath,  
And let's so propitiate both the church and the state  
That they'll grant us a cheerful, quick death.

Those lines were written by Arturo Giovannitti in 1912, and they are extracted from a poem to Joseph Ettor, his companion in prison, when both were awaiting trial on a charge of being accessories to murder. The case was, as the historical record shows, an attempt by the authorities to break the leadership of a strike by millworkers in Lawrence, Massachusetts, both men being notably active in organising in the town. As an aside, it's interesting to note that the policy of isolating activists and prosecuting them on trumped-up charges hasn't changed much, nor does it vary from country to country, as certain events connected with the Shrewsbury pickets clearly demonstrate.

In writing about Arturo Giovannitti it is not my intention to "mourn the dead", but instead to show how words written yesterday can still be applied to today's situations. The I.W.W. Songbook is ample evidence of that fact, and Giovannitti's poems, though possibly of a more "academic" (for want of a better word) type than much of the Songbook material, lend additional weight to the argument. After all, his poems came out of his experiences just as surely as those of the folk artists. His great poem, "The Walker," recalls the months he spent in prison:

I hear footsteps over my head all night.  
They come and they go. Again they come and they go all night.  
They come one eternity in four paces and they go one eternity in four paces, and between the coming and the going there is Silence and the Night and the Infinite.  
For infinite are the nine feet of a prison cell, endless is the march of him who walks between the yellow brick wall and the red iron gate, thinking things that cannot be chained and cannot be locked, but that wander far away in the sunlit world, each in a wild pilgrimage after a destined goal.

These words could have easily been written by more-recent radicals who have had to spend time in prison because of their aims and beliefs.

Arturo Giovannitti was born in Italy in 1882, and emigrated to Canada around the turn of the century. He moved to the United States in 1902 and worked on the railroads, in coal-mines, and as a bookkeeper and teacher. He was active in the Italian Socialist Federation of North America, and edited *Il Proletario*, an Italian-language weekly. As noted above he helped organise during the Lawrence strike

## from the Songbook

of 1912, and he was later connected with other I.W.W. activities. Throughout the Twenties and Thirties he spoke at many of the major labour rallies held in the U.S.A., and he worked with anti-fascist organisations during the Second World War, despite failing health. But, to quote one commentator, "his life glows in one light: his struggle with/for the labour unions."

If you believe that the good things in life ought to be available to everyone, and if you believe that the arts are among the good things, then it is logical that the aim to break down the barriers which restrict the arts to a select few (and in doing so restrict the free flow of information and ideas) can be allied to the social and economic causes by radicals. The Songbook is a living testimony to the value of being able to express oneself in direct and relevant terms. As pointed out in the second issue of *The Industrial Unionist*, "we are a working class able to read and write," and we ought to use those abilities to the full.



Arturo Giovannitti.

But let me finish by quoting from a critic writing about Giovannitti almost sixty years ago: "Whatever its future, the I.W.W. has accomplished one tremendously big thing, a thing that sweeps away all twaddle over red flags and violence and sabotage, and that is the individual awakening of "illiterates" and "scum" to an original, personal conception of society and the realisation of the dignity and rights of their part in it. They have learned more than class consciousness; they have learned consciousness of self."

Or, as the mill girls of Lawrence so succinctly put it on their banners: "We want bread and roses too."

Jim Burns.

# White Man's Magic

## A lesson in economics

In the September 1973 issue of National Geographic magazine, there is an article by Malcolm Kirk on the cargo cult along the Sepik River in New Guinea. The typical items of white mans wealth have been called 'cargo' in pidgen English, and for years, especially since World War II, cargo cults have sprung up in various parts of New Guinea. These mystical cults teach that by certain sacrifices and rituals folk can cause the material goods they crave to arrive in some ship, and reach them even though they live in the highlands. In her early post-war book, "New Lives For Old", Margaret Mead wrote of one New Guinea cargo cultist who had got his tribe to throw away the ancestral skulls that had ruled them, and thus freed them to make a more rational social compact, to regulate pleasanter and more co-operative lives. No ship came in and the angry people killed the prophet, but they did live better — a process that has its analog in western history too. But back to Malcolm Kirk's 1973 observations. He says,

"They believe that the white man obtains his goods, his wealth, through trickery and his own peculiar magic, which involves the church services and Bible studies. Since the white will not share their cargo, the people try to imitate this magic."

One cargo cultist told Kirk: "The Australians try to keep us from getting power, but you Americans have shown us. You have more power than Australia because your men go to the moon. Now we make money by hand. Later we will buy a machine like the one in Washington." They "made" money for Kirk by the ritual pouring of coins from one dish to another in the belief that this would later lead them to stumble on a cache of money somewhere.

The yearning for cargo has come from missionaries, traders, and contact with western conveniences and inconveniences during and after World War II. Missionaries urge these people to cover their nakedness with clothing, clothing that must be bought from traders, with money they had got from traders, clothing made by wage workers in some other land, and that has yielded profit and power to factory owners, transport companies, traders and others before it reaches the hills of New Guinea. The missionaries have not explained how this white mans magic works, where it gets its power, or that most white people have very little "cargo".

Observations made in Britain 1974 indicate that a lot of people also fail to understand the way this white man magic works, and are duped into acceptance of it and made its victims. It has even been observed that among those who oppose the present arrangements there are "cargo cultists" who believe these arrangements can be changed by appropriate chants and ritual markings on pieces of paper every four or five years, or more often if the high priests demand it. Perhaps if we could work out a way to explain white mans magic to our brothers in New Guinea, our fellow workers here might understand it too, and do something about it to break the spell it has cast around the world. That is a first lesson in economics.

A New Guinea non-cultist told Kirk a few things that may help explain the magic: "We work hard, and we get paid a dollar for a day. If we complain we get fired. There is a rich mining company up on the April River. They have helicopters and boats and plenty of money. They camp on our people's land. They cut down trees and dig holes in the ground and spoil the hunting. They bring in workers from the coast because they say that our men will go home when they are tired."

The first part of this gripe sounds like an NLRB<sup>1</sup> complaint and the last part like the final chapter of volume one of Karl Marx' *Capital* — an outstanding investigation of white mans magic. Marx wrote there of how a Mr. Peel took workers and materials, everything to build a capitalist society at Swan River in the early days of the colonialization of Australia, only to find that after his cargo had been deposited, his imported workers ran away and left poor Mr. Peel to cook his own food and make a shelter and a bed and do the rest of the work himself, for he had failed to export also those social conditions from Manchester that had compelled these people to seek work from him in the first place.

White mans magic requires polarization, contrast, dependency, coercion. Power is the power to use people. It is the backs and eyes of ten workers that makes the employer of the ten stand above them, and the brawn and brain of millions that makes massive corporations the great powers of the world. These workers are no ghosts but machines of flesh and blood driven by ancestral skulls to treat General Motors Corporation as kindly as though it were the village blacksmith.

Historically the white mans magic developed in Europe, then in America and elsewhere by the occurrence together of such circumstances as these:— agricultural changes that shoved workers off the land, forcing them to hunt jobs; which enabled the remaining farm workers to provide the labour to feed this new urban working class; a basis in technology for using these workers; a market to supply the materials on which they would work and in which to sell the products; a fostered outlook that working hard and accumulating wealth are the most worthy things a man can do; widespread acceptance that things can be exclusively owned by persons and traded between persons, and that if a man makes a thing it is his unless he has made it as the hired hand of an employer. In which case it will belong to the employer as the real owner of the labour that made it.

These are the conditions for the white mans magic. Where they are lacking it has not worked. The North American Indians, (like the Manchester workers taken to Swan River), found it impossible to live without a job, and so the white man could steal the Indians land but not make him work it. To make the magic work in America the rich had to create a working class by importing slaves of a different colour from Africa, by indenturing the impoverished and men and women from jails to work out their fines and passage for masters, by land policies that made it increasingly difficult for workers to farm on a small subsistence basis. In South

Africa to force the natives to work in the mines a tax was put on their homes, a tax that had to be paid in money that could only be obtained by working in the mines, and burning the home if the tax was not paid.

Mr Kirk notes an institutional handicap to New Guinea development of the white mans magic. A Dutch priest there, unhappy over the preaching of "sin, Satan and hell", explained a difficulty: "A man who sets up a store in his village soon goes broke — his relatives remind him of his tribal obligations to share goods and strip his shelves bare." You don't build capitalism, the white mans magic, that way! However, to cite Margaret Mead again, that co-operative spirit can be organized in practical ways to provide better food and shelter.

The term **capitalism** to describe the white mans magic focuses on the accumulation of means of production in the possession, but not actually in the hands, of an employing class. The machine, factories, mines, etc., as material entities consist of the gifts of nature as altered by the work of man, work that is seldom that of those who own them. These are products of past labour used to increase the efficiency of live labour, and properly can be called capital only when the class that made them works with them, but to make products that will be owned by the idlers who have gained title to them. That arrangement is the essence of white mans magic.

Why don't the folks in New Guinea improve their lot by putting some of their labour into co-operatively-owned means for more efficient production? Mr. Kirk helps to explain that, too. He describes an elaborate ceremony to initiate the young men into manhood status and explains this cannot be done often because "it has taken ten-thousand man-days to prepare for this." As Sims explained some fifty years ago in his "Society and Its Surplus", social dynamics hinges on the presence of something over and above what is needed just to keep

going; if this surplus is dissipated in rituals, temples, castles, pyramids (or for that matter Whitehalls) it cannot be used to augment human productive capacity. However, this surplus cannot be put into industrial improvements except in the presence of appropriate technical opportunities, social outlooks and institutions.

In pondering the mysteries of white mans magic, people here and in New Guinea speak often of money as though it was the central fact in the magic. Magical performances often rely on such distractions. Adam Smith — and all who have tried to probe the economic process seriously — found it best to describe it first in terms of people, their work, their products, their services, and their relations, without resort to the idea of money, and then later introduce into the picture this token which is used to facilitate exchanges, in place of other realities. So too here. The basic realities are the material objects, the social practices, and the prevailing attitudes that correspond to these practices. If practices and attitudes remain unchanged, we can expect only more elaborate technical means for a subservient working class to enhance the power and profits of a ruling minority, and to cope with the damage this policy entails. But, by the development of rational, union, working-class practices and attitudes, we can break the curse.

Fred Thompson

1 National Labour Relations Board. An institution of the U.S. Federal Government set up to regulate the relations between workers and bosses so that the government's boat isn't upset in ways it cannot control. Similar to the unlamented Industrial Relations Court.

## Wages & Prices

The fallacy is widespread that organised effort to raise wages is not worth while; that we would be no better off for our higher pay because, it is argued, the increase in wages is eaten up by a consequent increase in price. This is nonsense. If wages rise from £5 to £7.50 per day for a group of workers each of whom have been producing a £20 article each day, what will happen to the price of these articles? Will the extra £2.50 be added to it? Should this happen, the employer would still have the same £15 margin as before, and would have no reason to oppose the increase. Even should it happen, it would now take only three days wages instead of four, for the worker to buy one of these articles. But the £2.50 cannot be added to the price for the simple reason that nothing has affected the market to increase the price. The employer opposes high wages because he knows that when these workers raise their pay from £5 to £7.50, the price will stay just where it was, making his margin drop from £15 to £12.50. If the workers are to be as badly off

with their £7.50 as they were with their previous £5, then the product must sell for four times their new wage, or for £30, and thus leave a margin of £22.50 for the employer. If this were the case, the employers would welcome and promote wage increases. Therefore the assumption that higher wages must cause higher prices is absurd.

The less of our lives that we sell for our living, the better the bargain is for us. To end this glut of human life known as unemployment, we must actually sell less of our lives, not merely fewer hours. If in six hours we exhaust ourselves as previously we did in eight or ten, there is no gain for us in the change. For this reason we cannot rely upon legislative enactment of shorter hours or upon restriction of working hours by agreement among the employers. It is only when we workers have cut the working day by our own organised action that the power is there to assure that speeding up will not wipe out the gains made.



Review

The Union Makes Us Strong, by Tony Lane. Arrow Books, 1974. Paperback 70p. Illustrated by Trevor Skempton.

Tony Lane is a lecturer in sociology, yet another of those "vehicles of science" so admired by Lenin, and long before finishing this book I realised that I had read it many times before, only under different titles.

The first time I read it, it was all about Russia and was called "What is To Be Done?" by the Russian lawyer V.I. Lenin, who was responsible for the introduction of state capitalism into Russia, miscalling it socialism — at least until 1918 when events forced the truth out of him:

"While the revolution in Germany is still slow in coming forth, our task is to study the state capitalism of the Germans, to spare no effort in copying it and not shrink from adapting dictatorial methods to hasten the copying of it."

The ideas of the anarcho-sindicalists and Left-Socialist-Revolutionaries who were opposed to the use of dictatorial methods he dismissed saying that "the revolution that took these people seriously would perish irrevocably (and deservedly)"; consequently Lenin and that well known advocate of the militarisation of labour, Leon Trotsky, set about "building socialism" in Russia. History has proved Lenin's opponents to have been right, and it was because of the methods initiated by Lenin and Trotsky that the revolution did perish irrevocably, though not deservedly.

Tony Lane is obviously a disciple of Lenin who despairs (page 294) he cannot find "any theoretical work with a finely honed cutting edge" published by the left wing press in Britain, and his book represents an attempt to fill the vacuum. The assumption upon which the book is based is not merely highly questionable, it is fictitious in that he claims to have exploded the cherished myth that the failures of socialism can be laid at the door of a succession of leaders who have betrayed the movement. Not even Karl Marx has ever suggested that socialism would ever be possible until the workers became aware of themselves as a class, and in pursuit of this aim he advocated methods which were utterly at variance with those of Lenins. The "myth" to which Lane refers assumes that there exists a revolutionary proletariat constantly being held in check by union leaders, but let us ask ourselves who really subscribes to this myth? A few strike happy Trotskyists perhaps, and possibly a few lecturers in Sociology, but it is not widely held on the shop floor; it ought to be obvious even to Tony Lane that a revolutionary proletariat would long ago have rejected a treacherous leadership. It is difficult therefore to give Lane any credit for debunking a mythical myth, nor even for recognising that sectionalism within the unions and the sectional spirit exists because workers are, in Connolly's words, "unconsciously being compelled by their false system

# BOOKSHELF review



of organisation to betray their struggling brothers."

Lane scarcely refers to the industrial unionists who published "The Miners Next Step" before the first world war and provided a sound critique of forms of leadership, suggesting a form of organisation which would effectively thwart the growth of a union oligarchy; Lane in fact is not interested in forms of organisation but only in theoretical works with a "finely honed cutting edge" and vanguard parties led by lecturers in sociology. The union oligarchs, however were very much concerned with the forms of organisation proposed by the industrial unionists, as James Hinton has pointed out in his book 'The First Shop Stewards Movement':

"To many of its founders the Triple Alliance was valued, not as a means of promoting and extending sympathetic strike action, but as a means of preventing spontaneous outbreaks, of controlling and disciplining militancy".

Hinton then goes on to quote that most persistent critic of the forms of amalgamations taking place under the union leaderships, James Connolly, who wrote in 1916:

"The frequent rebellion against stupid and spiritless leadership and the call of the rank and file for true industrial unity seems to have spurred the leaders on, not to respond to the new spirit but to evolve a method whereby under the forms of unity it could be trammelled and fettered . . . a scheme to prevent united action rather than facilitate it."

The validity of that criticism can be confirmed by a reading of the events of 1926 by which time, unfortunately, too many of the industrial unionists had joined the CPBG which was backing the TUC General Council and calling for "All power to the General Council".

For our own part we do not suggest that working class militancy is constantly on the boil, but we are aware at the time when a more revolutionary form of union organisation was in the offing the Trade Union leaders did everything in their power to prevent it coming about. And is the TUC today not doing everything that it can to hinder the unofficial movement within the unions?

Lane adds an unconscious touch of humour (p.293) when he tells us that his friends considered his analysis to be too negative and almost begged him to write another "What Is To Be Done?" I have news for Lane's friends; he already has done, and this is it. Although Lane has taken the title of the book from an I.W.W. song, he consistently shows that he has no understanding of what that song, "Solidarity Forever", is about. For a start, I can only refer him back to the previous issue of this magazine.

Henry Bell.

# Social Work

Let there be no mistake about it — social work through the local authority is one of the Prime agents of social control in British society today. Essentially a reform measure, the concept of social work is tied up intimately with a liberal do-gooder view of society. Thus the prevailing emphasis of individual casework as if to suggest that the clients predicaments are somehow of his or her own doing, divorced from the real world that surrounds us.

Social work is doomed to failure because in its very fabric is sown paternalism of the rankest variety, coupled with an acceptance of the capitalist order and all that implies. It is a subtle way of keeping the working class in its place, attempting to get us to accept our fate.

Although it is undoubtedly true that many individual social workers are radical in their approach, this is soon thwarted by the prescriptions of the local authority. And looming on the horizon is the threat of professional elitism and the attempt to convince society that social work somehow contains a specific body of knowledge available only through training courses at polytechnics and universities.

Thus we have a professional elite emerging who are hell bent on the illusion that they have somehow escaped the working class. Little do they realise

that having to sell their labour in the market place they are already members of the working class and should be proud of the fact. But, of course, it shouldn't end here — we should, as workers, be organising with our brothers and sisters to seize control of the means of life.

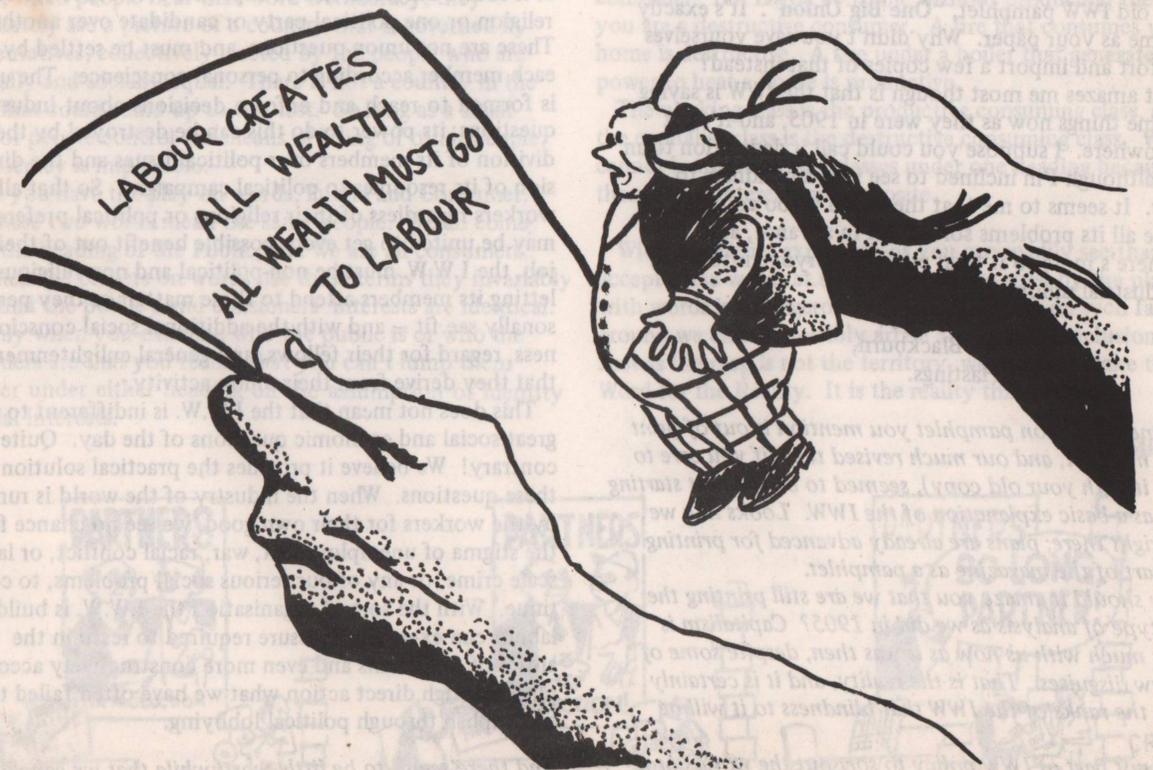
Problems of poverty, bad housing, economic deprivation, and alienation are all symptomatic of capitalism. Our entire lives are affected by the class system through bad education, bad housing, poor diets — second-class living! These problems can never be solved through social work — indeed, they make a mockery of the very attempt.

The crippling effects of all these problems can be solved through working-class solidarity. Attempts to syphon off members of the working class to assume elitist professional roles such as in social work, is a pathetic attempt to again divide and conquer.

Will those who see this, whether involved as social workers or as workers who have come into contact with social workers, who would be interested in doing something about it, please contact me care of Paul Shellard, 72, Wellington Road, Handsworth, Birmingham 20.

Yours for a new dawn,

P. Jones. B'ham.



# Letters

Brothers,

Picked up the Industrial Unionist at the same time as I bought my copy of Solidarity, and was surprised to see the apparent similarity of the ideas, at least on a couple of levels, but the real difference in going about putting it all into practice.

One thing though, after reading through both the magazines: In Solidarity there is an article by an old Clydeside militant on humour as a weapon in the working class armoury, writing as if it had just been discovered. He says, "There were . . . those who talked learnedly of how the worker was robbed at the point of production and yet had problems in answering difficult ones like 'how is a fireman robbed at the point of production?' Well, is it a difficult one?"

Doug Williamson,  
Manchester.

Any reader who hasn't see Solidarity can get a copy for 10p (plus postage) from c/o 123 Latham Road, London E.6.

The firemen in the factory are in the same position as the floor sweepers, necessary to the continuation of the production processes, and the firemen who work for the local corporations are in exactly the same position. We who work are robbed as a class, not as individuals. Eds.

\* \* \*

Dear Comrades,

When I got my copy of the Industrial Unionist I was rather surprised to find that the IWW was still in existence. I thought it had died out years ago.

So I rooted around the bookshelves until I found my copy of the old IWW pamphlet, "One Big Union". It's exactly the same as your paper. Why didn't you save yourselves the effort and import a few copies of that instead?

What amazes me most though is that the IWW is saying the same things now as they were in 1905, and it's got you nowhere. I suppose you could call it dedication to an ideal, although I'm inclined to see it as a blindness to reality. It seems to me that the world is too complex to have all its problems sorted out in advance, and that there's more to it than putting everyone into his or her industrial union.

Fraternally,  
M. Blackburn,  
Hastings.

The One Big Union pamphlet you mention is out of print at the moment, and our much revised text (if you care to check it with your old copy), seemed to be the best starting point as a basic explanation of the IWW. Looks like we were right there; plans are already advanced for printing that part of the magazine as a pamphlet.

Why should it amaze you that we are still printing the same type of analysis as we did in 1905? Capitalism is still as much with us now as it was then, despite some of the new disguises. That is the reality, and it is certainly not in the ranks of the IWW that blindness to it will be found.

It is not part of IWW policy to sort out the worlds problems in advance. Simply we have a method of organisation

that will enable the world's workers to sort out the problems that capitalist production and distribution have given us. And there certainly is more to it than putting everyone into his or her Industrial Union. We can only suggest you go back and read the One Big Union article again, but a little more carefully and thoughtfully this time.

You say you thought we died out years ago. Since the founding Convention of the IWW in 1905 the strength of the membership has waxed and waned many times, and although comparatively low today the idea of One Big Union, as put forward by the IWW, is gradually gaining adherents throughout the world once more. We have been reported as dead on at least a dozen occasions by various politicians and bourgeois historians. Guess they must be exaggerating. Eds.

\* \* \*

Dear Comrade Editor,

I was interested to read the Industrial Unionist, and as a supporter of Industrial Unionism agreed with much of what you said. However I found your attitude to politics somewhat wrong. James Connolly, when speaking of the attitudes of an Industrial Unionist said; "Because he knows that the capitalist class is unscrupulous he proposes to compete with it on the political field as well".

Why deny ourselves another chance to put over our ideas and propaganda?

Yours fraternally,  
Michael Tyldesley,  
Worsley, Manchester.

That the capitalist class has no scruples may well be true, but our morality is not conditioned necessarily by theirs. In fact breaking away from capitalist morality is one of the functions of a fighting union.

On politics itself, we said:

It is sound unionism not to express a preference for one religion or one political party or candidate over another. These are not union questions, and must be settled by each member according to personal conscience. The union is formed to reach and enforce decisions about industrial questions; its power to do this can be destroyed by the division of its members over political issues and the diversion of its resources to political campaigns. So that all workers regardless of their religions or political preference may be united to get every possible benefit out of their job, the I.W.W. must be non-political and non-religious, letting its members attend to these matters as they personally see fit - and with the additional social consciousness, regard for their fellows, and general enlightenment that they derive from their union activity.

This does not mean that the I.W.W. is indifferent to the great social and economic questions of the day. Quite the contrary! We believe it provides the practical solution to these questions. When the industry of the world is run by the workers for their own good, we see no chance for the stigma of unemployment, war, racial conflict, or large scale crime, or any of our serious social problems, to continue. With the sort of organisation the I.W.W. is building, labour can exert any pressure required to restrain the antics of politicians and even more constructively accomplish through direct action what we have often failed to accomplish through political lobbying.

And there seems to be little worthwhile that we can add to that. Eds.

# Playing With Words

The greatest universal indoor game is Playing with Words. It is the favourite pastime of educators, trade union leaders and politicians of all shades. Next time you hear one, hear how the words roll out, tumbling, twisting, turning inside out, somersaulting. It's really surprising what tricks they can do.

The game is as old as language itself. But at no time in history has the game reached the heights that it enjoys today. In the early days there were no telephones, cinemas or televisions, no newspapers radios or news systems as we know them today, no loud-speakers to carry the words, no satellite hook-ups that reach into the far corners of the earth.

When a person played with words in those days, if they were spoken they could reach but a small number of people, and if it was the written word it didn't reach too many more. It was a slow process to get the latest word games around. But today when some President or other plays with words, they are heard around the world.

There is another important factor involved in the game of words. In earlier days the ways of living, the system of society, was comparatively simple and the words to explain them were also comparatively simpler and nearer to the root. Today, with a more complicated system of living and with the rapid changing within the system, the words used to describe the changes are so far behind the changes that many of the words used to describe them are meaningless and often silly when applied to reality.

What are some of these words and combinations of words? Here are a few that are overworked today. Heading the list I would put down, Democracy and Democratic Counties. Then you have, the Public, the Consumer, the Rights of the People, Identity of Interest Between Capital and Labour, Arbitration to Secure Industrial Peace, and so on.

Now, when people hear that word Democracy, they immediately see a picture of a country that is governed by representatives, collectively elected by the people who are politically and socially equal. There is not a country in the world that could stand up to this test. So long as a small group of people control the means of living of other people, a Democracy is impossible.

Next you have the play on words, Public and Consumer. Now these two words mean the same people. We all come under the heading of the Public, and we are all consumers. But when the players on words use these terms they invariably mean that the public's and consumers' interests are identical. It is only when you examine who the public is or who the consumers are that you realise that you can't lump them together under either heading on the assumption of identity of social interests.

The public is made up of two economic classes whose interests are opposite. One of these classes controls the means by which the other class lives and as long as they do control the means of living there can be no equality between them in the social, political or economic sense.

## AN IDENTITY OF INTERESTS?



And the same holds true in regards to the other term, consumer. It is true that we all consume, but there are two totally different forms of consuming. One is destructive consumption, the other productive consumption. If you consume in order to be capable of producing, or you produce more than you consume, you must be a productive consumer. But if you consume without producing, then you are a destructive consumer. A fire that consumes your home is destructive. A fire under a boiler that generates power to heat a house is productive.

The working class is the productive consuming class, and the capitalist class is the destructive consuming class. We cannot lump these two classes under one heading because there social interests are opposite.

With these brief explanations you can readily see that to accept these words at their face value as used by the players with words is a dangerous practice. Starting on such false ground we cannot possibly arrive at a sound conclusion. Just as the map is not the territory, we must not take the Word for the Reality. It is the reality that counts.

Chas Miller.



# BREAD LINES or PICKET LINES

"GET READY, PARDNER: IT'S A-COMIN' "

"... so long as there is one hungry mouth on earth, I have not dined well." (Who said it?)

Here in the good old USA under good old US capitalism, depressions or recessions, as they're called nowadays, used to come at irregular intervals, one about every ten years. They called them "panics" then, money panics. It has been said, "We didn't have anything then even when we were working — wages being so poor even in 'good' times that, come bad times, we didn't miss very much what we'd never had anyway." Nevertheless, the American working class was a restive class. Even though most of the AFL union (?) leaders were hip-deep in collaboration with the owning class they spoke a jargon abounding in class-conscious phrases to woo their members.

Anarchists, socialists and other revolutionary schools of thought made themselves heard. Populists, Greenbackers and other political parties came on the scene, propagandised the public, ran candidates for office. None of the last mentioned were truly revolutionary, but they did propose social changes which would most certainly have altered Free Enterprise as practised by Rockefeller, Vanderbilt and Gould. (Although Gould was contemptuous; it was he who said, "The working class? Hah! I can hire one half of the working class to kill off the other half.") (And the damning hell of it is, good people, so far he's mainly right.)

In 1905 the Wobblies (the IWW, the Industrial Workers of the World) came on the scene, proposing to organise, as the name implies, the workers of the entire world into One Big Union whose mission would be to wrest from the owning class the means of production and inaugurate an era of production for use instead of for profit.

In 1912 the Socialist Party expelled direct actionists. This could well be the saddest thing that ever happened to the class struggle in the United States. An anomaly here: Eugene Victor Debs, the party's perennial presidential candidate, held aloof from intra-party politics. He did not come to the defence of the direct actionists; yet he leaned more and more toward direct action in the later years of his life. World War I was brewing.

When it got down to brass tacks, the Socialist parties of Europe caved in and supported their several national governments. In the US, although Debs was sent to prison for opposing the war, it is doubtful that he had a substantial number of his party really supporting his stand.

The response of US direct actionists to the war crisis was ambiguous. They lacked the muscle to pull off a strike against the war. Even so, some advocated the attempt, plus refusal to register for military service and general resistance to the war effort with whatever means at hand. No concerted agreement developed; the individual was left to individual action or inaction.

Before the war and the war hysteria had ended, the IWW had become the most persecuted organisation in US history. Ironically, wartime strikes charged to the IWW were almost wholly instances of IWW participation in strikes not of their making. Two things to remember: a strike otherwise poorly organised and ineffective became well organised and quite effective with IWW participation; and the IWW always reminded strikers that the mission of the working class is to take over the means of production, end the wage system — and war.



"Prices up, unemployment up, stable wages!" If I didn't know better, I'd think we'd all died and gone to heaven!

Following World War I came a period of hard times, especially hard on discharged war veterans, who found employment opportunities slim or non-existent; but it did not reach the severity of the 19th and early 20th century panics. So there was, comparatively, an absence of severe depression from around 1907 through the boom years of the war and on until the stock market crash of October, 1929 and the ensuing Great Depression, the grand-daddy of 'em all. Thus there was roughly a 20-year period without a harsh money panic, two decades for people to be lulled into a feeling that there was maybe some chance for security under the System after all; thus the bulk of the US working class in 1930 had not been at close quarters with severe economic depression.

Initial reaction was stunned apathy. Much later, much too late for millions, positive neighbourhood actions were taken on many occasions against foreclosures, evictions, utilities cut-offs and the like. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt came along with his reassuring fireside chats and his alphabet of government fundings and bureaux for bolstering the economy. Even so, the nation was headed for depression on top of depression until preparation for World War II began. Unemployment still topped 7,000,000 when the first "defence" contracts were let.

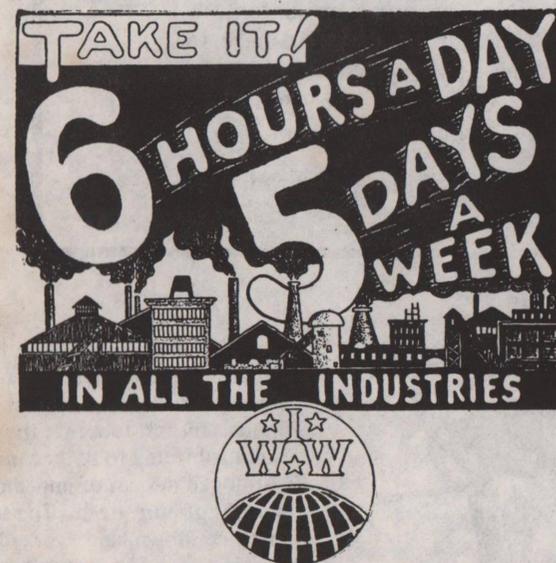
Again the pseudo boom of war economy. Again recession after war's end — but later this time (a happenstance that the Establishment economists

pointed to as proof that the System was getting better all the time) with "minor" recurring recessions following. Until now, in 1975 we are looking at the onset of one that could turn out to be a dilly. Again, maybe not. There are a lot of variables. For one to say that he or she could turn those many variables into a concrete forecast would be to place oneself in a class with the "recognised" economists of the world — the Fates forbid!

What is a sure prediction, though, is that depressions world-wide in scope are going to be recurring soon and often (if capitalism pulls through this one). The manipulation of money, that evil stuff that makes capitalism tick, has raced past the point of control. Monopoly ownership and marketing are solving the problems of dwindling sales by raising the price of the product, thereby getting more for less. Profits rise as unemployment rises. Beautiful!

It is the essence of capitalism that profit, money holdings, must be ploughed back into investment. The first John D. Rockefeller was quoted in his time as saying that he almost wished some of his projects would fail, and so relieve him of the problem of what to invest in next. These Savings and Loan biggies, highly visible and audible everywhere right now exhorting you to save your money with their institutions instead of spending it for goods and "adding to the inflation" are forced to invest that money they talk you out of, just to pay you back with interest, if nothing else. To pay off, that investment must be into the production of something to be sold at a profit or into a loan to someone who is buying something being sold at a profit. The Essence. No way but to inflate, inflate, balloon, balloon — until she bursts.

Compounding the problem are technologists at the drawing boards working out new automations to guarantee that many caught in current lay-offs will never, ever be employed again.



So the current crisis may deepen to the point of collapse or it may not. If not, it is sure to be followed by another soon. Then you are going to have a working class that doesn't like being burned twice by the same fire. And then still another (unless the working class has taken charge) and on and on, closer and closer together. Because, repeat, the manipulation of money has raced out of control. The

stop-gap legislation of the 1930's is far from adequate. Too many holes in the dyke. Nor will any legislation they dream up in the 70's prove adequate, because, again repeat, the manipulation of money has raced past the point of control.

History travels an erratic course at an erratic pace. It defies inclusion in any timetable. But at some point pressure builds, explodes, and there comes into being a new order.

A factor to be reckoned with in the present crisis, I should think, is the attitude of those, mostly students, who began to see and question the inconsistencies of the System in the last decade, who are now wage earners involved in the economic struggle. Granting that they do not allow their intellectualism to turn them into dealing with abstractions, instead of tangible bread-and-butter issues, they are going to seek a direct way to a free and equal society.

Well, it seldom happens that the goal is reached by a run-back from kick-off; and I should think that this one will be reached making yardage the hard way. The ideal thing would be for workers everywhere to take charge of their production as the IWW proposes and make sure that it all goes for use, for consumption — something that will not happen all at one time nor along any set pattern.

As of this moment I would beg, exhort, implore you to band together in your own neighbourhood to resist eviction of any unemployed or under-employed persons from their present residence.

These tactics won't persuade the enemy to leave the field, but they'll play hell with the supply lines. The skirmishes will toughen you for battles to come. Do it now. For your neighbours. Don't wait until they're not there any more to do it for you.

Gilbert Mers.

Gilbert Mers is a member of Marine Transport Workers Industrial Union 510 of the IWW, living in Houston, Texas. We hope he'll be contributing an article in each forthcoming issue.

Economics has been called the "dismal science" but the Marxian analysis of capitalism should be of engrossing interest to the workers, the universally exploited. It is customary in ruling class circles and especially among politicians who defend the present system (usually because they fare so well under it) to declare that Marxism is out of date. In the pages that follow we will prove the contrary; that in fact Marx's fundamental prophesies are being proved right day by day.

The above is the opening paragraph of a 2p pamphlet called *Marxism Made Easy*, by William McDougall, which can be commended as a basic introduction that carries no political party bias, but deals clearly and simply with Marx's economic theories. Available (add postage costs) from the author c/o Atholl Cottage, Westfield, Scotland, or from the Industrial Unionist.