

# INDUSTRIAL WORKER

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## The Story And Struggle Of Starbucks Workers In Chile

**Interview by Adam Weaver**

*During a week-long visit to Santiago to connect with social movement and political organizations, I had the chance to meet with Andrés Giordano, the president of the Starbucks Workers Union in Chile. Organized as an independent union beginning in 2009, they have a supportive relationship with their U.S. counterparts in the IWW's Starbucks Workers Union. On Sept. 22, I took the subway out to the middle-class suburbs of Santiago to meet him at his store, which was where the union effort began in 2009. Andrés is currently a student, previously in photography and now studying music, and has worked at his store for about eight years, with six years as a shift supervisor. He was excited to tell the story of their union, completely organized and led by rank-and-file workers, as well as to discuss their current negotiations and struggles. You can stay in touch with them on Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/SindicatoStarbucksChile>.*

**Industrial Worker (IW):** Could you describe the issues that motivated you to first start organizing?

**Andrés Giordano (AG):** Well, the first main issue was that the company decided to lay off workers from every store. Starbucks decided that they had too many workers for the operation. So, in my store, we went from being like 25 partners to being 13 or 14, and that caused a huge impact on the team. So we started to write complaints to the main office, through the human resources [HR] department. The company didn't take that too well and fired some of the people or took reprisals. Two partners at my store and at least one other from another store that did this got fired. So, we decided to seek legal protection and organized as a union.

I remember one of the biggest cases was a partner named Andy Israel, who had superb performance. He was going

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Starbucks Workers Union picket in July 2011.

Photo: Juanita Galleguillos Droguett

## Eurest Fires IWW Member In Frankfurt

**By Harald Stubbe**

Global catering company Eurest, which is engaged in brutal human resource management practices all around the world, and part of the British Compass Group, has fired our long-standing fellow worker Anil Vermani. Anil was put on a plane from Kabul to Germany when he was just 14. In Germany, he was put into a youth center, then, at 18, he had to make his own way. He started as a kitchen hand at Eurest. A shy young man, he was bullied from the start, and only given the worst jobs. In 2006 he joined the IWW. His first experience of fighting back was when he took part in a demonstration outside the Commerzbank in solidarity with Eurest workers in Cologne. He learned not to put up with everything. Meanwhile he got married and had two children.

Now, Eurest fired him, the sole wage-earner of his household, without giving any reason. We won't accept this inhumane action. In September we organized



Eurest demo in January 2012. Photo: IWW Eurest

protest emails to the managing director Jürgen Thamm. Then we sent letters to the workers' representatives of many of Eurest's client companies. With the support of the IWW, Anil has contacted one of the best lawyers in Frankfurt.

But all this is not enough. We need to continue to fight, globally, to give Eurest and Compass Group a hard time, and inform Eurest's customers of the company's inhumane labor practices!

## Sexual Harassment In The Workplace

**By Grace Parker**

My first major experience with sexual harassment at work occurred when I was 17 and working at a Mexican restaurant. One of the managers, a member of the family that owned the restaurant, put his hand down the back of my 16-year-old co-worker's pants. She and I confronted the head manager together, and he responded by giving the offending manager two weeks of paid leave. After two weeks, he was back and still working the same shifts with the worker he'd assaulted.

We organized a march on the boss, the first I had ever done, and went back to the head manager with two more of our co-workers. We demanded that the offending manager be fired, but instead the head manager changed my co-worker's schedule so she wouldn't have to work on the same shift as the man who assaulted her. While this was not a win in the least bit, it was still better than nothing. This was two years before I joined the IWW, and I was clueless about building workers' power and making changes at work. I wish that I had known then what I know now, because we could have organized more around this issue and actually made some gains in a workplace where sexual harassment was the norm, not the exception.

Four years later, I found myself again working in an environment where sexual harassment was something to be expected, was "just part of the job," and was written off as inevitable by bosses and workers alike. This time, however, was different. I had gotten the job for the purpose of organizing, and was *salting* (getting a job with the intent of organizing) into the campaign in its very early stages.

The store was called Chicago-Lake Liquors (Chi-Lake), located in Minneapolis, and we would go on to do a series of actions that would culminate in a mass firing of five workers, including myself, in retaliation for a march on the boss asking for raises. At this point, however, there were only two IWW members in the shop. They

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CHILAKEWORKERS@GMAIL.COM 612-354-6499

Chi-Lake picket flyer. Graphic: Twin Cities IWW

were making some progress in talking to their co-workers, building relationships, and agitating around issues at work. However, there was one problem: they were both men. The workforce at Chi-Lake was incredibly gender segregated, with all of the cashiers being women and all of the stockers being men.

This division of labor was based on two fucked-up ideas on the part of management: one being that women can't lift heavy things, and the second being that staffing the cash registers with young, attractive women will make men want to buy more booze. It also served to divide the workforce in very powerful ways. Stock guys had grievances that the cashiers couldn't identify with, and vice versa. It prevented cross-gender relationships from forming, and this was the issue that the two organizers were facing in trying to build a committee that was fully representative of the workplace. That's where I came in.

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“Comp Time” Is Bad For Workers

To the Editor,

Do you know about the “Working Families Flexibility Act? Members of U.S. Congress are trying to legalize “comp time.” Comp time was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court when Reagan was president. The Court said that it violated the anti-slavery amendment since it allowed employers to force people to work without getting paid. We never heard of unpaid “internships” in those days. Unpaid internships were illegal as violations of the minimum wage law. Comp time used to be very, very common. It was a policy in which an employer would promise to give time off in the future instead of paying overtime or any extra pay for extra work. I have had jobs where we worked 60-hour weeks but were paid for 37.5 hours, and promised that in some future week we could take some hours off and work less than 37.5 hours that week but still get paid for that full week.

In theory we might work five extra hours this week for no extra pay but work five hours less next week and get a full paycheck that week also. It was very easy to lose track of the extra hours. Brooklyn Catholic Charities and another job that I

quit about 30 years ago still owe me more than two full weeks each, which they never let me take off and would not pay for. This happened to all kinds of people I knew. If comp time becomes legal again, employers that pay time-and-a-half for overtime can just promise time off in the future. This will mean that in the company’s busy season, people will work extra unpaid hours, and when and if the boss decides it, the workers would get time off. This is similar to the situation in Poland, reported in the *IW* recently, where the eight-hour work day will cease to exist soon.

All of a sudden at work you could be told to take a break in the middle of a shift. If you work in a hospital kitchen, for example, maybe after lunch the boss gives you two comp hours and you must get back before dinner. That time off might not be a time when you can really do anything. If you commute to work an hour each way, you wouldn’t head home just to go right back. This is the way it often worked. Comp time sounds like extra vacation days, but it was not treated like formal time off like a holiday, vacation days or sick time. Vacation days often had more of a system. Some places would say you must take vacation

days before the end of the year. Some jobs give seniority privileges for choosing vacations. Some places would let Jewish people take a vacation day on a Jewish holiday and ask non-Jewish staff to not take those days off, for example. Comp time, in places where I or my friends worked, never had such customs or laws to enforce that the time off. Lots of jobs give the day off for Thanksgiving but there is no traditional comp day. That was something people said often as we complained about not getting our comp time approved. It was always hard to get permission to take the time off, especially when the job was understaffed.

Comp time was bad and many of us older folks forgot all about it. I did, until I heard about the Working Families Flexibility Act. The members of Congress (about half of whom are millionaires) are trying to bring it back saying that it is good for families with kids to sometimes have less rigid schedules. It will be the bosses who decide those schedules though not the employees deciding when they want to work extra late or leave early. For younger people, it will come as a shock and you will have less control over your time.

**Tom Keough**



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Feminism

How We Struggle: A Response To Ongoing Patriarchal Violence In The IWW

To our Fellow Workers:

The Patriarchy Resistance Committee (PRC) of the Portland General Membership Branch (GMB) has recently been notified of multiple instances of misogyny and sexual assault that have occurred within branches of the IWW. We write today to condemn these acts of violence and to encourage fellow workers around the world to actively resist misogynist and patriarchal behavior in all of its forms.

A member of the Kansas City GMB was recently accused of being a serial rapist. In order to secure the immediate personal safety of the rest of the branch, he was asked by a coalition of the Kansas City Wobblies to resign. The PRC supports the members of the Kansas City GMB who have prioritized the participation of all workers over that of a potentially violent man.

Time and time again, we see people (specifically and disproportionately women and people who do not identify with the gender binary) leave our organizing projects in response to physical, emotional and/or symbolic manifestations of gendered or sexual violence in our circles. In the essay “On Solidarity and Sexual Violence: An open letter to the Palestine Solidarity Movement,” Cassandra Solanas states:

“Often targets of patriarchy don’t want to be a victim twice; once from the original incident and again for having comrades betray them by not listening, not taking them seriously, and not acting.”

We wonder why, in radical circles and in our own union, are so many willing to fight against bosses who disempower the working class, but choose to ignore, or worse, actively defend individuals whose patriarchal behaviors systematically disempower survivors.

The IWW is built around the principles of direct action in the struggle against capitalism. We empower workers within the shop to determine the organizing

tactics that will be most effective while keeping the workers safe from the bosses. We would like to start a discussion on how these principles may also be useful in addressing gendered and sexual violence within our union. The “charges” process described in the IWW’s Constitution (see Article III of the Bylaws) can be a useful tool for some situations. Similarly, some survivors have found accountability processes to be helpful. However, both systems have serious flaws and can bring negative repercussions to both individuals and communities including: retraumatization, alienation, and lack of transparency, justice, and survivor-focused approaches.

Consider the following analogy: the IWW does not rely on the law for the protection of workers, recognizing that those who have the power to design and enforce the law do not share the interest of workers. IWW organizers are often told by capitalist sympathizers that we should just engage the legal system, that the system is fair and democratic. Our experience has proven otherwise. Similarly, some individuals may find it hard to trust a charges process when those who are in control of the process often do not experience the dynamics of our oppressions. We also are reassured that the system is fair and democratic, but our experience proves otherwise. This is demonstrated by the growing number of Wobblies who continue to leave the union due to a lack of organizational support.

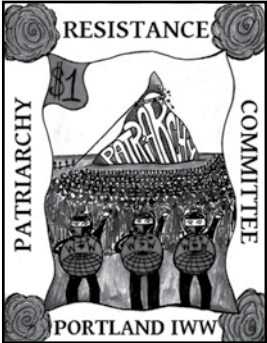
We wonder why workers can see how capitalism is upheld by systemic social issues such as patriarchy, but when abuses occur that present the opportunity to dismantle these systems collectively and personally, so many of us shy away, become defensive, or apply class reductionism. Perhaps it is because it is scary and difficult to confront the ways in which our own

behaviors and structures are oppressive. As a radical organization that seeks the liberation of the entire working class, we must address these fears and issues with the same passionate direct action with which we address capitalist exploitation.

It is not sufficient to state that capitalism is the linchpin on which all other oppressions depend and that, with the destruction of capitalism, all people will be free from oppression. If that were true, it is likely that our “democratic, anti-capitalist” organization would be more representative of the working class instead of being dominated by the same people who dominate capitalist society at large. In this vein, we pose the question: to whom is classism a “personal issue” and to whom is it a real issue? To whom is patriarchy a “personal issue” and to whom is it a real issue? As a union, we know that classism is a personal issue for working people, as well as a very real issue. We wonder why patriarchy is so often dismissed as a “personal issue” without any regard for its equally real consequences. We should all know that the personal is political. Perhaps we need to reassess what it means to struggle or what resistance looks like.

We know it is important to struggle against our bosses. We would never tell a co-worker that we “aren’t taking sides” when they confide in us about abuse perpetrated by the boss. Staying “neutral” is upholding the status quo. “Not taking sides” when someone is called out on patriarchal behaviors means leaving fellow workers without support and allowing abusers to continue, never being held accountable. Whereas, silence is compliance, Be it resolved that standing in solidarity with people facing patriarchal oppression is subverting the status quo that harms us all.

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the



Graphic: PRC

oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.” – Desmond Tutu

We must therefore consider alternative approaches. This may include, but is not limited to, directly expelling perpetrators from not just one branch, but from the union as a whole. We don’t allow bosses in our union, so why would we allow rapists? With that in mind, we support the Kansas City members who worked collectively and swiftly to address the patriarchal behavior of one of their members, and encourage all Wobblies to use survivor-centered solidarity, creativity, and direct action to support one another and resist the patriarchy within the One Big Union.

Activists are not immune to widespread cultural ignorance of the warning signs of abusive and predatory behavior, nor systemic apologism for such behavior. We must be proactive in fighting oppression in our organizing, or else we face losing friends and comrades and watching our organizing drives deteriorate. As radical organizers, we are cautious of agents of the state, informant infiltration, and Mr. Blocks who can derail our organizing. We need to be just as wary of the destructive behaviors of patriarchal fellow workers. As many of us have unfortunately already experienced, the unchecked “broletariat” can be just as effective at undermining our anti-capitalist efforts. As Courtney Desiree Morris observes in the essay “Why Misogynists Make Great Informants”:

“Informants are hard to spot, but my guess is that where there is smoke there is fire, and someone who creates chaos wherever he goes is either an informant or an irresponsible, unaccountable time bomb who can be unintentionally as effective at undermining social justice organizing as an informant. Ultimately they both do the work of the state and need to be held accountable.”

We as individuals and as One Big Union have a choice when we hear about an instance of sexual violence, or of anyone speaking up to say that they feel unsafe. We can choose to explain away the situation, leaving survivors behind to deal with it on their own. Or, we can choose to align ourselves with survivors and, in solidarity, resist the individuals and the systems that harm so many working-class people.

They only call it class war when we fight back:  
They only call it  
crazy bitch  
divisive  
distracting  
identity politics  
when we fight back!

In Solidarity,  
the Patriarchy Resistance  
Committee of the Portland GMB.  
prc@portlandiww.org. Oct. 9, 2013

IWW Constitution 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 means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the earth.

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 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.

Join the IWW Today

The IWW is a union for all workers, a union dedicated to organizing on the job, in our industries and in our communities both to win better conditions today and to build a world without bosses, a world in which production and distribution are organized by workers ourselves to meet the needs of the entire population, not merely a handful of exploiters.

We are the Industrial Workers of the World because we organize industrially – that is to say, we organize all workers on the job into one union, rather than dividing workers by trade, so that we can pool our strength to fight the bosses together.

Since the IWW was founded in 1905, we have recognized the need to build a truly international union movement in order to confront the global power of the bosses and in order to strengthen workers’ ability to stand in solidarity with our fellow workers no matter what part of the globe they happen to live on.

We are a union open to all workers, whether or not the IWW happens to have representation rights in your workplace. We organize the worker, not the job, recognizing that unionism is not about government certification or employer recognition but about workers coming together to address our common concerns. Sometimes this means striking or signing a contract. Sometimes it means refusing to work with an unsafe machine or following the bosses’ orders so literally that nothing gets done. Sometimes it means agitating around particular issues or grievances in a specific workplace, or across an industry.

Because the IWW is a democratic, member-run union, decisions about what issues to address and what tactics to pursue are made by the workers directly involved.

**TO JOIN:** Mail this form with a check or money order for initiation and your first month’s dues to: IWW, Post Office Box 180195, Chicago, IL 60618, USA.

Initiation is the same as one month’s dues. Our dues are calculated according to your income. If your monthly income is under \$2000, dues are \$9 a month. If your monthly income is between \$2000 and \$3500, dues are \$18 a month. If your monthly income is over \$3500 a month, dues are \$27 a month. Dues may vary outside of North America and in Regional Organizing Committees (Australia, British Isles, German Language Area).

- \_\_\_ I affirm that I am a worker, and that I am not an employer.
- \_\_\_ I agree to abide by the IWW constitution.
- \_\_\_ I will study its principles and acquaint myself with its purposes.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Post Code, Country: \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Membership includes a subscription to the **Industrial Worker**.

Subscribe to the Industrial Worker

Educate yourself and your fellow workers with the official newspaper of the IWW.

Just mail in this form, or visit us online at:  
<http://store.iww.org/industrial-worker.html> to subscribe today!

- 10 issues for:**
- US \$18 for individuals.
  - US \$30 for institutions.
  - US \$30 for internationals.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
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State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip/PC \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: PO Box 180195,  
Chicago IL 60618 USA  
Subscribe Today!

# You Might Just Be A Wobbly: A Speech From The 2013 IWW Convention



By Nick Driedger

*This month we run the words of welcome which a member from the Edmonton General Membership Branch delivered at this year's convention.*

My name is Nick Driedger and I, like all of you, am a Wobbly. But what does it mean to be a Wobbly?

Well, if you think a wildcat by the members is better than a deal cut by the leaders, you might just be a Wobbly.

If you think it's better to have 10 members who are in the union because they believe in it, than 100 who are in it because they legally have to be in it, you might just be a Wobbly.

If you think there is more radical potential in seeing a co-worker stand up for herself than a \$1 raise, you might just be a Wobbly.

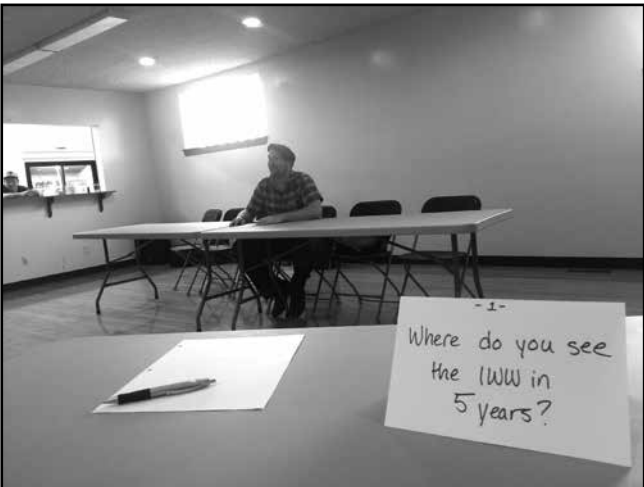
If you think the phrase, "We are the union" isn't just a way of deferring criticism but needs to be the driving force behind every action we take as workers on the job, you might just be a Wobbly.

A very experienced trade unionist once told me, "A union is only as good as the people in it." Now without falling short of flattering the audience I would have to say this room full of Wobblies is proof we have the best union going.

If you took chemistry in high school, at some point your teacher probably explained that a lump of coal is more or less the same as a diamond as far as the actual parts that make it up. However, coal and diamonds don't look the same. Why is that?

It's because of the way the pieces are arranged, the way they fit together, not just on a small level but pretty much on the smallest level possible, on the level of the molecules that make up the object itself. This is why a piece of coal crumbles in your hands and diamond is pretty much the hardest thing there is.

You see diamonds come from coal; they are just lumps of carbon. But if you apply pressure, heat, and time to a piece of carbon it packs down. Slowly the bonds between the component parts become stronger and stronger until what comes out is something very different than what went in.



FW Nick Driedger in Edmonton. Photo: Diane Krauthamer

Well, I think it goes without saying that as one of the oldest, un-reconstituted revolutionary organizations in North America, we understand time.

If there is one thing we know as Wobblies it is heat, heat from the state, heat from our bosses and heat from a culture that rewards kissing ass over standing up for others.

If there is one other thing we know as Wobblies it is pressure. The pressure of loved ones getting injured at work, the pressure of making ends meet, and the pressure of making a union that conforms and bargains within the constraints that the bosses and mainstream unions say legitimate unions accept willingly.

Now I just want to start wrapping up this introduction to this weekend by saying one last thing. A revolutionary union is not different just because it preaches a revolutionary message. As a revolutionary union we need to represent something different. This means we don't just talk differently, it means we must act differently. We won't always get this right but it needs to be our goal.

As many of you know these conventions are a lot of work, but the face-to-face contact and the experiences we will gain over the weekend by sharing victories and trading arguments are the foundation of a working-class democracy. This democracy is what will form the structure of the new society within the shell of the old, as the old saying goes.

So, one more time, I would like to thank all of you for making this long trip out to Edmonton. It means a lot to us because we know you being here means a lot to you and we are honored to host you in our homes and in our city this weekend.

## Traitors To The Ruling Class

By Jon Hochschartner

There are folks out there who are sympathetic to socialist ideas, but because of their class origins they are unsure if there is a place in the movement for them. Maybe they were born into families of small or large-scale capitalists. Maybe, like me, they were born into comparative privilege but don't fit quite so neatly into the class divisions emphasized by socialists.

For these people, it's sometimes helpful to learn of influential anti-capitalists who betrayed their economic interests on behalf of revolutionary workers. To that end, I will highlight two socialists of different tendencies, Frederick Engels and Peter Kropotkin, whose treason to the exploitive classes was particularly dramatic.

Many are familiar with Engels as the collaborator of Karl Marx, the preeminent communist who wrote "Capital." Fewer may be aware that Engels, while striving for working-class revolution, was himself a capitalist. His father owned textile operations in both Germany and England. Engels managed a family mill in Manchester.

As part-owner of the mill, according to historian Mike Dash, he eventually received a 7.5 percent share in Ermen & Engels' rising profits, earning £263 in 1855 and as much as £1,080 in 1859—the latter a sum worth around \$168,000 today.

Engels used his fortune to bankroll

radical causes and support revolutionaries, such as his close friend Marx.

Even before he became relatively wealthy, Dash continues, Engels frequently sent Marx as much as £50 a year—equivalent to around \$7,500 now, and about one-third of the annual allowance he received from his parents.

However necessary his income might have been to finance the work of Marx and others, Engels was clearly a reluctant business owner. His office duties encroached on his socialist activism and writing.

Besides the opportunity costs involved, Engels loathed the position simply as a way to spend his time. According to biographer Tristram Hunt, Engels' letters include frequent references to accursed commerce and filthy commerce. Writing to Marx, Engels confessed, "I am bored to death here." Of course Engels was aware his occupation would also undermine his political arguments.

"You wait and see," Hunt quotes him telling Marx, "the louts will be saying, 'what's that Engels after, how can he speak in our name and tell us what to do, the fellow's up there in Manchester exploiting the workers, etc.' To be sure, I don't give a damn about it now, but it's bound to come."

Peter Kropotkin, the influential anarcho-communist who spent years in prison

Chapter 68

Summer School

Women workers with a yearn to know more about the world than the daily grind could tell them got a chance to broaden their horizons in 1921 with the establishment of a Summer School for Working Women in Industry at Bryn Mawr College in Bryn Mawr, Pa. Both the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) and the Labor Department's Women's Bureau had a role in setting up the school, which had some 100 participants each year in its eight-week courses.

Half the school's directors were college people, the other half labor leaders, a proposition backed by the student-workers. The courses stressed basic college education, although the students, as well as the WTUL and unions, insisted on discussion of economic issues. Among the instructors at Bryn Mawr's workers' school was Esther Peterson, later Assistant Secretary of Labor in the Kennedy Administration.

At the time, Bryn Mawr did not accept blacks as students. The women workers attending the summer school successfully overcame the opposition of the college president, and black working women were admitted. At first, blacks were segregated in a separate hall, but the students prevailed in their insistence on integration, too.

Many employers refused to give women time off to attend the school, so some quit their jobs in order to participate.

"The women workers who attended Bryn Mawr Summer School became leaders in their communities when they returned home, and many of them were instrumental in establishing evening classes for working women in their home communities," says historian Philip Foner. "For 15 years the Bryn Mawr School was a leadership center for working women."

Graphic: Mike Konopacki

for his activism, was born into the Russian aristocracy. In addition to huge landholdings, his father owned approximately 1,200 serfs.

Kropotkin's ancestors had been grand princes of Smolensk in medieval Russia, descended from a branch of the Rurik clan, which had ruled in Muscovy before the advent of the Romanovs, wrote Paul Avrich.

According to writer Roger N. Baldwin, at age 12 Kropotkin stopped using his noble title after being exposed to republican thought, and even rebuked his friends, when they so referred to him.

In his memoir, Kropotkin described his lavish upbringing with no small amount of sarcasm: "We were a family of eight, occasionally of ten or twelve; but fifty servants at Moscow, and half as many more in the country, were considered not one too many," Kropotkin wrote. "Four coachmen to attend a dozen horses, three cooks for the masters and two more for the servants, a dozen men to wait upon us at

dinner-time...and girls innumerable in the maid-servants' room, how could anyone do with less than this?"

After reading about the class background of Engels and Kropotkin, who both made enormous contributions to their respective socialist tendencies, one hopes that those, whose families belong to either the exploitive classes or comparatively privileged economic groups that are less clearly delineated in anti-capitalist theory, who are flirting with radicalism, will not feel their origins bar them from working for a better world.

Those in the socialist movement from the lower rungs of the capitalist system will be understandably suspicious of the sincerity of better-off comrades. In fact, the latter might have to go to greater lengths to prove their commitment to working-class liberation.

But the trust and respect of the former can be earned, as shown by Engels and Kropotkin.



Wobbly & North American News  
Fired Palermo's Pizza Workers Win Compensation

By John Kalwaic

On Sept. 13, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) ruled in favor of the Palermo's Pizza workers, in Milwaukee, Wis. These workers were fired for trying to unionize and for walking out over unsafe conditions in May 2012 (see "Milwaukee Pizza Factory Workers Strike," September 2012 *IW*, page 1 & 7). They had organized as the independent Palermo's Workers Union to stand up to unsafe working conditions that cost one worker three fingers. The workers have won more than \$106,000 in back pay, and



Graphic: sliceofjustice.com

four of the seven fired employees also got their jobs back due to illegal terminations, which resulted from "threats, surveillance, and harassment of union supporters," according to SliceofJustice.com.

With files from SliceOfJustice.com.

Wobblies Picket In Scotland



Wobblies and local activists participate in a "Walk of Shame" picket at Burtons Store on Sauchiehall Street in Glasgow on July 13. Photo: Red Dwarf

Giant Eagle Workers Need Strike Support System

By Kenneth Miller

The United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 23 has two Giant Eagle contracts (a Pittsburgh-based supermarket): one for the meat department and one for the grocery department, that expire at the end of June 2014. No, we cannot take whatever the company decides to offer and we cannot bargain selfishly, it is not about how the contract affects you, we are bargaining for all Giant Eagle employees, in the union stores and the non-union stores, and retail workers everywhere.

Giant Eagle is a double-breasted company, using its huge non-union footprint to bargain against us, the workers. There are at least two other union contracts at the OK Grocery Warehouse, where the Giant Eagle warehouse workers and truckers are represented by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Locals 249 and 636. I don't think these contracts even have the same expiration date as ours.

Giant Eagle knows more about each of us than we feel comfortable admitting. The company has a world class human resources (HR) department and accompanying surveillance system. What do we know about ourselves that Giant Eagle does not know?

We have rights at work that Walmart workers don't have. Those rights are important to me. They mean we can talk union all night long at work. They mean we can protect our free speech with the grievance procedure all the way up through binding arbitration. They mean we can organize against police brutality and for public transportation while we are at work.

We cannot let ourselves be divided by age or race or nationality. Those are all strengths of our union and we can experience the strength of that diversity instead of allowing ourselves to be overwhelmed by it. We can try extra hard to understand and accept and celebrate one another.

I'm asking our UFCW reps for more information about the history at Giant Eagle—our history of collective bargaining and organizing. We need to compare our wages and benefits to the non-union Giant Eagle stores and to Walmart. We all need to understand how the contract treats older workers differently than younger workers and bargain up to the



Photo: wikimedia.org

higher standard. There cannot be more than a dozen or so retail contracts like ours in the country. This company and each workplace have to be charted. We all need to be actively sharing large amounts of information with one another. We need maps and graphs to explain this to one another; we have to see ourselves in context. We have to free ourselves from this particular moment in each of our individual lives and see each other as human beings. We are going to have to develop some skills that we did not previously know we each had.

Don't ever fill out that form in the HR department called "Voluntary Resignation." Use those Weingarten Rights at every opportunity.

I hand out copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and invite my co-workers to consider it a supplement to their union contract. It is, and it does not expire. In June of next year, when everyone is in the final throws of negotiations, we'll have to ask one another if we have indeed created a strike support network for every single Giant Eagle family and remind ourselves that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights does not expire.

One of my co-workers suggested that we should not talk about religion or politics at work. I think we should talk to one another about all kinds of things, like free people talk, and be kind to one another.

We have to start asking for community support now. What the community people who support us can do is join a strike support committee and adopt a Giant Eagle family. If we cannot imagine striking, if we are not ready to strike, to stop trucks, to let the milk spoil, then there is nothing for us. We are deciding tonight, at work, by talking and encouraging one another. We are going to be ready. We should ask the elected union officers of UFCW Local 23 to please seek strike authorization through a mail-in ballot repeatedly.

Student Walkout Supports Teachers In Santa Cruz



Students walk out of Santa Cruz High School. Photo: Barry Kirschen, YouTube.com

By John Kalwaic

Between 150 and 200 students walked out of Santa Cruz High School in California in support of their teachers on Sept. 26. Teachers are in a dispute with the school district over retroactive raises. They are seeking more than the 1 percent offered to them by the district administration in the 2012-2013 school year. The district now has a surplus in revenue and there are disputes as to how much the teachers will get.

The walkout at Santa Cruz was inspired by a neighboring high school student walk out. On Sept. 19, around 350 students at Pajaro Valley High School also walked out of their school district to support their teachers who were engaged in a similar dispute.

The teachers and the union leadership denied any responsibility for the walkout, but welcomed the support.

With files from the Santa Cruz Sentinel.

IWW Quote Of The Month



Photo: libcom.org

Workers' barricade during the Spanish Civil War.

"As my 67th birthday approaches this March, I am grateful for my age. Before it was too late I met Wobblies from the decade before the Great War, the 1930s Communists who gave their all for the CIO [Congress of Industrial Organizations], fought fascism at home and the valleys and mountains of Spain. They were called

Anarchists, Communists and Socialists and they were right. These wonderful ancient ones are all gone now, but they live, sing, clasped hands and dance deep in my soul and light up my heart with their warmth. They changed me and molded what I am today. These simple and beautiful ancient women and men they will always be my culture, my religion and my life's song."

— FW Michael Francisconi, a faculty member at the University of Montana Western, in Dillon

Just Say "No" To Sweatshop Baseball

By Kenneth Miller

The Pittsburgh Pirates are still losers and the playoffs are upon us. At the Giant Eagle grocery store and almost every other workplace in the region, uniform policies have been suspended and employees are being asked to support the team by wearing baseball shirts. The region is sprinkled with lawyers from Major League Baseball Properties doing spot checks and threatening lawsuits against anyone violating their copyright.

When you walk into the Gear Shop at PNC Park, the first shirt says, "We play for October" and the tag says, "Made in Bangor, PA" by Majestic. The Pittsburgh Pirates' talking points about sweatshops and social responsibility are exactly the same as Majestic's. The group of UNITE HERE workers in Bangor, Pa. have been told that they can keep their jobs as long as they allow themselves to be used as public relations talking points for baseball apparel production. They are using a few union shops to market the whole spectrum of Major League sweatshop apparel. This is what "union label" contract language has been reduced to.

The Pittsburgh Pirates and the news media are explaining the economic benefits of a winning baseball team endlessly. They never seem to calculate the cost of PNC Park, and the requests of the Pirates for more city services and stadium work from the Sports and Exhibition Authority are endless.

I bet against the Pirates finishing above .500 again this year (winning the same amount of games that they lose). That means I am out an additional \$150. That is my last bet on sports, ever. I could



Graphic: Upstate New York IWW

have paid my IWW dues for a year with that money.

Bill Peduto, the Democratic Party candidate for our mayoral election in November, was on his way down to the Labor Day parade while I was handing copies of the *Black Cat Moan*, the Upstate New York IWW's anti-sweatshop newsletter, to the labor council folks. He asked if I was marching with the United Steelworkers (USW) and Service Employees International Union (SEIU). I said to him, "You'd better remember that in Pittsburgh, human rights really are more important than sports! And don't forget your open process for board appointments; I want my crack at the Sports and Exhibition Authority. You've got one schmooze fest with the Pirates after the next. Now is the time to hammer on sweatshops."





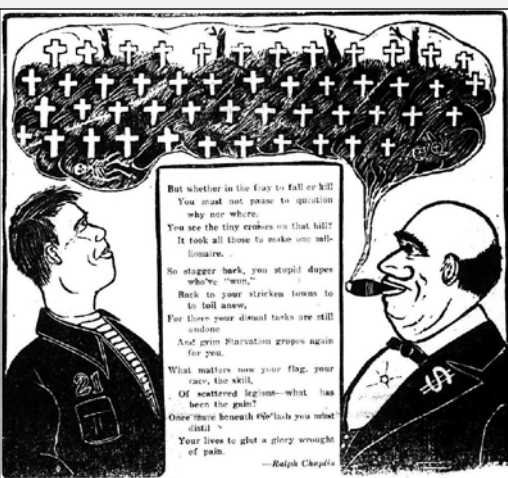


In November We Remember

In November Who Do We Remember?

Feb. 21, 1917 Martinas Petkevicia  
March 1917 Louis Jalleani  
June 4, 1917 J.G. McLeod  
June 10, 1917 James Fox  
June 12, 1917 Nick Luona  
June 26, 1917 Pete Jurcich  
July 12, 1917 James H. Brew  
July 18, 1917 Karl August Ialminen  
July 22, 1917 John Cline  
Aug. 1, 1917 Frank H. Little  
Sept. 6, 1917 Robert Williams  
Sept. 7, 1917 Jalmer Holn  
Sept. 8, 1917 Unidentified IWW  
Sept. 8, 1917 Thomas Simon  
Sept. 8, 1917 Mrs. Thomas Simon  
Sept. 12, 1917 J.J. Fricker  
Oct. 4, 1917 Verner Nelson  
Nov. 15, 1917 Unidentified IWW  
Nov. 27, 1917 Mike Jzlik  
Nov. 28, 1917 Kaisa Kreetta Jackson  
1917 “IWW John”  
1918/1920 Unknown numbers  
Feb. 18, 1918 Lyle Clifford Donaldson  
April 9, 1918 Nestor Junkala  
April 15, 1918 John S. Walker  
April 16, 1918 Pasquale Marsico  
July 12, 1918 Joseph Schoon  
Sept. 7, 1918 Fred Warn  
Sept. 24, 1918 Kosti “Gus” Kangas  
Oct. 22, 1918 Edward Burns  
Oct. 27, 1918 James Nolan  
Oct. 28, 1918 Robert James Blaine  
Oct. 30, 1918 Henry C. Evans  
Oct. 31, 1918 James Gossard  
Nov. 1, 1918 Frank Travis  
Dec. 2, 1918 Otto Frederick Schmidt  
Feb. 20, 1919 James Patterson  
Feb. 24, 1919 Unidentified IWW  
Feb. 28, 1919 James Pargin  
Feb. 28, 1919 Eustacio Di Chellis,  
Feb. 28, 1919 Silvario Di Chellis,  
Feb. 28, 1919 Dominic Columbo  
April 28, 1919 Michael Palombo  
June 18, 1919 Ten unidentified Mexican IWWs  
July 8, 1919 Joseph “J.A.” Kelly  
July 9, 1919 John Washington Cochron  
Sept. 7, 1919 Max Rosenstein  
Sept. 18, 1919 Carl Swenson  
Sept. 18, 1919 Carl Swanson  
Nov. 11, 1919 Nathan Wesley Everest  
November 1919 Two unidentified IWWs  
Nov. 16, 1919 James Anderson  
Nov. 16, 1919 Unidentified IWW  
April 21, 1920 Thomas W. Manning  
April 22, 1920 Hugh B. Haran  
May 19, 1920 John McCarthy  
May 24, 1920 Ole Hansen  
June 3, 1920 Ernest Holman  
June 10, 1920 Stanley Pavzlack  
June 27, 1920 G. Stain  
June 1920 Two innocent bystanders  
Sept. 29, 1920 José Domingo Gómez Rojas  
Oct. 2, 1920 Joe Bagley  
March 3, 1921 B.F. or F.B. “Whitey” Clark  
March 7-17, 1921 Unknown numbers  
May 13, 1921 I. Lelmul (sic)  
July 19, 1921 Arthur McDonald  
Nov. 6, 1921 William B. Bousfleid  
Dec. 16, 1921 William Kelly (a.k.a. “Sparks”)  
Dec. 3, 1921 Tomas Martinez  
June 16, 1922 Paul Bernarcek (Bednartik)  
Nov. 21, 1922 Ricardo Flores Magón  
Dec. 10, 1922 C.J. Dille  
Feb. 23, 1923 Frank Hastings  
May 3, 1923 William J. McKay  
June 30, 1923 James Holland  
June 30, 1923 Two unidentified IWWs  
July 1923 William “Big Heavy” Sanders  
Aug. 9, 1923 Abraham Shocker  
March 7, 1924 William Weyh  
May 12, 1924 Joe Coya  
Aug. 1, 1924 Lisa “Lizzie” Sundstedt  
Aug. 15, 1924 Olin B. Anderson  
Dec. 13, 1924 J.A. Teal  
April 27, 1926 Primo Tapia de la Cruz  
1926 Unknown numbers  
Nov. 21, 1927 Jerry Davis  
Nov. 21, 1927 John Eastenes  
Nov. 21, 1927 Rene Jacques  
Nov. 21, 1927 Frank Kovitch  
Nov. 21, 1927 Nick Spanudakhis  
Nov. 28, 1927 Mike Vidovitch  
Jan. 12, 1928 Klementi Chavez  
Jan. 12, 1928 Celestinio Marchtinez  
Aug. 13, 1930 James McNerney  
Oct. 28, 1930 Bert Banker  
March 14, 1931 Byron Kitto  
March 20, 1932 Elmer Stuart Smith  
May 16, 1932 Jack Vanetter  
1933 Unknown numbers  
Sept. 4, 1935 Arthur G. Ross  
Nov. 29, 1936 Blackie Hyman  
Dec. 15, 1936 John A. “Johnny” Kane Jr.  
1936 -1939 Unknown numbers of IWWs  
May 30, 1937 Konrad (Conrad) Hill  
June 8, 1937 Mike Stetz  
June 16, 1937 Lou Walsh  
1936 -1939 Vladimir Sergeyevich “Bill” Shatov  
September 1938 Ivan Silverman  
September 1938 Two unidentified IWWs  
Nov. 4, 1940 Dalton Lee Gentry  
Sept. 3, 1942 John “Jack” Beavert  
1947-1948 George Andreychine  
Sept. 23, 1973 Frank Terrugi  
September 1974 Frank Gould

Shot by the police while on a solidarity strike. Philadelphia, Pa.  
IWW organizer shot by police during a “riot” at Niagara Falls, N.Y.  
Never regained consciousness after being found injured. Aberdeen, Wash.  
Shot by railroad guards during an alleged gun fight. Los Angeles, Calif.  
Shot in the back by the police while being arrested as a slacker. Virginia, Minn.  
Decomposed remains discovered. Newspaper puts blame on his FWs. Bard, S.D.  
Shot resisting arrest during the Bisbee deportation. Bisbee, Ariz.  
His decomposed remains were found in the woods near Homer’s Gap, Pa.  
His body was found beside railroad tracks. Allegedly “hit by a train.” Warren, Ill.  
Brutally mistreated and lynched by vigilantes. Butte, Mont.  
Shot by railroad detectives for allegedly trying to hold them up. Haggart, N.D.  
Shot by a farm laborer allegedly after having words. Fargo, N.D.  
Shot during a shootout while “boxcar organizing.” Glencoe, Minn.  
Killed during a draft resistance fight. Hawkinsville, Ga.  
Killed during a draft resistance fight. Hawkinsville, Ga.  
Allegedly dived head first from a bridge. Carlton, Ore.  
Shot twice in the chest for calling a scab a scab. Butte, Mont.  
Shot through the heart by the police chief of Sapula, Okla.  
Shot-gunned for “cursing the government.” Modoc, Ohio.  
An Innocent bystander shot during the harassment of IWWs. Red Lodge, Mont.  
Found dead one morning after soapboxing. Not buried until 1942. Sapula, Okla.  
Died fighting Don Cossacks that were loyal to the Tsar Nicholas II. Russia.  
Shot when mistaken for an IWW by vigilantes. Hillsboro, Ill.  
Allegedly strangled himself while in jail. Marshfield, Ore.  
Murdered by a retired U.S. Navy Captain for slandering the flag. Honolulu, Hawaii  
Shot while collecting for the IWW Defense Fund. Old Forge, Pa.  
Railroaded and hung for the 1st degree murder of a cop. Folsom Prison, Calif.  
Shot in the head for belonging to the IWW. Isabella, Calif.  
Shot by the city police reportedly in self-defense. Butte, Mont.  
Succumbed to influenza while in jail awaiting trial. Sacramento, Calif.  
Died from tuberculosis while in jail awaiting trial. Sacramento, Calif.  
Succumbed to influenza while in jail awaiting trial. Sacramento, Calif.  
Succumbed to influenza while in jail awaiting trial. Sacramento, Calif.  
Succumbed to influenza while in jail awaiting trial. Wichita, Kan.  
Succumbed to influenza while in jail awaiting trial. Sacramento, Calif.  
Died from inhumane treatment while awaiting deportation. Walla Walla Jail, Wash.  
Alleged to have been shot by FWs for squealing on a bomb plot. Chicago, Ill.  
Found dead in the snow after being driven from an oil camp. Riverton, Wyo.  
Died in a “sabotage” explosion. IWW scapegoated as cause. Franklin, Mass.  
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Died in a “sabotage” explosion. IWW scapegoated as cause. Franklin, Mass.  
Died in a “sabotage” explosion. IWW scapegoated as cause. Franklin, Mass.  
Stabbed 17 times and left laying on railroad tracks. Canton, Ohio.  
Shot by Mexican federal troops during a labour dispute, Tampico, Mexico.  
Died of ill treatment during multiple incarcerations. Seattle, Wash.  
Allegedly committed suicide by drinking poison. Wenatchee, Wash.  
Found dead having been shot twice in the head. Carrington, N.D.  
Alleged to have taken his own life by strangulation while in jail. Spokane, Wash.  
2nd alleged suicide by strangulation in jail reported the same day. Spokane, Wash.  
Lynched by the good citizens and vigilantes of Centralia, Wash.  
Lynched by vigilantes and found hanging in the forest around Centralia, Wash.  
Shot in the head after an unsuccessful attempt to lynch him. Moberly, Mo.  
Believed to have drowned while trying to escape from being lynched. Moberly, Mo.  
Shot in the back while on picket duty by a Neversweat Mine guard. Butte, Mont.  
Accidentally shot while guarding the *Daily Bulletin* office. Butte, Mont.  
Shot by a guard on April 21 at the Neversweat Mine. Butte, Mont.  
Alleged suicide. Found shot in the head with revolver at his side. Oakville, Wash.  
Depression following being beaten by thugs led to his suicide. New York, N.Y.  
Shot by a scab on a shooting rampage during a Longshore Strike. Philadelphia, Pa.  
Shot by a scab during a Longshore Strike. Philadelphia, Pa.  
Shot by armed scabs during a Longshore Strike. Philadelphia, Pa.  
Tortured and driven mad then died of untreated meningitis. Santiago, Chile.  
Shot by a railroad special agent for “stealing a ride.” Hannaford, N.D.  
Succumbed to diseases incurred while being jailed in Fresno. Visalia, Calif.  
Died during the defense of Kronstadt against the Bolsheviks. Kotlin Island, Russia.  
Found in his hotel room shot in the head. Alleged suicide. Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.  
Alleged to have committed suicide through self-crucifixion. Superior, Wis.  
Mysteriously shot in the head and found lying in a pasture. Ft. Worth, Texas.  
Found with his head smashed in with a rock. Colorado Springs, Colo.  
Lack of medical care from an operation at Leavenworth. Guadalajara, Mexico.  
Shot during confrontation with a fink. Cherokee, Okla.  
Died while serving 20 years for “obstructing the war effort.” Ft. Leavenworth, Kan.  
Discovered beaten to death in a boxcar. San Jose, Calif.  
Died a class war prisoner at Walla Walla State Penitentiary, Wash.  
Shot in the back by a mill watchman while on the picket line. Aberdeen, Wash.  
Disappeared after being turned over to the KKK by the police. Port Arthur, Texas.  
Disappeared after being turned over to the KKK by the police. Port Arthur, Texas.  
Shot by a hi-jack while riding a train near Elko, Nev.  
Hung himself after 43 days of solitary confinement at San Quentin, Calif.  
Untreated tuberculosis contracted at Leavenworth. Tucson, Ariz.  
Died of pneumonia due to ill treatment. Sacramento County Jail, Calif.  
Died from a severe beating during a KKK attack on the San Pedro, Calif. IWW Hall.  
Mental breakdown & tuberculosis contracted awaiting trial in Cook County Jail, Chicago, Ill.  
Accused of attempted auto theft. Shot three times by a policeman. Calexico, Calif  
Captured, tortured, and executed by Mexican federales. Michoacán, Mexico.  
The IWW states that members were murdered in the Kuzbas Colony, Russia.  
Beaten to death after being wounded. Columbine Mine Strike. Serene, Colo.  
Machine gunned by police during the Columbine Mine Strike. Serene, Colo.  
Machine gunned by police during the Columbine Mine Strike. Serene, Colo.  
Shot at close range after being wounded. Columbine Mine Strike. Serene, Colo.  
Machine gunned by police during the Columbine Mine Strike. Serene, Colo.  
Machine gunned by police during the Columbine Mine Strike. Serene, Colo.  
Shot by the Colorado State Police in front of the IWW Hall. Walsenburg, Colo.  
Shot by the Colorado State Police in front of the IWW Hall. Walsenburg, Colo.  
Centralia defendant died while in prison. Walla Walla State Penitentiary, Wash.  
Succumbed to broken health incurred while in prison. Aberdeen, Wash.  
Succumbed to tuberculosis contracted during the Colo. Coal Strike. San Francisco, Calif.  
Selfishly ruined his health and died fighting to free the Centralia IWW prisoners.  
Gunned down by a gun-thug during a drive by shooting. Evarts, Ky.  
IWW dockworkers murdered by Nazis in Stettin and Hamburg, Germany.  
Attacked by a vigilante and died from severe head injuries. San Pedro, Calif.  
Killed during a rank and file waterfront solidarity strike. Philadelphia, Pa.  
Shot by a corrupt International Seamen’s Union agent during the Seamen’s Strike of 1936. Houston, Texas.  
Died fighting fascists while serving with the Republican forces in Spain.  
Succumbed to injuries sustained in the 1936 Pierce, Idaho ambush. Lewiston, Idaho.  
Succumbed to injuries sustained in the 1936 Pierce, Idaho ambush. Orofino, Idaho.  
Died while fighting fascists with the Catalanian Militia. Aragon front, Spain.  
Sent to Siberia and disappeared during the Great Purge of 1936-39. Soviet Union.  
Forced by commies onto a bare field to face fascist machine guns. Spain.  
Forced by commies onto a bare field to face fascist machine guns. Spain.  
Succumbed to injuries sustained in the 1936 Pierce, Idaho ambush. Monroe, La.  
Driven insane at San Quentin in 1928. Died in a state asylum. Talmage, Calif.  
After 18 years in Siberia he was eliminated during the 1947-48 purge in Bulgaria.  
Shot by the Chilean military during the Pinochet- led coup d’état. Santiago, Chile.  
Disappeared while covering the Moro guerrilla rebellion. Mindanao, Philippines.



“Crosses on the Hill,” May 6, 1939 issue of the *IW*.

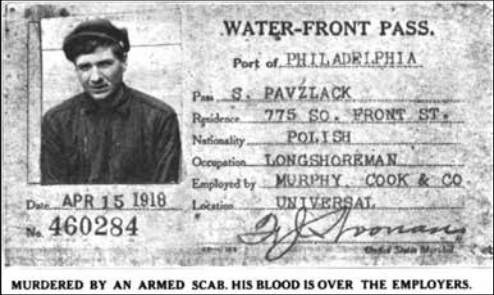
**Self-Confessed  
I. W. W. Is Shot,  
Killed in North**

(Associated Press)  
**FRESNO, Sept. 8.—Fred Warn** was shot and killed by John.. Hopper at Isabella, 120 mles southeast of here Saturday night, when Warn said he was an I. W. W. and he did not “care who knew it or what hap-pened,” according to the sheriff of Kern county. Hopper drew a revolver and shot him through the head. Hopper was arrested.

*San Diego Union-Tribune,*  
Sept. 9, 1918.

**I. W. W. MEMBER  
SLAIN AT CANTON  
Body, With 17 Wounds,  
Found on Track.**

*Cleveland Plain Dealer,* April 19, 1919.



*One Big Union Monthly,* July 1929.

**GUARD KILLS  
STRIKING  
‘WOBBLY’**

(Associated Press)  
**ABERDEEN, Wash., ‘May 3. —** William McKay, 46, I.W.W. logger, out on strike, was shot and fatally wounded this morning by E. I. Green, 67, watchman at the Bay City lumber mill, South Aberdeen. McKay died an hour after the shooting.

*San Diego Evening Tribune,*  
May 3, 1923.

**Convicted I. W. W. Is  
Suicide In His Cell**

**SAN QUENTIN PENITENTI-ARY, Aug. 9 — Abe Shocker, convicted in Los Angeles under the state criminal syndicalism law, committed suicide in his cell last night. His body was found hanging by a rope made of bed sheets. He left a note asking that the blame for “everything the I. W. W. had done in Los Angeles” be placed on his shoulders.**

*Riverside Daily Press,* Aug. 9, 1923.

**IVAN SILVERMAN,  
TWO OTHER WOBS,  
KILLED IN SPAIN**

**NEW YORK—It has been reported** here that Ivan Silverman, member of the IU 810—I.W.W., and two oth-er members of the I.W.W. whose names are unknown, were killed in Spain while at the front lines. Sil-verman went over with the Abraham Lincoln Brigade about seven months ago. He went over there with the knowledge that the A.L.B. was Com-mie dominated but at that time it seemed to be the only way of get-ting over there fast. Evidently Sil-verman voiced his disapproval of the Commie tactics as he and the other two Wobblies were ordered onto a

*Industrial Worker,*  
Sept. 10, 1938.

**Errors and omissions are solely the responsibility of the compiler FW DJ Alperovitz, x364631. Images from the University of Washington Suzzallo Library Newspaper Collection, the Oregon Historical Society Newspaper Collection and Genealogybank.**



In November We Remember

Re-Remembering The Mexican IWW

By J. Pierce

The history we tell ourselves about the Mexican IWW is quite brief. Two events are most often repeated that carry the IWW banner: the Insurrectos that invaded Baja, Calif., and proclaimed the Tijuana Commune in 1911, which included amongst them Joe Hill; and the “Tampico General Strike,” of which most of us know very little.

Additionally, we hold up Ricardo Flores Magon, his brother Enrique and the Partido Liberal Mexicana (PLM) as somewhat of a stand-in for the Mexican IWW. “Well, the IWW and the PLM had many dual members and they were anarchists so they were like the IWW in Mexico, basically,” we say to those who inquire.

However, it was only while I was reading Norman Caulfield’s book, “Mexican Workers and the State: From the Porfiriato to NAFTA,” did this general sketch of the Mexican IWW come into full view as wholly inadequate. This book has been sold by the IWW’s Literature Department for nigh on 10 years, yet I suspect that many of us have never read it. “Mexican Workers” is a treasure trove of research into the extensive IWW organizing and fighting all over Mexico and the borderlands from the 1900s to the 1920s.

It is true that the IWW in Mexico and the American Southwest was intimately linked with our allies, the PLM and the Casa del Obrero Munidal (COM), as well as with the Confederación General del Trabajo (CGT) and the communists at times. However, it is not necessary to conflate these organizations; Los Trabajadores Industriales del Mundo (the Spanish translation of “Industrial Workers of the World”) has its own wealth of history in Mexico. In particular, I would like to highlight the names of individual Mexican Wobblies so that we can research them and induct them into our IWW hall of fame, so to speak.

La Prensa del IWW Mexicana

There existed a bonafide IWW in Mexico and a constant flow of Mexican IWWs to and from the United States. These workers created fearless newspapers such as: *La Unión Industrial*, produced in Phoenix starting in 1909; *Huelga General*, out of Los Angeles in 1913-1914; *Solidaridad* and *Nueva Solidaridad*, from Chicago; and *El Obrero Industrial*, produced in Mexico City in 1919. These publications made their way all over Mexico. Caulfield’s research found mention of these IWW newspapers in complaints of government agents



Graphic: “Mexican Workers & the State”

Tamaulipas

Oil and marine transport workers in Tampico were constantly engaged in struggle under the banner of the IWW throughout the 1910s and early 1920s. Most likely, the IWW idea was brought to the Tampico area by sailors from the Marine Transport Workers’ Industrial Union (IU). FWs Pedro Coria (from Arizona), Ramón Parreno, Francisco Gamallo, Rafael Zamudio, Victor Martinez and Jose Zapata are all names that emerged from the constant strikes and agitation in Tampico.

In April 1916, mass protests erupted to improve working and living conditions led by the IWW and COM members. These demonstrations turned into a strike that shut down most of the oil companies and

public facilities in the area. A year later, in April 1917, another IWW-led strike broke out against El Aguila, an oil company. In the ensuing months, the El Aguila strike spread to at least six other petroleum companies as well as to long-shore workers and boatmen, resulting in a general strike of 15,000 workers and halting all oil production. The strike was violently repressed but another large strike in November 1917 was launched after the workers regrouped. In July 1920, the IWW along with the COM fomented yet another general strike of 10,000 oil workers.

Coahuila, Monterrey and Sonora

FW Ramon Cornejo organized textile workers in Villa de Santiago, Monterrey. Andres de León was one IWW leader active in Torreón, Coahuila, where the IWW is reported to have had five branches of metal workers in 1912. One name to emerge from the strikes in Cananea, Sonora, was IWW organizer Antonio C. Ramirez who helped lead the three-week strike of October 1920 against the Cananea Consolidated Copper Company.

Mexico City

With their headquarters established in Mexico City in 1919, Jose Refugio Rodriguez and Wenceslao Espinoza were two of the Mexico City IWWs who published *El Obrero Industrial* and attempted to establish a national presence for the IWW. Other names associated with the IWW in Mexico, perhaps in Mexico City, included Walter Fortmeyer and A. Sortmary, who were both deported as the Mexican government tried to crack down on foreign agitators, and Benito Pavon, Edmundo Ibarra and Pablo Olo.

Chihuahua

Five thousand smelter workers struck at Santa Eulalia in Chihuahua in 1924. Three of the IWW strike leaders there were Francisco Morales, Enrique Castillo and Francisco Nuñez. At Los Lamentos, Marcos Martinez, Jesus Gonzalez, Basilio Pedroza and Pascual Diaz, who was the branch secretary for Metal Mine Workers IU 210, were all thrust into leadership during strike waves there. During strikes in Santa Barbara, Chihuahua, FWs Eduardo Modesto Flores, Alfredo Lugo and Albert Fodor were all active organizers.

Many of the radical miners in Chihuahua were those who had worked higher-paying jobs in Arizona and had joined the IWW there. The mining bosses complained that “Arizona Mexicans” were “over-running” the mining districts of Chihuahua, spreading their radical ideas of higher wages, expropriation of foreign companies, and workers’ self-management.

Arizona

As the Western Federation of Miners drifted to the right politically (as did its successor, the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers), Mexican American miners in Arizona’s copper mines were leaving these unions and joining the IWW’s Metal Mine Workers’ IU, at that time called Local No. 800. By 1917, the IWW claimed a membership of



Enrique Flores Magón with IWW members and family, Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, 1923.

Photo: Labor Archives of Washington State, University of Washington

5,000 Mexican American miners. Mexican American miners helped established IWW branches in Bisbee, Jerome and Ajo. Mexicans were the core leadership of the IWW miners in Globe-Miami, which claimed 700 dues-paying members including Italians, Finns, Poles and Anglos and would gather on “Wobbly Hill” during strikes and demonstrations.

Phoenix Local No. 272 produced leaders such as Guillermo Velarde, Javier Buitimea, Jacinto Barrera and branch secretary Rosendo A. Dorame. In the mining towns, Wobblies Julio Blanco and José Rodríguez were active in Globe-Miami, and Abelardo Ordoñez was active in Morenci. FW Fernando Palomares, a Mayo Indian and a Magonista, participated in both the El Paso smelter strike as well as the Bisbee copper strike of 1917 that lead to the infamous Bisbee Deportation.

California

Los Angeles Local No. 602 has an extensive Mexican IWW history, rich enough to warrant further articles. This branch was a swarming beehive of revolutionary activity surrounding Mexico and the borderlands. It was in Los Angeles where PLMistas and IWWs prepared for the invasion of Baja, Calif., and printed a wealth of agitational material that helped spur the Mexican Revolution.

In addition to *Huelga General*, workers relied upon FW Aurelio Azuara’s unofficial paper, *El Re-*

*belde*, to bring them IWW news coverage. Other IWW organizers associated with the Los Angeles branch include Primo Tapia de la Cruz, Julio Castillo, Tomás Martínez, B. Negreira, Feliz Cedeño, Manuel Rey and Liunitas Gutiérrez.

Nunca Olvidamos

The goal of this article is to highlight the names of individual Wobblies who organized and fought on both sides of the border and to help bring this history into our contemporary recollection. Further articles and research will help us incorporate these Wobblies and their rich history into our work. For starters, let’s remember one Wobbly who we lost too early: FW Marcos Martinez, an IWW organizer, killed by police as they shot into an open air meeting of striking copper miners on June 30, 1924, in Los Lamentos, Chihuahua, Mexico.

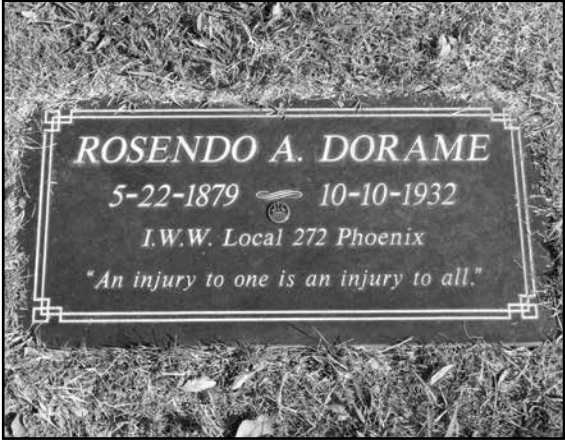


Photo: theblackrosesociety.wordpress.com  
Gravestone of Rosendo A. Dorame in Evergreen Cemetery in Los Angeles.



The Indiana IWW remembers the 100th anniversary of the 1913 'Indianapolis Streetcar Strike' workers who died fighting for a better world.



In November We Remember

# IWW Members Who Fought In The Spanish Civil War

By Matt White

Not surprisingly, a number of Wobblies went to Spain to fight in the Spanish Civil War. Several served with the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT), while it appears the bulk served in the International Brigades. Wobblies such as Mike Raddock, Ray Steele and then-future *Industrial Worker* editor Pat Read acquired reputations as some of the finest soldiers in the 15th International Brigade. Records from the Spanish Civil War and 1930s IWW are incomplete, making it impossible to know with any certainty how many Wobblies went to Spain. I’ve discovered over 20 people who either listed themselves as Wobblies or who others remembered as Wobblies. Of that group of Wobblies, eight were killed in Spain and one died shortly after he returned from Spain from wounds he received there. For reasons unknown, the *Industrial Worker* never commemorated the deaths of five of the nine fellow workers listed here. So this November, 75 years since the last act of the Spanish Civil War, we remember.

**Heinrich Bortz.** According to his obituary in the Oct. 23, 1937 issue of the *Industrial Worker*: “Fellow worker Bortz was a German and belonged to the I.W.W. [sailors’] branch in Stettin.” The obituary related that the Nazis threw Bortz into a concentration camp. Bortz then escaped the camp and made his way to Denmark and then to Sweden. In Sweden he continued to be active in radical labor. In 1936 he traveled to Spain and joined the CNT’s Durruti International Battalion where he was killed in action.

**Ted Dickinson.** Dickinson joined the Australian IWW in 1923 and edited



The 15th International Brigade in 1937. Pat Read appears third from left. Photo: dlib.nyu.edu

the Australian IWW paper, *Direct Action*. Dickinson was jailed for his IWW activities. Dickinson went to England shortly after his release from prison in the late 1920s. Dickinson joined the British Battalion of the International Brigades and was second in command of the second company. In 1937, he was captured and executed by the fascists.

**Harry F. Owens.** Owens was an outspoken anarchist sailor who joined the IWW in 1921 after he became infuriated with the conduct of the International Seamen’s Union. Before Owens left for Spain, he helped lead an IWW strike against a ship carrying goods to the fascists in Spain. There is not too much information about Owens in Spain, but he was a member of the Lincoln Battalion and was killed sometime in mid-1937.

**Louis Rosenberg.** According to his death notice from the CNT, Louis Rosenberg was killed in action with the Durruti International Battalion of the 26th Division, on the Aragon front, June 16, 1937. Rosenberg was 24 years old and joined the IWW Industrial Union (IU) 120 Timber Workers at Port Arthur, Ontario. He took part in the Thunder Bay strike of 1934 and the Algoma District strike of 1935. His obituary mentions an unnamed Pennsylvania anarchist who was killed at the same time.

**Lawrence K. Ryan.** Ryan was the Las Vegas branch secretary in the early 1930s. In that role he would have been involved in the Boulder Dam organizing drive. Ryan was an early Lincoln Battalion volunteer who was severely wounded during the Feb. 27, 1937, attack at Jarama.

According to his friend D.P. Stephens, Ryan died a year later in Canada, probably related to his Jarama wound.

**Herbert Schlessinger.** In an interview, Schlessinger claimed to have been a liaison between the Sailors’ Union of the Pacific (SUP) and the IWW, which makes perfect sense as the SUP had an alliance with the IWW during the latter half of the 1930s into the 1940s. He was killed in action with Lincoln Battalion in the latter part of 1938.

**Ivan Alroy Silverman.** Silverman was a member of the IWW construction workers in Los Angeles. Silverman arrived in Spain during the latter half of 1937 and was a member of the Lincoln Battalion. Silverman was listed as killed at Gandesa in April 1938.

**Raymond Albert Steele.** Steele was another Wobbly seaman. According to Lincoln Battalion veteran Dave Smith, “Ray Steele always expounded on the superiority of direct action as a tactic.” Steele was fondly remembered as one of the best soldiers in the Lincoln Battalion and one of the best machine gunners of the Tom Mooney Machine Gun Company. According to International Brigades records, he was killed on July 15, 1937, during the Brunete campaign. There are several different versions of Steele’s death, but the consensus view is that he was killed by a sniper.

**Robert Charles Watts.** Watts was a Gulf port sailor when he volunteered for Spain. He claimed to have served in the Mexican Army in the 1920s. He served in the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion and was killed in action in late March or early April of 1938.

## This November We Remember Fellow Worker Helen Keller

By Raymond S. Solomon

In 1933, Helen Keller was so outraged by the severe persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany, and by Nazi book burnings, that she directed the following statement to the German Nazis:

*“Do not imagine that your barbarities to the Jews are unknown here. God sleepeth not, and He will visit His judgment on you.”*

Helen Keller resisted the prevalent bigotry against handicapped people. Blindness and deafness continue to carry a stigma. As we know, Helen Keller suffered from both. She demonstrated that blind and deaf people were hardly stupid, as was commonly believed. Helen Keller brought attention to the problems of the disabled. There are visual disabilities short of complete blindness. There are people with diminished vision, who are not blind. Many people with multiple sclerosis have diminished vision, especially in the right eye. Even now, many people are indifferent to their needs. There is still great discrimination against disabled workers, often, very unfortunately, by other workers.

Working-class people were and are not always free of religious and racial prejudice. In this regard, I would like to recall that Mike Quill, organizer and leader of New York City’s Transport Workers Union ruined his health fighting for his workers. He ultimately died as a result of his imprisonment for leading an “illegal” and unpopular strike in 1965. He also fought bigotry among his own union members, including, anti-Semitism and racism.

Helen Keller was a labor activist at a time when child labor was common in the United States as people worked 14 to 18 hours daily in mines, mills, logging camps, shipyards, sweatshops, restaurant kitchens and factories.

Many people also worked at subsistence farms as tenant farmers, migrant

farm workers and also as sharecroppers. Agricultural workers were not covered in the 1935 National Labor Relations Act (the Wagner Act). Many small independent farmers were also, in effect, wage workers for banks and the railroads.

Helen Keller joined, and was active in, the Industrial Workers of the World and the Socialist Party. She decried the divisions and bickering within the labor movement. When Wobbly leader Big Bill Haywood was expelled from the Socialist Party, she wrote:

*“Are we putting difference of party tactics before the desperate needs of the workers? While countless women and children are...ruining their bodies in long days of toil, we are fighting one another. Shame on us.”*

Howard Zinn wrote that at one point she decried voting, saying, “We have a choice between Tweedledum and Tweedledee.” Yet she fought for women’s suffrage. She was critical of those people who admired her as a deaf and blind person, who demonstrated what handicapped people could overcome and accomplish, but were critical of her activities on behalf of exploited workers and doubly exploited handicapped workers.

Helen Keller could appreciate books, much more than many sighted people do, who do not give the fact that they can see a second thought, or even a first thought. This was manifest by her condemnation of Nazi Germany’s book burnings. The burning of books led to the gassing of people.

She was also a prolific writer, and her work includes an autobiography, “The Story of My Life.” Helen Keller was able to accurately describe President Eisenhower’s face by using her fingers to feel his face. Eisenhower probably did not realize that he was dealing with a Wobbly. She learned to “hear” through vibrations she could feel with her fingers. She learned this great technique when she was a child, from her fantastic teacher Anne Sullivan, who

was immortalized in the film and play, “The Miracle Worker.” By strategically placing Helen’s hand on her (Anne Sullivan’s) face and throat, including the larynx and lips, when Helen was a young child, Anne Sullivan taught her, in several lessons, to begin speaking. The first sentence that Helen Keller articulated was: “I’m not dumb now.”

These two amazingly remarkable women were together for almost a lifetime. It is hard to think of one without the other. On the internet you can tap into a rare audiovisual of Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller, demonstrating how Helen Keller was taught to say the above sentence. It was filmed in 1930. I am impressed by the lack of any pretension by either of these two women.

Despite the fact that she was blind and deaf, Helen Keller earned a bachelor’s degree. She turned down at least one marriage proposal.

We do not know for sure which illness caused Helen Keller’s childhood blindness and deafness. Theories about the disease that afflicted this child with blindness and deafness include measles and meningitis. There was a measles epidemic in Alabama around the time that young Helen Keller lost her sight and hearing.

On a personal note, without in any way whatsoever comparing myself to Helen Keller, I have experienced discrimination for my disability. Being dyslexic, I was profiled as being “retarded” in the first grade and as “illiterate” by a college history



Helen Keller (left) & Anne Sullivan (right) play chess in 1900. Photo: braillebug.afb.org

professor. By the way, I have 18 graduate school credits, have co-authored two books that were published by a major publisher, and have published more than 60 articles, including one in a psychology journal—not bad for someone who was profiled as “retarded” and “illiterate.” Since I am dyslexic, this article was proofread by my visually disabled wife, Judy. I thank her very much. Among the problems that dyslexic people have is omitting words and repeating words and phrases without noticing it, and groping for words when talking.

If only so many sighted politicians and statesmen could have seen the Nazis for what they were, the way our blind fellow worker Helen Keller clearly saw them, the history of the 20th century could have turned out much better, including saving of the lives of over 50 million people who were killed in war, by atrocities, and genocide committed by the Nazis.



Review

# “The Given Day”: Novel Of The Decade...Or Of Generations Of “Indignants”?

Lehane, Dennis. The Given Day. New York: Harper Perennial, 2008 (reprint edition). Paperback, 720 pages, \$15.99.

By Jérôme Diaz,  
Independent journalist, France

“So somebody better start thinking of how to pay us what’s right.”

What’s this: the words extracted from an activist paper? The catchphrase of a poster announcing a demonstration? The last provocative sentence of some politician?

Not at all. Simply the words pronounced by one of the characters in the “The Given Day,” Dennis Lehane’s masterful historical novel.

Getting us into the heart of the 1918-1919 riots and the Boston policemen’s strike, the author of “Mystic River,” “Shutter Island,” “Gone, Baby, Gone” and “Live by Night” takes the reader for a travel back through the past, to an unknown chapter of America’s history. And takes it back to life.

As pages go by, his fictive heroes Luther Laurence, a Black worker, and Danny Coughlin, a young officer of the Boston Police Department (that his superiors, mostly being of his own family, put in charge of infiltrating the anarchist field and the Boston Police’s syndicate), meet real characters such as John Hoover, future chief of the FBI, or baseball star Babe Ruth. In a burning political and social atmosphere, at the dawn of 1920s full with racism, class struggle, soldiers coming back from the front lines of World War I, and a terrible flu epidemic, emerge Bolshevik and anarchist movements.

Lehane has chosen, and perfectly succeeded, to make us feel the human aspect of

history, side by side with those on the field, telling these men and women’s stories as a lively and poignant log of their struggles. And no trace of a classic, conformist and rigid lesson: first, for he powerfully evokes these moments of life, these guys, policemen, being perfectly conscious of playing their fate in the full tumult; then, because we get of these depictions an obvious but tragic echo of present history. The doubts, wrath and fears felt by the characters about their living and working conditions are so vigorously expressed that we sometimes wonder if we are not instead along with the Indignados in Spain, New York City’s Occupy Wall Street or in Greece.

The same restlessness about a quite obscure future, the same demands about the same economic problems and, more generally, the same expression of a deep feeling of injustice. As not Karl Marx, but the narrator sums up: “the system fucked the workingman.”

“Steve said, ‘Have you ever noticed that when they need us, they talk about duty, but when we need them, they talk about budgets?’

‘What are we supposed to do about it?’ ‘Fight,’ Steve said.

Danny shook his head. ‘Whole world’s fighting right now. France, fucking Belgium, how many dead? No one even has a number. You see progress there?’”

Profoundly humanist, harsh and devoid of over-simplification, “The Given Day,” reminds us of Emile Zola’s “Germinal,” Steinbeck’s “The Grapes of Wrath,” Alice Walker’s “The Color Purple,” or more recently Thomas Kelly’s “Empire Rising.”

We also think of one of the best films ever made about a revolutionary movement (but knowingly left out of history

books for a long time): Peter Watkins’ “La Commune (Paris, 1871).”

Watkins and Lehane notably listen to those that history rarely takes into consideration. They illustrate this in their own way by attaching fictitious elements to history, giving that history a new lease on life.

“Absent fires and screams and darkness, the streets had lost their ghoulish flavor, but stark evidence of the mob lay everywhere. Nary a window was left intact along Washington or Tremont or any streets that intersected them. Husks where once stood businesses. The skeleton frames of chartered automobiles. So much trash and debris in the streets Peters could only assume this was what cities looked like after protracted battles and sporadic bombings.”

It is also interesting to mention that Lehane, from Massachusetts, has participated in the writing of a few episodes of the great television drama series, “The Wire.” The highly realistic and quasi-documentary aspect of the series indeed finds echoes in the writing of the novel: lively, sound and very detailed.

“There’s a principle here to be honored, boy. Can you appreciate that?

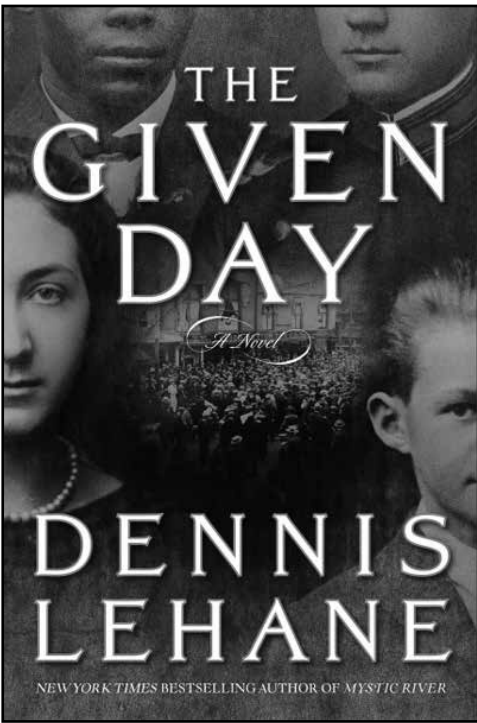
-And which one is that, sir?

-Public safety above all other ideals for men who hold the badge.

-Putting food on the table, sir, that’s another ideal.”

Among the historical sources of the novel, we pleasantly (and logically) find the names of great historians such as the much-missed Howard Zinn and his fabulous “A People’s History of the United States.” This book is a historical fresco going from the “discovery” of America to our time, except that he takes history on the opposite side in order to, here again, revive it but “from the other side.” Thus, like Lehane, “A People’s History” aims not to counter “the telling of history from the standpoint of the conquerors,” writes Zinn.

As an added bonus, “The Given Day” presents an uncompromising look at a post- World War I America, (already) a bit lost and in quest of itself, closer to James Ellroy or George P. Pelecanos than to the American dream so proudly promoted, and that millions of immigrants have been dreaming of—a dream that has slowly but surely collapsed since then, as a result of America’s obsession with itself, its myths



Graphic: collider.com

and its irrepressible need for making the world according to its own image.

“[...] You Americans—there is no history. There is only now. Now, now, now. I want this now. I want that now.”

Danny felt a sudden rise of irritation. ‘And yet everyone seems in a hell of a hurry to leave their country to get here.’

‘Ah, yes. Streets paved with gold. The great America where every man can make his fortune. But what of those who don’t? What of the workers, Officer Danny? Yes? They work and work and work and if they get sick from the work, the company says, “Bah. Go home and no come back”. And if they hurt themselves on the work? Same thing. You Americans talk of your freedom, but I see slaves who think they are free. I see companies that use children and families like hogs and—

Danny waved it away. ‘And yet you’re here.’”

After “Mystic River,” “Shutter Island,” or his series showing up Bostonian private detectives Patrick Kenzie and Angela Gennaro, Lehane offers a singular work crowded with incident. It is a mix of violent thriller, and also a social, historical and political novel.

Timeless and universal, intimate and poignant, this novel is a real masterpiece.

The question is: what filmmaker would be worthy of adapting such a powerful and gripping novel for the screen ?

From 1909 to 1916, thousands of IWW members engaged in dozens of fights for freedom of speech throughout the American West. The volatile spread and circulation of hobo agitation during these fights amounted to nothing less than a soapbox rebellion in which public speech became the principal site of the struggle of the few to exploit the many.

**Soapbox Rebellion: The Hobo Orator Union and the Free Speech Fights of the IWW** (October, 2013) re-imagines these controversial fights as a novel form of class struggle and analyzes the potential of this form of struggle to inform our understanding of class antagonisms and freedom of expression today—in an era of the decline of the institutional business union model and workplace contractualism.

While the fights were not always successful, they did produce a novel form of fluid union organization that offers historians, labor activists, and social movement scholars a window into an alternative approach to what it means to belong to a union.

The author, **Matthew S. May** PhD, teaches Communication at North Carolina State and is a former delegate of the IWW.

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Review

# Climate Change And Our Future

Alley, Richard B. The Two-Mile Time Machine: Ice Cores, Abrupt Climate Change, and Our Future. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002 (reprint edition). Paperback, 240 pages, \$25.95.

By John MacLean

“Is our spell of good weather almost over?” – Richard B. Alley

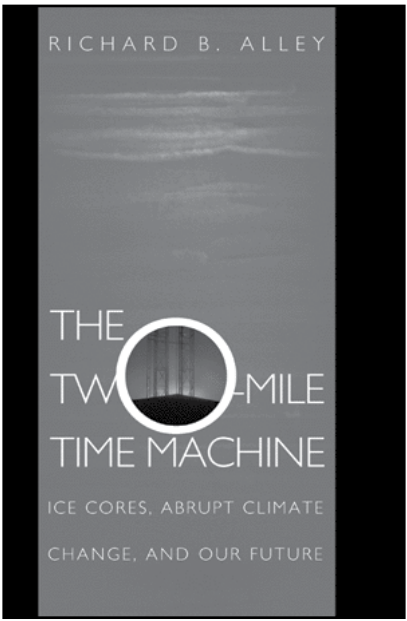
Richard B. Alley, in his book “The Two-Mile Time Machine: Ice Cores, Abrupt Climate Change, And Our Future,” finds a history of “climate craziness” in “cave formations, ocean and lake sediments, and other places.” The “finest records,” in this regard, are to be found in the three-foot long by four to five inch thick cores, pulled from the Greenland ice sheet. The pattern emerging from all these sources is one of “a long stagger into an ice age, a faster stagger out of the ice age, a few millennia of stability, [and then a] repeat.” Ice sheets tell us much about the past, and the sum of this knowledge has “revolutionized our view of Earth.” There is great concern that greenhouse warming, increased rain and the melting of ice, will freshen the North Atlantic and slow down or shut off the natural circulation of warm equatorial waters to this region. Small pushes can do a little, or a great deal, “almost as if someone had flipped a switch.”

Alley was involved with the second Greenland Ice Sheet Project, which toiled for five summers between 1989 and 1993 and produced two miles of core. Ice is a “warm solid” which sits close to its melting point and is always flowing from higher and thicker locations out to the ice sheet edges, eventually crumbling into bergs. The snow is laid down annually in layers, pressed by its own weight over time until it becomes ice; recognizable winter and “summertime hoarfrost” layers remain. This ice can be dated by simply counting

the layers or by trying to identify a “time marker” like a volcanic eruption. According to Alley there are “no events older than 2,000 years that are both reliably dated by historical records and that left a clear signal in the ice cores.” Testing the electrical conductivity of the layers can highlight the sulfuric acid left behind by known volcanic eruptions, and looking into the isotopic composition of the ice, how heavy or light it is, how close to falling from the sky or evaporating, can help with dating, also.

Temperature, at the time when the snow fell, can be estimated by using “two paleothermometers,” the already-mentioned isotope ratios and the temperature along the depths of the “borehole.” Finally, ice captures “samples of old air” in bubbles, which can hint at past atmospheric conditions as well.

Climate can be thought of “as a drunk; when left alone, it sits; when forced to move, it staggers.” In the planet’s deep past “drifting continents” have altered ocean currents, and “wiggles” in the Earth’s orbit have encouraged the expansion, and withdrawal, of ice sheets. There are “feedbacks,” both positive and negative, which can “magnify or shrink” a climate change. Of all the amplifiers, greenhouse gases are among the most significant. On Earth, we have been spared by chemistry from the frozen condition of Mars and the broil of Venus. The release of carbon dioxide from volcanoes and the constant chemical



Graphic: press.princeton.edu

reactions of weathering have “given Earth a thermostat that keeps the surface habitable for creatures such as us, who like liquid water.” The slow “changes of deep time serve as the stage on which faster events occur.”

Given that 10 percent of the Earth’s surface is currently covered by ice, and that 30 percent was ice-covered some 20,000 years ago, we know that “we are away from the warm end of the full range of Earth climates.” If you follow the melting water streams, to the ocean

sediments, you can find what Alley refers to as a “dipstick,” showing “how much water was left in the oceans and how much was locked up as ice on land at different times.” As past temperatures can be estimated from the isotope composition of ice in cores, past ice sheet size can be found also in the makeup of “the shells of tiny plants and animals...piled up in layers [on the ocean bottom] over millions of years.” These shells, dated and ran through a mass spectrometer, are a naturally written “history of ice volume.” The “rotation axis” of the Earth, its “inclination, or obliquity” between the poles, can vary from 22 to 24 degrees, over tens of thousands of years, as does the elliptical orbit of our planet, around the sun. This gives us seasons, and under normal circumstances regular periods of ice growth and contraction. Alley writes that the changing distribution of solar energy on earth’s surface “must have been causing the ice to grow and shrink.”

At the moment, we “naturally should be near the start of the next long, slow, bumpy slide into an ice age.” The usual pattern is for ice to expand for 90,000 years, and then shrink for 10,000, into an “interglacial period.” During these past long drawn-out coolings and warmings, climate in the North Atlantic was all over the place, mixed cold and warm centuries, as heat-circulating currents switched off and on. These ocean current and temperature swings are called “Dansgaard-Oeschger cycles.” As the cold deepened “a Heinrich event” would see icebergs dumped into the Atlantic, debris layers in the ocean sediment testify to this, and finally, with the next warming, a “Bond cycle” would, with time, resume the cooling. These cycles and events have been named after scientists, and many now see the climate of Greenland as coupled with that of the world. Alley writes that the cold times in the north Atlantic were also “cold, dry, and windy in broad regions extending into subtropical Africa and Asia, and across Europe and North America.”

Great climate changes, which can

“scare civilized peoples,” have happened repeatedly in our deep past. In the Earth system, heat energy, from the equator, is being moved to the poles by oceanic and atmospheric currents. As much as 30 percent of this energy is reflected back into space by snow, ice and the tops of clouds. The greenhouse effect of our atmospheric blanket keeps the planet from being frozen, and the “simple geometry” of a curved Earth profoundly impacts our weather. Alley writes that the roots of the “crazy climate stories,” in the Greenland ice cores, are to be found in “the interplay between ocean temperature and salinity.” The study of old shells in ocean sediment tells us that heat-bearing currents can be altered. A partial explanation for past cold spells in the North Atlantic can be found in “sudden meltwater deluges” brought on by the breaking of ice sheet dams, and the issuing of icebergs, jamming up the warmth giving current. Alley contends that science does not fully understand the Dansgaard-Oeschger oscillations, and that there may be “switches and amplifiers” in play outside of this ocean region; he humbly describes the climate community as “a Stone Age tribe clustered around [a] North Atlantic light switch, the first one we’ve ever seen, and just now figuring it out.”

The last section of the book is titled “Coming Craziness?” Generally our planet recycles organic matter very well, but “leaking” allows some to escape, yielding fossil fuels: “oil mostly from algae, coal mostly from woody plants, and natural gas—mainly methane—from either one.” Large, rapid and wide-ranging climate changes have been “common on Earth,” but have been relatively absent during the establishment of our civilizations. The author writes that “for billions of years” warming has come along with elevated levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and that despite a “natural trend” toward cooling “[h]uman-induced changes are likely to be one hundred or more times faster, so the next natural ice age won’t save us from ourselves.” In the Earth’s past there have been both warm and cold periods of climate stability, and it is in the “middle ground” between the two where drunken climate jumps are more likely to occur. The “losers from climate change will outnumber the winners” no matter how mightily we put our minds to adapting. Alley writes that we are poised before a “trench,” which we can’t see into, and we need to jump; we don’t know if the trench is “shallow,” or if it is “deep [and] could swallow much of what we hold dear.”

The author is a cautious scientist, awash in a media landscape as likely to feature denialist voices as ones like his. At times he seems to want to imagine that he can avoid being contentious in his effort. What kind of Olympian trench jump would it take to swallow up a poverty-creating money system, dear to the hearts of so many, whose motivations are driving us on to such an uncertain, unattractive future?

## Danny Perez, ¡Presente!

Danny Perez (1931-2004) was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. He worked as a textile cutter on both coasts and then became an organizer for the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU). His success could be accounted for in a number of ways—he built networks throughout Connecticut cities, among Hispanic individuals and groups and with other labor folks. When there was a need to organize a new shop in any industry, Danny was the first person everyone thought of. That’s good luck, but it came through a lot of work. As Danny always said, “there are lucky organizers and lazy organizers, but there are no lucky, lazy organizers.” He made a lasting mark in the struggle for workers’ rights, especially in the area of health and safety. He gravitated toward the poorest workers in the most dangerous jobs and inspired them to organize for their mutual protection. His work taught a new generation of labor activists. He will be missed but his legacy lives on.

– from his friends and co-workers in Connecticut



Danny Perez (left) speaking to workers at the Plastonics strike in 1992. Photo: Nick Lacy

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Special

# The Story And Struggle Of Starbucks Workers In Chile

Continued from 1

to be promoted to shift supervisor and when he went to the office to have a talk with the HR manager, Francesca Faraggi, regarding this new company policy and other work environment issues, they immediately removed him from the selection process and started to look for a reason to lay him off. He actually wasn't convinced about organizing as a union before the company did this to him. But after that, he was one of the key leaders in building up the organization.

**IW:** Talk about the campaign and how it progressed.

**AG:** We remained anonymous for about two years. I was, at first, the only visible face for about three months, and then when we reached 25 members this legally allowed us to elect two more organization leaders in the form of a president, a secretary and a treasurer. From then on we had to deal with some silent union-busting techniques. Managers started to approach employees with friendly advice about not getting involved with this new union. They had one-on-one meetings with each one of them, telling them that the union was against the company and that they better remain on the company's side, for their own sake. It was a classic "union bad" and "company good" argument.

And after two years, we started negotiations with the company on April 9, 2011. We presented an ideal collective bargaining agreement to start the negotiations. And of course, after Starbucks refused to negotiate with us, we were forced to go on a labor strike, and then a hunger strike.

**IW:** Before going into that, I was wondering if you could describe how you built the union from one store to half the workforce across Chile? I'm really curious.

**AG:** Well, we started visiting every store and explaining to everyone how our intention wasn't to be in a constant struggle with the company, but to make our labor conditions better. That was the first thing we did. We built a huge email database and started sending information to everyone constantly. That communication platform allowed us to keep them informed, in touch with us, and connected to our ideas. So some of them started to join naturally. We actually didn't realize until we started negotiating that almost half of the Starbucks workers in the country joined the union—around 250 members. Starbucks management was, of course, really surprised with that. They didn't expect it. As you know, they have always defended the idea that unions aren't necessary at Starbucks. So this freaked them out.

**IW:** How were you able to go around to every store and talk to the workers and gathering emails without any of this getting back to management for two years?

**AG:** Management was aware of this, but they didn't think the partners would really feel represented by us. They kind of thought that no one was going to listen to us because we were just a few "unhappy people" with the company, pretending to be union organizers, and that, as they were explicitly telling partners not to unionize, we weren't going to have much of an impact on them. History proved them wrong.

**IW:** Could you describe the [labor] strike, what happened, and then the hunger strike?

**AG:** Well, when we started the negotia-

tions we thought the company was going to respond in a good manner. We were naïve, thinking the company was going to give in on some of the points, trying to reach a consensus. For example, we were asking for the company to provide us our uniforms and also a lunch. Almost every food chain here does it. If you go to Ruby Tuesday's [a large corporate chain restaurant] they have their lunch and right next to us, Domino's, they even have someone to cook for them. I know when I first talked to some American journalists back in 2011, that they were kind of surprised by this. But here in Chile it's really common. So we were asking to have the same benefits that every other company in our market has.

We were also asking for a small wage raise, based on the CPI [Consumer Price Index]. It's the cost of living. And of course that seemed too strange to the Starbucks Corporation so they didn't want that either. They refused to even discuss any of these points because, as a global policy, they don't negotiate with unions.

Starbucks doesn't like anyone telling them how to run their business or how to do things better. It's not about money; it's a political issue. And they kind of bet on that we were never going to vote for a strike, and did everything in their hands to guarantee that. But, we did. And that was really hard to achieve because to make the strike legal we had to convince 50 percent plus one of our members to vote for the strike. Before the voting date, Starbucks began a tremendous union-busting campaign to convince every member that the strike was only going to bring chaos and disgrace on them; that they were going to lose their wages for a month; that the union was following political interests; that no matter what, the company wasn't going to give in. Of course, they scared the hell out of our members.

You can't imagine how hard we had to work to maintain our support level, and to get our people to vote. Subsequently, you are allowed under Chilean labor law to start the strike about 10 days after the vote, but you need for 50 percent plus one of your people to skip their shifts. For example, you can vote to strike, but never really go for it. It's putting a lot of pressure on the company for 10 more days. But if you do not vote it, you accept the company's offer, which, in this case, was nothing. The question is, what do you do if things don't change in those 10 days? I'm telling you, we gave everything of ourselves over those 10 days to avoid the strike, to reach an agreement, but of course that wasn't possible. The company didn't change its mind at all. So we had to struggle to get 50 percent plus one of the unionized partners that were scheduled for the day that the strike was going to happen, to miss their shifts.

**IW:** And when did that start?

**AG:** It was July 7, 2011, and the strike was official by a really small margin. From about 120 scheduled unionized partners for that particular day, about 50 of them came to work, and the other 60 didn't. We were really close to losing it. We almost had a heart attack.

**IW:** But once you have that, then the strike becomes legal?

**AG:** Yeah, everyone must go on strike and the company cannot allow them to go to work. So, we started the strike thinking that it wasn't going to last for too long. We always thought that the company was going to give in, because they are very brand conscious with the whole social responsibility marketing. We thought that the

strike was going to hit them pretty hard on their public image. But, of course, the company didn't care at all. When we were getting close to our third week of the strike, we decided that the three union leaders will go on a hunger strike to make this contradiction with their ethics more obvious.

**IW:** During the strike did Starbucks bring in replacement workers? Are they allowed to bring in other workers to continue the operations of the store?

**AG:** They can replace the strikers, paying a small fee to each striking worker—but they didn't pay for that either. They just replaced everyone and didn't pay anything. Then we went to trial with the labor board over that and they were punished. But they never paid anything to us. They illegally replaced striking members of the union.

**IW:** They did that illegally, but once the strike ends, they have to allow you back to work, right?

**AG:** Yeah, but we have a huge turnover rate, so it was easy for Starbucks to keep many of them. Most of the people hired for that particular period weren't conscious of why they were hired. Of course, there was a small tension, but it was unfair to them to be blamed for something the company was doing. The problem was Starbucks. The workers, they were just trying to make a living.

**IW:** For the hunger strike, did you feel it was successful? How long did it go on?

**AG:** It went for 12 days and on the 13th day of the hunger strike, we put an end to everything because we realized there was nothing else we could do to put any more pressure on the company, and a month without getting paid was too much for many of our members. After the strike ended Starbucks gave a 10 percent wage raise to every barista, explained that it had nothing to do with the union, the strike or the collective bargaining process. But most of the partners knew that was because of the strike.

**IW:** Also, you recently had a victory over the uniforms?

**AG:** Yeah. Legally, in Chile, if you require workers to have any particular kind of custom of clothes, the company must provide it to the [workers] free of any cost. It's illegal to force them to pay or buy any sort of uniform. Apparently, Starbucks doesn't do that anywhere in the world and, for that reason, they never agreed with us, even though they were breaking our labor code. So we had to go to our labor office and they made a full investigation on our complaint, and after a year issued a 100-page report. We showed this to the judge and he ruled on our behalf for Starbucks to provide us with the uniforms. From [this coming] December on, they'll have to give a pair of pants and a shirt to every worker from the moment they start working for the company. That's a pretty huge change and I'm guessing Starbucks must be really furious with us for that. It's a victory to us all. Of course, Starbucks publicly stated this was a decision made by the company, having nothing to do with the labor office, the trial, or the union.

**IW:** What's the situation now, as far as the union and what you're facing?



Starbucks workers in Santiago. Photo: Adam Weaver

**AG:** We now have less than 10 percent of the company unionized. We are a very small union, but we are starting on negotiations with the hope the four trials we have won in the past two years make an impact on the course of the negotiation. Starbucks has already been punished for refusing to negotiate with us, so we are hoping that the company—that's now starting to be controlled by a new operator, the Mexican restaurant and food corporation Alsea—has changed its *modus operandi*. They have about 70 percent of their workers unionized, so they should be more used to working with unions and I think that might make a difference in the negotiations. But, if that doesn't happen, we are doomed because we have no pressure to put on the company this time. And, if we didn't get anything last time, with the 50 percent of the company on our side, what can we expect now?

**IW:** So you don't see a strike happening?

**AG:** I couldn't really tell, but I'm sure that is not the best way to put pressure on the company right now. It may happen anyway; it depends on how partners feel the company's responding to their inquiries, but in this precise moment, I don't see it happening.

**IW:** As far as Starbucks workers around the world and other workers in the food service industry, how can we support your efforts? What might be the best ways?

**AG:** I think it would be good to have media attention around the globe, especially in the United States because that is where Starbucks' headquarters is. We need to build some kind of union solidarity network between all of the fast-food chains that's effective in making a difference. I've seen some of the unionizing efforts in some of the big chains like McDonald's, but here in Chile, we don't have any fast-food chains with unions. Besides Starbucks, there aren't any. So, we need to figure out a formula to work together as workers and to create consciousness in people who choose to, or have to, work in these kinds of chains.

Companies are ahead of us; they have developed studies and techniques to keep workers separated, forgetting what they really are: workers. Partners, collaborators, crews, you name it. We're not any of that really—we're workers before everything else. This false illusion that you are part of a family makes no sense. You don't fire your family, you don't put all your resources to prevent your supposed family from having collective ideas. At the end of the day we are just disposable workers, unless we wake up and realize the power within our hands. Awareness is the key to building a strong and a powerful movement with no boundaries. It's not about Chile, or the United States; it's about every worker in the world.

*Note: This interview was edited for clarity and length.*

**Transcribed by Eric Wind.**



Special

# Sexual Harassment In The Workplace

Continued from 1

Some quick background information on Chicago-Lake Liquors: it is owned by John Wolf, a multimillionaire who was raised incredibly rich, but shunned his family’s money and instead made his wealth as a sports agent. He bought Chi-Lake in the early 2000s as a fun side project, as well as a way to get back at his family, who also owned a large and profitable liquor store in the Twin Cities. The guy’s a “grade A” douche. Under his ownership, Chi-Lake became incredibly successful and is now the highest-grossing liquor store in not only Minnesota, but also Iowa, Wisconsin and the Dakotas. The store is located in one of the lowest income neighborhoods in Minneapolis, and John Wolf makes his money by exploiting the alcohol dependence of working-class Black, white, First Nations, Latino, and Somali folks who live in the neighborhood, as well as the vast network of *lumpenproletarians* who hang out at the intersection of Chicago Avenue and Lake Street. Chi-Lake is known for its low prices (hence the slogan, “Great place to stock up, terrible place to be a stock boy”) and crazy atmosphere (another slogan: “I survived Chicago-Lake Liquors”). It’s constantly busy inside the store, and on any given Friday or Saturday night, the line to the register regularly stretches all the way down the aisles.

When I first started working at Chi-Lake, I was a bit overwhelmed. I had experienced sexual harassment at other jobs before, but nothing approaching the frequency and intensity seen at this liquor store. Luckily, I had my co-workers to help me. There was an instant sense of camaraderie between the women that I worked with, and a culture had developed in the workplace of always watching each other’s backs. When I was being trained, the co-worker who I shadowed not only showed me how to use the register and stock the airplane shots, but also taught me how to deal with the endless stream of men intent on sexually harassing us. My co-workers told me when to draw the line, how to tell off men without getting in trouble with the boss, when to call security if necessary (there is always a cop or a security guard on duty to prevent shoplifting), and when to call a manager. They helped me pick out the fake name to give customers when they asked too many personal questions (mine was Grace, which is my middle name and also my pseudonym for writing).

In the beginning, I had trouble being assertive because I was so used to working at a yuppie natural foods grocery store where you had to bend over and take it when a customer was yelling at you, always

keeping a smile on your face. During this time, I was lucky that my girls were there to support me and tell the customer to shut the fuck up or else we wouldn’t sell them booze. Eventually, I became confident enough to take care of it myself and also keep an eye on the safety of the other cashiers. It was solidarity in action and it was a beautiful thing.

My co-workers told me horror stories of being a cashier at Chi-Lake. Keisha told me about the man who kept calling the store asking to talk to her during her shift, and it eventually escalated to the point where he was waiting outside the store for her to get done with work before management finally banned the guy. Alex told me about how our boss offered to give her a ride home and tried to make a pass at her. Days later, she was fired. Alice, a woman who had worked there for almost 10 years, told a story from a few years back when a customer reached across the counter and grabbed a cashier’s chest. The man was banned, but only until that cashier no longer worked at Chi-Lake. Now he is back in every single day buying his 24-ounce cans of Olde English.

I saw how Crystal put up with all of the men hitting on her because she knew she could go home with \$15 in tips a night—the equivalent of almost two hours’ worth of wages. I would overhear the stock guys in the cooler talking about Liya’s ass, knowing full well that as a conservative Ethiopian Orthodox Christian she would be extremely offended. I would see the way that men would treat Selam and Tsega, my Amhara and Oromo co-workers also from Ethiopia, and noticed that the sexual harassment they dealt with was ethnically-based, reeking with Orientalist overtones. Jane confided in me that she was trying to leave her abusive boyfriend, but couldn’t afford to until management gave her more shifts. Vanessa had to eventually quit the job when she was pregnant with twins because management wouldn’t let her sit on a stool when her feet became too tired to stand during the 10-hour shifts they kept giving her. Gender-related concerns came in many forms, and it was only a matter of time before I had my own horror stories to tell.

I was called a “bitch” so many times that I nearly started to respond to the name. “Cunt” and “whore” were also commonplace, but not as frequent as “honey,” “sweetie,” or “baby.” One customer referred to me simply as “legs,” since apparently he really liked my legs and as a woman I obviously don’t have anything else worthwhile going for me except for my body. One of my favorite comments



Graphic: radicalgraphics.org

was, “Damn, you thick for a white girl.” If I had a dollar for every marriage proposal I received, I could finally afford to buy a new front wheel for my bike. The comments were annoying, but I could generally handle them. As a young woman who grew up in the city just blocks away from Chicago-Lake Liquors, I’ve become quite accustomed to the hollering and cat-calling on the street and can block it out pretty well.

The hardest situations to handle were when customers would touch me without my permission. I have a visible tattoo on my forearm and oftentimes people would just reach across the counter and grasp my arm to get a closer look. One time, I refused service to a drunk man and he got mad and grabbed my wrist so hard it left a mark for an hour. I’ve gotten blood, spit, and other questionable substances on me. One particularly unsettling instance occurred not at work, but when I was at the grocery store in my neighborhood. A liquor store regular saw me and followed me home. I started keeping a bat under my bed after that.

The first big incident that I dealt with happened in September 2012, about two months after I started working at the liquor store. I was ringing at a register on a busy Saturday afternoon when a stock guy came up carrying a case of beer for his friend, Matt, who was there shopping. Matt has something of what you might call an alcohol problem, and was already incredibly drunk by 4 p.m. Normally, I wouldn’t serve someone who was that intoxicated, but he was friends with my co-worker, so I let it slide. He proceeded to start hitting on me with a perseverance that I had never seen before. He asked for my number multiple times, and was making non-stop comments about my body and all the different ways that he wanted to have sex with me.

By this point, Matt was causing a scene, but I didn’t want to call my manager because I would have gotten in trouble for selling to someone so intoxicated. I finished the transaction as fast as possible, but Matt still wouldn’t stop asking for my number. As he was leaving, he took the receipt and wrote his number on it and gave it back to me. I took it and tore it in half right in front of his face, ripped it to shreds and threw it in the trash. That pissed him off, but all he said was, “Ahh, you’re a feisty one.” I thought that I was in the clear after he left, but he came back the next week doing the same thing. I told him not to talk to me or come through my line ever again or else I would call security and he would be banned from the store. It actually seemed to work.

He respected that for a couple months, until one particularly busy evening. He seemed to be in a hurry, so he must have figured I would be lenient with him for just one day. He thought wrong, and I told him to get out of my line and go to a different register. I wouldn’t give in and we started getting in a shouting match. My boss noticed that my line was being held up, so he came over to check out the situation. I told him why I wouldn’t ring up Matt, but my manager insisted that I

do so. I still refused, so my boss brought him to another line and rang him up, but not before telling me to see him in his office immediately after Matt’s transaction was finished. As I was closing my register down, Matt walked passed me on his way out the door and yelled, “Fucking cunt!”

I went into the back to my boss’s office and was sat down and given a lecture about how I never have the right to refuse service to a customer and that I need to call a manager if I have a problem. They were getting ready to give me an official verbal warning when I mentioned the fact that Matt had called me a “cunt” just minutes earlier. Suddenly, my manager changed his tone, and decided not to write me up. They ended up trespassing Matt from the store for the name-calling, but only under the stipulation that I would never again refuse to serve a customer without manager approval. Apparently, management is more qualified to decide when I feel uncomfortable enough to tell someone they can’t interact with me than I am.

The whole experience was by no means unique. In fact, it was a pretty typical management response to such incidents, and most of my co-workers have similar stories. The bosses aren’t concerned about our well-being, just the safety of the merchandise and, thus, their profits. In their eyes, cashiers are expendable objects that cost just \$8 an hour to use, abuse, and throw away. If we want to feel safe at work, if we don’t want our souls crushed every day, if we want to preserve the last shreds of dignity we have at work, we have to fight for ourselves. Management involvement has never been and never will be a sufficient solution to sexual harassment.

When I got fired from my job, part of me was relieved that I wouldn’t have to put up with all of the bullshit from customers anymore. But another part of me was sad knowing that a new woman would be hired and would have to be the one the deal with the harassment. An injury to one is an injury to all. I wanted a union *so bad* at the store so that we could fight back together even harder against the conditions under which we were forced to work. The solidarity amongst the cashiers at the liquor store is amazing, but it would be so much stronger if our actions were concerted and tied in with a store-wide organized workforce.

Being on the defensive against customers isn’t enough to combat harassment. To be truly effective, we must take the offensive. If our organizing hadn’t been cut short by the retaliatory firings, we could have done any series of shop-floor actions, such as work stoppages or slow-downs, in order to enforce a zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment. Unfortunately, the campaign fizzled out and we took a monetary settlement that does not include reinstatement. However, I learned some valuable lessons about how to fight back on the shop floor, and in an industry full of situations like those at Chi-Lake, I’ll be able to use the skills I learned during this campaign and apply them in other organizing settings. If there is one thing that is for certain, it’s that Chicago-Lake Liquors won’t be the last job I have where gender-related concerns are a major grievance.

## GEORGE ORWELL



P.O.U.M. militia; George Orwell is third from left.

Photo: libcom.org

**Orwell fought in the Spanish workers’ revolution in the militia of the P.O.U.M. (Workers’ Party of Marxist Unification)**

**If you want a free copy of my article, “George Orwell: The Revolutionary,” send a self-addressed stamped envelope to:**

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Environmentalism

The IWW And Earth First! - Part 4: I Knew Nothin’ ‘Til I Met Judi

By X344543

The following is part 4 of a series on Earth First! and the IWW. Part 3, “Tree Spikes And Wedges,” appeared in the July/August 2013 IW, page 11.

“Every once in a while a new radical movement arises and illustrates the social firmament so suddenly and so dazzlingly that many people are caught off guard and wonder: ‘What’s going on here? Who are these new radicals, and what do they want?’

“This new movement...starts delivering real blows to the power and prestige of the ruling exploiters and their governmental stooges. This in turn inevitably arouses the hostility of the guardians of the status quo...who raise a hue and cry for the punishment and suppression of the trouble making upstarts...

“The new movement, with wild songs and high humor, captures the imagination of masses of young rebels, spreads like wildfire, turns up everywhere, gets blamed for everything interesting that happens, and all the while writes page after page in the annals of freedom and justice for all...”

These words were written by IWW member Franklin Rosemont in one of his four articles about Earth First! which appeared in the May 1988 edition of the Industrial Worker. In doing so, he brought the IWW squarely into the middle of a firestorm of controversy, and not just on the left, but in timber-dependent rural communities as well.

On the left, Earth First! had been (with some justification) excoriated for the reactionary sounding positions taken by Dave Foreman, Ed Abbey, and Chris Manes on starvation among Africans, limiting immigration, and AIDS being “nature’s” remedy for excess population, all of which were based on the wrongheaded notion that Thomas Malthus’s views on population and starvation had any merit or any relevance to the environment (they don’t).

Timber-dependent communities lambasted Earth First! for entirely different reasons. Obviously, the bosses hated Earth First! because the latter threatened their profits. Timber workers—many of whom suffered from a sort of capitalist induced “Stockholm Syndrome,” not the least of which was made worse by collaborationist business unions (where they existed at all)—echoed the bosses’ rhetoric, particularly when the capitalists used the word “jobs” when they actually meant profits. Earth First!’s association with tree spiking, and their stubborn refusal to jettison the tactic didn’t help matters much.

Ironically, few on the left, and practically nobody in the corporate media, paid any attention to what was going on in “ground zero” of the timber wars, California’s northwestern redwood coast. Earth

First! there had never used tree spiking, and they had gone to great lengths to express their sympathy for the timber workers’ plight—identifying capitalist timber harvesting practices as the actual threat to the workers’ livelihoods.

And it was. The timber workers’ job security and working conditions had been adversely impacted by automation (by 1988, it took two people to do the work that 11 people did in the 1930s), raw log exports, depletion of standing timber due to over-harvesting, and speed-ups (made worse by union busting).

The capitalists—largely through the use of very effective propaganda and public relations—were successfully able to divert many (though not all) of the workers’ attention and shift the blame to environmentalists, including especially Earth First!. Taking advantage of half-truths and gross exaggerations of Earth First!’s own shortcoming, the bosses framed the former as “unwashed-out-of-town-jobless-hippies-on-drugs.”

The Earth First! chapters in northwestern California found themselves unable to respond (though they certainly tried). Despite their best efforts, they lacked experience at cultivating the relationships necessary to build meaningful connections between radical environmentalists and rank-and-file timber workers, who—when stripped of superficial cultural differences—actually had a great deal in common.

The IWW would soon provide that missing link, but not without a great deal of heated debate among Wobblies and Earth First!ers. The May 1988 issue of the Industrial Worker proved highly controversial. While a clear majority supported the idea of the IWW working closely with Earth First!, there was a substantial enough minority of skeptics and naysayers who were vocal enough to force a debate, which raged for several months.

As one would expect, the Malthusian dogma championed by Foreman, Abbey, and Manes sparked the opposition. Franklin Rosemont—writing under the pseudonym “Lobo x99”—tried to defend Earth First! by drawing sharp distinctions between Foreman, Abbey, and Manes, but it didn’t help. Rosemont’s article, “Earth First! vs. the Rumor Mongers,” published in the September issue of the Industrial Worker drew a backlash from Ed Abbey. That in turn drew a host of rebuttals from various Wobblies, the most vocal being Louis Prisco and Jess Grant of the Bay Area IWW, whom Abbey then denounced as “Bookchinites” and “Marxoid Dogmatists” (which was ironic considering that Murray Bookchin’s own perspectives on “social ecology” assigned Marxism and syndicalism to the “dustbin of history”).

If anything, Rosemont’s defense of Earth First! (at the expense of Abbey, et.

al.) was a whitewash, and that drew a rebuke in the pages of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Review (known then as the Libertarian Labor Review), co-founded by the late Sam Dolgoff—a long time IWW member—and others. Meanwhile, even the primitivist publication Fifth Estate called out Earth First! for its ill-chosen romanticization of Malthus.

None of this had much relevance to Humboldt Earth First! activists, Greg King and Darryl Cherney, who were doing their best to communicate with angry timber workers who’d been whipped up into vigilante mob hysteria by the bosses and their front groups (Taxpayers for the Environment and its Management [TEAM] and WE CARE). On top of that, the local politicians (Democrat and Republican alike) had aligned themselves with corporate timber.

All of them kept repeating corporate timber’s standard litany of falsehoods as talking points: the corporations “were the backbone of the local economy” (never mentioning that they siphoned all of the profits out of the community); they “planted more trees than they cut down” (neglecting to point out that this was meaningless, since most saplings died before reaching over-story status and forest ecosystems were far more complex); that the environmentalists were “unwashed-out-of-town-jobless-hippies-on-drugs” (mostly false); and that California had “the best forestry regulations on the books” (which had no teeth, since the capitalists made sure that their foxes were guarding the state henhouse). Deciding that enough was enough, King and Cherney decided to run for office. Cherney, in particular, ran for Congress against the incumbent Democrat in his district, Doug Bosco. They described their “Earth First! Platform” (which was neither anti-worker, anti-immigrant, racist nor homophobic) as being six feet by three feet and 150 feet up in the trees. Talented musician and former childhood actor that he was, Darryl used his guitar and voice to spread his message and billed himself as “the singing candidate.”

In spite of that, Cherney still needed to use more conventional means of outreach, including old fashioned handbills. While he was a skilled songsmith he was not a particularly adept layout artist. Seeking help, he happened into the recently opened Mendocino Environment Center (MEC) on 106 West Standley Street in Ukiah one day in May 1988.

The “MEC” was principally staffed by two Earth First!ers, the wife and husband team of Betty and Gary Ball. The Balls referred Cherney to another volunteer, a



Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney in 1989. Photo: ecowobbly.blogspot.com

carpenter named Judi Bari, who—along with Gary Ball—worked for a small local company called California Yurts. Bari was a very skilled layout artist (as well as highly intelligent), and while she agreed to help Darryl with his design, she pointed out that his campaign was ultimately futile.

Bari, a one-time union activist, impressed Cherney with her knowledge of labor and environmental issues. He was at the same time impressed with how effortlessly she wove class and ecological struggle into a single all-encompassing whole. Bari, meanwhile, thought Cherney had much to learn about how class issues underpinned environmentalism. The two also shared a mutual romantic attraction for each other.

Cherney exhorted Bari to join Earth First!, but the latter initially demurred. She believed Earth First! was saddled with too much white male middle-class privilege to be truly effective (and she cited Foreman’s, Abbey’s, and Manes’s Malthusian perspectives in particular). Cherney countered by pointing out that Earth First!’s anarchic structure allowed local chapters to adopt their own unique character.

After some thought, Bari finally agreed to join Earth First! on one condition: at the upcoming California Earth First! rendezvous in September in the nearby Siskiyou National Forest, Bari would lead a workshop on the IWW and its relevance to the current ecological struggles of Earth First!.

To be continued...  
Next installment: Part 5: “The Earth isn’t Dying; it’s Being Killed.”

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Analysis

# The Anti-Democratic Nature Of Big Unions

By Burkely Hermann

*“Ten thousand times has the labor movement stumbled and fallen and bruised itself, and risen again; been seized by the throat and choked and clubbed into insensibility; enjoined by courts, assaulted by thugs, charged by the militia, shot down by regulars, traduced by the press, frowned upon by public opinion, deceived by politicians, threatened by priests, repudiated by renegades, preyed upon by grafters, infested by spies, deserted by cowards, betrayed by traitors, bled by leeches, and sold out by leaders, but notwithstanding all this, and all these, it is today the most vital and potential power this planet has ever known.”* – American union leader and socialist Eugene Debs, 1904

In the age of Obama, unions have had an even more diminished role than before. Despite this, a recent poll from the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press has shown that a slim majority, or 51 percent, approves of “organized labor... up a full 10 percentage points from two years ago” and also “labor unions had the highest approval ratings among women, people of color, and young people between the ages of 18 and 29 [but not] whites and retirees.” The right-wing has launched a massive attack on unions as can be seen in the “right-to-work” bills in recent years and other measures. As a result, the big unions, part of the labor aristocracy, like the AFL-CIO and the Change to Win Federation have backed the Democratic Party, the second-most capitalistic party in American politics. In electoral battles with the Republicans, the unions fund ads to help out their favored candidates: big business Democrats. Along with the agents of oligarchy, these unions applauded when the Wall Street marketing creation named Barack Obama was elected as U.S. President in 2008, and continued to support him throughout his presidency. Some of the only sticking points have been the protectionist multinational-empowering investor-rights agreements that promote “trade” like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the United States-Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), the United States–Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA), the Panama–United States Trade Promotion Agreement (TLC), the upcoming Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Transatlantic Free Trade Area (TAFTA), among many others. At the same time, these unions have not tried very hard to reverse trends that have caused unionization in the American economy to be on the decline. From here, it is important to discuss what the subservience of the labor aristocracy means to working-class and middle-class Americans.

Recall the Wisconsin uprising of 2011. According to his website, Governor Scott Walker wanted to “create an atmosphere where business can thrive and success will follow” and the unions were in his way. One of the state’s biggest unions decided to back some of the cuts sought by anti-union stalwart Governor Walker, in the infamous 2011 Wisconsin Act 10, also known as the Wisconsin Budget Repair Bill, at first, only opposing a provision limiting collective bargaining of public employees. Later, they changed their position after Walker rejected their compromise, as reported in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. Numerous protesters demonstrated a different view by calling for the defeat of the whole bill, not just one provision. Once Act 10 had passed, the unions pushed the next step: recalling Governor Walker. Almost a million signed a petition to recall him. However in the primaries, big labor’s favorite candidate Kathleen Falk was defeated by Tom Barrett. Barrett was a Democratic machine politician who Walker had defeated in 2010, but the unions backed him anyway

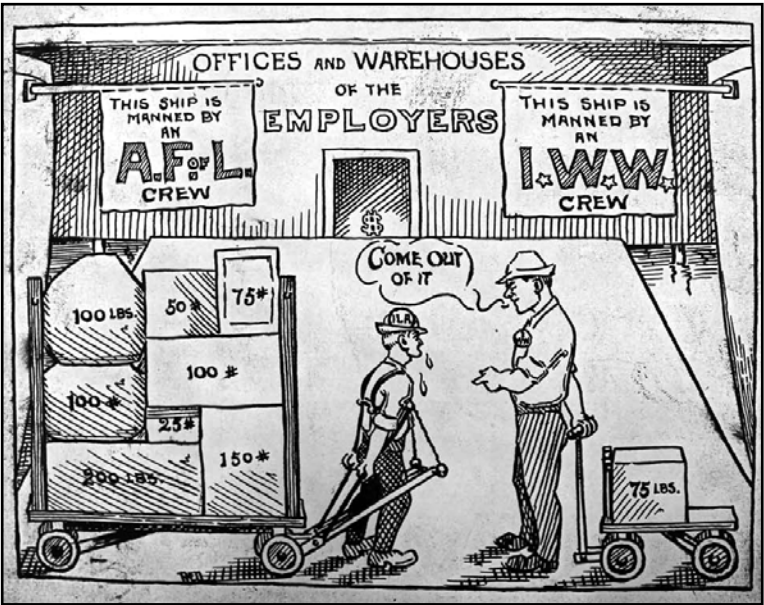
along with corporatists like Barack Obama and Bill Clinton. The website Watchdog.org reported that Barrett was “sticking by a plan that could mean up to \$14,000 in compensation cuts for state workers... [and] ‘rightsized’...state government and put public-worker pay and benefits more in line with private-sector compensation.” This follows what Barrett planned to do in 2010, as outlined in his report, “Tom Barrett’s Plan to Create Wisconsin Jobs”: “simplify[ing] regulations and streamline the regulatory process to lighten the burden on business.” Additionally, the report “Tom Barrett’s Plan to Put Madison on a Diet” was slated to “introduc[e]...technologies and revising processes to lessen the need for replacement employees... [and] keep...compensation and sick/leave accrual for state employees in line with the private sector, including wages, health care, pension, retirement age, job security, and overtime pay.” Due to this, he only gave lip service to the unions, making protesters disenchanted along with conducting a horrible campaign that didn’t mention Act 10. As a result, the propaganda machine, in part funded by the Koch Brothers, propelled Scott Walker to victory. The concentration of capital had sadly won against people power.

Examples like what happened in Wisconsin are further proof that there is something wrong with the unions. As was said by J. Lindley in 1896, “the moment that trade unions become tyrants in their turn, they are engines for evil.” Those at the top of these groups are paid high salaries which are not as high as CEOs, but there is still enough of a disparity between the wages of average workers. Back in the beginning of the 20th century, as Howard Zinn wrote in “A People’s History of the United States,” “AFL officials drew large salaries, hobnobbed with employers, even moved in high society...The well-paid leaders of the AFL were protected from criticism by tightly controlled meetings and by ‘goon’ squads-hired toughs originally used against strikebreakers but after a while used to intimidate and beat up opponents inside the union.” Today it is a bit similar, as the average total pay of the top three officers of the AFL-CIO is over \$275,000, or over five-and-a-half times the average wage of a worker. If you average the numbers of top leadership officers of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), and United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW), they receive seven times the wage of the average American workers or over \$314,473 each year. Still, don’t fall for the myth perpetuated by the right-wing that unions are overpaid. Let’s not forget that for years, the IBEW has been considered one of the most corrupt unions, seeking bribes and embezzling money, among other factors. While not corrupt, AFL-CIO’s top executive Richard Trumka lives in a house that has at total property value of over \$740,000, according to City-Data.com, which also has four baths according to Zillow.com. Additionally, as noted in my blog post about the corrupted nature of the AFL-CIO, the top three executives received between 5.9 and 6.6 times the average wage, and the union’s Investment Trust Corporation (ITC) has “key leadership [which included]...former employee[s] of Price Waterhouse LLP...Lockheed Martin...Deloitte and Touche or Deloitte...and a former advisor to corporatist Nancy Pelosi” while its “Building Investment Fund that has one the biggest banks in America, PNC Bank, as a trustee and investment advisor.” This is why some say they are part of a broader labor aristocracy since they make no effort to oppose the capitalist system.

There is something even more press-

ing that must be noted as well. This is what Noam Chomsky and numerous others call the “climate catastrophe” which comes from man-made climate change. It was widely reported, starting with the *New York Times*: “the AFL-CIO, the nation’s largest federation of unions, has issued an apparent endorsement of the Keystone XL oil pipeline—apparent because it enthusiastically called for expanding the nation’s pipeline system, without specifically mentioning Keystone...Richard Trumka...voiced support for building the Keystone pipeline... Leo W. Gerard, president of the United Steelworkers, said he would back the pipeline...[and] Cecil E. Roberts, president of the United Mine Workers, also backed it.” Then, there was a recent article on the website of the IWW’s Environmental Unionist Caucus, that after the announcement by Richard Trumka to partner with “Big Green” non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like the Sierra Club, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and others, the “more conservative elements within the federation, namely the building trades” opposed such an alliance. The author continues writing that it should be questioned how much “the building trades themselves represent workers, because the evidence suggest that for the most part, they represent the capitalist class more than anything else” and notes that “what Trumka is proposing is hardly anything close to a meaningful Blue-Green alliance and is...[about] building coalitions to keep the labor movement [and the progressive NGOs] firmly tied to capitalism and the Democratic Party...Clearly, the way forward doesn’t involve reforming capitalism or top-down ‘coalitions’ between the class collaborationist business unionism of the AFL-CIO or the corporate environmentalism of the Big (gang) Green NGOs. We need a different model entirely.” Journalist and activist Naomi Klein, tied to a big NGO (350.org) herself, made a speech before a new Canadian union, Unifor, telling them that “the most important message to come out of that process is that our coalitions cannot just be about top-down agreements between leaders; the change has to come from the bottom up, with full engagement from members...our current economic model is not only waging war on workers, on communities, on public services and social safety nets. It’s waging war on the life support systems of the planet itself. The conditions for life on earth...climate change...is the most powerful weapon progressives have ever had in the fight for equality and social justice... Environmentalists can’t lead that kind of revolution on their own. No political party is rising to the challenge. We need you to lead... not only is corporate globalization largely responsible for soaring emissions, but now the logic of free trade is directly blocking us from making the specific changes needed to reduce climate chaos in response.” Clearly, the big unions are not stepping up the plate, so unionists, workers and those outside of labor need to stand up and demand: system change, not climate change!

There has been a growing trend to build unions outside of the control of the big unions. Michelle Kern wrote in *People’s World* that there is a “rapidly growing trend in innovative organizing among



Graphic: Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University

non-unionized and low-wage workers... [in] new groups called ‘alt-labor,’ [like]... OURWalmart, Restaurant Opportunities Centers, Dancers’ Alliance and elements of the fast food organizing movement... taking on workplaces that were once considered totally impossible to organize... [since] the current AFL-CIO leadership does not reflect today’s workforce, which is becoming younger, with a rising number of people of color.”

There is also a political alternative to backing the Democrats. A recent article by a staff writer of *Labor Notes* noted that after “President Obama...the labor movement...[realized their]...relative powerlessness in the political arena,” renewing calls for “a labor-based political alternative—a labor party...a party unequivocally for working people...[which was spawned by] a Democratic Party that took our work, votes, and money, and gave us nothing in return...Then as now, the Democratic Party was busy lowering expectations.” Once it was established, people talked with “co-workers and the public about the Labor Party’s program: a guaranteed job for everyone at a living wage, the right to organize and strike without fear of losing your job, a shorter work week, free higher education, paid family leave, guaranteed pensions, a paid year off for every seven years worked, an end to the ‘corporate abuse of trade,’ and more,” telling people additionally that the “Democratic Party doesn’t advocate for them...[and] limits the debate and lowers expectations in the labor movement and in the country.” An article by the original founders of the Labor Party published in December 2012 noted that “after the Obama administration didn’t follow through on campaign promises to labor on job-creation and labor law reform...[it] should have marked the date when labor finally disowned the Democratic Party and declared its support for the establishment of a political party with a working-class agenda,” but instead many of these unions endorsed Obama for another term while an independent worker movement never emerged.

There is much change needed in the structure of unions. Using the processes available, workers can instigate a revolution from below to change the unions to do their bidding. However, this may not alone produce a powerful labor movement. Joining and strengthening radical anti-capitalist unions like the member-run International Workers of the World which organizes to “win better conditions today and build a world with economic democracy tomorrow...[where] workplaces [are] run for the benefit of workers and communities rather than for a handful of bosses and executives” is another important step. Then, you wouldn’t be part of an organization that supports dirty energy like the Keystone XL pipeline as in the AFL-CIO. Workers must work to bring radicalism to the big unions or join radical unions that challenge the capitalist system.

As the great Joe Hill said: “Don’t waste any time mourning. Organize!”





## International Action Against Santander Bank

From iwa-ait.org

Anarcho-syndicalists from all over the world, federated in the International Workers' Association (IWA), are standing in solidarity with the workers of Isban (Ingeniería de Software Bancario), which does information technology (IT) services for the Santander Group, a Spanish banking group. Members of the IWA are demanding the reinstatement of a dismissed comrade and an end to the outsourcing of the workers.

Confederação Operária Brasileira (COB) in Brazil organized informational actions and protests in cities like Aracajú and Araxá at the end of September.

The Związek Syndykalistów Polski (ZSP) from Poland concentrated its efforts on actions in Warsaw. There the Santander Group has important strategic interests in expansion through the acquisition of new banks.

The police and security presence at the entrance of the bank called even more attention to the comrades.

The anarcho-syndicalists of Montevideo visited the headquarters of Santander Bank in Uruguay, informing passersby about the conflict in the office and outside.

The Portuguese section of the IWA organized informational acts in the center of Lisbon and Oporto.

In Norway, the Norsk Syndikalistisk Forbund (NSF) informed people in the center of Oslo. There the information was well-received and people were interested in knowing more details about the conflict.

In the United Kingdom, the Solidarity Federation visited banks in Brighton and Hove with informational posters about the conflict.

In Germany, the Freie Arbeiterinnen-und Arbeiter-Union (FAU) in Cologne informed people about the conflict.

Unions located in regions where there are no offices of the Santander Group, like Konfederatsiya Revolyutsionnikh Anarkho-Sindikalistov (KRAS) in Russia or Priama Akcia (PA) in Slovakia, showed their solidarity by sending protest messages to the companies involved in the conflict (Santander, Isban and Panel Sistemas).

In Spain, dozens of actions were held at Bank Santander branches. Salamanca, Ciudad Rodrigo, Barcelona, Madrid, Villaverde, Zaragoza, Málaga and León are some of the places where the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT) expressed their opposition to the outsourcing of workers and demanded the reinstatement of the fired comrade.

The main headquarters of Isban, in Boadilla del Monte, became the preferred place of protest for the anarcho-syndicalists of Madrid. There they distributed more than 1,000 leaflets to workers in a situation of absolute precarity.

We also contacted the Isban management at the Alhambra building. They refused to discuss with us, protected by numerous private police deployed especially for the occasion.

Also the most centrally located branches of the banks in Madrid were visited in the morning, informing the employees and passersby of the situation in the conflict.

Dozens of workers gave their support to the protests.

Due to the attempts of the national police to disperse the informational picket, about 500 leaflets were given out. They did not want to understand that the real criminals are in the offices of the corrupt

management, not in the streets with the workers.

The dismissed comrade made a symbolic gesture of thanks to the comrades in solidarity by putting up a banner in English in his current workplace, Panel Sistemas.

There were also actions of sabotage made as a form of solidarity. These types of actions were seen especially in the working-class areas of Madrid.

The conflict started in August 2013, when workers publically denounced the illegal outsourcing of the staff of Isban.

This caused the immediate dismissal of the union delegate, who was sent back to the "agent" company of origin, Panel Sistemas, in an attempt by the management to avoid any contagious effect.

Revolutionary unions around the world, federated in the IWA, responded to the attack demanding the reinstatement of the

dismissed comrade in the places where the multinational is present. Isban manages some "agent" firms which provide cheap and precarious staff. They deal with more than 10,000 workers illegally outsourced to other companies all over the world, which can be dismissed at any moment without any cost to the bank since these workers are not recognized as the bank's personnel.

The workers of Isban are afraid of winding up on the streets if they make even the slightest protests, which makes them accept surrealistic work days, overtime, obligatory transfers, half-time work, jobs and salaries too low for the real work performed, and lots of other abuses.

The workers have denounced hundreds of irregular dismissals. The dismissals have hit these workers the hardest: the ones who were illegally outsourced, mothers on reduced working days and workers who were transferred abroad have been the preferred targets for cuts. With the complicity of the government and the yellow unions, Santander has gotten away with the mass destruction of employment at practically no cost to them.

The Santander Group not only is making money, but it had a profit of 2,255 million euros in the first six months of 2013, almost a 30 percent increase from the same period in 2012.

Emilio Botín, Rodrigo Rato, Alfredo Sáenz, Jose María Amusátegui and other directors of Santander Bank have been denounced for illegal practices and even found guilty, but they were never punished. Some of their most infamous deeds include continued tax evasion, the irregular purchases of banks like Banesto or Totta, the collapse and subsequent bailout of Bankia, millions of euros in severance pay for managers, the case of Swiss accounts of the Botín family, the sale of trash mortgages, foreclosures, charging abusive interest rates, shady dealings with universities, the participation in arms businesses and the financial management of the terrible prison system. Santander has a long list of crimes which are well-documented.

The interests of Santander now are clashing with the organized workers who are fighting to change the world. We never give up and will not be silenced by their bribes or repression.

Solidarity Against Santander-Isban! Reinstatement the Dismissed Comrade!

To find out more, visit: <http://informaticamadrid.cnt.es> or email: [isban\[at\]cnt.es](mailto:isban[at]cnt.es).



Brazil action.

Photo: iwa-ait.org

## Chinese Worker Imprisoned For Striking

By John Kalwaic

A Chinese migrant worker named Wu Guijun has been detained since May 23, 2013 for leading his fellow migrant workers in a protest to defend their rights. Since Wu was arrested he has been denied contact with his friends and family by Chinese authorities and now faces criminal charges. Wu and his co-workers worked at Diweixin Product Factory, which produces furniture, in Shenzhen (southern China). Wu

and his co-workers were concerned about cutbacks at their factory as well as plans to move the factory to the interior of China where the wages are often lower. Management, however did not want to negotiate, and refused to disclose any information on these cutbacks to the seven workers, including Wu who was chosen to represent the workers. As a result, workers dropped tools and went on strike. They also petitioned the local government to intervene. On May 23, 300 workers were besieged by the police while marching to the City Government; more than 20 workers were arrested and detained, including Wu Guijun. Later, all of the 20 workers who were detained were released except for



Workers strike in Shenzhen. Photo: popularresistance.org

Wu who faces criminal prosecution for "assembling a crowd to disturb social order." The detention of workers is not uncommon in China. Workers are technically not allowed to strike and some activists have been detained for as long as two years. An international campaign has now been set up to help free these activists including Wu Guijun. On Oct. 1, the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU) held a solidarity rally at the Liaison Office of the Central People Government office in Hong Kong. HKCTU President Cheng Ching-fat declared Oct. 1 a "National Day of Anger" on behalf of Wu Guijun and all other imprisoned Chinese labor activists.

With files from Popular Resistance.org.

## Belgium Firefighters Soak Police In Foam



Photo: businessinsider.com

By John Kalwaic

On Oct. 7 firefighters took to the streets of Brussels to protest working conditions and budget cuts. The firefighters had around 30 trucks to block off the streets; they burned tires and waved their union flags during the street protests as they made their way to the prime minister's office. When they got to the prime minister's

office, riot police blocked them off with barbed wire so they could go no further. The firefighters then decided it was time to give the police a foaming. The fire trucks were parked right before the police barricades, as they stood idle before a legion of riot cops and makeshift barbed wire. The firefighters then turned on the hoses and proceeded to hose the police in fire retardant foam. The entire street filled up with the foam and the cops were covered from head to toe. This has not been the first time the firefighters of Belgium have done this; they also did the same thing in 2011. The fire department has come under attack in recent years from the austerity-driven government in Brussels which has faced a militant backlash.

With files from BusinessInsider.com.

## Tegel Prison Introduces The 78-Hour Week

By the Olli R. Solidarity Committee

It's not the first time that the Tegel Prison in Berlin is attempting to force inmates, who are full-time distance-learning students at Hagen University, to take on an additional 40 hours of work in jail. The prison already failed to impose this in previous cases, but yet, they're trying again now.

Now, jailed anti-militarist and union activist Oliver (Olli) R. is expected to spend 40 hours a week gluing bags and folding boxes, despite his studies, which take around 38 hours a week. He can always study after work, according to the prison apparatus. Social worker and group leader Ms. Behrendt said that although she was in favor of R.'s application, she has never come across any prisoner who was actually exempted from working because of their full-time studies. However, the Olli R. Solidarity Committee knows of at least two cases of students at Tegel who did not have to work in addition to their studies. In one case this was, admittedly, only after a legal victory, but by all accounts this was not an isolated case.

Meanwhile, the forced labor continues. True to the institution's favored tactics, the decision is at first delayed as much as possible; because you can only sue once there is a written notification. Thus, Oct. 1, the official start of the term, passed for Olli R. without him ever having received a reply about the matter. And, as long as nothing is decided, he just has to continue the daily eight-hour shift in the prison's packaging facility.

It is somewhat ironic that it is a fellow worker in the IWW who finds himself confronted with this particular labor struggle in prison. Taking advantage of prisoners'

particularly restricted possibilities to take action, the demands made of him are ones no employer would dare make under conditions of collective bargaining. At a day rate of 11,25 euros (only the actual days worked are paid), work in jail is already more than underpaid. If you take it down to an hourly wage, you end up with 1,40 euros an hour. At 78 hours per week, that's just 72 cents.

The Olli R. Solidarity Committee demands that the Tegel Prison exempt Olli R. from this work immediately. We also challenge the legality of the wage-dumping practiced there. While the number of people on the outside who face job losses grows daily, the prison shamelessly advertises on its website that "especially where high-waged manual labor is needed," orders from companies can be "realized at low cost." A thorough investigation of working—or rather exploitation—conditions is highly needed here! We demand at least an end to forced labor, adequate wages, paid sick-days, and a right to strike for prisoners.

We call upon unions, prisoner support initiatives, and civil liberties organizations to support those demands, by sharing this statement, putting our demands to the appropriate bodies, pursuing investigations, and contacting us.

**Send donations to:**

Bank: Deutsche Kreditbank Berlin  
Name: Hauke Benner  
Account Number: 1031053851  
IBAN: De12 120300001031053851  
BIC: BYLADEM 1001  
Reference: Spende Olli R.

Get further information on Oliver R.'s imprisonment here: <http://solikom-olli.site36.net>.