

THE LUMBERJACK

Education
Organization
Emancipation



Freedom in
Industrial
Democracy

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EDITORIALS

"SOME QUESTIONS."

SACRAMENTO, CAL., May 19, 1913.

Covington Hall,

Fellow Worker.—There are some questions I would like to ask you and if you will answer them to the best of your ability, you will do me a favor.

- (1) What is the difference between the I. W. W. and Syndicalism?
- (2) Is there such a thing as a Syndicalist union in Europe that is of a strictly decentralized character and which has no fee and dues-paying system?
- (3) State the differences, if you can, between the conditions that caused Syndicalism to flourish in Europe, and the conditions that now prevail in North America?
- (4) What is the Syndicalist League, why was it launched, and what has been its activities since launched?
- (5) What, in your opinion, is the cause of certain persons leaving the I. W. W. and joining the Syndicalist League, and do you know of anyone that has been expelled from the I. W. W. that is now active in the Syndicalist League?
- (6) Do you think a more decentralized plan could be put into effect in the I. W. W. that would not retard the growth and education of the organization?

Yours for the cause,

H. H. KIZER.

ANSWER.

(1) The I. W. W. arose in the most highly industrialized country on earth, the United States. Syndicalism arose in a country, France, devoted largely to de luxe industries. In the United States the machine had forced co-operative labor on the workers in all the great basic industries and had begun already to dominate the farms. Here we had already arrived at a Socialism in production, distribution and exchange. The individual world had perished. The I. W. W. was born. It came to carry democracy into the last stronghold of the aristocracy—the workshops of the world. It came to make the present Socialism, of, by and for the capitalist class, into an Industrial Democracy, coming from the environment it did, facing the machine, which massed labor everywhere, it, the I. W. W., laid all its stress on social organization as opposed to individual autonomy. It conceived one vast and all-embracing democracy of the working class and proudly proclaimed itself the "Labor Trust." But above all and over all, the I. W. W. was the first labor organization on earth to clearly set forth a plan whereby the Commonwealth of the Workers could be organized, the workers take possession of the earth and be fully prepared to administer the Industries when they overthrow capitalism. This it did in advancing the idea of the INDUSTRIAL UNION and its FUNCTIONS in the NEW SOCIETY. Around this Industrial Union idea swings the whole theory and tactic of the I. W. W. Syndicalism, on the contrary, being born in a land of de luxe industries, in a country where the artistic skill of the workers yet counted for more than the machine in the industries, laid all its stress on individual autonomy, on the freedom of action of the group. The general Confederation of Labor of France was not a federalism, but a confederacy. Syndicalism, therefore, glorified "individual action," exalted the "militant minority" and openly sneered at democracy, while the I. W. W., true to its environment, glorified

"social action," exalted the "mass" and passionately, as a whole, defended the democracy.

Both Industrialism and Syndicalism are, however, frankly revolutionary and, as there are no fundamental differences between them, will soon be merged into one world-wide movement which will culminate in the Working Class Commonwealth. It is only a questing of squaring the individual and group right with the social right and the pure FEDERALISM of Labor is here.

Had it not been for the fact that the first Convention of the I. W. W. was dominated by the old "authoritarian socialists," who imposed the present constitution on the organization, we would have been much nearer to the pure Federalism, which is the basic dream of the I. W. W., than we are today, for the workers within the Union have always respected the Preamble, but never the Constitution, and for the reason that the first was theirs while the last was not.

The G. C. L. has already accepted the principle of Industrial Union and the present restlessness in our ranks indicates an early triumph within the I. W. W. of the principles of pure Federalism, by which I mean the conscious rule of the workers by themselves, SOLIDARITY achieved, not on the principle of an army, but by the free, democratic will of the mass, which, recognizing that "an injury to one is an injury to all," stands ever ready to defend its class interests no matter where on earth they are menaced.

(2) I never heard of such a thing and, in this organized world, believe it an utter impossibility.

(3) I have already practically answered this question in answering the first, but where a nation's industries have not yet become highly trustified, the revolts and organizations of the workers will partake strongly of their own individualism; on the contrary, where a country is, like the United States, merged into one vast machine, the revolts and organizations of the workers will reflect strongly the socialized character of their lives. Syndicalism is strongest in such countries as France, Italy, Argentina, etc.; Industrialism in the United States, England, Canada, Australasia, etc. It is a question of economic determinism. Man does not act as he chooses, but from necessity. Thus in the South, the West and Canada, the I. W. W.'s there think and act more closely on the lines of the Confederation of Labor than elsewhere—it is their environment, their necessity that makes them so—it is economic determinism speaking.

(4) The Syndicalist League of North America was organized mainly by persons dissatisfied with the present highly centralized form of the I. W. W. and who further believed that a mistake had been made in withdrawing from the American Federation of Labor. It seems to have been launched to prove the I. W. W. absolutely wrong and the A. F. of L. capable of being revolutionized. In my opinion they have, in both cases, somewhat of a job on their hands, but I admit that I am prejudiced in favor of the I. W. W. All its activities, as far as I have been able to read, see or hear, have been along the same lines. I do not think it will endure for long or cut much figure in the North American labor movement.

(5) First, because they had become disheartened with the terrific struggle necessary to establish the I. W. W. and, second, because their right of free speech was more or less suppressed. I do not "know of any one that was expelled from the I. W. W. that is now active in the Syndicalist League." There may be, but this would not explain the League's existence.

(6) I do; and I think it is coming somewhat on the lines outlined in the "draft" submitted to the Unions recently by L. U.'s 79, 82 and 389 of Calgary and Edmonton, Canada, though, personally, I do not agree with them as to their proposals—i. e., the General Officers, but I do believe in shearing the G. E. B. of all power to act for the organization except in extraordinary cases. I believe the I. W. W. should be built up from the Local Union, to the District Council, to the Industrial Union, to the General Administration. I believe the so-called "Industrial Departments" to be, not only absolutely useless in the machinery of organization, but that they, once organized, would not only be cumbersome, but an actual danger to the democratic control of the I. W. W. I think these "Industrial Departments" should be abolished entirely. I think that the "circuits" outlined by the Calgary and Edmonton Locals, or "Districts" as are already organized in the Forest and Lumber Workers Union, should control all organizers; and that the Unions affiliated with the Industrial Councils should assume the control of all propaganda in their respective Districts. I believe the press of the I. W. W. should be owned and controlled by the Industrial Unions and by the District Councils, to the end that no handful of men should ever hold this dangerous power in their hands, for a free press is the cornerstone of democracies.

I not only "think a more decentralized plan could be put into effect in the I. W. W." and one "that would not retard the growth and education of the organization," but I know it is coming and must come.

We want and are going to have our own constitution, one based on the spirit of and the principles laid down in the great Preamble, and we are not going to call it a "constitution," but simply the "laws of the I. W. W." I hope, for "constitution" carries with it the idea of the dead ruling the living and all such ideas should be an anathema to a Revolutionary Democracy.

At the last, experience alone will settle most of these questions as the I. W. W. openly acknowledges its belief in the law of eternal change, and there is nothing impossible to an organization that recognizes this law as a rule of action.

But, we are not to-day primarily interested in just how the Industrial Democracy will be organized—to-day we are primarily interested in how best to accomplish the Revolution. Yours for Industrial Democracy,

COVINGTON HALL.

LUMBER CAMPS NEED MORE MEN.

With the opening up of the lumbering operations in the northern part of the state, there is a big demand for men. According to William Leiserson, state free employment bureau, more than 500 laborers have been sent from Milwaukee to the north woods in the past three weeks. There is also an evacuation of labor for railroad work. This work draws a big percentage of the floating class of workmen. This year the railroads are paying 10 per cent more for such help. The men are now receiving \$1.75, and it is said the construction companies on railroad work, will, in all probability, be compelled to pay still more. Labor is scarce for that work.

During the past three weeks representatives of the lumber companies in northern Wisconsin have been stationed at the office of the State Free Employment bureau, lining up workmen to

"ship" them north. The bureau headquarters are packed with scores of laboring men.

The laborer is told the amount of wages and the conditions under which he will be required to work. His transportation is paid by the employing company. The employing company does not simply hand over five or six dollars of expense money, telling the recruit to be at work at such and such a place at a stated time. He has to "come across" with his baggage as security. His baggage is checked by the employing agent to the laborers' destination and then the ticket is turned over to him. His "turkey," or bundle of baggage, represents practically all his personal property. He, therefore, will not abandon it. Of course, the baggage check is sent by mail to the employing company and cannot be had by the laborer until he reports for duty. This insures the company against losses through fares advanced.

Mr. Leiserson states the lumber companies are experiencing great difficulty in holding men at the camps.

The above was clipped from the Milwaukee, Wis., "Journal" and sent to us by Fellow-worker Charles A. Hartnug, of Chicago. It shows clearly what a big bunch of bluffing liars the Southern Lumber Operators' Association are when they go around this Timber Belt and try to scare you Southern lumberjacks into staying out of the Union and continuing to accept the miserable wages, long hours and rotten conditions they have forced on you for now nigh on to thirty years by threatening to "close down theirs (?) mills." It's bunc pure and simple and, if you've got the sense of a horse chestnut, you'll get into the Union before sundown and either make them make their bluff good or come across, before this Summer ends, with a man's instead of a peon's life for all the Forest and Lumber Workers on the Continent.

YOU CAN DO IT.

FORTY THOUSAND and more men will soon be needed in the Harvest Fields. Thousands of workers are needed in the flooded sections of the North to rebuild railroads and cities. Lumber is at the highest price reached in a generation and stocks everywhere are shot to pieces. Never before in the history of Lumberland did you lumberjacks have a finer opportunity to hold up the bandits called the Southern Lumber Operators' Association and force them to return to you and yours some at least of the wealth they have looted from you and the commonwealth. NOW is the day of YOUR opportunity—hit the iron while it is hot. You Southern lumberjacks, up and at them! Join your brothers of the West in the great GENERAL STRIKE of forest and lumber workers and win, THIS SUMMER a man's life for all the forest men of North America!

On with the jihad of Labor!
On with the General Strike!
Long live Industrial Democracy!

BLESSED INSTITUTIONS.

(By W. M. Witt.)

Some people do not appear to exactly understand the origin of saw-mills and their purpose.

Some seem to think they were constructed just to exploit the workers.

But, of course their primary object was to benefit the human race and give employment to the poor.

As a matter of fact it would be impossible for the operators and workers of saw-mills to give all their slaves good, easy jobs because, there would then be no one to actually work and produce results.

There is a great multitude of "bone-heads" or "brush-monkeys" in Louisiana who have been, and are yet waiting to see if the F. and L. W. Union is a success. If so, they will then get a membership card.

In the meantime they share in any improvements that may accrue from the Union and retain the good will of their Masters.

That's right; every one stand back and "wait" and you will have a powerful Union, sure enough, all right.

A "brush-monkey" as a rule, is awfully afraid of losing his job. He would like to this or that but is afraid he might become separated from his "sow-belly" and beans. They are the two things that seem to content him most of all. I have heard a number say they were tired of paying 50 cents a month Union dues and seeing no immediate results.

They don't seem to ever get tired of paying from one to four dollars a month for a so-called medical and insurance fee imposed upon them by their Masters, the mill owners. By the way, this Dr. fee and insurance is the most thieving scheme ever hatched in the putrid brain of the timber thieves.

Suppose we don't have any Union.

Don't organize. Just Wait until people like old John H. Kirby and R. A. Long get weary of the good things of life. Perhaps they will then give you more for your work and you will then get a small whack at what you produce.

In the meantime, you should feel grateful that by working 10 or 12 hours per day, you have access to an improvised, or makeshift of a bed, accompanied by a limited amount of poorly cooked and adulterated food.

Should your condition never improve but steadily grow worse, remember, that "the heavier the cross the brighter the crown."

That never dying and blessed promise should act as a mental salve, soothing, cooling and erasing any irritant thoughts or discontented ideas that might enter your cranium. As for myself the promise is quite refreshing and helps to make "life's walk easy."

You know all poor working people go to Heaven, especially those who love and obey their Masters here on earth.

They certainly ought to go there if they devote their lives to making this planet a Heaven for others.

Poverty is the passport to Heaven.

If you are blessed with one of these, you will find the "Pearly Gates" ajar and old Peter waiting to place a crown of jewels upon your sun-burnt brow.

Old Brother "Bone-Head" will now lead us in prayer.

ITA EST.

"If Lieutenant Governor O'Hara didn't know before what kind of a power is this System whose profits he threatened he must have found out by this time.

It is a dangerous thing to attack the arrangements by which we send women to hell that we may have our automobiles and dwell in palaces."—"The Coming Nation."

"The great basic truth that the world's wealth is created by labor alone and that labor is entitled to all it creates is so simple, so obvious and so undeniable that we have only to continue to preach that with all the strength that in us lies to bring the day of emancipation."—"The Coming Nation."

"Men do not despise a thief if he steal to satisfy his soul (belly) when he is hungry."—Proverbs 7-30.

A miracle. "Uncle Gus" reports that a baby was born in Merryville with rubber arms and glass eyes. Red Nufsed says this is an error. He declares the baby was born with wooden shoes and no conscience.