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# Seattle Worker

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# Letter from the Editor

This is our first issue of *Seattle Worker* since COVID upended all our lives, and it is my first stint as Editor. Many thanks to my predecessors James Smith, who kept the *Seattle Worker* up and running, and Lindsay Mimir, who started the whole thing off. Thank you also to all the hands that went into the making of this issue and to its dedicated readers and supporters.

How has COVID changed the way we work and organize? We interviewed several workers to find out. We learned, in US dollars, exactly how much the employing class values essential workers. That would be \$200, and thank you for risking your life to serve the community. But their stories show that participating in solidarity unionism can bring change.

Speaking of solidarity unionism in life-threatening circumstances, the story of local Vietnam-era GIs forming a union to oppose the war begins in this issue, with the "Battle of Cascadia."

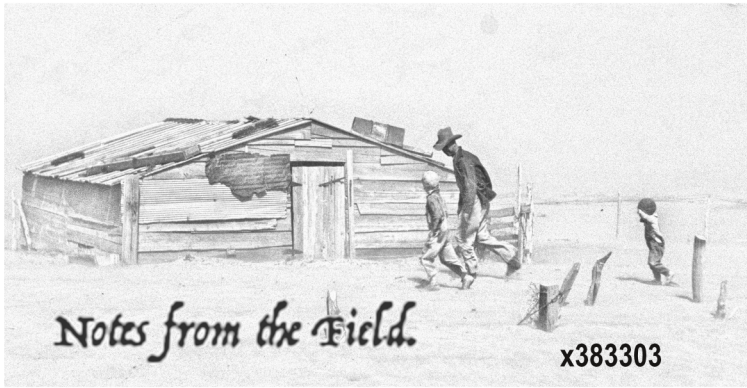
Yours for a better world,

Editor

Cover art: Mike Alewitz, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons, with modifications.

This banner honors the mostly female and immigrant textile workers who participated in the 1912 Lawrence Textile Strike. "Bread and Roses" is a labor and worker's rights slogan originating with these strikers, signifying that workers deserve a high quality of life and have a right to culture, family and leisure time- the "roses"- and should be given adequate wages and time away from work to give life meaning in addition to earning the "bread" needed for basic survival. Mike Alewitz is an American labor activist and mural painter.





Just as the coronavirus was beginning to make many of us nervous in February, more than 7000 health care workers in Hong Kong went on strike for 5 days. These workers were a part of the new Hospital Authority Employees Alliance (HAEA).

In Hong Kong, 12 new labor unions were established in the last two months of 2019. That brought the year's total to an astonishing 23 new unions. While much of the world has been focused on the news of the Democracy Movement, the creation of labor unions is a major development.

In China, with COVID lockdowns, new security laws, and arrests, the CCP has effectively stifled dissent. If you want to keep up to date on labor activities in China, we suggest following the China Labour Bulletin at <https://www.clb.org.hk/>. Their strike map is especially interesting.

A recent article in the China Labour Bulletin, "Food Delivery Workers need a trade union to push for real change" (22 September 2020), hit home for me living through our new pandemic reality.

The United Steelworkers Local 5114 Union has accepted Hecla Mining Company's proposal and their strike of almost three years has ended at the Lucky Friday Mine near Wallace Idaho. The strike had been precipitated by Hecla's unilateral changing of work rules in March of 2017. The about 250 hard-rock miners work in one of the most dangerous environments. The Lucky Friday mine had been producing 3.6 million ounces of silver yearly. However, in 2018 the scab workers were only able to produce 180k oz. of silver—a 95% reduction.

Hecla Mining has been a bane to workers since its inception in 1866. It is widely believed that the killing of 73 people (62 of them children) in the Italian Hall Disaster of 1913 in Calumet, Michigan, was the work of its henchmen.

The Oregon ATU Local 757 has been fighting to retain an apprentice training program at TriMet despite threats from

TriMet to cut the program. The TriMet system employs 165 bus and 123 light rail mechanics. They maintain over 700 buses and 145 light rail vehicles. Nearly all of the mechanics have gone through the training program. The Union points out that the unique skills needed to maintain these vehicles are best gained through a structured apprentice plan that gives fuelers and cleaners a defined path to the coveted mechanic positions.

A petition, "Don't Eliminate Apprenticeships," can be found at [www.valhoyle.com/trimetpetition](http://www.valhoyle.com/trimetpetition).

As of February, the Texas Amazon warehouse is double the national average for warehouses. Its 2019 injury rate was almost one in ten.

But never to be fazed, Amazon is fighting back on multiple fronts. Millions are being spent on national cable TV advertising. However, we remember correctly that Amazon has been on the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health's Dirty Dozen List for two years. The award speaks of the very high rates of on the job injuries, suicide attempts, and worker deaths.

Maverick Gaming has become the first gambling company to unionize in Washington. Teamsters Local 117 has organized 1700 workers out of their Tukwila local. Maverick has 2200 employees working in 19 Washington card rooms. The new agreement affords workers better pay, health care, retirement, scheduling, and other working conditions.

Work stoppages are on the rise. The Bureau of Labor Statistics keeps track of the number of large work stoppages per year, since its inception in 1884. Their figures show a steady decline until the 1980s, when work stoppages almost completely disappeared. In 2009 a new wave began, with five major stoppages, by 2017 there were over 10, and in 2019 there were 25 major work stoppages of 1000 or more workers. These actions involved a total of almost 500,000 workers. These workers believed in standing up for themselves and joining together in solidarity.

Wage theft is running rampant in the Washington State gig economy. Last year almost 50,000 workers were wrongly classified as independent contractors. This cheats workers out of pay, benefits, and workplace protections they have earned. Many times, they lose unemployment and social security payments as well. The primary reason employers practice this kind of wage theft is that in most cases the misclassifications can result in a 30% "savings" in labor costs. Recent studies have pinpointed the

construction trades, clerical services, and hotels and restaurants workers as being the three largest areas of fraud.

Union and community volunteers in Multnomah County, Oregon have been reporting wage theft in public works, through a pilot program instituted by the county commissioners. It won't be a surprise if the same problems that were found in Washington are found in Oregon too.

## THE TEN BIGGEST U.S. STRIKES OF 2019

|        |  |         |
|--------|--|---------|
| 92,700 | North Carolina Association of Educators vs. NC Legislature | 1 day   |
| 46,000 | United Auto Workers vs. General Motors                     | 29 days |
| 36,400 | West Virginia Education Association vs. W.V. Legislature   | 2 days  |
| 33,000 | United Teachers Los Angeles vs. LA Unified School District | 6 days  |
| 32,000 | Chicago Teachers Union vs. Chicago Public Schools          | 11 days |
| 31,000 | UFCW vs. Stop & Shop Supermarket in Mass., Conn. and R.I.  | 7 days  |
| 25,000 | AFSCME Local 3299 vs. University of California             | 3 days  |
| 20,400 | Oregon Education Association vs. Oregon Legislature        | 1 day   |
| 20,000 | CWA vs. AT&T in nine southern states                       | 2 days  |
| 18,900 | South Carolina Association of Educators vs. SC Legislature | 1 day   |

# One Big Union

Excerpted from "One Big Union," Ninth Edition.

### ***How Should Society Be Organized?***

What if workers, instead of corporations, governments, or bosses, decide how we want resources to be shared? Not simply goods and services, but also access to housing, transportation, medicine, and so forth?

What if you go into work, and instead of a boss telling you what to do, you collaborate with your coworkers? Or elect a project manager? What if you insist on having the proper tools for the job and the right safety equipment? What if you have the right to say no to tasks that harm yourself, others, or the environment?

And what if you could collaborate with workers in other workplaces and even other industries, rather than wasting time and resources in competition?

### ***Who Should Hold Power?***

When we think about democracy, people usually think about the decision we make once or twice a year at the ballot box, where we elect someone to run our social, economic, and political lives. But it never has been safe to let a few control the affairs of the many, and it never will be safe.

Under capitalism, our increased productive capabilities have increased the power of the ownership class. Their wealth allows

them to buy influence in politics, the media, and over other aspects of our social lives.

Seemingly every time we give more power to someone to fix the situation, the problems get worse. And this holds true whether we allow that power to fall to the present managers of industry, their friends in government, or their friends in the undemocratic business unions. Rather than giving power to one leader or to one political party, the best choice is economic democracy—industries run by those who do the work using democratic procedures on a daily basis for the equal benefit of all.

**We do not fear democracy: we believe it should be the backbone of our economic, social, and political life.**

What capitalists and politicians fear is democracy, which is nothing more than rule by the people. This is why capitalists fight to keep democracy out of their factories, their mines, and their stores, and when it suits them, capitalists ask the government to intervene and break strikes, arrest union leaders, and levy fines against workers. This is why capitalists seek to privatize our public services, such as our schools or public parks, and either "run them like a business" or defund them entirely. This is why capitalists spend so much of the money that they stole from our labor on lobbying, PR campaigns, and media to take away our voices even in issues that involve our very survival, from climate change to food security and water rights to pandemics.

We do not fear democracy: we believe it should be the backbone of our economic, social, and political life. We want control over our own labor because it is such a central part of who we are and what we do. We believe those who do the labor should have a voice in how it is conducted.

### **Industrial Democracy**

Put another way, who should control the organization of labor that provides the goods and services people need for survival and well-being?

- Should it be controlled by a handful of business owners and managers?
- Should it be administered by politicians?
- Or should it be run by those who do the work?

Presently the capitalist class and the politicians work together to govern how the economy functions.

A relatively tiny number of people control industry and commerce: capitalists, who own the factories, stores, mines, etc., and politicians, who protect the interests of the capitalist class with laws, police, and the military. So the working class—which includes almost everyone and produces nearly everything—has little control over our own daily activities.

Industrial democracy means workers

manage our own industries and our own labor. We should manage industry democratically because workers comprise an overwhelming majority of our society and produce all wealth. Only we have the knowledge necessary for industry to function. Without the working class, industry does not exist. We should be deciding among ourselves whether or not industry is productive or idle, what is produced and how, and who should have the wealth we create.

Through working together democratically, we can run industry ourselves and thereby solve the problem of power. We can stop

doing what we are told to do and start doing what we collectively decide to do, depriving our opposition of power and gaining it for ourselves. We can keep alive the democracy that cannot survive when practiced only on election day. We can gain security in basic needs like food and shelter, and the freedom that comes from being secure in our well-being. We can make organized society a harmonious whole, working for the good of all.

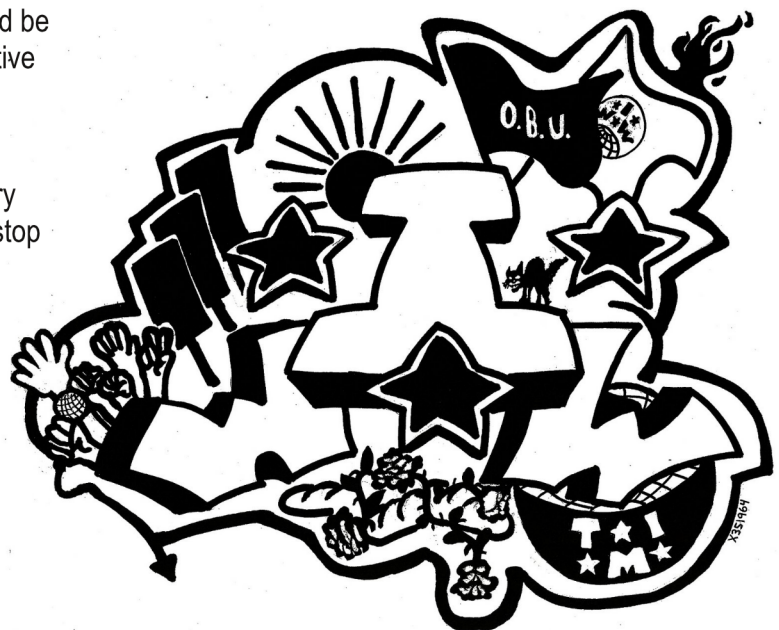
Working class organization must serve two purposes:

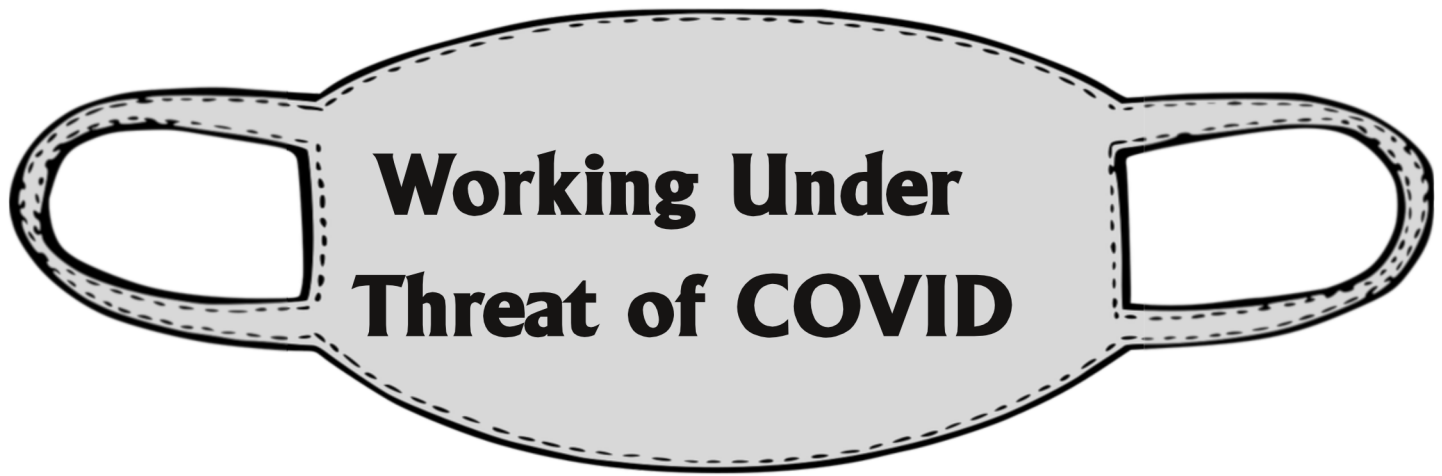
- it must provide the most efficient structure for carrying on our short-term struggle for better conditions and better pay;
- in the long term, it must provide a comprehensive and flexible solution to issues regarding the production and distribution of goods in an equitable and ecologically sustainable manner through the efficient management of modern industry by organized labor.

To unite the working class industrially, we also seek to end racial, religious, gender, and political discrimination. What is needed is One Big Union of all workers no matter what their language, what their beliefs, or what the color of their skin may be. In the union all are equal because we are all equally used by the same system. We will never be One Big Union if we allow prejudice to divide us from within.

Fortunately, but not by coincidence, the same type of organization best serves these purposes: a labor union based on mutual support, solidarity, and democracy. Through organizing collectively, as one international union, the IWW builds toward the future.

**We can stop doing what we are told to do and start doing what we collectively decide to do**





**Seattle Worker: What was workplace organizing like before COVID?**

William Clayworth (customer service): Before COVID I was doing customer service, and we were making progress. It was easy to talk to my coworkers during the down time. We had been talking about our grievances, and some of us were meeting in a space the IWW rented. I took a training and pitched in by working on spreadsheets—grievance lists and that kind of thing, to help out the committee.

**Seattle Worker: How has COVID changed your workplace?**

Jessica (nonprofit): Everyone is working from home now, including two new people we onboarded since the lockdown started. It has been a tough transition for me, having less access to my coworkers. I'm autistic and some aspects of the work that were already hard have been amplified by not being able to be near my coworkers on a regular basis. In general there is too much work, so we have constant issue prioritizing and refocusing. It's a collaborative process that is hard to do without the same type and level of contact.

We have a hotline that people can call into, with a lot of people

**There are some opportunities and some hurdles wrapped up in one big bag.**

who have problems where there aren't good answers to, within our current legal framework and world order. It's sad and frustrating and hard to get those calls in my house.

Gavin (retail): At the start of the pandemic about half the staff of the company took time off, cashed out their sick time. Then the employer sent us all an email saying, "if you feel uncomfortable working you have to quit, and if you want to stay employed you

have to come back to work." They wouldn't even do a furlough because "it costs money to keep people on payroll." It couldn't have been much. I was pretty sour about it, and a couple people I talked to were pretty sour about it too.

The way they did it meant there was no way to collect unemployment—if you quit your job or are fired for truancy you don't collect it, so in effect, they didn't want us to get paid.

We were given a temporary two dollar an hour bonus. They made it sound like it was going to be for the duration of COVID and it wasn't. Instead it was "Here's an extra \$200 in your paycheck, thank you so much for being willing to risk your life to serve your community."

At work the biggest thing they did was enforce an occupancy limit in the building, keeping the number of customers in the building down, which has been rather helpful, and also giving us a little more leeway when dealing with customers. They had a mask mandate and made customers line up outside before getting admitted to the building. For a while we were doing regular disinfectant of everything—we had spray bottles of medical grade disinfectant everywhere. We also have hand sanitizer at every point of sale.

William Clayworth (event venue): I remember our New Years 2019, with our event venue full of people, we were talking about what 2020 will look like and imagining grand plans—are we gonna go to Mars? Little did we know as we were ringing in that year what was already upon us. In February there were little signs. Why are all these parking spots opening up? And all the tech workers were staying home. The city was changing. It felt apocalyptic.

**Nothing can organize like your boss can!**

Then events started getting cancelled, and then the managers had me take the weekend off, and then I came back to meetings that were really different. Our manager was saying,

"Hey, we should all be keeping six feet apart, socially distanced, because we don't want to spread this." A few people started wearing masks.

Then we closed. They paid us for a few days and then they laid us off. They told us to collect unemployment, but that was a shitshow. Then we got our jobs back and the managers started talking about reopening. For months we kept having all these reopening procedures for when it was "safe to come back."

There's plexiglass everywhere now. They put arrows on the floor showing us where to go. And there's an intercom with my manager's voice that keeps repeating the safety instructions for the customers—"Wear a mask, stay six feet apart, use hand sanitizer—and enjoy your visit."

William Clayworth (warehouse): After I was laid off from my old job, I got a warehouse job, and I was waking up at 4 am, commuting 50 miles to Renton. They gave us gloves and masks and took our temperatures. We had all these safety procedures, but every two weeks we'd get an email saying that so-and-so had tested positive for coronavirus and what their last day had been. I didn't like the parking situation. They wouldn't let us use their parking lot—I don't know why, it was big—so we had to park two miles offsite and take a shuttle.

### **Seattle Worker: What are your biggest grievances, post-COVID?**

Gavin (retail): Issues with customers is the biggest thing. We still have a lot of customers who just kinda get up in our faces and don't respect our six foot space rule.

I'd like to see workers having less time on the sales floor, less time interacting with the public—more workers, more time off, or more workers cycling between "behind the scenes work" and customer-facing work. During the busy season we're at the customer service desk four to five days a week. It's exhausting and you're on your feet on concrete for eight hours. But now, having 8 hours in front of random members of the public every day made me feel unsafe.



Most customers do have masks. We have had a few customers try to come in refusing to wear masks and we've had to kick them out.

Some people gripe about that but management backs us up.



### **Seattle Worker: What does workplace organizing look like under COVID?**

Jessica (nonprofit): We had been organizing before COVID and had built up some relationships. After the pandemic began, my boss tried to fire me and one of my coworkers. I found out about it on a Saturday and spent the weekend on various phone calls and google docs. We were able to put together a formal letter to the board before we had officially been fired. We used terms like "without cause" and "retaliatory" and that touched off a month-long grievance process. In the end no one got fired.

Gavin (retail): I was just starting to have one-on-ones with my coworkers. The week before all the lockdowns started going into effect I had my third or fourth one, so I was starting to build a committee.

Before COVID our biggest grievance is our employer has absolutely no training program at all. For most of the people I've talked to it's one of their top three, the others being pay and respect for our dignity.

### **Seattle Worker: Has COVID made workplace organizing easier or harder?**

William Clayworth (event venue): Well, they laid off all the part-time people so our organizing committee was much smaller. But we had kept right on organizing. Our committee is starting over to figure out what our biggest grievances are.

William Clayworth (warehouse): Organizing at the warehouse was hard, with everyone tired and supposed to keep six feet away. I saw new people come and go. I was trying to map out the workplace, get peoples' names. It was so early in the morning I didn't feel like talking to people. I was either working or on break to eat food and chill out, and talking to people just felt like more work. So I struggled with one-on-ones but at least I was laying down the framework. Then my old job reopened and I went back to it.

Gavin (retail): It's made my life a little bit easier because we're still all in person. We can't work remotely, so in a sense very little has changed. But it's been easier to nail down times because my coworkers aren't doing anything after work any more. Right now I've got one coworker signed up with the IWW

and I'm working on a couple more, so we're on the cusp of having an established committee.

In the media I see people saying COVID is going to be the death of unions, so we just have to focus on electing Democrats in November, or else they're saying it's the biggest opportunity in a generation. But in my perspective it really depends on what your workplace looks like. There are some opportunities and some hurdles wrapped up in one big bag.

Jessica (nonprofit): In some ways it's harder to have organizing conversations when you don't see each other as often. It's hard to have more organic conversations with people, figure out what our grievances are. An upside is we are very used to videoconferencing at this point and so we're able to hold our union meetings remotely. We have pretty good lines of communication and we were able to bring those two new hires into our organizing efforts pretty easily. It sort of helped that my boss tried to fire me right after one of them got hired, and she got to watch that whole episode. Nothing can organize like your boss can!

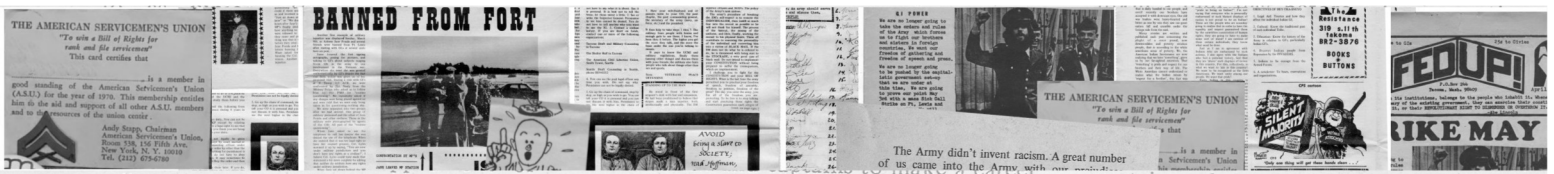
### **Seattle Worker: What gives you hope for the future?**

Gavin (retail): I'm hoping that when COVID starts to tail back, by then we'll have had enough time to have reached a supermajority of the workforce and take some action over whatever our grievances may be. One thing I'm interested in is being able to retain our newly granted ability to kick out customers if they're mean or rude, which happens all the time. Anyone who's working customer service knows that having just one rude customer in a day can absolutely ruin your day. That . . . and wages!

***Covid has disrupted workplaces everywhere, but solidarity unionism is still going strong. Workers are continuing to hold one-on-ones with new hires, build their committees, and brainstorm actions. The Seattle campaigns committee has a new "external organizer" program and is helping other branches expand their organizing capacity. Moving forward, we'll have online meetings as a new tool in our toolbox. -ed***







# When Fort Lewis Soldiers Fought For a Union

## Part 1. "The Battle of Cascadia"

**The following article was a collaboration between Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and GI organizers, and members of the Seattle Worker committee. -ed.**

For American working class youth during the Vietnam War, the US military was often their first real encounter with employment. The Vietnam War was a brutal, ugly, and dangerous conflict, with millions of Vietnamese civilians killed, over 60,000 GIs dead, and over 300,000 wounded. Totaled, the dead were equivalent to the population of the entire city of Los Angeles.

The mainstream media today focuses on this aspect of the war but misses out on the class struggle and the widespread angst and despair that led to rank-and-file revolt. But this factor was a visceral reality for soldiers organizing against this war. And at the time, the military brass were painfully aware of it.

*"By every conceivable indicator, our Army that remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and non commissioned officers, drug ridden and dispirited where not near mutinous. Elsewhere than Vietnam the situation is nearly as serious."*

– Colonel Robert D Heintz, "The Collapse of the Armed Forces," *Armed Forces Journal*, June 1971.



Image from Fed Up Vol 1 No. 1, Oct 13, 1969

This organization was happening all over the country and in Vietnam. One very clear incident was connected to the cause of unionism. At Fort Lewis in the late summer of 1969, soldiers formed a chapter of the Americans Servicemen's Union, publishing their own newspaper, "FED UP," which they clandestinely distributed on post. The ASU was part of the GI organizing movement, and FED UP was one of many GI organizing papers. GIs told the story of the union's first real skirmish on base, "The Battle of Cascadia," in the November 1969 issue of FED UP:

*"On Monday, October 20, the American Servicemens Union held a meeting at the Cascadian Service Club on post. There were 35 GIs and three civilians at the meeting, which had been underway for about 30 minutes when a platoon of MPs descended upon the service club. SSG Bostick, the sergeant in charge of the MPs, arrested five men he considered to be the leaders of the meeting and took them outside to awaiting squad cars. The meeting continued without their 'leaders.' It was decided by the rest of the men that the best action would be to return to their different units and start spreading the word about the gestapo tactics of the military police. As they began to leave the men were told that they too were under arrest."*

The military tried to break the organization of the American Servicemen's Union by making the assumptions that it was hierarchical and that all they would have to do is address "the leaders." But the GIs were decentralized and anti-hierarchical. They had no real "leaders" to speak of, and so they were able to continue the meeting regardless of the first arrests. As the military realized this, they came back to arrest everyone, taking them by truck to a temporary holding cell. During the ride, they sang the Wobbly song, "Hold the Fort," indicating that they were by no means cowed.

*"The next five hours was a really fantastic show of solidarity. We were all put in an 8 by 10 foot cell where we continued the meeting the MPs had tried to break up. We discussed the*

ASU—its purpose and goals; we made plans for this issue of FED UP; and we discussed plans for an action at Ft Lewis in connection with the nationwide moratorium. One additional matter was brought up: we decided to have further meetings on post. After the meeting was over we began cheering and shouting and singing and just generally making a lot of noise. Because of all the noise, the MPs couldn't make phone calls or conduct any normal business."

**A**nother advantage of a decentralized movement is that the meeting can be held anytime workers—in this case, the GIs—are gathered. By continuing the meeting even in the jail cell, the soldiers demonstrated that their movement could not be contained. The singing and shouting defeated the efforts of the MPs overall. It was a denial of "normal operations" that union members everywhere have found to be an effective tactic. It can disrupt every aspect of capitalism: traditional employers, the system, and the war machine.

"SSG Bostick then began to interrogate the men. He would pick one man from the cell and the rest would yell 'Article 31' [ed: the military right to remain silent] and cheer. After about two minutes he would return to pick another man for questioning and the same thing would happen. After questioning about 15 of the men, all he had was 15 names, ranks, service numbers, and units and Article 31. No one was answering any questions. SSG Bostick talked with Major Miller, the officer in charge, and they decided that since they couldn't break our solidarity and they had no reason to charge us with anything, they would have to release us. As groups of men were released to their units, the rest would cheer."

**W**hen the working class stands together, we are unstoppable. The questioning by the military police was once again looking for people to blame or cut off the 'leadership' and outside support. If any soldier had caved, they might have been able to prosecute the rest. Common jail sentences for this

kind of organizing started at 6 months. But because they stood together and showed solidarity, they didn't face jail—a demonstration of the principle of "Nobody talks, everybody walks."

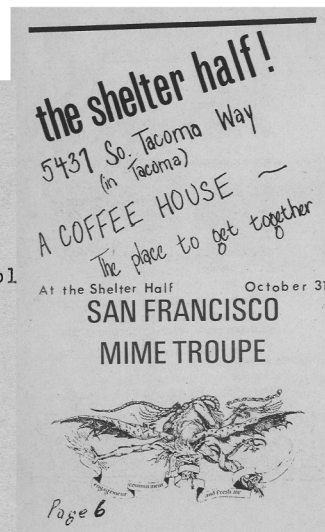
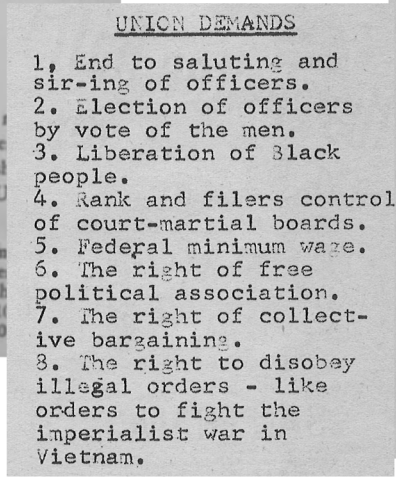
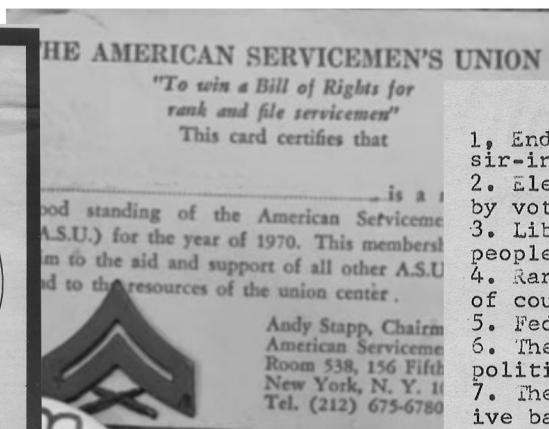
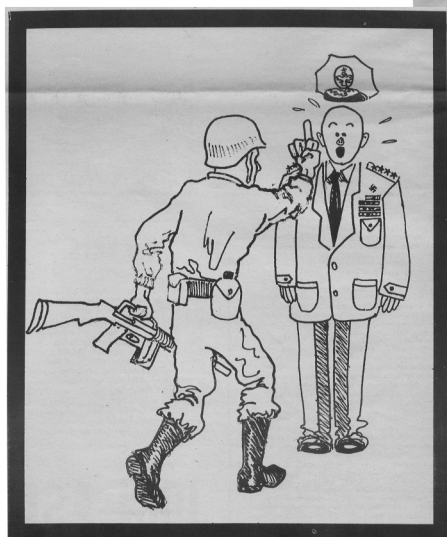
"Since the meeting on post, the Army has steadily been backing down. Originally the brass said we were busted for having a 'meeting of political nature' on post. A few days later they said the MPs were called to the service club because 'boisterous activities' were reported. They just can't find any reason to charge us."

**Faced with more than 35 GIs standing shoulder to shoulder in solidarity, they couldn't move**

**W**ith collective action comes collective power. The Army initially wanted to charge the soldiers with the heaviest of charges—but faced with more than 35 GIs standing shoulder to shoulder in solidarity, they couldn't move forward. And seeing the union in action helped lead to the legitimization of the GI movement for the soldiers of the post. It emboldened soldiers to get the paper, pass the paper out, talk more freely about their experiences and working conditions—and seeing everyone walk without charges helped create a sense that they could step forward and take the offensive.

**I**t further emboldened them to put the army itself on trial, which we will discuss in Part Two: "The Trial of the Army." This action and that trial helped create the conditions for the US withdrawal from Vietnam, and later also helped inspire soldiers of other wars—including the Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who refused to fight. We will tell the story of that struggle in Part Three.

**For more about the GI movement, visit <https://depts.washington.edu/labpics/zenPhoto/antiwar/gipaper/>**



# In November, We Remember: Sedition Act of 1918 2020

In Portland, moms are standing up to protect protestors. Meanwhile, US Atty. Gen. William Barr is suggesting that the Sedition Act be used to bring many US cities—including Seattle and Portland—under "control." He has suggested that these cities be declared "Anarchist Jurisdictions." **In November, we remember** that the Sedition Act was one of the main tools used to attack the socialist movement and the IWW back in the day.

The Sedition Act, in conjunction with the earlier Espionage Act, made it illegal to belong to an organization that refused to endorse World War One—a war between capitalists that was killing fellow workers and stacking their bodies like cordwood. Specifically, it made it unlawful to "willfully utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of the Government of the United States" or to "willfully urge, incite, or advocate any curtailment of the production" . . . The result of the act was to make illegal work actions, strikes, antiwar counseling, and free speech.

As a result, Socialist presidential candidate Eugene Debs was forced to campaign from an Atlanta federal prison cell. His death just 5 years after his release is directly attributed to neglect, poor care, and harsh conditions. Meanwhile, the US Justice Department orchestrated the first Red Scare: the Palmer Raids.

The raids of union halls and the imprisonment of anyone with a Red Card forced most to burn their cards and blend in. Under attack, with its leadership in jail and its members on the lam, the IWW almost ceased to exist for a few years. These were the ugly years of the Bisbee Deportation (1917), the murder of Frank Little (1917), and the Centralia Tragedy (1919).

**In November, we remember** the lessons of the past and see their reflection in the present. The Sedition Act of 1918 is alive and lurking. Beware, be vigilant, be safe.

For additional details, go to the University of Washington IWW History Project at:  
<http://depts.washington.edu/iww/index.shtml>  
and the Justice Department Campaign Against the IWW, 1917-1920, by Steven Parfitt at:  
[http://depts.washington.edu/iww/justice\\_dept.shtml](http://depts.washington.edu/iww/justice_dept.shtml)



## Worker's Encyclopedia

**Boycott** ['boi, kät] verb: To withhold or withdraw social or commercial relations from a country, organization, or person—as a punishment or protest.

**Usage Notes:** The first "boycott" was against the agent for an absentee Irish landlord. The action was a part of the greater Irish Land Wars (1879+). In 1880 tenants shunned the agent, Captain Charles Boycott, in order to pressure him (and the landlord) to reduce rents and stop evictions. Astonishingly, farm workers, shopkeepers, and postal workers all stood together in solidarity and so completely ostracized him that his subsequent harvest was a financial failure. Thus was born a new form of indirect action—the boycott.

**Examples:** David Hogg vs Laura Ingram/Fox News, Ethical Consumer.org vs Amazon, IWW Saskatoon Group vs Stella's Café,

**See Also:** Social ostracism, direct action, sabotage.

## About the Seattle IWW

Founded in Chicago in 1905, the IWW is open to all workers. Don't let the "industrial" part fool you; our members include teachers, social workers, retail workers, construction workers, bartenders and computer programmers. Only bosses and cops are not allowed to join. If you are currently unemployed, you can still join. We are a volunteer-driven union, and this means we run the union. Membership dues are used to maintain the union and assist organizing campaigns. As a result, monthly dues are low.

### Take the Organizer Training!

The Organizer Training 101 (OT101) is an intensive, four-day training that teaches you all the basic skills and tools they need to build an organizing committee at your workplace—from the ground up. You will learn what constitutes a union, how to have one-on-one conversations with coworkers, the basics of labor law, and how to organize and carry out a direct action.

The Seattle General Membership Branch holds regular trainings—free during the pandemic. If you'd like to be notified of the time and date, visit:

<https://forms.gle/q9edxoGrEVXhMVd89>

### Organize Your Workplace!

The Industrial Workers of the World want to help you improve the conditions of your workplace. If you have questions, or would like to begin organizing your workplace, visit:

<https://seattleiww.org/organize-your-workplace/>

# Preamble

*to the Constitution of the  
Industrial Workers of the World*

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the 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 in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

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

**Seattle Worker**  
January-February 2020 Price: Free for all workers



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