



Gold Standard

When you sell your labor power to a master he does not immediately pay you for it. Sometimes he holds the payment back several months, more often several weeks, usually two weeks, frequently one week and sometimes one day. Hardly ever does he pay you twice in one day and, although you may sell your labor by the hour, it is seldom indeed that he pays you at the end of each hour.

This holding over of a man's money works a great hardship upon the workingmen and insofar as the working class is still in the majority in this country—no machinery having displaced them to any noticeable extent save on certain kinds of work—it would seem as if the majority of the people are at the mercy of the minority—"letting a little fellow like that lick yuh."

When you step into a baseball park you will "pay in advance," no two ways about it or you don't get in. Now I have been watching this system at the parks and find that it works well, and it occurs to me that it would be a good system for the working class to adopt. When you get on a street car you "pay as you enter" (and the company seems to be well pleased with this system). When you step into a motion picture (I beg your pardon, I quite forgot that you are not stepping into any motion picture house since California started murdering workingmen with overwork in its state-owned jute mills in San Quentin, my mistake). Almost anywhere you go you "pay as you go" and so I got to thinking that it would be kind of nice for us if we would organize, as the majority, and draw our pay in advance; draw our pay as we enter the works and tell the boss to have the exact change ready. This would do away with all mistakes in "time"; nobody would be "short."

"But," you say, "The capitalist system can't operate under that principle."

Just what I was going to say! H'm, what show have we writers got with great readers? Here I was going to prove to you that the capitalist system won't work and that its engineers don't intend to work—and you already know it. What's the use of me getting up (out of bed, mind you) to frame up this article and then have you tell me the thing I was going to tell you?

Of course the system won't work under that principle. In fact there is no principle under which it will work; it is based upon the most unprincipled thievery and cannot trust a workingman to draw his pay in advance. They think that workers are as crooked as they are themselves—some of the workers think so too; that's because they ain't used to thinking—rusty.

You step into a cigar store to buy a box of Captain Hogan Snus. The kindly Ku Klux behind the counter hands you a box and trusts you to hand him a dime. That's what I call invigorating confidence in human nature.

Now, how would it be if we adopted this same way of getting our pay? Say we would work an hour (we generally work by the hour) and then hold out our hand. The cigar store Kleagle doesn't wait till we chew up a full box of snus, neither does he wait till we smoke a full carton of camels. No, he wants his money right now—same as getting it in advance.

Everybody else seems to be getting "theirs" spot cash, or in advance, so why cannot the worker organize so as to arrive at "his" sooner. Why wait a month? "Procrastination is the thief of time." Yes, your "time" will be short if you wait. It was the weight that broke the suspenders. Don't wait.

No, the capitalist system won't work unless they get their hands on our money first. Employers could not operate (they say) if we did not "work in advance." Great big giant concerns have hired the best lawyers (and liars) to tell us that a semi-monthly pay day is an outrage and all but ruins the delicate financial mechanism of the trusts. They want a monthly pay day twelve times per year.

These giant concerns, brain children of the master minds we have learned to worship, are so gotten up that they cannot go ahead unless we work on credit. Whadda you know about that? Yet they expect a man who has hardly seen the insides of a school to go out and pay spot cash for everything he gets. He does pay cash and makes a success of it. Which all goes to show the master minds aren't half as brainy as they would have us believe. They argue like a novice.

"Stay by the system" they say, and in the same breath they demand that we trust them for 30 days' work and overtime; otherwise they'll fail, limp or bust. Whadda you know about that? They admit (when it serves their purpose) that their system is less efficient than the working class. The individual, even the lowest paid laborer can so arrange his affairs that he can pay as he goes or go without, yet these super-contraptions we call companies, cannot get along unless we trust them with four to six weeks' exertions.

It is high time the workers get together in a One Big Union and go on a cash basis. A good start can be made by demanding a semi-weekly pay day, in gold. Nothing like a little loose change in the "jeens" when the delegate makes his rounds.—(T-bone Slim).