



SOLD OUT



Quite frequently we hear the expression, "He sold out the workers." It may be even so. He may have sold his class. He may have traded his class for wealth prestige or power, and if he did, he is a traitor and his act was that of a traitor.

A billion voices denounce him as a traitor—to the exclusion of all other sounds. They razz him unmercifully, which is well and proper. Thereafter he is an outcast, ostracised by respectables as well as by those who are not so particular about the "ethics of deportment."

But it so happens, at not infrequent intervals, that the muchly "sold out" workers sell out their champions—and leave their spokesman to wrestle with the bear of oppression when this happens—not a billion voices denounce the traitors, oh no—one puny little voice protests against the crime; against the lack of support; against the sale—against the turning-over to the hands of the Philistines the earnest champions of the cause of labor; one puny little voice tries to point out that there is no "consideration" in the deal; no wealth, no fame and no fulfilled ambitions; that labor has sold out its champion cheap—one puny voice proclaims this, but it is soon drowned out and the world moves on to the next market place.

Yes, these sell out—both "sides" sell out—a good illustration of that habit is the fable of the sale of Jesus Christ—not by Judas—but by the "cripples" that infested the Labor Temple in Jerusalem. He was duly crucified, so the fable relates, because he championed the cause of the people. The same thing is going on today (Ford and Suhr are still in the "can" deserted by those whose cause they espoused).

Where labor has been sold out once, it has sold itself out 10,000 times.

. . .

But, it may be true, a few Christs have reversed the procedure in the late years:

I'm not praising them, I'm merely relating cold blooded facts, as I conceive them to be—and I know that the noise about being sold out is out of all proportion to the damage done; I know that if labor quits selling itself out it will not be sold out too much.

. . .

There are no champions in the I. W. W., in reality and theory. And those that forge to the front are only normally active members—doing normal-work. It is the failure of others that makes them stick out prominently. The introduction of caste (leadership) is the downfall of every cause because it presupposes inaction on the part of those being led—inaction begets inaction.

The loss of a cause is not poor leadership, the loss of it is due to first-class inaction. Where all are active none are leaders; for after all, mankind varies but little and produces enormous numbers of each (closely allied) series. Saviors are sold and saviors sell, hence, if the workers desire not to be sold out they can set a good example by not selling out themselves; they can become active in their own behalf and find out, thereby, that leadership good, bad, or indifferent will disappear without formal repudiations. . . " . . . get in action."

"Bread your chains, demand your rights."

Few men will take the responsibility of decision, on great questions and will compromise—what good are they? What good is a compromise decision?

No good. Life is too short.

P. S.—Fellow Worker Labor: When next you get sold out, don't come to me looking for sympathy. Why?

First, because I need all the sympathy I've got.

Second, because I'm liable to ask you, were you drunk when it happened—or asleep? (I've heard of men sleeping with their shoes on, but they were exceptionally sound sleepers).

Sold out! Huh!

Why it is ridiculous!

All mighty labor sold out?

Why it's impossible!

Can't be done—unless he's willing—make it a point to be unwilling. . .

Moral: Raise the ante.