

October 14, 1930

## Official Bellyhoo

By T-bone Slim

"Times are definitely on up trend."

Uh huh—this morning I met a Soo Line locomotive and it was saying over and over: "Tryin' to do bizness, tryin' to do bizness, tryin' to do bizness", and it was more than leaking steam! (No doubt, something wrong with its valves or it wouldn't talk that way.)

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The "hearing of cowbells" doesn't always indicate the cows are coming home to roost or that the discontented bovines are journeying to newer and better pastures. Indeed not—they may be definitely standing still or on the verge of lying down altogether. All that clang and clatter may be the result of bossy's angry swing at an imaginary mosquito's moustache.

Good times can not be bellyhooed into existence—any amount of "leaking air" won't fetch it.

Good times can not be bellyhooed wages—nothing else; work isn't a factor—lots of people put in a good time without a tap of work . . . Wages at present are on down trend—that means hard times are just around the corner, if not already swinging on the gate.

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Wages system is the "short-changing" of labor at the point of production; be it factory, mill or rock pile—the more he is short-changed the less he can buy; the less he buys, the less he consumes; and, so on, less and less and less; down and down and down to underconsumption, slightconsumption and, finally nonconsumption—Hardtimes! Overproduction is not hard times—overproduction is merely another name for under, slight or nonconsumption, so ordered.

But how comes it, if it is true that wages system is the short-changing of labor, that the employer manages to preserve a calm, yea, a cheerful composure, even when caught in the act? Now, I remember when I was official guardian of a till and part of my duties consisted of short-changing the customers if they looked the least bit absent minded.

Well sir, fellow sinners, do you know, I never could attain the composure sported by our employers—I'd be uneasy, nervous, stand on one foot, then the other—and debate with myself as to the drawing power of raw beefsteak and leeches, for black eyes—I never could see one but the other was black, too.

Strange the assurance possessed by the powers that be!

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Here again, if I go in an alley and roll dice, the officers of the law wait outside till the game gets going good and then they swoop down upon me and grab the nickles and dimes . . .

But I can go into another alley. (Wall St.) and gamble to my heart's delight and no officers there but to salute me as I come out with a bagful.

Why is this?

In the first alley case, the judge says 30 days.

In the second, I'm elected bishop-procurator of a diocese, or something.

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Remember that bagful I came out of Wall St. with? Well, I'm a capitalist. Being a capitalist it is perfectly proper for me to horn into an industrial organization, manufacturing concern and squeeze out the old heads, send them out bumming lumps, or keep them as errand boys, ain't it?

Ah yes, brothers and sisters, its very fashionable these days . . .

But, darn it, I had a little hard luck in guessing how far stock can jump and there was a slump—(that bag was full of ticker tape and the cops wasted their time in tipping their hat)—consequently, I'm no capitalist.

Would it be proper for me to horn into one of those "Moscow Blessed" trade unions and flirt with their treasury, squeeze out the old business agents and send 'em out bumming lumps or keep them as errand boys?

No?

Well, why not?

Because that would be racketeering? Mysterious indeed are the ways of the world: I butt into a union, get a soft seat, a good pie-card, drive away all who so much as lick their lips and I'm a racketeer, am I?

I butt into an industry, gain control, get a softer seat, sho off all the old heads and I'm a—what am I?

It's too deep for me.

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A bunch of workers goes to work, they're the noblest of creatures; if they grab control over the industry,

they're a mob—a mob of noble critters, eh?

Too deep—but the water is fine.

\*

A bunch of disgruntled liberals turn sour and decide to hold a revolution; throw every Lequilia in the can and tampup on the rail-family so badly that it takes 25 years to identify the czar's daughter; toss out all the rulers and anoint themselves king-bees of the field or comic-czars of people's republic. What kind of civilization is that?

It's dog eat dog, no matter how you figure it; not one scintilla of organization in the whole "kaboodle".

What the world needs is the organizing of a "new society in the shell of the old".—

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"What are you going to do with the shell, Slim."—You had to bring that up, didn't you? What do you do with a peanut shell? Do you now want to grind up the crust of shell-back society into breakfast food? What do you do with an eggshell? Drop it in coffee to settle it?

Fauh!! that's unsanitary—I have a better plan: donate it to the Shell Oil Co. (or other organized charities) they might be able to squeeze a little oil from it.

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