



# T-Bone Slim

## LET US BE FAIR

Time was when the arrest and conviction of an I. W. W. member and broadcasted knowledge thereof practically prevented the organizing of new members—that time is past.

Today an imprisoned wobbler is living, breathing proof of the superiority of that organization, its form of unionism, and new members are not so jail-shy as they were.

I do not go so far as to say the prestige of the I. W. W. rests wholly on the jailings of its members or, for instance, the continued incarceration of the "Centralia Boys." No, what I mean to say is the continued imprisonment of the Centralia bunch contributes the most eloquent and irrefutable argument in favor of the I. W. W.

How times change—the horror that was to overwhelm the workers is the horror that will now flatten the bosses.

In the past every attempt to organize the workers was met with every opposition known to bosses and their servile retainers. Every effort to prevent organization was attempted and effected—from misrepresentation, threats, to actual assault and murder—all to no avail, so far as altering the eventual accounting.

The Everett massacre is still vivid in the memories of the loggers as well as in memories of the business elements of that town that suffered directly as a result of the withdrawal of logger trade and who suffer today indirectly the result of having permitted the prevention of organization in their city.

The massacre was a severe blow to organized labor not only in the I. W. W. insofar as because of that setback organized labor was unable to hold up wages (buying power) and the slide-downward (and out) had commenced. Severe as the blow was to labor, it was no less severe to businessmen and Everett's businessmen today frankly admit the massacre was a mistake. You will notice I move from the position that the massacre was the brain-child of a master mind and not the irresponsible vagary of vagrant mischievousness.

Centralia, Washington, was as blind to its own welfare, as was Everett in the earlier day, and repeated assaults and raids against the union hall was sanctioned indirectly pulled-off and laughed-off, directly. Protection for the hall was denied, which is equivalent to giving carte blanche to the marauders and when the membership defended their hall successfully (without protection) they were brought to trial, accused of conspiracy against the lawless and thrown in jail for forty years.

*A fine kettle of fish!*

Is it then a wonder the workers have no money with which to do their buying? Verily the mastermind made beggars of them—for they cannot have money without a strong organization.

These occurrences had the effect of frightening the workers and caused them to mark time—a dangerous proceeding as is exemplified by the payless days we are experiencing today.

It is my firm opinion had not organization been discouraged by lynchings and murders the West Coast would have no share in this present panic . . .

Seattle's share in the Everett massacre is not so clear as are some others I have in mind and which I shall offer in future articles, but it is clearer than Tacoma's share whose growth is the more phlegmatic. It is no small matter to construct a city of Seattle's prominence in the several hills shoring the placid Puget. It takes labor. Much of it. It takes money. Lots of it. Boulevards must be run (around Alki Point). Piers must be driven. Skyscrapers built. Ravines filled. Hills levelled, etc.

Where did this money come from?

All of it did not come from Seattle labor's pocket. Indeed, some of it was imported into Seattle by merchantmen, railroads, shipping etc., by interests that came to do business there—and much of it came from the pocket of loggers.

I am not inferring the imported money did not come from labor's pocket, quite to the contrary: Labor in Seattle's vicinity were unequal to the task of constructing the city and paying for it. Thus it was that labor's pockets in distant parts of the country were raided through the medium of low wages and these monies were invested in the upbuilding of the City of Seattle along with other monies collected in the more intimate surroundings—and from familiar points in the state, including the penurious Yakima.

The growth of Seattle was a high-pressure affair from beginning to end which is not yet (lest it be her growth is arrested never to be completed) and the only question that arose in re public improvements, beautification was "will the traffic bear it"—not that those improvements should not be, for they should.

But when a city subconsciously becomes so tangled in her growth that it passively indorses the destruction of labor's buying power and bends obeisance to the lumber lords now well on their way to complete the destruction of timberlands (only one-half of timber is milled, the rest rots where it fell—waste of wealth) as was done in Germany a generation ago and, in connection, the state and cities shall suffer, during and after, altogether in a mien of a sucker that believed not well but too much. Seattle has this share in the Everett massacre and the Centralia and Montesano I hope, favorable consideration.

outrage: it agreed, by failing to protest the interference in labor's affairs, to a regime of ruthless labor exploitation that has now resulted in the only thing it could—a city full of paupers.

True enough the City of Seattle cannot undo the Everett massacre—neither can Weyerhaeuser or the rest of his ilk—but the City of Seattle can, if she will, urge the release of the Centralia boys in terms so certain that the stubborn but just Governor Hartley will honor the plea.

When it is taken into consideration "those boys" came by their trouble in no small measure because of the fact that they happened to be in town and in view of the fact they staked their liberty, their very life, against the right to organize without interference—a right now recognized in court after court—and lost one as well as the other—it ill behooves any of us to show the slightest indication of vindictiveness. We cannot help but note the period under which the sentences were administered was rife with hysteria and therefore we cannot erase from our minds the thought: the sentences were unusual, severe, cruel—

They have served the state dutifully now these many years, not even permitting the sense of guiltlessness to betray them into rebellion against the rules of Walla Walla. Men they were when they went in, so remained and men they will be when they come out. A release to these men, my dear governor, would benefit not only them but society, as well.

In all those years these men have never portrayed themselves as martyrs for an ideal, that they sacrificed their liberty in an effort to stay the difficulties which are now upon us and whose approach they must have seen. Their sincerity and earnestness, your excellency, is deserving of further and, favorable consideration.