



# T-Bone Slim Asks Can Leaders Save Us Workingmen?

Practicing swearing long enough, we will become better perfect in that quaint art of oratory.

Lay our soul to the practice of tyranny and we will excell as dictators—until some one looks at us through a range-finder.

Practice obedience long enough and we will become splendid slaves. If we follow a leader long enough we will become chronic followers, and we shall follow even when the leader's compass has gone haywire and he is riding in the ditch with the middle of the road grass-grown like a disused railroad yard.

Labor cannot afford to be divided.

Labor cannot afford to remain separated behind leadership all the colors of the rainbow. We're getting nowhere under leadership. If an attack of prayerfulness shall captivate us we will become so helpless of a morning that we must call on the dear Lord to help pull on our pants. Practice of manhood on the other hand makes for more manhood.

How ludicrous it is then for us to lay by our practices and expect a saviour to spring from nowhere and rescue us from the clutches of industrial autocracy and wage slavery—we, ourselves, there all the time? He'd have to be an awful big-hearted saviour—nothing like the present dozen of ribbers and kidders. But these leaders are practical men? To be sure they are—they go where the pie flows thickest.

Another thing—when a saviour or leader undertakes to save the working class, he's got a big contract and a lot of territory—45,000,000 in this country alone. No leader is equal to that task under any theory; and in the long run the workers will have to save him from the results of his he-saviourism. He's a mark for all javelins.

All leadership is based upon the presumption of dictatorship, the very thing that the boss exercises. Dictatorship, no matter how well intended, makes for tyranny on the one hand and slavery—or rebellion—on the other. The rebellion is inevitable though deferred.

These millions must be freed not by a leader but by an organization formed in such a way that all hands can get leverage on the problem and lend the weight of their considerations to balance the scales of justice.

Even as I write the radio blares: "The world needs a helping hand." The radio is a liar; the world already has the hand—it is not an armless creature object of abstract compassion.

Labor needs no helping hand. Labor has all the hands it needs. Any more hands would be in the way. But labor needs to organize those hands and systematize the unloading of plutocratic bums and industrial potentates from the saddle.

Leadership by the way is not "the showing of the way". It is defined: exercise of control over others. We can of course have the leaders save us—but I warn you the sweat shall continue to pour from our necks just as though no emancipation had occurred—and, if we holler, they'll rig up a war for us so that we can shoot and be shot.