



Many Union Cards Don't Make the One Big Union

By T-BONE SLIM

In the marine industry as well as in many other industries, the leaders have pretty well succeeded in dividing the workers into many factions. The only thing left unchanged is the condition of their servitude; they are still workers and proud of it.

In order for the seamen to be an industrial unit they would have to carry a SUP card in one pocket, an ISU card in another pocket, a raft of ILA cards in several other pockets; coalburners, oilburners, and steakburners, radioburners (ARTA), and a half-dozen other cards in other pockets—separate pockets; and I do solemnly proclaim that there aren't enough pockets in the seabag, to say nothing about the dungarees.

Then the politicians feel that we ought to carry one of their cards too.

You will notice that I didn't mention the I. W. W. card, the Red Card, the One Big Union Card. That's the Joker, the fifth Ace—so what do we care if the deuces be wild?

It would seem that if seaman carries a card in his pocket that divides it would be all right if he carried an I. W. W. card that unites in another pocket; then they could all carry cards of various colors in various pockets, always making sure that the card that unites, the Red Card was in the other pocket; that they then would be a One Big Union of the marine workers.

That is not so, however, for they would be powerless as Samson with a hair cut; the muchly heard leadership would have by this time taken the precaution to bind them hand and foot to agreements, treaties with the boss) and the seamen

would be powerless to move as a unit or as a faction.

Seamen never will get anywhere following such leaders, or single leader for that matter; for a single leader's trail may lead in many directions and the destination at the end of each trail is obscure.

There is no such thing as conciliating a condition that is inconciliatory—it's like reconciling a dog to the fleas, (understand fleas favor conciliation).

No use hollering at the dog; just as sure as you turn your back, up goes the dog's hind leg and the class war is on.

I'd hate to be a conciliator and pass between a dog and his fleas. All I could do is to tell the dog to keep cool and ask the fleas to bite less. I think I would rather be a matador and fight wild bulls.

It is said the SUP is probably the best of these factions but its very name confines it to the Pacific—nothing like the A. and P. that does business on the two leading oceans.

The NMU is purely a national movement and reads out of the party international seamen. The ISU is supposed to be international but it has not been living up to the specifications.

The I. W. W. doesn't go about geographically, racially, nationally, internationally, or universally. True enough, its name mentions "Workers of the World" but the emphasis is all on INDUSTRIAL. (World is just a place—like S. Chicago or Halifax.) Race, creed, or color has no place in the I. W. W.