

The Best of a Bad Bargain Is Plenty Tough

By T-BONE SLIM

Why are those cinnamon buns so small? —

They have to pay for four new trucks.

Today when I had succeeded in getting patches spotted properly in my overalls, I gazed upon them with great pride—a feeling that was to a great many who must perforce swing the needle—and, when I stepped out upon the boulevard, my many neighbors and admiring friends stood spell-bound.

"Doesn't he look natural?" they exclaimed, "just like a working man!"

I'll say I do—grocery strings sticking out like the golden fleece in stories of old. I'd pass for an emblem of wage slavery; no changes whatsoever.

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There has been a stampede into the unions that believe in the preservation of the capitalist system as is. Many of these workers do not believe in the system but joined those unions in the faith that to do so was taking advantage of the "best of a bad bargain." Later events have demonstrated, however, that "they girl they left behind them" (the jobless) arose like Banquo's ghost, to haunt the theoretical ecstasies of their job. Rotten conditions arose surprisingly to surround them and employment was a nightmare of unease, suspicion and unknown fear. That's the bargain they made.

No, the job never will be worth having until the last unemployed is working and that will not be before the capitalist system is at an end, and the last capitalist is no more; shuffle the cards how you may. You can lay to that!

It will get worse, not better—relief is but a temporary surcease in the unnecessary sorrows of an economy that is a row of contradictions, and wars against itself.

You have had your adventure and it panned out nothing but misery and more misery. You took all the short cuts and landed in the swamps of authorized unionism—capitalism a la union label.

So now, since the pieces have ceased flying, it is logical to think you are open to reasonable argument in favor of the Industrial Workers of the World, the union that has no use for the parasite's system, including its wage skullduggery.

The alphabet is now exhausted—catechism and prayer book comes next; cuss words are inadequate—the English language is sterile that way. Even now I have to skip "satan" and "devil" which sound like a kiss in the dark, and rasp "Portola" or "California," words that have body and spirit.

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Roosevelt did save the small business man from insanity, suicide or untimely grave by banging away at the public till and also by putting him in office work (his vacant store is for rent), but that is all he did do.

As far as my own case is concerned, I did not get him for better or worse—I have experienced no change whatsoever. I still have the eighteen cents I had seven years ago when he came in, my clothes are just as raggedy, and I'm looking for black thread, free of cost, so I can sew the knee chaps back into the pant leg.

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Once we admit politicians can correct this economic maladjustment, we must admit they can create it. If we admit that much we must question the politicians as to the parentage of the recession—they were there! But I'm of the opinion economic royalists fathered this child and organized labor will have to raise it to manhood. Why should politicians wish to adopt that child of destiny?

GOOD UNIONISM