



There's Never A Bad Time to Pull a Strike

By T-BONE SLIM

Well, ladies and gentlemen, if you wait for a union "leader" to call a strike you're gonna be old and rickety before he finds his voice. Why is it then that when the membership call a strike the leader rushes in there foaming at the gills and wants to call it off?

"Unauthorized!" they scream, "Outlaw!" they roar—proving they are "call-it-offers." (Couldn't the boss do it just as well?)

The initiative for a strike always comes from the rank and file. They can start it and they can stop it. They know all the controls.

This is one of the seasons when leaders think it "inadvisable" to strike. hey are at the end of their rope (and the rope isn't even over a limb yet).

I look for a series of "unnotified" strikes, "uninformed" strikes and expect to see leaders and bosses do a lot of heavy guessing, for the boys are not going to be gobbled up by the high cost of low living (the big bad wolf) or the low cost of high living, (by indirection). The parasites better put their business in order before this takes place.

Don't let me stampede you. Don't do anything rash. Just shove the surplus into the kitty. That's all that ails the country. The kitty hasn't been fed. General Motors surplus of \$450,000,000 would "keep" the whole nation a solid year, full to the chin like a "healthy quin"—with Quaker Oats (if you borrow the salt and carry the water).

Less than ½ billion dollars. But they say the surplus is the "Kitty." Granted, but it is an alley cat; ours was red, white and blue on both sides. Can't you hear it me-ow? (I'd know that me'ow even in Mari-caibo or Antifogasta)—

Time to Strike

So this is the wrong time to strike? —the right time never comes. We're either going to strike at the wrong time or not at all—in Heaven they do not strike. Lucifer pulled a strike there, but came in second best because he wasn't well enough organized.

Organization is the whole thing: time, color, weather, creed, etc. are only incidental.

No strike is ever lost.

Lost strike is unfinished business.

The way things have been going in the country we should never have permitted strikeless days. All bosses were guilty (or should have been, for all the elements of perfidy were present, as far back as I remember —1890—and they all rated a strike, morning, noon, and night, before and after meals).

A strike is all we have—the only articulation a boss understands.

We have struck when our belly

was full of Mallard duck and there is no reason to think we can't pull a rolled-oats strike. (I have an idea here but we'll skip it).

In 1897, spring of the year, the workers went to township trustees for relief orders. 1900, ditto; 1910 ditto; 1920, ditto; 1930, ditto; 1938,??—what can we expect?

It never occurred to us to strike and place our wages on year-around subsistence level—the famous living wage. No, we were right there waiting in front of the trustees and they, without much success, were trying to insult us (I used to get a great kick out of it). We had hides on us those days that would blunt a harpoon.

It never occurred to us to strike and place our wages at a level that would cause some of it to overflow into our grouch sack and save us the trouble of chasing after mushrooms in the spring rains. Oh no, we were all for letting the boss fill his cracker barrels first.

(Those days oyster crackers came in barrels—now they come in envelopes).

Are We Nuts Too?

The boss lives by the year—and we'd been all right too if the eelpouts hadn't quit biting and the chemical plants didn't kill the toad stools and the chain stores hadn't refused us credit . . . oh hell!

We could have lived off of grasses until we caught up with our bills and then gorge up on round steak for a couple of months.

My Gawd! Are we nuts too, like our leaders? Our leaders, you see, would also favor a strike at this time had they not been brought up on intellectual malnutrition . . . tut, tut, Slim, hunger is not a mental process but it starts a lot of wheels whirring . . .

So if everything is not all right with you, count the leaders out and glance over the years and days you did not strike.

Your alibi: (as good as any)

Those darn kids, they didn't time us up properly! We never had the advantages of the fathers of millionaire sons.

Selfsought Slavery

One thing though, the scrap between CIO and AFL has caused bosses to hug one another closer. Mercenary enemies and chiselers are almost kissing . . .

AFL steps before the boss and hollers: "Smile at me boss, please."

CIO steps up and says: "No, no, no—it's me you want to smile at."

So the boss laughs at all of 'em.

Now, boys and girls, isn't the drama of the bosses hugging each other a sign of weakness? If so, let's go.