



# Masters Start War but Won't Stay to Fight

By T-BONE SLIM

For some we loved, the loveliest and best  
That from this vintage rolling Time  
has prest,  
Have drunk their cup a round or two  
before,  
And one by one crept silently to rest.

—OMAR

We who have attended the funeral of the IWW so often feel that a good word might be said for its birth, the birth of a working class—the working class is now 35 years young—same age as the IWW.

Be it noted the two shared the same cradle when they were bouncing babies, and even today no threat of death to their hope or ideal hath risen to disturb the serene equanimity of these two "Siamese Twins." No accoutrement of undertakers, flowers, mourners, graves or headstones hath harrassed this great body—in fact, it is just beginning to feel its oats, and kicking the bucket physically or spiritually is farthest from its thoughts. (Learning to live is the present peccadillo.) Just like that, mysterious and mischievous as a lad trying out each new-found muscle or power.

Three hundred twenty-five years ago Cervantes hauls off in his Don Quixote and says (in effect) "Industry is the mother of success." Just 300 years later the IWW says, "Cerv, you've got something there" and, determining to have the name as well as the game, they organized the Industrial Workers of the World. That was 35 years ago and it seems like only the other day.

So why should we that took 300 years to discover the truth in Cervantes' crack, "industry is the thing" despair of the handful of wobbly years?

Must we wait another 300 years to be showered with the accolade, "IWW was right?"

They tell me our household science is based on holding sacred the gathering of shekels, and I believe it all right; because even our courts hesitate to haul up short some of our best shekel-harvesters on the grounds of having exceeded the speed limit; and substitute, instead, a puerile charge of income tax evasion. What's this world coming to?

It seems our courts expect our chiselers to confess their crimes by coming right out and paying an income tax without encouragement from the courts. Now if there's anything that's hard to confess, it is the misadventure of having had your hand stray into another man's pocket. Courts shouldn't expect it.

"My hands were so numb I couldn't pick up a cigarette butt." "There's a fog and I'm chilled to the bone. Soon the sun broke out and brought comfort to my soul." "Churches have gold, silver and diamonds and having these—much real estate." "Price of wheat drops; price of bread is steady as the Rock of Gibraltar." And so on . . .

All these wisecracks are the product of a citizen of Hooverville, village of tin shacks, roofs held down by bricks in serried rows. A crude organization and management is present, some complacency, meditation and subdued freedom.

"We don't want money, we want work."

Well, a small piece of change wouldn't go bad—no matter how sorely we need exercise—change from the millions we have stored up for the economic masters—back pay, if you know what I mean.

I could put a couple of thousand in circulation right now and make plenty businessmen's hearts glad. And I, I myself, would get a tremendous satisfaction from peeling off those toadskins.

Do not think, however, that it is a cinch to attack employing class hegemony. Just so you don't hop upon organized government, for the time may not be far distant when the employing class will acknowledge the corn and say, "we are the government." Better organize, Buckley!

Only a scant quarter of the people want war—a damn small quarter, both sexes.

Among the migratory workers each job has an equal number of idle men waiting in sight. How many are hid away in the "sylvan dells" is anybody's guess. One-third working? How about shortening the day two-thirds?

It is claimed one-third of the working class can support the millionaires in the style to which they are accustomed.

I believe it, but why not forget the millionaires for a spell and throw a little bait to your brother and fellow worker now idle and in want? They can't eat battleships or phony democracy. Charity soup isn't much better.

Rainbow-hued coffee and missile-biscuits!

Redtape and red herring.

The marshal says the Bremen is sunk and if we are around the jungles tomorrow, he'll take us into protective custody. (There's a carnival in town.)

Notice how the industrial giants of Europe are hightailing for parts unknown—closely followed by the various governments, to seats of safety. Not that the politicians have cold feet; they simply disdain to take potluck with the defenders of the capital, because they wish to shout orders long after the army has surrendered, just to show their uncompromising bravery by remote control.

They declared the war, at the instance of the plutocrats, but they never stay to fight the war. Ah those good old days when the Swedish Kings died in the battle's front line!