



# Lay the Keel For a Better System Now

By T-BONE SLIM

Great friend of peace, Joe Stalin, is worrying himself sick because England, Germany and Italy are killing each others world trade. USA trembles in fear that the war will end before the destruction is complete. By the same token, when the destruction is complete—win, lose or draw—USA will be included.

A fellow worker tells me: "We live but once," and added consolingly, "once too often."

Of course we'll survive the bliss of heaven and the only flea in the selve is that our rheumatism will survive too. Better way would be to lay the keel for a heaven right here before we get rheumatism, and call it Heaven of the United States.

Wages are like contributions in a church collection. Church collections are less grudgingly given, however. Some wits have advocated the abolition of the wage system and substitution of full value of production.

Russia seems to feel that if it is right for the U. S. to swap warships for a few riparian rights with England, it is equally right for Russia to send a few pancakes to Germany.

The war orders so far have created work only for windbags. ("Shortage of skilled workers!")

Hysteria will improve as we grow older. Let them "shoot their bolt" now without reason.

The word "newspaper" is a misnomer. It is an instrument of propaganda, a medium of opinion, a residue of advertisement (influence with price tag), and adjunct to the owners' many means of furthering their private ends. News is merely the camouflage — kalsomine — the front.

"If government, business and labor will all put their shoulders to the wheel . . ." (The wheel will bust.)

Would suggest that government and business do the pushing by themselves in the interest of preserving the old wagon. Note: Heretofore labor alone exerted pressure on the wheel, so what in the name of blue blazes has government and business got in going through the pretenses? Can they be looking for credit, long and loud applause? Labor needs no example set, real or phony.

The very men that were tossing IWWs in the can 25 years ago are letting out the most heartrending yodels over the radio. Their racket is turning to pain and sorrow in their hands. We have nothing to defend except parasites and their concessions.

Still and all, the idea that was IWW then is the same today; the only thought that has withstood the fat and lean years—and will survive the rackets.

Man is somewhat of a rhinoseros, reasonable though he be . . . And how he loves the original sin, chiseling.

The IWW is a creation, not a copy.

The less said about the Panamanian registry the better. Under its sanctimonious provisions there is no protection for seamen aboard ship and the ship is an armed camp of extra legal deputized authority. It is not one of those things that "just happened"; it was developed over a period of time and has many earmarks that distinguish a conspiracy from open and above board procedure. The only protection seamen have is their union and its solidarity—if such there be—to the bitter end.

Tanker scale! So emaciated, decrepit, that I dare not mention the size, lest it discourage the natives; and when we consider that \$10 a month covers the value of the chow per man we must conclude the emoluments do not make up for the loss of shore leave weeks and days upon a stretch. Yes indeed, a stretch. Thirty-six dollars? The seamen never see it.

Skyscraper admirals must think seamen are screwballs?

Kick him again, he moved! "Knock 'em down and drag 'em out." "Come on down and tend your corpses."

I wonder who started the fracas anyhow? Some faction seeking group affluence, opulence or dodging the cold, grim hand of destitution; rich against rich, rich against poor, poor against poor and poor against rich, in a society of poverty and wealth; in a society warped out of all form and proportion, a formless sea of human greeds, the capitalist system.

This is not looking backward, it is here. But let us not look at it mere,

Each succeeding social setup has been an improvement over the older one—and then the folks just sat themselves down and watched it deteriorate into desuetude, refusing to either repair, improve or trade it in for a blind mare.

Looking backward at the wrecks of discarded social establishments (as lawyers and preachers do) our present wagon looks pretty good; even if the wheels are slightly bowlegged and a spoke or two is missing. But did it ever occur to you to take a look at a new wagon? In other words, look ahead and keep your eyes glued on the improvements yet to come.

Sometimes I've thought of burying the grim past so that the good people might go on at their business of progressing toward a workers' commonwealth as the most promising of peace, contentment and fellowship.