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# Seattle Worker

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**Carlos Cortéz, Wobbly Mentor (3)**

**Building up Branch Officers (7)**

**May Day (9)**

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The cover art for this issue is by Carlos Cortéz and was created for the Industrial Worker in June 1979.



# Letter from the Editor

It's our May Day issue and the theme is... office work? Yep! All the excitement in the call for a General Strike is wasted if we don't ORGANIZE. And if we're gonna organize, we've also got to GET ORGANIZED!

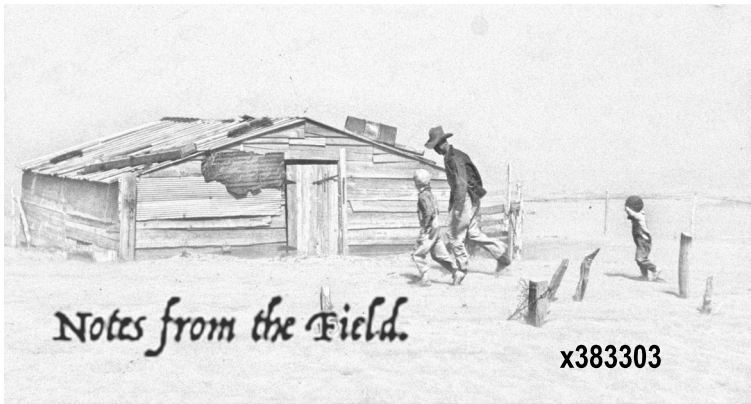
No organization can grow without the steadfast efforts of administrators, who file the papers, send the emails, reconcile the checkbooks, and so forth. In the IWW we call these folks "officers" but reserve decision-making power to the vote of the membership.

Here we interview David "Tuck" Tucker about his time as General Secretary-Treasurer of the union and in particular his mentorship by Carlos Cortéz, famous artist and steadfast Wobbly. Turns out, the values of our organization are inherent in the way we do the work itself.

And if that wasn't enough office work for you, FW Lexi Owens interviews three more union officers about how they recruit and mentor future officers, building a culture where everyone is encouraged and welcome to step up to the position.

Thought administration wasn't exciting? Think again.





For Kroger Foods, this last year has been very good to it. Large scale food retailers have seen record breaking revenues and profits this last year. However, they can't seem to afford to pay all their workers in Seattle the mandated \$4 per hour Covid Hazard Pay Premium, even though other food retailers have given all their workers a \$4 per hour hazard raise—across the nation.

Kroger announced it is closing two of their stores in Seattle, with some folks speculating it's more of a protest move. They announced similar closings in Long Beach, CA. after that city passed a hazard pay ordinance.

All the while, Kroger is spending big bucks to support a lawsuit by two grocery industry trade groups against the ordinance. Don't be deceived: their true target is the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Union. The Seattle Worker salutes our fellow Union in their great victory for the working class.

While Prop 22 is devastating the gig workers in California, workers in New York City are pushing forward with an innovative alternative business model, the worker co-op. The Drivers Coop of NYC is an exciting alternative to Uber and Lift in that ultra-capitalist bastion.

The coop is a 100% driver-owned ridehailing cooperative. They use an app-based system much like others. Unlike the others, the cooperative distributes all the profits back to the workers.

Worker coops were very common in centuries past. They grew during the early stages of the Industrial Revolution in opposition to the ultra-capitalist private companies that were exploiting the workers. They are not the same as "consumer co-ops," which are just private companies hiding under an old name. When the members are consumers, the "co-op bosses" can pit the members against the workers. (We can't raise prices to pay workers a living wage, can we?) Some of the harshest union busting activities are being undertaken by your friendly "leftist" co-op.

Worker owned co-ops are found in many countries around the world, including the US, Mexico, Canada, India, the UK, and Israel.

For more on worker owned cooperatives, The Drivers Coop, and retail coops, visit:

<https://www.drivers.coop/>

<https://ecology.iww.org/texts/IWW/Coops>

<https://organizing.work/2019/04/why-do-coops-hate-unions/>

Worker actions have been bubbling for years at the Wild Goose and Good Neighbors Meeting Houses in Colorado Springs. Last year during the pandemic, they fired union organizers in an attempt to halt the signing of union authorization cards. Then in late December, the Wild Goose decided to give all workers \$16/hour, but to also abolish tipping. In addition, they also said that they are restructuring and that all the workers had to reapply for their jobs once they opened again. A classic union busting technique.

In February, as a result of an unfair labor practices complaint, the Colorado Labor Board awarded many WG/GN workers back pay in their dispute with the coffee houses.

The ripple effects of the Union actions have spurred other coffee shops to raise wages and in one case pay back wages. As a result of these and other efforts, the IWW has reestablished itself as a force in Colorado. Our fellow workers are looking forward to formally establishing a new branch, The Southern Colorado IWW, in Colorado Springs. We are grateful to them for reminding us of the old adage: Direct Action Gets the Goods.

Southern Colorado IWW can be found at:

<https://www.southerncoloradoiww.org/>

During this unprecedented pandemic, when food delivery platforms have expanded and grown exponentially, Instacart has decided to fire 2000 of its 10,000 grocery store workers—and all of them are members of UFCW Local 1546 of Skokie, Illinois. The Union was in the process of negotiating a historic first of its kind gig worker contract when they were fired. The workers had formed a union to bargain for a living wage, basic benefits, and safe working conditions. Instacart responded with a harsh union busting program with the usual anti-union literature, memos, and veiled threats.

It appears that, in preparation for an upcoming IPO, Instacart is attempting to cut costs and appear more profitable than they actually may be. Instacart is looking to sell \$30 Billion worth of stock this spring.

More can be found at:

[https://ufcwlocal1546.org/news/new-and-events/1546-news/27289/2#tabContent\\_36187](https://ufcwlocal1546.org/news/new-and-events/1546-news/27289/2#tabContent_36187)

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/7k9deg/instacart-says-it-will-lay-off-all-of-its-unionized-workers>

*"Ecology without class struggle is just gardening." - Chico Mendes*

*(continued on page 6)*

# Carlos Cortéz:

## Building a Ship We Might Not Sail On



Photo: Guillermo Delgado (desaturated)

*Seattle Worker interviewed Fellow Worker Dave “Tuck” Tucker about his time with Carlos Cortéz, an artist, poet, editor, Indigenous struggles activist, and longtime wobbly.*

### **Seattle Worker: How did you meet Carlos Cortéz?**

Tuck: I was the General Secretary-Treasurer elected for the term in 1983, so I went from Bellingham where I live to Chicago, to serve the union in the General Headquarters office (GHQ). While I was in Chicago, I had the great pleasure to work regularly with FW Carlos Cortéz as well as other great folks, memorable among them specifically being Fred Thompson. Carlos came into office as a volunteer. The union was much much smaller then and the office was staffed by the one paid person—me—and volunteers who came in from the Chicago area. Carlos was one of the most steadfast of those volunteers. He wrote a column for the Industrial Worker—“Red Cloud’s Corner.” I spent a lot of time with Carlos.

### **Seattle Worker: I understand you considered Carlos one of your mentors. What values did you learn from him?**

Tuck: One was to take it easy. He’d say, “OK you’re workin’ in here, we’ve elected you and hired you to to run this office, and that puts you in the spotlight as the General Secretary. Don’t take anything personally or feel you have to respond to everything that comes your way unless it’s a letter from a fellow worker—then you damn well better write back, and acknowledge receipt!”

He also said, “You need to be diligent, make sure to get the things taken care of that you need to get taken care of.”

And further, he was always encouraging me to call him or Fred or Penny Pixler or any number of people in Chicago to come down and help. I remember one time at a branch meeting I was pissin’ and moanin’ about how I’d put in a couple of really long days typing out mimeograph stencils for the GOB and running our very cranky mimeograph machine, and I remember Carlos said “Why the hell did you not call me?” I was in the office at 1 a.m. and was not going to call him, and he kind of reamed me out: “I can get down there!” So he mentored me in not taking things personally when people objected to things that were going on, or when they raised a ruckus as people do in this organization. He urged me to take a break and not feel like I had to attend to everything right now, and watch out for myself, but to be sure that things did get done.

He was steadfast. He showed up at EVERY picket line, which we attended a lot of, every rally where there were Wobs participating in the march, there was a Mayday march, anti-intervention in El Salvador, or anything like that, you knew that Carlos was going to be there.

### **Seattle Worker: You sent us two photographs. What can you tell us about them?**



Carlos Cortéz typing in the IWW General Headquarters, 1983. Photo: Dave Tucker



The one of Carlos in the office, I don't know for certain what he's doing, probably typing up something for the Industrial Worker. We did get submissions that were handwritten in the mail, and Carlos in particular and others would have to type those up so they could be readable by the typesetter. He was always typing.

**Seattle Worker: Will you paint us a picture?**

Tuck: Carlos was a relaxed guy. He would just show up in the office, "Hey fellow worker, how are you doin'?" He spoke slowly: "How are ya? Well, I came by because I wanted to use the typewriter. Is it available?" Then he would come in and sit down at one of the empty desks and start doing his thing, but he loved to chat, just to hear what I'd been up to. He would kinda hunch over his typewriter and clack it out two-fingered. But he would easily enough take a break, and light up one of his little cigarillos, sitting by the open window, or he might close the window because it was too cold. (Laughs) Just kinda wanted to know what I'd been up to, somebody else is coming into the office to do something or just hang out, he would engage them. I mostly think of Carlos as an easygoing, relaxed person, with his long gray ponytail, usually wearing a beret or sitting at the desk and making his counterfeit bus transfers (laughs).

**Seattle Worker: Counterfeit bus transfers?**

Tuck: Carlos taught me how to make a fake transit transfer pass, so that I'd get on the bus or the "L", I'd get a transfer and he'd show me how I could use that all day long instead of just for an hour. He would often be in the office making transfers—he'd pick them up off the street and he would kind of overlay them over each other and very carefully tape them with magic transparent tape and cut them out. He was an artist at it. I don't remember Carlos having a vehicle, I don't remember him driving or even owning a car. I never rode with him in a car. It was always on the bus or the L.



Carlos Cortéz with his plastic bottle skeleton, 1983. Photo: Dave Tucker.

**Seattle Worker: And what about the other photograph?**

The one of him with the skeleton, he made that out of plastic bottles and Carlos—his father was from Mexico and his mother was German, and Carlos thoroughly embraced traditional Mexican culture and had a reverence for the cultural symbols of skulls and skeletons, and that sort of thing. And so he made that

pretty nearly life-sized skeleton out of plastic bottles, and he carried it around from time to time at demonstrations, rallies, May Day rallies. It definitely generated conversation. A lot of people would come up to talk to him, who wouldn't otherwise, "Hey man, what's with the skeleton?" and Carlos had a ready-made audience.

**Seattle Worker: What was his biggest contribution to the IWW?**

Tuck: It was his artwork, his art was his contribution to the IWW and the class struggle. He also did a lot of artwork for local Hispanic and Native American organizations.

**Seattle Worker: What can you tell us about his art?**

Tuck: He was pretty well known as an artist, he was known to a lot more people as a linocut and a woodcut artist. We knew him as a Wob but we also appreciated the wonderful linocuts that he made for posters, like the Joe Hill poster, and he's got a Ben



Art: Carlos Cortéz

Fletcher poster and a bunch of others, I wish we still produced those. I've got another really great one, in addition to this Joe Hill one, I've got one that he made that shows some cats holding bottles, and it says something like, "There's so many of us so few of him." It is a great piece of art, and it's signed CAC so you can see that it's his.

**Seattle Worker: Did you participate in any of the printings?**

Tuck: Yes I went to Carlos' house quite a number of times. His studio was at the house, and he had engraving tools that he used on the linoleum blocks. I remember watching him doing one of those. I was pretty impressed at the quickness that he could summon to make just a lovely picture out of just a square of linoleum, and how quickly he could do that. I watched him do that and I also helped him a number of times use his printing press to print. He would ink up the linoleum block and put a piece of paper over it, and rub it, and peel it off, and then re-ink, put another big piece of paper down, rub it, pull it off. His whole house would be covered by these 2 by 3 foot posters that he made. For years, if anyone sent an order to General Headquarters to the store, to the literature department, and ordered a Carlos Cortéz poster, if we didn't have any in stock he would just go print one! If you had ordered a Carlos Cortéz

poster in those days he would have actually printed it at home, Carlos Cortéz's fingerprints all over it. I used to have several of the ones that he made. Those were very valuable to me, but I lived on my boat for years and a lot of stuff had water damage.

**Seattle Worker: What did he find valuable about the IWW?**

Tuck: He was a fierce anti-capitalist. He would call himself an indigenous anarchist perhaps. Carlos had been in the union a whole lot longer than I had at that time—I was a newbie, and Carlos had been around for decades. I think it was a connection for him to the world that we want; a group of people who actually had a vision.

**Seattle Worker: On the Industrial Worker, he was a contributor and Fred was the editor, right?**

Tuck: Fred was the Industrial Worker editor. He gave that up partway through my year there in 1983 because his eyesight wasn't good and then it became more of a collective effort, Penny, Carlos, Mike Hargis, me, Fred, a couple others, I think Dean Nolan might have been involved in that, Cathy Taylor. I can't remember who all was considered the editorial collective.

**Seattle Worker: What differences did he have with Fred about the Industrial Worker articles?**

Tuck: Fred wanted to talk a lot about socialism, and Carlos didn't. Carlos wanted to talk more about anarchism, and Fred didn't. There was that, and there was how much space to devote to articles about the antinuclear or the peace movement versus articles about workers organizing the J.P. Stevens textile mills, or whatever sorts of things were going on. Fred wanted to enlarge the subject matter. He wanted there to be more stuff on non-labor efforts. Carlos was into that but didn't think it should be our priority at the paper. Layout. . . I vaguely remember there being some discussions about layout and what goes where. Fred may have suggested we move Carlos' column to another page. In a nice way though; it wasn't raging arguments, just disagreements.

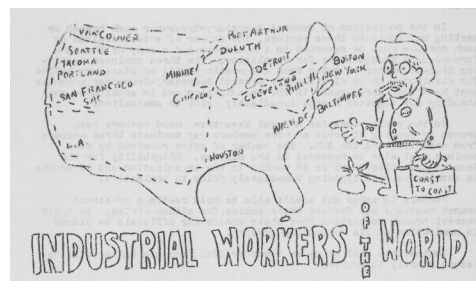
**Seattle Worker: What was his relationship like with Fred Thompson?**

Tuck: Carlos would come in to type up his column or to do some other work for the Industrial Worker, and Fred Thompson would come in and the two of them would manage to have these kinda low-key arguments. They had known each other for a long, long time, by the time I was there in 1983, probably 30, 40 years, which is as long ago as when I was there. But they always had this discussion. Fred was always giving Carlos a hard time for smoking his little cigarillos in the office, and Carlos would say, "Hey, do you want me to come in here and work or don't you?" (Laughs) "Just open up the windows!" There weren't

any no-smoking rules at the time, in the office, and it was often quite the stinky fug in there, not just Carlos. Fred and Carlos would go round and round and round about smoking in the office. Carlos was a very personal fellow; he loved to talk to people.

**Seattle Worker: Who were his heroes?**

Tuck: He talked about Ben Fletcher a lot. Carlos was a conscientious objector in WWII, and went to prison. He talked quite a bit about some of the people he was in prison with. He was also quite a big fan of Fellow Worker Bruce "Utah" Phillips. I remember Phillips coming into General Headquarters a couple times, and I was under standing orders to call Carlos



Art: Carlos Cortéz

immediately, and he would come down and have a great reunion. I would just sit in awe and listen to these two.

**Seattle Worker: What did they chat about?**

Tuck: Bruce talked about his travels and where his concerts were taking him to these days. I remember something about having trouble with his guitar. It was just kind of updating. "How ya been, what's going on, you made any good posters these days?" he'd ask Carlos, and Carlos would want to know where Bruce had been on the road, and ask "Oh, did you see so and so?" It wasn't anything earthshaking. It was like two friends who didn't see each other very often crossing paths again.

**Seattle Worker: Who else have you met over the years that you consider either old timers or "of the old cloth"?**

Tuck: I had the real honor of meeting Fellow Worker A.L. Nurse, the delegate that signed up Fred Thompson. So I met him. He lived in Missoula. A fellow worker that really impressed me was Bob Markholt from the Seattle branch, and David Jahn also from Seattle. They were much older than me. Bob's mom was Ottilie Markholt, who was in the Tacoma branch. She was Ralph Chaplin's office secretary and had very strong opinions about everything you could imagine. I met Frank Cedervall from Cleveland. He organized IWW in the auto plants before the UAW got around to it, and so when the IWW was doing auto worker organizing in the Detroit area in the early 1930s, Frank was in on that, and that carried over into moving to Cleveland

and being a stalwart in the old Cleveland metalworkers union. He came to a couple of Mayday presentations, and came by the office just to visit one time. He was a remarkable old guy. Another person I met was Minnie Corder. Minnie participated in the Bread and Roses strike in Lawrence 1912, as a very young woman, a textile worker, and I met her at a convention. She was pretty old and frail even by then, and we had quite a letter correspondence. I have quite a number of letters that I've saved. I've felt very privileged to be able to meet these people who are now long gone, the people who held the union together through the 50s. It was literally a tiny discussion, people writing letters back and forth. They probably figured they were the last: "When we are gone the IWW ceases to exist." Fortunately they were wrong.

In fact, I just had a great association with that, I watched a Bruce Phillips documentary that's been circulating around, and at the end there's some people, Mark Ross and a few other old Wobs singing a song, and the song goes "We're building a boat we may not sail on" and so I think that image is what Carlos had in his mind: ***we need to keep this going***.

#### References

<https://archive.iww.org/history/biography/CarlosCortéz/1/>

<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/carlos-cortez-6203>

<https://libcom.org/library/carlos-cortez-1923-2005>

## Utah Phillips on "Building a Boat"

I see 'em as they were building a boat. They were building a ship. And none of 'em believed they would ever sail on it. But it was no excuse not to build it. When they got too old and broken, tired to build any more on that boat, they passed the skills and the tools on to the younger ones and they kept building the boat, and now those tools are passed on to our times, they're in our hands, and we keep building that boat, when our turn comes, we'll pass those tools on, and someday that ship is gonna sail. Someday that ship is gonna sail the world of economic justice and peace, and you can count on that too.

Utah Phillips, Hail to the Thieves, Volume III: Songs to Take Our Country Back

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogMm2FmRGYQ>



*Members of the Port Townsend Shipwrights Co-op restore the historic Western Flyer. Photo by Chris Chase, Western Flyer Foundation.*

### Notes from the Field (continued from page 2)

One of the most interesting data points in this pandemic is that the mortality of nursing home residents is 30% lower in unionized homes than non-unionized. With 40% of all deaths centered in nursing homes, this is a big deal. An abstract published in Health Affairs goes on to point out that it may be due to the higher staff-to-patient ratios, lower staff turnover rates, and an emphasis on health and safety rights. Furthermore, unionized workers having a say in the operation of the facilities proves to be a potent factor in the reduction.

"Our finding that unions are associated with reduced COVID-19 mortality rates in nursing homes is consistent with previous findings that unions improve safety and health standards for workers, help coenforce those standards with employers, and also reduce workplace injuries and accidental deaths. Health care worker unions, in particular, are also associated with improved patient outcomes."

Read the original article at:

<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/full/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.01011>

# That Sense of Connection: How to Build up Branch Officers

By Lexi Owens

*Editor: This is part 1 of a two-part series on what officers can do for branch building, member engagement, mentorship, and fostering a positive union culture.*

“It’s my responsibility as a Wobbly to take this on,” said Ned K., the new Branch Secretary of the Seattle Education IU620 Job Branch. “I need to learn how to do it.” After layoffs devastated Ned’s campaign, he decided to become a branch officer, even though he had never served in an officer role before, because “Admin work is crucial. It keeps the branch rolling.” Now as Secretary, Ned and a small group are holding the Job Branch together, keeping the campaign going, and preparing for the union’s return to their workplace.

In the IWW, officers like Ned take on a range of administrative tasks, all while remaining workers in the shops they are unionizing or as regular dues-paying members in their local branch. This system reflects the democratic principles of the union: rank-and-file members control policy in their locals through meetings and votes, and officers carry out those decisions and provide administrative support. All this administrative work is done by volunteer branch officers, unlike other unions which rely on paid staff.

Most branches struggle to carry out these basic duties in one way or another.

However, several branches have developed successful, time-tested methods for staffing their officer positions with competent and reliable officers as well as mentoring the next cohort who will take office in the future. Using these methods, shops and branches can create a system of volunteer mentorship to develop skills in our fellow workers, build trust and solidarity, and share the burden of the



Office of General Headquarters, 1983.  
Photo: Dave Tucker

tasks needed to keep the union working.

## ***Widen the Pool: Recruiting***

The Stardust Family United Industrial Union Branch 630/640 (SFU) organizes food service and entertainment industry workers in New York. According to Emé B.—a former treasurer and current delegate—SFU has had four Branch Secretaries and four Branch Treasurers since 2016. Stardusters understand that rotating these positions builds members’ skills, helps avoid burnout, and encourages commitment to the organization. And while turnover has challenges for continuity and institutional memory—increasing the time it takes to learn how to do a job well—the key has been the support offered by the workers in the shop. “There is a core group of Stardusters who are always there to help, but we insist on not taking those official titles, mostly because we are delegating,” Emé said, “It gets people involved and keeps the union strong and gives people a deeper appreciation for what a union is.”

Spreading work around is also an important aspect of the IWW’s rank-and-file emphasis

and avoidance of paid staff. Not only is staff prohibitively costly for a small union like ours, but hiring staff can undermine worker organization. Having volunteer administrators who come from the shop or the branch reinforces that the union’s admin is supposed to reflect its membership. “It’s the soul of the organization,” said Ned in Seattle, “it’s not about farming out duties to ‘professionals.’ We have the understanding that everybody takes care of responsibilities. It’s empowering.”

Kelsey T.W. has encouraged turnover in the Chicago General Membership Branch, where a combination of intentional recruitment and term limits has helped eight members take on the Branch Secretary and Branch Treasurer duties since 2016. Kelsey has served as Branch Secretary, Branch Treasurer, and is currently on the IWW’s General Executive Board. After moving to Chicago, Kelsey helped develop an onboarding process for new members where delegates—members elected to collect dues and initiate new members—became responsible for helping create a 1-year plan for every new member. “The role of the delegate changed, and the model is now a mentorship role,” she said, which facilitated communication between the branch and its members. Because of this program,

**Build a representative culture that people can find a home in.**

Kelsey identified a member who showed an interest in getting involved, mentored that member, and encouraged them to pursue branch office, which gave them the confidence to run. That member is now the Branch Secretary for 2021.

Turnover helps break down barriers between groups of workers and prevents a permanent administrative class from forming. Officer turnover is both pragmatic and a reflection of our democratic ethos.

### ***Deepen the Pool: Mentorship***

Mentorship of the next wave of officers must be an intentional process that builds members' confidence and skills so they feel supported when they take on a new role. According to Emé, "The only way that it has ever worked is emphasizing that we have a very strong group of people who are here to help you, and you never have to do it alone." Mentorship then facilitates a transfer of institutional knowledge while a member learns the position. "I had many meetings with the previous Branch Secretary," said Ned in Seattle. He described their relationship as reciprocal: a give and take of information that helped form a strong bond between them and provided him with some much-needed tools.

If officers don't build the relationships necessary for a good hand-off of officer duties, they endanger the functioning of the branch. Kelsey described the lack of support she received when she first became an officer and when the branch was struggling to get back on its feet. Having experienced the difficulties of learning on the job without a mentor, Kelsey decided that future officers would not have to suffer that again. She said, "My immediate goal: no one should be shoved into a role without support again, it's unacceptable." Branch officers have a responsibility to train and mentor their replacements so as to protect the branch's operations and finances.



*Seattle branch office, 2021*

Current officers should identify the barriers that keep members from volunteering, and turn those challenges into opportunities. Emé observed that the best way to engage workers in the union is to turn their agitation into action: "Take that momentum and put it towards the organizational side of things." Give that member the opportunity

to fix a problem they see, and show them you respect them enough to help them pursue a solution. Emé also spoke to the process that got him to take on an officer role. After being hired as a scab, Emé was recruited into the union when other members noticed his agitation and found ways to get him involved. This culminated in Emé becoming a key member of the campaign and serving as Branch Treasurer.

### ***A Union Identity***

Creating a welcoming and supportive union culture is also fundamental to success in recruitment. Members will only take on roles in the union if they see themselves in the union. Emé believes that "when you accept an elected position, you're basically saying, 'my identity is now tied to this organization.' So you have to make it an organization that someone would want to identify with." Build a representative culture that people can find a home in, and build relationships with your fellow workers. No one will volunteer to work on behalf of the union without feeling that sense of connection.

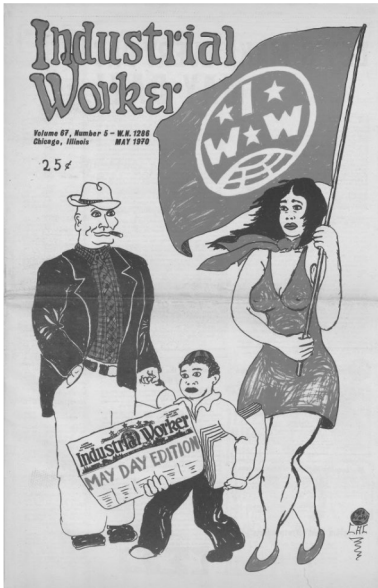
Ned has been a Wobbly since 2013, and he's still finding ways to get more involved. "I felt like my number was up as far as taking on the secretary duties for the year," he said, "Everybody should get a little bit of a hand in as many places as they can to help the whole project move along." Ned's feelings towards his fellow workers reinforce his reasons for remaining in the union and keeping the job branch alive, even after three quarters of the union's members were laid off. That sense of solidarity binds us together, and it manifests in volunteers who are willing to take on the work of the union.

Kelsey believes that experienced branch administrators need to seek out the next group of members who will be mentored until they're ready to take on officer duties. "You can't be a good steward of the union unless you form a relationship," she said. "You can only do that by talking to people on a regular basis and getting them involved." These sorts of regular connections can inform you about a member's potential and where they can be most helpful to the organization. And when that member asks the right questions—like how to get involved, what work they can take on, where to find something—it demonstrates that they want to "be of service to their fellow workers," in Kelsey's words. Those members will be invested in doing a good job as an officer because they care about the union.

"Where our last secretary was helpful," said Ned, "—and where she will always be helpful—was in her enthusiasm and commitment to the project." He concluded with, "I'm doing this out of a sense of obligation to my coworkers."

***"We all want to keep this going."***





Art: Carlos Cortéz



Photo: x395594



Earth First! and the IWW join autoworkers in a Fenton, MO protest against Chrysler (1989) Photo: Orin Langelle, <https://photolangelle.org/>



Photo from archive.iww.org, original source unknown



Photo: x395594

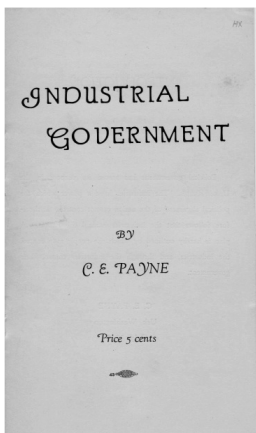


*Stumpy Payne's gravesite, marked with a flower*

In an unmarked grave near Portland, OR lies a very special Wobbly. Clayton E. "C.E." Payne aka "Stumpy" (1869-1963). Born just after the Civil War, C.E. worked as a farm hand, railroad worker, carpenter, and stump rancher (hence the moniker "Stumpy"). He is considered one of the foremost IWW autodidactic (self-taught) intellectuals.

Little is known of his early years; however, by 1903 he had joined the Socialist Party and become an organizer. Later in 1904 he became the North Dakota Socialist Party Secretary. In 1905, he attended the founding convention of the IWW. He showed up with no credentials and no organization affiliation. He described himself on his paperwork as an "Unaffiliated Individual." In 1911, Stumpy started a long career writing for the IWW and other left organizations. In the *Industrial Worker*, he covered famous historical events like the Free Speech Fights and the Everett Massacre.

In 1920, he was convicted in Washington State for Criminal Syndicalism. He spent nearly a year in Walla Walla Federal Penitentiary. However, he continued writing and by 1923 became the Editor of the *Industrial Worker*.



Stumpy wrote, edited, authored, and worked his way through WWII and by 1955 was recognized as one of the leading members of the IWW. From then to 1962 he served on the General Executive Board (GEB) of the Union.

To read his 1945 wartime pamphlet "Industrial Government" that he sold while soapboxing, email us at [seattleworkeriww@gmail.com](mailto:seattleworkeriww@gmail.com) and ask for the PDF.

Finally, after resigning due to poor health, he passed on October 1st, 1963. Fellow Worker Payne was buried in an unmarked grave at Park Hill Cemetery, Vancouver, WA. He was described by Carl Keller, Editor of the *Industrial Worker*:

***"He was a serious rebel with an amount of dignity and urbanity that was extraordinary. He remained a dedicated Wobbly to the end of his days."***

## Worker's Encyclopedia

**Slowdown:** aka Work-to-rule. A job action in which workers follow the employers work and safety rules so exactly, that the ending result is a decrease in worker productivity. In contrast to workers going on strike and ceasing production, the workers are less susceptible to disciplinary action and continue to receive pay as they stay on the job.

Slowdowns are construed by employers as malicious actions. Workers are subject to reprimands, negative performance reviews, and firings. Slowdowns are illegal in the USA for the very reason that workers resort to them: they give the worker a decided advantage by making it impossible for the employers to plan production efficiently. It is also difficult to prove workers are engaging in the slowdown as it is a variable action that can be modified from moment-to-moment and situation-to-situation. This type of direct action is also one of the oldest as it can be done individually or as a group.

At the turn of the century, a gang of section men working on a railroad in Indiana were notified of a cut in their wages. The workers immediately took their shovels to the blacksmith shop and cut two inches from the scoops. Returning to work, they told the boss "short pay, short shovels."

Examples: teachers refusing to work for free, nurses refusing to answer phones, workers refusing to work overtime, and workers following all safety rules without exception.

See also: soldiering, slacking off, rule-book slowdown, go-slow, stand and stretch actions, shirking, industrial actions, gold-bricking, direct action, and as usual, sabotage. Also the scene from "I Love Lucy" with Lucy and Betty working on a candy factory packing line is a hoot.

Much of this piece was liberally taken from the IWW archive:

<https://archive.iww.org/about/solidarityunionism/directaction/1/>

## About the Seattle IWW

Founded in Chicago in 1905, the IWW is open to all workers. Don't let the "industrial" part fool you: our members include teachers, social workers, retail workers, construction workers, bartenders and computer programmers. Only bosses and cops are not allowed to join. If you are currently unemployed, you can still join. We are a volunteer-driven union, and this means we run the union. Membership dues are used to maintain the union and assist organizing campaigns. As a result, monthly dues are low. To join, visit:

<https://iww.org/membership/>

### Take the Organizer Training!

The Organizer Training 101 (OT101) is an intensive, four-day training that teaches you all the basic skills and tools they need to build an organizing committee at your workplace—from the ground up. You will learn what constitutes a union, how to have one-on-one conversations with coworkers, the basics of labor law, and how to organize and carry out a direct action.

The Seattle General Membership Branch holds regular trainings—free during the pandemic. If you'd like to be notified of the time and date, visit:

<https://forms.gle/q9edxoGrEVXhMVd89>

### Organize Your Workplace!

The Industrial Workers of the World want to help you improve the conditions of your workplace. If you have questions, or would like to begin organizing your workplace, visit:

<https://seattleiww.org/organize-your-workplace/>

## Preamble

### to the IWW Constitution

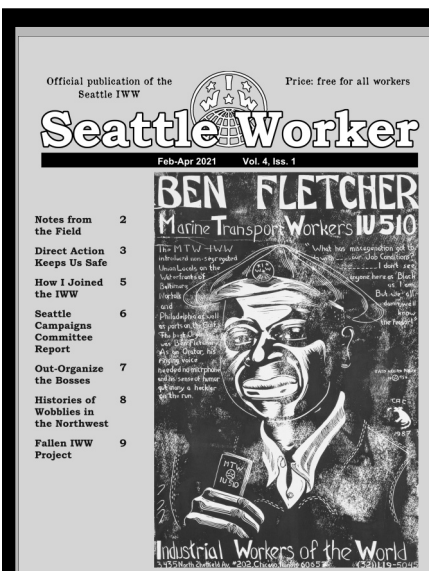
The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."



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