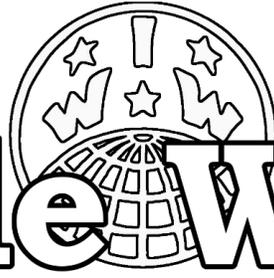


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If I Had A Hammer...

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Cover image: Renee Good's Memorial, submitted by Josiah Devine Johnson.

Extended Cover Caption:

Being in MSP During "Operation Metro Surge"

Josiah Devine Johnson

The best tasting coffee in Minneapolis is easily found where Renee Nicole Good was shot and killed by I.C.E. officers January 7th of this year. It's delivered fresh every morning in a large brown thermos—self-serve on a frost-covered folding table near the firepit at Good's memorial. Pull over across from the flowers, near the press van with the dog in it. You can't miss it.

The best tasting coffee in Minneapolis does wonders after a redeye flight from SeaTac. Exhaustion and ignorance complicate the balancing act of staying out of the way while feeling a sense of obligation, perhaps even duty, to get involved. My father's advice echoes Mr. Rogers', "look for the helpers." This emotional cocktail, spurred on by my PBS-inspired father, drew me to Goods' memorial site.

The best tasting coffee in Minneapolis is free. The price adds to the quality of its flavor, as it could easily outsell anything being shilled out here on the coast. "It's Ecuadorian," Fabiola, the coffee brewer extraordinaire, tells me, "I spice it—the same recipe my Grandma made."

Fabiola is one of the guardians of Good's memorial, and has been here everyday since she was murdered. Swinging the claw of her hammer into the ice, she creates holes perfectly sized to fit used saint candles that act as vases for fresh flowers.

The best tasting coffee in Minneapolis is drunk religiously by the memorial's self-proclaimed security guard, James. The gentle giant sits low to the ground, fireside and three layers deep in sweatshirts smelling of stale smoke. "People ask me to leave my jacket outside when I come over to visit," he tells me. Sometimes there for 15-hour stints since Good was shot, James was home when it happened; he helped clean up her blood in the snow.

Stripping logs for tinder, we got to know one another. I became quick friends with James and the guardians who've taken on the open-ended responsibility of attending to Good's memorial and its visitors. They invited me to look after the memorial while they ran errands, saw family, and slept. I host mourners there and meet as many as I can. I direct each of them towards the fire for some warmth and to please help themselves to our donated catering, and to be sure to have a cup of the best fucking coffee in Minneapolis.

Everyone who's tried it agrees.

It might seem ludicrous to imagine, but for many, fighting for the cause looks like leading with hospitality in the face of death and deportations. That's how Minnesota shows up, and—given what I see while back home—it's working. Since the invasion of ICE during 'Operation Metro Surge', Minnesotans offer a place to stay, provide refuge, deliver groceries and curate memorials. For many, this generosity comes at the expense of time to mourn, or live life.

Months into the ICE occupation, the guardians of Good's memorial (and Minnesota at large) are passionate, strong, and profoundly tired. Despite this, they do the Minnesota thing—they host.

Building the Plane as We Fly It

“But we can, you know we can...”

FW John (x430192)



**SUPPORT NYA
TENANT UNION**

**WE DEMAND OUR LANDLORDS
NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH
WE DEMAND SAFE,
HEALTHY, STABLE
HOUSING**

**JOIN THE TENANT MOVEMENT,
SIGN THE PETITION TODAY**

Art provided by NYATU.

So that's what they look like...,' I can't help but think, looking over my landlord's LinkedIn. Not sure what I expected; they've only ever been a name on contracts to me.

Scrolling past a post offering their “different perspective” on taxing the wealthy—and extolling *Rich Dad, Poor Dad*—I was much more surprised to learn that my landlord helped start the property management company for the apartment I rent. I guess I'd always assumed it was a third-party situation. Presumably, this unit is part of the ~\$200 million in real estate they list managing over the last few years and the ~\$10 million portfolio they manage now.

That's...

That's a lot more assets than whatever I expected.

It's also a lot of tenants.

—

Per the *One Tacoma* plan, adopted June 2025, renters comprise 50% of our city's residents. Some 100,000+ Tacoman tenants.¹

And starting with New York Apartments Tenant Union (NYATU) last December, we've begun organizing.

“The long-run horizon of this is we want to build a city-wide tenant union,” Devin Rydel Kelly states, albeit toward the end of our conversation. When first sitting down with the tenant union organizer to enjoy some always-needed coffee on an oddly sunny February day, he relayed developments since the public launch of NYATU's campaign (covered in our Jan/Feb Issue).

NYATU updated and reissued their original demand letter after landlords Rob and Candy Hoover ignored the December 20 deadline given for their response. Following this second letter, the property managers—Elev8 Residential—stepped in to scold NYATU: don't contact the landlords; no WA state law requires NYATU's demands be met; no problems exist with current maintenance; tenants are responsible for submitting more timely maintenance requests.

But what Rydel Kelly describes happening next contradicts those last two claims: “They did a ‘maintenance blitz’ on the property right after that—which, I think, both was to diffuse that part of the demand and a bit of an intimidation tactic.

“Having people come into the building a *lot* over the course of several days is, obviously, helpful in that it's improving quality of life visibly in the building—but also inundating them with people and information and rather invasive.”

Moreover, at their December 6th launch, NYATU members described the property managers giving little to no notice before attempting to enter units. That continues through the ‘maintenance blitz’. Elev8 disregards repeated requests for 48-hours notice and to stop scheduling work at times when tenants aren't present.

Rydel Kelly makes the culprit clear: “The manipulation and the mismanagement is really on the part of Elev8—and the ultimate responsibility is the Hoovers, the landlords.”

I tell them, "Turn on the water"

I tell 'em, "Turn on the heat"

Tells me, "All you ever do is complain," yeah

*Then they search the place when I'm not here.*²

More recently, Elev8 sent NYATU a cease-and-desist letter on behalf of the Hoovers' lawyers. Determined to double down on the intimidation, Elev8 followed that legal notice with an inflammatory email accusing NYATU of doxxing the Hoovers during the tenant union's public launch.

Rydel Kelly explains that some tenants understandably felt somewhat spooked even after preparing for aggressive responses: "We did a whole lot of inoculation—'This might happen. This probably will happen.' But it's one thing to talk about it, and it's another when it comes up, when it actually occurs."

Weathering the Hoovers' intimidation only reinforced NYATU's commitment to each other and their demands, however. "The tenants were really united. We worked through all of that. They're pissed off about it."

This attempted union busting isn't exclusive to New York Apartments. Rydel Kelly continues, "The landlords have also been going and whining to tenants in other buildings over the union, saying we're on rent strike—which is not true—and that no one's paying rent." With living conditions in Hoover-owned buildings providing everyday evidence of landlord neglect, skepticism of the landlords' claims rose quickly.

Many of those tenants now work to form their own unions.

"In union organizing of all types, we say, 'the boss is the best organizer,' and I firmly believe the landlord is the best organizer here. So, while that was a bit of a scary blip, I would say folks are feeling really fired up right now."

All these efforts targeting tenants at the five Hoover-owned properties in Tacoma (and a sixth still in Pierce County) have backfired so spectacularly that Rydel Kelly is confident enough to relay, "We're over a majority of all their tenants."

"So, we're doing good... We're about to launch another super-duper majority union in one of their buildings at 80%."

—

Having recently attended an OT101, I was curious about what else to look out for and inoculate against as other tenants organize.

Rydel Kelly stresses that we'll see landlords, property managers, and their lawyers selectively wield laws and regulations they don't expect tenants to know—flagrantly violating or rigidly enforcing them depending on the benefits.

Providing a pragmatic example, Rydel Kelly informs, "Landlords will write stuff as if it's a writ for eviction and also ten-day or two-week notice—they'll have a lawyer write it, in legalese, but it won't be stamped by a judge's court system. That happens all the time."

"They also will erroneously post [notices] when there's no grounds. In late December, one of our members got three copies of a two-week notice posted on his door for rent insurance, for not paying \$15. He didn't owe it; he had his own renter insurance as part of the lease agreement."

Although Rydel Kelly expects local landlords and property managers to begin orchestrating a response to Tacoma's growing tenant union movement, it seems there's some clumsiness and disorganization right now, which might prove vulnerable.

"Part of us thought, 'Oh, this is an intimidation thing,' and part of us are like, 'God, they're morons...' They're so disorganized and chaotic internally that they don't even have their own data lined up. And he actually came home right as it was happening."

The tenant stood firm. Per Rydel Kelly, "He was like, 'I know my rights. This is bullshit. I pay my insurance.' And they took [the notices] down."

Asked about any exploitation emerging in the aftermath of amendments to the Landlord Fairness Code (LFC), Rydel Kelly notes that some landlords remain unaware of late changes successfully added by the local coalition of tenants and allies. These include closing a loophole related to relocation assistance and pegging late fees to a set percentage.

"Bryn Mar Village—the other place we've been in for a year, almost—actually issued [notice] to all their tenants that late fees were going to be \$75, which is not what happened. They're 1.5% [monthly rent]. So, they just outright lied or they had old, bad information, assuming we were going to lose."

Rydel Kelly stresses, "Every single one of those things can be used as an organizing opportunity. Every single one of those can be a contested space, if people believe in it."

"And there's only so much bullshit people can put up with, you know?"

On the topic of legal stuff already (and still a bit perplexed by the accusation against NYATU), I ask whether the property managers' doxxing claim held any kind of legitimacy. Rydel Kelly asserts that outside legal counsel determined otherwise, and he figures it's simply the Hoovers and Elev8 trying to "scare the tenants, limit their range of tactics they can do—which is classic union busting."

"I've been doing organizing of one type or another for 30 years, but it's my first time organizing a tenant union. And it's all their first time. So, we're building the plane as we fly it."

—

Somewhat handy with literal and metaphorical wrenches myself, I've been curious about a DIY guide to getting started. I ask Rydel Kelly how familiar he is with all the public documents and investigative research.

Immediately replying, "Very," Rydel Kelly proceeds into a quick 101:

"So, there's what we consider 'building research' and 'personnel research'. And 'building research' is the properties themselves; 'personnel research' is the owners and managers.

"For 'building research', once you have a property in mind, go to the county auditor, assessor, and treasurer sites. If there's a bill of sale, if there's a deed or mortgage that's publicly reported, you can see what LLC owns it and who signs for it.

"In different counties—King County, for sure, and Pierce County—you can get their business ID or tax ID or mailing address and you can cross-reference it to see what other properties they own in that database. It's kind of a pain in the butt, they're all a bit different, but that's kinda how you do it."

Rydel Kelly tells me that landlords' businesses must be licensed in Seattle and Tacoma, with building info. "Once we get the County information, we go look at the City business license stuff. And it's a way to make sure those two things are lining up."

Thinking of 'personnel research' like 'workplace mapping', I ask whether the process started with property managers.

Rydel Kelly says it depends on whether landlord information is easily accessible. "We did research on the Hoovers and found out they live in Huntington Beach and have a \$3 million house on a marina there and a \$2 million house on the water here, which is public record, and an art gallery—they're pretty boastful about that stuff. Social media, LinkedIn—classic 'power analysis' is what you might call it in union organizing research: who they know, if they're on boards, who they interact with, where might they have some vulnerabilities."

—

Rydel Kelly states the long-term goal to organize a city-wide tenant union, simultaneously sounding as casual and inflexible as he had earlier in our conversation while calling for "a militant, democratic tenant union". And as word spreads from tenant to tenant—or gets plastered around town, like the NYATU poster pinned up over on the coffee shop's bulletin board across the room from where we're seated in the sun—you see it starting to shape.

This March, it starts escalating; TFA intends "a portfolio-wide campaign to put pressure on the owners and the property managers."

Starting with a non-Hoover building soon launching as well, Rydel Kelly projects, "Our goal is to have several publicly organized tenant unions this year. I'm very confident in that. At least one to use the threat of a rent strike to win concessions, and other ones in various places in the building and escalation process.

"And the goal is—by the end of the year—have a founding convention, where they elect leadership, they decide on their bylaws, they decide on a dues structure if they want one. And that's the vision we have."

Rydel Kelly and I start discussing different federated, "almost kinda anarchistic", and "neighborhood-y" structures that might work for a city-wide tenant union—from CT's state-wide model (CTTU) to Seattle's Puget Sound Tenant Union, from Kansas City to LA. There's a consistent familiarity throughout: democratic decision-making (within both individual tenant unions and across a city-wide structure); building and personnel 'mapping'; inoculation training; the imperative of solidarity, given the (current) lack of legal recognition and protection from the city; the need to confront landlords or property managers more directly.

In particular, Rydel Kelly mentions how CTTU and KC Tenants are "quite disciplined. They're very democratic in the ways the locals operate and building-level or portfolio-level unions operate, but then they're disciplined in their organizing model, which is what we really want to do." Noting the ease with which both unions wield leverage, he adds, "They've all been around for years now, but we could get to that place."

Having looked into CTTU's structure a bit, I recall individual chapters can be "organized by building, municipality, or landlord".³ Apartment buildings sorta represent more of a 'shop floor' in tenant organizing, so I mention to Rydel Kelly that something allowing for an 'at-large' membership could suit Tacoma's tenants renting single structures or 'few-unit' properties—circumstances without a larger number of other (known) tenants.

Rydel Kelly agrees, believing that—starting with organizing Tacoma's large apartment buildings for momentum—we should also be "building an at-large program and portfolio organizing, especially if people have a bunch of single-family homes or duplexes."

Curious about T4A's coalition-building, I ask whether there's been any collaboration with the Tenant Union Federation (TUF)—to which CTTU, KC Tenants, and others belong. Rydel Kelly speaks to a strong relationship, "I'm meeting with TUF people tomorrow—we took their four-month education program last summer," before punctuating with, "We love TUF."

—

Asking about resources for interested tenants, Rydel Kelly directs me to TFA's intake form—found on both TFA's website and tacomatenants.org. Aside from assistance with unionizing, TFA will help tenants find access to legal aid and resources. Drop-in volunteer training for tenant union organizing remains ongoing—at Nexus Legal Council, 4:30 on Fridays.

Complementing Tacoma's growing tenant union movement, TFA is building momentum behind another ballot initiative for this Fall, seeking again to secure and reinforce tenant rights. Rolling out a door-rapping campaign over the coming months, TFA intends to nab ~9,000 signatures by mid-June—starting with a Field Launch at People's Park on March 14 and a Campaign Launch on March 22 (11am and 4pm, respectively).

The local Landlord Lobby, which gutted the LFC and helped fund failed-candidate John Hines in Tacoma's last mayoral race, is expected to oppose both efforts perniciously.

*Says, "I'm doubling the rent
'Cause the building's condemned
You're gonna help me buy City Hall"⁴*

—
Walking to my apartment door—East Bay Ray's guitar surfing the wrinkles of my brain—I cross paths with the tenant from the other downstairs unit, taking out the trash. A few steps past our usual friendliness, I stop and turn.

"Hey, [REDACTED]—have you heard about any of the tenant organizing that's starting up?"

"Not since the last time."

I can't help but smirk as I continue, "Yeah, so..."

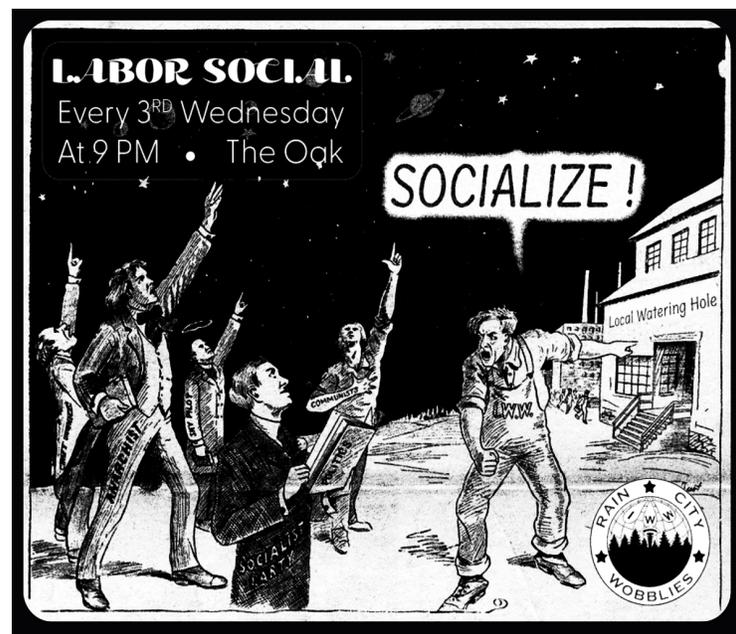
—
[Per Rydel Kelly at the end of Feb., the Hoovers have swapped Elev8 Residential for another property management company (expected to be no different). NYATU's campaign remains ongoing.

Although it probably doesn't need to be said, Tacoma's city-wide tenant union movement also continues (and continues growing).]

¹ *One Tacoma*. "Chapter: 05"
https://cms.tacoma.gov/Planning/Comprehensive%20Plan/Tacoma%20Comp%20Plan%2005_H.pdf

^{2,4} Dead Kennedys. "Let's Lynch the Landlord." *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables*.

³ CTTU. *Structure*. <https://www.cttenantsunion.org/our-chapters>



In Opposition to the Ongoing US-Israeli War on Iran March, 2, 2026

IWW Freelance Journalist Union



On February 28, the US and Israeli militaries launched an unprovoked war on Iran. The ongoing US-Israeli attacks, as well as Iranian counter-attacks, threaten the lives of countless people throughout the Middle East. One Israeli attack has already killed at least 148 people, including students, at an

all-girls elementary school in Iran, as reported by Al Jazeera.

US and Israeli airstrikes also targeted Iran's state broadcaster, which was previously knowingly targeted by Israel, according to Al Jazeera. These attacks come amidst the ongoing Israeli genocide in the Gaza Strip, where Israeli forces have killed more journalists than in any other conflict worldwide, per the Committee to Project Journalists.

The Industrial Workers of the World Freelance Journalists Union denounces the US-Israeli war on Iran and calls on our members, media workers more broadly and workers in all other industries to oppose it in our workplaces, in the streets and in the halls of power.

(Republished with the FJU's permission)

<https://freelancejournalistsunion.org/statements/2026/3/2/opposition-to-iran-war>

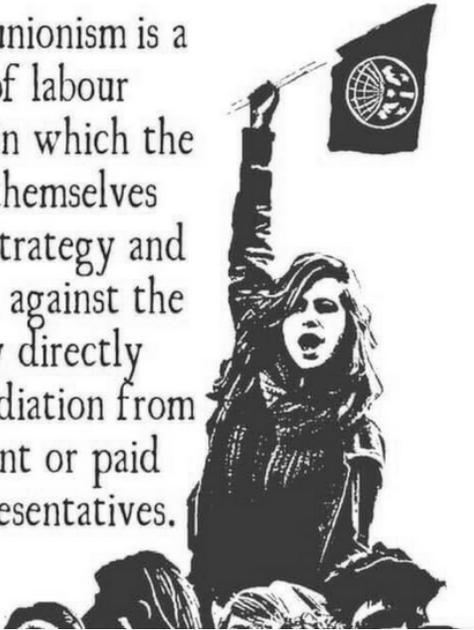
Solidarity Union Primer

Setting the date: Your first steering committee meeting

FW Noah

SOLIDARITY UNIONISM

Solidarity unionism is a model of labour organizing in which the workers themselves formulate strategy and take action against the company directly without mediation from government or paid union representatives.



Art originally published by the Industrial Worker in May 2021: "How Solidarity Unionism Supports the IWW's Historic Mission" by Lexi Owens, IU620, Seattle General Membership Branch.

In our Jan/Feb Seattle Worker, FW Donovan and I both discussed the first two steps to an organizing campaign. You start through conversations with your coworkers about collective workplace issues (empowering them as the problem solver or the organizer when doing so). FW Donovan showed us how to build a robust contact list from those conversations for a better sense of who we're trying to organize with, who to continue conversing with outside of work, and who belongs in your steering committee meetings.

But that last phrase might beg the question, "what is a steering committee?"

Put simply, a steering committee forms when coworkers regularly meet up outside the workplace to discuss ongoing grievances within it, how to advance their union efforts, updates to their contact lists, and much more. It's the core of any good organizing campaign, as the committee is what ultimately guides the tactics and strategies implemented. It models what a union in the workplace will look like: democratic, diverse, consistent, and a continual demonstration of workers addressing their own needs.

A good steering committee meeting should look like any other union meeting:

- 🐾 Meeting agenda
- 🐾 Common set of rules or bylaws
- 🐾 Updates on tasks that were assigned at the previous meeting
- 🐾 Practice for one-on-one conversations with other coworkers
- 🐾 Inoculating each other for potential retaliation or preparing future direct actions in the workplace

Committee meetings are where the collaborative elements of an organizing campaign begin to take greater shape, beginning to form a much clearer sense of direction for what the campaign wants to accomplish. Steering committee meetings must always be democratic in nature; agreeing on a clear decision-making process and delegating responsibility will prevent your campaign from becoming easily distracted or disorderly. Provided that everyone in your steering committee is familiar with how these meetings are meant to function, and the members of your committee consistently follow through on the tasks that they volunteer for, a steering committee can get a lot done even with just a handful of people in one workplace.

But even if you only have that handful of coworkers to start, you must still make sure that your steering committee is diverse—and not just in terms of race, gender, age, and so forth. Making sure that your committee is also diverse in terms of the different shift assignments, job titles, job tasks, and specific concerns or grievances is also very important.

This ensures that every kind of worker in your shop has adequate representation on the committee, as different groups of workers in

the same workplace have different concerns that can be addressed by organizing. This is also why our previous issue emphasized keeping an updated contact sheet. It helps workers-as-organizers keep track of union members and how they can contribute to the campaign's fight for its demands, as well as during future bargaining with the employer.

Organizers should look out for some obvious pitfalls when forming a committee:

 **People you're organizing with can't just be your friends.**

Continue having one-on-one's with other workers in your workplace who you may not socialize with much or aren't all that familiar with. It's easy to miss out on potential concerns to address—and people that could really benefit and be motivated by a campaign—if you only stick to the people you know best.

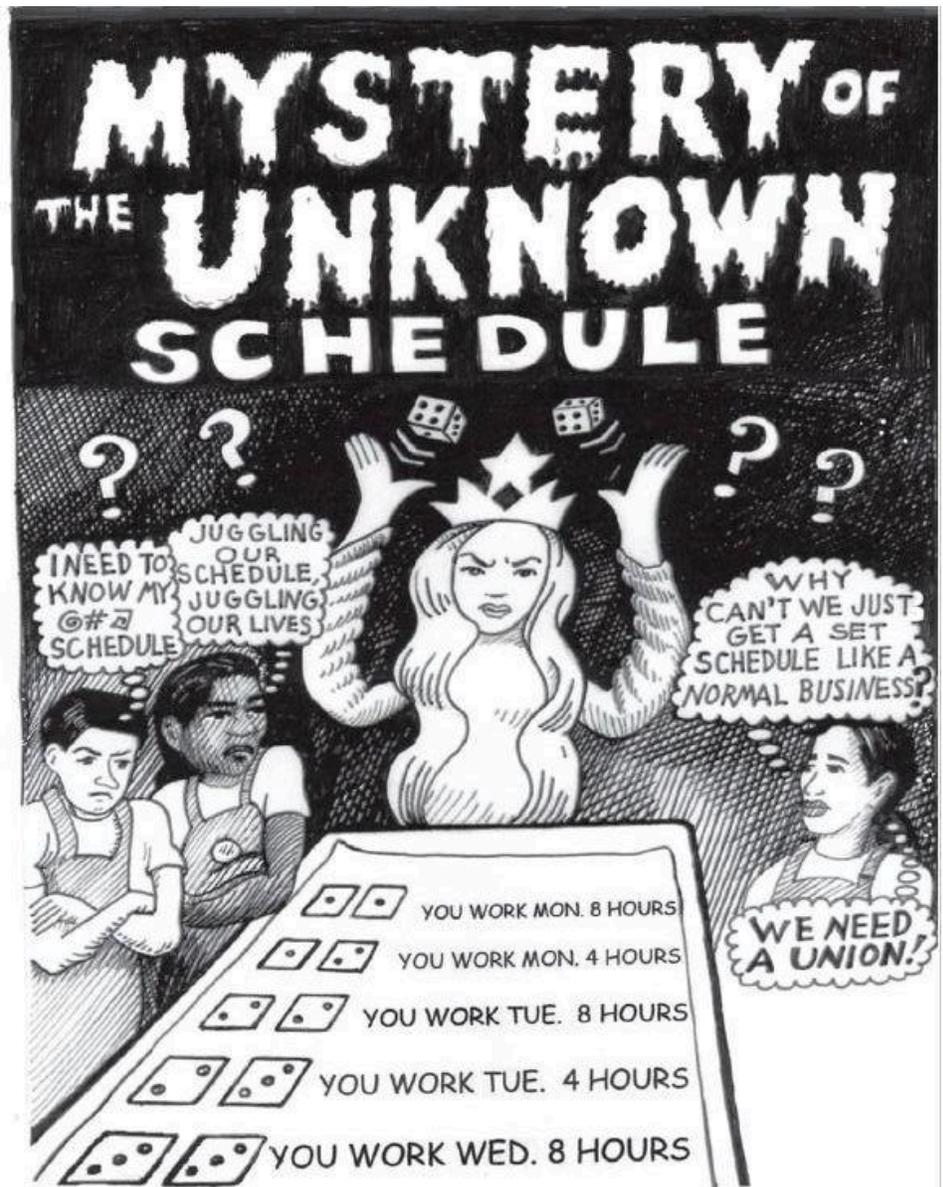
 **Avoid making your steering committee just an echo chamber for gripes or complaints that you have about your job.** Instead, make sure that your committee's conversations in end with how those concerns could potentially be addressed, either through direct action in the workplace or in future bargaining.

 **Regularly meet somewhere you know your coworkers can travel to easily, and try to time your committee meetings for the greatest ongoing attendance.** Be mindful of other people's work or personal schedules, and don't have your committee meetings in places that might be loud or distracting, such as a bar or a particularly busy cafe. Quieter locations—like a library, a bookstore, one of your coworkers' homes (if they're willing to host), a rented office space or a spare room at a local church—will do just fine.

 **Finally, practicing good operational and information security is a must.** It should be made clear to the other committee members that the conversations you're having, the decisions you're making, and the actions you might be planning shouldn't be discussed at work—unless absolutely necessary or safe from prying eyes and ears. If somebody decides to either rat you out to the boss or if someone decides to talk about it next to an anti-union coworker, your campaign could face some serious hurdles or the potential danger of failure in the near future.

If you weren't already familiar, you've hopefully got a better understanding of what a steering committee is and how to start one with your coworkers. They're a crucial step of any successful organizing campaign, also bringing a much greater sense of collaboration and productivity to your efforts.

Now that you know, take the leap: ask a couple of coworkers to hang out after work soon, and start talking about how your labor deserves so much more!



by Tom Keough (with permission), originally published as the 2022 March/April Seattle Worker Cover.

What Shall We Do with the Starbucks Bosses?

X383303

For years, Starbucks Coffee has been under economic stress and strain. With lagging US sales, European pushback, and mounting problems in China, Starbucks has been attempting a turnaround. But they're feeling further friction due to a very effective national boycott and ongoing strike brought by Starbucks Workers United (SBWU).

Through all of the years of strife and decline, Starbucks has refused to relinquish their firm control of each and every detail in store operations. They've refused to give their workers any meaningful say in those operations and store staffing.

However, this may be coming to an end.

In a landmark case with New York City, Starbucks has agreed to an almost \$40 million settlement for violations of NYC Fair Workweek Laws.

The NYC law is a nascent group of regulations stopping employers' worst employment practices. The law recognizes:

 Workers need predictable hours and shifts, requiring 14 days' notice to change shifts and hours.

 If the schedule needs changing, premiums need to be paid for shift changes.

 Workers must be given the opportunity to work extra shifts if extra hours are available to work, and those hours must be offered to regular workers before additional workers are hired.

Starbucks decided over 5 years ago that they didn't want to comply with the regulations and, instead, set out to violate almost every provision of the law. Following the standard Starbucks playbook of extreme litigation, they went their own way.

The result has been a devastating loss, only bolstering the law.

The almost 15,000 Starbucks NYC workers in the suit will receive \$50 for each shift in violation for the period between 2021 and 2024. Workers laid off illegally will be offered their jobs back as jobs become available, and Starbucks agrees to abide by the regulations in the future.

The Fair Workweek Laws are administered by NYC's Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP). They regulate retail, delivery, fast food, freelance, and care workers. The

overarching tone of the regulations are spelled out in a Workers Bill of Rights:

"It is illegal to punish, fire, or take any adverse employment action against workers for exercising or trying to exercise their rights."

These are basic rights all workers deserve; we need them in every workplace in every city. You can see how NYC is handling employers' continual overreach by going to DCWP's website:

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/dca/workers/workersrights/know-your-worker-rights.page>

This article's title is from the song of the same name—'What Shall We Do with the Starbucks Bosses?'—as published in the 38th edition of the IWW *Little Red Songbook*.

Tune: 'What do we do with a Drunken Sailor?' Words by Joe Grim Feinberg. Written in 2007 to celebrate the expansion of the IWW Starbucks Workers Union into Chicago.

What shall we do with the Starbucks Bosses,
What shall we do with the Starbucks Bosses,
What shall we do with the Starbucks Bosses,
Ear-eye in the morning.

CHORUS:

Way, ho, up she rises: (x3)
Starbucks Workers Union.

Make 'em drink coffee 'til they wake up and listen...(x3)

Decorate coffee with a union label...

Picket outside 'til they give us a raise, now...

Sing this song 'til they can't take it anymore...

That's what we do with Starbucks bosses...
Late until the evening.

—

As one last note: Starbucks CEO, Brian Niccol receives almost \$100 million per year—6,666 times the median income of a Starbucks worker. In addition, all of the other senior leaders at Starbucks receive a similarly ridiculous salary. Yet, they whine about how difficult it is to pay their workers a livable wage and give them predictable schedules. Go figure.

Support Starbucks workers. An Injury to One is an Injury to All.

No 'Good' Administration on Immigration:

Insight from a Dozen Years Organizing Against ICE Detention

Josefina Mora-Cheung, Director of Organizing with La Resistencia



Image provided by La Resistencia.

It's time to wake up to the actions of ICE and recognize we've turned a blind eye to it.

It can be difficult to remember that once, not that long ago, we lived in a world without Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the immigration detention complex.

Pre 9/11, the prominent immigration agency was known as Immigration Naturalization Services (INS). But post 9/11, we saw the Bush administration split an agency that focused mostly on border enforcement into two agencies: One intended to provide services and one focused solely on the expansion of mass enforcement.

Witnessing private interest in immigrant detention and enforcement continuously increase—particularly that of booming tech companies and billionaires contracting with DHS and ICE with the intention to put financial interest over humanity—we have to admit that, to some extent, we allowed the system to get to this point.

La Resistencia began in 2014, when we were asked to uplift the demands of detained people who were on hunger strike at the Northwest ICE Processing Center (NWIPC). Then known as the Northwest Detention Center, the hunger strikers were the largest number engaged in such action in an immigrant detention facility at the time. For over a decade, La Resistencia has been documenting conditions of inedible food, medical neglect, harassment and abuse, excessive use of solitary confinement and more human rights violations that happen at NWIPC, with the goal to shut down the facility and free all people in detention. La Resistencia has had

almost a constant presence outside the detention center throughout our 12 years, and we have seen the dramatic fluctuations of public interest and support in our work throughout various administrations.

La Resistencia's founding occurred during the last Obama administration, at a time when organizers around the country were labeling Obama as the "Deporter-in-Chief" for the skyrocketing number of deportations carried out under his administration.¹ Additionally, the Obama administration had just appointed Tom Homan—currently designated the 'White House Border Czar'—to Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Executive Associate Director of Enforcement and Removal Operations, and in 2013, it deemed Homan a Distinguished Executive—awarding him a Presidential Rank Award

During the first Trump administration, we had hundreds of people come out to our actions and support our work. This quickly dropped when Biden won the presidential elections in 2020, where we saw only a handful, maybe a dozen people show up to our actions outside of NWIPC.

We now see the numbers rise again, and while La Resistencia is grateful for the support and our increasing community awareness, we must remember that ending deportations and detentions does not depend on one presidential administration or political party.

We as a society allowed for a general complacency once Biden was elected, ignoring the warnings of numerous hunger strikes from inside detention, the skyrocketing numbers of people on digital detention and the multiple deaths that have happened inside the facility in under a decade,² including the deaths of Charles Leo Daniel and Jose Manuel Sanchez Castro.^{3,4} Our belief in democratic administrations has clouded our ability to see violence that has been allowed inside detention centers for more than a decade.

As we write this, we are supporting Steven Chavarria Portillo, who has been detained since 2024 and is on his sixth hunger strike while in detention. He has been on strike for 31 days (as of March 6) and demands to be released from solitary confinement—where he has been since April of 2025—and for dental care that he's been demanding for over a year. Steven is the seventh person to go on hunger strike that we know of since January 1, making 2026 to likely be the most hunger strikes that La Resistencia has seen at NWIPC in our 12 years of contact with people in detention.

Today, we're seeing that system begin to spill its violence into the streets, against anyone and everyone considered a threat, be it an immigrant or a U.S. citizen. However, immigrant detention and deportation, and the violent attacks that ICE has provoked on immigrants, is something that many of our immigrant communities have experienced for decades. Countless deaths inside detention have been occurring at the hands of ICE and their contracting

companies, such as GEO, who enabled and tried to cover up the death of Amar Mergasana at the Northwest ICE Processing Center in 2018. What we see happening in the streets is simply a fraction of what happens besides closed doors at facilities like the NWIPC.

As the narrative around immigration gains more interest and is more widely used, we must steer away from divisive narratives that focus solely on "good immigrants," families and "contributors to our labor and economy" and steer towards true solidarity and liberation for all immigrants no matter their history. This is the moment to remember that we once lived in a society without ICE and detention, and can get back to a world without ICE. We must not allow this moment to pass; we must stop turning a blind eye to the violence happening on the streets or behind detention walls; and we must demand that prisons like NWIPC be shut down for good!

—

¹ NPR. *Obama Leaves Office As 'Deporter-In-Chief'*. <https://www.npr.org/2017/01/20/510799842/obama-leaves-office-as-deporter-in-chief>

² TRAC Reports. *Immigrants Monitored by ICE's Alternatives to Detention Program Vary by Nationality, Gender, and State*. <https://tracreports.org/reports/698/>

³ UW Center for Human Rights. *NWDC Conditions Research Update: Charles Leo Daniel's Death at NWDC in Context*. <https://jsis.washington.edu/humanrights/2024/03/15/nwdc-conditions-research-update-daniel-death-in-context/>

⁴ KIRO 7. *Family sues ICE after man dies in Tacoma immigration center during withdrawal*. <https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/family-sues-ice-after-man-dies-tacoma-immigration-center-during-withdrawal/6RRKV2J36ZBVPL3DIR2THZLLU/>

Submissions welcome!

All Seattle Worker content is written by workers who volunteer their time and energy to help us spread news about our branch, our union, and our communities.

Our Editorial Committee welcomes essays, articles, photographs, art, cartoons, and announcements.

email: seattleiww@gmail.com

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 maintain the union and assist organizing campaigns. As a result, monthly dues are low.

To join, visit: iww.org/membership/ or email: seattle@iww.org or tacoma@iww.org

To begin organizing your workplace, visit: seattleiww.org/organize-your-workplace/

Take the Organizer Training!

The IWW Organizer Training 101 (OT101) gives you the skills to organize with your coworkers to flip workplace power dynamics—winning demands around conditions and wages, even without a formal union. It is focused on IWW's concept of 'solidarity unionism' and direct action tactics rather than legalistic NLRB processes.

OT101 is an intensive, two-day training—covering information that includes organizing conversations with coworkers, building organizing committees from the ground up, how to take direct action, and how to navigate with (and around) labor law.

For notice of the Seattle General Membership Branch's regularly held OT101s, visit: <https://forms.gle/q9edxoGrEVXhMVd89>

Upcoming OT101s

Bellingham, April 11-12.

Open to non-members on a space available basis. Registration:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1y6m3aD3u2IRvzFo0y4Tk96FBpg2Z6BQT2ThFq37hU3I/>

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."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.



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