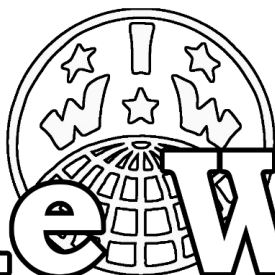


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**AN INJURY TO ONE
IS AN INJURY TO ALL!**

**UNITED FRONT
FOR A WORKERS' PARTY**



Same Story, Different Day:

The 1919 Criminal Syndicalism Trial of the IWW in Bellingham Washington

Evan Ricci

This article will also be published in the upcoming Winter Issue of the Whatcom Historical Society Journal.

At 7:21 am on Tuesday, March 25, 2025, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detained local labor activist Alfredo “Lelo” Juarez Zeferino while he drove his partner to work.⁽¹⁾ Many observers thought his detention was politically motivated, as he was a crucial organizer for the farmworker union Familias Unidas por La Justicia. In July, after experiencing “torturous” conditions at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, he decided to voluntarily deport himself to Mexico.⁽²⁾

A little after 10 am on Thursday, November 12th, 1919, the Bellingham police arrested a labor activist, Philip Bochnak, on a count of criminal syndicalism.⁽³⁾ Many observers thought that his and his comrades’ detentions were politically motivated, as they were critical organizers for the local Industrial Workers of the World, an organization that sought to abolish capitalism. After being paid \$3 dollars a day to work off a \$2000 fine, he was pardoned in February 1921, only to be turned over to immigration officials and deported back to Poland.⁽⁴⁾ Despite the clear differences in circumstance between these two people and their trials, one theme runs strongly throughout both: the targeted violence forced on them by law enforcement for being labor organizers in Whatcom County.

The story starts in Bellingham, November 12, 1919. It’s a Wednesday. Yesterday was the first celebration of a new holiday, Armistice Day, to commemorate the end of the Great War. Cities held parades and civic events. Reminders of horrors and sacrifices of war abound. The day’s newspaper, however, speaks of this day of supposed peace as anything but for the town of Centralia. The Bellingham Herald headlines in big, bold print “CENTRALIA CLEANING HOUSE FOLLOWING MURDER OF FOUR EX-SERVICE MEN BY I. W. W.”⁽⁵⁾ Next to it, a story headline titled “Red Agitator Declares Plot to Kill Veterans Carefully Planned”, which

details a Wobbly (a nickname for those who are a part of the IWW) named “Brick” Smith being hanged from a bridge, and the jailing of 19 others. The scandalous red agitator, one James Lamb, confessed to this whole sordid plot, alleges prosecuting attorney Herman Allen. This story would fit the narrative the Herald’s readership was already familiar with surrounding the IWW. There was a strike at a Blodel-Donovan lumber mill last month organized by the IWW, using similar inflammatory language.⁽⁶⁾

During the evening while many read the paper, the police have already raided the IWW headquarters at the Bellingham Hotel on West Holly Street, arresting Philip Bochnak, James Wilson, and Lafayette Ady for the crime of criminal syndicalism. Criminal syndicalism is a new charge—not just in Washington, but across America. First enacted in Idaho in March of 1917, it was copied nearly verbatim by many western states. Washington law defined criminal syndicalism as:

“Criminal syndicalism is the doctrine which advocates crime, sabotage, violence or other defined. unlawful methods of terrorism as a means of accomplishing industrial or political reform. The advocacy of such doctrine, whether by word of mouth or writing, is a felony punishable as in this act otherwise provided.”⁽⁷⁾

It is worth noting that these criminal syndicalism laws were made specifically to target the IWW, despite the Wobblies more often being the targets of state and interpersonal violence, not the perpetrators. In fact, during the last few months of 1919 and the first few months of 1920 alone, over 150 Wobblies were charged with criminal syndicalism, eighty-six of whom were convicted, receiving sentences ranging from 30 days’ jail time to 20 years in prison.⁽⁸⁾ To be clear, people were charged with criminal syndicalism if they simply joined the IWW. Washington state’s law was enacted on January 14, 1919, and while it was repealed in 1937, the damage had already been done to those imprisoned.⁽⁹⁾

With these stakes in mind, it is rather heartbreaking to hear that Philip Bochnak's lawyer, Thomas Waters, advised him to plead guilty, ultimately leading to his deportation.⁽¹⁰⁾ As for Ady and Wilson, they would be bailed out of jail: Ady by his younger sister Cora's husband Myron Baldwin and his friend W. G. Wilson, and Wilson by an old man who will soon be charged with criminal syndicalism as well, one Henry Larson.⁽¹¹⁾ Together, the trio of Ady, Larson, and Wilson would face off against the prosecution: Whatcom County prosecuting attorney Loomis Baldrey, United States Commissioner Frank Radley, and a bevy of lawyers from around Washington state, including the state's Attorney General, L.L. Thompson. Despite the legal attention drawn to Washington state's first case of criminal syndicalism, the defense lawyers objected to this number of supporting lawyers.⁽¹²⁾ Thompson stated that as AG, he could advise any case in the state. The defense then asked how much legal talent was arrayed against them, with the judge then determining it prudent to record all supporting legal advisors.

In addition to the legal forces arranged against them, simply finding unprejudiced jurors took the court two days and almost the entire jury pool. Many business owners were vehemently against the IWW, with one even saying that no amount of evidence could change his mind on the matter.⁽¹³⁾ Perhaps understandably, the Bellingham Herald recorded that Ady and Wilson were intently focused on the selection of jurors. They were not alone. In the courtroom, both during jury selection and the trial itself, the Bellingham Herald consistently described the courtroom as being packed, mostly with working men, who "cheered whenever the defense scored a point," to the extent the judge had to remind them that disruptive behavior would get people thrown out.⁽¹⁴⁾

Confronted with considerable exhibits gathered from the raid and presented by the state as evidence, as well as from a state paid witness in the form of T.L. Allison, Ady and Wilson reportedly had a hard time keeping their laughter in check. The Bellingham Herald reports it as if they thought of the whole trial as a joke, but that could be due to the complete and utter misunderstanding that the lawyers and Allison apparently had about various pieces of IWW literature. Notably, when the state-paid witness Allison was on the stand, being asked whether a book from this literature advocated violence, he said yes, but when the defense asked

him to name the book, he didn't know, causing a small stir among the court spectators.⁽¹²⁾

That said, Ady's testimony similarly contained issues. Given the high stakes of conviction, as well as the prosecution's lack of knowledge about the IWW, it is understandable why Ady gambled on misrepresenting the IWW. One of the more inaccurate things was his statement that the IWW was organizing a "revolution" to be accomplished by majority vote, which would be ratified with a constitutional amendment to the United States constitution.⁽¹⁵⁾ This is not what the IWW were ultimately aiming for, which was, as per their constitution's preamble, abolishing the wage system. Whether or not the jury knew this distinction, however, would not matter, as one of the jurors, Kate Rusk, against the orders of the court, brought out a newspaper clipping about an IWW court case in Spokane to the bailiff, having thought that the lawyers and judge would find it interesting. This resulted in a mistrial.

After a second lengthy round of jury selection, with both prosecution and defense going through the procedural motions as quickly as possible, came another unexpected turn of events. The defense chose not to give any testimony, citing their belief that the state's case was so weak that it didn't even warrant a response.⁽¹⁶⁾ This surprised many people, but if they had read the papers, they might have found the defense's reasoning. In Kansas, defendants in a similar trial against the IWW didn't offer any testimony, and won.⁽¹⁷⁾ Given Ady's previous performance on the witness stand, it is perhaps understandable that the defense found this particular gamble appealing.

This lack of testimony then led into fiery closing statements presented by both sides, with lead prosecutor Loomis Baldrey focusing on two claims against the defense and the IWW that were quite common at the time.

First, Baldrey ranted about how the IWW teaches what amounts to free love.⁽¹⁸⁾ For context, during this time in the 20th Century, not only did "free love" more mean a critique of marriage as an institution rather than necessarily having multiple partners, but it also was an accusation leveled at perceived anarchists and Wobblies to try and discredit them morally and publicly rather than just strictly legally (though

there were morality laws, these were not brought up in this case in Bellingham).⁽¹⁹⁾ Charles Sampley, one of the defense attorneys, objected to this, asking where, in all the literature that had been gathered, it had said anything of the sort. The judge said there would be no more arguments on this matter.

Secondly, Baldrey compared the IWW to a bunch of “slimy snakes and crawling things looking to destroy the American eagle”. Turning to the jury, he continued “It is up to you of the jury, to take in hand...in these matters. The aliens must be deported, and these native-born traitors must be put where they can no longer do harm.”⁽¹⁸⁾ Perhaps this final utterance should alarm contemporary readers. This rhetoric and the resulting actions are still with us in present day America, not only targeting people of various marginalizations, but specifically precarious labor organizers, as the kidnapping of Lelo shows.

With all of this evidence and rhetoric arrayed before them, what did the jury choose? The jury decided that all of the defendants were to be acquitted.

While the story doesn’t truly end here, as Loomis Baldrey filed a civil suit against the IWW in January of 1920, this series of trials nonetheless showcases the often unexamined labor history in Whatcom County.⁽²⁰⁾ This specific trial highlights connections to today, where various parts of the state apparatus are still used to punish and pressure labor organizers, like Lelo, for trying to make a better world for the working class and marginalized of the county. For Whatcom County specifically, it is important to bring this working-class resistance to light, not only to have a more holistic understanding of our past, but also to motivate and inform our actions against these systemic patterns of domination.

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Stickers, Posters, Graffiti, & Public Murals (& Other Art For Uplifting Gormandizers)



Art submitted by X383303, Seattle.

Stumble upon top-tier stickers, posters, graffiti, murals, or any other agitating art while in the weeds or about the 'tall grass'?

Whether it's a quality quip or astounding artwork (or peeped in perplexing-to-put places)—take a photo and send it our way! Our SPGP & OAFUG section features the Committee's favorite silent agitator from those received between issues.

Entries aren't geographically restricted to being around Puget Sound, but they must be:

- 1) *Captured with camera or phone photography
(by whoever shares it)*
- 2) *Easily discovered or positioned for public
(or 'public enough') consumption*

SPREAD INFORMATION NOT PANIC

When reporting or signal boosting potential threats or ICE activity: provide as much information as possible! Rumors and unconfirmed reports spread fear and waste community member's time.

S.A.L.U.T.E.

Size/Strength

"3-4 armed men"

Actions/Activity

"Stopping people leaving the library"

Location & Direction

"Downtown Boulder Public Library"

Uniform/Clothes

"Dark jackets, plate carriers, ball caps"

Time & Date of Observation

"8:32 AM June 1st"

Equipment & Weapons

"Hand guns, pepper spray, 2 cruisers"



Not Useful: "URGENT: ICE raid at the library!"

Useful: "Suspected ICE activity: 4 cops in masks, stopping people at the downtown Boulder Public library at 8:32am - 6/1. Agency has not been identified. They have handguns, 2 cruisers, and pepper spray."

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From the Secretaries' Desk: The hidden challenges of being Branch Secretary

FW Noah

A lot of what a branch secretary is supposed to do, regarding how they are meant to oversee a branch of the IWW, appears rather simple on paper when a former branch secretary is training you. For context, branch secretaries are officers of a General Membership Branch (GMB) who are elected annually and are responsible for the administrative duties that enable a union branch to grow, build capacity, and wield organized power. The bare-bones responsibilities include filing monthly reports to headquarters, ensuring that your delegates collect and record dues correctly, hosting business or committee meetings, and filing various tax or Department of Labor forms annually.

However, something I found in my experience as the branch secretary for the Tacoma GMB is that there are a whole host of other responsibilities that you can find yourself taking on, even if they are not apparent at first or if they are not previously suggested by a former officer. Every branch secretary can find themselves in this situation from time to time, especially if their branch lacks a more active membership or finds themselves unfamiliar with a position of great responsibility. Learning not just how to do the “bare bones” aspects of the job, but the broader tasks of making sure that your branch remains focused on its mission, making sure that the various side projects being taken on by the membership are well executed, as well as maintaining a socially healthy and diverse collective of fellow workers can put a strain on anyone who is either lucky—or obliged—to be in the position. While some of these undefined duties can be delegated to other officers or branch members when they are able, many secretaries can end up taking on these tasks themselves if the membership is unable or unmotivated to do so.

One thing I've had to reckon with, even before I became branch secretary, is that it's very easy for a collective to agree to an ideal or project that the branch should put into action.

However, when it comes time to search for volunteers, fellow workers may be busy with other obligations, wrestling with the challenges of their own lives, or otherwise disinterested in taking on the work that needs to be done. Something that needs to be emphasized in union spaces is that everyone has to carry some portion of the work for the entire branch to achieve a certain goal—whatever that goal may be—and that putting all of the work on one or a small few fellow workers is liable to create burnout or resentment when it comes to union duties. It is also imperative for a democratic institution such as ours to stress the fact that there can be no genuine democracy unless the workload itself is democratized. Ideally, the same number of those who vote in favor of any project, task, or committee should be willing and able to take it on; otherwise, there's no point in trying to achieve lofty goals that need more than two or three people to accomplish.

One big way our branch was able to achieve this was by creating a proportional officer ratio. This helps secretaries and other branch officers delegate tasks to peers or assistants, allowing more than one person at a time to occupy various officer positions such as branch secretary, treasurer, delegate, and so forth. This creates more opportunities to get trained and gain experience in taking on the bigger tasks that make a union branch well-functioning. Creating action lists for fellow workers at the end of every branch meeting, so they have a clear picture of what they need to achieve before the next business meeting, can also help members hold themselves accountable for the tasks and goals they want to accomplish on behalf of the union. Of course, it cannot be stressed enough that secretaries should get in the habit of delegating tasks to their available branch members, even work that they want to take on, so that they don't become easily overwhelmed by the collective responsibility.

Another aspect of being branch secretary that isn't immediately apparent is handling multiple office-related responsibilities while also checking in with other committees

or fellow workers who have taken on the work of the union. Being a branch secretary requires adopting a more objective, bird's-eye view of the various committees and activities the union is engaged in, and getting a good sense of where your collective efforts are being applied and where future efforts should be directed as needed. Sometimes, you may notice that the collective efforts of your branch are towards projects or efforts not directly related to labor organizing or education, or membership becomes overextended by taking on multiple labor-intensive projects. It will require you, from time to time, to call upon the membership and motivate them to refocus on the main mission of the IWW: educating, organizing, and unionizing workers.

Balancing this workload, between your own immediate duties as a branch secretary as well as occasionally helping out with work of various committees and projects, can become exhausting or overwhelming, especially if you're the type of person who is overeager to help your fellow workers. Developing trust in your branch membership to assist with the union's work can be a leap for some, especially if it seems like your branch might be biting off more than it can chew or if the membership is suffering from low morale. Keeping your branch realistic about what can be accomplished is a must, and helping fellow workers gain perspective on how a task or project can be broken down into smaller parts can make the work of the union more approachable and achievable for even the most hesitant member.

On a final note, it's important to stress that branch membership should not only be active and diverse but should also maintain a common standard of respect and decorum in the treatment of our fellow members. Having to manage interpersonal conflicts, safer spaces violations, or a socially fraught or low-morale membership can be especially stressful and dread-inducing, especially if you aren't used to mediating such conflicts. Sometimes fellow workers clash over differences in ideology, projects, or organizing campaigns that they think the branch should prioritize, as well as other aspects of the union's health, such as its finances or relationships with other organizations. It can also be difficult to maintain a healthy social environment when your branch members feel that the only thing they do as members is

busywork, even if the busywork is in the service of larger, more meaningful goals.

Having regular socials with members, especially where you can interact with the public, has been one way the Tacoma GMB has managed to get together and practice community, both internally and externally. Taking time to engage with our mission artistically, such as banner-making, writing, or producing our homegrown radio show—WOB Radio—gives us a time and space to set aside the more strenuous work to create something that is both enriching for the membership and informative and entertaining for the public.

As for managing conflict, it's a step in the right direction to create a safer spaces policy moderator for meetings who can address sensitive matters or problematic behavior. However, learning how to handle and resolve conflict between members takes both a resolve to be considerate of others' feelings in union spaces and the proactive willingness to put yourself in a tense situation and mediate towards a resolution. It's not a fun experience for anyone involved, but it is absolutely necessary to the health of a branch and the wellbeing of its members that you can identify and navigate conflict to maintain a respectful and caring union environment. Otherwise, undermining, bullying, or even abuse behavior can go unchecked to the point it fractures membership trust in both you and the union's values. The IWW's Conflict Resolution Training Manual is available through the Education Department, and the IWW Constitution outlines grievance and mediation procedures for complaints charges. Both of these are incredibly helpful to any fellow worker facing such situations.

These are just some of the things I've learned as a branch secretary, with just under two years in the position. Hopefully, these ideas can help you understand what it's like to be an officer of the branch, and give you a more realistic expectation of the job if you hope to get elected to the position yourself. I certainly look forward to continuing to grow in these skills, and with this look at the role, you too can use them to help grow a productive and successful union branch. Help the work along!

Landlord Research 101: Who Actually Owns This Place?

– FW John (x430192)

“And look—suppose you kill me? They’ll just hang you, but long before you’re hung there’ll be another guy on the tractor, and he’ll bump the house down. You’re not killing the right guy.”

“That’s so,” the tenant said. “Who gave you orders? I’ll go after him. He’s the one to kill.”

“You’re wrong. He got his orders from the bank. The bank told them: ‘Clear those people out or it’s your job.’”

“Well, there’s a president of the bank. There’s a Board of Directors. I’ll fill up the magazine of the rifle and go into the bank.”

The driver said: “Fellow was telling me the bank gets orders from the East. The orders were: ‘Make the land show profit or we’ll close you up.’”

“But where does it stop? Who can we shoot? I don’t aim to starve to death before I kill the man that’s starving me.”⁽¹⁾

When workers begin researching their employer during the early stages of unionizing—such as mapping the workplace’s hierarchical structure, social networks, and physical facilities—they can generally skip over the initial step of identifying who the person or entity employing them is. Even in cases of subsidiaries or complex structures (and setting aside completely dysfunctional settings), workers hold a solid starting idea of their general situation. They probably know their immediate boss, the owners or executive board, and which entity controls their workplace and its policies.

At the very least, workers know who signs paychecks and the company name printed on them.

But that often isn’t the case for unionizing tenants. While they probably know which company collects rent and is supposed to manage the property, tenants often don’t know into whose pocket their rent ultimately goes.

In many cases, this is by design, with property managers often hired to obfuscate landlords’ responsibility for building conditions and then conveniently replaced when landlords need someone to blame. Property managers certainly aren’t innocent bystanders to tenant exploitation—with many cutting costs and corners themselves—but they’re not who’s deciding whether to raise rents, evict tenants, or how little to spend when dealing with maintenance and other issues.

“Many of us believe the emperor has no idea what’s being done on his behalf.”⁽²⁾

What landlord research involves will vary in different locations, depending on the various levels of government that claim jurisdiction where tenants live. But getting the process started should look similar to the following.

—

Step 1: Check Your Address to Find the Parcel

The Pierce County and King County Assessors’ Offices both provide public-facing, searchable databases where inputting an address will provide information about who pays the taxes for a given property:

<https://atip.piercecountywa.gov/app/v2/parcelSearch/search>
<https://gismaps.kingcounty.gov/parcelviewer2/>

Pierce County’s system automatically loads the Summary Report for the property and displays the taxpayer’s name and address information. King County’s system requires clicking first on the result’s ‘Property Report’ link and then on the ‘Property Tax Bill’ (green button, second from left above the Summary Report), where the taxpayer’s mailing address will be located under the ‘Account Summary’ tab.

Record the parcel number, taxpayer’s name (whether an individual or a corporation), and taxpayer’s mailing address, as all three are needed to triangulate and confirm more info.

—

Step 2: Check the Recorded Documents for the Parcel

Next, use a database of county records to pull up all the paperwork the landlord filed for the parcel:

<https://armsweb.co.pierce.wa.us/RealEstate/SearchEntry.aspx>
<https://recordsearch.kingcounty.gov/LandmarkWeb>

Search results will help confirm the accuracy of the parcel reports, construct a timeline of the property, and provide names and addresses that will be crucial for continued research.

Searching first by the parcel number will provide narrower results that can be easier to sort through, but searching the papertrail under the landlord's name (the taxpaying individual or company) helps identify how they operate and enables tenants to build better profiles of landlords with whom they're dealing. Tenants might learn their landlord shuffles deeds—or 'conveys quit claims'—between companies they own or among their associates. It might reveal existing property liens that could be an indication of whether a landlord is financially distressed (and resultantly more vulnerable to organizing).

Researching this info also helps identify whether there may be other local properties owned by the same landlord that are worth scouting and unionizing with.

Step 3: Check for Code Violations

When researching the parcel's history, it's worth checking whether there's a history of code violations that tenant unions can leverage to wield greater power. Enforcement shouldn't be relied upon (see: Tacoma), but a record of violations can be used to further pressure landlords and make them sweat.

Undermine their lending bank's confidence, sic a salivating press on them to turn public opinion, or pursue other tactics. While these efforts aren't substitutes for solidarity organizing, building strike-ready unions, and direct action, they're still levers that tenant unions can pull to amplify the effectiveness of a strategy tailored to their specific landlord and progressing situation.

County code violations can be researched at:

<https://pals.piercecountywa.gov/palsonline/app/srs/srsSearch>
<https://aca-prod.accela.com/kingco/Default.aspx>

Step 4: Check State-Level Corporate Info

The next databases to search are from Washington's Secretary of State (SOS) and Department of Revenue (DOR)—the Washington Corporations and Charities Filing System and the Business Lookup, respectively:

<https://ccfs.sos.wa.gov/#!/Home> (scroll below the login fields)
https://secure.dor.wa.gov/gteunauth/_/#10

Results will provide or confirm information including:

-  'UBI Number', used for state-level identification of corporations in WA
-  Principle Office Mailing Address
-  Registered Agent (an individual or a company)
-  Registered Agent's Mailing Address (where corporations receive legal notices and other official correspondence)
-  Corporate Governors (the landlord(s) and/or individuals authorized to make decisions on behalf of the corporation)

Gather more information by searching the corporation names, individuals, and addresses collected so far, further piecing together all the different people and entities involved in a landlord's network. In particular, searching the registered agent's address and the names of corporate governors will help find other corporations that were likely set up by the same landlord for other properties or businesses they own.

This and prior steps will probably involve going back and forth between all these databases to develop more holistic understandings of a landlord's operations. As tenants uncover new names, addresses, and corporations, they should feed those back into the various databases to see what else they find and expand their mapping efforts.

Additional state-level databases for WA tenants to check include the Public Disclosure Commission (for identifying political contributions that can be leveraged similarly to code violations) and the WA Housing Finance Commission (for finding additional information about WA landlords benefitting from government-funded Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) programs).

One of the reasons researching landlords involves so many databases is because it's common for landlords to set up each property under its own corporation. Tenants might uncover a landlord's history of setting up new corporations to transfer property deeds and controlling interest from an old corporation before dissolving it. A single landlord might have their name attached to as many different corporations as the number of properties they extract rent from.

Unfortunately, you cannot rely on state and county agencies to confirm their information's accuracy (or reliably share it with each other), so cross-referencing is crucial, if time-consuming. Databases might also store old information, as is the case for the company my landlord uses to pay taxes where I rent.

Clicking the DOR system's link to show SOS info on my landlord's company, the pop-up reads: "No results were found. Either the business is not registered with SOS or the service is unavailable at this time." Info on my landlord's company can still be found by directly searching the SOS system, where it lists an 'Active' business status. However, the Registered Agent's mailing address listed within the SOS database routes to a PO Box at a USPS that's now permanently closed.

Picking the trail back up requires returning to the Parcel Search Database (Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer's Information Portal), which was used for Step 1, and further digging in the SOS Database. The mailing address listed in the Parcel Search Database for the landlord's company matches that of the Principle Office listed in the SOS database—which happens to be a residential address. And by researching that address in the SOS database, I discover a different entity—a trust—listed as the taxpayer, among other corporations tied to that address.

The name of that trust (and some of the other corporations sharing the same registered agent address) appear across the different documents pulled by querying the database of Pierce County Records. So, I know that at least some of the property ownership transfers are occurring between different companies or trusts under the same individuals' control, and I can further expand my research across that network.

Writing one of the most important passages among all American literature, Steinbeck perfectly captured the raw fury felt by those slowly crushed beneath layers of capitalism—the experience of "one set of workers... pitted against another set of workers" while the system grinds them down and those most responsible obfuscate or insulate themselves. Nearly a century later, that last passage in Chapter 5 of *The Grapes of Wrath* remains as relevant as ever—increasingly so.

But by unionizing, tenants discover that the same rage they feel toward those exploiting them also enables them to grow and wield power. And with a little research, they begin dismantling landlords' obfuscations—learning exactly where to direct it.

"I got to figure," the tenant said. "We all got to figure. There's some way to stop this. It's not like lightning or earthquakes. We've got a bad thing made by men, and by God that's something we can change."⁽¹⁾

1. John Steinbeck. *The Grapes of Wrath*.
2. Andor. Season 2, Episode 5. "I Have Friends Everywhere."

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>

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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