

LABOR'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR PEACE

Unions limit how much workers can be used against each other.

By organizing we avoid bidding against each other to lower our pay or worsen our working conditions.

Why should we let ourselves be used to shoot holes in each other's guts or bomb each other's children?

For generations thinking men have asked why should workers be taken away from their useful industry, be put into uniforms of differing color, and then be set up, on some strange field, to shoot each other. The answer regularly has been that these workers had no quarrel with each other, but that those who rule and rob them had fallen out.

The union-minded man avoids being pitted against his fellow worker across the work bench by reaching a common understanding with him. By organization he reaches such an understanding with his fellow workers in competing plants across the continent. By organization, he can reach an understanding with his fellow workers across the ocean and under other flags, so that they cannot be used in peace to bid down each other's wage or blast each other's home in war.

No better thing could be done than to build such an understanding among workers everywhere. But the large labor organizations avoid this. They seem married to their leading politicians. At home and abroad, the unions in Communist countries promote the policies of Peking or Moscow. In America they echo the Pentagon, and some unions became the subsidized tools of the CIA. Great federations everywhere have been used to voice the quarrels and outlook of the managers and employers they are supposed to fight. To unite workers, the labor movements must first declare their independence.

We of the IWW ask you to help us build up an understanding among workers that will turn the world labor movement in the direction it must take if mankind is to survive the atomic age. Such an effort can greatly improve labor's bargaining position in what has become a world market. Joint statistical research by unions in all lands could, among other things, come up with workable plans for using the earth's resources for our common good. The existence of such plans should squeeze better offers from employers, and prove handy should the business system collapse; but better yet, the work of making such plans builds the system of communication and makes possible the mutual understanding among workers that can make war impossible.

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