

larger implications of this disparity and then abandoning them to more research." And we must acknowledge the quality of his book. But it cannot altogether offset the intellectual limits of misplaced modesty.

JOEL HAGGLUND, SWEDISH IMMIGRANT to the US at age 23, becomes Joe Hill, IWW anarchist, and then American labor hero after his execution in 1915. Dispute persists over his guilt or innocence in the murder of a Salt Lake City grocer on a Saturday night in 1914. And this dispute over "Joe Hill," celebrated in a well known song, himself a prolific creator of labor-folk songs, has added to the fascination of the man in the same way and for some of the same reasons as those attaching to Sacco and Vanzetti.

The early part of the century continued a period of tense labor-capitalist conflict, immigrant influx and ethnic friction. The worker as a "martyr" to profit was the object of reforming zeal and exhortations to revolt. This was a period when the working class drama was at its climax. The class war was accompanied by its marching songs and embattled heroes. Acted out in industrial towns, large and small, where spectacular behavior assumed heroic proportions, unlike the more anonymous big cities, labor-capitalist strife was all the more tangible and stark. "Outlaws" on behalf of the cause of unionization or socialism became legendary in a way that can be likened to the outlaws of the West who took from the rich and left the poor unharmed.

The songs of Joe Hill were composed in this climate, rooted in his experiences and unashamed in their sincerity. They still suggest something of what we mean when we refer to "the people." As a "Wobblie" he was involved in the unionization battles of Utah's miners and this set the stage for his fate. A war, after all, involves the taking of prisoners. The ambiguous evidence which convicted Joe Hill has not convinced many historians and thus his execution constitutes one of a number of American labor's political

"mystery stories," recounted and re-examined many times.

Philip Foner's account of the Hill case is informed and exciting. His defense of his subject is irresistibly persuasive. Still, Foner promises an analysis of the "special" import of the Hill case. The special attraction that the case bears must be granted. Implications beyond this either do not exist or Foner has mis-stated his introductory promise. Nevertheless, the book is well documented by important primary sources (although the original trial transcript is still missing) and the story is decidedly well told and worth reading.

One is unavoidably struck by the extreme contrast provided by reading these books together. Tired alienation cannot produce heroic "mysteries" reeking of blood and injustice. The former, however undramatic, is as much a social problem as the latter. While both books reflect quality craftsmanship, they make one long for the daring effort that would account for labor's historical experience as a whole, drawing on an expressive language and cultural framework that goes beyond recounting events or the small scale study. RUTH L. HOROWITZ

HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES, VOL. IV:  
THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE  
WORLD, 1905-1917, by Philip S.  
Foner, International Publishers,  
New York 1965, 608 pp. \$8.50

THE IWW was the most colorful and militant labor organization indigenous to the United States, but today it hardly exists as a meaningful force and its memory has long since faded. It has received only passing mention during the last twenty-five years, yet has left behind a tradition of unrelenting struggle against the dominant forces in society.

The IWW was founded in 1905 because of the necessity to organize the mass production industries, and the bitter experience of the Western Federation of Miners,

(WFM), which had gone through a series of strikes bordering on civil war. The men had been the victim of concentration camps, the armed forces, the courts and legislature. Its goal was the abolition of the wage system by a continual series of strikes culminating in the General Strike.

The past of the constituent organizations, of which the W.F.M. was the core, made them hostile to political action through a party or the legislature as an effective force by which the workers could advance their interests. The IWW's best known leader, Bill Haywood, maintained that not many industrial reforms could be won by political action. He insisted that the I.W.W. was not anti-political but non-political, a view shared by Vincent St. John, the other leading luminary in the history of the organization.

The so-called non-political attitude was also conditioned by the source of IWW strength: the disenfranchised, who included migratory workers as well as immigrants. Even though small in numbers (sometimes with less than 15,000 members), their activity belied their numerical strength. They used free speech fights to organize the harvest hands and the lumberjacks. Migratory workers were given dignity; foreigners were equals. They were among the first to uphold the rights of Japanese in the days of the "Yellow Peril," and the defense of the Negro's right to equal job opportunities.

IN PHILIP FONER's history of the IWW we find the most detailed and voluminous work on the subject. His research has been prodigious with sources dug out of libraries from coast to coast, but it is sometimes flawed by what appears to be political bias.

Foner is too critical of the IWW for what he characterizes as its lack of interest in fighting for the Negro's civil and political rights. In the context of the time, the IWW was ahead of the Socialist Party. On the fundamental question of job opportunities, it was far in advance of any other group. It struck fear into the employers and leading citizens, who knew that the arrival of the IWW meant a

struggle without compromise. Its tactics put a drain on a community's resources, when it filled the jails with prisoners during free speech fights. Just as often to counter such tactics, the forces of law and order, the pulpit and vigilantes united to beat them brutally and often dumped them in a desert. Sometimes they murdered them.

Free speech fights were often the means by which workers were organized but the IWW's strike tactics and organizational approach contributed to a basic instability in its functioning. It believed that contracts would weaken the worker's spirit and prevent them from striking when conditions warranted. It had no strike or sick benefits. Under such circumstances, it believed in short, swift strikes. If it failed, the strike would continue on the job with varied methods of impeding production. St. John, the secretary from 1908-1915, wrote that the day of long, successful strikes was past. As a deterring factor in building an organization with roots, the organizers would leave after a strike, and what had been built would disappear.

When finally it began to come to grips with this problem, it was smashed by the ruthless prosecution of the Government which sent many of its leading members to jail for long terms. These actions directed against the IWW, which could hardly have been a threat to the foundations of society, reveal an attitude of insecurity and hysteria in American life later manifested in the McCarthy era and the violent anticommunism now prevalent. The IWW's failure to recover may be attributed partly to its failure to recognize the role of political power.

The IWW was syndicalist, with the goal of overthrowing the capitalist system by a series of strikes culminating in the General Strike. It was to be effected by one big union without ties to any political party. The State would collapse once the Union seized economic power. Thus it was more than a simple union, since it set itself a goal that only a political party could achieve—the overthrow of an existing social system. It could never

solve this contradiction, between its non-political character and its actual political objectives.

FONER OVEREMPHASIZES THE INFLUENCE of French Syndicalism on the IWW. Although their goal was the same, the differences in approach and organization were fundamental. The latter was organized in industrial unions, outside the AFL which it did not consider a working class organization. The differences were considered to be of such importance that W. Z. Foster, whose authority Foner accepts, broke with the IWW on the question of dual unionism and formed the Syndicalist League. (Foner does not refer to Foster's pamphlet *Syndicalism* where he fully sets forth his views.)

The French rejected political action, were opposed to democracy in the union and believed in the concept of a Militant Minority, where a small group, disciplined and active, functioned as a unit in capturing and controlling a union. The IWW needed no Militant Minority since it organized dual unions and did not have to contend with diverse groups as was the case with the French. The author asserts that Haywood, after his European trip in 1910 was influenced by the French and Tom Mann. Yet Mann on a later trip to the U.S. called on the IWW to give up dual unionism which was rejected by Haywood.

A second cause of the destruction of the IWW as an effective force was the imprisonment of its leaders and the massive persecution of its cadres during World War I. Yet, Foner does not give a balanced picture of its attitude to the War. Although it did not take an active position against the War, it did support the Zimmerwald resolution, advanced by the anti-war Socialists of Europe; this is not mentioned. Above all, it continued to carry on an unrelenting struggle in the fields and mines. The government considered its activity a greater threat to the war effort than the struggles of the Socialist Party, and the criminal syndicalism laws were directed primarily against the IWW.

Although Foner's work is detailed, he is at times tendentious in his use of sources. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, to whom the book is dedicated, was his closest adviser but she relied on her memory of events fifty years past. It seems that every incident in her long career in the IWW is mentioned but Ralph Chaplin who is called Haywood's right hand man, and with Joe Hill was its outstanding poet, is referred to only two times. We wonder why men like James P. Cannon (who was one of the organizers of the Akron rubber strike in 1913), Earl Browder and William Dunne are neither listed in more than 1500 references nor consulted (or were they?).

Reliance on Flynn leads the author to unverified conclusions. When Carlo Tresca and other IWW organizers were held on murder charges with several miners in the Mesabi range strike of 1916, a deal was made to release the former if the miners pleaded guilty. Foner adduces no other instance of such a deal in the history of the organization. The AFL is remorselessly criticized for its derelictions but the author accepts Flynn's specious excuse that it was necessary to concentrate defense activity on other labor cases and release the organizers.

Haywood cuts a sorry figure in Foner's account of this affair, but without evidence. Flynn's guilt becomes Haywood's in Foner's version. Haywood is charged with refusing to send a lawyer, Hilton, to the defense of the prisoners because of a personal grudge (unrevealed) against this lawyer and refusing to release funds for the defense. In his autobiography, under the same imprimatur as the current book, Haywood states that he hired Hilton. Such a charge by Foner can hardly be considered serious historiography. More, Haywood is also alleged to have ordered a reprint of Flynn's pamphlet, *Sabotage* in 1917, first published according to Foner in 1913 and in 1915 in Flynn's version. Actually, it was reprinted by the Cleveland section in 1916. It would be strange for Haywood to have been guilty of such behavior after the entry of the U.S. into the war in 1917.

Haywood is sharply criticized for centralizing the IWW which, writes Foner following Flynn, facilitated the arrest of many leaders. If such a charge is valid, the Communist Party was much more culpable, and Flynn, too, in the 1950s, when the Government just as easily prosecuted the leaders of The Communist Party.

If Haywood were the bureaucrat depicted here, a source of dissension, how could the IWW, in Foner's version, begin to revolutionize its approach to strike organization? All this was happening under Haywood's "centralized" control, and the IWW reached perhaps its high watermark in membership in September 1917, 90,000 members claimed.

ALTHOUGH, AS NOTED, this is the most complete history yet published, it lacks the élan which distinguished the organization. The great labor leaders associated with it De Leon, Mother Jones, Debs, St. John and even Haywood are hardly known. Their background and contributions are passed over.

It does not have the spirit, even of Brissenden's work which appeared almost fifty years ago. In this respect, it is also inferior to Kornbluh's IWW Anthology which speaks in the spirit and words of the IWW members themselves. But Foner's volume recalls the great contributions of the IWW to the American labor movement.

**HOFFA AND THE TEAMSTERS: A Study of Union Power**, by Ralph C. James and Estelle Dinerstein James, D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., Princeton, N.J., 1965. 430 pp., \$6.95.

**TENTACLES OF POWER: The Story of Jimmy Hoffa**, by Clark R. Mollenhoff, The World Publishing Co., 1965, 415 pp., \$6.50.

ONE OF THESE BOOKS—the Jameses'—is a serious and informative analysis of certain aspects of the Teamsters' union. It is the best study of unionism to appear in a long time. The other is a bit of

self-congratulation on the part of a journalist who happened to be around at the time of the McClellan Committee's investigation—and who claims to have been the "real" moving force behind the public exposure of Beck and Hoffa.

The Jameses focus on five separate questions: the personality of Jimmy Hoffa; the midwestern Teamster heritage of Dobbs, the Dunnes and Hoffa himself; Teamster national bargaining patterns under Hoffa; Hoffa's administration of the Teamster pension funds; and the economic effects of Hoffa's union stewardship. In a sense, these are five different stories, only indirectly related to each other. The Jameses do not try to tie them together but examine them separately—a scholarly effort in which they were aided (but not dominated) by the cooperation of Hoffa and the Teamsters' international staff.

There is little to criticize in what the Jameses have written: their studies are almost uniformly excellent and free both from apologetics and anti-Teamster bias. As to what they have *not* written, one half-wishes that they had inquired more into the internal politics of the Teamsters' union—but that would have required research entirely different from the research they were enabled to perform. Yet, as in discussing the International's different approaches toward collective bargaining problems in Philadelphia and San Francisco, they do provide an occasional ray of light into the internal life of the union.

We get no theoretical generalization as to the meaning of anything that can be called Hoffaism. The collective bargaining techniques that Hoffa brought to the International from the Central States Drivers Council come in for careful examination, and they are without question a high point in Teamster and trade union history. But these had their origins with Hoffa's socialist predecessor, Dobbs—not with Hoffa himself. The questions that make Hoffa almost uniquely interesting—such as, how come under a Hoffa the men get theirs although he gets his, too; while under

other bureaucrats (say, under a Rarback) the men get nothing or even lose what they had and only the bureaucrat gets his?—don't come in for an answer here. But the Jameses' study remains one of the few books on unionism, old or new, that rank as serious social and economic analysis.

THE MOLLENHOFF EFFORT is an absurdity, whether considered alone or compared with the Jameses'. What it amounts to is indicated by the photographs contained in the middle: they show the author with Senator McClellan, the author with Senator Mundt, the author with Bobby Kennedy, and the author with Pres. Kennedy as member of an "advisory" press committee. This last picture has nothing, of course, to do with Hoffa (whether the others have anything to do with him is unclear), nor does the eulogy to the author which the author prints on his dedication page, but they do have something to do with the book's purpose: to feed its author's self-esteem. The author's maiden relatives will, perhaps, treasure this volume but others would do well to ignore it.

BURTON HALL

**HUELGA**, by Eugene Nelson. Farm Workers Press, Inc., P.O. Box 1060, Delano, California. \$1.50.

**THE GRAPE STRIKE**, National Advisory Committee for Farm Labor, 112 East 19 Street, New York. 50 cents.

TWO RECENT PUBLICATIONS—the paperback *Huelga* by Eugene Nelson and the booklet *The Grape Strike*, based on reports by George Ballis—must be read to understand why the Delano strike may well be the turning point in the long struggle to unionize farm workers.

*Huelga* (Spanish for Strike) was authored by Eugene Nelson, son of a Modesto grape rancher, who served as a picket captain for the independent National Farm Workers Association. The strike was initiated by the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-

CIO, on Sept. 8, 1965, and Nelson describes the historic meeting when NFWA members voted unanimously to support the strike.

The two small organizations, without funds or machinery, take on the Goliath of the grape industry. Against the enormous resources of some 38 large grape growers in the Delano area, backed by California's \$3.7 billion agribusiness complex, the strikers pit their courage and determination to end their poverty.

AWOC entered the California scene in early 1959, and had fought many strikes, raising wages but unable to wrest contracts from the growers.

In the Delano area, AWOC's membership was largely Filipino-American, living in permanent labor camps. Wages had risen to \$1.20 an hour by early 1965. But Mexican Nationals—braceros admitted under the Immigration Law—were guaranteed a minimum hourly rate of \$1.40.

NFWA, founded in 1962 by Cesar Chavez was predominantly Mexican-American and strongly based in Delano's farm worker population. AWOC's Filipino leader, Larry Iliiong, had earned their respect and confidence. The two groups worked closely together, raising the joint strike demand: a union contract and a guarantee of \$1.40 an hour.

"Huelga" became the battle cry in the San Joaquin Valley, and the book describes in vivid detail the first 100 days of the strike. The narrative moves quickly from one episode to another to present a dramatic and absorbing account of the grape strike.

The heat of the battle rises from these pages—a non-violent struggle despite the aggressive tactics and provocations of the growers, in several instances directed against Nelson himself. Hence, *Huelga* is more of a personal narrative and highlights the events in which Nelson directly participated.

One defect, even if understandable, is the prominence given to the "outsiders," like Nelson himself, who volunteered their time and talent to the strikers' cause. Like all major upheavals, it will

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